



**Inclusive Education for Deaf Students in Saudi Arabia:
Perceptions of Schools Principals, Teachers and Parents**

**By
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Abstract

This study is set in Saudi Arabia within the context of increasing national and international emphasis on inclusive education of deaf students and where policy overtly supports increasingly inclusive schools. This research is important because it is one of the few qualitative Saudi Arabian studies that have been conducted within the interpretive paradigm with a view to understanding the complexity of inclusive education. It specifically explores the factors that have influenced its theory and practice at inclusive boys' primary schools for deaf students in the Saudi educational context. The empirical study which was set in the Local Educational Authority in Riyadh city focuses on the perceptions of schools' principals, teachers and parents of deaf students. It explores the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and experiences of these three groups of participants regarding the inclusive education of deaf students, in order to establish the factors that influence inclusive education and determine the kind of services that are needed for inclusive education of deaf students in the Saudi context.

The study had two stages: the first involved exploratory focus-group interviews with schools' staff including schools' principals, teachers and parents of deaf students; and, stage two was based upon individual interviews, observations and documentary data. I adopted a purposive sampling strategy in both cases and overall 61 participants were included. A key finding was that principals of inclusive schools lacked the knowledge and understanding of inclusive education necessary for effective education for deaf students. This arguably has affected their attitudes and unconstructively influenced their attitudes towards the inclusive education of deaf students in their schools. Whilst the majority of teachers of deaf children had more knowledge and the necessary positive views towards their inclusive education and have tried to adapt classroom materials and activities to accommodate deaf students, the lack of support from principals inhibited them. In addition parents appear to lack knowledge about inclusion and its possibilities for their children and they are as such excluded from influencing educational policy and mostly do not play the role in inclusive schools to support their children that Saudi Arabian policy suggests they should. Other inhibiting factors for inclusive education for deaf students included insufficient facilities and resources, lack of training courses and lack of collaboration among school staff and between staff and parents of deaf students.

My research indicates that these insufficiencies cannot be addressed without there being a symbiotic relationship between principals, teachers, parents, the Local Educational Authority, the Ministry of Education and the school environment. There is a strong need to create mechanisms to change the knowledge, attitudes and qualifications of principals, teachers and parents. Therefore in response to these findings I have developed and proposed a strategic model that focuses on the deaf student and their educational support, for the Saudi Education System.

There is considerable research needed if inclusive education for deaf students is to be more grounded in an understanding of the context. The study ended with utilising its findings and previous literature to develop recommendations for theories of inclusive education and made contributions to knowledge about the role of attitudes. It also provided a set of policy guidelines and made suggestions about pedagogy. In Saudi, organisationally the Local Educational Authority need to pay more attention to funding inclusive schools and providing facilities and specialised training to school staff and parents. With work this may lead to successful inclusive education for deaf students in Saudi Arabia.

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Abbreviations and Terms

UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
GSSE	The General Secretariat of Special Education
EAU	The Educational Advisory Unit
MOE	Ministry of Education
LEA	Local Educational Authority
UK	United Kingdom
DGSE	Directorate General of Special Education
SEN	Special educational needs
IEP	Individual Educational Plan
ICF	The Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health
WHO	World Health Organisation
ICIDH	The International Classification of Impairment, Disability and Handicap
BSL	British Sign Language
SSL	Saudi Sign Language
SL	Sign Language
CHL	Conductive hearing loss
SNHL	Sensor-neural hearing loss
dBHL	Decibels Hearing Level
USA	United States of America
DRTF	Disability Rights Task Force
BERA	British Educational Research Association
CPD	Continuing Professional Development

Chapter One

Context and Exploring the Gap

Chapter One

Context and Exploring the Gap

1.1 Introduction

In the last few decades, the view of deaf education has changed in most societies. There has been a great deal of research into the education of students with deafness, and as a consequence of this instead of segregating students with hearing difficulties into special institutions and schools, the ideology of inclusive education, which is about reforming mainstream schools to meet the needs of all students with different needs, is being promoted. In an inclusive setting the education system is responsible for incorporating students with deafness in general schools and providing them with all the facilities, resources and support they need to encompass specialised teaching and help them reach their potential. However, the idea of inclusive education seems to be a major challenge in many countries (Al-Rossan, 2003; Foreman, 2005; Ainscow, 2007; Abyed, 2011). So whilst students with deafness are increasingly being educated in the general school environment, this process of inclusive education for deaf students is a complex task which poses a lot of challenges for both practitioners and researchers (Hung and Paul, 2006). For example, on the ground, the successful implementation of inclusive education for deaf students is dependent on the positivity, knowledge, skills and experience of principals, teachers, and parents: their perceptions, attitudes and judgments play a part in ensuring the success of inclusive education practices in schools (Norwich, 1994).

The current study explores the complexity of inclusive education: its theory, practice, and other influencing factors, in inclusive boy's primary schools specialising in deaf students in Saudi Arabia. The Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia (2001) describes students with deafness as those who have severe or profound hearing loss and use sign language for communication and general school/classrooms as those settings which are prepared only for students who do not need any special education or intervention. The same document defines inclusive school/classroom as those designed to meet the needs of students with special needs. This includes the teaching methods, tools and equipment,

as well as support services and specialists to encompass specialised teaching. The move in Saudi from the policy perspective has therefore been towards inclusive education – which the Ministry of Education (2001) describe as teaching students with special needs in general schools, including the provision of special education teachers and services, whether full or partial inclusion.

1.2 Research Context

Globally support for inclusive education has been provided by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) (2000), which advocated providing education for students with deafness in mainstream schools as a means for achieving academic and social equality among all students. In this regard, there has been a transition from the traditional mode of education for students with deafness in special schools (such as the Al-Amal Institute) to inclusive education in general schools in Saudi (Al-Omari, 2009). Saudi Arabia, like several other developing countries, has made education a top policy priority during the last few decades. The Saudi government, in particular the Ministry of Education, is concerned with mobilising its educational resources such as specialist teachers and school environments to support its policies of inclusive education. This also involves providing contemporary education for all of the population in the nation state. So the ambition to educate students with deafness in Saudi Arabia has arisen as a consequence of the Saudi Disability Code of 2000, which guarantees free medical, educational and rehabilitation services to all students with special needs. This policy has ostensibly created the chances for a large number of students with deafness to access education in inclusive schools purportedly giving them equal opportunity (Ministry of Education, 2001). However, inclusive education is a relatively new concept in the Arab countries including Saudi, and it is a complex and controversial notion in this context. Notions of inclusive education were developed in North America and Europe and their differences in educational policy and cultural issues between Saudi Arabia and these countries. This is discussed in more detail in chapter two.

The Saudi Ministry of Education has initiated actions which are supposed to take place within several educational settings to achieve a sustainable and reliable learning system for students with special educational needs. In Saudi Arabia, inclusive education for

students with special needs depends on the type and degree of disability. Students with mild disabilities receive their learning in general classrooms where they fully participate in the general education curriculum as well as receiving some support in resource rooms from a special education teacher. Students with moderate and severe disabilities still get their learning in separate classrooms in inclusive schools but participate in some general school activities (Alquraini, 2011). The inclusive educational system for students with deafness is this partial inclusion in which there are special units or classes within the general school with only some inclusive classes and activities. This form of inclusive education affects a large proportion of deaf students nationally and statistics suggest it has become the most common mode for deaf students receiving their education. According to the Ministry of Education, in 2007 more than 90% of male students and 65% of female students with special educational needs were in inclusive schools (Al-Musa, 2010).

There has been a trend towards acknowledging those students with deafness and their needs and in producing mechanisms which aim to allow them to be effectively engaged and respected in inclusive schools. The aim of this investigation is to explore the complexity of this implementation of inclusive education for deaf students in Saudi Arabia. The particular focus was on the knowledge and attitudes of schools' principals, teachers and parents of deaf students towards inclusive education, arose from the literature as did the exploration of the factors which influenced the inclusive education for deaf students.

1.3 Statement of the Research Problem

Although there are undeniable efforts to reform education in Saudi Arabia, the reality of special education policy and the issue of improving special needs services is what it always has been - a slow and demanding process. According to Raheem (2010) Saudi Arabia is a home to a high population of students with special needs, but it still has a major problem in providing the means to educate such students on a national level, especially in the inclusive schools. A small amount of existing research suggests that the education provided by inclusive schools that concentrate in helping students with deafness is unsatisfactory, primarily due to a lack of awareness among school staff and parents and also a lack of available professionals, such as speech and language

therapists (Al-Omari, 2009). However, the lack of research with people working on the ground makes it difficult to discern what type of professional support and skills are required in order to support students with deafness. Whilst there are some research studies, articles and papers in the national level (Al-Abdulgabar and Massud, 2002; Jummah, 2007; Al-Samade, 2008) that have discussed the topic of inclusive education for different types of students with special needs in general schools, studies centred on students with deafness are still much needed in Saudi Arabia (Alquraini, 2011). It has been argued that this lack of educational research into the inclusive educational practices for students with deafness in Saudi Arabia result in inclusive schools which lack the necessary standard of awareness, appropriate policies and sufficient commitment to host deaf students effectively (Al-Omari, 2009).

Whilst there is much international research which highlights the importance of the school staffs' attitudes and understanding of inclusion and specific disabilities for successful inclusive education practices (Habayb and Abdullah, 2005; Ainscow, 2007; Carrington et al., 2010) there is little evidence that any of the Ministry of Education's decisions were informed by knowledge of the current attitudes of schools' principals, teachers and parents of deaf students about inclusive education. Furthermore, there are several factors identified as obstacles for inclusive education in general, including; lack of schools' community awareness, school's facilities, parental involvement and collaboration with school (Singal, 2005; Al-Zyouidi, 2006; Elsayed, 2009). Additionally, the educational research context in Saudi Arabia, particularly in the field of deaf education has been dominated by studies which mainly examined curriculum, ways of communicating and teaching methods (Al-Turky, 2005; Hanfy, 2008). Work with deaf students is of particular interest to me because there is minimal research on inclusive settings for these students in Saudi Arabia, and particularly none that has qualitatively explored the perceptions and experiences of school principals, teachers and parents of deaf students. This is not surprising as there is very little qualitatively orientated research in the Saudi context generally.

The literature review and practical experience meant that from the start of the empirical research it was assumed that, although the government of Saudi Arabia has recognised the rights of deaf students and had actively striven to advocate for their inclusive education in general schools, there may be problems on the ground. There was an

expectation that the research would reveal: (a) lack of knowledge and understanding about inclusive education of deaf students within the broader school and community; (b) problematic attitudes toward the inclusive education of deaf students within the framework of schools' principals, and a lack of implementation of inclusive education by teachers for deaf children; and, (c) a shortage of facilities, training and collaboration between schools' staff and parents regarding inclusive education for deaf students. The intention was to gain a clearer understanding of the exact nature of these issues within the Saudi context for deaf boys attending general schools in order to support the academic and social development of students with deafness.

1.4 Objectives of the Research

As stated above, this research explored the complexity of inclusive education; its theory, practice, and factors that have influenced inclusive education for deaf students in boy's primary schools specialising in deaf students in Riyadh city, Saudi Arabia. This research sought to:

- Explore the knowledge, understanding and attitudes of schools' principals, teachers and parents regarding inclusive education of deaf students.
- Examine the factors that influence inclusive education of deaf students.
- Determine the kind of services required for deaf students and the best practices to support inclusive education in Saudi Arabia.
- To contribute to the broader literature on inclusive education for deaf students on this basis.

1.5 Research Questions

On the basis of the above outlined objectives, this thesis followed a qualitative research design in which data were collected through interviews, observation and documentary analysis. The main research questions which directed the empirical study were:

1. What do schools' principals, teachers and parents understand by inclusive education of deaf students?

2. What are the attitudes of schools' principals, teachers and parents towards inclusive education of deaf students?
3. What are the other factors that influence the inclusive education of deaf students?

1.6 Overview of the Research Method

In view of the research aims and research questions, a qualitative method was adopted and the study was grounded in the interpretive paradigm: it looked at participants' interpretations of the social world (Crotty, 2003). Hence, it was assumed that participants would be able to provide useful information from their experiences regarding the inclusive education of deaf students at the schools where they worked or where their children attended. Unlike most Saudi Arabian studies of inclusive education, this project adopted a qualitative approach and as such provides a depth of insight about participants' theory and practice of inclusive education for deaf students. A short-coming of this is that as a male researcher I was only able to study boys' schools (this is discussed in more detail in chapter six). The journey of this research has included two stages. In the first stage, exploratory focus-group interviews with schools' staff included schools' principals, principal's assistants, teachers and also parents. These were carried out to investigate their perceptions and to obtain more knowledge about the situation of inclusive education of deaf students. In view of the fact that there is a lack of literature about the specific issues affecting inclusive education for deaf students in the Saudi Arabian context, the exploratory stage seemed vital for providing relevant issues and questions for the second stage. In addition, the early stage provided the initial insight and understanding about the context, it had the main objective of developing ideas rather than gathering findings (Oppenheim, 1992).

In addition, the data and information from this stage revealed specific improvements for some of the questions for the individual interviews in the second stage of the research. In this second stage the interview questions were prepared after intensively reading relevant literature and examining the early stage of exploratory focus-group interviews. In the second phase, rather than relying on simple personal responses represented by the interview approach, the researcher decided to also use direct and indirect observation as well as documentary reviews in order to collect more sophisticated and in-depth data.

Furthermore, data was recorded on audio-tape and written field notes recorded my perceptions, thoughts and feelings arising from the data. All of the data was analysed using a thematic approach: themes were derived and formed after thorough analysis of the perceptions of the participants, the written notes from the observations, and documentary data (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Braun and Clarke, 2006). Themes were categorised into sub-themes and a clear link between the research questions and the data analysis was maintained. The responses in the form of quotations of the participants were translated from Arabic into English through consultation with experts in translation. Purposive sampling was used. There are five inclusive schools specialising in deaf students in boy's primary schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; the full sample of study was five school principals, 32 teachers and 24 parents from these five inclusive schools. The participants were school principals, who have students with deafness in their school, teachers who work with deaf students in their classrooms and parents who have a deaf child who attend an inclusive school. Further details will be given in chapter six.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The current study is focused on understanding school principals, teachers and parents' perceptions towards inclusive education of deaf students in terms of philosophy, practice, influencing factors, and how to support change in the Saudi context. It is believed that the findings of this research make a significant contribution to the field of inclusive education of deaf students in Saudi Arabia. The findings are useful in that: (a) they assess the current situation in detail in the context of Riyadh and identify the characteristics and components of effective inclusive education in this specific context based on views, experiences and feelings of key stakeholders; and, (b) they have allowed me to propose a process of reforming and restructuring activities and practices to improve the quality of inclusive education to ensure that all deaf students can have access to the whole range of educational opportunities offered within the schools in Saudi Arabia. The research suggests that this can be achieved through the creation of conditions and environments within schools for managing change successfully and by focusing on priority areas (Al-Omari, 2009). In addition, the findings aim to contribute to a more thorough understanding of inclusive education of deaf students, with the hope that they can be used to modify the current policies of the inclusive education of students

with deafness in Saudi Arabia. It is hoped that the findings of this research can be used by policy makers because they can provide them with insights regarding the kind of services required for deaf students and the level of commitment that is required of school principals and teachers towards inclusive education if it is to work. As it is conducted in Saudi context it may provide some direction for future change in a way which is suitable for this environment. International research is not always useful in this respect. In the same way it is hoped that the findings of this resonate with principals and teachers regarding the difficulties they are facing when dealing with deaf students and that it will provide important insights into how they may be better supported or what action needs to be taken to improve things.

Additionally, it is hoped that the study will be an example for further studies in inclusive education in that it demonstrates the potential and worth of using qualitative methods in research, especially for studying the perceptions of those involved in trying to deliver inclusive education. Unlike most of the previous studies in Saudi related to this topic which have used quantitative methodologies this study adopts a constructivist perspective and explores what people believe they do (through interviews) and what they actually do (through observations); and does not begin with the assumptions of other researchers and policymakers to the same extent. This research lays the ground for further research in Saudi Arabia in terms of using qualitative data collection methods, including interviews, direct/indirect observation and documentary data.

1.8 Overview of the Study

Even though policies for students with special needs in Saudi Arabia were passed many years ago, it seems that the understanding and attitudes of school principals, teachers and parents, with respect to inclusive education is very limited compared to the Western ones. Despite differences in the cultural aspects of inclusive education between Saudi Arabia and Western countries it is the prominent form of educational provision for students with deafness in the former. The lack of effective understanding of inclusion and the associated difficulties with implementing it have created a gap between the framework of these policies and what happens on the ground. The nature of this gap has been made clearer through this exploration of the implementation of policy and the provision of services in relation to students with deafness. In addition the specific ways

in which special education services for male students with deafness are lacking have been better illuminated. The research has added to the understanding of the ways in which principals, teachers and parents' awareness and attitudes about inclusive education of deaf students in Saudi inclusive schools, are insufficient (e.g. to Raheem, 2010) and that detail is illuminating with respect to thinking about why things are as they are and how they can be improved. Saudi inclusive schools are faced with problems regarding the delivery of services mandated for students with deafness and research such as this is much needed.

In accordance with the focus of this research, the thesis is organised into ten chapters, including the introductory chapter which has presented the background, introduced the gap in the literature that led to conducting this research. It has also stated the research problem, research questions and objectives of the research. In addition, it has briefly discussed research methodology and the significance of the research overall. Chapter Two presents and gives an account of Saudi Arabia's educational system and provides a general historical overview of special education and deaf education specifically. It further explores the aims and the current trials of educational reform in the field and some reflections on principals' and teachers' education in special educational needs as it applies to deaf children as well as parents. Chapters Three, Four and Five present the conceptual and theoretical background relevant to the study: providing a toolkit of theories and issues relevant to the framing and interpretation of the results. Chapter Three provides a review of the theoretical models of understanding disability and deafness, it also contains a review of the literature on deafness. Chapter Four provides a historical review of inclusive education and explores its complex nature including the assumptions underpinning it, the rationale for it and the issues of implementation in a worldwide context. Also, it presents factors which influence the process of inclusive education and perspectives on the changes required to achieve it. Chapter Five provides a comprehensive review of the relevant literature about attitudes towards inclusive education of deaf students, and explores studies related to school principals, teachers and parents' attitudes which were used to inform this research.

Chapter Six outlines the research methodology and framework. This includes a more detailed rationale for adopting the qualitative method in the study. The chapter then presents the research design and describes the method of data collection. In addition, it

discusses issues related to sampling procedures, ethical considerations, data analysis, the quality of the study and finally researcher's positionality. Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine present the findings of the study. These chapters report on the results of the qualitative analysis of the interviews and observations, as well as documentary data. Chapter Seven presents the findings of the knowledge and understanding of principals, teachers and parents related to inclusive education of deaf students. Chapter Eight focuses on their attitudes towards inclusive education of deaf students. Chapter Nine presents the factors facing inclusive education of deaf students in general schools. These chapters evaluate the findings of the study through a discussion of the results with reference to previous literature. Finally, Chapter Ten presents the conclusions of the study and the main findings, and appraise the contribution of the study, and it makes recommendations for inclusive education of deaf students. A 'strategic model' for improving inclusive education for deaf students in Saudi that was based on the research findings is presented in this chapter. This is followed by a discussion of the limitations of the study, suggestions for further research and reflexive account.

Chapter Two

The Saudi Arabian Context

Chapter Two

The Saudi Arabian Context

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the essential background knowledge relating to the Saudi Arabian context. As briefly discussed in chapter one, in the current environment inclusive education in Saudi Arabia depends on the type of disability and/or special need, and there are schools for inclusive education especially for blind students. There are also other inclusive schools specialising in mental disability. The focus of this study on deaf students is a result of the lack of previous research and therefore also the paucity of recommendations based on it (Al-Omari, 2009; Alquraini, 2011). The significance of the educational changes around inclusion and the perceptions and voices of school principals, teachers and parents of deaf students, explored in this study, can only be properly understood if the cultural and historical backdrop to their dialogue is known. Consequently this chapter describes those aspects of the historical development and the current state of education that is necessary to make sense of the education for students with special needs described in this thesis. More specifically, it describes how inclusive education for students with deafness has been re-organised over time. Hence, it demonstrates how inclusive education has been shaped by the social, cultural, political, economic and historical environment. While there is little literature about deaf education, especially inclusive education in Saudi Arabia, it is very important to know the forms of deaf education that have pre-existed current approaches as this influences current practice. According to Law et al., (1998) in order to be aware of the relevant issues for research in specific countries and to understand the outcomes of a study it is essential to understand the background.

The country context affects national policy and what can be done within its confines. Without a degree of understanding of national educational policy an analysis of deaf education would remain unconvincing or inadequate. Awad (2002) concurs with this view. For example, the UNESCO World Declaration on Education for All (1990) was a milestone for inclusive education for many countries. However, such policies cannot be

adopted or borrowed without adapting them according to how they will interact with a culture. For instance, Saudi Arabia has unique cultural borders such as the gender segregation of unrelated boys and girls which shapes the general school systems. This implies that a broad understanding of this situation is required not only to develop methodology but for the reader to appreciate the methods used, which in this case was that the researcher could only study boy's schools if he was to stay within his personal and cultural ethical code. In addition an awareness of past and present political, economic and social context is necessary to the analysis of deaf education, and in developing measures or recommendations aimed at improving deaf education afterwards.

Therefore, this chapter starts with shedding light on general information about Saudi Arabia and an historical perspective on the education system. The discussion then becomes more focused on the area of development of special education and more particularly on deaf education in Saudi Arabia. After that the chapter discusses the special educational needs policies, the beneficiaries of special education services and the distribution of service delivery for deaf students across the country. This discussion contrasts Saudi with other countries, particularly other Arab countries, to illuminate similarities and differences which have implications for the findings of this research.

2.2 General information

Saudi Arabia is at the intersection of three continents: Asia, Europe and Africa. The population of Saudi Arabia is 27,136,977 in an area of 2,000,000 square kilometres.



Map of Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia borders Kuwait, Jordan, Iraq, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Yemen and Oman, as well as the Arabian Gulf and Red Sea. The capital city is Riyadh, with a population of 4,878,723 (Central Department of Statistic & Information, 2010). Islam is the religion of the Saudi Arabian people and their culture is defined in terms of this religion, covering all their lives and, pertinent for this context, specifically education. Muslims believe in Allah (God) and the Last Messenger Muhammed (pbuh). Islam highlights the importance and duty of each Muslim to gain education, both males and females (Al-Salloum, 1996). This implies that each individual has the right to seek education regardless of cast, sect, status, gender and disability. Saudi's current education policy is in tune with this as it protects the civil rights of all persons with disabilities. Since 1998 they have been protected and empowered to participate in and benefit from all programmes and activities in schools (Ministry of Education, 1998). This includes the right of all students including deaf students to a free appropriate education. Consequently the Islamic view does not contradict the notion of a universal education in countries where in practice it has gradually become a civil right (UNESCO, 1994). Although the culture is different from non-Islamic countries, there are now many similarities between educational policies. Where the right to universal education is given through the Islamic religion it parallels the political empowerment in those countries, but as in all countries who have increased civil liberties, equality has only gradually become a civil right and until recently people with disabilities were still not getting access to policy which ostensibly entitled them to real inclusive education.

According to Humaid (2009) Islam declares clearly that all people, male and female, able and disabled, poor and rich etc., 'have an equal status and value before God, and piety alone differentiates one individual from another'. Islam emphasises equality between people, for the reason that Islam respects humans being human. This view is supported by the Holy Qur'an:

‘O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you’ (49, 13).

In fact, the principles of Islam confirm the importance of care and respect to others including disabled people. There is no direct judgement about disabled people in the

Qur'an which only comments minimally about disability and these are only figurative references, for instance; the blindness of the heart, or the deafness to God's teachings. According to Al-Thani (2009) many Islamic scholars see disability as morally neutral and as a blessing. However, despite this there are issues relating to segregation of those people with disabilities from society or negative attitudes towards inclusive education but these do not stem from Islamic beliefs, but are more cultural matters, they are more accurately local and pre-Islamic customs (Gaad, 2011). Some of these more counterproductive attitudes towards disability are revealed through the dialogue of participants' in this research when they discuss their understandings of very specific concepts in relation to disability; for example, the notion of inclusive education. This is elaborated in chapters seven, eight and nine in which the findings of this research are presented.

2.3 Historical Perspective in Education in Saudi Arabia

In 1932 when Saudi Arabia was founded, education was partial and there were only individualised institutions and they were not accessible to all due to a shortage of places in schools and a lack of teachers. This exclusive form of education was available only in schools based in urban mosques which taught Islamic Law and basic literacy (Encyclopaedia of Education in Saudi Arabia, 2003). In reality, as living conditions were difficult, most children were expected to contribute to their family income from a young age, by tending animals and performing domestic labour (Gaad, 2011). However, taking advantage of the growing wealth that came with the exploitation of oil fields in Saudi Arabia which funded social welfare, many public schools and special schools were initiated across the country (Al-Musa, 1999).

Times have changed and 82 years later Saudi Arabia now has a national free educational system aimed at all citizens (from primary stage to university level), focusing on core studies of Islam and a diverse field of modern and traditional arts and sciences. This modern educational system aims to produce highly educated citizens that are perceived as being needed for the rapid progression of developing the country. The first formal authority, "The Council of Education", responsible for education in Saudi Arabia was established in 1927, prior to the formal establishment of Saudi Arabia as an independent

state, but it remained until the foundation of the Ministry of Education in 1953. Setting out education policies in Saudi Arabia became the responsibility of the Supreme Committee, in 1963, chaired by King Saud, this committee also included the following ministers: Ministers of Education, Interior, Defence, Information, Labour and Social Affairs, as well as the General Presidency for Girls' Education (Encyclopaedia of Education in Saudi Arabia, 2003). In addition, there was some educational exchange between Saudi Arabia and Jordan as well as Egypt through which teachers and educational experts from these countries were employed in Saudi Arabia. Hence, the initial policy of education in Saudi Arabia has been greatly influenced by these two countries (Al-Muslat, 1984).

The education provision and the implementation of state policy on education is the responsibility of three main executive authorities, namely: The Ministry of Education, the General Presidency for Girls' Education and the Ministry of Higher Education. The first, The Ministry for Education, was specifically responsible for establishing education policy for the state and educational programmes and curricula for boys' education in the primary, intermediate and secondary schools. The second authority was specifically responsible for girls' education at all levels, as well as the kindergartens and the girls' colleges. Since 2002, all these responsibilities were passed on to the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Higher Education was established in 1975 and was specifically responsible for conducting and co-ordinating higher education of universities and its executive secretariat (Al-Senble et al., 1998). Of these three categories, the former (Ministry of Education) is most relevant to this research as it sets up the state policy for education including primary inclusive schools. The segregation of educational responsibility for Boys and Girls schools in Saudi Arabia is due to the cultural perspective which dictates the separation of male and female schools. It is also true of higher education which although has one Ministry requires a special department for females. Such educational categories can be found in a significant proportion of Arab countries particularly Gulf States. However, in some countries like Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Algeria and Iraq such segregation has not existed because the policy of education in these countries allows mixed schools (Al-Asmari, 2013). As stated above this cultural factor has reflected on the study, as segregation makes accessing girl's schools impossible for me as a Saudi Arabian male.

Private and public bodies play a role in the Saudi Arabian education system. Additional public authorities such as the Ministries of Defence, Petroleum and Health, along with the General Presidency of Technical Education and Vocational Training, have roles to play in the education system. These roles include financial support, schools' health care and training individuals to participate in the various activities within schools (Al-Musa, 1999). This is significant because schools receive extra funding and care from these organisations and these authorities grant employment to students after graduation. There is also a private sector which provides education for approximately 12% of the student body in Saudi Arabia (MOE, 2013).

In Saudi Arabia, the educational system is categorised into the various stages outlined below. All government schools provide free gender-segregated education and the schools are day schools (Al-Muslat, 1984; Al-Senble et al., 1998).

- a) **Kindergarten** - this is the preparatory stage, one or two years in private/state kindergarten, whereby children can experience school life through education and social activities, before they attend primary school. This stage of education is optional as parents can choose whether or not they wish their child to join before primary school.
- b) **Primary stage** – Pupils are accepted into primary schools at the age of six, and complete it after six years of education, on the condition that they pass subjects each semester in each year. Having achieved the required standard in the sixth year of this stage, pupils are awarded with a Primary School Certificate, enabling acceptance onto the Intermediate stage of learning.
- c) **Intermediate stage** – pupils complete this stage in three years, with those who pass exams receiving the middle efficiency certificate to transfer to secondary school.
- d) **Secondary stage** – This stage, with a duration of three years, provides pupils with different branches of study assigned by specialist institutions, which includes scientific institutes (covering subjects such as Maths, English and Chemistry), Dar-Attawheed (Islamic studies), professional institutes (devoted to agricultural, industry and commerce), and schools teaching the holy Qur'an. Students are guided and

prepared with the aim of ensuring a range of specialisations required for the national development (Al-Senble et al., 1998). Additionally, those students who pass these exams receive a certificate.

- e) **Tertiary Stage** – Universities in Saudi Arabia provide free education in a variety of different fields. Although students have general knowledge about these different subjects when they apply, they select one to specialise in, for example, humanities, religion, physical, social and applied sciences.

The above different stages of schooling are similar to those in a number of other Arab countries including Egypt, Jordan, Iraq and Gulf States. As mentioned earlier, the social perspective in terms of family life, traditions and customs in Saudi Arabia influences the different forms of education. In addition to teaching science, English and Maths, subjects in all stages of schooling include Arabic, Islamic studies and the history of Saudi Arabia. Although Saudi society is divided socially into wealthy, poorer or middleclass citizens, education is free and available for everyone whether citizens or residents. Some residents would attend private or international schools, however if they choose to go to state schools they are exempted from religious studies.

2.4 The Development of Special and Deaf Education in Saudi Arabia

As mentioned earlier, the aim to educate all citizens of Saudi Arabia has been established through the convergence of religious beliefs and international rights, such as the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in 1948 (Al-Muslat, 1984). The Ministry of Education has consequently attempted to develop and diversify the education sector. This included producing specific plans for the education of students with special educational needs. The early stages of special educational needs started in 1956 through individual initiatives (Al-Musa, 2008). Such initiatives were taken by some enthusiastic people. For example, Al-Ghanem, a blind man, learned the Braille reading and writing system from a visitor to Saudi Arabia. For a period of two years, Al-Ghanem taught Braille to fellow blind men attending general public schools and to two sighted persons who had heard about the new system and were interested to learn more. These efforts were highly supported by the government, who facilitated government buildings and provided materials for the evening sessions (Al-Musa, 1999).

Based on these efforts, in 1960, the Ministry of Education opened the first institute, 'The Institute of Light for the Education and Training of the Blind in Riyadh', which was a fundamental milestone in organised special education in Saudi Arabia. This was followed by the establishment of the first Administration of Special Educational Needs in 1962, which provided services for the deaf, blind and partially sighted students and those with mental disability. The year 1964 was significant for the development of special education as a school for blind and partially sighted girls was founded, as well as the first two deaf schools, Al-Amal Institute (school for boys and another school for girls), established in Riyadh City. This was followed by the establishment of the first specialised institute for students with mental disability, Al-Riain Institute, in 1971 (Directorate of Special Education, 1981). The development of special educational needs initially started at Riyadh, the capital city of Saudi Arabia, where those students with special educational needs who come from distant places could reside. Such education is free for all residents regardless of their social, ethnic, cultural, or religious background (Al-Musa, 2008).

Consequently, the Ministry of Education established the Department of Special Education to introduce special educational services to three types of students (male and female); blind, deaf and those with mental disability through the resolution No. 674/36/40 (Ministry of Education, 1978). Additionally, administering programmes, monitoring educational progress and ensuring schools' compliance was the top priority for the Department of Special Education, where it is clear that the policy formulation in education in Saudi Arabia was based on a top-down approach. This development of special education is relatively late compared to countries like Jordan and Kuwait. However, it is early compared to Egypt, Iraq and other Gulf States. As stated above the development of special educational needs is based upon religious beliefs and a political sense of social justice (Al-Muslat, 1984).

Within Saudi Arabia, as elsewhere, special interest groups such as those focusing on human rights and the general secretary for disabilities lobbied the Ministry of Education to think seriously of its responsibility towards students with special educational needs, and the decision was made to establish more special schools (Al-Musa, 1999). The case was also supported by research, for example, researchers such as Al-Salloum (1996) stated that culturally it was not acceptable to leave disabled students without education

and illustrated that politically, it was the duty and responsibility of the government of Saudi Arabia to accommodate and provide accessible education for those with disabilities and special educational needs. At the same time, the country's economy flourished due to oil discovery, which helped the government to establish special schools and institutes for special needs. In 1983, the name was changed from Department of Special Education to the General Secretariat of Special Education (GSSE) and the aim was to continue opening specialised institutes in the 13 Local Educational Authority districts to provide facilities and accommodate for students with disabilities (Al-Musa, 1999).

In the following years, there has been a steady expansion of programmes and the quality of special educational policy and practices. There was a substantial change in services in terms of adding further supporting units for different educational needs, by 1996 the departments of the GSSE were divided into the educational administration for students who were blind and partially sighted, deaf, mentally disabled, learning disabled, autistic and multiple disabled (Al-Musa, 1999). The General Secretariat of Special Education monitored the planning and implementation of these programs for students with special needs through various policies and procedures to ensure its efficacy and enlighten students of its values and benefits. Also, it worked to develop and diversify new educational administrations, throughout Local Educational Authorities, by drafting the necessary plans to cover the needs of the institutes, programs and districts. In addition, the GSSE participated in educational research programs in special education, the writing of teaching material, the selection of suitable assessment instruments and the preparation of training programs at the various levels of special education. The GSSE was also involved in directing debate groups, meetings and conferences related to each separate educational department (Al-Musa, 1999).

Currently, the General Secretariat of Special Education also has a department named the Educational Advisory Unit (EAU) which provide several important services to special and inclusive schools. These include: a) evaluating the continuous benefits and efficacy of these educational programmes and social services through field visits; b) preparing curriculum, educational material and suitable equipment. In this respect, in 2005 resolution No. 159/27 applied the same national curriculum to deaf students in primary schools as their hearing peers in general settings, but with additional visual illustrations;

and, c) improving teaching methods and scheduling meetings to ensure staff development and training (Al-Omari, 2009). In addition, roles of the Physical Therapy and Training Unit in schools focused on caring for students with special needs and individualising the physical and occupational therapy to suit their needs. In this respect, schooling hopes to identify individual students with special needs including each ones' skills and abilities. In addition to providing suitable programmes to suit their needs schools hope to provide psychological and social care necessary for students. Moreover schools intend to prepare students for real life so they become effective members of the wider society (Ministry of Education, 1998). However, as shall be seen in my data chapters what is advocated at the policy level is not necessarily happening in the schools for children with special educational needs.

2.5 Policy of Special Education in Saudi Arabia

It can be seen therefore that in Saudi Arabia the Ministry of Education does endeavour to provide individuals with special needs an appropriate education and this has become more focused on their individual needs. Between the years of 1990-1992, the Education Policy in the government of Saudi Arabia focused on special education for students with disabilities by initiating reforms and introducing special policies/principles. These included: a) a ministerial order instruction that students may not be rejected from any educational level; b) the improvement of curricula for special education; and c) the establishment of new and modern facilities to improve services. These policies main objectives were to ensure students with disabilities could access free and appropriate education and rehabilitation programmes. Research has suggested that these also allow these students the opportunity to discover new skills, better understand the values and conditions that affect their lifestyle, and prepare them to become a fully participating person in society (Al-Musa, 1999). Additionally, the overall objective of education of students with special needs in Saudi Arabia is in line with the cultural context:

‘To have students understand Islam in a correct and comprehensive manner; ... to equip them with various skills and knowledge; to develop their conduct in constructive directions; to develop the society economically and culturally; and to prepare the individual to be a useful member in the building of his/her community’ (UNESCO, 2006).

According to Al-Musa (2008) the main aims of these special programs are to help students with special needs reach their best academic level and prepare them for independent life. The Ministry of Education (2001) has provided guidelines for how the aims could be achieved:

- To identify students with special needs and their locations to provide them with special education programs.
- To discover each child's skills and abilities, and develop each of them through special and appropriate education and activities.
- To provide stability and medical, psychological and social care to help students with disabilities to become as independent as possible.
- To design individualised plans and programs which correspond to each child's abilities.
- To adapt schools to ensure that they have an appropriate environment and the materials and services necessary for students with disabilities.
- To prepare students with disabilities for public life so they become productive members of society, able to support themselves and productively participate with others.

Additionally, while all of the above policies and objectives are very important for the education of students with special needs, what is unclear is the effectiveness of such an approach and the implementation methods.

This thesis has interrogated the efficacy of these policies in depth in chapters seven, eight and nine. Such research has not been previously investigated in Saudi Arabia but questions of efficacy have been explored in some other Arab countries. For example, a study conducted in Jordan by Al-Zyoudi (2006) clearly revealed a mismatch between objectives of special and disabled education policy and its application. This finding is replicated in research conducted in Egypt by Najm and Badr (2012) to examine the extent in which schools achieve the objectives set by the Ministry of Education. The finding revealed that there was conflict between schools' actions and the policy aims. Such variation between objectives of education and schools' actions is attributed to several factors including knowledge, experience, school environment, and also a lack of

consistent inspection and monitoring (Al-Khatteeb, 2004; Al-Turky, 2005; Abyed, 2011).

2.6 The Beneficiaries from Special Education Services

The General Secretariat of Special Education needs recognised the beneficiaries of the special education program policy as being students with blindness, deafness, mental disability, learning difficulties, autism and mixed disabilities (Al-Musa, 1999). Additionally, the Secretariat also included students who were gifted and talented as beneficiaries of the program of policies. Al-khashrmi (2000) argued that:

‘All students with special education need to have the right to be learning at general schools with their peers... learning for those students who are gifted and talented and those who have disability forms an integral part of Saudi policy in various types of inclusive education.... there is recognition that Students with special needs constitute at least 20% of the school population. The general school is the natural place for learning students with special education needs’ (p.152).

As stated above the students within these categories are eligible for appropriate services and programs specifically designed to meet the special needs of students in general schools, and this includes teaching methods, tools and equipment, as well as support services and specialists (Ministry of Education, 2001; section 76). In Saudi Arabia, the term special educational needs is defined as those who ‘are different from their peers in their cognitive, physical, emotional, sensory, behavioural, academic or communicative abilities’ (Al-Musa, 1999: 41). The chart below shows the distribution of special education for boy students according to the category of disability and school stage cross the country.

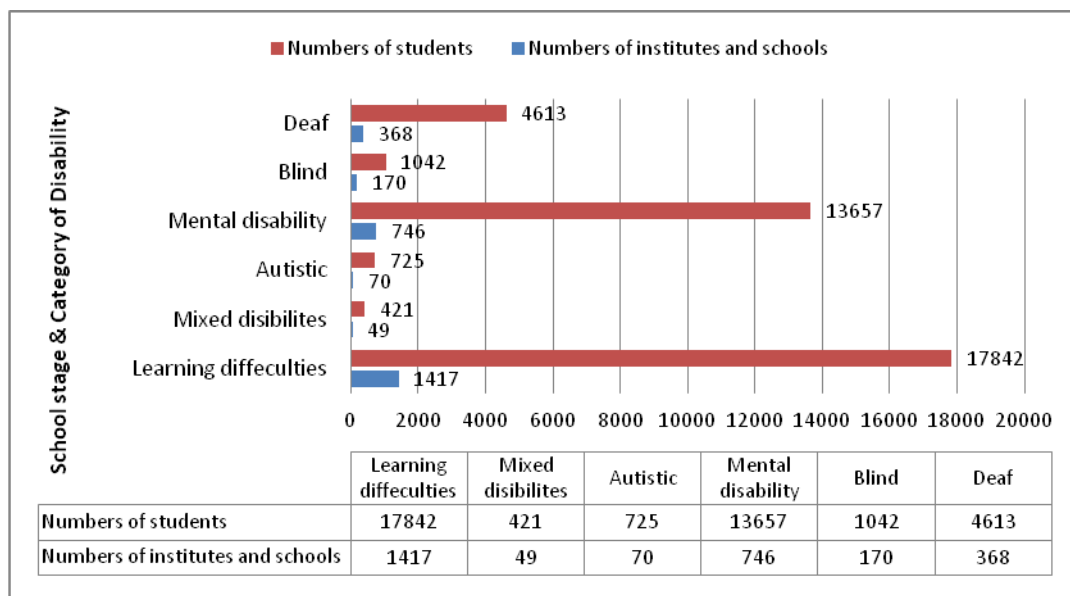


Chart 1: Distribution of SEN according to the category of disability and school stage

The information in the above table signifies the academic year 2012/2013. The table illustrates the different categories of disabilities with the figure of students and the number of institutes and schools in Saudi Arabia. Although the number of programs and schools developed for students with special needs seems high there still needs to be more schools to cater for the increased number of disabilities (Al-Fahily, 2009). At the same time, these current inclusive schools need to be evaluated for their suitability in meeting the requirements of students with special needs, particularly the school's physical environments, staff experience and attitudes, facilities and resources, and involvement of parents of special needs students (Al-Omari, 2009; Alquraini, 2011). This study has discussed these issues, with a focus on inclusive schools for the deaf students.

2.7 Educational Settings for Students with Special Needs

Initially, when the Resolution No. 674/36/40 was passed by the Ministry of Education in 1962 which established the Department of Special Education as a General Directorate, students receiving special education services were involved in two types of programs: a) Residential Institutes, whereby the facilities and education were provided to students who stay in the accommodation of the institutes for five days, and b) Day Institutes, whereby students would commute to the institutes daily to receive education from the special institutes.

Since 1996-1997 and till this present day, there was a major shift in the perception of the educational placements needed. Therefore, the General Secretariat of Special Education decided to modify and increase the educational placement options to five categories for all different types of students with special educational needs, which included inclusive schools. So whilst in 1996-1997 there were only 67 programmes seeking to educate 9,424 students with special needs, by 2000, there were 13,914 students educated into 226 programs in a variety of settings in Saudi Arabia, and then the number increased rapidly to 2577 programs across the country (Al-Musa, 2008). These new placements can be categorised as follows:

- Special classes or units in a general school which have a minimum of five students per class. These classes are equipped with specialised materials to aid in the teaching of the specific needs of the children. Certified teachers experienced in teaching students with special needs are provided. These teachers have to have a degree in special education and the Ministry of Education planned some training courses for teachers in-service so that they remain aware of new developments in special educational needs (Ministry of Education, 1998).
- Resource rooms whereby students with special educational needs spend half or part of their school day in regular classes with their peers. Materials and equipment to suit the needs of the students are provided. Most of the time students are seated in general class, but when students need special care regarding one subject they are sent to the certified resource room teacher who will discuss the student's needs with them and provide the right services which may include academic advice, support for homework, or extra explanation of a topic.
- The Itinerant and Counsellors Program which provides follow-up and support for general teachers and students with special educational needs, who are educated full-time in inclusive education in general classes. Through this program, teachers with extensive experience with special educational needs are linked with the inclusive schools. The itinerant teacher may work in several different schools. The consultant teacher also provides teachers and parents of students with special educational needs advice through visits. There are a small number of these programs, where those

specialists exist in the Department of Special Education in the Local Educational Authorities (Al-Musa, 2008).

It is worth mentioning that, according to Al-Musa (2008) historically since the beginning of education in Saudi Arabia, students with special educational needs were originally taught in general schools with their peers; those students were not prevented from entering the general schools. However, after initiating special schools and its distribution within the country, students with special educational needs were transferred to these schools to get optimal care and education by specialists to meet their needs. That was until the mid-1990s, where general schools opened their doors again to welcome these students. Conversely, Avramidis (2005) argues that in the United Kingdom(UK), the Green Paper, published in 1997 (DfEE, 1997), and its subsequent plan 'Meeting Special Educational Needs' (DfEE, 1998) strongly affirmed that students with special educational needs should be learning in inclusive schools, where those students should be at the heart of a school and its policies. Avramidis (ibid) also mentions that the UK government in 2001, issued guidance to Local Educational Authorities for the purpose of removing all barriers to the education and participation of students with special educational needs in schools (DfES, 2001a).

In theory education for children with special educational needs in Saudi Arabia should be effective because there is a unit to assure quality. The improvement and development of the educational programs above is the responsibility of the Education Advisory Unit (EUA). This responsibility is performed through the continuous evaluation of educational programs, reviews of the curriculum and the efficacy of the programs for students with special educational needs. Usually, the above is evaluated through, for example, school visits, reviews of the reports that are sent from school and student outcomes (Al-Musa, 1999). Moreover, the EAU participates in preparing educational books and suitable equipment for each program, as well as producing guidance pamphlets to improve the education activities. Debating groups and meetings are held at the schools and institutes whereby any issues faced are raised for the attention of the EAU and discussed. Occasionally, school principals and teachers attend such meetings. If any modifications are needed, the EAU suggest revisions and corrections for the programs to ensure each group excels in the context of continuous educational development. The EAU also produces policies for extra-curricular activities, supervises

their implementation and evaluates the results (Ministry of Education, 2001). The majority of the staff in such units were former teachers in the field of special or general education.

However, such a rapid expansion in educational settings and the change in services and the quality of special educational policy and practices raises questions over whether school staff are ready, willing and able to receive such programs. In addition, there are challenges regarding the experience and professional training of the principals and teachers which need to be met if the appropriate service and facilities are to be provided. As indicated above, research in other countries indicates that such a plethora of instructions and regulations are not necessarily matched by the application and action in inclusive schools. It is the details of this mismatch that is explored later in this thesis.

2.8 Current provision for Deaf Students in Saudi Arabia and Riyadh

I have already indicated that deaf students' education is a neglected area in Saudi Arabia. This section therefore frames this specific focus by explaining the current situation of deaf education in Saudi Arabia and under the Riyadh Local Educational Authority in particular. In Saudi Arabia, there are 88,000 people who have been diagnosed as having problems with hearing, of whom 14,374 are students (boys and girls) of school age (Al-Sharif, 2012). Hence this thesis focuses on students with such special needs. This allows me to explore in depth a broad policy whose effects are hard to judge. General special education policies clearly have wide-ranging effects for a broad range of people but to understand the degree to which they are achieving their aims I conducted an in depth study to understand the complexity of inclusive education for male deaf students; its theory, practice, and the factors that have influenced their inclusive education through perceptions of school principals, teachers and parents.

Like other students with special educational needs (as discussed previously), deaf students can be educated in different ways in special education programmes. Firstly, residential institutes 'Al-Amal', which provide certain housing and educational facilities to those students during the week. There are two residential institutes in Riyadh. These institutes have special health care, social, recreational and physical education services. Secondly, special institutes: (day classes in special schools), here deaf students have

academic teaching and support learning in day school and students can use all facilities, and they have the advantages of residential institutes but without the boarding facility. There are two special institutes. Thirdly, special classes or units in general schools whereby adequate materials and equipment and certified teachers with experience with students with special needs are provided. These programs provide education for the deaf with free daily transport between their home and school, and this facility is now widely available. Here there are two different types of programs. The first type is special classes or units for those pupils who are deaf and have a degree of hearing loss of 70 dB or greater, which was the focus of the study. There are five inclusive placements for deaf students in Riyadh. The second type is special classes or units for those students whose loss of hearing could be between mild to severe 40-69 dB, and who have speech difficulties. There are 16 programs serving those students in Riyadh (Directorate General of Special Education (DGSE), 2013).

A number of additional initiatives have also been developed, such as the Resource Room Program, where deaf students spend part of their school day in the general class with their hearing peers. These programs provide special materials and equipment and a certified resource room teacher who may provide individualised services to students with different hearing loss. They serve students who are varying in age and academic achievement. The resource teacher offers additional services and instructions from academic subject areas to speech and language therapy in resource rooms. This type of service involves working with students with hearing loss, and there are two such resource rooms in Riyadh. Fourthly, an Itinerant and Counsellors program provides follow-up and support for students with hearing loss who are educated full-time in general class. An itinerant teacher provides education support to deaf students whether psychologically, socially and/or academically. Also, teachers in this program provide support such as educational workshops to teachers of general school, as well as students' parents. They may also provide support for some environmental modifications within general classrooms, and there are five itinerant teachers. Consultant Teacher Programs formed of specialists with prior experience in education and learning with deaf students are also in existence. A consultant teacher visits schools to provide advice for teachers of regular classes who have a deaf student. There are two such programs in service and those specialists in the Teacher-Consultant Program locality are in the Department of Special Education in the Local Educational Authority (Al-Musa, 2008;

DGSE, 2013). The next chart explains the distribution of deaf students in education placement through Al-Amal residential institutes, the special institutes and inclusive education in general school in all Saudi schools year 2012/2013.

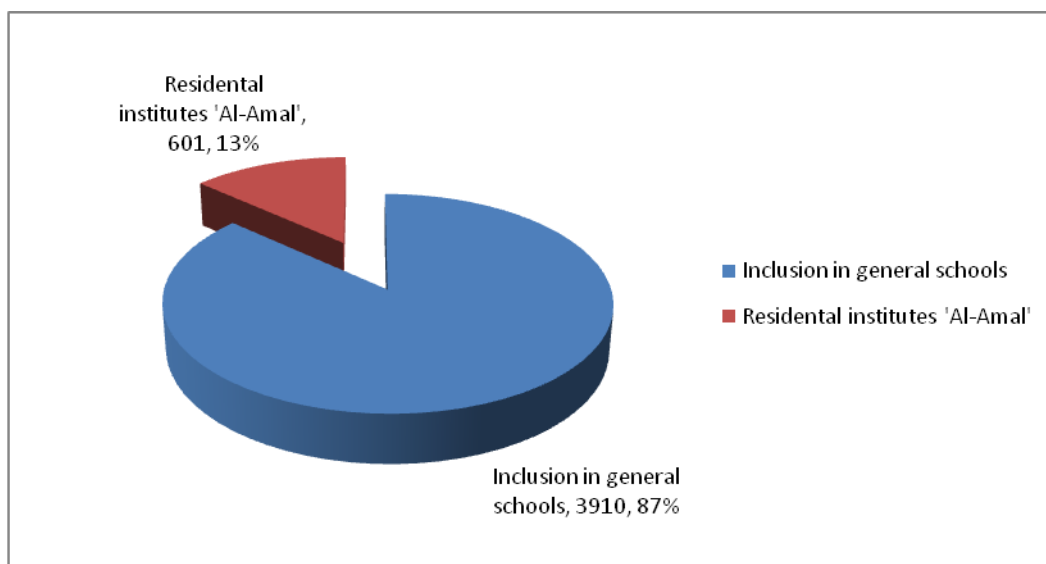


Chart 2: distribution of deaf students in education placement by numbers and percentages.

2.9 Teachers of Deaf Students in Saudi Arabia

When educating deaf students in Saudi Arabia began in 1964, there were only 11 teachers of the deaf. The government opened a program in cooperation with UNESCO to prepare and train 40 teachers (20 males and 20 females) to work with deaf students in 1968 (Al-Muslat, 1984). Until 2002, there were only two Universities responsible for training educators to work with special education needs students in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, there was a great demand for establishing such departments to train and qualify teachers to work in schools and meet the needs of students. Recently, there have been a growing number of graduate teachers working with deaf students. Teachers who are specialists in educating students with special educational needs must have a Bachelor's Degree in Special Education Needs, and this bachelor's degree must relate to the teaching of deaf students in inclusive or special schools. Teachers who work with deaf students in Saudi Arabia who have specialised preparation enjoy an additional salary bonus of 30 per cent (Al-Musa, 1999). This, therefore, is designed to help to raise the status of the profession and may serve to encourage professional standards. Teachers

of deaf students are responsible for class activities, through reviewing the aims of curriculum skills and assessment of class students by means of the Individual Educational Plan (IEP). In this way, plans specific to a particular child are designed to meet their educational needs and targets, all in accordance with certain criteria and specific periods of time. There are some tasks and requirements for teachers of the deaf students (Ministry of Education, 2001: Article 39), such as:

1. The diagnosis of students' needs inside the class in order to determine the nature of the education support.
2. Giving recommendations regarding intervention needs that may help the child.
3. Preparation of both short and long-term plans (individual and collective) and work to implement them through the individual educational plan.
4. Follow-up to evaluate each student on a regular basis (weekly - monthly), to identify the extent of progress.
5. Participation in studies, research, courses, seminars, and conferences in the area of deaf education.
6. To help the student at school and create interactive learning environments.

These tasks and requirements for teachers of deaf students are significant and important in order to support deaf students academically and socially. However, what is unclear is to what extent this policy and tasks are reflected in practice. There are some studies which explore the reality of performance of teachers in inclusive schools. For example, a study conducted in Jordan by Al-Dabanh and Al-Hasn (2009) revealed that most of the tasks set by the Ministry of Education for inclusive schools are not accomplished adequately. In a similar vein research carried out in Kuwait by the General Secretariat of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development (2007) indicated that there was a gap between the Ministry of Education's tasks for inclusive education and schools' performance and activities. The most important outcomes of these studies indicate that there is inadequate training for staff, insufficient monitoring and negligible follow-up.

2.10 School Principals of Inclusion Schools for Deaf Students in Saudi Arabia

School principals are expected to be involved in inclusive education to benefit all students in their school. Principals are primarily appointed on the basis of their long

experience in education which it is believed qualifies them to be principals of schools including those with inclusive education for deaf students. In Saudi Arabia the process of appointing school principals at all levels of inclusive education only requires that they were former teachers in general education. Principals who work in inclusive schools have a specialised additional salary bonus of 20 per cent but as inclusive education is a new policy in Saudi this means that these principals are administering schools without having a degree in special education or inclusive education (Al-Fahily, 2009). Also, Al-Fahily (ibid) suggests that as there were no regulations and policies concerning inclusive education programmes for students with special needs when current principals were doing their training to work in mainstream schools they did not have even basic training. Yet, the principals are responsible for the admission of students with special needs and they are the head of the team for devising and implementing the individual educational plan. The regulations identify the role and duties of school principals towards the inclusive education programs for deaf students (Ministry of Education, 2001: Article 26) as being:

1. The general supervision of special education programs and the provision of the educational requirements for students with special needs.
2. The creation of educational environments that enable students with special educational needs to learn and to integrate with their peers in the classroom and in other activities.
3. To facilitate a co-operative relationship between parents of students with special needs and the school and to invite them to view the standing of their children and their academic achievement.
4. To provide specialised training for teachers through the assessment of needs and proposing appropriate programs for them.
5. To follow the procedures regarding transport of students with special needs between schools and homes.
6. The supervision and management of the support from the Local Educational Authorities, which includes a monthly remuneration for students with special needs.

Nevertheless, it could be argued that the legislation is not applied as it should (Al-Fahily, 2009). With regard to deaf children school principals are lacking the experience of how to deal with them in their schools (Al-Brahim, 2003). This study has looked at

the role of school principals based on their and others accounts of their practice and on observations of schools.

2.11 Parents of Deaf Students in Inclusive Schools in Saudi Arabia

Parents of deaf students are important in the education of their children who require special educational services, as they play a key role within the inclusive school. Therefore, a good relationship between the parents of deaf students and inclusive schools is necessary (Al-Qarny, 2010). In order to support the inclusive schools to meet the needs of deaf students, there should be regular meetings with parents of deaf students to discuss the children's progress and the support required. In addition, other research has suggested it is vital that inclusive schools educate parents of deaf students and the local community through meetings and training sessions (Al-Sartawe et al., 2000). According to the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia (2001: Article 76/1), the relationship between the parents of deaf students and inclusive schools is very important and it can be strengthened through the following:

1. Enabling parents to visit the inclusive school and look at all aspects of the education of their children.
2. Inviting the parents to participate in the diagnosis and development of the individual educational plan for their child.
3. Continuous communication with parents about the developments of their students including asking parents to visit the school if needed.
4. Helping the parents to deal with their children, and providing advisory services and training courses for them.
5. Encouraging parents to co-operate with the inclusive school, in the best interest of the deaf student.

2.12 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has examined key aspects of the context in which the present study was carried out, attention given to the general information about Saudi Arabia and education of students with special needs and more particularly to deaf education in the country. Also, this chapter has discussed the special school settings, the inclusive education

movement in Saudi Arabia, and the current provision for deaf students. In addition, the initiatives mentioned show the government's seriousness and effort in developing deaf education in Saudi Arabia, nonetheless, even with all these initiatives and attention, more is needed. There is a need for a systematic approach supported by research to explore the issue of deaf education in inclusive schools. The next chapter will explore the issues involved in understanding deafness, different models of deaf education and communication with deaf students.

Chapter Three

The Notion of Deafness and Special Education

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The Notion of Deafness and Special Education

3.1 Introduction

Having presented the national context of the study, this chapter moves on to review literature on deafness and deaf education. All over the world, many deaf students require physical, intellectual or educational support, including relevant facilities and resources such as hearing aids, a special educational environment, speech and language therapy and a specialist teacher, in order to help manage their school activities and to live a fulfilling life. This chapter is devoted to issues relating to this and provides important background which, as with the previous chapter, helps to make sense of the study and its findings. At the first, it starts by discussing and introducing models for supporting children with special educational needs in general and deafness in particular. The chapter then moves on to explore the conceptualisations of special educational needs and their categorisations and then illustrates how each disability needs to be thought through in this context using deafness as the example. It also explores the understandings of deafness, including its dimensions and degrees, the language development of deaf children, and the ways of communicating for deaf students are discussed.

3.2 Models of Special Educational Needs and the example of Deaf Education

A model is a framework by which individuals make sense of information. Special educational needs (SEN) is a concept that is used internationally to incorporate the educational requirements of a wide spectrum of children with disabilities who have a complex variety of needs. Special education is therefore a division of education, which refers to the teaching of students, who have: medical, emotional, physical and/or learning difficulties. Therefore, this study is only concerned with a small sub-section of these children whose special needs arise from their deafness. There have long been debates surrounding the terminology used to refer special needs and others have been used previously including ‘impairments’, ‘handicaps’, and ‘disabilities’ (Foreman,

2005). Impairment was used to refer to any loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological or anatomical structure or function. The term 'handicapped' alluded to any difficulty 'resulting from impairment or a disability that limits or prevents the fulfilment of a role that is normal (depending on age, sex, and social and cultural factors) for that individual' (Skelton, 1993: 44). The Warnock Committee (1978) was set up by the British government to look into the education of handicapped students, and they proposed the term 'special educational needs', SEN instead of 'handicapped' (Department of Education and Science, 1978). This new concept is now used worldwide and has become more socially acceptable: other terms have been seen as positioning disabled people as negative or lacking. It is worth mentioning that Warnock (2005) noted problems with the concept SEN and thought it was too general and in that represented all the different special educational needs. However, naming single categories causes difficulty when it comes to meeting the needs of the diversity of students in schools. This highlights the difficulty and complexity of using language to describe such phenomena.

Additionally, it is important to start the discussion in this chapter by explaining that it is important that the models which are employed to make sense of disability must reflect life as experienced by specific disabled people if it is to allow for progress (Rieser and Mason, 1992). This reinforces the notion that there is value in exploring the impact of special educational provision by focusing on a single disability. For example, there can be better provision regarding deaf education if there is a greater understanding of deaf students. The views of which key models of deaf education are most appropriate have changed radically over the years and there are still debates over which model can present the correct understanding of deaf education. Proper understanding of these models can affect the provision for education of deaf students because they explain how deaf educational needs should be understood and which measures should be implemented in schools.

The broader literature on special educational needs (e.g. Frederickson and Cline, 2002; Dewsbury et al., 2004; Al-Turkay, 2005) proposes three main theoretical views which emphasise different aspects of the experience of disability: the Medical, Social and Interactional models. Although the SEN models are sometimes regarded as succeeding

each other, it would be better to consider a model is dominant in particular places and times. Devlieger (2005) also referred to this point:

‘thinking that one mode of thought has totally replaced another mode of thought is illusory. It is always a matter of dominance, of situational context, and in particular of time, i.e. of not yet having achieved a particular mode of thinking and the fact that older dominant modes of thinking never leave us’ (p.10).

Therefore, during this journey, the research has taken into consideration these theoretical views with more focusing on the social and interactional models (which consider the interaction between all three models) as they include more holistic insights and outlooks for dealing with students with deafness in inclusive placements. More details about these models are illustrated in the following sections.

3.2.1 The Medical Model

The medical model looks at students with deafness as medically impaired people. It argues that the difficulty is located within the child (Campbell and Oliver, 1996; Dewsbury et al., 2004; Villa and Thousand, 2005). For example, it tackles deafness from a medical point of view and aims to find clinical methods to aid in the diagnosis of the deaf and in aiding learning to speak, communicate and lip-read. A purely medical model does not consider how external factors in education, such as school type and quality of teaching, empower and disable deaf children. In addition, the model focuses on the individual’s biology/psychology and impairment and believes it is the mental or physical impairment that causes disability. Therefore, medical professionals who are trained to reduce the effects of such impairments see disability as a medical problem and hold the belief that removal or medication of the impairment will result in success in curing the disability (Al-Turkee, 2005).

In the medical model, students who appear unable to learn ‘normally’ are grouped into diverse types according to their problems and receive special treatment or special educational programmes. In this way, special educational needs is defined by Okpanachi (1995) as those students who

‘differ from the norm in mental characteristics, sensory abilities, communication abilities, social behaviour, or physical characteristics to the extent that special education services are required for the child to develop to maximum capacity’ (p.iii).

According to Lynas (2002) students have to change to benefit from general education or they have to be changed to fit into the system. The degree of disability in the medical model is quantified, i.e. mild to severe, and the severity of a disability or impairment is dependent on how much an individual deviates from a social norm. The overall belief is that a human being is malleable and alterable whilst society is fixed and unalterable, thereby assuming that it is the responsibility of a disabled person to adapt to a hostile environment (Rieser and Mason, 1992).

3.2.2 The Social Model

In contrast to the medical model, the social model sees that difficulties which students face are inherent in the environment not in the student’s characteristics (Oliver, 1996). This model is based on the view that society should remove all obstacles that may lead to the isolation of children with special needs (Campbell and Oliver, 1996). It seems that the social model provides an awareness of the importance of removing barriers in education and community, through looking at deaf people as a minority that have their own forms of communication and culture. The social model perceives sign language as a natural or common form of communication and is not inferior to any other ‘spoken’ forms of communication in any way (Knight and Swanwick, 1999).

Therefore, the social model perceives the problems and difficulties that deaf students face as ‘external rather than internal’ (Moore et al., 1999); the model searches for and finds difficulties within the educational environment rather than within the child. This approach highlights the importance of removing the barriers within the system to meet the needs of the student instead of trying to change the child to fit into the system. In the same direction, it is believed that the educators, teachers and community should work to alter their beliefs, and adapt and improve the educational environments to meet the needs of all students, an important aspect in the successful inclusive education for students with special needs (Smith et al., 2004; Villa and Thousand, 2005). In this regard, one of the important principles of the social model assumes that there are no

students with learning difficulties, but schools with teaching difficulties (Frederickson and Cline, 2002), where this model has been developed in response to the medical model it has impacted on students lives (Villa and Thousand, 2005).

The social model has been developed with the aim of removing barriers so that students with special educational needs have the same opportunity as everyone else in determining their own life styles and education. This model is supportive of change in the school's teaching and learning environment to one that welcomes and is appropriate for all students (Ainscow, 1999). It has modified the focus from the difficulties of the learner to everything that happens in the school and classroom environment which can create barriers to learning (Ainscow, 2004). It represents a challenging critique of special education, based on a view that disability is part of and not outside of everyday life experiences (Campbell and Oliver, 1996). The social model of disability has fundamentally altered the way that disability is regarded and has had a major impact on anti-discriminatory legislation. It is regarded as superior to the medical model for its feasible goals that could work on a wide scale and encapsulate the struggle of other oppressed groups, therefore, providing a better world to live and be educated in (Rieser and Mason, 1992).

However, Barnes (1996) highlights that although the social model contributed greatly in developing inclusive education, the downfall of this model is its disregard for the situation of the children's characteristics and their abilities. These characteristics are deemed very important in explaining why special needs children can or cannot perform (Frederickson and Cline, 2002). Similarly, Clough and Corbett (2000) argue that while this model has worked in different research and has a significant influence, there are some issues raised by researchers, primarily that the social model did not offer practical advice to teachers who work in classrooms when faced with difficulties apparently arising from individual characteristics. Arguably, these two models have brought to light each other's limitations but none of these models alone reflects the complete picture: each one reflects only a part of it. Each can be misleading. The medical model seems to use an assimilation approach to special education – expecting, for example, deaf students to accept the non-deaf world around them as given and to adapt to it. It would marginalise the role of environmental factors in constituting difficulties for deaf students. The procedure of intervention is focused on changing the student. The social

model views the process as involving, ensuring that the environment is accommodating of children with special educational needs and it denies the task of the within-child factors.

Bayliss (1998) argues that any intervention for students with special needs have to be based on both assimilation and accommodation. Therefore, attention has to be given to environmental factors in addition to individual variables, not instead of them (Gutierrez and Stone, 1997). Moreover, there is a need for an interactional or integrative model in understanding special education needs. Such an approach would combine with student factors and environmental issues to give a more appropriate and holistic view of the phenomenon (Frederickson and Cline, 2002).

3.2.3 Interactional Model

This model, locates the source of difficulties within the educational environment and the within-child factors thereby applying such model in inclusive education is promising. This approach comprises both social and medical models in conceptualising special education needs, where the level of need, when viewed by the interactional approach, results from a complex interaction between the education provided, level of support and the child's strengths and needs (Frederickson and Cline, 2002). It lays great importance on the dynamics of school and student interaction to facilitate or impede learning (Skidmore, 1996; Frederickson and Cline, 2002). This conceptualisation is linked to the ecosystem approach, whereby it is suggested that human behaviour results from the interaction between environmental influences, internal motivations and social experiences (Cooper and Upton, 1990). Moreover, the perspectives provided by interactivity theory, interactionism (Quicke and Winter, 1994) and constructivist theories (Vygotsky, 1986) of learning, consider all these factors in the investigation of the influence of the learning environment and instructional relationship on the learning process. A shift towards recognising the complex relationship between personal conditions and environmental influences is seen with the Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) (World Health Organisation, [WHO] 2001). After systematic field trials and international consultations, this classification replaced the International Classification of Impairment, Disability and Handicap (ICIDH) (WHO,

1980). This transition of classifications represents a change from the traditional medical model to a bio-psycho-social model (Geertzen, 2008).

Increasingly, researchers worldwide support this approach. For example, Kaul (1992; cited in Frederickson and Cline, 2002) discussed the challenge of SEN in rural communities in India, and argued that, 'to understand the special educational needs of children with disabilities we need to look at them as children with personal identities in a particular social milieu'. Moreover, the learning difficulties experienced by students in schools arise due to the relationship between students, school and context of teaching (Booth, 1996). According to Gearheart et al., (1992) the definition of special needs acknowledges that 'exceptional children', children with learning difficulties and special needs are seen as the result of the interaction between the child and school. This view is supported by Keogh et al., (1997) who stated that it is impossible to separate the learning competencies of students from the environmental contexts.

These medical, social and interactional models can assist in trying to develop an understanding of students with special needs and how to deal with them; in this study in the analysis of deaf education in boy's primary schools in Saudi Arabia. At the same time, it is also important to consider the role that the categorisation of special educational needs and disabilities plays in helping students and in providing an appropriate service. The next section will discuss the categories of special education.

3.3 The categories of special education

As stated above, generally speaking special educational needs is a term which has come to describe and include a wide range of difficulties and disabilities, and it refers to the special adjustments that need to be made in order to accommodate the diverse needs of these students. There are some national differences between categories and conceptualisations. According to Al-Musa (1999: 41) in the Saudi Arabian context, the term special educational needs is defined as those who 'are different from their peers in their cognitive, physical, emotional, sensory, behavioural, academic or communicative abilities'. Although academically, Saudi Arabia has attempted to produce a definition that satisfactorily covers all western countries definitions, it still has some differences from other definitions such as the United Kingdom. For instance, the Saudi definition

sees the difficulties with learning and weaknesses in special needs coming from the children themselves. In Britain, the concept of special educational needs, defined by the Education Act 1981, is

‘a child has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child has a learning difficulty if he or she (a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age, (b) has a disability which either prevents or hinders the child from making use of educational facilities of a kind provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the Local Education Authority, and (c) is under five and falls within the definition of (a) or (b) above, or would do if special educational provision was not made for the child’ (Department of Education and Skills, 2001a).

In the UK definition of the role of the school or classroom, the needs of the student become ‘special’ when there is a mismatch and gap between the learner’s characteristics and other interacting factors such as the level of support that is available in school. One of the most interesting uses of the concept of special educational needs focuses on the range of educational provisions and services, more than definition and classifications. An example is this one described by Norwich (2008: 48), who defines special needs ‘as a more positive and provision-oriented term to re-focus attention on required provision rather than concentrate on children’s deficits’. These intellectual and national differences in terms and concepts regarding special educational needs are significant because they can reflect real differences in perceptions which can shape inclusive education for students with special needs in different countries.

There are some differences in the way that types of special educational needs that children in schools may have are categorised but all include deaf students. In Britain, the Code of Practice (DFE, 1994) refers to some special educational needs as including: hearing difficulties, learning difficulties, visual difficulties, physical disabilities, medical conditions, speech and language difficulties, and emotional and behavioural difficulties, which have an effect on how children in a school function. The Code of Practice, updated in 2002, includes four areas: a) communication and interaction, b) cognition and learning, c) behavioural, emotional and social development, and finally d) sensory and/or physical (Al-Khatteeb, 2004). This latter

category incorporates deaf students. Similarly in the USA the types of special educational needs (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)), includes

‘speech or language impairments, visual impairments including blindness, serious emotional disturbance, orthopaedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injuries, other health impairments, or specific learning disabilities, and who, by reason thereof, need special education and related services’ (Osborne, 1999).

Additionally, in Saudi Arabia, deafness is a specific category along with blindness, mental disability, learning difficulties, autism, and students with mixed disabilities (Al-Musa, 1999). Researchers argue that identifying definitions and categories of the special needs is very significant for deeper understanding and service provision (Webb-Hendy, 1995) and helps organisations and institutions in providing services for students (Stakes and Hornby, 1997). The categorisation of deafness as a specific disability in Saudi Arabia is enshrined in the creation of specialised primary schools for deaf students generally, and boys in particular.

3.4 Understanding of Deafness

Having discussed deafness as being a named and categorised special educational need in Saudi it is important to now give attention to a more specific understanding of deafness and deaf students. Whilst the fact that deafness is specifically categorised as a special need is indicative of, and concordant with their being specific targeted services in Saudi Arabia. How service provision is organised is likely to be affected by understandings of deafness as a category. The literature has revealed various definitions of the term deafness. The term deafness is most often related to those with serious hearing loss which impedes educational progress (Stewart and Kluwin, 2001), whereas Moores (1996) denotes deaf as hearing loss at 70 dB or more as an impediment to understanding speech through the ear, with or without hearing aids. He adds that hearing-impaired or hard of hearing refers to; people whose amount of hearing loss is between 35 - 69 dB, which causes difficulty but who do not have a disability in understanding speech through the ear with or without hearing aids. Others define the term deaf as including all students with any degree of hearing loss (Knight and Swanwick, 1999; Watson et al., 1999). These deep understandings of deafness are necessary for people working with

and making policy about deaf students because they affect the services and requirements that are needed by deaf children in complex ways. For example, deaf children not only have loss of hearing but they also have the loss of spontaneous speech and language acquisition. It has been argued that obstruction or non-arrival of sound to the auditory channel can have a deep influence on the development of deaf children, their learning and their educational needs (Marschark and Hauser, 2008).

Therefore, deafness could be seen as a serious disability that impacts upon individuals, families, communities and countries, socially and economically. It could be hard for those who enjoy healthy hearing abilities to imagine and understand the feelings of isolation and despair that deaf people live with. However, in the deaf community, the terms ‘Deaf’ with a capital (D) and ‘deaf’ with a small (d) are sometimes used to represent different ideas of deafness. Some people prefer the term ‘Deaf’ and apply it to those who make a choice to use this term to recognise the culture and language of Deaf people as an important and beneficial part of their identity. They do not necessarily have a more significant hearing loss than others who choose the term ‘deaf’. People who identify themselves as Deaf simply have to recognise sign language as their primary language and identify with the Deaf culture. The term ‘deaf’ tends to refer to those who have partial or severe hearing loss, can benefit from hearing aids, and prefer using speech or other non-signing communication (Watson et al., 1999; Marschark and Spencer, 2010). Another term ‘Deafened’ is used to describe those ‘people who were born hearing and became severely or profoundly deaf after learning to speak’ (Action on Hearing Loss, 2013). In the Saudi Arabian educational system all students with whatever type or degree of hearing loss are referred to as either ‘deaf’ or ‘hearing impaired’ (Ministry of Education, 2001) and it is assumed that each deaf person is a regular member of the deaf community, this more political distinction is not acknowledged and does not tend to affect the primary school students, more importantly for this study the parents, teachers and principals I studied. However, it is important to understand that this categorisation exists.

Deaf people who adhere to the notion of a deaf community describe themselves as a minority group with their own language such as British Sign Language (BSL), Saudi Sign Language (SSL), and their own culture (Marschark and Spencer, 2010). There are about 50,000-70,000 people in Britain who use BSL to communicate (Simmons, 2005)

and around 17,000-20,000 who use SSL in Saudi Arabia. Many people who are born deaf learn Sign Language (SL) as their first language. In terms of learning the dominant language in their cultures, similarly to people whose native language is not English, their writings tend to have errors such as missing 'to be' verbs, or plurals, have wrong verb tenses, spelling errors, improper propositions or determiners or have the subject/verb not in agreement (Paul, 1998). However, sign language of deaf people is totally formed and connected to national languages and cultural values as well as the social behaviours of deaf communities. It has been argued that spoken languages differ from the sign language in terms of 'modality of production (gestural vs. oral) and perception (visual vs. aural)' (Woei-Jyh, 2006) and this impacts upon learning and perhaps communication between deaf and non-deaf students.

3.5 Dimensions and Degree of Deafness

It is clear that, deafness affects how students learn, where there are different types of hearing loss. This may have various implications for education (Knight and Swanwick, 1999). Additionally, according to Norwich (2008) understanding the types and degree of hearing loss can be useful as it helps to see what provision might be necessary and how deafness should be dealt with. This approach complies with the interactional model which considers a student's situation in terms of causes that can be dealt with medically along with the necessary provided services. There are several types of hearing loss which Al-Turkee (2005) recognises:

- Conductive hearing loss (CHL) which is caused by some mechanical problems in the external or middle ear. Such type can be cured with medication or surgery.
- Sensor-neural hearing loss (SNHL) occurs because of a problem of the inner ear or the auditory nerve. This type of hearing loss is permanent, but can be treated with hearing aids or, in severe cases, a cochlear implant.
- Mixed hearing loss is a category in which someone suffers from both conductive and sensor-neural hearing problems. In this case it is usually presumed that the cause of the hearing loss is genetic, in some cases children develop this type of hearing loss after birth.

Furthermore, in respect to the degrees of hearing loss, the literature (Kapp, 1991; Flexer, 1994; Kirk et al., 2000; Abyed, 2001; Schirmer, 2001) shows that some people have partial hearing loss, which means that the ear can pick up some sounds. Others have complete hearing loss, which means that the ear cannot hear at all. Knowledge of the degrees of hearing loss is important to enhance the understanding of the nature of deafness, and for the purposes of ascertaining appropriate educational provision (Kapp, 1991). A hearing test provides an evaluation and estimation of the ability to perceive sensations of a persons' hearing and is most often performed by an audiologist using an audiometer to determine a person's hearing sensitivity at different frequencies. Furthermore, minimum measurement has been defined by the National Hearing Services (2009); 'The minimum intensity of a sound at any frequency required to create the sensation of hearing is known as the Hearing Threshold'. Hearing loss is measured in decibels hearing level (dBHL).

The thresholds for the different types of hearing loss have different implications for educational environments. Mild hearing loss (20-40) refers to a person who has no difficulty in communicating in quiet environments where the topic is familiar and there is limited vocabulary (Schirmer, 2001). However, sometimes in the classroom, those who do not use hearing aids may miss up to 50% of the voices (Flexer, 1994). A person in the category of moderate hearing loss (41-70), can hear conversational and class discussions only at close proximity, if it is loud and clear (Schirmer, 2001). Flexer (1994) mentioned that a child with a 56 dB hearing loss may miss 100% of the class discussion without the use of hearing aids. A person with severe hearing loss (71-95), is unable to hear conversational speech unless it is loud, and the deaf person's speech may not be clear (Schirmer, 2001). A person with profound hearing loss (95-up) may hear loud sounds but cannot hear conversational speech without hearing aids, and their speech is not easy to understand (Schirmer, 2001). In addition, Kirk et al., (2000) argued that there are only 1% of deaf students who are not capable of understanding speech under any conditions. It seems clear from this that an argument could be made that with the right conditions the majority of the population of deaf children can study in inclusion schools. The following table shows a summary of different levels of hearing loss.

Type of Hearing		Degree of Hearing
Normal hearing		0 – 20dB
Hearing impairment	Mild hearing loss	20 – 40dB
	Moderate hearing loss	41 – 70dB
Deaf	Severe hearing loss	71 – 95dB
	Profound hearing loss	95dB+

Table (3): The levels of hearing loss

However, this notion that most children could work in inclusive classrooms is not necessarily shared by the academic community. It has been argued that establishing the level of hearing loss clearly helps to evaluate the necessary support. According to Knight and Swanwick (1999) ‘the degree of deafness is also seen to be important as it indicates how well a person can understand human speech’. In addition, Moores (1996) suggested four classifications of deaf and hard of hearing, according to levels of the degree of hearing loss and suggested that children’s educational needs can be understood in relation to each level:

- First level: a loss of hearing of 35 - 54 decibels, no special schooling required but needs the help of hearing aids and speech training.
- Second level: a loss of hearing of 55 - 69 dB, the child with this classification needs to be in a special class and also needs help with speech, hearing, and language.
- Third level: a loss of hearing of 70 - 89 dB, the person in this category needs to be in a special class, or special school with specialist assistance in the areas of speech, hearing, language, and academic matters.
- Fourth level: loss of hearing more than 90 db and above. A special class or special school is required in addition to specialist assistance in the areas of speech, hearing; linguistically and educationally.

It is clear from this discussion that there is no doubt of the importance of knowledge and awareness about deafness especially by those who work with deaf students such as school principals, teachers and the parents of deaf children. It is clear that knowledge and understanding of deafness leads to complex discussions and is needed for positive results, and this type of insight has helped deaf students learning in inclusive placements elsewhere (Hanfy, 2003).

3.6 Language Development and Communication with Deaf People

The abilities of understanding and developing language are very important to deaf children in discovering the environment and the world around as well as to interact with it. The major components, or skills, of learning a language are listening, speaking, writing and reading; these apply to both, hearing and deaf children (Heaton, 1988). The skills of speaking, signing and writing are output means; they are the communication skills which enable a person to express their thoughts. On the other hand, listening and reading are the input means; they are the receptive skills which enable a person to receive thoughts and messages from others (Marschark, 1997; Paul, 1998). Communication has been the biggest barrier for deaf children. The hearing loss does not have a direct impact on the deaf child's development, it is more the consequential lack of communication which obstructs and diminishes the deaf child's ability to access a daily conversation with family, and interactions with the outside world (Marschark, 1997).

Those deaf students whom learn sign language at an early stage, may miss out on a lot of common information that hearing people gain regularly from their family and the society. For example, a child with lower levels of language competencies probably has a lesser complete picture of the environment than a child with higher level of language competencies. It could be argued that a child's early environment is very important in shaping language and learning development. For most children, the linguistic intake, or reception, is made through the auditory channel; however, this is not the case with deaf children. Despite the use of several means of communication, such as sign language, finger spelling and written language, a deaf child still suffers from certain barriers to have a complete linguistic intake, or input (Marschark et al., 2002). According to Marschark et al., (ibid) the visual perception of language, which is used by deaf children, differs from auditory perception. For example, speech reading as a visual stimulus provides limited information, and written language differs from spoken language, many of these elements present in speech cannot be represented in writing such as, rhythm and duration. The limitations of visual perception of language arguably affects the quality and quantity of linguistic information received by most deaf children. This leads to a deficiency and it has been shown that hearing aids do not fully compensate for deafness in terms of linguistic reception for many deaf children. It has

been argued that this poor compensation, probably, causes the language of deaf children to be different, or even inferior to hearing children's language (Marschark and Spencer, 2010).

Moreover, language development in young children is a wide and complex area. For those working with deaf children it is important to know an easy and effective way to communicate with a deaf child, whether that is sign or spoken language in both situations (receptive and expressive). In some cases, it is clear that language development for profoundly deaf children is learned quickly and fully through visual gestural and sign language (Marschark et al., 2002). On the other hand, children with less deafness may develop their language through spoken language (Knight and Swanwick, 1999). In this regard, the level of proficiency and expertise in deaf children play a significant role in language and learning development. For example, when deaf children operate in two languages, such as sign language and spoken/written language at the same time, their level of proficiency affects the range of skills they master (Paul, 2001; Knight and Swanwick, 2002).

The issue of language acquisition is significant when it comes to talking about deaf people. Its importance stems from the point that acquisition takes place at an early age. However, large numbers of deaf children do not receive full access to communication up to the time they have passed the most important age for language acquisition, and because of their hearing losses and the early environments in which they are reared, most deaf children enter school lacking fluency in language either spoken or signed language (Marschark et al., 2002). This has been found internationally. However, the degree to which this happens is not universal and the degree and style of interaction produces different styles and levels of development of language. A deaf child's interaction with people around them therefore, such as parents and carers, is very important and affects the rate of learning development. However, the same is true of hearing students and there is evidence to show that such deaf children acquire sign language at a similar linguistic rate to language acquisition of hearing children (Marschark, 1993; Paul, 1998; Harley, 2008). For deaf children of deaf parents, in this situation, the deaf child may have their specific needs of language and linguistic interaction met from the time of birth and the development of language can be seen as natural and takes place in a relaxing form (Knight and Swanwick, 1999). For deaf

children of hearing parents, it is much more difficult because the opportunity to access language is different from that of deaf children with deaf parents. So where the development of spoken language for these children is impaired, these children try to use complex gestures and in the absence of sign language they are frustrated. Therefore, deaf children would benefit from the opportunity to communicate in an easy and productive way (Knight and Swanwick, 1999).

Notwithstanding whether parents of deaf children are hearing or deaf, the children who have better language skills are those who received an early diagnosis of hearing loss and have early access to communication and interaction (Marschark, et al., 2002). I contend that it is clear that it is not the loss of sound which is the basic issue of deafness, but the deprivation of language which is usually caused by the environment and settings in which a child grows up in (Meadow, 1980; cited in Mcanally et al., 1994). In young deaf children, access to language is limited as 95% of children have hearing parents (Mitchell and Karchmer, 2004). In other words, the environment in which the deaf child grows up will be hearing oriented, they also may not be exposed to sign language from an early age and this creates less opportunity for the child to acquire a language. The basic difficulty for the deaf child is being cut off from the ordinary speech environment (Webster, 1986) where there would be emphasis on the importance of early linguistic stimulation for deaf children in the first three years of life (Marschark, 1993). It could be argued that, in such situations adopting and applying the social model which considers that it is the duty of society to remove all obstacles and barriers is important in seeking a resolution (Campbell and Oliver, 1996).

There is much debate regarding the best ways or methods for communicating with and educating deaf people. Various proposals have been put forward as better connecting with deaf students. There are many specialists in deaf education who emphasise that there is no specific form of communication suitable for every deaf person (Al-Rayes, 2005; Marschark et al., 2006). However, there are some factors that may affect the choice of communication method, such as the degree of hearing loss, the individual's ability to benefit from the remaining hearing, age at time of deafness, the communication type that is preferred by the family, and the availability of services (Paul, 2005). The literature (e.g. Al-Turkee, 2005; Poe, 2006; Al-Zeriqat, 2009) describes main methods which can be used with deaf people, including:

- **Oral Method:** for communicating and educating deaf people through the use of spoken language, lip reading and auditory training. In lip reading, the deaf person can use the visual to assist in the understanding of the words of the speaker and facial expressions (Al-Zeriqat, 2009). This method can be practised well with people who have mild and moderate hearing loss as it could be easy for them to hear with hearing aids (Poe, 2006). Some educators and hearing people advise the Oral method for the reason that they do not like the deaf children to rely on sign language and interpreters in order to communicate with hearing people. In the same way, they believe that when deaf people are allowed to use sign language they may not learn how to use speaking and lip reading (Al-Rayes, 2005; Al-Turkee, 2005; Poe, 2006).
- **Manual Method:** for communicating visually based on the use of sign language and using hand symbols to communicate for learning; this is favoured in the deaf community (Al-Rayes, 2005; Al-Turkee, 2005). People with moderate and severe deafness may find the Manual Method is the easiest method to use in communication and learning. Nevertheless, several educators believe that the Manual Method is not the best method for communication as it has some limitations. For instance it is difficult for the deaf to participate with hearing people and it can significantly exclude them from a range of social contexts (Poe, 2006).
- **Total Communication:** it allows learners to communicate through incorporating a range of methods, such as the use of speech, lip reading, gestures, reading, writing, finger spelling, and sign language (Al-Turkee, 2005; Poe, 2006). According to Al-Rayes (2005) this approach has been highly used in the context of deaf children, as it offers the learner the convenience of the use of the best method in any given context. This approach emphasises the individual factor for each learner and their best methods to develop learning and communication academically and socially. However, there are some concerns regarding this approach, as the deaf learner's messages might be confusing to the audience when spoken words are matched with sign language at the same time (Knight and Swanwick, 1999).
- **Bilingual-Bicultural Method:** the bilingual-bicultural method believes that sign language is the 'common' and 'natural' form of communication for deaf children (Al-Rayes, 2005). This is supported by the belief that when deaf children are exposed

to sign language, they would readily develop it as a 'first' or 'preferred' form of language and communication. The early years are the most appropriate age for linguistic development through the bilingual approach. In this regard, this approach believes that deaf children should learn and develop language through sign communication right from early childhood. The bilingual-bicultural method supports the use of sign language as the 'natural first language' of the deaf community and its place in the communicative and development of language and academic skills (Al-Rayes, 2005). This approach also highlights the importance of learning and developing a 'second language' for deaf children (such as, English, Arabic, and Italian), which is a language of the wider social community and the language of reading and writing (literacy) (Knight and Swanwick, 1999; Al-Rayes, 2005). Additionally, the term 'sign bilingualism' is used when the two languages 'signed language' and 'spoken/written language' are used together.

These different models illustrate the complex range of issues that those working with deaf children in inclusive settings need to understand if they are to develop appropriate levels of provision.

3.7 Learning Development for Deaf People

There is a link between language fluency and the acquisition of learning skills such as literacy. Those deaf students who begin schooling with stronger language abilities have a relatively easier time making the move to text-based literacy than those students without, or with poorer, linguistic experience (Mayer, 2007). Literacy can be 'described to include reading, writing, computer, and mathematics, although there is a tendency to emphasise reading and writing, or text-based literacy skills' (Paul, 1998: 5). There is a correlation between the abilities of reading and writing, 'for most people learning to read and write seems to be a relatively straightforward process, although writing might seem to be more difficult than reading. Fluent writing seems to follow fluent reading' (Moores, 2001). Many deaf people who are poor at reading are also poor at writing (Paul, 1998). In addition, reading and writing have generally been considered 'common denominators' in the education of deaf children (King and Quigley, 1985). Whilst reading and writing skills for deaf children are not just important during school language lessons but also outside school where they have to write and read for other

purposes. Marschark (1997: 149) noted that 'reading and writing form an essential link to the world of social and intellectual interaction'. Unfortunately, many deaf children reach school-age with notable language delays which usually guide to poor academic achievement and difficulties in school communication (Marschark and Wauters, 2008).

One of the main problems faced by many deaf children is acquiring and using spoken language. In fact, speech is the major means of communication for most people, and those deaf children without speech have difficulty in communicating with the hearing world. There are other ways of communication such as sign language, lip-reading and gesture but it may not be understood by hearing people. Therefore, it is important and essential to teach deaf children the skills of writing. As Powers et al., (1998) suggest writing skills are especially important for deaf children in enabling them to communicate with the non-deaf world. Literature showed that until the 1960s there has been no empirical examination of the nature of writing for deaf (Marschark and Hauser, 2008). Several studies (Musselman and Szanto, 1998; Tur-Kaspa and Dromi, 2001; Moores and Miller, 2009) mention that deaf children suffer problems in the development of writing. A study conducted by Volterra and Bates (1989) to compare writing skills of deaf students with hearing peers noticed some difference between the two groups in terms of writing. They say that deaf students usually: 1) produce shorter sentences; 2) avoid complex syntactic structures; 3) use a more restricted vocabulary; 4) often delete function words (e.g. articles and prepositions) as well as using more of these than necessary on some occasions; 5) can also delete major constituents of the sentence (e.g. the verb 'to be' or auxiliary verbs), and 6) use inappropriate word order.

It could be argued that some deaf children compose ideas in a visual way, rather than an oral way, which may be very difficult when they come to translate those ideas to written language. Therefore it is not surprising that studies of deaf children's writing show that most of them are unable to write well, and their written language contains many errors and it is difficult to understand (Paul and Quigley, 1994; Marschark, 1997). In relation to developing reading skills for deaf children, most school programmes for both deaf and hearing children, give reading more attention than writing as it is seen to be a tool for acquiring knowledge and participating in society, especially when those individuals are deaf (Moores, 2001). Moores (ibid) also argued that during the first years of school we learn how to read and after that we learn to write. Reading is a fundamental skill: it

may affect success in other academic areas. Students who experience difficulty in reading will also have difficulty in other academic subjects (Moore, 2001). Literature has shown that deaf students have been found to be weaker in reading skills compared with hearing students (Paul, 2003). They also have difficulty with memory span and deaf children tend to have a short attention span, and it has been suggested that they may not be able to organise knowledge because of issues with their long and short term memory processes (Marschark and Spencer, 2010), syntax knowledge (Paul, 2003), grammar (Kelly, 1998), figurative language (Paul, 2003) and vocabulary size (Paul, 2003; Marschark and Spencer, 2010).

Summarising the above section, there is a great need for deaf children to receive support from an early age to gain access to communication and interaction with those people who they have regular social contact with and to be able to understand the world around them. On the contrary, the delayed access to acquiring language and poor interaction can negatively affect the development of a deaf child's abilities and social skills, which leads to difficulties in access to information at school-age. These specific difficulties need to be taken into account when planning inclusive education for deaf children, otherwise they can become isolated and it is very easy for their learning to be compromised. This highlights the challenges faced by those trying to create inclusive schooling for deaf children.

3.8 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has reviewed the theoretical models of understanding special educational needs. It then explored definitions of the concept and categories of special educational needs and it focused on understanding deafness and its degree. It has also brought out the importance of knowledge about deafness in order to provide the appropriate service for those students. Finally, this chapter discussed the communication and language development for deaf students. This chapter presented the first part of the theoretical framework, the rules or principles that have been used to plan this research. It brings out issues that need to be addressed in the educational and social environment in inclusive schools and directs attention to what needs to be explored through interviews and observations. The next chapter moves the focus to issues regarding inclusive education

and explores some previous studies regarding factors that influence inclusive education for deaf students.

Chapter Four

Inclusive Education: Theoretical Overview

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4.1 Introduction

Inclusive education for students with deafness is now an ambition for many countries globally following the Salamanca Declaration (1994). There is much evidence in the literature suggesting that inclusive education is useful for students with special educational needs including students with deafness (Ainscow, 2007; Al-Musa, 2008; Forest and Pearpoint, 2011). Inclusive models of education have been developed to describe what is meant by this term. However, studies in the area of inclusive education have largely been conducted in Western context and it is still in the early stages in Saudi Arabia. Hence, this chapter is structured to review literature in relation to educational provision for the deaf with an emphasis on inclusive education: a topic relevant to the questions of this research. Key issues in the field of inclusive education including those relating to deaf students are explored. This includes a review of: the theoretical perspectives which claim to give insight into the meaning of inclusive education; models of inclusive education; the underlying rationale for inclusive education, and key features of inclusion. In addition the factors influencing the process of inclusive education and the changes required to implement this process in the Saudi Arabian context are discussed.

4.2 Educational Provision for the Deaf

In the Middle Ages, because of inability of deaf students to use the language and speak, they were considered to be unable to learn (Mcanally et al., 1994). However, generally in the years since then as education systems developed deaf students were taught in special institutions and schools which were formed especially for them (Smith et al., 2004). For example, in the UK, John Wallis 1616-1703 and William Holder 1616-1698, of the Royal Society, initiated the education of deaf students and started to educate deaf students through writing and the manual alphabet as a means of teaching language and speech communication skills. Wallis also started the teaching of deaf children through

the functional language system by using gestures as the foundation for communication. Wallis tried to link the gestures with the written alphabet. Years later, Joseph Watson (1765-1829) advocated using new ways to educate deaf students through the use of finger spelling and natural gestures to supplement speech (McAnally et al., 1994). The first UK school for deaf students was opened by Braidwood and Watson in London in 1792. This was followed by the opening of another school in Edinburgh in 1810 and in Birmingham in 1812 (Giangreco et al., 1996). At first it was for a select few but in the middle of the last century education became available to more children. The Education Act 1944 was considered as a major step establishing the education of deaf children in the UK. After that the Warnock report (1978) and Education Act (1981) instigated improvement to SEN including deaf education (Al-khashrmi, 2000). In Saudi Arabia the early period for education of deaf students was in Al-Amal Institute in Riyadh, 1964, where it provided education, training and health care for deaf students. The Ministry of Education established the department of special education as responsible for the preparation of educational programs for deaf students and plays a role in enlightening the parents regarding the benefits of special education for their children. There has been a steady expansion of schools for deaf students in different geographic locations according to the needs of each province (Al-Musa, 1999).

In Saudi Arabia, the mid-nineties was the turning point of service delivery for deaf students, with a move towards provision in general schools (inclusive education). These special institutions were not eliminated but rather their functions changed. Some of their functions are to provide: 1) in-service training centres, 2) information and support service centres, and 3) alternative service delivery models for students with mixed disabilities who may not be served in general inclusive schools due to the severity and complexity of their challenging conditions (Al-Musa, 1999). The Ministry of Education has worked to educate deaf students in general schools, whereas parents became increasingly more interested in sending their deaf children to inclusive schools (Al-Rayes, 2005; Al-Musa, 2008). This has played critical roles in supporting the movement of inclusive education and the creation of suitable environments for students with deafness. The most significant aspect of this provision is that deaf students should enjoy education with their peers. This has created a major challenge in relation to the effectiveness of general schools, those schools in solving deaf students' educational problems, including their having equal opportunities and equal rights (Al-Turkee,

2005). Inclusive education provides a clear message that students with deafness should have the right to the same opportunities as other members of society and its existence is based on the belief that inclusion results in stronger social and academic achievement (Bunch and Valeo, 2004).

Generally, educational provision for students with special education needs globally, including for deaf students, has moved from exclusion (residential/home or special school for the deaf) to full inclusion (general classroom with additional support services or teaching assistant). This process is identified as 'continuum of provision', Warnock Report (1978). The idea of educational provision within a continuum of services involves a continuum of alternatives which could be defined as having a hierarchal relationship and which are represented in the following table.

	Features of continuum of educational provision
1	Full-time education in an ordinary class with any necessary help and support provided
2	Education in an ordinary class with periods of withdrawal to a special class or unit or other supporting base
3	Education in a special class or unit with periods of attendance at an ordinary class and full involvement in the general community life and extracurricular activities of the ordinary school
4	Full-time education in a special class or unit with social contact with the main school
5	Education in a special school, day or residential, with some shared lessons with a neighbouring ordinary school
6	Full-time education in a day special school with social contact with an ordinary school
7	Full-time education in residential special school with social contact with an ordinary school
8	Short-term education in hospitals or other establishments
9	Long-term education in hospitals or other establishments
10	Home tuition

Table (4): Continuum of special education provision, Department of Education and Science (1978)

4.3 The Historical Background to Inclusion

Historically, deaf students were educated in specific schools based on the belief that they were disabled and that they have problems that are addressed in those schools that are underpinned by a medical model. The early provision of deaf education services began with residential and special schools, which were first established in the 18th century in Europe. Later on, during the 19th century these schools grew rapidly (Frederickson and Cline, 2002; Peters, 2004). In addition categorising students with disabilities in groups and placing them in special classes has resulted in them being segregated from other pupils of their age (Ainscow, 2007). Contemporary thought suggests that this action restricts these students' access to important educational opportunities. It could be argued that as thinking about the education of students with disabilities and special educational needs changed there is a move from the medical towards social and more integrative models.

The view that inclusion might be a way forward began to emerge from North America in the mid to late 1980s when provinces and Local Educational Authorities in Canada and the USA began to develop programmes which focused on including all children with SEN in the general schools/classroom setting (Tilstone et al., 1998). Tilstone et al., (ibid) point out also that the concept of inclusion was introduced in the UK around the early 1990s with the launch of annual inclusion conferences aimed at extending and creating ideas about the integration of children with disabilities into mainstream schools. By the mid 1990s, the concept of "inclusion", as opposed to "integration", was being used to refer to a process of education that promotes the education of all children in the same general schools. More recently, the term "full" inclusion which places students with special needs in regular classroom all the school day emerged and became popular (Fox, 2003). In Saudi Arabia, the concept of inclusion was introduced to public schools in 1996/1997. The General Secretariat of Special Education in Saudi Arabia looked for students with special needs and identified their location in order to provide suitable education programmes (Al-Musa, 1999). Al-Musa (ibid) suggested that the main aim was to place students into high quality schools. Policy has advocated that the provision for inclusion of students with special needs in general education schools should be a priority. The Saudi Ministry of Education's commitment towards inclusion is not surprising since the issue of inclusion is high on the educational reform agenda in

different parts of the world. For example inclusive education in Saudi Arabia, as is the case elsewhere, aims to enable students with special education needs to have the right of entry into high quality education in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for them. This concept has been borrowed from United States legislation and describes environments which provide for students needs and maximises their learning opportunities but which also prioritises integration or inclusion with non-disabled students (Al-Musa, 2010).

According to literature the issue of inclusive education has its roots in the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. The goal of this movement was to gain equal opportunities and equal rights for all, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, or disabilities (Landorf and Nevin, 2007). In 1970 the effectiveness of placing children with disabilities in special schools in solving their educational problems was a matter of debate (Fox, 2003). Therefore, many experts in the field of special needs discussed and questioned the purpose, practice and location of special education (Ainscow, 1999; Slee, 2006). Such discussions have led to calls in different countries for inclusion of students with special education needs in general schools. Thus, inclusive education emerged from the general dissatisfaction with the traditional conceptualisation of special education, as well as the limitations of the medical outlook described previously. The issue of how teaching could further marginalise people with special needs came to-the-fore (Florian, 2005; Landorf and Nevin, 2007). Additionally, as a result of the debate and the broader civil rights movement in society towards "normalisation" and appreciating social justice and human rights (Bunch and Valeo, 2004; Gaad, 2004) there has been a change in the conceptualisation of disability. These changing conceptualisations implied that people with disabilities should have the right to the same opportunities and options as other members of society.

4.4 The Differences between Inclusion and Integration

The two concepts, 'integration' and 'inclusion', are used to refer to the process by which students with special needs move from a separate educational placement to study with non-disabled students. Whereas these terms are sometimes exchanged as if they were synonymous by people who work in schools and education, in reality, they have different meanings. The term integration was defined by Booth (2000) as the

participation of students with special needs in the educational and social life in general primary and secondary schools. This definition was supported by Zionts (2005) where he sees the integration as the 'bringing of children together as a whole' away from segregated settings to mainstream settings. Foreman (2005) mentions that integration is a process where students with special needs are transferred to a less restricted setting, which gives children with special needs the opportunity to interact with their peers in general school more than if they were in segregated settings (Wood, 2006). Hence, the integration of deaf students in general schools does not necessarily mean shared classes or curricula or outcomes. It signifies providing deaf students with opportunities, mainly activities in schools that meet their needs. It is based on the notion that deaf students need to feel that they are part of the social environment of mainstream schools. Whilst the aim is that deaf students are socially included in communities, this may not always be the case, the school administration plays an important role in providing support for such environments and this does not always work.

In contrast, Hegarty et al. (1981) defined the term inclusion as the:

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

The Code of Practice in the UK (DfES, 2001a) describes inclusion as ‘a process by which schools, Local Education Authorities and others develop their cultures, policies and practice to include pupils’. Rieser (2012) mentioned that inclusion ‘should be seen as an extension of the school's equal opportunities practice and policy’. Inclusion is seen as a continuing process which leads to the acceptance of students with special needs, in order to develop inclusive schools (Booth, 1996; Ainscow, 1997; Norwich, 2008). These definitions which are generated by authors from the UK affirm that inclusive education implies whole school change and creating an environment in which students with SEN, including deaf students, can participate in activities equally in general schools as others without being excluded or ignored.

In addition, and in line with these changes, it has been argued that all students with SEN should be taught completely within general school/classrooms if a process of inclusion is implemented (Lipsky and Gartner, 1996; Booth, et al., 1998). These changes in

terminology, from segregation, integration to inclusion, not only reflect special educators' concerns that children with SEN are not being appropriately educated, but they are also supposed to shift the public's attitudes of inclusion - that is to move them closer towards the realisation of an inclusive society (Thomas, 1997; Barton, 1999; Reid, 2005). This broad concept of inclusive education and the accompanying aspirations for equality have developed in Saudi and inspired people of authority in special educational needs to adopt measures for creating inclusive education. There are attempts by the Ministry of Higher Education to establish a department in different universities to teach about special needs and ways of dealing with diverse disabled students.

Consequently, in recent years, the term inclusion became more widely used on a global scale, Webb-Hendy (1995: 23) claimed that 'with ongoing changes in educational practice the terminology has altered with use and integration has become inclusion'. Regardless of slight differences between these views what the terminology implies is that in Saudi Arabian mainstream school, all staff, including principals and teachers should be prepared to provide for all the needs and educational services required by students with special educational needs. It is worth reminding the reader here that for the purpose of this research the term inclusive education (partial and full) is used in Saudi schools; as opposed to integration as a result of the exact translation of Arabic term 'Damg' into English prevailing, which signifies 'inclusion' (Elsayed, 2009). Therefore, in this research the term inclusive education is used in correspondence to its utilisation in Saudi Arabia context.

4.5 Key Features of Inclusive Education

Although the literature shows that there is no unified definition of inclusion, Mitchell (2005) argued that there are some principles regarding inclusive education which nonetheless advocates that students with deafness should share with regular students in general school near their home, where they should have all the support services, individualised programmes, and appropriate curriculum and assessment practices available to them. In addition, the Salamanca Statement on special education, which was agreed by representatives of 92 governments and 25 international organisations in June 1994 (UNESCO, 1994), proclaimed the principles and policies that it was believed

would achieve inclusive education for children with special educational needs, including deaf children. The Salamanca Statement principles had a huge influence on the successful push for inclusive education, they include the following:

- Every child has a fundamental right to education, and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning;
- Every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs;
- Education systems should be designed and educational programmes implemented to take into account the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs;
- Those with special educational needs must have access to regular schools which should accommodate them with a child-centred pedagogy capable of meeting these needs;
- Regular schools with inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving an education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education for the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system (UNESCO, 1994: viii-ix).

4.6 Inclusive Educational Processes: meanings and practices

While many governments across the world have adopted the philosophy of inclusion, inclusive education manifests itself differently in each context. In relation to the definition of the term inclusive education, the literature shows how diverse and conflicting definitions of the concept of inclusive education have developed historically. There is no accepted 'universal definition' (Pearson, 2005). Many different countries define inclusive education from their distinct cultural and social perspectives (Mitchell, 2005). So whilst a number of studies, researchers, authors and educators identify similar key issues and components in relation to inclusive education others focus upon different aspects of its meaning and understandings of its benefits. Perspectives include those which focus on human rights, social inclusion, the school's environment and broader perspectives on inclusion as a governmental issue. For example, according to Artiles and Dyson (2005; Mittler, 2005) inclusive education involves acknowledging deaf children's human rights which includes being accepted and taught together with their

peers in a general classroom/school. It can be defined as the inclusion of students with deafness in general education classrooms regardless of their ability or disabilities (Loreman et al., 2005). This type of definition is supported by Ainscow (2007) where he sees inclusive education as including all students with different abilities in one school. Creating inclusive education involves a process of widespread change through which students' diverse needs are catered for by altering things such as teaching practices, facilities and curriculum activities. This should eventually lead to building the capacity of mainstream schools to accept all learners in the same class or school regardless of their strengths or weaknesses.

These views of what constitutes inclusive education and of how to bring it about are important when we come to consider the Saudi Arabian context. Janney et al., (1995: v) confirm the view that it is a process involving whole school change by stating that inclusive education is 'a move towards extending the scope of ordinary schools so they can include a greater diversity of children'. Similarly, Smith et al., (2004) also see inclusive education as a process that refers to students with special educational needs becoming part of the general education school/classroom, delivering a meaningful curriculum with essential support for all students regardless of their needs and all students being taught with effective strategies. Corbett and Slee (2000: 134) argued that inclusive education 'is about establishing access for all people. It is not conditional, nor does it speak about partial inclusion'. In addition, Ballard (1997: 244) pointed out that 'inclusive education means education that is non-discriminatory in terms of disability, culture,.. or other aspects of students or staff that are assigned significance by a society'. This implies including every student in mainstream schools without any exceptions such as children's intellectual, physical, or other differences. In other words, inclusion denotes having equal rights to access for education of all children in the society as full time valued members in appropriate general schools/classrooms.

Within different national contexts and with different groups of children in many countries, including Saudi, it is partial rather than full inclusion that is operating. Loreman and Deppeler (2001; cited in Loreman et al., 2005) mention that full inclusion means the inclusion of students with diverse abilities in all elements of a school day. They should be able to enter and enjoy such schooling with other children. Additionally, Cambra and Silvestre (2003) mentioned that nowadays there is a general consensus

about inclusive education, which is not simply an issue of placing students with special needs in general schools; rather it is to appropriately develop all aspects of the school to meet their requirements for a successful education. For example, students with deafness require the school curriculum to be adapted by school staff. Such changes include issues such as how best to physically organise the school's structure and encourage all students to work together.

When inclusive education is defined from a social perspective it focuses on integrating students with special needs into societies and communities. This is clearly more than just adapting classrooms and teaching. For example, Uditsky (1993: 88) described inclusive education as 'set of principles which ensures that the child with a disability is viewed as a valued and needed member of the community in every respect'. Likewise, Farrell (2004) defined inclusive education as:

‘the extent to which a school or community welcomes pupils as full members of the group and values them for the contribution they make. This implies that for inclusion to be seen as ‘effective’ all pupils must actively belong to, be welcomed by and participate in a general school and community- that is they should be fully included’ (p.7)

So inclusive education not only has to increase the process of students' participation inside schools it has also to decrease exclusion from social settings (Booth, 1996; Booth et al., 1998; Armstrong et al., 2000). This view of inclusive education is not distinct from having a focus on learning, for example, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority in the UK (Wade, 1999: 81) argues that inclusive education is ‘securing appropriate opportunities for learning, assessment and qualifications to enable the full and effective participation of all pupils in the process of learning’. Qualifications enable participation and inclusion beyond schools. Moreover, as O'Brien (2001: 48) put it ‘inclusive schools must offer more than inclusive placement (being there) and focus upon the provision of inclusive learning ‘learning there’’; this in the context of seeing schools as learning communities. Inclusive learning therefore recognises and connects with the individuality of the learners (O'Brien, *ibid*), it is a ‘universal human right’ and it requires the 'removal of all barriers' that might affect children with special needs in school and in society at large (Bayliss, 2003). Villa and Thousand (2005) point out that inclusive education is more than a set of strategies, it is a belief system, it also ‘involve

attitudes, values and beliefs that extend beyond schools to the wider community' (Mentis et al., 2005: 76). This broad view of inclusion clearly involves complex change which is quite far-reaching, indeed as is suggested in chapters seven to ten, it could be argued that, the views of interactional model are most suitable for this complex view of inclusive education as they take into account the education, the support provided in school, student's strengths and needs, and the social and environmental influences (Frederickson and Cline, 2002).

This view of inclusion is consistent with the perspective that an inclusive school should represent the ethos of community involvement (Bayliss, 1995; McConkey, 2002; Reid, 2005). A school represents the community and thereby asserts the notion of 'belonging' and 'identity', appropriate to the context. Bayliss (2003) implies this means an egalitarian society when he claims inclusive education requires interdependence, mutuality and reciprocity to develop relationships between children across dimensions of gender, ethnicity and disability. Visser et al., (2003) add if schools are to be more effective in meeting the needs of students, which includes those with deafness, they need to be open, positive and diverse communities, not selective, exclusive or rejecting. In this sense, inclusive education is seen as an essential, dynamic process of change rather than an end-product (Booth, 1996; Ainscow, 1999; O'Brien, 2001). Additionally, Ainscow (ibid) argued that inclusive education is a school culture where the values of students' diversities and differences is a process of a never-ending search for learning to live with, and learn from difference. It could be argued that good inclusion produces a feeling of membership for both teachers and students. Furthermore, Al-Rossan (2003) mentioned that one of the primary meanings of inclusion, which has led to social and educational inclusion for children with special needs in general schools and classes, requires the availability of two conditions. First, those students should be in the classroom for at least part of the school day. Second, those social arrangements should be followed through in the rest of the schools activities.

Based on such conceptualisations, also inclusive education has looked from the perspective of what governments (including local government) should be doing. Definitions of inclusion have been broadened to refer to a process in which Local Educational Authorities and governments strive to reduce barriers to the participation and learning for all citizens. In this respect Barton (1998), who believes in the social

model of disability, believes that governmental organisations have to strive to remove all forms of exclusionary practice towards all children and young people. Inclusive education is thus about responding to diversity, it is about listening to unfamiliar voices, being open and empowering all members, through school cultures, which receives and respects differences as well as recognises individual needs (Corbett, 2001) and acknowledges learners who have complex, multiple identities (Hall et al., 2004). According to Cheminais (2001) 'inclusion is the keystone of current government education policy' and in this respect the role of the Local Educational Authorities in supporting schools to remove all barriers to learning for students with special educational needs (Booth et al., 1998) is seen as important. The issue of local government's role arises in the analysis of the Saudi Arabian data.

It can be seen that key to understanding inclusive education is a grasp of the range of issues and activities involved: from creating active participation in inclusive schools; to active participation in all aspects of life in the society; from a set of principles that organise work in schools; to a social, political and ideological commitment to equal human rights. These conceptions reflect a broader understanding of inclusion rather than providing technical definition of the process. In this regard, it could be argued that students with special educational needs need not be asked how to study in inclusive education placements, rather how the situation in these school settings can be arranged to suit every student possible for their educational development. Additionally, it has been argued that inclusion is not about placement in the mainstreaming school only but it is also about the experience of learning and the quality of life experienced in the school. In addition, it has been argued that inclusive education is seen as a 'universal human right'; the aim of inclusion is to accept all people regardless of disability or other needs. Inclusion requires the 'removal of all barriers' that might affect students, including those with deafness which is the focus of this study, in school and in society at large (Bayliss, 2003). What this all implies is that in order for schools today to become inclusive, they are required to change past ideas regarding a 'medical model of disability' which understand 'disability' as the problem in a child, and focuses on their differences, to a 'social model of disability' and/or an 'interactional model' which leads to the recognition of the characteristics of the child, the school environment, the learning strategies and the attitudes which would lead to children with deafness gaining and achieving the same as their peers (Rieser, 2012).

To sum up, the above definitions show that inclusive education remains a broad concept that is open to interpretation in terms of what aspects are crucial to achieving it and how it should be brought about. Educators and researchers continue to engage in discussion about it. Nevertheless, most definitions and conceptualisations reflect common points of views which highlight the way that inclusive education involves the introduction of essential modifications through which general schools reorganise themselves to embrace all students. The notion of human rights underpinning inclusive education means that schools should be working to meet students with diversity. This involves considerable work and commitment by schools and governments as it has to include a consideration of overall organisation, schools' environment, curriculum, and classroom practice, staff development and training. Moreover, inclusion is not only related to education, but also to society at large. This viewpoint is clearly confirmed by the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) which asserted that inclusive education is largely effectual at structuring solidarity to people with special needs and their peers in general schools. Inclusive education is clearly extremely hard to achieve for most societies which are essentially unequal and it should be seen as a process not a state (Ainscow, 1997; Daniels and Garner, 1999; Cornwell, 2001; O'Brien, 2001; Rieser, 2012). It is not simply a question of placement in the same groups and institutions as others, but it is a process which involves whole school re-organisation in order to develop inclusive schools. This perspective on inclusive education leans on the social model which is based on the view that school and society should remove all obstacles in education and community that may lead to the isolation of students with special needs (Campbell and Oliver, 1996; Villa and Thousand, 2005).

4.7 Classifications of Inclusive Education

Classifications of inclusive educational practices that currently exist begin to demonstrate how difficult the ideals laid out above are to achieve with different groups of students. On the basis of the literature inclusion can be categorised into various types. Faroge (2002) lists the following types. First, special education institutions share only the same building with mainstream ones, while each school has its own planning for learning and special training techniques: the two single sight schools may have a combined management. Second, Educational Inclusion in which students with special needs are mixed with ordinary students in the same school or part-time in the same

classroom. They are supervised by the same educational institutions, in spite of the possibility that there could be differences in the curriculum that are perceived to suit the abilities of students with special educational needs. This could involve some students who have special educational needs being taught with peers who do not have special educational needs and the study of the same curriculum. Third, Social Inclusion which implies the involvement of special needs students with classes for non-special needs children and with a variety of school activities such as trips, sports, art and other social activities. This is one of the simplest types and forms of inclusion that is perceived as helping students with special needs to establish friendships and join in the community. The last type of inclusion listed by Faroge (ibid) is Community Inclusion that advocates the broader society should provide opportunities for students with special needs to help them take part in various activities of the community and facilitate their being active members. This type of inclusive education looks beyond educational establishments and offers those students with special needs the right to work, independently and enjoy all that is available in community services.

Another classification developed by the Department of Education in the UK (1988) through the Warnock Report, had three interrelated classifications of inclusion, which include:

1. Locational inclusion: in this type students with special needs are educated in special units or classes set up in general school, where they can share the same building;
2. Social inclusion: where students with special needs can socialise and interact in some school activities joining with regular students in school meals, recreation and out of school activities;
3. Functional inclusion: where students with special needs attend general classes part-time or full-time through programme adaptation in the regular school.

Both of these classifications are valuable as they are commonly referred to in research on inclusive education. They are similar in many respects to Faroge (2002); includes community inclusion which links schools with external communities more strongly and

advocates that society should provide opportunities for students with special needs to take part in various activities of the community, including employment.

4.8 Models of Inclusive Education

To guide the development and implementation of inclusive education, numerous models are in place, two of the most widely known are reviewed here: Giangreco's, model, (1997) and Ainscow's model, (2005). These two models illustrate the importance of the interrelationships between professionals in education including principals and teachers. They also highlight the importance of parents in the process of establishing and implementing inclusive education. These models also highlight the significance of considering the students' needs including developing appropriate resources and creating the correct conditions, for example; developing learning activities, which suit special educational needs students. These models were helpful in developing this research investigating the Saudi context since they imply that the attitudes of schools' principals and teachers as well as parents are important for inclusive education of deaf students and in developing inclusive schools.

Giangreco's Model (1997) focuses on the importance of the inter-relationship between educators, parents and other professionals in the process of developing and implementing inclusive education. Giangreco (ibid) suggests that any school with successful inclusive practices is based on an interaction between: collaborative teamwork amongst school staff; parental involvement; effectively skilled and empowered school staff; the ownership of the inclusion agenda by generalist and specialist educational staff; and clear and effective procedures for evaluating of inclusion. These issues (including successful inclusion teamwork among school staff; the sharing of ideas and support between school staff; effective training and commitment to the development and improvement of inclusive education by all school staff; parents' involvement, including awareness about inclusion as well as activities adopted in schools; and the monitoring and effective evaluation) are significant to understanding the significance of the empirical work in this study with Saudi Arabian boys primary schools. This model is helpful but it did not provide information about the

role of government in the practice of inclusive education. Arguably, this role is important in promoting the growth and development of inclusive education.

Ainscow's (2005) framework, is important as it identifies six strategies that could support the growth and development of inclusive educational practice for schools at any stage of the inclusive process: 1) start with existing practices and knowledge; 2) see differences as opportunities for learning; 3) scrutinise barriers to participation; 4) use available resources to support learning; 5) develop a language of practice, and 6) create conditions that encourage risk-taking. Ainscow redefined his ideas over the years and he increasingly placed school review and development at the forefront and he highlighted the importance of diversifying learning for those with and without special educational needs. Hence inclusion becomes a process that develops the learning of all school children. He also draws attention to several factors which link school practice to broader policy imperatives and emphasise the important role that government plays. First, the principles that guide policy priorities within an education system are seen as really important. In Saudi Arabia this involves exploring the role of central and local government. The views and actions of others within the local context including the wider community served by the school and the department of staff responsible for school administration are seen as important to Ainscow (2005). This view encouraged this study to explore a broad sense of what inclusion means for schools and communities. Thirdly, the criteria used to evaluate the schools' performance are also seen as important. Finally, the importance of a common language to encourage effective communication between colleagues and allow for experimentation with new possibilities was emphasised (Ainscow et al., 2003). Ainscow's Framework places a great responsibility on inclusive schools, but interesting for the Saudi context, where principals can have considerable influence on what happens and are supposed to lead inclusion, is that he puts less of an emphasis on the schools principals.

4.9 The underlying Rationales for Inclusive Education

Whilst there are a range of approaches to implementing inclusive education it is important that underpinning any practices is some commitment to a shared philosophy or rationale for what is being done. According to the literature, one the most important purposes of inclusive education is to ensure that students with disabilities including

those with deafness have access to general school experiences as fairly and equally as non-deaf students (Loreman et al., 2005). The belief that inclusive education will result in stronger social and academic achievement on behalf of students with special educational needs, which will advance citizenship and lead to the development of a stronger community has been underlined. It has also been argued that inclusive education of students with special educational needs, including that for students with deafness would assist their right of entry and participation in schools and society. Furthermore, continued segregation of these students might no longer be justified, from either a 'research' or a 'rights' perspective (UNESCO, 1994). Such movement has been acknowledged internationally in different parts of the world. According to Winter (2006) the movement towards the inclusive education of students with special needs, including deaf students in general school settings has been structured in many countries with the implementation of the recommendations of the Salamanca statement Action Plan (1994). Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Education (MOE) launched a reform policy for education with a special emphasis on the education of children with special needs at least partially as a consequence of this. However, it is important to understand the various underlying principles that have been used to justify implementing inclusive education. Bayliss (1995) and others (e.g. Bailey et al., 1998; Al-Musa, 2008; Abyed, 2011) have identified three main areas of justification which are described here, the social-ethical rationale, the legal rationale, and psychological-educational rationale. An understanding of these principles is important to understanding what is happening in the Saudi context described in this thesis.

4.9.1 The Social-ethical Rationale

One of the fundamental principles of inclusive education draws upon the social-ethical rationale of inclusive education which relates to the problems inherent in the segregation of students with SEN (Kauffman and Hallahan, 1995). This approach, which draws upon opinions and policies from the civil rights movement in 1960's America and it proposes that children with special educational needs, including deaf students' have a right to be included and moreover, that they should experience the same quality education as non-deaf students in schools, classrooms and courses. It is based on a belief that where deaf students become members of the school community through participation in all school/class activities, they will develop positive social

relationships with school members including students and staff (Bailey et al., 1998). Additionally it is suggested that when deaf students are given equal opportunities to their peers to participate and learn in general schools, this would develop and alter the positive and welcoming attitudes of staff and all students in school towards deaf students, and would support them to accommodate and welcome them into their community (Wade and Moore, 1992; Bayliss, 1995; Peterson and Hittie, 2003). Additionally, it is proposed that if deaf students are to succeed in the inclusive school/classroom, they need to feel a sense of belonging which will lead them to enjoyable learning and to feeling a valued part of the school (Smith et al., 2008).

Furthermore, Bailey et al., (1998) believes that there are also benefits of inclusive education for students without special educational needs, including; 1) helping them to learn about differences in the way people grow and develop; 2) nurturing the development of more accepting attitudes toward persons with disabilities; and 3) helping children become more accepting of their own strengths and weaknesses. According to Peters (2003) inclusive education for students with deafness improves educational and employment opportunities. In addition, there is some evidence that inclusive education seems to be developing the academic and social performance, where students with special needs who study in inclusive school settings show more achievement in academic skills and social learning compared to those students in segregated settings (Al-Sartawe et al., 2000; Rix and Simmons, 2005). According to Al-khashrmi (2000) it is argued that students with special needs who are set and educated in general schools have higher academic achievements, higher self esteem and a greater probability of attending college. They are also more likely to graduate and find employment when they leave school. It is clear that for inclusive education to work it must be like living together and learning together which validates the notion of having inclusive education that has a direct relation to the core of values and beliefs associated with universal human rights (Bayliss, 2003). Hence in exploring the Saudi context, as with any other, there are questions about whether these human rights and the associated benefits are being realised for deaf students.

4.9.2 The Legal-legislative Rationale

The legal-legislative rationale emphasises the need for a legal framework to guarantee the right to learn in general school for all students with deafness, such as having the same rights and access to being an 'Active Citizen' (Bayliss, 1995: 6). This approach provides a framework which requires schools to provide a broad, balanced, relevant education for all students including those with deafness which meets their educational, social and personal needs. In many countries such legislation now provides students with deafness in settings with their non-deaf peers (Odom and Diamond, 1998). For example, in the UK, the 1981 Education Act, premised on Warnock Report (1978), recognised the right of students with special needs to inclusive educational provision. Among other things, this Act documented: 1) the constitutional right of students with special educational needs to receive free public education, and 2) the ability of parents of students with special educational needs to review procedures to request the allocation of appropriate resources for their child. Later, the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of Children with Special Educational Needs (DfE, 1994), states that all students with SEN have the right to access to a broad and balanced education including the National Curriculum (Norwich, 2008).

However, as we shall see with the Saudi Arabian case in this thesis, setting a legislative framework for inclusion is only a step towards the final goal of equal rights for those with disabilities. According to Disability Rights Task Force (DRTF) (1999: 2) 'whilst legislation in itself cannot force a change in attitudes, it can provide certain rights and lay down a framework that will encourage and hasten a change in culture'. This legislation is meant to prevent the educating of children with diverse abilities in separate schools and to generate general acceptance that it is unfeasible and oppressive (Booth and Ainscow, 1998). As suggested above this is in line with the Salamanca Statement (1994) which recommends that each student has the right to be a full member of their community school. Therefore, all schools should provide opportunities for students including those with deafness to learn among their friends (Andrews and Lupart, 1993). The legislation that arises from this rationale supports the legal-ethical rationale and suggests that through enforcing inclusive education via legislation that a more inclusive education and society will be developed as students without disabilities or special educational needs become aware of 'individual differences and learn to respect these

differences' (Deiner, 2005: 55). As I have previously described in Saudi Arabia this legislative framework has very recently been provided and as yet there is little evidence, particularly qualitative research that evaluates whether these frameworks are similarly effective in this environment.

4.9.3 The Psychological-educational Rationale

The psychological-educational rationale of inclusive education for deaf students is concerned with providing students with special educational needs and disabilities with a better learning environment. It can be argued that, students with deafness during the inclusive education can develop their capabilities through interaction by the school environment. As early as the 1970's Bricker (1978) and others were suggesting that the placement of students with special needs in general school was useful, by providing: a) a more challenging learning environment; b) opportunities to observe and learn from peers without disabilities or special educational needs; c) real-life contexts for learning skills; and d) a more socially responsive and facilitative environment. Evidence also suggests that inclusive educational approaches do not undermine students ability to achieve well. Thomas and Webb (1997; Myklebust, 2006) have found that students with deafness who were placed in segregated special classes did not seem to achieve any better than those who remain in general schools/classes, despite the vast amount of resources being made available to these special classes. So there is educational value to being included and the approaches that are used in this context.

Bayliss (1995) mentioned two kinds of psychological rationales and accompanying types of support that inclusive education could particularly provide for students with special educational needs: 1) peer support; which is essential not only in the learning process, but also for students' social and emotional development within the inclusive school culture; and 2) support in the form of a differentiated-curriculum, which is an individualised curriculum for students with special educational needs or disabilities in inclusive classes. Where these differential curricula allow those students to improve through the school curriculum at their own pace, and ability, it has been found that at the same time, they help those students to dispel feelings of weakness.

Important for the Saudi Arabian context is the way that the psychological-educational rationale of inclusive education does show some diverse findings in the literature: as it will be remembered the schools studied in this thesis only have partial inclusion. Where some studies support full inclusive education, others support the need for inclusive education in the context of a continuum of specialised services (Marston, 1996; Lipsky and Gartner, 1997). In this model it is suggested that the continuum of services is necessary to reflect the continuum of need, in the case studied in this research it would depend on the level of deafness. It argues that, no one size fits all, as every child has ways of learning and different ways to deal with it. In this study the degree to which this type of model was being operated and was effective was explored.

4.10 Challenges and Effects of Inclusive Education

Having outlined the positive reasons for inclusive education it is important to note that there are some negative aspects and that the approach is still controversial. Even advocates of the approach acknowledge its challenges. For example, Warnock (2005) acknowledged that some inclusive education programmes may lead to the emergence of some incorrect behaviour, such as frustration, failure, aggression, school avoidance, fear and hatred of school and disobedience and that in such situations inclusive education does not work. According to Kauffman and Hallahan (1995):

‘in examining some of the effects of mainstreaming¹ that have been documented, the best that can be said about the body of data is that they are inconclusive and often contradictory. In addition to the possibility of increasing or decreasing social stigma, mainstreaming may have an effect on a number of other behavioural variables, such as expectancy of success, responsiveness to social support, outer-directedness or imitateness, self-image and wariness of adults’ (p.307).

Some of these problems have been attributed to the location of some inclusive schools. According to Norwich and Gray (2007) the location of schools plays a big part in inclusive education for students with special needs. In some geographical areas, there are not enough qualified school staff to cover the requirements of students needs. Placing inclusive schools far away from students’ homes, which is one possible resolution, could also be a stumbling block for students. Students’ may lose their right

¹ Mainstreaming is another word used to describe inclusive education.

to inclusive schooling because of a lack of provision in their locality even in countries such as the UK which has a more lengthy experience of this provision than in Saudi Arabia. Some schools cannot accommodate students with special needs because they do not have specialised units, while some other schools cannot offer a support service for them (Norwich, 2007).

According to Ainscow (2005: 109) inclusion is a 'big challenge facing school systems throughout the world'. The lack of well-trained and qualified school staff in the field of special education and inclusive education may lead to the disappointment of the process of inclusive schools for students with special needs. Additionally, according to Emanuelsson et al., (2005) it is easier to make policies on inclusive education than to practice it. According to Wedell (2005: 9) inclusion in the UK 'is not practicable within the rigidities of the current school system'; there are many students with deafness in inclusive education schools in the UK that have difficulties performing tasks such as reading and writing. Hence, this suggests there are likely to be similar problems in the Saudi Arabian system.

In some cases, inclusive education does not work very well. This provides some evidence that it needs to be monitored and parent's and student's views should be taken into account when decisions are being made about them. Students with special education needs can tell those providing it about themselves and their feelings about inclusive education. MacConvill (2007) provided instances of students who were studying in inclusive schools who were really suffering. One of them a student (aged 7 years) with a hearing impairment stated that other children came up to him and shouted and tried to touch his hearing aid. He tried to push them away but they said, 'Why have you got it in your ears?'. Another student (also 7 years old) with learning difficulties in a different inclusive school said 'my teacher was not very helpful and she says I was lazy and I did not want to work'. A third student (5 years old) with physical disabilities said that he was not able to go on the last school trip because the teaching assistant who looked after him was unable to go, so he spent the day in the library (MacConvill, 2007). Additionally, in most national contexts the idea of inclusive education is still not understood by some parents of students with special needs. Sometimes, they think that inclusion may affect their child's learning and achievement. It is perceived as a cut in resources and support and believed that the consequences of the inclusion process will

be negative for their children. For example, some parents of deaf students in Saudi Arabia who have transferred their children from a special school to a inclusive school, thinking that they may be saving a lot of time due to the long journey every day to the special school, but were not sure if their children will have the same service and facilities in the new inclusive school (Al-Khatteeb, 2001).

The literature makes it very clear that inclusive education is a contested issue and opinions about it vary widely (Fuchs and Fuchs, 1994; Kauffman and Hallahan, 1995; Slee, 2001; Ainscow, 2007; Norwich, 2008). However, despite the controversy over the feasibility of the inclusive education process, it could be said that there is a wide consensus that the process of inclusion reflects the philosophy of human rights towards the provision of appropriate education for students with deafness and others with special educational needs in appropriate environments. However, it could be argued that segregated services for those students are not acceptable under any circumstances. Moreover, many students with deafness globally are not in inclusive settings or do not have the suitable services. This is due to many factors influencing the process of inclusive education. Recognising and addressing these factors is a prerequisite for developing inclusive practices, the next section highlights these factors as well as reflecting upon the required changes to support inclusion in practice.

4.11 Factors Influencing Inclusive Education

It is clear that identifying factors or challenges which influence the practice of inclusive education for deaf students are very important and that education is not simply about making schools available for those who are already able to access them (Elsayed, 2009). For the deaf children which this study focuses on it is about attempting to access opportunities of quality education for deaf students in inclusive schools. Clearly, the process of finding and adapting the right environment is complicated and the solutions are rooted in the nature of the educational policy and the school context in which change is required (Al-Zyoudi, 2006). In this regard, Allan (2003) noted that the achievement of an inclusive educational system for students with special needs including deaf students is a major challenge facing countries throughout the world. Allan (ibid) added that the process of developing such an educational system requires substantial personal, organisational and cultural changes. Education of deaf students and

those with special educational needs generally must change in response to wider changes in society and the education system in particular (Dyson, 1990). Hence, the overview of literature indicates that there are a range of studies (e.g. Avramidis et al., 2000; Norwich, 2002; Hastings and Oakford, 2003; Dupoux et al., 2005; Al-Zyoudi, 2006; Bradshaw and Mundia, 2006; Kalyva et al., 2007) that have attempted to document the factors that influence adopting inclusive education for deaf students. The following sections examined these factors which include professional training and development, school environments, collaboration and the nature of the special needs.

4.11.1 Professional Training and Development

With regards to professional knowledge and training, there is enough evidence in the literature to support the notion that training either pre-service or in-service is an important factor in improving inclusive educational practice. A social constructivist perspective on school principals and teachers' attitudes inevitably acknowledges that their ideals and accompanying knowledge influence their actions in the implementation of inclusive education. For example, Carrington et al., (2010) argued that schools' staffs' attitudes, efficacy and values are affecting the rising organisational paradigm called inclusive education. Moreover, Avramidis and Norwich (2002: 139) argued that many principals and teachers are without or lacking in professional training about inclusive education and the needs of students with special needs, resulting in difficulties in including these students in the general schools. There are a range of different studies such as Kristensen et al., (2003; Reid, 2005; Winter, 2006) which pointed out that insufficient training, and a lack of opportunities for professional development for school principals and teachers are factors that affect the success of inclusive inclusion. These studies conclude that without having the necessary skills and expertise to deal with children with special educational needs like deaf children, school principals and teachers may be incapable of accommodating those children, and providing suitable education and social needs in schools/classes. An international study by Leyser et al., (1994) found that teachers with substantial training in special education and inclusion had a significantly higher positive attitude and applied inclusion principles in school than those with little or no training about inclusive education. Therefore, this evidence supports the notion that it is clear that attitudes towards inclusive education can be influenced by training.

The importance of training holds true across a range of different national contexts. These results are supported by several studies in the literature confirming the importance and influence of professional training on successful inclusive education (Shade and Stewart, 2001; Pearson et al., 2003; Lifshitz et al., 2004; Leatherman and Niemeyer, 2005; Romi and Leyser, 2006; Dupoux et al., 2005). A study conducted by Avramidis and Kalyva (2007) considered the influence of teaching experience and professional development on Greek teachers towards inclusive education. They found that training plays an important role in forming teachers' positive performance towards inclusion of students with special needs in general schools. In addition, their study revealed that teachers with further training in special education and inclusion matters hold significantly more support for inclusive education in practice than those with little or no training concerning inclusion.

Where negative attitudes are a problem this has often been linked to lack of knowledge and training. According to Kalyva et al., (2007) Serbian teachers held overall slightly negative attitudes towards the inclusion of children with deafness and special needs students generally. However, those teachers with skills and experience about special needs and inclusive education were willing to work with students with special needs in general schools. Teachers' knowledge and training about children with deafness and inclusive education have also been cited as a variable affecting their actual teaching styles, their adaptations in diverse classrooms and their support for inclusion policy in school. In respect to experience with deaf students, Leatherman and Niemeyer (2005; Romi and Leyser, 2006) claim that the direct experience, knowledge and training of school principals and teachers about inclusion and special needs has been proved to influence the acceptance of their inclusion in general schools. Moreover, there is evidence revealing that years of teaching experience and contact with deaf persons might impact on the successful inclusion of deaf students (Papadopoulou et al., 2004; Bradshaw and Mundia, 2006). Hence, this evidence directs attention towards questions about the qualifications and previous experience of staff in inclusive Saudi Arabian schools as well as the availability of ongoing training.

4.11.2 School Environment

The review of literature has indicated that facilities, resources and school environments are factors that influence inclusive education for deaf students. Inclusive schools have to provide adequate and appropriate resources if they are to ensure that the implementation of inclusive education for deaf student is effective. There is sufficient research to support this argument, for example, Avramidis (2001) identified major inhibiting factors for the successful development of inclusive education such as a lack of material resources in schools including IT, hearing aids, and a lack of individualised educational plans. Avramidis (ibid) also identified insufficient professional human support. For example, a lack of speech therapy specialists and clinical psychologists, this inhibits the successful implementation of inclusive education.

Many other issues related to the school environment have also been criticised, for example, the structure of schools, classroom size, educational responsibilities and policies, and lack of funding (Singal, 2005; Al-Zyouidi, 2006). Moreover, there is a good deal of evidence in the literature that states providing schools with adequate and appropriate resources and materials, adapting teaching materials, and restructuring the physical environment to be accessible to students with deafness, are instrumental in the development of inclusive education (Janney et al., 1995; Singal, 2005; Al-Zyouidi, 2006; Koutrouba et al., 2006).

In addition, there is an important role for the Local Educational Authorities and inclusive schools administration and management to equip inclusive schools. According to Batu (2010), preparing the school environment and ensuring that classrooms and educational equipment resources for learning are available before implementation of inclusive education, as well as during its implementation is pivotal. In this respect, a study conducted by Macleod (2001), which aimed to promote the inclusive education of students with special needs, identified some factors that affect inclusive education. Most of the factors identified reflect the fact that a less supportive ethos of inclusion within the Local Education Authority (LEA) and the school was found and these were identified as barriers. For example, he found LEA's lacked practical commitment towards inclusive practices in spite of it having an apparent dedication in policy terms. In addition, across schools there was a lack of collaboration (or facilitating framework)

including a reluctance on the part of some schools to accept students with special needs; these all represent challenges to inclusive education. Hence, it can be argued that successful inclusion may be more achievable if school environments, such as classrooms, are appropriately facilitated to meet the challenges of deaf students. Additionally, school environments may affect negatively on parents, making them disinterested and unsupportive of inclusive education for their deaf children if they lack confidence in the capacity of the schools to understand their children's needs and to provide facilities and resources in school (Sadek and Sadek, 2000; Elkins et al., 2003).

Moreover, a study carried out by Semmel et al., (1991) showed that teachers were dissatisfied with inclusive education in their schools. They identified some factors that would affect the success of inclusion, which included: class size, lack of adequate teacher preparation, and the curriculum, teaching experience and strategies for teaching (Kristensen et al., 2003). For these things to be provided supporting frameworks and training are required and they need to be funded. School funding and local and school policy have been shown as a factor affecting inclusive education for deaf students. According to Avramidis et al., (2000) schools with extra funding provision expressed more acceptance of inclusive education of students with different special needs, as the schools were able to train their teachers and staff, and provide counselling and resources as needed.

However, arguably a lack of resources in inclusive school must not be used as an excuse or justification for not encouraging inclusive education practice. Miles (2000) explains that the attitudinal obstacle to the implementation of inclusion is so great that the level of school resources may sometimes be seen as irrelevant (this is discussed in much greater depth in the next chapter). However, for objectives to meet strong policies at all levels are needed. For example, Fraser et al., (2005) suggest there needs to be clear policy in place at the government, Local Educational Authority, and school level if the implementation of inclusive education is to be achieved and if national goals for education are to be met. It is clear that inclusive education is mainly an attempt to change and modify current education policy and practice which results in failure of students with special needs (Ainscow, 2007).

4.11.3 Collaboration and Communication

Additionally, the literature shows that one of the major challenges which must be faced if the development of inclusive education is to be successful is collaboration on a number of levels. For example, inclusive practices can be effective when there is a well-built collaboration and relationship between schools and parents. In the case of this study ideally collaboration should be effective amongst schools' staff (principals and teachers) and between schools and the parents of the deaf child. Inclusive schools have to spend time with parents of deaf students and involve them in school activities that would strengthen that collaboration and partnership. According to Villa and Thousand (2005) inclusive schools have to develop practices with parents which are based on mutual respect and which involve the valuing of each other's contributions. In addition inclusive school have to provide necessary information to parents through a clear and simple way to understand. In her review of the Indian literature, relating to factors perceived in the development of inclusive education, Singal (2005) has concluded that schools don't have adequate community awareness or parental involvement and the resulting lack of mutual collaboration between schools, parents and communities could be a major obstacle to successful inclusive education (Al-Zyoudi, 2006). Hanfy (2003) stresses the significance of awareness and collaboration around inclusive education which implies that everyone in the school such as students, principals, teachers, and parents should feel that they belong, realise their potential, and contribute to the life of the inclusive school. Nevertheless, the connection between a successful inclusive education for students with deafness and the context, specifically the inclusive school in which it functions, is considered as one of the major challenges in the literature.

4.11.4 Nature of the Special Needs

The review of literature also showed that many other factors influence the process of inclusive education such as nature and the severity of the special needs. Generally, the degree of deafness and other difficulties, such as physical, cognitive, and behavioural dimensions, are important factors that influence inclusive education of deaf students. According to Avramidis and Norwich (2002) they found that whilst attitudes are generally positive, the nature and severity of student's needs and requirements strongly influence teachers' outlook towards inclusive practices. Teachers showed more positive

attitudes towards the inclusion of students with mild disabilities - including the degree of deafness - than students with more complex needs and with severe hearing loss. Similarly, it seems that teachers advocate inclusion of children with mild/moderate deafness rather than children with severe deafness (Al-Zyoudi, 2006). In the same direction, Forlin (1995) found that acceptance of inclusive education was lower for children with an intellectual disability than children with a physical disability such as visual and hearing disabilities. This seems to be a tendency in other studies too (Soodak et al., 1998; Al-Khatteeb, 2004). Whereas, in the Clough and Lindsay (1991) study, the majority of school staff surveyed, ranked the needs of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties as being most difficult to meet, followed by children with learning difficulties, children with visual impairment, and children with deafness.

It could be concluded here that there are too many factors that may affect implications of successful inclusive education for deaf students. However, none of these factors could be considered as a single predictor of inclusive education. Of the mentioned factors, lack of understanding and training about inclusive education, lack of facilities and educational materials, experience of principals and teachers, and lack of communication and collaboration between school staff as well as parents seem to be the most effective factors towards inclusive education for deaf students. However, we should take into account that most of these factors are inter-related and affect both policy and practice of inclusive education. Moreover, it has been highlighted that although factors leading to inclusion may be similar in different contexts, the complexity of each single factor is differently rated based on the degree of development in the context under investigation.

To sum up, the literature review highlights a number of studies (Avramidis et al., 2000; Frederickson, 2003; Ellins and Porter, 2005) which have been conducted in several countries to investigate the attitudes of school principals, teachers and parents towards inclusive education for deaf students. Most of this research was undertaken in Western countries, where the education systems are different from the Saudi Arabian context due to a) cross-cultural variations, b) the outlook and understanding of the basic principles of special education for deaf students, and c) in relation to educational programmes. Nevertheless, the findings of these studies have an important influence and have been very useful in shaping this research. This is in terms of developing awareness and

obtaining knowledge regarding inclusive education, as well as assisting in the framework of the methodology and data analysis. It can be argued that reviewing literature of this phenomenon in any given context could provide useful implications for developing theory and practice. This is specifically vital for some Arabic countries as the part of the contextual factors on the teaching and learning processes has been largely missing in educational research specifically in Arabic countries (Gahin, 2001).

4.12 The Possibility of Change

Due to the aforementioned analysis of the various factors that influence inclusive education, a number of researches and studies (Frederickson and Cline, 2002; Fox et al., 2004; Ring and Travers, 2005; Ainscow, 2007) have mainly concentrated on identifying key issues that could lead to a successful inclusive education. For example, Frederickson and Cline (2002) recognised a range of different studies, conducted in different countries concluded that for inclusion to be successful there should be significant changes to all aspects of the school environment. Vaughn and Schumm (1995) suggest that to have effective and responsible inclusive education for students with special educational needs and disabilities there are eight issues to be evaluated, which include:

- Considering academic and social progress in general classes as the major criteria for considering alternative interventions.
- Considering teachers' choice regarding their willingness to teach in inclusive schools/classes.
- Adequate human and physical resources.
- Developing inclusive practices tailored to the needs of the students, parents and communities.
- Continually monitoring and evaluating the organisation of provision.
- Ensuring ongoing professional development is available to all staff.
- Encouraging the development of alternative teaching strategies and means of adapting the curriculum developing an agreed philosophy on inclusion which provides guidance to teachers, parents and others.

In addition, Ainscow (2007: 148) highlighted the importance of the development of policies for practices of inclusive education, which include; 1) developments in the area of teaching and learning in school; 2) school improvement should focus on priority areas; 3) collaboration amongst colleagues in schools, and parents, which can create change and improvements based upon a wider range of expertise, resources and support. Moreover, Kilgore et al., (2002) recognised that a system of democratic governance, collaboration, continuous professional development, and supportive leadership as helpful to changing schools and implementing inclusive education.

In theory drawing upon the experiences and educational policies of countries that have more developed special education and inclusion policies and practices can help with the aim of creating inclusive schools with high performing systems. Where policies are borrowed it is usually because there is an interest in duplicating the positive experience of other countries, particularly those countries that are believed to represent 'best practice' (Raffe, 2011). However, such policies cannot be effectively adopted or borrowed without adapting them to productively interact with the culture and systems of the country that wishes to gain from such an arrangement.

Therefore, it is important when using international experience to understand its broader context. The historical context of a policy influences how it works in the original culture as does the broader culture, which may be responsible for its specific form of efficacy. There may also be differences between national practices and borrowed policy due to the determination of national belief systems (Gabel and Danforth, 2008). In relation to this study the concept of inclusion is problematic because Saudi Arabia does not have the same understanding and historical relationship with the notion of an inclusive society as compared to some western countries. Commenting on such circumstances, Barton and Armstrong (2007:1; cited in Gabel and Danforth, 2008) suggest this is not just a cross-national problem but that it has resonance within a country. They argue, "that we cannot just apply the language of 'inclusion' uncritically, assuming that meaning will be shared across culture-or even within the same national context or educational authority". It is important to consider how that policy will fit and to explore the challenging issues that may arise before transferring a policy to a new context (Raffe, 2011; Auld and Morris, 2014). Where policy borrowing from other jurisdictions

has taken place, without understanding the implications of the changes that have been introduced for the new context, this has led to unproductive change.

Inclusive education is a relatively new concept in the Arab countries including Saudi, and complexities and controversies are inflected by this context. Inclusive education was developed in North America and Europe and applying policies based on it in countries with such different jurisdictions, such as Saudi Arabia, requires well-conceptualised adjustments that take into account the different educational and cultural context. Understanding what is meant by inclusive education, within the competing international and national interpretations, is arguably an essential starting point given that education is an ethical and political issue that takes place in a cultural context (Gallagher, 2014). “Schools reflect and enact the dominant ideologies of their respective cultures” (Gallagher, 2014: 832). This is particularly important in the Saudi context where students are segregated according to gender, and the dominant research tradition in the field is empiricism or positivism. This positivist view aligns with a medical model of disability which views the disability as inherent in the person. The dominance of a scientific methodology has arguably had ‘undesirable consequences for the people it is intended to serve as well as for the field as a whole’ (Gallagher, 2014: 825) and it runs counter to the spirit of the inclusive educational policies that are being borrowed which are highly influenced by social models of disability. Employing a qualitative methodology may help to understand how such policy and conceptual borrowing interacts with the complex field of inclusive education in a way that is specific to the Saudi context.

The literature also suggests that successful inclusion mainly depends on creating a collaborative environment with highly prepared and trained staff holding positive attitudes towards inclusive education equipped with all the necessary support; financial, administrative and political framing. Inclusive education changes are a comprehensive and on-going process (Slee, 2011). I do strongly believe that

‘Change is not just about the creation of new policies and procedures to implement external mandates. It is also about the development of personal strategies by individuals to respond to, and seek to influence the impact of structural and cultural change: personal as much as organizational change’ (Bennett et al., 1992).

Additionally, the whole school needs to be helpful towards inclusive education of deaf students. Leaders in schools have a critical role in leading and supporting change for inclusive schools. In this respect, school principals need to be supportive and give the support and resources to teachers in order to feel good about the conversion toward inclusive education. Crockett (2002; cited in Travers et al., 2014) highlights five core principles of leadership in developing inclusive schools which demonstrate how all encompassing their approach needs to be: 1) ethical practice, ensuring universal educational access and accountability; 2) individual considerations, addressing individuality and exceptionality in learning; 3) equity under law, providing an appropriate education through equitable public policies; 4) effective programming, providing individualised programming designed to enhance student performance; 5) establishing productive partnerships. Other principles are proposed as developing school principals in ways that would enable them to analyse the complexities of inclusive education, such as: a respect for others; working as advocates for child benefit; a focus on social justice including a commitment to the principle of full educational opportunities for every learner; a keenness to create effective communication and collaboration with others on behalf of students with special needs and their parents. The principles demonstrate the role it is believed that leaders should play. McLeskey and Waldron (2002: 66) also provide a list of key points which principals and teachers should abide by in order to achieve inclusive education:

- Provide support for program development and implementation including time for planning changes and for staff development;
- Ensure that teachers are in control of changes;
- Ensure that the faculty members own and support changes;
- Encourage risk-taking among teachers and assure them that they will be given support in the event that certain aspects of the inclusive school do not initially succeed; and
- Encourage ongoing evaluation and improvement of the inclusive school.

It is believed that understanding the real meaning and aims of inclusive education can lead to increasing the value and implementation of the inclusion of deaf students and others with special educational needs and disabilities in inclusive school. According to

the UK based Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education (CSIE, 2000: 1) inclusive education involves:

- Considerate valuing of all students and staff equally;
- Increasing the participation of students in, and reducing their exclusion from, the culture and communities of local schools;
- Restructuring the cultures and policies in schools so that they respond to the diversity of students in the locality;
- Reducing barriers to learning and participation for all students, not only those with impairments or those who are categorised as ‘having special educational needs’;
- Viewing the difference between students as resources to support learning, rather than as problems to be overcome; and
- Emphasising the role of school in building a community and developing values, as well as in increasing achievement.

It is clear from that inclusive education requires many strategies and changes. Thus, the above provides some schemata which can help to think through the responsibilities and key issues that should be applied in order to achieve successful inclusive education for deaf students.

4.13 Concluding Remarks

In spite of a whole plethora of developments, inclusive education remains a complex and controversial issue which tends to generate heated debates (Farrell, 2004; Ainscow, 2007). This signifies that the term inclusion in its broadest sense is so complex that it reveals the impossibility of having a shared international definition because of the different social and political contexts. Nevertheless, there are some similarities, for example, inequalities and differences still permeate all societies - which in some ways always make inclusive education an idealistic aspiration, for many countries including Saudi Arabia. This chapter discussed a historical review of the concept of inclusive education, which rejected the medical model with its focus on the problem as being related to individuals’ impairments and sees students as ‘abnormal’ to investigating the attitudinal and environmental barriers that meet students with disabilities in school and

society (Rieser, 2008). Next inclusive education, its features, rationale and its implementation in a global context was discussed. Also, the models of inclusive education were highlighted. Finally, the main factors affecting inclusive education, including for deaf students, and, the process of change were discussed. In the next chapter, I explore in more depth the issues relating to attitudes and the way they have been reviewed, some previous studies especially regarding attitudes of schools' principals, teachers and parents towards inclusive education for deaf students.

Chapter Five

On the Concept of Attitudes and Inclusive Education

Chapter Five

On the Concept of Attitudes and Inclusive Education

5.1 Introduction

As suggested in the last chapter the attitudes of those involved with inclusive education are likely to have a strong impact upon its success. In addition unhelpful attitudes have been at the heart of many of the problems with inclusive education. Therefore this chapter explores the concept and the literature exploring the role of attitudes in more depth. A great deal of research which has sought to examine school principals, teachers and parents' attitudes towards the common values of inclusive education, has illustrated that the attitudes of all of these groups are likely to be vital for the success of inclusive education policies and implementation of students with deafness in general schools regardless of national context (Alghazo, 2002; Smith and Leonard, 2005; Bursuck and Friend, 2006; Subban and Sharma, 2006; Kalyva et al., 2007; Al-Samade, 2008). Although the literature discloses various definitions of the term attitudes, broadly speaking it denotes a person's reaction based upon the information or beliefs they have and it includes their feelings or emotions towards a particular event, thing or an idea (Moliner and Tafani, 1997; Krosnick et al., 2005).

Additionally, models of attitudes are important for the topic of this thesis because, as will be seen in chapters seven to ten, changing attitudes is proposed as crucial to improving the education of deaf students in Saudi Arabian boy's primary schools. An understanding of these models has informed the recommendations I make in chapter ten. There are two common models of attitudes which include the single component model and the three component model (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993; Stahlberg and Frey, 1996). In contrast to the view of the single component model of attitudes, the three component model of attitudes is a multidimensional model (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993). It is this more complex model which informs my understanding. The review of literature (Krosnick et al., 2005; Smith and Mackie, 2007) also shows a variety of methods and procedures used to measure the attitudes of people. However, the more complex model suggests that attitudes are best understood through my qualitative approach to the research. Therefore, this chapter presents an overview of literature

which includes understanding the historical and cultural context of the different literatures and how they relate to one another focusing on:

- Explanations of the concepts or definitions of attitudes (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993; Krosnick et al., 2005).
- A discussion of the two common models of attitudes including the single component model and the three component model (Ajzen, 2005; Franzoi, 1996).
- An examination of the methods and procedures which have been used to access the self-reported attitudes of research participants (Oppenheim, 1992; Hogg and Vaughan, 2005; Krosnick et al., 2005).
- An overview of studies concerning attitudes towards inclusive education of deaf students (Sadek and Sadek, 2000; Jones et al., 2002; Elkins et al., 2003; Al-Zyoudi, 2006).

This literature frames this research and provides an important backdrop from which I developed a working model of the concept of attitudes which shaped the way the data was collected and critically analysed. In the same direction the review of literature is used to raise issues about the mismatch between attitudes and what really takes place in inclusive education for deaf students in general schools, which are explored in this research.

5.2 Explanations of the Concept of Attitudes

The literature shows how diverse and conflicting definitions of the concept of attitudes have developed historically. Initially attitudes were viewed as mental processes that shaped the real and potential reactions of an individual. This is signified in the definition of attitude proposed by Allport (1935):

‘a mental and neutral state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual’s response to all objects and situations with which it is related’ (p.798).

A number of researchers have considered this definition to be valid and have explored the implications of it. For example, Bordens and Horowitz (2001) interpreted it as follows: a) since attitudes are a mental or neural state of readiness, they are necessarily private which implies that they cannot be measured directly; b) as attitudes are organised through experience, they are presumably formed through learning from a variety of experiences and influences. This signifies that attitudes are formed by human culture, especially by parents, friends and other agents of socialisation such as schools and television; and, c) given that attitudes apply dynamic influence on an individual's response to objects, attitudes are directly related to human behaviour. In the same direction, Petty and Cacioppo (1981: 7) stated that 'the term attitude should be used to refer to a general, enduring positive or negative feeling about some person, object or issue'. These definitions raise a number of issues which are discussed throughout this chapter. Firstly, they are underpinned by a theoretical understanding of the nature of attitudes. However, there is a question as to whether attitudes are one-dimensional concepts representing an individual's evaluative response (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980) or if they are more multidimensional arising from the complexity of concern, cognition and conation (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993) and other factors. Secondly, this raises questions about the ways that attitudes are investigated (Krosnick et al., 2005). And finally, there is an ongoing debate about the relationship between attitude and behaviour.

In their discussion and analysis of the term attitudes and its nature, Moliner and Tafani (1997) illustrated that although there are various definitions of the terms attitude, three critical guidelines can be distinguished:

1. Attitude is a process that is impossible to observe directly as it is internal to the subject.
2. The observation process of attitude depends upon the evaluative nature of the response a person manifests about the object of attitude.
3. The response of a person towards an attitudinal object can be divided into three classes, cognitive, affective and behavioural. These three classifications are discussed in section 5.3.2 below.

Hence, it can be argued that the above definitions of attitudes signify a response to an event, person, information or beliefs about the object of the attitude such as their feelings or emotions towards it. It can also be claimed that although attitudes can be categorised into different types, the distinctive element of attitude is its evaluative nature which comprises an individual's perspective toward a particular object which includes a person, a thing or an idea.

5.3 Models of Attitudes

As discussed above about the different definitions of attitudes, the literature reveals that there are two common models of attitudes which include the single component model and the three component model (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993; Stahlberg and Frey, 1996). Each model is discussed below:

5.3.1 The Single Component Model of Attitudes

Franzoi (1996) explains this model as being the emotions or feelings of an individual towards an object. It is a one-dimensional model concentrating on one component in which evaluation is central. Moreover, this restriction enables followers of this view to distinguish attitude as a concept from others such as beliefs, intentions and overt actions (Fazio and Olson, 2003) which in other models are interrelated and also complex. For example, with regards to the concept of beliefs, it refers to the ideas, opinions, information or knowledge individuals have about an object towards which they develop attitudes which are partially based upon this.

5.3.2 The Three Component Model of Attitudes

Contrary to the view of the single component model of attitudes, the three component model of attitudes is a multidimensional model (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993) that includes responses categorised into: a) affective (relating to evaluative feelings of liking and disliking), b) cognitive (i.e. beliefs, opinions and ideas of the object of attitude), and c) behavioural (concerning the behavioural intentions or action tendencies). Evaluations are related to all classes of evaluative responses, including overt or covert, cognitive, affective or behavioural. This means that an individual does not have an attitude until

they respond in an evaluative way to the object on an affective, cognitive and/or behavioural basis. Generally, this model views attitude as an inferred state which cannot be directly observed, with evaluative responses divided into three classes:

1. Cognitive component: refers to thoughts or ideas about the object of people's attitudes (Stahlberg and Frey, 1996; Ajzen, 2005). People convey either positive or negative evaluations of the objects of their attitudes. These can be at either end of the extremes or at a more neutral point. For example, some parents believe that deaf students' social and emotional functioning is enhanced by inclusive education, which links their attitudes to the object (inclusive education) with a positive perspective. Other parents believe that the academic achievement of students without deafness may be hindered by inclusive education, which links inclusive education to a negative view. However, what causes these feelings and ideas is complex because the cognitive responses, as pointed out by Eagly and Chaiken (1993), are recognised by different names, such as cognitions, knowledge, opinions, information, and inferences.
2. The affective component: includes emotions, feelings, moods, and sympathetic nervous system activity experienced by individuals in relation to attitude objects (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993; Ajzen, 2005). These emotional responses can range from extremely positive to extremely negative and may be part of the evaluative dimension of meaning. Therefore, regarding the concept of inclusive education, individuals may experience feelings of optimism or on the other hand, pessimism and this will affect how they act towards it.
3. The behavioural component: consists of the explicit actions that people demonstrate in relation to the object of their attitudes (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993; Ajzen, 2005). These responses also range from extremely positive to extremely negative and can therefore be located on an evaluative dimension of meaning. For example, as will be seen with inclusive education in Saudi Arabian boy's schools, school principals may behave positively or negatively towards students with deafness in their school. Moreover, with teachers, their intentions may be to adapt teaching styles to accommodate students with deafness in their class, but they may or may not carry out

this intention. The emotional and cognitive aspects will interact to shape this behaviour.

Several practical attempts have been made to explore how these different components interrelate. Most efforts in the psychological field of attitude research have focused on testing out the different components. For example, early researchers such as Ostrom (1969) and Kothandpani (1971) supported the three component model when they concluded that cognition, affect, and behaviour were interrelated yet distinguishable from each other. Moreover, the different dimensions of attitude may vary depending on the attitudinal object studied, as assumed by Schlegel (1975) and Schlegel and DiTecco (1982). However, they also agreed that attitudinal structures can be conveyed in a single affective response. This led to research exploring factors that strengthen or weaken the different components relationship. Others found that attitudes acquired through direct experience increased the consistency between behaviour and the affective component of attitude (Fazio and Zanna, 1981). This reinforces the idea conveyed in the last chapter with relation to school staff who have more experience of working with children with special educational needs and disabilities as being more positive towards inclusive education. It has also been pointed out by (Franzoi, 1996) that cognitive information at times is important in determining the formation of an individual's attitude towards an object, while in emotionally arousing situations, affective information may be a key factor. This study supports the notion that the training of teachers might be important. Franzoi's (ibid) point also raises the question of whether principals or teachers have been emotionally moved by any students with special needs. Ajzen (2005) stated that according to which method is used and assumptions made, data can be interpreted as either supporting the single or three component model.

These models of attitudes support the value of one of the main objectives of this research which is to explore the attitudes of school principals, teachers and parents towards inclusive education of deaf students. However, it also demonstrates how complex a notion this is. In addressing the main concern of gaining an understanding of their attitudes towards inclusive education this research has used qualitative interviews in order to focus more on a) the formation of their attitudes, and whether such attitudes are formed through their upbringing, training, or their experience as principals or

teachers and, b) how such attitudes influence inclusive education, in particular the education of deaf students in boy's inclusive primary schools.

5.4 Measurement of Attitudes

The literature (Stahlberg and Frey, 1996; Krosnick et al., 2005) shows that a wide variety of methods and procedures have been used to measure peoples' attitudes. Most of them are based on the assumption that attitudes can be measured by stated opinions or beliefs of individuals about specific objects (Krosnick et al., 2005). According to Hogg and Vaughan (2005) these methods are usually called direct self-report measures in which individuals are asked directly about their attitudes or opinions; that is, they are to give some sort of self-descriptions. According to literature (Oppenheim, 1992; Hogg and Vaughan, 2005; Krosnick et al., 2005) there are three basic classical methods often used to access the self-reported attitudes of research participants: Thurstone's equal-appearing interval method; a Likert summated rating method; and/or a semantic differential method (Krosnick et al., 2005). These more quantitative self-reporting methods, particularly the Likert method, have been used extensively to measure individuals' attitudes towards different objects. According to Smith and Mackie (2007), self-reporting approaches like this normally consist of a set of questions that measure or produce an evaluation of the object of the attitude, for example, a parent can be asked about his belief regarding inclusive education of deaf students in general schools. However, researchers have identified advantages and disadvantages to this approach. Krosnick et al., (2005) stated that these methods have at least two main advantages. First of all, many items (as measured by a set of questions) yield a final score that can be compared to other ways of measuring attitudes. Secondly, it provides empirical evidence of convergence of interpretations across persons which can be useful. Nevertheless, the assumption of self-report method is that persons participating will be willing and motivated to explain themselves accurately and honestly, while some participants may distort their response to suit the questionnaire items or their answers can involve self-deception (Ajzen, 2005). As we have seen above attitudes are complex responses which include behaviour and shaped by knowledge and emotions. Peoples sense of what quantitative measures will say about them may shape their response as much as their feelings about inclusive education. To overcome the disadvantages of self-report methods, there are some alternative ways which are non-direct and have been

used to measure attitudes. Within psychology the most popular methods of this approach are; unobtrusive behavioural observation and physiological measures (Krosnick et al., 2005). With these indirect methods, the researcher tries to measure attitudes without the individual being aware of the measurement procedure. It is worth mentioning that, any of these actions have to be under the research ethical issues.

5.5 Overview of Studies Concerning Attitudes towards Inclusive Education

Whilst studies have been conducted to investigate attitudes towards inclusive education in many parts of the world, including Western countries (Avramidis and Norwich, 2002; Smith and Leonard, 2005; Zionts, 2005) and some other countries around the world (Al-Zyoudi, 2006; Subban and Sharma, 2006; Kalyva et al., 2007), this type of research is still in its early stages in the Saudi Arabian context. Which is one of the reasons this research is concerned with the inclusive education of deaf students in general schools in a Saudi Arabian framework. However, it also means that literature from other countries has to be leaned upon. For example, the review of studies by Jelas (2000) and Spedding (2005) have showed that schools' staff including school principals and teachers, and parents' negative attitude and lack of knowledge toward inclusive education majorly undermines the development of the inclusive education process. In the same direction, Avramidis (2000) assumes that the successful implementation of any inclusive policy is largely dependent on school staff being positive about it. This denotes that without the readiness of school principals and teachers to accept children with deafness in the general schools and classrooms, inclusion will not be successful.

It is important to understand how previous studies of inclusive education in developing countries and others present similar or different issues. The educational systems and cultural contexts of all countries, including developing countries are likely to display similarities and differences to Saudi Arabia. The notion of similarity between developing countries is based on the premise that the concerns of one developing country are the concerns of many. However, the attitudes of school principals has been a problem in western countries who are comparatively advanced in terms of inclusive education. A study conducted by Bursuck and Friend (2006) discussing school principals' attitudes toward inclusive education showed that some principals hold negative attitudes and a low belief of the success of inclusive education. Many of those

school principals were not sure that inclusive education would work with all their deaf and special needs students. Another study by Spedding (2005) has highlighted that some school principals have intolerance in relation to the overwork load in the case of inclusive education of deaf students. This may be due to the lack of awareness about inclusive education and special needs (Morley et al., 2005) or to difficulties school principals face in managing children's behaviour within the school environment (Hodge et al., 2004). In this context, Avramidis (2005) argued that some school principals feel that the inclusive education of students with deafness or any special needs will have a negative impact on the standard of achievement for the school.

Inclusive education research conducted in Arab countries has also investigated the attitudes of school principals and teachers toward the inclusive education of students with special needs which will include those with deafness. For example a survey study conducted in Kuwait by Abdul-Ghafour (1999) examined school principals and teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of students with special needs in general primary schools. The study showed that although all the participants considered the recent trend towards inclusion served those with special educational needs and created opportunities for social interaction with students in general schools, they did not appear to accept the idea of inclusive education. The finding showed that the type of special educational needs and degree of disability influenced this as discussed in chapter four. Those with medium disabilities were better included than those with severe special needs. The disabilities that were most likely to be accepted were motor disabilities and visual disabilities. The disabilities deemed least acceptable were the categories of mental problems and deafness. In Saudi Arabia context, it seemed that deaf students were also least accepted due to difference of language used and difficulty of communication in inclusive schools.

A considerable amount of research has found that teachers' attitudes are specifically critical regarding inclusive education for deaf students in general schools (Ellins and Porter, 2005; Al-Zyoudi, 2006; Subban and Sharma, 2006; Kalyva et al., 2007; Al-Samade, 2008). However, it is likely that with variations between countries and even within countries in terms of philosophies, policies and systems, teachers' attitudes will likely vary as well. Attitudes towards inclusive education more broadly suggest that this is the case. Leyser et al., (1994) conducted a cross-culture study of teachers' attitudes

towards inclusion in the USA, Germany, Israel, Ghana, Taiwan and the Philippines. Their findings showed that there were differences in attitude, to what they termed integration, between these countries. Teachers in the USA and Germany had the most positive attitudes. Teachers' attitudes were significantly less positive in Ghana, Philippines, Israel and Taiwan. The authors reasoned that this could probably be due to limited or non-existent training to acquire inclusion competencies, the limited opportunities for inclusion in some of these countries, teaching experiences and experience with students with special education needs. It is clear that training and experience is a very important factor for success of inclusive education as mentioned in chapter four and as implied by the theories of attitudes described above. Whilst these studies together suggest that teachers' attitudes towards inclusion varied from one country to another. Nevertheless, in many cases, the differences between countries are not just related to the country, rather they may be related to other contextual factors within educational systems and schools, school staffs' awareness and understanding, training, experiences, type of children's needs, times of these studies.

In another study conducted in Palestine, Abdullah (1998) examined teachers' attitudes towards the inclusive education of students with special needs in general schools. The respondents showed positive attitudes towards inclusive education. Dirham (1997) found in his study of inclusion in general schools in the United Arab Emirates, teachers had negative attitudes towards including students with special needs in general schools. They believed that generally, inclusion was not useful for students with or without special needs. This research also suggests that teachers' knowledge and experience regarding inclusive education and special educational needs are significant to accept and support the implementation of inclusion. Similar results were found by Alghazo (2002) who explored Jordanian teachers' and school principals' attitudes towards the inclusion of children with special educational needs including deaf children in general educational settings. The findings of the study showed that both principals and teachers hold negative attitudes towards inclusion of students including deaf students, and those with more expertise had more favourable attitudes towards inclusion of deaf students. In line with what has been found through attitudinal research more broadly, it is clear from that, expertise and knowledge is an important factor for the implementation of inclusive education. There are studies that find positive attitudes and report their positive effects. An Australian study by Subban and Sharma (2006) found that participants generally

held positive attitudes toward the inclusive education of students with special needs including deaf students into general schools.

On the other hand, it can be argued that there are a lot of contradictory findings about inclusive education which make it difficult to ascertain the role of attitudes. In Hong Kong, a study conducted by Yuen and Westwood (2001) assessed teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in general schools and found that the teachers did not hold particularly favourable or supportive attitudes towards the policy of inclusive education for deaf students. However, the majority supported the underlying principle that it is every child's right to learn in a regular classroom. The problem was that most were uncertain about the actual practicalities of such placements. Additionally, a study by Vaughn et al., (1996) examined general and special teachers' views of inclusive education through the use of focus group interviews. The majority of these teachers, who were not participating in inclusive programmes at that time, had strong negative feelings about inclusion and felt that decision makers were out of touch with classroom realities. In the same way Hodge et al., (2004) contended that teachers' negative attitudes could undermine the development and improvement of inclusive education. They concluded that teachers' attitudes about inclusive education were linked to children's individual characteristics and the special needs they exhibited, rather than educational placement philosophy.

Similarly, the literature has also revealed a broad variety of attitudes amongst parents regarding inclusive education. Some parents have positive attitudes (Lombardi et al., 1994; Reynolds, 2001; Jones et al., 2002), while others hold negative attitudes and prefer separate schools for deaf students (Grove and Fisher, 1999; Elkins et al., 2003). These parents often believe that inclusive schools are not able to accommodate their children's learning needs (Palmer et al., 2001). Although parents of children with deafness mention numerous benefits of inclusive education, like the increased social skills and friendship (Palmer et al., 2001), yet they have worries concerning their child's ability to join the other students on the playground or in class activities, to ask for help or to be competitive in schools/classes (Rosenkoetter and Rosenkoetter, 1993). Moreover, several studies have identified that the negative attitudes of parents towards inclusive education can cause a major hindrance to successful inclusion (Forlin, 1998; Macleod, 2001).

Research conducted to investigate inclusive education confirms the importance of studying the attitudes and beliefs of school principals, teachers and parents in order to establish successful inclusive education. Nevertheless, the outcomes of these studies generally provide a mixed picture. There is a survey study in the Egyptian context by Sadek and Sadek (2000) which explored the attitudes of parents, teachers and principals towards inclusive education. The results showed that generally there were positive attitudes towards inclusive education including for deaf students in general schools. Another study conducted in Kenya by Mundi (2009) showed that most of the parents of deaf children prefer to take their children to special schools than inclusive school, where those parents believe that their children would receive more attention, special care and education in these schools. Moreover, parents mentioned that their deaf children are able to interact with their peers who use the same language. In the same study, a few parents preferred taking their deaf children to the inclusive school nearest their home, or a specialised unit in an inclusive school.

Most literature in the field supports the notion that there is value in principals, teachers and parents having positive attitudes in terms of producing effective inclusive education. For example, Avramidis and Norwich (2002) concluded that attitudes of school staff are very important in achieving inclusive education which, in turn, was translated into practice. Moreover, school principals and teachers who are willing to accept responsibility for inclusive education of deaf students and feel confident in their instructional and management skills can successfully implement inclusive programmes. However, it is also argued that inclusive education requires a shift in the attitudes of all of those who constitute the schools' society as well as the wider community and those responsible for the development of policies and practices that reinforce inclusive behaviour (Al-Zyoudi, 2006). It is based on the philosophy that the whole school shares in the responsibility for inclusive education. Creating an awareness of culture with inclusive education is critical because schools act as mirrors of the larger community. Since the social context and school surroundings create an environment that plays a large role in shaping the attitudes of participants, it is argued that the complexities of inclusive education, deafness, and attitudes should be studied within a framework that recognises the influence of context, as discussed in previous chapters. Therefore, in this research I have made a particular point of addressing these themes within the exploration of attitudes of school principals, teachers and parents. This research adopts a

perspective which is closer to the three component framework of understanding such attitudes towards inclusive education in the approach that was taken to interviewing and to analysing and interpreting the data.

5.6 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has reviewed various literature regarding attitudes. It started with the concept and models of attitudes, the single component and the three component. Then it moved to discussing the measurement of attitudes and finally ending with a discussion of studies concerning attitudes towards the inclusive education of deaf students. This literature review generated an understanding of the importance of previous research regarding attitudes towards inclusive education for deaf students. It also provided theoretical understanding of the issues under investigation. The three component model has been adopted because it highlights the way that people's levels of knowledge and understanding, their feeling and their behaviours need to be understood if their attitudes are to be successfully explored. In the research methods I describe how the use of interviews and observation were seen as a valuable way of revealing the opinion, and attitudes of participants and that permeated the school. Further details are presented in the next chapter which discussed the methodological framework design of this research.

Chapter Six

Design of Fieldwork: Materials and Methods

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Design of Fieldwork: Materials and Methods

6.1 Introduction

As stated in the previous chapter, over the past two decades there have been many changes which affect the education of students with deafness in Saudi Arabia. These changes can be conceptualised through the term inclusive education. They are situated within a framework that focuses on what appears to be an aspiration for inclusive education. However, due to the challenges associated with the application of inclusion and because of the myriad problems faced when dealing with deaf students in a school setting, it has been evident to those working in the educational field of deaf students in Saudi Arabia that changes introduced have many obstacles despite the concerted efforts of the Saudi Ministry of Education (Al-Musa, 2010; Raheem, 2010). The limited number of studies conducted on inclusive education of deaf students and the challenges associated with its implementation have added to the problems of those trying to develop the practice of inclusive education for deaf children in Saudi Arabia (Alquraini, 2011). This study has aimed to address this gap in the research by exploring the reality of inclusive education in all five boy's primary schools in Riyadh that specialise in inclusion of deaf students. Therefore, this research intended to build on the previous research described in the literature and to:

- Explore the knowledge, understanding and attitudes of schools' principals, teachers and parents regarding inclusive education of deaf students.
- Examine the factors that influence inclusive education of deaf students.
- Determine the kind of services required for deaf students and the best practices to support inclusive education in Saudi Arabia.
- To contribute to the broader literature on inclusive education for deaf students on this basis.

Consequently, this chapter presents the methodology and the research framework of the study. It starts with a description of the philosophical underpinnings, which highlights

the interpretive paradigm. This is followed by the rationale for adopting the qualitative method in the current study, highlighting the research design; also ontology, epistemology, and methodology in this study are discussed. This chapter then moves towards data collection strategies including design and administration of instruments (interviews, observations and documentary data) through the fieldwork process. Finally, the sampling framework, ethical considerations, data analysis, quality of the study and issues relating to the researcher's positionality are addressed.

6.2 Philosophical Underpinnings

Obviously, a workable paradigm is essential to any research query. Guba and Lincoln (2004) described a paradigm as the worldview or the belief system which directs researchers to research social and educational phenomenon. It is the researchers' way of looking at the world of investigation, and what information is important and valid and needs to be recognised (Rubin and Rubin, 2012). In this regard, in human sciences there are two main paradigms: positivist and interpretive (Guba and Lincoln, 2004; Cohen et al., 2007). Firstly, the positivist paradigm, which is also known as the natural scientific method, where human perceptions, behaviours, beliefs and actions, are considered separate from the findings and not the focus of positivist approaches (Ernest, 1994; Morrison, 2002). It is believed that social reality can be investigated through the senses and that belief's and perceptions do not influence what is found provided the method is right. In addition, an important aspect of the positivist approach is the belief that it is possible to generalise the findings (Bryman, 2008).

Secondly, the interpretive paradigm, which acknowledges the significance of understanding participants' meanings (Pring, 2000) and working to descriptions of human situations, such as 'behaviour with meaning' to creating theories that explain this behaviour which is intentional and motivated (Cohen et al., 2007). It does not subscribe to the idea that there is one single universal reality that can be discovered through the application of correctly applied methods, nor does it ignore the influence of researchers as people who influence and interpret their environments in ways that shape the outcomes of their research. In the interpretive approach, the research is influenced by the researcher's personal involvement. Also, there is no claim to generalisability of findings, but rather the aim of research is to give information which can be applied to

similar contexts by similarly partial and motivated individuals and groups (Kaplan and Maxwell, 1994).

The interpretive paradigm refutes ideas underpinning more positivist paradigms, for example, the idea that there is justification for not focusing enough on the social context and the meanings people attribute, their beliefs or what they enact through their behaviours (Morrison, 2002). The interpretive paradigm focuses on perspectives and looking for participants' meanings, and as this study investigates human understanding and behaviours and is based on the idea that these both shape, and are constitute to one another the interpretive paradigm was suitable to be used. An overview of the basic assumptions of ontology, epistemology and methodology used is given in the next section.

6.3 The Interpretive Paradigm: ontology, epistemology, methodology

The approach used in research depends on what the researcher is attempting to discover or examine (Punch, 1998). This research is interpretive, intending 'to understand the subjective world of human experience' (Cohen et al., 2007: 21). Interpretive research is concerned with meaning and looking to understand the complex world of social members' explanation of a situation. Rubin and Rubin (2012) argued that the researchers in this paradigm attempt to investigate the participants and obtain a comprehensive understanding about their views regarding the world, work, and their experience. In this regard, the nature of reality in the interpretative paradigm is based on three basic assumptions: ontological, epistemological and methodological (Patton, 1990; Cohen et al., 2007).

The ontological assumption is the ontological position which is based on an understanding of the nature of reality or in qualitative paradigms it is a situation which proposes the existence of various realities inside the social world being studied. Crotty (2003: 10) describes ontology as concerned with 'the study of being..., with the nature of existence, with the structure of reality as such'. Where realities are perceived and constituted by the culture and social environment of participants (Cohen et al., 2007) this is what is studied. Therefore within the context of this study, the ontological orientation shaped the need to uncover the reality perceived by participants in the

context of their inclusive schools and their broad culture. This meant that the method needs to allow for understanding and exploring the complexities of inclusive education for deaf students in the social world of school principals, teachers and parents, to obtain an understanding of behaviour and the meanings upon which give life to them and are an integral part of them (Pring, 2000; Morrison, 2002).

The epistemological assumptions underpinning the study are concerned with the appropriate methods for generating knowledge, related to what and how we get that knowledge, the relationship between the knower/inquirer and the known/knowledge. Epistemology can be identified as ‘a philosophical grounding for deciding what kind of knowledges are possible and how can we ensure that they are both adequate and legitimate’ (Crotty, 2003: 8). In the interpretive paradigm, the epistemological approach acknowledges that participants hold their own knowledge about situations, and different participants might build meaning in different ways. In this paradigm, such information and knowledge is generated by discovering the meanings of the individuals in social situation which are gained through an inductive approach such as observations, and highlighted by words rather than numbers (Maxwell, 1996). Also, it has been argued that, in order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the epistemological assumptions in the area of educational and social studies, researchers should deal with that relationship between the researcher and the researched world, and the way in which knowledge is acquired. In this study, the aim was to construct an understanding of participants’ knowledge and attitudes about inclusive education for deaf students, and the factors influencing their inclusion. In this research, the reality is socially constructed from the perspectives of the different partners such as principals, teachers and parents for the reason that they might have different outlooks towards inclusive education for deaf students. In addition observations are used to explore in what ways inclusive practices are/are not appearing. Crotty (2003) explains the reality in a constructive way:

‘all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and transmitted with an essentially social context’.

Methodology is seen as the strategy, plan of action or process, where it is defined as ‘the research design that shapes our choice and use of particular methods and links them

to the desired outcomes' (Crotty, 2003: 7). In the same way, Ernest (1994: 21) describes methodology as 'a theory of which methods and techniques are appropriate and valid to use to generate and justify knowledge'. It is related to how the researcher gains knowledge about the social world. In this regard, the qualitative methodology is aligned with the interpretive approach, and uses mainly case study and purposive sampling (Yin, 2009). The case study research identifies 'the uniqueness of events or actions, arising from their being shaped by the meanings of those who are the participants in the situation' (Pring, 2000: 40). In this research, the case study approach was used to allow the researcher to study specific phenomena in their natural settings with an emphasis on depth of study (Bryman, 2008; Yin, 2009), where the second stage of the research was a single case study that draws upon multiple sites: all 5 boys primary schools specializing in deaf education in the capital city of Riyadh were studied. The methodology comprised of analysis of policy documents relevant to all of the schools, interviews with key stakeholders in each school (teachers, parents and principals), and the conducting of ethnographic style observations in the social spaces of the school. There are some advantages that make case study approach the best to answer the research questions tackled in this study. It provides deep insights about the case, inclusive deaf education in Saudi Arabia, which allows the researcher to retain the holistic and meaningful saturation of real-life events (Yin, 2009). As the case study relies on multiple methods of evidence it builds a rich and textured picture of deaf education in the capital city.

Additionally, the case was bounded by its focus on, a single disability (deaf education), its location (Riyadh), the sector (primary schools) and the gendering of the schools (boys schools). In Saudi Arabia, inclusive schools are dependent on the type of disability so in Riyadh and across the country there are schools that specialise in different forms of disability. Globally this is quite a unique way of interpreting inclusiveness. My focus on the single case of inclusive education for deaf students may be criticized for not applying to inclusive education for children with other disabilities. Care needs to be taken when generalizing from the findings of this project to other inclusive contexts even within Saudi for this reason. However, many of the issues I raise in my conclusions are likely to have resonance with other inclusive schools; for example, the issue with principals being insufficiently educated and specialized. The reason for focusing on this single disability and restricting it to primary schools was because my expertise in deaf education as a primary school teacher meant that I was

more able to understand qualitatively the context of the study drawing upon my own knowledge.

In addition, I have been able to produce a study that specifically has relevance for inclusive deaf education, an area that is both complex and much neglected in inclusive education research. The focus in Riyadh can also be seen as a restriction as it is only one part of Saudi Arabia. However, inclusive policy and the training of teachers are organized on a national level and national culture and religion permeate the whole country. Whilst there may be specifics about different regions, for example, rural differences, there are likely to be sufficient overlaps for many of the findings to be highly significant across different regions. In relation to the focus on boys' schools there is a cultural norm of gender segregation, which restricts the possibility for research across both halves of gender divided schooling system. However, national policy is similar for both sets of schools and it should have some resonance. In each aspect defining this chosen case study there should be similarities between it and these other contexts but in addition producing a unique qualitative case-study of this nature in a country that does not have a tradition of qualitative research is important because it provides a starting point for other research. The issue of whether there are differences in these other contexts can be a useful starting point for future qualitative research.

The aims of the case-study involved understanding the patterns emerging from the first stage (focus groups) and to interrogate the theory and practice of participants regarding inclusive education for deaf students in relation to the policies. The critical evaluation of participants' theory (knowledge and understanding), as well as their practices, provides an important qualitative case-study of inclusive schools for deaf students whose findings should have resonance across inclusive education in Saudi Arabia and beyond.

Regarding the research methodology, invaluable insights were gained from reviewing the relevant literature about inclusive education. This evaluation of existing approaches provided the researcher with clear ideas about the assumptions regarding inclusive education and its philosophy, the core principles and practices of inclusion, and the challenges of inclusive education. Additionally, this revision provided the researcher with a thorough theoretical base that was used in designing fieldwork including materials and methods. Furthermore, it was the primary source in the analysis of

participants' knowledge and understanding about inclusive education for deaf students and their attitudes along with the factors influencing inclusive education of deaf students in general schools. Similarly, the researcher reviews some studies conducted to investigate the knowledge and attitudes of school principals, teachers and parents' concerns and views about factors in relation to inclusive education. This helped in wording and formatting the interviews and the process of observation used in this research.

There is an important point regarding the role of the researcher in the interpretive paradigm, which is a questioning of the capacity of the researcher for dealing with and recognising the data obtained from participants including beliefs, values and emotions of the individuals in the social context. This may lead to criticism about subjectivity (Cohen et al., 2007), particularly for someone like myself who is interested in the research from a practice standpoint. However, in this research a commitment has been maintained to maximise study objectivity. This includes providing clarity regarding issues of bias and/or conflicting evidence. Additional explanation of this has been provided in the section on the quality of the study and its trustworthiness. Nevertheless, in qualitative approaches acknowledging subjectivity would not necessarily be a weakness (Crotty, 2003; Cohen et al., 2007) and it aligns well with the epistemological and ontological underpinnings of this study.

This research is devoted to employ the qualitative method to critically analyse the participants' real meanings, thoughts and feelings in order to bring about change (Cohen et al., 2007). The next section gives details justifying the use of the qualitative method (case study) in this research.

6.4 Justification for adopting the Qualitative Method

Various methods are required to elicit clearly the perceptions of participants to provide an environment which encourages them to reflect on and articulate their views and concerns. The qualitative method generally employs interviews, observations, documents, open ended surveys, etc. The researcher has to be capable of recognising, sorting and distinguishing, and dealing with the information obtained in a way leading to findings that encompass the emotions, values, beliefs and assumptions of individuals

in a social context. Events are understood adequately when they are seen in context (Crotty, 2003; Cohen et al., 2007). Whilst many researchers have been involved in investigating knowledge and attitudes of a school's staff towards inclusive education have used quantitative research, specifically questionnaires, such methodology arguably usually does not deal with the complexities of the inclusive education, and gives less attention to the role of the social and contextual issues (Avramidis and Norwich, 2002). The nature of the research objectives for this study made it apparent that the qualitative method is best fitted to answering these questions. Hence, this research uses qualitative methods which are also recognised as having a long history, especially in the field of educational research (Creswell, 2003) in many parts of the world. As suggested above, in using a qualitative method (case study) it focuses on understanding rather than generalising, involves the use of small samples, which was selected for a specific purpose, and it uses participants' natural language to gain a real understanding of their social worlds, which provides important data on inclusive education for deaf children in Saudi boy's primary schools (Creswell, 2003; Denzin and Lincoln, 2003; Cohen et al., 2007).

In using a qualitative method grounded in interpretive philosophy, where it looks for interpretations of the social world (Crotty, 2003) it is based in the idea that participants in this study have been able to provide useful information from their experiences regarding inclusive education of deaf students in general schools within the Saudi Arabian socio-cultural context. Therefore, in this research the perceptions of school principals, teachers and parents of deaf students are considered within their context where they think in certain ways that are bound by cultural and social norms. This is one of the few ways I could have gained insight into this context. Moreover, this research is committed to understanding the complex world of lived experiences from the point of view of those who live them. In this respect, the researcher has used a qualitative method which attempts to obtain a broad understanding of how participants who are being investigated view their world and the events they have experienced or observed (Rubin and Rubin, 2005).

It could be argued that qualitative methods have witnessed an exceptional rise in their popularity, attracting the attention of a great number of researchers in education and other fields of studies. In this research, data gained by interviews in combination with

participant and inclusive school environment observations, as well as documentary reviews of the findings is crucial in assessing the nature and scope of the research questions. Such combinations of data collection in a single study can help to explain a variety of aspects of the phenomenon under examination, providing a more holistic understanding of such situations (Cohen et al., 2007). This approach is especially helpful when researching complex social phenomena (Creswell, 2003); for instance, perceptions regarding the application of a new educational policy, such as inclusive education for deaf students. Furthermore, data analysis involves actual interpretation of the data, which includes verbal and practical actions (Angrosino, 2007). Thus, in the context of this research, school principals, teachers and parents of deaf students are understood to be ‘meaning-making organisms, theory builders who develop hypotheses, notice patterns, and construct theories of action from their life experience’ (White and Gunstone, 1992: 101).

The assumption underpinning my qualitative method suggests the existence of multiple realities within the social world. These realities are perceived as constructions existing in the minds of people as they are a product of the people’s consciousness influenced by the social environment and the culture in which they find themselves (Crotty, 2003; Guba and Lincoln, 2004; Cohen et al., 2007). In this respect, ways to uncover these various constructions of reality held by the participants have sought to examine how these realities were socially constructed in the context of their inclusive schools. Building this knowledge of the social world and the understanding and perceptions of participants towards inclusive education has been important.

Additionally, taking into account the arguments about the complexity of inclusive education, the multifarious relationships between knowledge, understanding, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours that are likely to be integral to participants’ perceptions and the objectives of this research; qualitative methods appear an appropriate choice to adopt because they carry the potential of deepening understanding of the complexities of inclusive education for deaf students in Saudi’s inclusive schools.

6.5 Research Design

Research design is used to structure the research, and to illustrate how all the main parts of the research project are fitted together (Robson, 2002). Reflecting on the research aims mentioned above and the research approach, the study offered a sequential design being divided into two distinct stages (the research design is presented in figure 6.1). The figure also shows that the research employed a multi-design strategy (De Vaus, 2002) because it used a case study, which includes an interview strategy, an observational strategy and a documentary reviews strategy. Research design includes the logical sequence which links the research questions with its data collection, then to the findings and conclusions (Yin, 2009). Having a sequential design allowed more space for the research to be flexible where the early stages had related on the later ones (Creswell, 2003). The research design draws the overall picture of the study components that work together to answer the research questions.

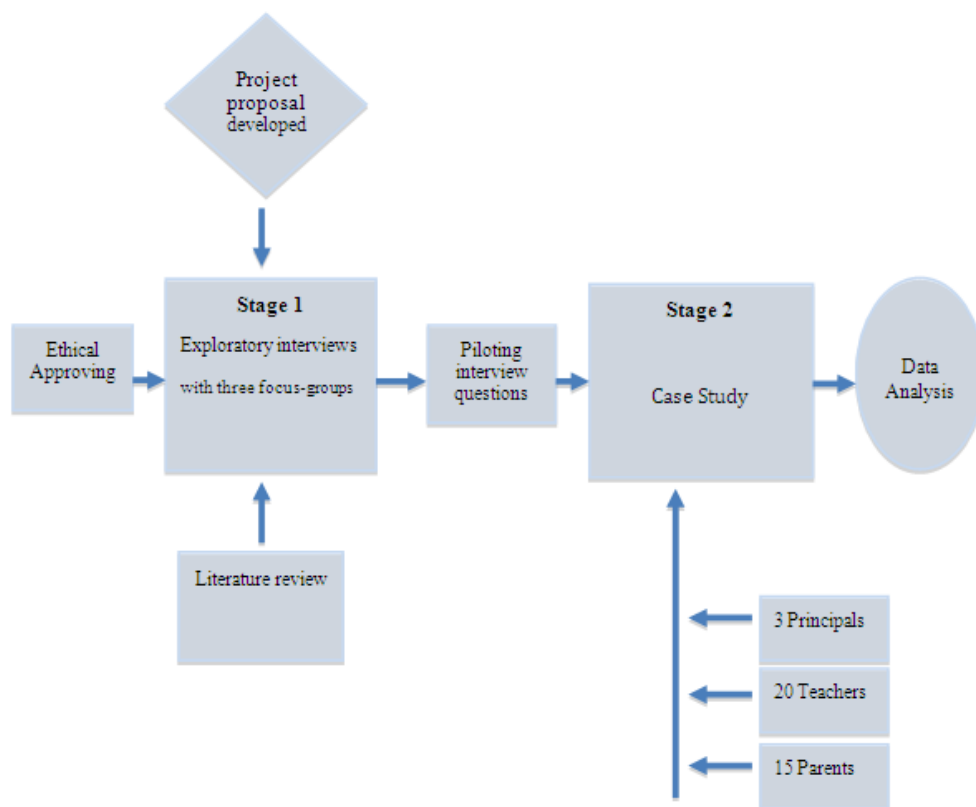


Figure 6.1: The research design

6.5.1 Stage One

The first stage was exploratory focus-group interviews with school principals, teachers and parents of deaf students to investigate their perceptions and to obtain more knowledge about the situation of inclusive education of deaf students. Realistically, in view of the fact that there is a lack of literature about the issue of inclusive education of deaf students in the Saudi Arabian context, in this regard the exploratory stage seemed vital for providing relevant issues and questions. This stage provided the initial insight about the research context. Also, the research design was flexible, where the exploratory stage impacted on establishing and improving the second stage (Oppenheim, 1992). In this exploratory stage, the aim was developing ideas rather than gathering findings (Oppenheim, 1992). This stage assisted with the identification of themes and issues regarding inclusive education of deaf students. Furthermore, in exploratory research, unstructured and semi-structured interview tools are recommended (Cohen et al., 2007). Choosing to start with unstructured and semi-structured interviews offered an opportunity to discover important information through depth of the interviewees' answers, also for the interviewee to ask for clarification of some points regarding the research topic (Cohen et al., 2007). In this stage, the interview questions were prepared by the researcher after intensively reading relevant literature (see appendix, A). It is worth mentioning that the participants for this stage were from three different inclusive schools and different to those in the actual study. The samples were a school principal, a principal's assistant, four teachers of deaf students, two teachers of non-deaf students, and six parents of deaf students. Within this stage, piloting the interview questions was a focal point and the task of improving the data collection tools; more discussion on the piloting strategy is presented in the next section.

6.5.1.1 The Pilot Interview

After reformulation of the interview questions due to the exploratory stage, a pilot study was conducted to identify any potential problem areas as well as for checking the time spent on completion (Cohen et al., 2007). The samples were with different people from different inclusive schools which included: one school principal, five teachers of deaf students and three parents of deaf students. Each of them was interviewed in an appropriate place in a separate room at a convenient time using a tape recorder. The aim

of the pilot study was to detect any further unforeseen practical difficulties and examine the validity of the research instruments including the interview questions. After the pilot study the research became more focused. Much light had been shed on the interview questions. These modifications were to ensure that participants grasp the meaning of interview questions (Radnor, 1994). Following the analysis of the pilot study data a number of actions were considered:

- a) Any ambiguous or unclear questions were rephrased or removed including all necessary substitutions or modifications which facilitate comprehension and ensure cultural and linguistic accuracy.
- b) It created an environment of confidence and reassurance through which I became familiar with schools and felt welcome. It also offered me the opportunity to test my ability in interviewing skills and techniques. Such experience provided me with optimistic and constructive motivation to continue the research with high spirits.
- c) It provided a preliminary insight about the context (place, time of interview) including the reformulation of a number of the interview questions. Additionally, content validity for the interview questions was done through asking a review committee, which consisted of academics with expertise in inclusive education as well as in measurement and research design, to check that the statements of the interview items covered the variety of features under study. They were also asked to provide suggestions about the wording and the appropriateness of the items. This process resulted in the refinement of specific items and resulted in some changes in wording as well.

6.5.2 Stage Two (case study)

The second stage in the research design was a case study approach which allows the researcher to gain holistic and meaningful data on real-life events, which is referred to by Yin (2009) as ‘a comprehensive research strategy’. Case study approaches employ a variety of methods and techniques for gathering and analysing data, including surveys, interviews, observations and documentary reviews (Yin, 2009). In stage two, semi-structured interview, observations were used as a method of collecting data from the

participants as well as examination of documentary data. These multiple or triangulation methods were used to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question (Denzin and Lincoln 2003).

The researcher rather than relying on simple personal responses represented by the interview approach decided to use observation and documentary data related to inclusive education. Through the outcome of the first stage, the research became more purely focused on the semi-structured interviews, with the addition of new instruments, which are observation and documentary evidence, to evaluate the actual practical and realistic process of inclusive education for deaf students. In the same way, the researcher made a clear note about the inclusive school environment, facilities and compared the participants' responses with the observed reality. Cohen et al. (2007) state that data gathered from participants' observations can enable the researcher to cross-check with participants' responses in interviews. Additionally, documentary data was very important to inform and verify the other two sources, and also to compare those policies with practices of inclusive education as implemented in the inclusive schools. As Corbetta (2003: 234) stated that it is important to allow the researcher to examine the 'given social situation from the standpoint of the material'. In this stage, the aim focused on understanding the complexity of inclusive education; its theory, practice, and factors that influence inclusive education for deaf students. In this stage, participants provided in-depth data about inclusive education for deaf students at inclusive boy's primary schools specialising in deaf students' education in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

In this stage, the samples were three school principals, twenty teachers of deaf students and fifteen parents of deaf students. The researcher has focused on these three groups as samples because they have a primary relationship for the education of the deaf in inclusive schools. They have also been chosen as suggested at the exploratory stage (detailed further in the section on sampling). The interview questions in this stage were prepared after examining the findings of the early stage and relevant studies. The researcher was present in the inclusive school settings for deaf students during school times or different times through the weeks depending on the activities taking place in the schools, and this facilitated observation of the research context. Thus, all data were gathered from participants' interviews, observations and documentary data, and

analysed jointly to create a link between participants' theory and practice. These details are expanded in the following sections.

6.6 Data Collection Strategies

Coinciding with the research design outlined above, the main data was collected through interviews, observation and documentary data where these three methods are an essential source of case study, in relation to understanding human relationships and behavioural actions (Yin, 2009). This research has explored a general picture of the participants' perceptions towards inclusive education for deaf students, and the factors influencing their inclusion in general schools. Therefore, semi-structured interviews and direct-indirect observation were suitable to discover in-depth insights from school principals, teachers and parents of deaf students about inclusive education and these were supported by documentary evidence (Cohen et al., 2007). To ensure the quality of the interpretive paradigm, triangulation of methods of data collection was employed, as shown in Figure 6.2. The next sections discuss the three methods of data collection and how they were applied in this research.

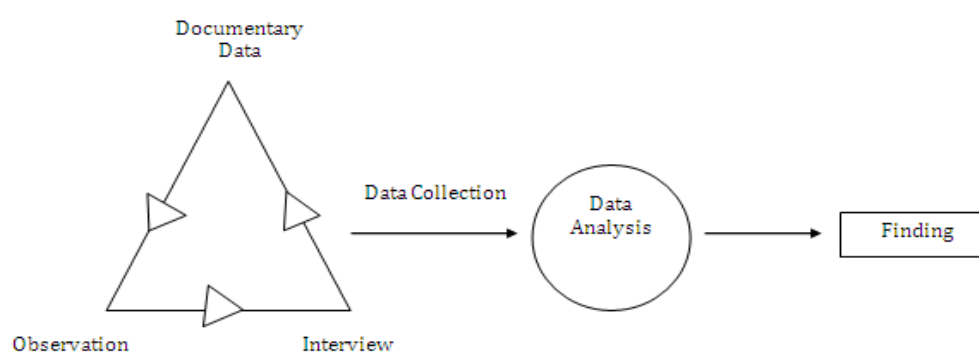


Figure 6.2: Triangulation of methods of data collection

6.6.1 Interview method

Through the semi-structured interview, the researcher has asked some predetermined questions and, at the same time, allowed the participants an opportunity to explore other areas that they may have thought relevant (Hinchey, 2008). Radnor (1994: 59)

identified the interview as ‘a two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information’. It is a critical method, which allows the researcher to understand other individuals’ beliefs, attitudes and experiences with their own language and words rather than the words of the researcher (Rubin and Rubin, 2012). In this regard, the interview is seen the best method of investigating interviewees’ opinions and attitudes (Kvale, 1996).

The literature shows that various types and ways of interview can be used in educational research based on the research questions, sample size and type of data required. There are three main sorts of interview: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured (Cohen et al., 2007). In terms of the design of the interview questions, the structured interview question has fixed wording and has been previously prepared. A structured interview is useful when looking for particular information, and usually it is used by quantitative researchers. In the semi-structured interview, questions can be modified and more explanations given by participants. This type is usually used in qualitative studies to get deeper understanding of responses. The unstructured interview, which can be informal, where the interviewer has a broad area or subject of interest, the dialogue can be allowed to build up within this area (Cohen et al., 2007). In this research, semi-structured interviews are used because this type is more flexible and less structured, where the interviewer has a general idea about how he wants the interview to go, and what should come out of it. According to Merriam (2001), in the semi-structured interviews the researcher prepares the questions to guide the interview by exploring the issues or topics that are listed beforehand. At the same time, there is scope for the researcher to introduce new questions into the conversation that had not been considered earlier, which arise during the course of the interview (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1995).

Additionally, semi-structured interviews were used because they allowed for a comprehensive account from the participants about their perceptions and the underlying factors which they think need to be changed or adjusted, in order for the inclusive education process to work well. In this research, such rich data represents very useful feedback for those developing learning infrastructures, such as, facilities, equipment, school staff training courses and general school environment (Cohen et al., 2007).

More specifically, using semi-structured interviews allowed a) capturing of general and specific information about participants' understanding about inclusive education and how students with deafness learn; b) participants' attitudes towards inclusive education; c) exploring their perspectives about factors that influence inclusive education for deaf students; d) the participants a voice with a certain degree of freedom to talk about what is centrally significant to them within the designed framework of the research; e) the researcher to 'get inside' the perspectives of the interviewees and to generate hypotheses from such perspectives and understand what they think is important in their own situation; and f) the researcher to keep an open mind and remain open to ideas or new research questions that would be encountered and that would not have been expected (Radnor, 1994; Merriam, 2001; Cohen et al., 2007).

6.6.1.1 Focusing on the Interview Questions

The themes in the interviews were related to the research questions and objectives of the study. This was achieved by using a sequential study design in stage one, which included exploratory focus-group interviews and the pilot interviews (Yin, 2009). The researcher ensured that interview questions were not too specific, to allow participants to give further information and details related to answering the research questions. The researcher used language that was understandable by the interviewees (Bryman, 2008). Interview questions were without bias, where questions with 'how' were used instead of 'why', to avoid interviewees' being defensive about their actions (Yin, 2009).

Additionally, issues related to basic concepts of interview technique, ways of designing an interview investigation, and interview analysis were considered (Kvale, 1996). Two criteria were followed in the development of the interview questions in this stage a) a review of related literature on inclusive educational research (Avramidis et al., 2000; Cambra and Silvestre, 2003; Bunch and Valeo, 2004; Hung and Paul, 2006) and b) a review of issues that emerged and were discovered from the early stage of exploratory focus-groups in the current research. Hence, the interview questions were designed as follows. They were:

- Planned to give a very clear picture of what really goes on in the mind of the interviewees.

- Left open so that the subjects' answers would not be affected by the researcher's bias and to encourage the subjects to talk freely regarding their own knowledge and experience.

In connection with the research objectives and questions, three interview schedules (one for school principals, one for teachers, and one for parents) were constructed. The main interview questions guide (see appendix B) consisted of three major areas, as explained below:

1. Understanding of inclusive education for deaf students.

In this first question, school principals, teachers and parents of deaf students were asked about their knowledge and understanding of inclusive education, deaf education, inclusion of deaf students in general school, and their experience in deaf education.

2. Attitudes towards inclusive education for deaf students.

This area of interview has focused on beliefs of school principals, teachers and parents of deaf students towards inclusive education generally. There were more special questions concerning their perceptions about inclusive education of deaf students in general school/classroom. The participants were asked about their viewpoints in relation to advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education.

3. Factors that influence inclusive education.

The participants – school principals, teachers and parents of deaf students – were asked to provide information about what underlying factors influence inclusive education of deaf students and how they overcome any barriers.

6.6.2 Observation

A key skill part in qualitative methods for educational research is the use of observation. In this research, focusing on the aspects of a situation such as inclusive education could lead to increase the chance of understanding the situation. Participant observation has an extended and worthy history in qualitative research. The observation is defined as an approach by observers for a long period of time to observe and study participants'

behaviour, group activities and individual interactions in a daily basis context in the field of the research setting (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1998; Cohen et al., 2007). Additionally, it is argued that participant observation is not a technique in itself, but a mode of 'being-in-the-world', because the researchers cannot study the social world without being part of it (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1998), observation ways adapted by researchers who having been accepted by the study community to extended period of time, with people under study in order to gain as complete an understanding as possible of the cultural meanings and social structures of the group and how these are interrelated. Moreover, participant observation has frequently been used for studies in institutional settings, such as schools, hospitals or prisons. Thus, regardless of its setting or subject matter, participant observation draws on multiple perspectives and data sources to produce contextually rich and meaningful interpretation (Davies, 1999). Cohen et al., (2007) emphasised that direct observation signifies the ability of the researcher to extract depth and meaning in context. The observations allow a relationship between the researcher and the people who observed, and also provide the researchers to build comparing between what is happening and what was said (Merriam, 2001). However, there are limitations to observations such as the participants might change their performances when they are being observed.

Additionally, field notes were used to overcome the difficulties of remembering accurately all events and behaviours, having them available for the analysis, and later at the stage of reporting the findings: thus the field notes were an excellent method for overcoming such a difficulty. In this research, the field notes are an important data source thus the use of field notes by the researchers are crucial to retaining the data gathered: it includes recording what the researcher hears, sees, experiences and thinks in the situation of collecting and reflecting on the process (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Following is a detailed discussion of the procedures used when carrying out the observations.

6.6.2.1 Procedures for carrying out the Observations

Direct and indirect observation was developed to reinforce and compare with the collected data from the interviews and provide richer detail and a full picture of many different aspects of the researched phenomenon. The participant observations enabled

the researcher to understand the context of the situation, to be open-ended and inductive, to observe things participants may not feel free to speak about or are not aware of or able to comment on in interview situations, and to find out the relationship and cross-check between what happens in practice and what was said through interviews about inclusive education of deaf students (Cohen et al., 2007). Despite the concerns expressed about the consistency of the observations and the confidence in the data collected in this way, on the basis that the observations are 'subjective, biased, impressionistic and idiosyncratic' (Cohen et al., 2007: 407), the researcher believes that the observations in this study are very important in regard to examining which policies (as gathered in the documentary review) of inclusive education are translated into practice in inclusive schools/classrooms. In this regard, having these matters and benefits in mind, observation has been used as a consistent element during the whole research period of data collection.

From the beginning of the data collection process, the focus was on looking for information that might develop my understanding about issues relating to inclusive schools specialising in deaf students in boy's primary schools in Riyadh. The researcher needed to obtain insights about their practices, cultures and contexts. The researcher observed many of the day-to-day inclusive schools' life and recorded notes into field notes, writing down detailed information about events and behaviours of individuals (school principals, teachers and deaf students) or group daily lives whenever possible (Cohen et al., 2007). Therefore, field notes were utilised in this research, dated and written no later than the morning after observation so that the researcher could later correlate them with the data (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The process of taking notes was carried out during the forty observation sessions. Taking notes is a reliable mechanism for recording and retrieving specific information when necessary (Cohen et al., 2007). Hence taking notes in this research aimed at collecting data regarding particular aspects of deaf students experience in inclusive education. For example, I observed classrooms, playgrounds, assemblies and corridors of the schools I visited. My notes focused on specific activities, spatial plans, sometimes included what people had said and I carefully noted who was involved in the events I was observing in order to assist my memory. I witnessed many events that were also informative about how the inclusive schools dealt with deaf students. I was not only observing events and actions, but also observing the inclusive schools' locations, environment and facilities.

Also, the role and actions of school principals, teachers and parents of deaf students in inclusive schools, and different elements were also discussed and observed. This data has helped me by providing evidence that supported or contradicted interview data in ways which helped me to make connections when analysing the data.

Field notes were often difficult in these school settings. A number of challenges and difficulties were encountered, for example, teachers used to frequently interrupt me asking what had been written because they were fearful of what I was going to do with the notes. I had to keep reinforcing the confidentiality aspects of the research. Similarly, it was difficult for me to take notes during assemblies in which schools principals and teachers used to look at me with suspicion, which affected the efficiency of the process of taking notes. I wanted to put research participants who were not familiar with qualitative research of this nature at ease so it inhibited my note-taking. This meant I often had to write down my observations as quickly as possible once I reached a place of privacy rather than at the time of the event.

Whilst I have tried to obtain as much observational data as I could (I managed to conduct just over forty events) principals, who acted as gatekeepers, claimed that it would obstruct teachers. In the same way some teachers were reluctant to give me the chance of watching due to lack of experience of such qualitative research. A request was made to principals for taking videos and photos while schools' visits, however they refused. The culture of Saudi Arabia did not allow for this. Instead to understand the spatial aspects of what I was observing I drew a number of diagrams and pictures reflecting the schools' environments and the types of actions and things took place during observations. The diagrams describe and demonstrate things such as the physical layout of the schools and how children were located. For instance, diagram (1) shows in one school the classrooms of deaf students were completely isolated in separate building in the corner of the general school. In this school deaf students just shared space with other students at the main entrance of the school and in the playground at break time (see appendix C-1). Diagram (2) shows that inclusive education where deaf students were mixed with others in a single classroom were actually internally segregated. Through observational work I found deaf students sitting with each other on a round table where there was not interaction or communication with ordinary students,

or any attempt to have shared tasks (see appendix C-2). More details about observations are presented in the findings chapters.

In addition, I was always careful when taking field notes, especially in front of the participants, as that might have created a sense of unease and consequently reflect on the quality of the data. In this regard, notes were sometimes recorded onto the field notes after they took place. Thus, the researcher had to go back afterwards and write detailed notes during my free time. Furthermore, in this research casual conversations were also carried out with school principals, teachers, parents and different members of the inclusive schools' staff. This was done alongside observation in and out of classrooms, through which the researcher built an accurate image about the deaf students' learning process in inclusive schools.

6.6.3 Documentary Data

The third instrument in this study is documentary data, which is a very important source and is crucial for collecting data in qualitative studies (Creswell, 2003). Yin (2003: 87) asserts that: 'Because of their overall value, documents play an explicit role in any data collection in doing case studies'. Additionally, documentary data have to be carried out systematically, through clear standards as to how a document is selected and how it is analysed (Cohen et al., 2007). The essential aim of investigating the documentary data was to inform and verify information and data gained from the interviews and observations. Documentary data could be collected from different sources, which include national policy statements, institutional responses, on-line resources for institutions regarding staff or programmes, etc (Corbetta, 2003). In this study, various documents were obtained from different sources including the Ministry of Education, the Local Educational Authority and inclusive schools. One of the criteria for using a document was the occurrence of the terms 'inclusive education', 'special educational needs', 'deaf student' and 'deafness', since those terms could indicate whether the documents were directly relevant to this study. All available documentation relevant to the research topic was reviewed and read carefully many times to make sure that no important information was neglected. Examples of these documentary data are as follows:

- Laws and regulations that describe the educational options for students with special education needs;
- Basic requirements and standards for school principals and teachers of deaf students in inclusive schools;
- Policies and procedures for special needs education and inclusive schools' instructions, procedures, plans and any additional relevant data;
- Relationship of these institutes and inclusive schools with parents and their role towards school.

6.7 Actual Investigating Procedure

In this investigation, three methods were consistent with each other and with the theoretical framework of the study, where a good case study requires various sources of evidence (Yin, 2009). A range of procedures were taken into account to ensure the answering of the research questions with school principals, teachers and parents of deaf students. For example, all interviews were conducted in Arabic in suitable settings. The researcher chose a quiet and appropriate place. The majority of interviews were conducted in the inclusive school, in out-of-class times, to encourage participants to feel free and expand upon their answers. On the other hand, because of some cultural aspects that do not let a male meet with a female in a closed place, the researcher had to conduct the interviews with female parents by telephone. Interviews were conducted using a sensitive portable digital recorder. Each interview lasted approximately 40-60 minutes. In some cases and for administrative reasons – for example, an urgent phone call to the school principal or a vital mission for a teacher to take charge of students in break time – a few interviews were cut in the middle and completed afterwards either on the same or the following day. At the start of each interview, the researcher presented a personal introduction and an overview of the study and its purposes and significance (Cohen et al., 2007).

Additionally, all the interviews were recorded and transcribed. There is an important point regarding transcribing the data after every interview, which helped to formulate further ideas or questions that were significant and relevant to the topic, and that needed to be investigated with the next interviewees (Rubin and Rubin, 2012). In this regard,

and after each interview, the researcher carried out an early analysis of the material and made some notes potentially relevant for any subsequent questions. Furthermore, throughout the interviews the researcher asked school principals, teachers and parents of deaf students if they wished to confirm their interview transcriptions. Thus, comments were exchanged through email with the interviewees for their scrutiny, confirmation and criticism as a means of achieving validation.

In the same way, this research aimed to enhance its reliability through consistent direct repeated observations over a period of time and the same amount of time in each context. The researcher was present in the school settings one day or more a week, depending on the activities taking place in the schools, to extract depth and meaning in the context. Furthermore, divergent activities occurring in the schools' timetable such as: lessons, group work, assemblies, after-school clubs, plays and performances, and meetings in various year groups and classrooms were observed by the researcher. These were carried out whenever possible and with minimal distraction and suspicion caused to inclusive schools, teachers and students. The researcher recorded the data gained from observations. Thus, all data gathered from participant observation within classrooms or in the inclusive schools' setting were written down, then analysed alongside the data that was gathered from the interview questions supported by documentary data.

6.8 Sampling Procedures

The quality of any research is dependent on the procedures of sampling. It is very important that selection of participants is purposeful, to make sure that information gathered is relevant to the research questions (Patton, 1990). In this regard, Cohen et al., (2007) mentioned that there are two main procedures of sampling, that is random sampling and purposive sampling. In this research, purposive sampling was used. The key objective of purposive sampling was to select cases that help to answer the research questions and to provide the researcher with diversity among the members in the sample (Bryman, 2008). Miles and Huberman (1994) point out that purposive sampling tends to be used in qualitative research, studying in depth small samples of participants and, in some studies, single cases. Purposive sampling provided me with information in relation to the purpose of the study; 'information rich' (Patton, 1990: 169). It also facilitated

‘maximized discovery of the heterogeneous patterns and problems that occur in the particular context under study’ (Erlandson et al., 1993: 82).

In this research, as mentioned earlier, there are five inclusive primary schools, specialising in boy deaf students in Riyadh. The participants were those school principals who have deaf students in their school, those special teachers who work with deaf students in their classrooms and those parents who have deaf children who study in an inclusive school. Those people were selected because they are supposed to be influential regarding the learning of deaf students; also, they have a direct relationship regarding inclusive education. Thus, principals, teachers and parents were investigated to gain a comprehensive outlook about inclusive education for deaf students. The full number of participants was five school principals, 32 teachers and 24 parents, all from inclusive schools. Sixty one participants were chosen to be involved in this research because the belief was that this would provide sufficient data. Another reason is related to the resources (time and budget) allocated for this research; also, there was no more new data or issues emerging following exploration with the 61 participants (Mason, 2010). Furthermore, this number was satisfactory, especially when we know that ‘interviews’ are quite rare in educational research in a Saudi Arabian context. This is due to the Saudi ‘culture which makes it difficult for some to honestly discuss social problems objectively, sometimes for fear of state authority’ (Cook, 1998: 98).

Additionally, there was direct communication with participants to invite them to participate in this study. All school principals participated. Regarding teachers of deaf students, the researcher had a meeting with those teachers in each inclusive school to explain to them the aims and purpose of the study. Some teachers asked some questions related to this research, which the researcher answered. After that, the researcher requested teachers who were interested to participate. The researcher contacted parents of deaf students by sending a letter home with their child, explaining the purpose of the study. The researcher asked those parents who were willing to participate in this study to complete the form with their contact number. After this, the researcher contacted them and discussed a suitable time for interview. All participants received a letter requesting permission.

6.9 Ethical Considerations and Access

Reviewing the literature revealed a number of ethical principles to be undertaken when conducting research. It has been argued that research ethics are very important to provide researchers with several rules on how to conduct research in an ethically acceptable way (Pring, 2000). Therefore, this research was conducted within the guidelines of British Educational Research Association (BERA) (2004), and through the University's ethics policy (University of Lincoln, 2004), where the ethical issues reflected on the research process (see appendix D). In addition, the main ethical considerations consist of gaining informed consent from participants, offering the right to withdraw, protection of identity and confidentiality (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Christians, 2000; Cohen et al., 2007). The researcher had to ensure that the result of this study caused no harm to participants as 'the rightness or wrongness of the research is judged according to its consequences' (Malin, 2003: 22). Three ethical areas were considered: 1) the protection of their participants, 2) the confidentiality of research data, and 3) the avoidance of deception of research subjects (Wallen and Fraenkel, 2001). In this study, participants were involved from the beginning of the process of research, in order to ensure an equal balance of power between participants and researcher, where this engagement and collaborative work can arguably overcome any ethical issue (Burgess, 2002).

The researcher carried out a number of procedures for this study at the inclusive primary schools specialising in boy deaf students in Riyadh. The aim was to ensure that these participants understood the nature of the research and the process in which they would be engaged, prior to the start of the research. This included why their participation was necessary, how it would be used, and how and to whom it would be reported (BERA, 2004). The researcher explained to the participants the details of this research and its implications, and ensured their understanding and consent to be participants. According to BERA (2004), the researcher must make clear to the participants that they have the right to withdraw from the research at any time if they so wish. Thus, despite the initial permission, three teachers and two female parents withdrew either because of administrative obstacles or the cultural sensitivity of female interaction. For example, one teacher mentioned that he was only allowing the researcher access because the school administrator had said so. In addition, in this research all participants were

informed that their identity was anonymous and confidential; identities were recorded using letters and numbers, and information was kept confidential to maintain their privacy (Cohen et al., 2007). Therefore, the researcher took the following steps (see appendix, E-1):

1. Official permission was sought from the Local Educational Authority and proved essential to access the inclusive schools' settings for deaf students and communicate with principals, teachers and parents to conduct research.
2. Personal contact was made with school principals and teachers at their inclusive schools and a mutually convenient time to conduct the interviews was arranged.
3. Personal contact was made with parents of deaf students and negotiation took place to conduct the interviews within the inclusive school settings or by phone.

6.10 Data Analysis

Data analysis is defined as a 'process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data' (Marshall and Rossman, 1995: 111). In this research, the case study methods of data collection which are interviews, observations and documentary data were used together to answer the research questions of the study by providing qualitative data regarding the understanding and attitudes of school principals, teachers and parents about inclusive education of deaf students and the factors that influence inclusive education. In this research, data analysis has organised the information and broken it into manageable components to determine what was significant to learn. In a qualitative study, transforming data into meaningful and relevant findings is not easy due to the multiplicity of data sources and forms (Miles and Huberman, 1994). In this regard, data analysis was the procedure that worked to reduce data from interviews, observations and documents data to become condensed to essential and important information (Kelle, 1999). Furthermore, qualitative data analysis depends on the interpretations of the researcher, where the researcher collects data from what they see or hear from the participants and then interprets it (Bryman and Teevan, 2005). It has been argued that combining data analysis is required for developing conceptualisation of the possible relationships between different parts of the data, where contrast analysis is suitable to clarify issues of human behaviour and experiences (Thorne, 2000). In this

research, the documentary data, which included policies and processes that refer to implementation of inclusive education, were analysed compared with responses of participants and practical observations in the inclusive schools.

In addition, Miles and Huberman (1994) assumed that data collection is not something easily separated from data analysis in qualitative research. For that reason, in this research, the data analysis began from the first day of the data collection process at inclusive schools. The researcher carried out an initial analysis of the material after each interview, observation and documentary reviews by using different techniques such as: post-interview analysis notes, initial reading of transcripts, writing memos and also some notes were taken for subsequent questions (Maxwell, 1996). In view of the fact that interviews have a huge amount of data, the early analysis assisted in reducing the problem of data overload (Cohen et al., 2007). The interviews, observations and documentary data were identified and categorised together as themes, from which several sub-themes emerged which later established the analytical framework, aimed to answering the research questions which were in three different chapters (Robson, 2002).

Additionally, when the researcher returned to the UK further data analysis was carried out. The qualitative data was analysed using an interpretive analytic framework which was prepared and managed based on the general guidelines proposed by many researchers (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Merriam, 2001; Cohen et al., 2007). It is worth mentioning that there is no one way or right technique of data analysis in qualitative research (Robson, 2002; Cohen et al., 2007). For instance, Miles and Huberman (1994) recommended three key phases in analysing raw data in qualitative research. The first phase is data management, in which the researcher categorised data for organising data collection, storage and retrieval. This phase includes transcribing and typing notes, and also formatting that through cross-referring and indexing. The second phase relates to data reduction, in which the researcher began to read transcripts and take notes, codes and memos to assist further thinking. The third phase is data presented, which refers to the organised assembly of data to facilitate the drawing of conclusions. In this research, the researcher transcribed the audio-recorded interviews and filed them with the notes taken during the observations, leaving space for coding. In addition, the researcher created files containing basic information for each participant and all data gathered from interviews as well as field notes from observations. Moreover, these files assisted the

researcher to sort out and reduce the information to a manageable size, and this provided a vital preliminary point for analysing emerging patterns and relationships (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

Through data analysis, the researcher read all the interview transcripts many times to get a broader sense of the nature of the data (for example see appendix G). Additionally, holding the visual written transcript allowed the researcher to get a better understanding of the whole interviews, which led to moving quickly between different themes and sub-themes in order to analyse the rising conversation. The researcher used paper and pen to tag the hard copies of the interview transcripts for aspects that appeared, at that stage, to be relevant and interesting, and to specify some of the major aspects to which the researcher was paying attention and to ensure that these aspects were noted across all the interviews. Additionally, it is worth mentioning here that, although there are some computer software packages available for qualitative data analysis (Tesch, 1990) the researcher opted for manual analysis. The researcher believes that computer-based analysis focuses more on linguistic patterning in reducing the data and that it becomes less meaningful compared to a manual analysis by the researcher through more interaction directly with the data. Furthermore, analysis of qualitative data contains direct quotations regarding the participants' feelings, views and knowledge (Patton, 1990), which is more effective to organise and analyse manually. Additionally, since the Arabic language was the mother tongue of all the participants in the study, all analyses were systematically processed manually. Also, the researcher decided to analyse manually since he would feel more confident that no important data had been left out.

Additionally, after the completion of management of the qualitative data, the researcher started the coding process. Codes normally are attached to 'chunks' of differing size words, phrases, or sentences, which are connected or unconnected to a specific setting (Cohen et al., 2007; Rubin and Rubin, 2012). In this regard, coding involves how the researcher differentiates and combines the information through labels for assigning parts of importance, sense and meaning to the descriptive or inferential data gathered throughout the research (for example see appendix F). Miles and Huberman (1994) proposed three analytical levels of coding of qualitative data, which reflect different levels of analysis ranging from descriptive to inferential. In this research, some codes were created at the first round of reading the transcripts, and others arose in the second

and the third rounds. Through the first level of coding, the researcher read through the transcript sheets to divide the interviews into chunks through several codings and labellings to assign units of meaning to the data. Assigning codes is a procedure for summarising pieces of data. These are descriptive codes and they entail little interpretation. The codes are used to retrieve and organise the ‘chunks’.

The early organising stage involved some system for categorising the various chunks, thus the researcher could quickly find, draw and cluster the segments relating to a specific part of a research question, themes and sub-themes. Additionally, the main focus at this stage was placed not on the words but on the meanings of participants about such context. There was a list of broad themes under each set of findings. Since the generated themes were initially descriptive, the researcher continuously re-examined the data in an effort to make them more conceptual. The main aim of the analysis was to understand the research situation and make meaning through data (Merriam, 2001). Care was taken not to impose my expectations on the data but to let the categories or the themes emerge from the data. Thus, inductive data analysis through a re-coding technique was used where data were checked and cross-checked several times to enhance the possibility of new understandings.

Following the researcher’s transcription and coding of the data a number of participants, colleagues and educationalists checked the codes and transcripts through email exchange (due to time and distance constraints). The interviewees reviewed the researcher’s interpretations and constructions of the data by reading the narratives based on our interviews to verify that the researcher had adequately represented their views and experiences. This helped to keep the interviewees in touch with the research, which is an essential aspect of qualitative research (Mertens, 2005). This was done out of the belief that:

‘if the purpose of a piece of qualitative work is emit, that is, if the intent is to give an account of how the participants in a situation see it, then checking the account with the participants (or with a selected informant) is a vital step’ (Philips, 1987: 20).

Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that the social and interactional models have been used as a guideline in the data analysis to understand and interpret participants’ (school

principals, teachers and parents) views about inclusive education for deaf students, and the problems and issues that need to be addressed in improving inclusive education for these students in Saudi Arabia. The theoretical views of these models were taken into account because they provide more comprehensive insights about participants' views on deaf education and the problems and issues that need to be addressed to improve inclusive education for deaf students in Saudi Arabia. Additionally, dealing with students with deafness in inclusive educational settings and giving them the opportunity to benefit from participation in general schools, this may support them to active participation in society (Knight and Swanwick, 1999).

6.11 Quality of Research and Trustworthiness

The extent to which the research findings have to be trusted depends on the validity and reliability of the research (Devellis, 2003). In qualitative research, to ensure validity and reliability, examination of trustworthiness is crucial (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In this regard, there are different assumptions in qualitative research, where the concepts meet validity and reliability within different names (Merriam, 2001). Seale (1999: 266) affirms that 'the trustworthiness of a research report lies at the heart of issues conventionally discussed as validity and reliability'. In this regard, trustworthiness in qualitative research is essential, and consists of credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In order to ensure the trustworthiness of the instruments, data and findings of this research several procedures have been considered:

6.11.1 Credibility

In qualitative research credibility is considered by comparison to internal validity in quantitative research (Shenton, 2004), which involves the establishment that the results of the research are believable. The rationale of qualitative research is to understand such phenomena from the participants' views, where they and readers can reasonably judge the credibility of the results (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Therefore, the researcher used some strategies to ensure the credibility in this research. Whilst the interviews were transcribed from digital recordings, the researcher provided participants with the transcription of their interviews to verify the content. The researcher also undertook

checking information by ‘member review’ which involved feeding back the primary interpretations of data to a number of the participants for their criticism. Lincoln and Guba (1985: 314) argued that credibility is enhanced ‘whereby data analytic categories, interpretations, and conclusions are tested with members of those stake holding groups from whom the data were originally collected’. In this regard, the member review also worked as a check that data, categories, interpretation and conclusions of analysis were examined by participants to build up the credibility in this research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Moreover, the researcher discussed the data analysis such as coding and themes with three colleagues, obtained feedback from two academics in education, and discussed the analysis with his supervisors. This provided several interpretations of the data analysis, and helped reduce the impact of subjective bias (Patton, 1990). In addition, in interpretive studies data analysis relies on the researcher’s perceptions and, at the same time, the readers with their own understandings of the research (Bryman and Teevan, 2005). Additionally, the researcher aimed to be objective and to conceive issues without being influenced by personal attitudes and feelings. Therefore, the researcher worked to make sure that the data analysis expressed the participants’ ideas and beliefs, and also represented their interpretations accurately. Also, the researcher used another strategy, cross-reviewing, in order to avoid contradiction through the interviewing, where the researcher requested the participants to explain any subjects that seemed confusing (Minichiello et al., 1995).

6.11.2 Transferability

Another criterion for trustworthiness is transferability, which is named in quantitative research as external validity (Shenton, 2004). Transferability refers to the extent in which the findings of the research can be generalised or transferred to other contexts, which is defined by readers of the research. The reader notes the particular situation and details of the research, and compares that to a similar situation (Hammersley, 2007). The researcher tried to meet that by providing an explanation and rich description of the data collection, participants and context of the study. Additionally, the researcher provided quotations to give the reader a clear perspective of the original data. The researcher presented verbatim transcriptions from the participants’ interviews; this step

was important to avoid making claims without any evidence. According to Merriam (2001: 214), transferability can be possible with rich descriptions of data and information, where such descriptions let readers ‘determine how closely their situations match the research situation, and hence, whether findings can be transferred’. The reader, not the researcher, should be responsible for establishing how a piece of research can be applied to another context (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Bryman, 2008). However, as this research is qualitative, it does not look for generalisation of the findings but rather to provide perspectives very specific to a particular context which is contextually bound and unique. Additionally, in this regard it is impossible to accurately replicate an interpretive study, of the peculiarities of the research context (Cohen et al., 2007; Hammersley, 2007).

6.11.3 Dependability

A further criterion for trustworthiness is dependability, which is more suitable for qualitative research than the term reliability, which is used in quantitative research (Bryman and Teevan, 2005). Dependability implies that the research results are consistent and could be repeated, and that could be through details such as how the research was conducted and analysed to allow another researcher to repeat the examination and get similar results (Hammersley, 2007). In this research, in order to conserve dependability the researcher maintained a record of all the data collection procedures. Hence, digital recording, interview transcripts, observations and field notes were kept; that way allowing further interested parties to confirm the data analysis in addition to demonstrating whether suitable procedures had been followed (Bryman and Teevan, 2005).

Another issue related to dependability is professional translation; to avoid misinterpretation of the language, and because this research was conducted in the Saudi Arabian context, the interview questions and responses of the participants were translated from Arabic into English. The main priority of the translation process was to ensure that the items’ meanings were the same in both languages. To check the validity of the translation, a process of give-and-take between two professional translators was followed. The first was a friend of the researcher who works as an assistant lecturer Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) in Saudi Arabia, and the second was

Dr Awad, who has a PhD in Translation from Manchester University (2005). Both versions were checked and compared. Despite some differences, an agreement was reached at the end. The researcher translated the quotes into English and asked a colleague to translate them back into Arabic to make sure that there were no major differences in the two versions.

6.11.4 Conformability

It could be argued that different methods of data collection and sources can be employed to help broadly understand something. Conformability refers to the extent the research findings can be supported by the data collected (Cohen et al., 2007). Lincoln and Guba (1985) argued that triangulation is a technique that can contribute to trustworthiness for achieving conformability in qualitative research. Triangulation is used broadly to ensure accuracy when providing alternative explanations for measuring one phenomenon (Yin, 2009). Triangulation can involve examining information from different methods or sources of data for consistency of evidence (Denzin, 2009). Dependence on one method or source may be risky and at the same time provides limited information and a limited view of the complexity of human behaviour (Creswell, 2003). In this research, methodological triangulation was used through employing a combination of data collection techniques (interviews, observations and documentary data). Also, different sources of data (principals, teachers and parents) added to the richness of the data collected, providing opportunities to sort and study data from various aspects (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

To sum up, the researcher used member checking, peer debriefing and triangulation methods (interviews, observation and documentary data), and sources (principals, teachers and parents), which contributed to the quality and trustworthiness of the research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

6.12 Researcher's Positionality

Regarding the researcher's position, and the interactions between the researcher and the researched, the researcher was aware of his positionality in this research, being a former teacher of deaf students in Saudi Arabia, which helped me to be familiar with the

culture and context of the research. In this regard, some teachers and school principals may have considered the researcher as an insider. On the other hand, others considered the researcher as an outsider because of the researcher's education and role, and because the researcher came from a different Local Educational Authority than where this research was being conducted. In order to have a balance between insider and outsider positions, there have been benefits and challenges for the research process (Merriam et al., 2001).

At the beginning, when the researcher introduced himself to the teachers and school principals, the researcher felt that he was at home, and the participants were willingly and freely responding to the interviews without any apparent fear or hesitation. However, due to the researcher's familiarity with the education system and the inclusive schools in Saudi Arabia, some participants were concerned that the researcher was asking them to explain obvious things. For instance, asking the teachers what are the different educational needs for deaf students or about inclusive education. Some of the responses started with phrases such as: *As you already know...*, or *As you are familiar...*, which may limit their contributions to the issues being discussed. Nevertheless, the researcher employed different procedures to encourage respondents to open up. For example, in interviews questions phrased like 'In your point of view' and 'Could you explain that more, please?' were used. This helped and encouraged the participants to provide in-depth data and information about the issues being researched (Creswell, 2003; Bryman, 2008).

The researcher was aware of the possible problems of being seen as an insider, which may lead to a bias of data where some participants may have, consciously or unconsciously, answered with what the researcher wanted to hear rather than providing their own opinions and beliefs. Whilst this may raise concerns regarding objectivity and validity, nevertheless, the research in a qualitative study cannot be free of values, because the researcher has a key role in the research stages and analysis of the data (Bryman, 2008). In this research, the researcher intended to hear participants' perspectives and their own beliefs and opinions and not express my own perspective. The researcher was committed to ensuring that the findings were a true reflection of participants' perspectives (Merriam et al., 2001). Also, it is worth mentioning that in

this research use of the data and methodological triangulations has assisted in strengthening the objective/outsider positionality of the researcher through the data collection and analysis, where the data collection from different methods encouraged the researcher to understand such subject of research (Creswell, 2003).

Generally, the insider and outsider positions created benefits and challenges in this research procedure. In this study, the researcher properly discussed his own positionality, through interactions with participants (school principals, teachers and parents), and that led to transparency in the responses and comments between the researcher's views and the representation of his subjects. This has been explained in order to avoid biases in the research results and conduct reliable and ethical research.

6.13 Concluding Remarks

This chapter presented the fieldwork design and the methodological approach which was adopted in the current research. The chapter started by presenting the philosophical underpinnings and the research paradigm employed in this study. This was followed by a rationale for adopting the qualitative method in the current research, which provides important data on the topic of interest, especially with a new area of research such as inclusive education of deaf students in Saudi Arabia (Creswell, 2003; Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). The research design was also discussed. In order to address the research questions and achieve the research objectives, the study was undertaken through qualitative methods, which is sequential in two stages: stage one is an exploratory focus-group and stage two is a multi-case study approach, with interviews, observation and documentary analysis. Data collection strategies including design and administration of instruments through the fieldwork process were described. The important issues of piloting, sampling and the ethical considerations and access were also discussed. Finally, this chapter highlighted the quality of the research and trustworthiness. In conclusion, the researcher can argue that even though he has justified the choice of the research methods, instruments and sample used, the researcher has to acknowledge that there are still limitations in the research (see chapter ten).

Chapter Seven

FINDINGS: Knowledge and Understanding of Inclusive Education

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7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter the research design and methodology were discussed. The three data analysis chapters that follow focus on the analysis and interpretation of data generated through the qualitative method described in the previous chapter to investigate the understanding and practice of inclusive education of deaf students in the Saudi context. As stated previously, the inclusive education of deaf students in general schools is a relatively new phenomenon in Saudi Arabia, and understanding this was the core focus of this thesis. The findings presented in this chapter imply that the Saudi government including the Ministry of Education, the Local Educational Authority and the inclusive schools need to understand the difference between medical, social and interactional models of inclusive education and to work to self-consciously include this in their thinking, policies, values and practices. It is argued through my analysis of the data that without developing the type of knowledge that is attained by applying these theoretical models and increasing the level of understanding, inclusive education for deaf students is unlikely to improve.

This research has focused on understanding the complexity of inclusive education; its theory, practice, and factors that influence inclusive education for deaf students. On the basis of these findings a strategic model has been developed (presented in chapter ten) which combines multiple perspectives and comprises features of the interactional model. This strategic model is distinct in its nature in order to suit the specifics of the Saudi Education System. The model demonstrates how my findings suggest that teaching should be managed at inclusive boy's primary schools specialising for deaf students. In fact this model reflects the necessary symbiotic relationship between principals, teachers, parents, the Local Educational Authority and the Ministry of Education and in that sense it may have wider purchase. It focuses on the student and their learning; the level of educational support needed and also includes principals, teachers, parents and students in the process of evaluating and supporting the deaf student.

The research which led to the development of this model aimed to:

- Explore the knowledge, understanding and attitudes of schools' principals, teachers and parents regarding inclusive education of deaf students.
- Examine the factors that influence inclusive education of deaf students.
- Determine the kind of services required for deaf students and the best practices to support inclusive education in Saudi Arabia.
- To contribute to the broader literature on inclusive education for deaf students on this basis.

As described in the methodology to achieve the above aims and answer the research questions, was a case study of five inclusion boy's primary schools specialising in deaf students in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The qualitative approach described here has provided more in-depth data about inclusive education for deaf students in primary boy's schools in Saudi which has not previously been available. It is necessarily limited to boy's schools because of the cultural rules applying to gender in Saudi Arabia. This approach has offered a rich description of participants' insights. This chapter examines specifically the knowledge and understanding of school principals, teachers and parents of inclusive education for deaf students in boy's primary schools. It is intended that the findings of this qualitative research will be a significant contribution to the field of inclusive education of deaf students in Saudi Arabia.

The social and interactional models framed my understanding and interpretation of participants' views on deaf education and the problems and issues that need to be addressed in improving inclusive education for these students in Saudi Arabia. The theoretical views of these models were taken into account because they provide more comprehensive insights for supporting students with deafness in inclusive educational settings. As discussed earlier, such models represent a shift in thinking about education provision for deaf students and offer the opportunity for students to benefit from and participate in general schools thereby achieving meaningful outcomes in terms of their active participation in society (Knight and Swanwick, 1999). These models guided the objectives of this research and the design as well as the analysis of the data. For example, as can be seen in chapter three these models suggest that understanding the existing provision of inclusive education of deaf students (Frederickson and Cline,

2002), the attitudes of those working in the system (Villa and Thousand, 2005) and the other factors that affect deaf education (Ainscow, 2004) and identifying the measures to support inclusion of deaf students (Bayliss, 1998; Smith et al., 2004) will help to inform future practice.

The results of the analysis described in these three chapters combine insights from the interviews with participants, those written in notes which were taken during observations and through review of documents. It is worth noting that the quotes provided in the discussion are examples of the participants' interviews and observations. These samples have been used as evidence and justification for the emergent themes after thorough investigation, reading and analysis of the data collected.

7.2 Knowledge and Understanding of Inclusive Education

This section is devoted to answering the first research question which explores the background knowledge and understanding of school principals, teachers and parents in relation to inclusive education of deaf students at specialist deaf inclusion schools for Saudi Arabian boys at primary level. The question is: What do school principals, teachers and parents who are responsible for supporting deaf children in these schools understand about inclusive education for deaf students? The core findings of this chapter revealed that all three groups had some issues relating to the knowledge and understanding of inclusion and deaf children. For school principals they were lacking sufficient knowledge and understanding of the concept of inclusive education for students with deafness and the implications of that for education. It can be argued that principals' knowledge reflected that of the medical model which considers the needs of students as primarily care not education. Although the medical model acknowledges the educational needs of students, the difficulty is seen within the child and how to get the child to 'fit' in to the system.

On the other hand, teachers' understanding demonstrated an awareness but not comprehension of the social and interactional models. What is less clear in relation to this group is why this gap between knowledge and practice exists. In relation to parents the findings demonstrated that they generally did not understand the notion of inclusive education for deaf students and were therefore inactive in their children's inclusive

schools. It can be asserted that parents also viewed inclusion as a medical model. Their understanding reflected the principles of the medical model of inclusion which looks at students with deafness as medically impaired people (see chapter three for a more in-depth discussion of this). The sections below present and discuss the evidence for these findings.

7.2.1 School Principals' Knowledge and Understanding

In relation to school principals, the findings obtained through data collection based on the analysis of interviews (with three principals) and notes taken during observation revealed that school principals are largely lacking knowledge and understanding of the notion of inclusive education, this is to varying degrees but it seems to be firmly based within the medical model framework. Such findings are reflected by other researchers (Habayb and Abdullah, 2005; Elsayed, 2009; Abyed, 2011) in other contexts. For example, Abyed (2011), who conducted research to examine problems of inclusive education in Jordan primary schools has argued that a number of schools' staff including the majority of the school principals in the Ministry of Education lacked sufficient knowledge of special educational needs and inclusive education. Hence, it is disappointing but not unique to find out that the knowledge and understanding of Saudi school principals in relation to inclusive education of deaf students is limited to that of a medical model view. This is evident from their responses during the interviews. When SPF3 (SP refers to school principal, the letter F refers to the name of the Principal and the number 3 refers to the school) was asked about his understanding of inclusive education he simply stated:

‘Accepting those deaf children in our school to take part in trips and visitations for different places’.

He showed no greater awareness of the various forms of inclusion and their strengths. Nor did he seem to understand how limited his own definition was. However, SPR5 has highlighted his understanding of inclusive education, emphasising:

‘admission of the child with deafness in general schools... and placing them in different classrooms with other deaf students’.

Whereas, SPN1 seemed to have even less knowledge about the concept of inclusive education than the others, when he stated:

‘access of deaf student into general schools, being with other deaf students...’.

The above statements illustrate clearly school principals’ lack of knowledge and understanding of the concept of inclusive education for students with deafness. Their views of inclusive education primarily reflected the admission of deaf students and placing them with other deaf students, a practice I discussed earlier in this thesis (see chapters four and five). It seems that principals viewed inclusive education as being about placing deaf students in inclusive schools rather than changing the system to meet the needs of deaf students. In this regard, O'Brien (2001: 48) argued that ‘inclusive schools must offer more than inclusive placement (being there) and focus upon the provision of inclusive learning’ which would require adopting a more social or interactional model of inclusive education. It seems from the above statements that principals seem to adopt the medical model and focus on the disability side of students more than their needs for education and inclusion. Medical models view the needs of students as primarily care not education. In other words principals seem not to think really of educating deaf students but just care. In this context, SPR5 stated:

‘Deaf students require special care because of their disability to suit their deafness’.

Similarly, SPN1 answered:

‘They are deaf..., what can we do. Those students need clinical approaches to aid them in learning’.

Also, SPF3 stated:

‘These students seem to me unable to learn normally compared to non-deaf students..., So they need special treatment programmes’.

In the same direction, during the schools’ visit, I have observed that principals located specific areas for deaf students to sit alone in order to avoid being bullied by others.

Moreover, Ballard (1997) pointed out that inclusive education means non-discrimination between students in the community of school, irrespective of their intellectual, physical, sensory, or other differences, and their having equal rights with their non-deaf peers in one inclusive school. Hence, school principals should understand the educational right for students with deafness to be accepted and taught together with their peers with their basic human rights acknowledged (Mitchell, 2005; Mittler, 2005). It is especially important that school principals have this understanding, if deaf students who traditionally would have been 'cared' for by religious and voluntary organisations are to benefit from inclusive education.

However, despite this lack of knowledge, school principals have been appointed to a role with high levels of authority and responsibility in their inclusive schools where they are essential to promoting and supporting change (Bursuck and Friend, 2006). Arguably the fault lies with the Local Educational Authority that employ the principals whose understanding may be limited to the medical model of inclusion. This also may be reflective of the Local Educational Authority's view of inclusion being aligned with a medical model and once the pupils are attending mainstream schools then in their view it is inclusion.

With regard to knowledge and qualifications, some studies indicated that principals who have high levels of education, especially qualifications in SEN, are more accepting and supportive of inclusive education compared to others (Balboni and Pedrabissi, 2000; Elhoweris and Alsheikh, 2006). Similarly, Avramidis et al., (2000) explored general school staff attitudes towards the inclusive education of students with special needs in the general schools in England. The findings showed the importance of knowledge and professional certificates (such as a Master's degree) for positive outcomes related to inclusive education. In addition, Barnett and Monda-Amaya (1998) highlighted the significance of knowing and understanding inclusive education for deaf students by school principals and teachers to support and facilitate the progress of inclusive education. According to Van Reusen et al. (2000) who considered the view of social models suggested that a more positive outlook, towards inclusive education, by principals and teachers was evident in those who have a higher level of special needs certification and experience of working with students with special needs. Moreover, several studies (Villa et al., 1996; Lifshitz et al., 2004), revealed that having special

education qualification pre- or in-service courses, leads to more understanding and support towards the inclusive education of deaf students in particular. This suggests that as levels of knowledge and education in the area of deaf education and inclusion rise, the more likely it would be that school principals would demonstrate more encouraging remarks towards inclusive education. In this respect, one of the teachers TB4 during the interviews, responded:

‘School principals should be appointed according to their qualifications and expertise of both the concept of inclusive education and deaf education, ..However, it is sad to say this is not the case’.

In relation to the subject of knowledge and qualification it can be asserted that principals in general inclusive schools in Saudi Arabia who have been appointed as head of inclusive schools are from an era when knowledge and education for inclusion of deaf students in general schools was not part of the basic training. Also, there is not a continuing professional development programme available to meet the training needs of principals. It can be argued that principals are tempted by the additional salary for running inclusive schools but know there is no accountability within the system of education and no adequate continuing professional development programmes.

The data from principals affirms the suggestion that not being knowledgeable about inclusive models of education has made school principals unable to apply the principles of inclusive education for deaf students in general schools. Hence, unless school principals are properly qualified and have experience of inclusive education, it would be difficult to maintain successful inclusive education of deaf students. There is a study conducted by Vaughn and Schumm (1995) which found that many school principals do not feel that they have the knowledge or skills to appropriately manage students with special needs in their schools. They also indicated that school principals perceive themselves as unprepared to handle a class of students with diverse needs. Hence, they do not set a good example or concentrate on the issue they need to address. Therefore, principals’ knowledge, understanding and qualifications are necessary for inclusive education for students with deafness in inclusive schools and for the well being of the principals themselves. It seems that with knowledge about special needs of deaf students and inclusion those school principals could promote and allow inclusive education for deaf students. As indicated the acceptance level of school principals of

inclusive education increased with knowledge and qualification with special educational needs students (Alghazo and Gaad, 2004), where this finding is relevant because those deaf students are a branch of special educational needs students.

In this study, the unsatisfactory and disappointing application of inclusive education in schools is the initial responsibility of the Local Educational Authority who appoint school principals to be heads of inclusive schools, with a full awareness that they will be leading a school which specialises in educating students with a specific and named disability without considering their qualifications and suitability in relation to inclusive education and deaf education. In this regard, Al-Fahily (2009) has pointed out that most of the school principals of inclusive schools in Saudi Arabia are appointed according to their experience in general education and their social connections. It is unfortunate to observe that culturally, one would prefer to recruit his relative or an individual who he knows personally rather than choose candidates with high ability or skill (Al-Treky, 2013). A system based upon jobs being given out as favours to people who are known to the appointment panel is not necessarily productive even for the principal involved as Al-Qahtani (2005; Jummah, 2007) reported, school principals with lower qualifications in special education have more stress than their peers with higher qualifications.

Based on the data for this project and the previous literature it seems reasonable to assume that school principals have a negative outlook towards the inclusive education process due to lack of knowledge and professionalism in the field of deaf education in inclusive schools. The term professional in this context meaning having specialist knowledge and an ability to use it and deliver it to others, through empowering and motivating them, in the midst of adhering to a moral practice (Ozga, 1995). The specialist knowledge related to teaching deaf students may include sign language, or the ability to use total communication, finger spelling or lip reading. Principals often attributed their doubts regarding inclusive education to a lack of facilities and the necessary adjustments in inclusive schools trying to get the child to fit in (medical model) but they did not focus on student needs – social and interactional models. This will be discussed in detail in chapter nine. Correspondingly, it can be argued that professionalism in deaf education and a certificate in inclusive education for schools' principals would support the idea of inclusive education for deaf students in general schools (Ainscow, 2004). Knowledge of leadership is essential for school principals to

understanding inclusive education, as without it, it is difficult to see how they could have the knowledge that would allow them to adopt a more social or interactional view of inclusive education. With this understanding principals could encourage school members to employ more inclusive practices that move away from a medical model of inclusion.

Additional evidence for this interpretation of school principals as unknowledgeable and lacking what is needed to lead such schools is provided for this by my school visits. The notes taken on (30-02/06-07/12) in S1, on (04-07/07/12) in S3, on (22-25/09/12) in S5 (These dates reflect the times that I visited these schools), revealed insufficient contact and communication between school principals and deaf students during school activities and assemblies. During school visits it was rare to see principals communicating with deaf students or involved with activities related to them. For example visiting S5 on (23/09/12) it has been observed that:

‘during assemblies which lasted 15 minutes the school principal used to move within the rows among non-deaf students without considering deaf students who are placed in a side row (i.e. excluded or separated because of their disability)’.

According to the system of education in Saudi Arabia, principals during assemblies have to move within the rows to address and greet them in the morning. Disregarding deaf students in this respect would develop a feeling of being isolated and a sense of discrimination. Similarly, in S1, on (01/07/12) it has been observed that:

‘during break time the school principal used to communicate with non-deaf students disregarding the deaf ones’.

When asked about this SPN1 answered:

‘... I do not know how to communicate with those deaf students’.

Likewise, SPR5 mentioned:

‘Well! addressing these students requires special ways which I do not have... Even to try I will not understand them and they do not understand me’.

The above quotes clearly reflect the medical models' view which implies difficulty within the child with no concept of their needs. Nevertheless, it has been argued that if not all staff of inclusive schools for deaf students are able to use sign language, at least they can communicate by body language or smiling to them rather than being neglected (Hanfy, 2008), unfortunately this was not understood by principals. If the principal of the school demonstrates to the rest of the staff that it is acceptable to exclude deaf students then instead of removing barriers, which hinder deaf students from inclusive education with their non-deaf peers, school principals are furthering exclusion. My observations as a whole confirmed that principals did not encourage inclusive education among students with or without deafness during schools' programmes.

According to the social model a society developing inclusive schools should remove all obstacles that may lead to the isolation of students with deafness and the principals action is an example of how society can be at fault for causing exclusion (Campbell and Oliver, 1996). Oliver (1996) does not deny the problem of disability but locates it squarely within society. This implies that disability is seen as something imposed on disabled people on top of their impairment by an oppressive and discriminating social and institutional structure. Hence, the barriers that prevent any individual playing a part in society are the problem, not the individual. Accordingly the problems students with deafness face are caused by the society in which they live and are not the fault of individual disabled persons, or an inevitable consequence of their limitations. In the same orientation, the interactional model, which does acknowledge the role that the disability itself plays, also lays great importance on the actions and measures taken by inclusive schools to facilitate or hinder the education of deaf students (Frederickson and Cline, 2002). This signifies that human behaviour and educational achievement is a result of the interaction between environmental influences and social experiences. The interactional model also places high importance on the child's environment in inclusive schools in helping deaf children to learn (Taylor, 2005).

Consequently, it can be argued that principals in the Saudi inclusive schools view deaf students through a medical model in which they often related the problem of deaf students to their disability, which requires specialists. Hence, their involvement with deaf students was rare whether in assemblies, classrooms or school activities. Therefore

according to the findings of this study, it seems that, school principals were actively excluding deaf students through their behaviour and their lack of knowledge.

7.2.2 Teachers' Knowledge and Understanding

As might be expected responses obtained from special education teachers of deaf students regarding their knowledge and understanding of the concept of inclusive education, revealed that the majority of teachers have a basic theoretical understanding of the notion of inclusive education. This is due to their academic qualification in deaf education. For example, TA1 (T refers to Teacher of special education, the letter A refers to the name of the teacher and the number 1 refers to the school) understood full and partial inclusive education:

‘there are two types of inclusive education, partial which includes placing a child with deafness in a special class in a general school, however including him with general activities of the school.., nevertheless the full inclusion comprises specific processes which considers the case of the child and his level which will determine the placing of him with the general class with non-deaf students’.

However, not all teachers of deaf children in these contexts were as knowledgeable, TB4 described only partial inclusive education:

‘inclusive education implies placing the deaf student with their peers during break times, assemblies and sports sessions, despite that most of the time students with deafness are taught in special classes’.

In the same way, TJ5 focused on social occasions when he denoted that:

‘inclusion signifies an educational process in which students with deafness are given the chance to participate in available school activities and social gatherings’.

However, TK5's interpretation is more ambiguous as he mentions the importance of learning in the inclusive education of children with deafness:

‘establishing a natural and suitable environment for deaf children to learn in a general school’.

Moreover, TD2 gave a more thorough description when he stated that:

‘Inclusion signifies giving opportunities for students with deafness to be included with non-deaf students, trying to remove any barriers amongst them as well as creating alternative opportunities for learning’.

It is obvious from the above quotes that teachers in general are more aware of deaf education than principals due to their qualifications. The responses of teachers are more reflective of interactional views of disability. This is in contrast to the principals who, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, are lacking knowledge and understanding. In moving from verbal descriptions to observed behaviour, a critical question is raised as to whether teachers’ knowledge is enough to change the current situation of inclusive education for deaf students in inclusive schools. It can be argued from observations that the teachers in this study missed key issues regarding the notion of inclusive education - and did not always apply the theoretical knowledge they appeared to have within the school environment.

I observed there was a gap between theory and practice for most of the teachers since deaf students were not properly encouraged to interact actively with non-deaf students in the general school environment. During school visits I noticed that deaf students were sitting alone at lunchtime and I did not observe any authentic communication between non-deaf students and deaf students in schools. This exercise seems to severely contradict the theoretical education of these teachers who were supposed to understand the importance of encouraging deaf students to communicate with others within inclusive schools. Obviously, teachers need to be supported with narrowing the gap between the theory and practice. The role of the principal in this regard is pivotal (King, 2011) and if the principal’s lack the knowledge and understanding then arguably it can be very difficult.

The gap between theory and practice was breached in most cases. However, during observation I did notice that a few of the teachers who had obtained recent qualifications relating to the inclusion of deaf students and others who obtained a Masters showed signs of inclusive practices. They were active and appeared to demonstrate that they were enthusiastic to do their best to encourage deaf students to participate in various activities with non-deaf students. It has been observed that such

teachers were sitting with deaf students and tried to encourage other students to play with them at break time. When interviewing the recent graduate teacher (TD2) he highlighted:

‘Well! as you know we need to act upon what we have learnt..., Students need to be treated equally in general inclusive schools..., That's why they are inclusive’.

It might be that recent changes in teacher education have reflected the policy ambitions more effectively. Similarly, it was observed that teachers (three out of twenty) who obtained an MA in deaf education for inclusive schools supported inclusive practices and were actively engaged in encouraging deaf students to involve equally in schools’ assemblies and activities with other non-deaf students. This finding, that those who are educated appropriately then act to change things is supported by Koutroubaet et al., (2008) conducted a study in Greek, found that teachers with more knowledge and experience supported inclusive students with special needs in general school. In my study such teachers who gained an MA seem to understand how to remove barriers for educating deaf students taking into consideration the view of interactional model. Hence, when asking one of them, TG5, about his enthusiasm to assist deaf students, he answered:

‘...These students need to feel that they are part of the school’s community..., They need to be encouraged to share with non-deaf students in the schools environment’.

Additionally, although the Ministry of Education have set up specific policies (e.g. to encourage deaf students to interact with hearing peers, creating convenient environments for deaf students) (Al-Qarny, 2008) for teachers to implement, it has been observed through my school visits that very few of these policies are applied by most of the teachers because teachers think these policies have not the desired effects. In this respect, TP3 mentioned that:

‘As you know, Local Educational Authorities designed policies without awareness of application... No they did not follow up these policies. It’s all theory’.

However, even when these enthusiastic teachers find that there are unaccountable barriers and they are unhappy with their schools lack of inclusion. When asking TH3 about this case, he replied:

‘Well..! We try to apply these policies’.

However, TB4 answered:

‘...but you know I think these policies are ineffective’.

This has also been evident from the notes obtained from the observations during field study. For example, my notes made in S1 on (01-03/07/12), in S2 on (03-04/07/12), in S3 on (11-15/09/12), in S4 on (14-19/09/12), in S5 on (22-26/09/12), pointed out:

‘during break times, it has been observed that deaf students are standing together in a separate area and are excluded from non-deaf students’.

In the same orientation, on (04/07/12), in S2, on (07/07/12), in S3, on (14/07/12), in S4, and, on (17/07/12), in S5, the notes highlighted that:

‘during assembly, deaf students are segregated into different groups to the extent that they are regarded and seen as different’.

The analysis of the data has also revealed that what teachers have highlighted about inclusive education is that it is only partially implemented within the school environment. This was evident from the data collected when interviewing teachers, for example, TA1 pointed out:

‘what was originally taught in university education is not seen in reality in our schools’.

Similarly, TF5 has expressed his disappointment in seeing that the school environment is not properly supporting inclusive practices. Knowledge and training is not enough because eventually he got inculcated into the school environment. Thus he remarked that:

‘whatever we have been qualified in at university is completely different from actuality and the school environment.., It’s too much to do these things in school’.

It seems that many teachers have lost sight of the theory when back at schools, as inclusive schools are busy demanding places. Teachers felt that they are often under pressure due to the burden of schools regarding homework, preparation and other extra curricula activities. However, it seems that there is no monitoring so that this lack of application of what is learned goes unnoticed.

Supporting the above statements are the notes written down during all of the school visits. These notes comment on the fact that:

‘deaf students were not given full opportunity to participate with non-deaf students in school general activities, in particular during break times, assemblies and sports sessions.

‘in relation to social gatherings such as break times and after school functions, deaf students are sometimes sitting together doing activities on their own’.

‘the schools’ environment whether learning or social activities suggested that there is minimal inclusive education of deaf students with non-deaf students’.

‘a number of barriers (for example, a lack of sign language pictures, posters, big TV screen) existed which hindered deaf students from expressing their abilities and skills, thereby limiting their potential learning’.

It seems that teachers did not look at sign language pictures or posters to put up around the school because their focus is often within classes. In the same direction school principals seem not to encourage such posters because as they mentioned ‘these posters are not effective for deaf students’. This shows their lack of knowledge and understanding of the models of inclusion. Additionally, in this study, it seems that the majority of teachers have not implemented whatever they learnt and have known about deaf education and inclusive schools in real life practice in schools. In this context, Forlin (1998) argued that without teachers’ application of their knowledge of inclusive education in their schools, inclusion would not be successful. Hence it can be contended

that effective inclusive education for deaf students requires not only theoretical knowledge, but the ability and context to exercise their enthusiasm to deal with students with deafness. Some teachers were also aware that the effectiveness of inclusiveness depends upon its implementation by all of the teachers in the school. This is evident when interviewing a teacher who recently obtained a degree in inclusive education for deaf students. He claimed to interact regularly with deaf students and encourage them to participate in sport and art activities with non-deaf students. He also said he used to visit the school library with deaf and non-deaf students together but TA4 also noted that:

‘I really support inclusive practices because I have recently been taught about deaf education and how to deal with deaf students in schools..., I have got the ability and knowledge to do that..., I hope that teachers do and have the enthusiasm to do that. These students really need our help’.

In this respect, Carrington (1999) pointed out that it is very important for education reformers to assist teachers not only to gain knowledge but also in other ways such as in the application of knowledge and coping with children with special needs. Moreover, it is argued, teachers have an essential role to play in inclusive education as they are responsible for implementing many of the changes necessary for them to be able to put their understanding into practice (Fullan, 1992). This signifies that teaching and learning is highly contextual and the culture of schools is very important. However, the analysis of attitudinal research carried out in chapter five suggests that without teachers’ positive and productive emotional states as well as willingness, openness, enthusiasm and commitment to implement the necessary changes, inclusive education approaches will not be implemented wholeheartedly or effectively. In this context, the view of the social model as represented by Moore et al., (1999) pointed out that the difficulties and problems that deaf students encounter should be searched for within the schools’ environment rather than within students. This signifies that the teachers should work collaboratively with school principals to adapt schools’ programmes including classroom activities to meet the deaf students’ needs which is crucial to successful inclusive education in general schools.

One way education systems gain knowledge is through collaboration with and between school staff. This has been addressed in chapter four and analysed in chapter nine. Although Saudi policy of education encourages collaboration in the schools (MOE,

2001: 76/2) it seems that there was unsatisfactory evidence of collaboration in the schools under study. When asking SPN1 about the issue of collaboration with school staff, he answered:

‘I tried to do so occasionally..., because of the many demands in the schools’.

When interviewing TM1 about collaboration, he highlighted that:

‘there is little collaboration... ,We only work together when there is an urgent meeting like at the beginning of the academic year’.

Another way education systems gain knowledge about inclusive education is through a regular system of inspection. In the same direction, inspectors related to the Saudi educational system who have a supportive role to play in evaluating practices, are to be involved heavily in assessing the teaching and learning processes in the schools. The Saudi system of education appoints inspectors to monitor the performance of principals and evaluate the operations of teachers. Regarding SEN these inspectors often have training courses in which they develop awareness about inclusive education (Al-Turkee, 2005). However, due to a lack of specialist inspectors in the area of SEN, inclusive education has been affected. In this respect when asking one of the teachers, TF5, about the involvement of inspectors in the educational process of the schools, he replied:

‘There is an effort from the inspectors but not evaluative enough to meet the educational needs of deaf students..., I want just to highlight that I myself have only once met the inspectors during the whole academic year 2011’.

When asking TZ2 about the role of inspectors, he answered:

‘I believe there should be more involvement of inspectors. Not as a threat but to assess and direct teachers to what is beneficial for deaf students. In the same time they can be helpful in providing us with recent information about inclusive education and how to deal with those students’.

Hence, activities within the inclusive school environment have to be constructed to suit deaf students that should be assessed by members of the educational authority including inspectors and specialists who should be provided by the Local Educational Authority.

Accordingly, the interactional theorists Keogh et al., (1997) argued that, from a socio-cultural perspective, it is impossible to separate the learning competencies from the environmental contexts. In this regard, I believe that part of the responsibility is liable upon teachers who should apply whatever they learnt about inclusive education in practice. This can be examined by either principals who are the leaders of schools or educational inspectors which are both needed for effective inclusion. According to King (2011) leadership may strongly influence teachers in their professional learning and implementation of new practices. This implies that the responsibility of principals as leaders is to motivate and support teachers to change their behaviours through democratic process. Leadership plays a vital role in fostering collaboration between teachers through building shared involvement based on trust and respect where all parties have equal status and input. It is unfortunate collaborative practices seem to be lacking in these schools in which principals have only the power to enforce their own views. In the absence of full collaboration within schools' staff and such leadership behaviours of school principals the result is a negative impact on the process of teaching and learning thereby affecting inclusion.

The review of literature has shown that research conducted by Al-Khatteeb (2004) pointed out that several teachers in Arab countries are not fully implementing their academic knowledge in their teaching process thereby leading to ineffective schooling, hence unsatisfactory results. On the other side, drawing upon other evidence from other countries which showed the significance of theoretical knowledge associated by implementation. For example a study conducted in Australia by Olson (2003) to examine the role of teachers in inclusive education revealed that knowledge about inclusive education led to implementation successfully and effective in general schools. Similarly, Hanfy (2008) in his study showed that implementation of academic knowledge in education is crucial especially when it comes to the teaching of children with deafness. Therefore, he asserted that teachers are able to create suitable environments not only in classrooms but also outside for instance to help the deaf students to interact with non-deaf students in break times, and participate in sport activities as well as other school functions. As indicated by Reynolds (2001) teachers' knowledge about inclusive education associated with application and positive behaviours are significant indicators in establishing successful inclusive education. Thus, I believe that knowledge can be ineffective if there is not a context in which it can

be applied. Having knowledge about specific model(s) without understanding the context of Saudi schools and the Saudi system of education is difficult. Therefore, a strategic model is developed (chapter ten) taking into consideration the views of the interactional model as well as the context of the Saudi system of inclusive education.

7.2.3 Parents' Knowledge and Understanding

In relation to the responses obtained by parents of deaf students, data analysis revealed that they are unaware of the general understanding of the notion of inclusive education for deaf students thereby they are inactive in relation to their role in inclusive schools. For example, parent PY2 (P refers to parent, the letter Y refers to the name of the parent and the number 2 refers to the school) explained that the notion of inclusive education implies:

‘placing children with deafness in big school’.

Similarly, parent PA1 described inclusive education as:

‘placing different nationalities, casts and backgrounds together in one place’.

Another example came from PB5, when specifically asked more than once during the interview, about the notion of inclusive education; she (by telephone) referred to it as:

‘a school which comprises children of special needs and looking after them and keeping them happy..., What can we do? Should we keep them at home? It is better to go to school’.

Indeed it is evident throughout the interviews with parents of deaf students in the inclusive schools under study that they were unaware and uninformed of the concept of inclusive education. It seems that some parent's view inclusion as care not education and the attendance of their children in inclusive schools as treatment (as a medical model - no cure so just care). They wished their children to attend schools rather than to be at home isolated from the society. Consequently, they consider their children being in an inclusive school is good rather than to be at home or go to a special school for

disabilities. In this respect when asking one of the parents, PY2 (by telephone), about their children being in an inclusive school, she replied:

‘I believe that sending my child to a school in which he meets neighbourhood children is better than sending him to disabled schools’.

Such views imply that encouraging children to develop social interaction was the most prominent wish of some parents. This notion that parents see this as the main value of inclusive education is indicated by Al-Khatteeb (2001) who argues that parents view that the most important aspect of inclusion is to develop social interaction and friendship with other neighbouring children. However, parents’ awareness, participation and involvement in schools’ functions are so significant in the process of the child’s learning. For instance, Smith et al., (2008) declared that parents’ knowledge about inclusive education of deaf students is an important element in inclusive schools because they present valuable information about their child. It can be asserted that when parents have knowledge about inclusive education and deafness, then they can view their child’s strengths and needs and make vital contributions to the success of inclusive education. Hence, cross cultural studies on parental involvement show that in European countries such as Britain parents are formally involved and invited to participate in decisions, for example, policy making (Elzein, 2009). In my study the parents of deaf students in Saudi inclusive schools were not involved in schools’ policies or activities due to their perception that teachers know best about children’s education. In addition, principals or teachers believed that parental involvement played an insignificant role in changing the educational policies set for special needs children. When I asked principal SPN1 about parents’ involvement, he replied:

‘Well! I believe that parents most of the time do not get involved because they seem to be busy’.

Although the responses of principals suggested disapproval of parents not attending meetings because of being busy, it can be argued that this view is used by principals to justify their lack of interest and support for parents to attend school meetings.

Similarly when asking a teacher, TP1, he replied:

‘I do not think parents get involved!..., because it seems that the school does not have enough time to invite parents for discussing educational matters..., As you know parents normally have no voice in schools’.

While principals’ views suggest disapproval of parents’ lack of involvement, teachers who have qualifications in SEN encouraged involvement but they could not influence principals’ views. This is due to the authority given to principals (Jummah, 2007), which overpower teachers’ views. In this respect when asking TP1 he answered:

‘Look! as you know I am a teacher and the authority is in the hand of the principal... He is the only one responsible for school’s activities and functions’.

It has been observed through school visits that there was a lack of parents’ meetings and an absence of parents’ voices in inclusive school’s activities. This is due to schools’ policies, which do not encourage parents to be involved in children’s education as mentioned earlier in chapter two. In the same way, other researchers have found that the Local Educational Authorities in Saudi do not promote policies for parents to be involved due to their perception that parents can do little (Al-Qahtani, 2005). Al-Qahtani (ibid) also suggested that there is a limited role played by parents that includes choosing the inclusive schools for their children, hence, the systemic inclusion of parents is in terms of their choosing a school. This suggests that the Local Educational Authority have an improper conception of inclusion which is certainly not aligned to an interactional model since they view parents as having nothing to contribute.

However, ignoring parents’ knowledge about their children and discouraging them from having a voice in educational policies could be a serious mistake because their participation and involvement can help in improving the outcome of their child’s education (Jones et al., 2002). Therefore, it can be argued that it is the responsibility of the Local Educational Authority as well as school principals to encourage parents to have a voice in education and participate in schools’ activities. Hence, an Australian study, Subban and Sharma (2006) found that participants with a family member or a friend with special needs, and those who possessed some knowledge about the legislation surrounding the education of students with special needs, encouraged

inclusive education practices. In my study, towards the end of interviews parents were really happy to see someone giving their opinions attention and interviewing them regarding their child. For example PS3 remarked towards the end of his interview:

‘... It is interesting to consider our views as parents’.

And PN4 admitted that he had:

‘never been interviewed and asked about children with special needs’.

Therefore, parents indicated that they wanted their voices to be heard although they lack knowledge about inclusion. This contradicted the view of principals, which suggested that parents are often busy. Hence raising parents’ awareness and encouraging them to participate with their views arguably could result in positive changes at inclusion schools specialising in deaf students. Interestingly, Lampropoulou and Padelliadu, (1997) noted that parents with knowledge of inclusive education would be able to comment and provide feedback in relation to their child’s achievement as well as being able to view inclusive educational practices more critically.

As Saudi parents do not participate in this way it was not possible to gather data from the study that confirmed this was the case locally. However, based upon past research and this study the strategic model developed in chapter ten combines multiple perspectives and comprises the features of the interactional model but is distinct in its nature to suit the specifics of the Saudi Education System demonstrating how teaching is managed for deaf students in inclusive schools. It focuses on the child and their learning; the level of educational support needed and also includes principals, teachers, parents and students in the process of evaluating and supporting the deaf student. In fact the strategic model reflects the necessary symbiotic relationship between principals, teachers, parents, Local Educational Authority and Ministry of Education. Also, from what is developed in this chapter the strategic model would focus on an incorporating sense that there needs to be changes in the knowledge, and qualifications of teachers, parents, principals and other students and new modes of collaboration.

7.3 Concluding Remarks

This chapter shows the importance of knowledge which suggests the needs of all key stakeholders to have this knowledge, in particular principals in order to be able to effectively support inclusive education. It can be argued that school principals of inclusive schools for deaf children have a lack of knowledge, understanding, awareness and professionalism in the field of education for deaf students and inclusive education. In this context, the wider literature suggests that the continuous administrative support and encouragement from school principals plays an important role in building positive and active commitment among teachers and other school staff towards inclusive education (Smith and Smith, 2000). Therefore, it can be affirmed that becoming qualified is essential for school principals to gain the necessary knowledge and understanding of inclusive education for deaf students that would equip them to encourage school members to implement inclusive education within the general school environment (Jarvis and Iantaffi, 2006; Sari, 2007). In supporting principals to gain knowledge Local Educational Authorities and inspectors should play a role to encourage them.

At the same time, part of the deficiency in the application of inclusive education can be attributed to the way that responsibility is given to teachers of deaf students to implement what they have been taught (a theoretical background and knowledge about inclusive education) in schools whose context does not facilitate inclusive practice. Previous research, such as that by Buell et al., (1999) reports a positive relationship between the teachers' knowledge towards inclusion and their influence on the outcomes of students with deafness in the general school. This contains supporting students in inclusive settings, and adapting classroom materials and procedures to accommodate them. As such theorists of the social model (Campbell and Oliver, 1996) as well as the interactional view that schools, including the principals and teachers, should work together to create suitable environments and remove all obstacles that may hinder the education of children with deafness in inclusive schools.

In relation to parents, my research suggests that parents lack knowledge about inclusion and its possibilities for their children and they are as such excluded from influencing

educational policy and do not play a role in helping schools support their children. However, previous research suggests that if parents were empowered by knowledge about inclusive education they could be influential engines for better inclusive education. They could put forward their suggestions to improve their children's education through direct contact with their child's inclusive school.

Although the findings of this chapter revealed the importance of knowledge as a key factor, yet an important outcome of data analysis highlighted that schools' staff including principals, teachers and parents are unaware of or are not consciously working with the models, this has unconstructive consequences. However, it can be argued that while both principals and teachers have a responsibility to implement the inclusion policy there is also a responsibility on behalf of the Local Educational Authorities and the Ministry of Education. Hence, such findings have informed the strategic model developed in chapter ten. In the next chapter the attitudes of all key stakeholders in the five schools are examined justifying the explorations of attitudes as an endeavour affecting inclusive education.

Chapter Eight

FINDINGS: Attitudes toward Inclusive Education

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8.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings regarding the attitudes of school principals, teachers and parents towards the inclusive education of deaf students. The participants interviewed either work at or have children attending schools who specialise in the inclusion of deaf students in Saudi Arabian boy's primary schools. The research question that informed the findings presented in this chapter focused on eliciting the attitudes of the three groups of interviewees towards the inclusive education of deaf students. As discussed in chapters four and five, the review of literature indicates that the attitudes of principals, teachers and parents of deaf students are influenced by their level of knowledge and understanding regarding deaf education in inclusive education. Hence, discussing and analysing the attitudes of school principals, teachers and parents has been significantly considered by a number of studies (Monsen and Frederickson, 2003; Subban and Sharma, 2006; Smith et al., 2008). These studies highlighted that understanding the attitudes of school principals, teachers and parents is as significant and of the same importance as other factors such as schools' environment and curriculum.

In this respect, several studies indicated that school principals' attitudes and their support are very important for building positive practices in inclusive schools (Elkins et al., 2003; Bursuck and Friend, 2006). This is due to a fact that principals create the culture for inclusive education by modelling (their behaviour) in terms of doing and saying. For example, a study conducted in the Arab Emirates by Alghazo (2002) found that the attitudes of school principals is crucial in instituting changes in general schools concerning inclusive education. In a similar vein, Smith and Leonard (2005) argue that many studies confirm that the attitudes and the views of teachers toward inclusive education of students with deafness is significant and is pivotal to the success or failure of implementing an inclusive education practice. This view is also supported by Jordan et al., (2010) who argued that teachers' attitudes play a crucial role in the way that teachers deal with students with different special educational needs in inclusive schools.

This also reflects what Lewis et al., (1994) highlighted about parents' attitudes influencing the achievement of inclusive education. They suggested that attitudes are more favourable when parents are allowed input into the decision making process.

Consequently, it is clear that exploring the attitudes of school principals, teachers and parents of deaf students within a single setting may provide substantial indicators and unique data (in the Saudi context) regarding how successful inclusive education is likely to be. Considering the views of principals, teachers and parents has provided me with greater insight regarding their perceptions, which thereby has given me better knowledge and understanding of their actions in schools. Whilst the subject of attitudes towards the inclusive education of deaf students has gained considerable attention in the research of a number of progressive western countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom (Iantaffi et al., 2003; Hung and Paul, 2006; Jarvis and Iantaffi, 2006; Angelides and Aravi, 2007; Vermeulen et al., 2012), little attention is given to the attitudes of school principals, teachers and parents in relation to the complex nature of inclusive education with regard to students with deafness in Saudi Arabia. This arguably is due to a lack of professionals in the area of special educational needs, particularly in deaf education, as well as the Ministry of Education (who commission and fund such research in Saudi) only recently showing an interest in research into inclusive education (Al-Omari, 2009). Following is a detailed discussion of the findings of the responses of school principals, teachers and parents collected through the interviews, documentary data and observations. The observations have provided direct and clear evidence of behaviour during the school visits. The discussion explores the findings through the lens of the social and interactional models of inclusive education as well as drawing upon the literature review more broadly.

8.2 Attitudes toward Inclusive Education of Deaf Students

The findings of this thesis revealed that school principals generally have negative attitudes towards the inclusive education of deaf students. This could be reflective of their poor knowledge and experience regarding inclusive education especially in the area of deaf education. Similarly principals often have low expectations and partial ambitions for deaf students to be educationally improved. This is demonstrated through the data in the sections below. The findings also show that although teachers have

positive attitudes towards inclusive education the implementation of inclusive practices for deaf students remains a challenge. Teachers of deaf students have expressed through their responses the notion that they don't have the support to implement inclusive education. With regard to parents of deaf students the findings demonstrated that parents supported the recent trend towards inclusive education in Saudi Arabia as schools provide places for their children in general schools. However, a number of parents stated that they felt powerless to change due to a) their lack of awareness about inclusive education for deaf students and; b) not being given the chance to interact within schools' activities owing to the policies of local educational systems which do not invite parents to take part in schools' practices. Parents are normally only invited to schools in emergencies and for students' graduation.

8.2.1 School Principals' Attitudes

As discussed early in the literature and above, the success of inclusive education of deaf students in general schools/classes depends on the attitudes and support that is available by school principals. This is due to their influential power in the structures of schools' programmes and activities; also they are often given authority through which they can influence the structures of schools' environment including resources and school meetings (Al-Fahily, 2009). In this study, the analysis of the attitudes of school principals in relation to the idea of inclusive education in general, showed that principals support the concept of inclusive schools largely due to the financial gains, rather than because of any commitment to inclusive education, for example, SPF3 stated that:

‘I do not mind.., Well as you know inclusive education in our school would benefit us financially’.

Similarly, SPR5 stated that:

‘oh yes, suitable.., Why not as long as we get extra profit because we are an inclusive school’.

The fact that principals' attitudes are based on monetary gains has led to negative consequences in terms of their behaviours in relation to schools activities; as my

discussion of the link between attitudes and behaviour in chapter five would suggest. Their financial concern and their preoccupation with personal benefits seem to have driven principals away from the real objectives of inclusion and created doubts about their role in deaf students' education. When asking TM1 about the lack of achieving inclusive objectives, he replied:

‘We do not get the real support from school principals..., Well they are the main person to decide the culture in the school’.

According to the Regulations for Special Education Inclusion Programs, principals get additional salaries and promotion from the Local Educational Authority due to extra efforts and times and they see this as reasonable justification for doing inclusive education for students with special needs in their school. My finding in this respect is supported by others in the field (Al-Musa, 2008). However, through visiting the schools such as S5 and S1, I have added to the evidence provided by Al-Musa (ibid) as I found further evidence that principals did not encourage good education for deaf students. For example, they did not stay after school or encourage teachers to help deaf students to do extra activities with non-deaf students. In addition I found the situation to be more complex than suggested by Al-Musa (ibid) as the motivations of school principals attitudes towards deaf students had a humanitarian dimension. For example SPN1 confirmed that:

‘it is a good idea when including all students together because they all are human’.

Similarly, SPR5 stated that:

‘inclusive education is a moral issue which has led to accepting students as part of humanitarian support’.

This view of principals appears to indicate that on the whole they concur with the notion that education should be widely recognised internationally as a fundamental right for everyone as first stated in 1948 in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, I think the problem is that the declaration does not tell us how disabled people should be included especially in the Saudi context, where principals do not have the experience of how to deal with deaf students in inclusive schools.

Generally speaking, this is the problem of policy borrowing, that the responsibility lies with the Ministry of Education and the Local Educational Authority to make sure that policies of inclusive education suit the Saudi context. The Saudi government (like many others) want to do the right thing on humanitarian grounds, therefore they invest money to ensure it happens. However a lack of structure and accountability has arguably resulted in the Ministry of Education and the Local Educational Authority not supporting school principals on the ground to build leadership capacity in this area. The Ministry of Education and the Local Educational Authority should be responsible for taking adequate decisions to choose the right policies or adjusting what is borrowed to suit the needs of Saudi deaf students but my study shows that this clearly is not happening.

It is disappointing that my research suggested that school principals generally accepted deaf students in inclusion schools for their own specific interests such as financial gains and that the findings of the data analysis in this thesis showed that those principals under study have mostly unsupportive attitudes towards inclusive education of deaf students. Such attitudes are unacceptable because schools are a microcosm of society and principals are key elements of inclusive schools whose attitudes directly influence school policies, affairs, principles, teachers' practice and school environments. Smith and Leonard's (2005) research implies that the views of principals and teachers towards inclusive education of students with deafness may lead to the success or failure of implementing inclusive education, positive views of school principals may help supporting teachers to implement further inclusive practices and bring deaf students into general classrooms. School principals have an opportunity to influence their schools and their communities to benefit deaf children but instead school principal SPR5 declared, for example:

‘Inclusive education of deaf students within general school settings would not be helpful to them because of language communication’.

Thus portraying an attitude which embodies the exclusion of deaf students. Similarly, SPN1 stated:

‘I do not believe that currently inclusive education within the classroom is appropriate as they will be ridiculed by the other students due to their physical and learning abilities’.

This principal seemed to believe that other non-deaf students had a negative attitude towards students in his school and that it was not his responsibility to change such activities. This clearly shows a lack of understanding of the models, in particular the social model which promotes the view of removing the barriers to meet the needs of students. I believe it is a shared responsibility. Principals should try to acquire knowledge about deaf students and inclusive education. Similarly it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and the Local Educational Authority to ensure that school principals have this knowledge and understanding. Principals are paid extra money with an expectation that they will engage with continuing professional development but unfortunately due to a lack of accountability, professionalism and lack of opportunities such an objective has not been fulfilled. In the same direction, SPF3 affirmed:

‘Inclusive education (in classrooms*) would be difficult regarding the needs and situation of deaf students’.

*author added

In addition to a lack of knowledge and understanding of principals towards inclusive education as shown in chapter seven, it seems that a lack of accountability has also played a role to affect negatively the attitudes of principals towards inclusive education of deaf students. Although, I expected to find inspection visits in the annual schools’ schedules, yet during the three months of observation I have not come across any sort of inspection by the Local Educational Authority. When asking the schools principals, SPN1 replied:

‘Well, as you know I have no authority to decide such work!..., it is the Local Educational Authority that decides...’.

Similarly, SPF3 answered:

‘...there is a lack of inspection..., Specially in relation to special educational needs, ... I think because of insufficient specialists in the area of inclusive education’.

When asking SPR5 about quality assurance procedures, he replied:

‘Well! I do my best as a principal, I try to check the preparation notes of teachers every week..., but for quality assurance procedures it is the responsibility of the Local Educational Authority’.

Moreover, during the several visits to inclusive schools, in notes on (1-5/09/12) in S1, in S3 on (15-19/09/12), in S5 on (29-02/09-10/12), I realised that the schools principals did not even pay any visits to the deaf students’ classrooms. Although the influence of principals in the overall teaching process of deaf students is little, it can be argued that their visits to classrooms can potentially encourage teachers to perform better. One would argue that teachers’ performance could be much greater if principals had the knowledge and experience of inclusive education. Principals are considered to be models (Norhouse, 2007), hence, their role is to assess the teaching process (Jummah, 2007), as well as to encourage and support teachers to lead teaching and learning of all students (King, 2011). However, principals’ lack of knowledge, unawareness of the concept of inclusive education, and lack of skills added to their own lack of professional responsibility in relation to deaf students have generally influenced their attitudes towards inclusive education. A study conducted by Opfer and Pedder (2011) also suggests that a lack of professional development undermines school principal’s ability to improve schools through their knowledge and to support others to develop a positive attitude towards inclusive education for deaf students. It is the Ministry of Education and the Local Educational Authority who are responsible for quality assurance procedures. These authorities should make sure that inspection visits to schools are conducted according to the annual planning.

In this study, the overall findings of the attitudes of school principals towards inclusive education for deaf students showed that although they generally accepted the idea of inclusive education due to additional funding and humanitarian issues, yet they hold a) unconstructive thoughts as well as low beliefs in the success of inclusive education for

deaf students in general schools, and b) unsupportive attitudes of inclusive education for deaf students within general classrooms which is indicative of a negative attitude towards inclusion. This is implied in the response of SPF3:

‘As I informed you earlier, I have doubt that inclusion would be successful for deaf students with non-deaf...’.

Similarly, SPN1 responded saying:

‘My point of view is that, inclusion education is difficult to attain by deaf students because of differences between students’.

The review of the literature on attitudes would imply that such attitudes appear to be concordant with principals’ lack of knowledge, experience and awareness of the concept of inclusive education for deaf students. The literature posits that knowledge, skills and experience influence personal practices. For example, according to Hallinger (1998; cited in Opfer and Pedder, 2011) schools have internal and external ways of learning and improvement. External sources depend on knowledge and information available for schools, and the internal resources relate to the capacity of the school itself. Both of these may affect beliefs and attitudes of school staff. According to Desimone (2009; cited in Opfer and Pedder, 2011) school principals’ knowledge and skills are critical to their practice and are the most considerable factor for individual change. Similarly (Burn et al., 2003; cited in Opfer and Pedder, 2011) demonstrated that attitudes are heavily grounded in past and present experiences.

Another significant finding in this thesis revealed that school principals were not sure that inclusive education would work with deaf students. This was due to their low expectations and partial ambitions for deaf students to be educationally improved. Principals believed that deaf students lacked the ability to acquire knowledge in inclusive schools and that the idea that they could do this is impractical due to their deafness. For instance, SPN1 suggested:

‘I do not think that inclusive education within general school settings for deaf student is appropriate because of their psychological, behavioural and learning abilities’.

This indicates this principal had a medical definition of deafness and believed that it was routinely accompanied by other issues. It seems that his attitude is based on a lack of understanding of deaf students and as indicated in the previous chapter his knowledge about deaf students is poor. This principal seems to misunderstand the concept of inclusion and deaf education as highlighted by Schirmer (2001) who asserts that deafness has an effect on the lack of ability of the students to easily communicate, express their ideas and interact with others which may sometimes develop unacceptable behaviours which may be seen by school staff as aggressive behavior. In an ideal world school principals would understand that this was what was happening. When asking the principal about whether his belief is related to all special needs students. He replied that:

‘I think it's only for deaf students due to their inability to communicate with non-deaf students’.

Such unconstructive attitudes are based on prejudice and misapprehension of the reality of deafness and the needs of deaf students and it reflects a medical model which implies care needed only without cure. In this context, Kaul (1992; cited in Frederickson and Cline, 2002) discussed the challenge of special needs students in India, and argued that to understand the special educational needs of students with disabilities we need to look at them as children with personal identities in a particular social environment.

During several visits to inclusive schools, I have realised as denoted in S1 on (1-5/09/12), in S3 on (15-19/09/12), in S5 on (29-02/10/12), that the attitudes of school principals were manifested in lack of interaction and a general disregard to the group of deaf students. This is evident in a number of actual incidences recorded in the field notes. For example, during morning assembly in which SPN1 completely ignored deaf students while rejoicing with non-deaf students. Similarly, SPF3 was asking about the achievement of a group of non-deaf students encouraging them to work hard while not mentioning such messages to deaf students who were in the same hall. In this context, it would be helpful if principals could take on the view of social model and would not see students with deafness as having differences that define them as a minority with their own forms of communication and understanding (Moore et al., 1999) that principals are under no obligation to engage with. It is also important that principals change so that

they see that the problems that face students with deafness are not ‘external rather than internal’ (Moore et al., 1999): principals are part of the problem.

A further analysis of data collected through interviews with principals regarding advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education of deaf students revealed that they generally have reservations about including deaf students in schools. Their views assumed that deaf students cannot bring anything valuable to the classroom that might benefit other students. For example, SPF3 denoted that:

‘Although inclusive education has specific problems in relation to teaching and learning..., I believe deaf students cannot contribute greatly to the learning process..., Nevertheless, its advantage (in its current state*) – students would feel lonely at special schools’.

*added by author

These attitudes towards deaf students implies that they are not valuable and not a positive asset. However, during school visits I observed that support from leadership, teachers, including knowledge and understanding can help both deaf and non-deaf peers learn from each other. One example was of a teacher (who has a Master’s degree in inclusive education) who did work on sign language with non-deaf peers and which has helped them to interact with deaf students and treat them with respect.

Whereas, SPN1 stated that:

‘Although deaf students could improve their speaking abilities, communicative skills, and this would have other positive effects such as, removing the sense of isolation and disability, .. it would be difficult for deaf students to learn due to the potential bullying and violence they may experience from other non-deaf children’.

This view provides a dramatic example of the principal’s attitudes towards deaf students and others. Such attitude implies that deaf students take and benefit themselves but don’t give and enhance other students experience and learning, and it sees bullying as almost a natural response to difference. However, it should be the responsibility of principals to make sure that every student in the school is safe and that they are able to learn in an undisturbed environment.

Moreover, SPR5 indicated that he thought that whilst deaf students could potentially benefit this was unlikely to happen:

‘Inclusive education of deaf students within school settings would help them to be familiar and interact with non deaf students which may improve self confidence..., however, due to the lack of specialists in the area of deafness and psychology, this may hinder such purposes from being achieved’.

In addition there is no mention in this interview of the notion that all students might benefit.

The analysis of the school principals’ viewpoints showed that students with deafness are perceived by principals as ‘less’ and as having little to contribute. The notes taken during several visits, for example, note on (01-06/09/12) in S1, in S3 on (15-19/09/12), in S5 on (27-02/09-10/12) supported their reservations. The notes implied that in general, school principals are not supportive of inclusive education of deaf students due to: a) lack of understanding about deafness and awareness of the concept of inclusive education for deaf students as mentioned previously in chapter seven, and b) trying to avoid responsibilities and extra duties that come along with inclusive education. This signifies that principals are uncommitted and don’t have a sense that they should hope to achieve as positive an educational and social outcome as they can for deaf students. It was apparent in their attitude towards deaf students, for example in S3 on (15-19/09/12), in S1 on (03-06/09/12), in S5 on (27-02/09-10/12) that school principals were not routinely involved in any direct contact with deaf students. The fact is that the Local Educational Authority gives extra salaries and promotion to the principals but no direct extra funding for the students. Arguably this is because principals do not often demand resources and funding for students due to their lack of knowledge and the needs of deaf students. Additionally, as I have personally observed, and the principals and teachers have confirmed, there was a lack of inspection to follow up and assess the needs from the Local Educational Authority. Also, there were not any specialist visiting educators for the deaf to support teachers and students or who created a link with parents and principals. Providing schools with extra inspections and specialists in the area of deafness as well as increasing the level of understanding of inclusive education

among principals would lead to a positive change of attitudes (Al-Qahtani, 2005; Jummah, 2007).

8.2.2 Teachers' Attitudes

It is indicated in the literature that teachers' attitudes towards the inclusive education of deaf students is extremely significant in relation to their own learning and the social interaction that takes place in inclusive school communities. In this context, Sadek and Sadek (2000) have suggested that the attitudes of teachers of deaf students are very important because they underpin their professional practice. In the same way, Forlin et al. (1996) see teachers' attitudes as a particularly important factor which is too often ignored by policymakers who expect teachers to accept new policies and practices and work with these changes without giving much consideration to their personal beliefs and attitudes.

When analysing teachers' responses regarding the idea of inclusive education for deaf students, the data obtained through interviews, observations and field notes highlighted that teachers of deaf students generally showed positive attitudes. As indicated in the literature (Alghazo, 2002; Subban and Sharma, 2006; Al-Samade, 2008), this is concordant with their education, knowledge and experience of working with deaf children in inclusive schools and the motivation for taking on such a role. For example, teacher TM1 stated that:

‘inclusive education is essential for deaf students’ learning’.

Similarly, TB2 affirmed:

‘yes, I support inclusive education completely’.

In the same way, TG4:

‘inclusive education is good..., and I fully support it, if it is applied in a way that considers whether it is the best way to fulfil the objectives relating to a deaf student... this includes creating social interactions and friendships’.

Although a number of teachers of deaf students expressed their support for inclusive education, they associated it with specific conditions as in the above case, and in the instance of TM4 who pointed out:

‘Inclusive education is a wonderful idea if other conditions are taken into considerations, e.g. the suitability of the school’.

In relation to teachers’ attitudes about inclusion of deaf students within general schools’ settings, the findings revealed that even though teachers may have some reservations and caveats their responses are constructive and associated with specific recommendations indicating a positive attitude and a desire to make inclusion work where possible. For example:

TH2 replied saying:

‘Well, inclusive education of deaf students within general school settings depends on the school environment and community’.

TA1 also affirmed this view:

‘Inclusive education of deaf students within general school settings is acceptable if the school provides all the essential facilities and needs’.

Similarly, TP3 asserted:

‘Yes, I believe in the inclusive education of deaf students, with providing all of the means and equipments which help them to study in general school settings’.

The above quotes suggest that teachers believe in the underlying philosophy of inclusion but see it contingent on being provided with resources. However it can be argued that despite the constraints, a teachers’ duty is to serve the needs of the deaf students. This fact that they get very few resources is the signal that is given to them and the rest of the school that taking care of the requirements of and the needs of deaf students doesn’t take any extra resources or materials to do this, besides the teachers themselves. Teachers were not unreservedly positive, some also showed unconstructive practices regarding the inclusive education of deaf students within classrooms. Most of

the teachers were hesitant in their views about including deaf students in classrooms with non-deaf ones because they were worried that students would not get the suitable facilities to meet their needs. When asking TP3, who previously mentioned the lack of appropriate school environment as the major barrier to inclusive education, his response to the question of the inclusion of deaf students in general classrooms was that:

‘Inclusive education of deaf students in general classrooms is inappropriate.., without supports to facilitate communication’.

Whereas, TM1 commented that:

‘I believe including deaf students in the general classroom cannot be useful.., for both deaf and non-deaf, because deaf students cannot communicate with non-deaf students and benefit of each other’.

In the same orientation, TF5 who showed a lack of understanding stated:

‘No, I do not think so.., because they need attention and they could make problems in general classrooms’.

Similarly, TM5 affirmed that:

‘We cannot include the deaf students in the general classrooms, unless there are sign language teachers’.

Also through observations it has been realised that the practices of teachers did not fully correspond to their positive attitudes about inclusive education of deaf students. For instance, as shown in the actual field notes in S5 on (24-26/09/12), in S4 on (17-19/09/12), in S1 on (01-04/07/12) many teachers left groups of deaf students alone at break time without encouraging inclusion with the other students in the general school. Similarly, deaf students were often left alone in activities taking place in art classrooms as well as cultural activities such as theater. Nevertheless, despite the structures and constraints, I have observed one teacher (TJ4) who has a master’s degree in inclusive education who managed to interact with deaf students and helped them to participate in activities with non-deaf students. He used to arrange visits including deaf students to non-deaf classrooms and help deaf students to express their thoughts and convey the message to non-deaf students. Additionally, he also managed to write a monthly news

letter about inclusive education particularly for deaf students to share that knowledge with school staff, all students and parents by sending that letter with students to their homes. Another teacher (TG5) who had a master's degree in deaf education showed high regard for deaf students and had a constructive attitude through which he managed to teach key sign languages to non-deaf students to enable them to communicate and interact with deaf students in inclusive school. Observing such practice, some teachers expressed their satisfaction and admiration, and deaf students were extremely happy to see a teacher communicate with them in their own language. This suggests the importance of teacher agency and using their individual successes and knowledge (MA in inclusive education) to encourage others, mainly teachers to become involved effectively in the process of inclusion and bring about change. In this respect, a study conducted in Egypt by Elsayed (2009) found that the level of education and qualifications in special education and inclusion had a positive affect on teachers' attitudes and practice.

In all the classrooms I have been allowed to observe, I have realised that there is no real attempt to include deaf students into the general classroom. The occasional cases are as illustrated in notes on (17/09/12) in S2, when I did observe inclusive education (partial inclusion) in art and sport sessions. Although a teacher of deaf students was there, I found deaf students were seated in corners of the class, rather than being involved in the various activities. Of course such an approach is challenging because the number of students increases and the teacher is less able to work with all the students. Furthermore, inclusive education of deaf students within classrooms should be well organised and planned by teachers, not treated as if it is just a matter of deaf students spending time in general classrooms (Ainscow, 2007). This showed that in reality there was no real application of inclusive education in classrooms to the extent that the deaf students were left for the majority of time without being encouraged to participate in activities in classrooms and learning. This contradicts the view of the social and interactional models which lay great importance on the measures taken by schools including teachers of deaf students to facilitate their education and interaction (Frederickson and Cline, 2002).

To further interrogate the above argument that teachers' practice seemed to indicate that they did not have a positive attitude about inclusive classrooms, teachers' viewpoints in relation to the advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education in classrooms for deaf students were also explored. In this context, the interviews with teachers produced more explicit data regarding their positive attitudes towards inclusive education for deaf students. Generally, data analysis showed that teachers' views align with the social model in that they are concerned with what students can achieve and perceive only the deaf students as benefitting. For instance TA5 declared that:

‘Despite the problems we face on a regular basis which includes a lack of awareness of principals and parents about deafness..., inclusive education in general would help deaf students to create social and friendly relationships with the ordinary students... It also helps deaf students overcome the obstacles of being disabled and try to be involved with others in activities and other social interactions’.

And TJ4 declared:

‘It is the right of all deaf students to attend inclusive education for social interaction with non-deaf students... It also gives deaf students the chance to interact in activities with non-deaf students. Hence, this will create friendly environments.’

Whilst these responses are positive they reflect the attitudes of some teachers who do not mention the positive aspects of inclusive learning for all children and clearly, the attitude of some teachers towards deaf students is that they don't have much to bring to the classroom for non-deaf students. This attitude forms a social barrier. So the attitudes of some of the teachers and the principals seem to be forming a social barrier to inclusive deaf education that needs to be overcome. For example TP1 commented that:

‘Inclusive education is so significant for deaf students in particular it helps them to get rid of fear and isolation. It helps deaf students to participate in activities such as assemblies and break times normally with non deaf students...’.

And TG5 asserted that:

‘Including deaf students in general schools would prepare the society to accept them and would help them to feel normal and no different to any member of society..., This includes their hearing peers in school as well as neighbours of the community. However, I am worried that the schools’ society in which deaf students live in is not prepared to offer social support for such type of individuals’.

This later teacher seems to fear the attitudes of others rather than his own.

There are some teachers that have a positive attitude towards deaf students being included in the fuller sense and appreciate the value for all students. They appeared to be saying that deaf students might bring something to the classroom. For example, TJ3 denoted that:

‘I could not see any disadvantage of inclusive education but our understanding of its principles and application is the problem. On the contrary, inclusion is good for deaf students and hearing ones; ... because they may encourage others to learn about difference, sign language, cooperation and respect..’.

Other teachers have more positive attitudes but see their effects as limited in that the social context is not enabling them to achieve their goals. For example TK4 affirmed that:

‘Among the advantages of inclusive education of deaf students, we help them to lead a fulfilling life.., so that when they grow up, they will not be shocked by living in society. It would be easier for them to communicate with others as they were brought up with ordinary neighbour students.., However, I could affirm that the main disadvantages, as teachers we suffer from lack of facilities which may not help professionally the learning of deaf students’.

Likewise, TH3 claimed that:

‘Theoretically inclusion means deaf students could study with ordinary students in one setting, so that they could build up a relationship..., Nevertheless, if we cannot provide the school with programmes and classrooms fully facilitated for such type of students, we could never achieve the objectives we originally intended’.

The several notes in S2 on (08-12/09/12) and in S4 on (15-24/09/12) taken during observations, illustrated that in general those teachers of deaf students pointed out a number of advantages for including deaf students. However, they lack confidence in the power of their own attitudes being sufficient to bring about the desired effects, which then manifests in their contradictory attitudes and behaviours towards the endeavour. My note on (10/09/12) in S2, clarified the attitude of TH2 which was positive and was evident in the fact that he was so helpful during break times. He used to organise simple activities (for example games including races, pulling the ropes, jumping...) through which all students including the deaf took part. In the same direction, my note on (01/10/12) in S5, showed that teacher TA5 (who verbalised a positive attitude) was trying to stop some non-deaf students from bullying deaf students at lunch time. Bullying was dealt with by directing non-deaf students to respect students with deafness and deal with them as peers and schoolmates. In this context, it is evident that the actions of a few teachers is insufficient and needs further support: establishing education courses for school members including students is essential (Al-Khatteeb, 2004), to develop successful inclusion as well as creating school environments based on love, respect, care and sharing.

8.2.3 Parents' Attitudes

The findings showed that parents were fully supportive of the idea of inclusive education in general. For instance PR5 stated:

‘Inclusive education is a magnificent initiative so that students with special needs will be with non-deaf children’.

Similarly, PF3 responded saying:

‘Inclusive education is absolutely suitable and useful for all students with special needs to remove any kind of fear and discomfort’.

Also a few parents indicated that they believe their children have a right to an education. They strongly supported the inclusion of deaf students in general school settings. Take for example PY2:

‘Yes, I support my child to be in this inclusive school..., It is appropriate for them, so that he can learn and study’.

Likewise, PS3 asserted:

‘It is suitable for them ... I believe deaf students like my child should learn and be included in this inclusive school regardless of the schools’ services’.

The analysis of parents’ responses revealed their beliefs for inclusion of deaf children in inclusive schools. Some believe that this is the only way their children can learn which seems to demonstrate that they set high expectations. Others believed that it is convenient for them to send their children to the local school. In this context, an Australian study conducted by Subban and Sharma (2006) found that parents generally accept inclusive education of their children into regular settings because schools are near to their places of living and have easy access in terms of transport. A similar study conducted by Semmel et al., (1991) showed that parents were interested in sending their deaf children to general schools rather than sending them to special schools for disabilities. The views above also suggested that the reason parents send their deaf children to such schools could also be to do with there being less of a stigma if their child goes to a special school. It can be argued such mixed attitudes are related to parents’ relative lack of knowledge or a lack of understanding in different ways. For example for some it reflects high expectations that their child’s needs would be met which as my study has shown is not always the case. Parents’ views showed that their attitudes are often based upon a misunderstanding of the current level of inclusive education and the possible alternative models.

Nevertheless, parents expressed their concerns about inclusive education of their children within general classrooms. For example PF2 stated:

‘Perhaps it will be difficult to control the deaf students within the general class..., thereby they are in danger of being overlooked’.

Moreover, PW5 affirmed:

‘Deaf students require efforts to manage in the general classrooms due to their physical abilities’.

Similarly, PB4 stated that:

‘my deaf child and other deaf children require special attention which may not be available in the general classrooms’.

Whilst parents have concerns in relation to their children being in general classrooms it could be argued that their responses indicated an awareness of their child having special needs that requires specialist teaching as seemed to be the case from the evidence discussed in chapter seven. In the same direction parents’ views of deafness were situated in the medical model which focuses on the child’s impairment and their need for care (Villa and Thousand, 2005).

To back up the above arguments parents were interviewed discussing their viewpoints about the advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education for their deaf children. Analysis of parents’ viewpoints regarding inclusive education of deaf students highlighted their main concerns being the fear of negative reactions from ordinary students. Parents’ viewpoints asserted that it is the responsibility of school principals to create the right culture and environment in the school. In the same way parents expressed their concerns about their children being bullied in the schools. However, they have the opinion that it is the responsibility of teachers to prevent this. For example PY2 asserted that:

‘There are plenty of advantages of inclusive education of deaf students; specifically it helps them become active members of society.... It is the duty of principals to maintain such aims’.

Similarly, PT5 stated that:

‘The advantages of inclusive education of deaf children are social - through which deaf students can have friends with ordinary children. However my concern is the attitude and behaviour of some ordinary students towards the deaf students, which include laughing and mocking at them..., I believe teachers should be aware of this and stop it’.

In the same orientation, PZ1 pointed out:

‘One of the most significant advantages of inclusion of deaf students is encouraging them to integrate with the whole society, rather... Normally deaf students could be isolated in the school ...This may create stress, depression and other psychological problems..., I think principals and teachers are responsible’.

In addition, PB4 commented that:

‘The advantages of including deaf students comprises developing their abilities and allowing them to experience real life situations, as well as acquiring natural skills in terms of communication and people skills. However, school principals and teachers should make sure that such students would not encounter any sort of bullying and aggression in inclusive school’.

The above viewpoints suggested that all parents supported inclusive education for its main benefit of allowing their deaf children the opportunities to attend schools rather than being at special schools for special needs. In addition they have an important perspective to contribute in that they don’t accept the bullying as inevitable but start to suggest that something can be done about it and that this is the responsibility of the principals and teachers. However, the discussion of teachers’ attitudes in the previous section has revealed that teachers are also lacking the understanding necessary to create a good environment for inclusive deaf education. It can be argued that if such viewpoints which reflect the attitudes of parents are taken into consideration by schools, the Ministry of Education and the Local Educational Authority would begin to encourage a good infrastructure and change could happen.

8.3 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has illustrated the second set of findings of this thesis regarding the attitudes of school principals, teachers and parents in relation to inclusive education of deaf students in general school. The evidence is found by comparing reported attitudes, viewpoints, behaviours and participants’ evaluations of the strengths and weaknesses of inclusive education. Hence, the findings have demonstrated that school principals have largely unconstructive attitudes towards including deaf students in general schools. The findings showed that the reasons for such attitudes are lack of knowledge, experience,

understanding and awareness about the concept of inclusive education and the needs of deaf students. It is disappointing because principals' attitudes would affect the greater Saudi society which may have negative perspectives about deaf people, their education and their role in the society. Nevertheless, it can be argued that through providing principals with knowledge about inclusive education and raising awareness about deaf education, their attitudes can become positive, leading to better practices and support for the inclusion of deaf students in general schools. It is the responsibility of the Local Educational Authority to arrange courses for principals which include deaf education. According to the view of the social model problems facing deaf students are the product of unconstructive perceptions presented within society, including schools. Therefore according to the social model the removal of discrimination requires a change of thinking in the way in which society is organised (Smith et al., 2004). In this respect, paying extra funding to principals without knowledge and understanding of inclusive education and without consistent inspection and responsibility would not sort out the problem of deaf education and the attitudes of principals within inclusive schools. Hence, part of the responsibility of dissatisfaction of inclusive education in relation to the findings of this research is due to the Local Educational Authorities who appoint principals without transparent policies and proficient measurements as well as a lack of follow up.

In relation to teachers, although the findings revealed that they have generally appropriate academic backgrounds, it has also found that the implementation of what they learnt is challenging for the most part. It seems that there is a mismatch between teachers' values and their practice. This could be due to a lack of infrastructure which will be discussed in chapter nine. It was observed that deaf students were not given due attention within schools/classrooms and they were not encouraged to interact with their hearing peers during break times. However the view of the interactional model is that students with deafness should be encouraged to interact with others. This encouragement should come from school principals or teachers and they also need to create suitable environments and develop appropriate activities for all students equally (Frederickson and Cline, 2002). While the social model acknowledges that learners can experience difficulties in school, these difficulties can provide opportunities for improvement. This view posits that inclusive schools are responsible for modifying activities in order to respond more flexibly to the diverse learning needs of students

such as deaf students. Regarding parents, the findings showed that they generally expressed full support of the inclusive education of their children in general schools though most of them are unaware of the concept of inclusive education. Accordingly, this research proposes a strategic model which takes into consideration the Saudi context of inclusive education for deaf students. It not only focuses on the level of educational support for deaf students but it has developed out of an analysis of the knowledge and attitudes of principals, teachers and parents' involvement in the learning process of their children. Moreover, it considers the centralised system that works from the Ministry of Education, to the Local Educational Authority. This signifies that the strategic model focuses on the deaf students and their learning. In fact this model reflects the necessary symbiotic relationship between principals, teachers, parents, Local Educational Authority, Ministry of Education as well as acknowledging the need for changes in the knowledge, and attitudes of principals, teachers and parents of deaf students.

Chapter Nine

FINDINGS: Facilities, Training and School Environment

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9.1 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to presenting the evidence that emerged in association with the third research question: What are the other factors that influence inclusive education for deaf students? In addition to the key factors presented in chapters seven and eight concerning the knowledge, understanding and attitudes of school principals, teachers and parents of deaf students toward inclusive education, there are other underlying factors which have emerged from the data analysis and constitute important findings. These factors include the fact that participants feel that there are insufficient facilities and resources, a lack of training courses and that there is a lack of collaboration among school staff and between staff and parents of deaf students. This set of findings have been analysed through the lenses provided by the social and interactional models of inclusion as well as drawing upon the literature from the field of general inclusive education on the education of deaf students. These different aspects of the findings are examined to find out whether they support or contradict the theoretical premise of this research which has suggested that the social and interactional models need to be better understood by those working in, supporting and making policy regarding inclusive education in Saudi Arabia if changes are to be based upon enhanced understanding. This chapter will now explore each of the factors identified as significant to hindering the current situation of partial inclusion and which would certainly prevent any moves towards full-inclusion were that to come about.

9.2 Insufficient Facilities and Resources

According to the policy of the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia (section 78) facilities and resources for schools with inclusive education should be adequate for teaching the group of students that need to be included. For deaf students this would include, for example: a) classrooms equipped with a sound field system which involves the teacher wearing a microphone, and hearing aids are available to help deaf students;

and, b) schools should be built using materials which minimise outside sounds to prevent confusion for deaf students (Ministry of Education, Saudi Arabia, 2001). However during my visits to these inclusive schools specialising in deaf students in boy's primary schools, it was disappointing to see that most of these facilities are not available. Thus it seems that what is recommended by the policies of the Ministry of Education regarding inclusive schools and practices do not necessarily materialise at the level of schools educational resources. I believe as highlighted by Al-Musa (Head of special educational in Saudi Arabia: 2008) that it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education to supply all the required equipment for inclusive education for deaf students. It is also the responsibility of principals to fight for such resources. This view is supported by McLeskey and Waldron (2002) who argue that a key role for the school principal of inclusive schools is to make any necessary changes to the school building and to provide the resources to support the implementation of inclusive education. In this context, the policy of special educational needs in Saudi Arabia (Section 26: 2001) appears to concur with this view. It is stated that it is the responsibility of principals to:

- a) ensure that all facilities required for inclusive education of deaf students are available;
- b) create a suitable environment within schools through which deaf students can be incorporated with non-deaf students in all activities; and,
- c) to supervise the maintenance of indoor services and make certain that they are suitable for deaf students.

It is unfortunate as indicated in chapters seven and eight that principals were not making due efforts to demand such resources or pursue any application procedures. The theories associated with attitudes suggest that this could arguably be related to their low expectations of deaf students and the principals' belief (based upon a lack of knowledge) that the resources wouldn't make any difference. I believe this influences their lack of demand to the local educational authority regarding the needs and requirements of deaf students. During the various visits to the S1 on (01-03/09/12), in S2 on (04-05/09/12), in S3 on (12-15/09/12), in S4 on (22-25/09/12), in S5 on (29-02/09-10/12), it was evident that schools do not have sufficient facilities and resources which provide deaf students with full opportunities to exercise their skills and learning activities as well as communicating with other students. Hence, there was no accessibility to more visual teaching materials, interactive whiteboards, computer software, hearing aids or a sound field system. When I asked school principals SPN1

and SPF3 about the facilities and equipment they have which meet the requirement of deaf students, they stated that:

‘All schools are at the same standards, no difference between inclusive schools or general ones – lack of facilities’.

When asking SPR5 about resources and facilities he replied that:

‘Our school is poor regarding facilities, I have never heard of any differences in other inclusive schools for deaf students’.

In the same way when I asked teachers of deaf students about resources and facilities in their inclusive schools they were critical of what was available. TJ3 stated that based on his experience with deaf students in special schools he could not:

‘see any of these facilities and resources ... which are available in special schools for deaf students’.

Similarly, TM5 answered:

‘I think facilities are not sufficient in inclusive schools, and classrooms do not help deaf students to learn’.

This later teacher mentioned the impediments to deaf students learning that were attributable to the physical classroom. However, the lack of ability to argue coherently as to why these issues were to be demanded as a right can, at least partially, be attributed to the lack of awareness of the social model in schools. Teachers knew who to blame but nobody reproduced the arguments of the social model they only alluded to things which could be addressed if it were adopted as a framework to think through inclusive education for deaf students. For example, TP1 implied that the fault lies with the school principals as well as the Local Educational Authority:

‘There are not enough facilities in my school... it is the responsibility of the principal. Also, I believe all inclusive schools (in Riyadh*) belong to one Local Educational Authority, hence, the lack of facilities would be for all’.

*added by author

The above responses clearly illustrate the issue of insufficient facilities within inclusive schools. It is unfortunate that the Ministry of Education pays extra salaries to those principals and teachers but do not dedicate sufficient to the resources for the students. There is research to show additional resources would improve the education of deaf students. In this regard, Pearson et al., (2003) concluded that teachers in schools with extra funding provisions, additional counselling resources and specialist supports expressed more accepting attitudes towards students with special needs and their admission into general schools. Similarly, Leatherman and Niemeyer (2005) reported that while the teachers in their study did implement inclusive practices, they indicated that financial support from administrators and other resources are vital to develop a successful inclusive environment.

I believe that with this lack of equipment and resources significant changes are required to the approach taken in Saudi Arabia, and that this requires a strategic model which highlights the shortcomings and assesses and frames the functions of the Ministry of Education, the Local Educational Authority and inclusive schools whilst outlining the functions of staff, including principals and teachers with regard to securing and providing appropriate resources. The strategic model would set procedures to monitor the amount of money spent for the purpose and for whom, thus taking into consideration the whole process of inclusive education for deaf students in boy's primary schools. I believe that current issues are not a matter of insufficient funding because the Local Education Authority receives annual reasonable funds (Ministry of Education, 1998); it is the issue of a lack of prioritisation and management. It is clear that the Saudi Government has tried to establish inclusive education in general schools, but it seems that a lack of organisation and adequate planning and monitoring (by the Local Educational Authority) has caused part of the problem. The expressed concern of the Saudi Government represented by the Ministry of Education is to provide these schools with suitable facilities and equipment that meet the needs of deaf students. Although Al-Musa (2008), a leading researcher who is highly influential with government, claimed that general schools for inclusive education are fully provided with convenient facilities for all students especially those students with special needs including deaf students, such a claim is not reflected in reality in the schools in this study. During the interviews one teacher (TJ3) stated that:

‘Once I met Al-Musa and complained about the lack of facilities in inclusive schools..., and Al-Musa responded saying, you teachers are not interested to work in inclusive schools!’.

In addition, the Local Educational Authority does not seem to carry out their responsibilities adequately for inspecting the needs of these inclusive schools. The Local Educational Authority that obtains financial resources (Al-Salloum, 1996) from the Ministry of Education should be responding to the demands of these inclusive schools and provide appropriately. Furthermore, the General Secretary for Special Education in Saudi Arabia should play a role in this context by providing adequate policies and programmes for inclusive education of deaf students where they are currently found lacking. In this respect the view of the interactional model, which draws attention to the level of need and the level of support provided by authorities to meet the strengths and needs of deaf students (Skidmore, 1996), could work in the Saudi context. The Saudi government has the financial capacity for providing inclusive schools for deaf students with all the necessary special educational facilities and resources. In the current context the Ministry of Education and the Local Educational Authority should be being approached continuously by school principals and teachers to inform them of their demands. However, for this to happen it would require principals and teachers with knowledge, dedication, determination and willingness to create a suitable place for deaf students to develop their skills, obtain learning and encourage them to interact with other students. This could occur if schools were provided with other specialist services, for example, visiting teachers for the deaf, a special education support service for teachers to provide continuing professional development (CPD) for all involved as well as teaching assistants in general classrooms. This is a notable fact as it must be remembered that all the teachers interviewed in this study are teachers of deaf students and more knowledgeable but a whole school approach is needed. Furthermore, principals and teachers are required to demand what equipment is needed for deaf students and they are responsible to follow up on their demands.

In relation to teachers’ duties, with regard to responsibility for fighting for equipment and other things that deaf students need, Sinclair and Christenson (1992) contend that efforts made by teachers are among the most important influences in developing inclusive education practices. However, teachers need to have confidence in the capacity of the school to understand and effectively educate students with deafness

(Elkins et al., 2003) and this does not seem to be happening in this context. There is some evidence that as this work implies teachers are the change agents or gatekeepers of change in this Saudi context. Examples of teachers who did something positive in creating a suitable environment for deaf students despite a lack of resources were TJ4 and TD2. When asking TJ4 about managing facilities for deaf students, he expressed his opinion clearly with no hesitation:

‘Although, there are not enough facilities.., I tried to equip my class with basic facilities and I paid 5000 Riyal from my pocket’.

Similarly, TD2 stated that:

‘I managed to prepare my classroom with a laptop and projector to help my students during the presentation of lessons’.

Facilities are crucial for inclusive schools because it helps them to become an inclusive part (Vaughn et al., 1996) of what is happening, and in learning deaf students can only attain education and other skills using sign language which hinders interaction. According to the UNESCO (2003), a lack of proper facilities and equipment affects students’ active participation in the teaching-learning process. Additionally, I believe that if school principals and teachers do not take the necessary steps and give careful thought to changing the school environment and practices to meet the needs of students with deafness, the inclusion process will be unsuccessful. Whilst it is admirable that TJ4 and TD2 out of enthusiasm and dedication, as well as an interest in the process of inclusive education have contributed to classroom resources for the benefit of their deaf students, it should be the responsibility of inclusive schools to seek support and extra funding provisions as suggested by Avramidis et al., (2000; Al- Khatteeb, 2004) who posits that inclusive schools should have the ability to provide resources as needed. Al-Khatteeb (2004) also highlighted that inclusive schools are responsible for creating suitable environments and being able to provide the essential requirements for students with special needs.

These problems in the Saudi context obviously resonate with those experienced elsewhere, for example, Weiss and Lloyd (2002) pointed out that the inclusive education of deaf students in general schools requires an effort from teachers and

principals to organise classrooms with resources to meet the needs of deaf students. Moreover, according to the view of the social model the problems facing deaf students should be sorted out within the educational environment (Villa and Thousand, 2005). Practices and situations in line with such views can be accomplished in the Saudi context if schools (principals and teachers) dedicate more efforts, whether by approaching the Local Educational Authority constantly to demand their needs for deaf students and by creating appropriate environments with whatever available equipment they have in order to achieve the objective of inclusive education of deaf students.

9.3 Lack of Training Courses

Another important factor which was obtained from data analysis was that both school principals and teachers have insufficient access to training courses. There were no training courses related to inclusive education and deaf education, as noted by school principal SPF3:

‘Me as a school principal, I have not been involved in any training courses to deal with deaf students inside the inclusive school’.

When asking about the significance of training courses, SPR5 asserted that:

‘Sorry, I have not seen such training related to inclusive education..., I have no idea of how to deal with students of special needs, in particular deaf students..., I did look for a course’.

Likewise, teachers of deaf students for example TM1 stated that:

‘there are some training courses, but it would be too generalised in teaching and not specified for deaf education’.

And, TD2 commented that:

‘Oh my brother, I will tell you something, I have been teaching for ten years, but I have never received any training courses in relation to inclusion schools’.

Also TK4 pointed out:

‘Most of the training courses I obtained while teaching for 20 years did not have sufficient benefits or relevance to the subject of inclusive education of deaf students, as such courses are not corresponding to reality’.

As can be concluded from the above responses both principals and teachers have not often been involved in training courses for deaf education in inclusive schools. Similar findings of a study by Rau (2003) recommended an increase of training courses to principals who were lacking knowledge and experience of inclusive education to confront the challenges in their schools. Such training courses may influence actions of school principals towards inclusive education. In my study, when asking them about whether they have looked for these training courses, SPN1 replied:

‘I can say that, these training courses are not related to my career as a school principal.., well I am not involved in teaching deaf students’.

It is clear from this quote and others that the principals in this study also do not see themselves as leaders of learning for all students. In relation to teachers, TH3 answered:

‘Of course, I did look for.., but honestly these training courses most of the time are not relevant to the issue of facilities or discussing the needs of deaf students’.

Additionally, during visits in S1 on (1-5/09/12), in S3 on (15-19/09/12), in S5 on (29-02/10/12), it seemed that school principals have no initiative to promote such training courses and they appeared to lack interest to do more for the deaf students. It was realised that school principals were appointed for their experience in general schools, and without any experience of dealing with deaf students or how to manage inclusive schools (Al-Fahily, 2009). When I discussed with teachers about the training courses (conversational notes in S2 on (10/07/12), in S4 on (25/09/12), in S5 on (02/10/12), they complained about the lack of training courses in inclusive education, in which they claimed it is not their responsibility, but as pointed out by TD2:

‘This is the responsibility of the Local Educational Authority which is under the umbrella of the Ministry of Education’.

Al-Qarny (2008) suggested that according to the policy of education in Saudi Arabia training courses (including defining what type of training is available) are either organised by the Local Educational Authorities or are based on the demand of school principals. Sometimes principals decide which courses are needed, then contact the Local Educational Authority to recommend the type of course(s) to be delivered to teachers or school staff (Al-Qahtani, 2005). This study unfortunately suggests that principals are not actively concerned enough to seek training or adequately informed about inclusive education to the extent that they appear not to understand that they are currently not meeting the needs of deaf students and are contributing to their unjust treatment. The school principals seem to have a lack of awareness and understanding of their roles and responsibilities. According to King (2011), it is the role of leadership (in Saudi context, school principal) to motivate teachers to positive change through supporting them in a variety of ways, for example providing training courses, which may result in a change of practices and attitudes. Additionally principals could empower teachers to 'create collaborative learning cultures' (King, 2011: 153) between principals and teachers and between teachers themselves for enhancing deaf students' learning. It is the responsibility of leadership to 'create the organisational capacity for change' by providing time for collaboration (King, 2011: 152). It is unfortunate that such collaboration does not seem to take place within the schools that I visited. The cause of this seems to be a lack of understanding of the concept of leadership on the principals' side.

Durtschi's (2005) findings supported my interpretation regarding the role of principals in revealing that the objectives of inclusive education in elementary schools were accomplished when principals offered complete support and facilitated training courses for school staff. The findings also revealed that the success of inclusion was due to principals attaining knowledge and experience about special educational needs and inclusive education. Such findings could inform practice regarding Saudi primary inclusive schools on two levels: firstly, it is the responsibility of the Local Educational Authority to establish training courses which relate to inclusive education of deaf students and they could direct principals and teachers to attend. In this context, Al-Turkee (2005) pointed out that it is the responsibility of the Local Educational Authorities to generate extra training courses and organise them for professionals to discuss various topics around inclusive education. Similarly, Al-Fahily (2009) argued

that training courses for principals in inclusive education has not been given the due consideration by Local Educational Authorities. According to Jummah (2007) the level of training courses in inclusive education is below the expectations of school staff. Therefore, the Local Educational Authority is supposed to contact the Ministry of Education to assist in this by inviting specialists and experts in each area of special education and in accordance with requirements. If Local Educational Authorities are made aware that principals are unlikely to understand how they can benefit from training courses around leading inclusive school, therefore it is their duty to provide them without demand. Secondly, once principals are sufficiently informed and trained they then might be likely to fulfil their duty and along with teachers begin to enquire about courses and inform the Local Educational Authority of the type of courses they need. According to Al-Qarny (2008) it is the responsibility of principals to enquire about training courses and discuss such issues with teachers. Hence, that steps need to be taken to address this lack of integration and collaboration on the subject of training courses between school principals, the Local Educational Authority and the Ministry of Education to address the gap between policy and practice.

The lack of ongoing professional development described by teachers is a problem that needs addressing in its own right. Siegel and Jausovec (1994) found that training was highlighted as an effective way of improving teachers' practices of inclusive education. According to Marchesi (1998) professional training of teachers was one of the key factors to successful inclusive education. In a similar study, Shade and Stewart (2001) found that teachers required extra training to be adequately prepared to work with deaf students in inclusive school. According to studies by Kalyva (2007 et al.; Batsiou et al., 2008) there is an important positive relationship between training courses, attitudes and practices toward inclusive schools. This bears out cross-nationally, for example, in a study conducted in Cyprus by Hadjidakou et al., (2008) to explore the attitudes of school staff toward inclusive education for deaf students, the findings revealed that the success of inclusive education is determined by a number of factors including knowledge about inclusive education, resources and training courses. According to Al-Khatteeb (2004; Al-Sayid, 2009), who conducted studies in Arabic countries, professional training courses for school staff in inclusive schools was considered to be one of the key factors of successful inclusive education.

It is expected by applying the strategic model, which calls for a change of current practice to real inclusive education for deaf students, that the qualified development of principals and teachers can be improved. In this context, the strategic model recommends providing teachers with CPD, workshops or seminars so that they can apply theoretical knowledge effectively. This is discussed further in chapter ten.

9.4 Lack of Collaboration among School Staff as well as Parents

Another factor that has been found to undermine the partial-inclusion explored in Saudi Arabia, is insufficient teamwork among school principals and teachers in one hand, and on the other hand there is a problem with communication between schools and parents. When asking school principals about teamwork, SPF3 pointed out:

‘Although there is a type of collaboration between teachers and me, yet as you know time is a concern and availability of teachers.., In relation to parents, again, we need better collaboration. Not all parents really ask about the achievement of their deaf child’.

Notwithstanding the reports schools send at the end of each semester to parents, some parents do not even take or receive the opportunity to discuss their child’s level with the school. SPR5 again draws attention to the lack of in school collaboration:

‘Truly, there is not enough collaboration between teachers and the school principal to manage the challenges of inclusive education of deaf students.., We are trying..’.

And SPN1 also affirmed a lack of interaction with parents:

‘There is collaboration, but not as expected as team work.., regarding parents I believe there is not enough teamwork which I hope to develop in the future’.

During a number of visits in S1 on (1-4/07/12), in S3 on (15-22/09/12), in S5 on (25-02/10/12), it came to my knowledge that even where there were meetings principals and inclusive school teaching staff they did not discuss any issues related to the inclusive education of deaf students within the school. They normally discussed issues relating to teachers’ attendance and holidays. It was evident that teamwork was severely lacking.

According to King (2011), principals can create the organisational capacity for change through providing resources, time and more collaboration with teachers. Hence, it is the responsibility of principals to put the discussion about inclusion and deaf education on the agenda. This view is reflected in the educational policy in Saudi Arabia, also where Al-Salloum (1996) argued that it is the duty of school principals and not teachers to initiate the contents of the agenda to be discussed in the meeting. He also decried the fact that principals do not participate in any teaching class. Therefore, the strategic model developed and presented in chapter ten suggests that principals are to take training courses in order to be aware about inclusive education, what it is like to teach and that they should participate in the learning process. This is very important because they are the leaders of learning.

The teachers in this study did acknowledge the significant role principals should play in creating time and opportunities for collaboration. For example, when asking teachers of deaf students about collaboration in school and with parents, TD2 stated that:

‘We suffer from interacting with each other.., There is also a lack of contact between the school and parents. I believe this is due to school management.., also some parents’ lack of knowledge’.

And TA4 affirmed that there was also a lack of collaboration between teachers and parents:

‘I have not experienced any sort of gathering between inclusive school staff on one side and parents of deaf students..., It is the responsibility of teachers as well as all staff.., Also parents are not aware of inclusive education!’.

TH3 implied that there were individual meetings but that these were somewhat ad hoc and uncoordinated:

‘Collaboration is on an individual basis, which can take place between two teachers or a teacher and a parent. But teamwork as a whole, it does not exist. What I mean here, there is no regular meeting between school staff and parents.., school principals should organise such meetings’.

TF5 indicated that meetings were usually to address specific problems:

‘We never meet together, only in specific circumstances when there is a problem. For example; continuous failure of a student or improper behaviour of another..., We do have meetings at the beginning of the academic year focusing on organisational issues. Nevertheless, in a normal situation, we lack teamwork, which I believe is essential’.

From the above quotes it can be observed that most of the meetings conducted in schools are generally held for specific reasons. Nevertheless, it is unfortunate to realise that meetings did not focus on teaching and learning as such. It was noted, on several visits in S1 on (2-4/07/12), in S4 on (19-24/09/12), in S5 on (26-02/10/12) that teachers did not share ideas or teaching plans to support deaf students. If any discussions were initiated it was only when a major problem had occurred, such as a misbehaving student or when there is a complaint from a parent due to his child being bullied. Thus it seems that there was not enough collaboration between principals and teachers in relation to inclusive education of deaf students.

A number of studies (Al-Khatteeb, 2001; Stewart and Kluwin, 2001; Al-Shammari and Yawkey, 2008; Al-Sayid, 2009) were conducted in various international contexts, including Arab countries such as Egypt, Jordan and Kuwait to investigate the significance of relationships and collaboration between principals, teachers and parents, in various configurations. The findings of these studies revealed that creating diverse types of partnerships and relationships between school members and parents of deaf students is essential for the advancement of inclusive education. A study carried out by Biddle (2006) indicated that collaboration between school staff, including principals and teachers is a significant factor that contributes to successful inclusive education. Similarly, Jarvis and Iantaffi (2006) affirmed that successful inclusive education for deaf students in general schools can be attained by teamwork among school staff. In the same direction, research conducted in Egypt by Sadek and Sadek (2000) to examine inclusive education in general primary schools revealed the significance of relationships and cooperation among school staff (principals and teachers), which has a great impact in the advancement of inclusive education. The findings also exposed the procedures adopted to create such collaboration, for example a) regular meetings set up by principals in collaboration with teachers to discuss issues related to children, b)

exchange of views among teachers during break time, c) seminars set up by teachers and presented by those who have experience to raise awareness about inclusive education. It is unfortunate that such collaboration has not been conducted successfully in Saudi Arabia due to a lack of professional leadership and a lack of training courses that reinforce the value of collaboration.

According to the social model of inclusion, school staff including principals and teachers should work as a team and cooperate to create educational programmes that suit deaf students' needs. It is in this way that the environmental factors that inhibit students can be identified and addressed. I have taken such procedures into consideration when developing the features of the strategic model for Saudi inclusive schools for deaf students: particularly those used in Egyptian schools because of the unique closeness of these two systems. This may help to create constructive attitudes and understanding of inclusive education among school staff (principals and parents) thereby improving the process of inclusive education of deaf students in general schools. Consequently, the Local Educational Authority should encourage principals to plan for such collaboration within school. Relationships between the different groups involved in schools need to change by discussing the needs of deaf students in which teachers introduce reports about students progress, achievement or the challenges that teachers encounter during the teaching process. In this respect, the study carried out by Leyser and Tappendorf (2001) found that it was useful for school staff to work together and share ideas as a mutual team to meet the needs of special education needs students and to implement inclusion in general schools and classes. Similarly, the findings of the research conducted by Al-Khatteeb (2004) in Jordan revealed that when school staff work as a team, they could develop appropriate change and a range of learning strategies for students with special needs in inclusive schools.

In relation to parent-school relationships, during my visits to schools and through conversational notes in S2 on (10/09/12), I noted that some parents complained of the lack of communication and feedback from the inclusive school. When asking parents about their interaction with the inclusive school, parent PF2 argued that:

‘There is a lack of collaboration between the inclusive school and parents..., regarding the educational learning process’.

In the same direction, PS3 declared that:

‘It is a sad situation that there is no collaboration between school staff and parents..., although there is a sort of mercy towards the children. However, me as a parent, I hope in the future that there will be a regular meeting with the school’.

These responses revealed that there is an imbalance in the relationships between inclusive schools (principals and parents) and parents of deaf students. Parents are scarcely given the chance to express their views and to interact with schools’ decisions. It is as if parents are grateful that the schools are nice to their children. In this context, medical views are considered which looks at students with special deafness as medically impaired persons who require care (Villa and Thousand, 2005). I believe that students with deafness should not be perceived as having differences that are dealt with through just taking care of them. Hence, it would be helpful if the social and interactional models which perceive that the problems facing students with deafness as external rather than internal could be adopted. For example, according to the social model the removal of discrimination requires a change of approach and thinking in the way in which society is organised (Smith et al., 2004). The interactional model which also places high importance on the child’s school environment helping children to learn (Taylor, 2005) would be helpful in directing future developments. Hence, parents should be given the chance to initiate meetings and be invited in person and informed of any change in the child’s individual educational plans.

The current situation is untenable and it is made worse by the limited knowledge of parents. Although parents are aware about the needs of their individual child in general, most appeared to have limited knowledge about their deafness and the specific special needs this gives rise to in an educational context. In this context, PF2 stated:

‘Well, I know that my child needs special education and to be in school..., but sorry! I have not been informed about types of deafness..., or about ways of deaf learning’.

Therefore, one of the principles of the strategic model is to recommend national parents’ councils through which learning communities can be established and parents can express their views freely and be enabled to support their own child’s learning. In turn

this may empower them to discuss their child's needs with the staff of the inclusive school. In other words, parents did not view themselves as equal partners in the education of their children because they lack knowledge about deafness and see teachers and schools as good models for enabling their children to learn. Other scholars indicate that this has been a problem in other national contexts, for example, Bhabra and Ghate (2004), who evaluated parents' information received by schools and investigated the extent of collaboration between schools' staff and parents of deaf children and a lack of guidelines and awareness and scarce provision by schools to parents. Similarly, according to Hilton and Henderson, (1993) they indicated that teachers may underestimate parent involvement and may view parents as playing a limited role in societal issues.

However, the following points highlighted in the policy of the Saudi Ministry of Education for special needs (section, 76/2, 2001) are noteworthy as they indicate that at national level there is an understanding of this need for collaboration. They suggest that: a) mutual interaction between the inclusive school and parents is necessary for the benefit of deaf students, b) principals are responsible for organising time in which parents can visit schools and be informed about activities for their children, c) schools should inform parents about the needs of their children and how they can be involved in the process of education, and d) parents should be provided with information about special educational programmes whether by leaflets or by seminars. It is clear from these inclusive schools for deaf students that this adequate level of collaboration and suitable interaction between parents and schools has not happened. Al-Rayes (2005) posited that the problem of communication between inclusive schools and parents is related to the belief that the views of parents are ineffective due to their lack of knowledge about inclusive education. However, this view ignores what parents can contribute, such as their knowledge of the child, the way they have worked to teach their child and in providing insights into the children's emotional responses to school. Some principals and some teachers also had a very restricted view of what parents could contribute, for example SPR5 said:

‘Probably the role of parents is useful but most of them do not have knowledge about inclusion’.

However, it can be argued that the responsibility of achieving the above policy regarding collaboration between parents and schools lies with the Local Educational Authority as well as school principals. Furthermore, the Local Educational Authority is responsible for ensuring accountability whereas principals that get extra money and should make sure that the policies are being implemented. When asking principal SPF3 about contacting parents regarding their views about including their children in the school, he responded saying:

‘I do not think that parents views or opinions are effective in our inclusive school..., because they have a lack of knowledge about inclusive education’.

While teacher TP1 stated:

‘Well! I do not think that parents have the knowledge so their views would be ineffective’.

Similarly, TG4 responded saying:

‘According to my experience parents’ views may not be useful because they seem to have little knowledge about inclusive education’.

It has been widely argued that communicating with parents on a mutual basis has a positive influence on the practices of teachers. According to UNESCO (2003), the involvement of all parents in the education of students with special needs is critical in addressing their needs in an inclusive school. Moreover, according to York and Tundidor (1995) collaboration among school staff (principals and parents) and parents of special needs students facilitates inclusive educational success. This signifies that developing collaboration between school principals, teachers and parents based on mutual respect for one another and valuing each other’s contributions is necessary for the process of inclusion in relation to all students and that includes students with special needs. According to the interactionists Cooper and Upton (1990) motivations and social experiences as well as the interaction between those who influence the educational environment is essential. Moreover, the study carried by Stewart and Kluwin (2001) to investigate the means of achieving successful inclusion revealed that whatever efforts are made by schools (such as availability of resources) will not attain the objectives of

inclusion without proper collaboration with parents. Hence, the strategic model developed in chapter ten suggests that the practice of inclusive education should match the policies relating to the ideology of inclusive education and to apply the existing policies in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, when parents of students with deafness develop relationships with inclusion schools and individuals, such as teachers, this can be seen as mutually valuable.

The findings of a number of studies showed a series of benefits including improving children's academic standards, developing social interactions, adapting children's behaviours and attitudes as well as raising awareness of school staff about children's environments outside of schools. By way of illustration, the findings of the study conducted in Kuwait by Al-Shammari and Yawkey (2008) aiming to explore the issue of parent-school relationships in schools adopting inclusive education revealed that the more collaboration between schools and parents, the better results of education and better understanding between schools and parents. In addition, the study of Al-Khatteeb (2001) conducted in Jordan general inclusive schools revealed that creating collaboration between inclusion schools and parents of special needs children has influenced positively the process of inclusion. Al-Khatteeb (ibid) illustrated a number of factors that led to such collaboration for instance a) establishing courses for teachers to be trained on how to deal with parents and the means to encourage parents to communicate with the schools, b) arranging suitable transport by schools for parents to attend gatherings, c) choosing convenient times for parents to be provided with feedback of their children, and d) encouraging parents to propose agendas for discussion during meetings. I believe the Saudi Ministry of Education have to consider similar approaches to encourage collaboration but the problem is clearly related to implementation at a more local level as the policies appear to be in place to motivate such actions. It is the responsibility of the Local Educational Authority and school principals to make sure the policies are implemented effectively. In this context, it is hoped through applying the strategic model most of the problems of implementation can be resolved. However, the findings and factors that have led to useful and constructive parent-school relationships in Jordan could be a suitable framework to be adopted in Saudi Arabia inclusive schools for deaf students. This would be aided by the close affiliation of the Saudi Arabian and Jordanian systems of education. A great number of Jordanian teachers are employed in Saudi Arabia particularly in schools of special needs

since 1970 (Al-Muslat, 1984). I believe such approaches can be implemented in Saudi inclusive schools for deaf students if the Local Educational Authorities are seriously trying to create various types of partnerships and relationships among schools (principals and teachers) and parents. The Local Educational Authority need to adjust their approaches to facilitating collaboration in order to encourage collaboration between schools and parents and to inspire parents to be actively involved in school activities. The negative attitudes of school staff towards parents needs to be changed and parents should be looked upon as an effective element in the process of their children's education. Hence, it is impossible to separate the learning competencies of children from the environmental relationships. To create good parent-school relationships, it is the responsibility of schools to create activities, programmes and seminars to which parents are invited, where they can share activities with school staff and discuss the progress of their children. In the same way, information should be provided to parents about inclusive education and awareness should be raised among parents of the barriers that face schools. Hence, there should be unique and positive relationships between the different groups involved in inclusive education; including principals, teachers and parents. This can be established through regular meetings between schools and parents or sending leaflets to parents about news and activities within schools. Schools are to inform parents of the progress of their children or any changes that occur to their behaviours.

9.5 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has discussed the findings of this thesis in relation to the insufficient facilities and resources, lack of training courses and lack of collaboration among school staff and between staff and parents of deaf students. The findings reveal that whilst the process of inclusive education is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, the Local Educational Authority, and school including principals and teachers, this is not yet working. According to Jones et al., (2002) the success of inclusive education is determined by the efforts made by both teachers and principals. The supportive and creative efforts of school principals and teachers are essential to help build a successful inclusive school. This is supported by Subban and Sharma (2006) who reported in their study in an Australian context that those participants who had training in special education and inclusion were found to influence the success of inclusive education.

Additionally, the educational process including the development of the individual educational plan which every child should have, should include the parental voice: they can help identify their child's strengths and needs. Targets can be around learning, social or behavioural issues. Teachers need to understand deafness and educational content knowledge, which implies an understanding of the difficulties of the individual child. Teachers may know more about deafness and inclusive education but parents know more about the child. Although sometimes it can be difficult to engage all parents, their involvement in education is vital. Therefore parents, due to their closer contact to their children, should be motivated to be active participants in schools. In this respect, Elkins et al., (2003) claimed that parents have to have confidence in the capacity of the schools to understand and effectively educate their children. This confidence cannot be developed without proper school interaction and cooperation with parents. The next chapter presents the conclusions of this thesis including further recommendations and suggestions for future research.

Chapter Ten

Conclusion and Recommendations

Chapter Ten

Conclusion and Recommendations

10.1 Introduction

This final chapter intends to draw together the threads of the study and evaluate the research outcomes in relation to the research questions. This will be done in several sections, with the first section summarising the study and focusing on its key findings including stakeholder's roles, continuing professional development, school physical environments and collaboration. It also presents and then discusses the development of the strategic model. This is followed by the presentation of a number of recommendations for practice. The third section outlines concluding comments and evaluates the success of the study and the contributions made. The fourth section considers the limitations of the study and evaluates directions for future studies. The concluding discussion presents a reflexive account of the study.

10.2 Summary of the Study and the Main Findings

Over the past two decades there have been many changes that affect the education of deaf children in Saudi Arabia. These changes have been conceptualised through the lens of inclusive education. The framework is one in which there appears to be an aspiration of inclusive education but due to challenges associated with its application this is not achieved. Whilst there are many examples of research into inclusive education in Western countries (Smith and Leonard, 2005; Zionts, 2005) and a burgeoning literature in some other countries around the world (Al-Zyoudi, 2006; Subban and Sharma, 2006; Kalyva et al., 2007) this type of research, focusing on qualitative analysis of inclusive education, is still in its early stages in the Saudi Arabian context. Given the limited number of studies that have produced evidence specifically for understanding the state of inclusive education for deaf students in Saudi Arabia (Raheem, 2010; Alquraini, 2011), this study has aimed to address this gap. The importance of the research is in its exploration of the reality of inclusive education for deaf students using qualitative research.

The focus of this thesis was on understanding the complexity of inclusive education: its theory, practice, and factors that have influenced inclusive education for deaf students in Saudi Arabia. As this implies, the thesis is a critique of current practice of inclusive education and its effects on the education of deaf students in this context. The findings show that the rhetoric and policy of inclusion for deaf students in Saudi Arabia does not align with the practice. The data analysed in this thesis has supported the notion that the Saudi government, at all levels, including the Ministry of Education, the Local Educational Authority and the inclusive schools need to understand the difference between the medical, social and interactional models of inclusive education and to work to self-consciously include this in their thinking, policies, values and practices. I believe policy borrowing from other jurisdictions without understanding the implications of the changes that have been introduced has led to unproductive change. It is hard to introduce over-arching long-term changes to practice, and impossible without processes which ensure that the knowledge, attitudes and beliefs needed to support the transformations actually happen. Hence, it can be argued that without developing knowledge and increasing the level of understanding, inclusive education for deaf students is unlikely to improve. In this context, a strategic model has been developed, which is presented in this chapter, and that combines multiple perspectives. It is comprised of features that have been guided by the interactional model (which includes the social and individual aspects) but it is distinct in its nature to suit the specifics of the Saudi education system and the problems that have been identified during the course of this study: it demonstrates how teaching could be managed for deaf students in inclusive schools in this context.

The interactional perspective that has driven the development of the strategic model I present in this chapter places high importance on the child's education and lays great value on the actions taken by schools to facilitate such education. This perspective draws upon aspects of the medical model and the social models. The medical model marginalises the task of the environmental factors in constituting difficulties for deaf students but its focus on how the deaf student needs to be transformed by education can be helpful. In contrast, the social model views the process as accommodation which involves changing the environment, where it denies the task of the within-child factors. Therefore, I have aligned myself with the interactional model because it considers the level of need and the level of support provided by schools to meet the deaf students'

strengths and needs. Also, the attributes of the interactional model has more holistic insights for dealing with deaf students in inclusive schools.

As stated at the beginning of this thesis, as a practitioner I began my research with a sense that inclusive education for deaf students in Saudi Arabia was not working. Drawing upon the literature I identified factors which I felt could be fruitfully explored in order to gain insights into the issues that were hindering it. Accordingly, this research intended to:

- Explore the knowledge, understanding and attitudes of schools' principals, teachers and parents regarding inclusive education of deaf students.
- Examine the factors that influence inclusive education of deaf students.
- Determine the kind of services required for deaf students and the best practices to support inclusive education in Saudi Arabia.
- To contribute to the broader literature on inclusive education for deaf students on this basis.

To achieve the above aims and answer the research questions, a qualitative method (case study) was adopted in which semi-structured interviews, observations and documentary data were used. School principals, teachers and parents of deaf students were interviewed to identify a) their knowledge and understanding of inclusive education for deaf students, b) their attitudes toward inclusive education for deaf students, and c) factors influencing their inclusive education. Direct and indirect observation was undertaken in all of the five inclusion schools, specialising in deaf students, in boy's primary schools in Riyadh. The investigation of the documentary data was to gather information of inclusive schools for deaf students, also to verify data gained from the interviews and observations. Given that the qualitative method is relatively unique in the Saudi context it has provided in-depth data about perceptions and practices of inclusive education for deaf students that was previously not available and it has offered a rich description of participants' insights. Additionally, by doing an in-depth study in a small number of schools it was more appropriate to use qualitative methods particularly in a new area of research; inclusive education (Crotty, 2003).

Within the philosophical stance of this research epistemological and ontological views were considered as these influenced the methodology. The ontological basis which proposed the existence of various realities influenced by the culture and social environment of participants (Cohen et al., 2007), uncovered a range of realities based on the perceptions of participants in their inclusive schools and which drew upon their broader culture. Therefore the reality that has been presented in this thesis is socially constructed by the researcher, from the perspectives of the different partners such as principals, teachers and parents. They were chosen because they had the potential to provide important but different outlooks towards inclusive education for deaf students. This approach has allowed for an understanding of the complexities of inclusive education for deaf students in the social world of school principals, teachers and parents. The epistemology is also subjective as it acknowledges that participants hold their own knowledge about situations, where different participants might build meaning in different ways. This knowledge in this thesis has been produced by discovering the meanings of the individuals in social situations, gained through an inductive approach (Maxwell, 1996). The aim was to construct an understanding of participants' knowledge and attitudes about inclusive education for deaf students, and to gain insight into the factors that have influenced their inclusive education.

Data was analysed using an inductive approach whereby themes were derived and formed after thorough reading of the perceptions of the participants and the written notes from the observations as well as documentary data. Themes were categorised into sub-themes in accordance with the research questions to provide a clear link between the research questions and answering them. The findings of this research were explored using literature in the area of inclusive education for deaf students and the analysis was particularly informed by an understanding of the way in which the medical, social and interactional models of inclusive education were informing perceptions and could inform practice.

In the early part of the thesis I presented evidence to suggest that where it is possible full-inclusion works best. Based on the general findings of the interviews, observations and review of the documents of this research, it appears that despite the efforts made by national government policy and the Local Educational Authority to promote the basic

rights of all students to attend available general schools, arguably deaf students have not received appropriate and quality inclusive school environments. It has been observed that deaf students continue to lag behind their hearing peers in respect of their interaction with students in general classrooms (which they are mostly excluded from but also in the few instances where they are included) and inclusion in the school's social environment. In this section I present the major findings under four headings: stakeholder's roles, continuing professional development, school physical environments and collaboration.

Stakeholder's Roles

The findings showed that school staff, including principals and teachers are not conscious or systematically working with the models of inclusion so their values, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours are mixed and confusing and have negative consequences. Principals lacked knowledge and understanding about inclusive education for deaf students, which arguably has affected their attitudes and unconstructively influenced principals' roles towards the inclusive education of deaf students in their inclusive schools. In this study, the interviews with school principals clearly displayed that their limited knowledge about inclusive education led them to disagree with the notion of fully inclusive education for deaf students. This finding is supported by similar results, for example, by Al-Abdulgabar and Massud (2002) who studied the effect of knowledge and experience of principals in relation to their perceptions and acceptance of inclusive education. They reported that those with knowledge and more experience were found to have a greater acceptance and were more supportive of inclusive education.

It can be argued that school principals and teachers are key elements in the successful implementation of inclusive education; they are asked to create a suitable environment within inclusive schools for deaf students to obtain the required learning and to encourage interaction with other hearing students. Noteworthy was the absence of principal openness and willingness to apply and support the practices of inclusive education within general schools. Principals often blamed the Local Educational

Authority but when asked about their duties of creating an appropriate environment to meet the needs of deaf students SPN1 for instance replied:

‘I cannot do anything!..., the school is not suitable for deaf students’.

It seems that school principals are unaware that the school should benefit both hearing and deaf students. The literature demonstrated that inclusive schools are more likely to work if they uphold their duty to help students learn about differences, develop positive attitudes toward students with deafness and accept them with their own strengths and needs. Moreover, it can be argued, that principals and teachers have an essential role to play in the implementation of inclusive education. They should not look at deaf students from a care point of view as in the medical model but instead be responsible for creating a suitable environment for deaf students which has been highlighted in the social model.

In addition this research argues that there is a positive relationship between the teachers’ attitudes towards inclusive education for deaf students and the implementation in practice within general schools. It has been observed that the majority of teachers with more knowledge and positive views toward inclusive education have tried to adapt classroom materials and activities to accommodate deaf students. Consequently, knowledge, experience, and awareness about inclusive education for deaf students in this research are considered to be effective factors, which have been highlighted as conducive to positive attitudes towards successful inclusive education for deaf students. The focus on attitudes provided supporting evidence for the factors likely to change action in psychological studies. In line with this, knowledge about inclusive education has been reported in studies as having an influence on the attitudes and practices of school principals and teachers, as well as parents. For instance, a study conducted in Australia by Subban and Sharma (2006) showed that acceptance of a students with deafness increased with knowledge about inclusive education and an aspiration of practising it within inclusive schools. In relation to school principals, their role should be leading and supporting teachers in the process of inclusive education. Leadership plays a vital role in continuous support and encouragement in building positive change and active commitment among teachers and other schools’ staff towards inclusive education. In the same vein, Jones et al., (2002) argue that parents’ lack of awareness about inclusive education and excluding them from school functions could be a mistake.

In this regard, this research argued that successful inclusive education of deaf students requires not only the initiation of new policies by the Ministry of Education or the Local Educational Authority, but the ability, skills and willingness of school principals and teachers to cope with these policies. This signifies that unless school principals and teachers hold positive perceptions, high devotion and commitment and skills, inclusive education policies for deaf students will not be implemented successfully. Hence, the notion of principals and teachers being aware of and carrying out their roles should be considered and monitored.

Continuing Professional Development

My research findings showed that although teachers have basic theoretical knowledge of inclusive education, there are key issues missing around encouraging deaf students to interact actively with hearing students. It could be contended that the basic knowledge of teachers may not be enough to change the current situation to deal with deaf students in inclusive schools. There is a positive relationship between the level of teachers' knowledge and their practices towards inclusive education of deaf students in general school (Olson, 2003). Data analysis revealed that three teachers (TG5, TJ4 and TD2) in different inclusive schools who had a Masters degree (MA) in the area of deaf education and inclusion were more willing to accept deaf students and more prepared to assist their needs in an inclusive school compared with their colleagues. This finding which is also supported by other studies, confirmed that high levels of knowledge and degrees of qualifications displayed more favourable attitudes towards inclusive education, and had more positive contact with deaf students in their schools (Alghazo and Gaad, 2004; Romi and Leyser, 2006). Another interesting finding regarding newly qualified teachers was their real enthusiasm and excitement to practise what they had been taught. Such a view is supported by Avramidis et al., (2000) who found that newly qualified teachers hold more positive attitudes towards inclusive education. This signifies that the most recent qualifications in the area of inclusive education inspire teachers to be more enthusiastic about the application of inclusive education.

Additionally, the analysis data showed that the participants were concerned about training courses, where the focus has to be on how to deal with deaf students in inclusive school. In general people need ongoing support for teaching methods related

directly to deaf education and for using sign language efficiently. In general it has been found that theoretical knowledge about inclusive education through continuing professional development is needed to provide schools' staff and parents with training courses. All of these key stakeholders need to be knowledgeable and participating for it to work, and training needs to encourage each group to: a) develop awareness that can change their attitudes which may in turn change practices towards deaf students in general schools; b) be knowledgeable about research on inclusive education and the issues facing deaf students; and c) collaborate with colleagues and parents. In this respect, in order to improve inclusive education, on-going workshops and professional development programmes should address the concerns of all schools' staff about inclusive education: this should include special educational needs teachers, teachers of other classes and principals. Strong teaching and leadership is needed. In addition parents need to be effective contributors of ideas and advocates of their children. To conclude this point, if inclusive schools are provided with adequate training, they would begin to feel more comfortable working with deaf students and have positive effects to meet various students' needs and learning skills.

School Physical Environments

It is clear that inclusive education is much more than deaf students' placement, but it is the principle of meeting students' social, emotional and learning needs within their school/classroom. The findings in this study showed that the lack of appropriate and adequate teaching and learning resources in the inclusive schools/classrooms is not a matter of insufficient funding because the Local Educational Authority receive annual reasonable funds (Ministry of Education, 1998). Rather it seems to be an issue of lack of prioritisation, lack of organisation, lack of accountability as well as lack of adequate planning. Sufficient facilities and resources are very important to organise schools' environments to suit the requirements of deaf students, which facilitate them using all of their senses for learning. It could be argued that inclusive schools/classrooms should have sufficient facilities and resources to provide deaf students with full opportunities to exercise their skills and learning activities as well as communicating with other students. This includes classrooms equipped with microphone and hearing aids, visual teaching materials, interactive whiteboards, and computer software to help deaf students (Eriks-Brophy et al., 2006).

Additionally, inclusive school environments especially in classrooms and effective teaching strategies are crucial for learning of deaf students. There are different teaching strategies to accommodate the diverse needs of deaf students, for example, these can include: 1) teachers have to face the class while speaking; 2) giving favoured seating to make easy lip reading for student; 3) writing notes and comments on the whiteboard; 4) teachers have to speak at a slightly slower pace, and use the favoured way to communicate with students; and 5) providing active participating opportunities for learning including small group discussion in class, visiting labs and resource rooms (Florian, 2008).

Collaboration

Another significant factor which would lead to improvement of inclusive education is the issue of collaboration among school staff as well as parents. The findings show a need for more collaboration, thus inclusive schools' staff have to develop regular meetings to discuss issues relating to inclusive practices in order to provide proper teaching skills and to meet the needs of individual deaf students. Another level of collaboration is centred on inclusive schools ensuring that parents of deaf students are kept informed of their child's learning and activities. In the same occasion, schools should encourage deaf students to be involved in communication with other hearing students, where deaf students should also be persuaded to express their views and worries about their education. They should feel fully included in the life of the inclusive school, and teachers of deaf students should ensure that they make the same educational progress as their hearing peers.

According to the social model of inclusive education, school staff, including principals and teachers should work as a team and collaborate to create educational programmes that suit deaf students' needs. It is argued that communicating with parents on a mutual basis has a positive influence on the practices of teachers. The involvement of all parents in the education of students with special needs is critical in addressing their needs in an inclusive school. This signifies that developing collaboration between school principals, teachers, parents as well as the Local Educational Authority based on mutual respect for one another and valuing each other's contributions is necessary for

the process of inclusion in relation to all students and that includes students with special needs.

These findings highlight the fundamentally challenging nature of the process to achieve inclusive education for deaf students within the Saudi educational and social context, and the need for significant personal and environmental changes including stakeholder's roles, continuing professional development, school physical environments and collaboration, which led to celebrate diversity in inclusive schools along with active participation by all students.

10.3 Conception of the Findings

On the basis of the four key findings including stakeholder's roles, continuing professional development, school physical environments and collaboration, this research has developed a strategic model which combines multiple perspectives and comprises features of the interactional model but is distinct in its nature to suit the specifics of the Saudi Education System. The strategic model demonstrates how teaching should be managed for deaf students in inclusive schools. It focuses on the deaf student and their learning; the level of educational support needed and also includes principals, teachers, parents and students in the process of evaluating and supporting the deaf student. In fact the multi-dimensional model reflects the necessary symbiotic relationship between principals, teachers, parents, the Local Educational Authority, the Ministry of Education as well as acknowledging the need for changes in the knowledge, attitudes and qualifications of principals, teachers and parents of deaf students.

The model is based on the key findings, which reveal that principals are lacking knowledge regarding inclusive education for deaf students. Hence, one element the model suggests is that principals of existing schools for deaf students should acquire knowledge and understanding of inclusive education by attending training courses. However, it may be argued that principals can have the knowledge and understanding but still not implement changes. Therefore, principals should be actively involved in developing an inclusive school through leading the creation of organisational capacity for change. If principals develop an understanding of these endeavours and the positive

impact they may have this may help in developing positive attitudes among principals towards inclusive education for deaf students, as this is not the case at present.

The findings also reveal that teachers have more appropriate knowledge but they don't implement what they have learnt and therefore the strategic model directs teachers to apply their theoretical knowledge in practice. This can be achieved by increasing the level of monitoring and support in each inclusive school and by providing schools and teachers with proper resources and training, as well as collaboration with experts and specialists in inclusive education. In the same way the findings of this research reveal that parents were unaware of inclusive education and were not involved in the schools' activities or programmes for students with deafness. The strategic model encourages parents to be involved in the learning of their children by attending schools' activities and workshops organised by inclusive schools.

Consequently, this strategic model takes into consideration the Saudi context of inclusive education for deaf students, therefore it does not only focus on the level of educational support to deaf students but it has developed out of an analysis of the knowledge and attitudes of principals, teachers' application of theoretical knowledge and parents' involvement in the learning process of their children. These findings have implications for how the centralised system works from the Ministry of Education, through the Local Educational Authority to the principals, teachers, parents and students and this strategic model demonstrates these.

To elaborate on such a model and be more systematic about each of the findings and all of the different levels discussed, a table has been generated. The table lists briefly the different findings in relation to principals, teachers, parents, students and the wider context, the barriers to an effective inclusive education for deaf students that were identified and the implications for how a new model might address or overcome the barrier.

Issues identified	Barriers	Implications
<p><u>1. School principals</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge about inclusive education for deaf students. • Have negative attitudes towards inclusive education • Have low expectations and partial ambitions for deaf students to be educationally improved • Lack of effort to demand and follow up for educational resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate qualification in the area of inclusive education for deaf students • Lack of understanding of inclusive education • Appointed on the basis of their experience in general education and social connections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Local Educational Authority takes into consideration professionalism when employing principals • Training courses about inclusive education to be conducted and provided for existing principals • Offering additional support to inclusive schools by the Local Educational Authority, in terms of evaluating what they are doing and the experiences or learning of deaf students • Providing principals with leadership courses thereby supporting teachers in their practices.
<p><u>2. Teachers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mismatch of implementation of inclusive education and what they learnt • Although they have general knowledge about inclusive education they have contradictory attitudes towards deaf students within classrooms • A mismatch between teachers' values and their practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improper monitoring or supervision of teachers for implementing inclusive education • Lack of access to recent information, methods of teaching deaf students in general inclusive schools • Inequality of rewarding teachers for being inclusive education teachers without monitoring what they are doing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular supervisions to be increased by the Local Educational Authority and developing some kind of accountability by recruiting experts to support and inspect both principals' and teachers' practices • Rewarding teachers by acknowledging their efforts • The Local Educational Authority should work to provide teachers with recent information, methods and research • Exchange of information between teachers and principals about inclusive education for deaf students • Establishing a special education support service by the Local Educational Authority to provide training courses and workshops to support teachers

<p><u>3. Parents</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They have very limited knowledge about inclusive education, the implications of deafness and are unaware of schools' activities • Parents not being consulted, and not encouraged to have a voice in their children's education • Having limited expectations and ambitions for their children's educational improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are inactive and uninformed of their role in their child's education. • Lack of collaboration between schools' staff and parents of deaf students and non-deaf students • Parents are disempowered in inclusive schools • Parents don't understand the educational implications of their child's disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness among parents about inclusive education and clear information about the learning implications of their deafness • Establish parental interaction with schools through organising meetings with principals and teachers • Encourage parents of deaf students to be involved with schools' activities • Create collaboration between schools' staff and parents • The Local Educational Authority and principals encourage parents to have a voice in school policies.
<p><u>4. Students</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of interaction in inclusive placements in schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deaf students being disregarded by principals and teachers who largely do not encourage deaf students to participate in activities with their hearing peers in and out of classes • Being disregarded by other students who see it as 'natural' to exclude them. • A fear of being bullied 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a more inclusive culture in the school by dispelling some myths associated with the medical model and encouraging understanding across deaf and non-deaf children • Encouraging more inclusion in activities with non-deaf students by schools' staff • Designing and applying an individual educational plan for each student in collaboration with all stakeholders including the students where appropriate • Improve teaching and developing more inclusive methods

<p><u>5. Local Educational Authority</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not provide schools with enough resources and proper facilities • Recruitment of non-specialised principals • Lack of regular supervision and evaluations of the performance of both principals and teachers • Lack of responsibility for providing training for special educational needs leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient communication and improper collaboration between inclusive schools and the Local Educational Authority in relation to the schools' needs • Lack of reward or acknowledgment of achievements • Principals who do not ask for what is necessary for deaf students to learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principals and teachers should communicate regularly with the Local Educational Authority regarding their requirements • Increase the level of collaboration between the Local Educational Authority and schools' staff • Providing inclusive schools with equipment and facilities • Increase the level of reward for both principals and teachers who work for successful inclusion practice • Providing specialist visiting teachers for the deaf to support teachers and students as well as link with parents and principals
<p><u>6. Ministry of Education</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient follow up and supervision to the practices of the Local Educational Authority • Lack of transparency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not provide the Local Educational Authority with enough specialised inspectors and professionals in the area of deaf education and inclusion to evaluate practices of schools • The Local Educational Authority seems not to provide Ministry of Education with adequate information about schools' requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of professional inspectors • Reviewing the latest researches and publications about inclusive education and provide it to the Local Educational Authority • Regular adequate and transparent news are to be reported to the Ministry of Education • Recruitment of professional advisors and experts of inclusive education to the Ministry of Education

10.4 Recommendations

Since inclusive education practice is believed to be developed from a philosophy which views diversity of strengths, abilities and needs of learners as natural, then all students within such communities are expected to be educated in inclusive schools alongside

each other. Based on the key findings of this research including stakeholder's roles, continuing professional development, school physical environments and collaboration as well as the viewpoints mentioned in the above table explaining what should be focused on the strategic model, the following key recommendations are proposed:

- **Leadership and management:** The role of leadership is critically important; it has impact on the infrastructure and educational and human resources. Leadership in inclusive education involves the school principals' role to reduce or remove barriers in inclusive school and supporting the development of staff (Hattie, 2005). Therefore, school principals need to raise awareness about deafness and inclusive education to develop effective communication with deaf students ensuring deaf friendly inclusive practices. They should make sure those school's activities and practices help deaf students to achieve their all-round potential. They have to have high expectations for all deaf students in relation to their academic and social development. Therefore, school principals are to be appointed in accordance to professionalism and not on the basis of general experience in education. Through the journey of the research investigation I have realised that the university degrees of school principals are not related to the subject of inclusive education and the teaching of deaf students. This may have contributed to the negative attitudes and unconstructive views towards inclusive education for deaf students. In this respect, qualifications and area of specialisation are broadly related to successful inclusive education developments. Qualifications and expertise are crucial in influencing principals' actions thereby improving teachers' practices towards inclusive education (Pearson et al., 2003; Lifshitz et al., 2004). These studies tend to reinforce the view that qualifications of inclusive education and deaf education are required for less resistance to inclusive education. In the same direction it is very important for education reformers such as the Local Education Authority as central leadership, to support inclusive schools through efficient administration and with the development of specialist teachers. They also need to better understand the attitudes of principals and teachers in relation to inclusive education for deaf students before the inclusive programme starts.
- **Facilities, resources and equipment:** To achieve successful inclusive education, the teaching and learning materials and resources in inclusive schools should be

designed to meet the diverse needs of deaf students. Inclusive schools should respond in ways that lead to learning and growth for the whole student, and giving each and every member a valued role. The equipment and tools of the general classes need to be changed to accommodate deaf students. In this context, successful inclusive education can be achieved if facilities in inclusive schools are provided (Hadjikakou et al., 2008). These include educational equipment such as audio devices, predisposing school's library with visual equipment, computers, and TV programmes which are suitable for deaf abilities. In addition light signs should be provided in classrooms and school corridors, which indicate time of break. Similarly, it is recommended to provide inclusive schools with proficient assistant teachers or interpreters. Relating to leadership – leaders need to be knowledgeable about what equipment, facilities and infrastructure are needed to make a school inclusive, or at least to have access to those who do.

- Adopting extra promotions and stimulations for inclusive schools: In addition to the current stimulations granted by the Local Educational Authority to schools and staff of inclusive schools, this research recommends extra promotions in particular for teachers who are enthusiastic to the process of inclusive education. Through data analysis of the interviews and schools' visits several teachers expressed their concerns in relation to funding provision. TH3 for example stated that:

‘Oh yes! Increasing promotions would be significant towards constructive functioning of inclusive education within schools’

Such perception is also revealed by a number of studies conducted to measure the significance of promotions. For example, Pearson et al., (2003) concluded that teachers in schools with extra funding provisions, additional counselling resources and specialist support expressed more accepting attitudes towards students with special needs and their admission into general schools. Similarly, Leatherman and Niemeyer (2005) reported that while the teachers in their study did implement inclusive practices, they indicated that financial support from administrators and other resources are vital to develop a successful inclusive environment. In the same direction Koutrouba et al., (2006) pointed out that through moral and financial support teachers exhibited a positive implementation of inclusive education than

those who had not received any. Thus, this research recommends that the way forward for successful inclusive education lies through an approach in which the concepts of needs for deaf students can be met and extra promotions for school staff can be fulfilled.

- A broad set of changes that need to happen in teachers and leadership training: Specialised training courses are to be organised by the Local Educational Authority and offered to school principals, teachers and stakeholders. In other words, school principals and teachers are to be given adequate training on how to cater for the needs of students with deafness in the inclusive schools/classrooms. In the same direction, principals and teachers are to help to determine what types of courses are required and then contact the Local Educational Authority. This study recommends that principals and teachers in inclusive schools need to attend various workshops and training to learn more about students with deafness and inclusive education. This, supported by Burke and Sutherland (2004) pointed out that the success of inclusive education is the result of various factors, mainly directing teachers and providing them with enough training for dealing with deaf students.

The data analysis revealed that school principals felt unprepared and lack sufficient training to fully support successful inclusive education. Similar findings of a study by Rau (2003) recommended an increase of training courses to principals who were lacking knowledge and experience of inclusive education to confront the challenges in their schools. Such training courses may influence actions of school principals towards inclusive education. In the same direction, in-service training was highlighted as an effective way of improving school staff practices of inclusive education. Therefore, professional training of school staff including principals and teachers was one of the key factors to implement inclusive education in their school. This signifies that training courses about inclusive education develop school principals and teachers' confidence and competence, which improve their actions and performance within the schools' environment.

- Different types of partnerships and relationships needed to be developed: This research further recommends that in order to achieve successful inclusive education of students with deafness teamwork should be promoted. Collaboration and communication skills are to be developed by school principals and teachers. They need to realise the important role they play in making inclusive education successful. School principals can utilise creative scheduling to allow time for teachers of deaf students and others to meet. In the same orientation, school principals, teachers and parents for successful inclusive education, need collaboration and communication. Teachers need to develop a comfort level of collaboration with parents. Inclusive schools need to reach out to all parents of deaf students to become involved in schools' activities. This is supported by Morris (2001) who highlighted that the education of students with special needs in inclusive schools cannot be achieved without full participation of parents with the inclusive school. Additionally, parents of deaf students and inclusive school collaboration are a very important element that would encourage and foster positive learning outcomes of students with deafness. In this regard, Bojuwoye (2009) contended that active participation of parents and their collaboration with inclusive schools has an effective role in developing students' learning skills and their successful educational outcomes.
- Parents of students with deafness in Saudi Arabia should be equipped with knowledge about inclusive education and encouraged to be involved in the educational decision-making process and given opportunities to participate in schools' activities. Establishing programmes to raise parents' awareness about inclusive education can be a step towards changing their position. Creating opportunities of access for schools' services which are convenient can help parents attain more understanding of the students' needs and share views, which may help teachers. It could be argued that parents, without the proper knowledge and understanding are unable to meet their child's needs. As a result, many parents of deaf students have struggled to deal with their children and support them to interact with the school community. Therefore, principals and teachers need to reach out to parents and be familiar with that factor to support parents' involvement in their child's education (transportation, timing of meetings). Where a school is a specialist deaf school they should be able to support parents in coming to an understanding of

the educational implication of their children's disability so they have a good understanding of what they might achieve. Another important point involves encouraging interaction among parents so that they can share their experiences, and where appropriate teachers can help parents in educational resources.

- The current school, the Local Educational Authority and the Ministry of Education's policies for deaf education should be improved to include the practices of educational services, which ensure that deaf students are not treated less favourably on the grounds of their deafness. Such policies are to consist of procedures that take account of the needs of deaf students to achieve their full educational and social potential and ensure that there is early identification of barriers to learning.
- For Saudi deaf students to experience successful inclusion and equal opportunity reforming the characteristics of the current schools is necessary. The physical environment including a school's vision and values are to be deaf friendly by creating opportunities for all students. It is the responsibility of school principals to communicate/model these values and share them with the school staff. These schools should foster a positive attitude towards deaf issues through which every deaf student is treated as an individual and feels valued. All measures and reasonable procedures should be taken to ensure that the school buildings including library, sport halls and audio/visual rooms do not hinder the learning of deaf students or their full participation in the school activities. In such inclusive schools there should be special support services, including hearing support services and a speech and language therapist. Such services are necessary to ensure the education meets the needs of all deaf students.
- Monitoring: the Local Educational Authority should develop extra monitoring procedures in inclusive schools specialising in deaf students in boy's primary schools. Schools, including principals and teachers should be monitored to assess the impact of their practices on inclusive education of deaf students. This includes assessment of teaching, resources used and participation of deaf students in school activities. Assessment also includes inclusive school policies to understand the difficulties they face, although such assessment would help the Local Educational Authority to identify gaps in the inclusion education policy and evaluate the

advantages and disadvantages of the current policy to meet the needs of deaf students and improve their achievement. In the same direction, school practices should be reviewed as a result of monitoring.

10.5 Concluding Remarks

Although, the UNESCO convention against discrimination in education (1994) disallows any exclusion or limitation to educational opportunities on the bases of socially ascribed or perceived differences, the findings of this research reveal that there is still, today, a number of deaf students who experience segregation within and from education in inclusive schools in Saudi Arabia. In the Saudi context, it is unfortunate that inclusive education is viewed as a placement issue disregarding deaf students as valued members to the schools who should be given the full opportunities to achieve their educational potential. When visiting inclusive schools in this study, it has been observed that deaf students are treated in a way that they do not belong to the schools. Although they are respected as individuals, they were not given the opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life alongside their hearing peers. They were often bullied and teased in relation to their deafness, and they were not given the right opportunities to combine with hearing students and given support to build their confidence and self esteem. I personally observed that deaf students were excluded from general activities and were placed in separate groups. When asking a school principal (SPF3) about the causes of this segregation, he responded:

‘Look! I cannot let deaf students mix with non-deaf ones because of their disability’.

Hence, there is an urgent need for changes at inclusive schools specialising in deaf students in boy’s primary schools in order to meet the needs of students with deafness, particularly an emphasis on the importance of increased knowledge and skills that could empower school principals as professionals. Therefore, a strategic model is proposed to meet the needs of inclusive practices for deaf students. This signifies that taking into consideration the features of this model, which includes understanding the concept of inclusive education and raising awareness about the importance and value of inclusive education, ultimately may help foster truly inclusive practices. Knowledge, acceptance

and willingness provide schools (principals and teachers) with opportunities for creating a suitable environment for deaf students to learn through others about the importance of belonging, acceptance and community values. More appropriate and less restrictive settings for students with deafness should be established. All students, regardless of their special needs, can learn if they are given the proper educational facilities and resources. Also, all the students have the right to receive education in an environment that is consistent with their academic and social needs (Singal, 2009). In addition, implementation of the above recommendations requires a fundamental change of attitudes and improved understanding of inclusive education.

10.6 Contribution of the study

This thesis has focused on understanding the complexity of inclusive education; its theory, practice, and factors that have influenced inclusive education for deaf students in Saudi Arabia. This investigation has underlined the significance for researchers, the Saudi government and all stakeholders to consider the policy and practice of inclusive education for deaf students not so much from the perceptions of worldwide, but from the national local context. In the view of the findings and conclusions derived from this research, it can be said that this research has made a valid contribution to knowledge which points out some factors in the educational field from the perspectives of school principals, teachers and parents of deaf students. It provides rich and detailed images of their understandings and attitudes about inclusive education of deaf students that had not been investigated before in this context. This research would help to assess the current situation and it is hoped that it will help those in Saudi to identify the characteristics and components of effective inclusive education. It also proposes a process of reforming and restructuring of activities and practices to improving the quality of inclusive education which will ensure that all male deaf students in primary schools can have access to the whole range of educational opportunities offered within the schools in Saudi Arabia. It has provided a range of theoretical backgrounds in relation to deaf students in inclusive schools so that this research provides policy makers in Saudi Arabia with in-depth insights into the gap between the policies governing inclusive school and what is actually happening in real school life: although this is limited to boy's primary schools because of the cultural rules that govern gender interaction.

Moreover, this research has provided practical and methodological implications which could be implemented by researchers who intend to investigate inclusive education for deaf students. Although I do not claim that my research provides a definitive answer to inclusive education for deaf students, I do however believe that the strategic model, which has developed from this research, makes a useful contribution to addressing the complexity of inclusive education practically. I hope that the recommendations of this research could direct the educational reform to concentrating on the deaf education in the inclusive schools by developing and enhancing the quality of deaf education. In this context, it has been argued that inclusive education should not be thought of as disability, rather it is about reconstruction of education and reform of schools' activities. If the Saudi Local Educational Authority truly wish to change and better the life and education of its deaf students, it must implement the strategic model that directs inclusion schools specialising in deaf students in boy's primary schools to meet the recommendations proposed in this research. This should also improve education for all non-deaf students as they will have access to more diverse learning materials and strategies. They will benefit from the value that deaf students bring to the classroom and school. The efforts of policymakers in the Ministry of Education should be directed towards increasing the quality of the educational system of deaf students rather than blaming them for being a failure. Hence, inclusive education is not simply about putting students together in one school, it is about involving deaf students with schools' activities and encouraging them to interact with hearing students. In the same direction, it is essential for school principals and teachers to identify the learning needs of deaf students in order to provide them with the right resources in an inclusive school environment. All deaf students should have access to quality education that meets basic learning needs and enriches their social lives.

Additionally, most studies of educational research and special education specifically conducted in Saudi Arabia rely on the scientific approach which used questionnaires for data collection (Al-Samade, 2008; Hanfy, 2008; Al-Fahily, 2009). As far as I am aware, this is the first study about perceptions of school principals, teachers and parents toward inclusive education of deaf students in Saudi Arabia which employs a qualitative method (interview, observation and documentary data). It can be said that adopting an interpretive approach using interviews, observations and documentary data in the current research may contribute to methodology in social science research in Saudi

Arabia. This research demonstrated that the qualitative approach has provided more in-depth data about inclusive education specialising in deaf students in boy's primary schools in Saudi Arabia and has established a platform for further research to be conducted using a qualitative method.

10.7 Limitations of the Research

Despite the interesting findings of the study of the complexity of inclusive education of deaf students and different factors affecting the process of successful inclusive education, this research has encountered a number of constraints which are necessary to acknowledge. For instance, in order to get access to inclusive schools specialising in deaf students' primary inclusive boy's schools, the researcher followed a lengthy procedure to get permission from the Ministry of Higher Education and the Local Educational Authority. Also, collecting the data from the participants was not easy, because there are different groups (school principals, teachers and parents of deaf students) whilst arrangements with them required much time and effort.

Another limitation is related to the chosen sample. The study included a reasonable number of the main participants (38) from all inclusion schools specialising in deaf students in primary boy's schools in Riyadh city, Saudi Arabia. Also, the educational system in Saudi Arabia separates schools by gender, thus the researcher was unable to extend this study to girl's inclusive schools for deaf students. In addition, these samples did not include key players such as policymakers (the Local Educational Authority and the Ministry of Education) and deaf/non-deaf students. It is necessary in future studies that the voice of all concerned about inclusive education should be heard.

In addition, whilst the use of the interview was so beneficial, there were some limitations related with using this method such as the long procedures to get permission to interview with some participants, timetable constraints and cultural issues. For example, some female parents were reluctant to participate in interviews and have them recorded. This is attributed to the culture of the country. Some teachers also refused to be interviewed because they were worried to reveal their views and perceptions to the Local Educational Authority. This is in spite of being guaranteed that all the data will be

kept confidential and used just for the purpose of this study. Regardless of all these challenges, the participants provided the researcher with rich and meaningful data.

Recognising the limitations of the study minimises the risk in attempting to generalise the findings obtained from the research. This research adopted an approach that was not aimed at generalisations over a larger population, but to get a deeper insight of the perspective of the research phenomenon under investigation. The central focus of this research is to establish what is actually happening at inclusion schools specialising in deaf students in primary boy's schools for deaf students, Riyadh city. However, despite the reality that generalisation is not an aim for qualitative research, the lessons learned from the current study may be transferred to similar contexts (Cohen et al., 2007).

10.8 Directions for Further Research

The limitations of the current study has provided insights and opened the door for potential future research. There are some other aspects that need to be investigated regarding inclusive education for deaf students in the Saudi context. It is a fast-moving subject, and interest in how to improve inclusive education is growing all the time. The findings reported in the present research suggest a number of areas in which future studies in the field of inclusive education for deaf students might be designed:

1. Investigation to what extent school curriculum and teaching approaches influence perceptions towards inclusive education?
2. What types of services are needed for deaf people to include them in the community?
3. Investigating the perceptions and voices of deaf students towards inclusive education?

10.9 A Reflexive Account

Based on my personal experience as a teacher of deaf students at an inclusive school in Saudi Arabia I feel there has been an improvement in almost all aspects of education with the exception of inclusive education and deaf learners. However, there are positive factors, which can be built upon to foster more effective inclusive education in Saudi Arabia. Firstly, at a national level government and education policy have demonstrated

a firm public commitment to supporting inclusive education by opening the door to schools by aspiring for every single student to study in inclusive schools. Also, even though policy borrowing has created the issues that are demonstrated in this thesis there is a will to borrow policy and transfer the features of high performing systems. In addition I am an example of how the Saudi government is trying to send many teachers and specialists in the field of education of students with special needs to countries with more expertise to study and obtain the experience that can be used upon returning to the country. Moreover Saudi has some advantages over the countries from which it is borrowing the policies. For example, its religion includes an underpinning philosophy that is not detrimental to and undermining of people with special educational needs and disabilities: all are considered equal in the Quran. As Saudi is a religious society this could be an important building block providing it with the potential to development of special education and inclusive schools in Saudi Arabia.

This research has explored the education of deaf students in inclusive schools through exploring the perceptions of school principals, teachers and parents of deaf students. Undertaking this research, I have learnt various things. At a personal level, my study at Lincoln University has enabled me to develop my research skills, knowledge and review of literature about the notion of inclusive education in general and at inclusive schools specialising in deaf students in Saudi Arabian boy's primary schools in particular.

Through my journey in this research, it has made me understand that straightforward answers need to address the complex nature of the inclusive schools for deaf students. I have developed a critical vision about realities of deaf education in inclusive schools in Saudi Arabia; also hopefully my strategic model can make a contribution to this process. Reviewing literature has provided me with an insight of how complex and contested the notion of inclusive education is, with differing views presented by people at different levels. In this regard, I tried to perceive my participants' understanding and views about inclusive education to making-meaning procedures rather than classifying them as truths. On the basis of literature review and the findings of this research, my own thoughts and insights about inclusive education for deaf students has been positively developed. I strongly support inclusive education for deaf students in Saudi Arabia and it could be improved when taking into consideration the research

recommendations, as it is the duty of the Local Educational Authorities and inclusive schools to provide deaf students with all necessities to meet their needs of better education. Since I started conducting this research and through my regular visits to inclusive schools, as well as direct contact with teachers I have realised that no real change has taken place in relation to inclusive education for deaf students. Accordingly, I believe that a critical amendment to the structure of schools' policies as well as schools' environments should be carried out. This includes change of the attitudes and knowledge of school principals as well as monitoring the teachers' practices. This is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and the Local Educational Authorities. Hopefully the findings of this research and its recommendations could be supportive to this change and new researches in this field would highlight other areas to improve inclusive education in Saudi Arabia.

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Appendices

(Appendix A)

Exploratory Focus Groups' Interview Schedule

These focus group interviews seek to get general perceptions and to obtain more knowledge about the situation of the inclusive education of deaf students through meeting with schools' staff included schools' principals and teachers, and parents of deaf students in primary schools in Riyadh city, Saudi Arabia.

Understanding of Inclusive Education for Deaf Students

What is your understanding and belief about inclusive education for deaf students?

Prompts and Probes

What do you know and understand about inclusive education? What do you believe about inclusive education? When is the best time for deaf students to be included in regular schools? What types of inclusive education are available? Do you believe that all deaf students should be included in general school/general classroom and why? What are the arguments for and against inclusive education for deaf students? Is there anything you would like to add about inclusive education for deaf students?

Knowledge about Deafness and Deaf Education

What is your knowledge and understanding about deaf education?

Prompts and Probes

What is deafness? What does being a deaf student mean to you? How they can learn? What are the important needs for deaf students? How do you meet the different educational needs of deaf students? What are the different ways of communicating with deaf students? Is there anything you would like to add about deafness and deaf education?

Issues and Factors that are Related to Inclusive Education

What are some of the underlying factors that influence inclusive education?

Prompts and Probes

Do you believe that your school meets all the needs for inclusion of deaf students? Why? Do you believe that pre-service and in-service professional training is very important? Do you think that general schools have sufficient resources for the inclusion of deaf students? What are the major factors that influence inclusive education of deaf students in general schools and in general

classrooms in Saudi Arabia? What are the unique challenges of being a deaf child in an inclusive school? What do you envisage and recommend for inclusion-friendly schools within the Saudi context? Do you believe that there will be no need for special schools in the future because of the movement towards inclusion in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia? What kind of support or facilities do you think you may need to conduct an inclusive class? Could you please mention some other important changes or any issues that should be done in order to put full inclusion into practice in Riyadh?

Thank you for your collaboration

(Appendix B-1)

Semi-Structured Interview Schedule with School Principals

Prompts for researcher:

- Completion of permission form
- Assurances of confidentiality
- Permission to record

I want to thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. This interview seeks to get your views regarding school principals' perceptions and their understanding regarding inclusive education of deaf students in general schools. It will also explore factors that influence inclusive education in general schools, and there are some key areas that we will cover during the interview. This interview should take between 45 and 60 minutes.

Name & Inclusive School:

.....

Date & Start and End Time:

.....

Personal details & your role, years' experience:

.....

Section A: Understanding of Inclusive Education for Deaf Students

1. Let's talk about inclusion: tell me what is your understanding about inclusive education?
2. Explain what you mean when you say your school is "inclusive" in your view?
3. Could you tell me about your qualifications and experience in inclusive education?
4. Tell me what is your experience in the area of deaf education?
5. Could you tell me about the different educational needs of deaf students?
6. What do you do to ensure that students with deafness are included in your school?
7. Could you tell me what is the ideal model of inclusion from your perspective?

Section B: Attitudes towards Inclusive Education

1. Tell me what do you believe about inclusive education?
2. Describe how you feel about the inclusive education of deaf students?
3. Do you support the concept of inclusive education for students with deafness? Why?
4. Do you believe that deaf students should be included in general schools and why? Could you explain your answer more, please?
5. Do you believe that deaf students should be included in general classrooms and why? Could you please explain your answer more?
6. From your viewpoint, what are the arguments and advantages for inclusive education of deaf students?
7. From your viewpoint, what are the arguments and disadvantages for inclusive education of deaf students?

Section C: Issues and Factors that Influence Inclusive Education

1. In your opinion, what are the major factors that influence inclusive education for deaf students in general schools?
2. Do you believe that your school meets all the requirements of inclusive education for deaf students? Please explain.
3. Could you explain more about how your school environment/classroom is organised to include students with deafness?
4. Do you receive any support from the Local Educational Authority regarding the inclusion of deaf students?
5. Do you think that general schools have sufficient resources and are ready for the inclusion of deaf students? Explain.
6. Do you believe that pre-service and in-service professional training would be helpful for successful inclusion of deaf students? Could you explain more, please?
7. Explain how you feel about your training opportunities to help students with deafness in your school?
8. Do you have any previous professional training in inclusive education for deaf students?
9. Do think that principals' training can guarantee inclusive education? Explain that, please.

10. Could you tell me about the collaboration inside your school regarding inclusive education?
11. Could you tell me about assistance and collaboration you may get from teachers and parents of deaf students to manage the challenges of inclusive education in your school? How?
12. What unique challenges do deaf students have in your school? How do you deal with them?
13. Does the inclusion of deaf students in your school make your work difficult? Why?
14. Could you tell me how could you overcome these factors?
15. Are there any other issues or concerns that you wish to share that may be relevant to this research?

Thank you very much for your help and time

(Appendix B-2)
Semi-Structured Interview Schedule with Teachers

Prompts for researcher:

- Completion of permission form
- Assurances of confidentiality
- Permission to record

I want to thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. This interview seeks to get your views regarding teachers' perceptions and their understanding regarding inclusive education of deaf students in general schools. It will also explore factors that influence inclusive education in general schools, and there are some key areas that we will cover during the interview. This interview should take between 45 and 60 minutes.

Name & Inclusive School:

.....

Date & Start and End Time:

.....

Personal details & your role, years' experience:

.....

Section A: Understanding of Inclusive Education for Deaf Students

1. Let's talk about inclusion: tell me what is your understanding about inclusive education?
2. Explain what you mean when you say your school is "inclusive" in your view?
3. Could you tell me about your qualifications and experience in inclusive education?
4. Tell me what is your experience in the area of deaf education?
5. Could you tell me about the different educational needs of deaf students?
6. What do you do to ensure that students with deafness are included in your school?
7. Could you tell me what is the ideal model of inclusion from your perspective?

Section B: Attitudes towards Inclusive Education

1. Describe how you feel about the inclusive education of deaf students?
2. Do you support the concept of inclusive education for students with deafness? Why?
3. Do you believe that deaf students should be included in general schools and why? Could you explain your answer more, please?
4. Do you believe that deaf students should be included in general classrooms and why? Could you please explain your answer more?
5. From your viewpoint, what are the arguments and advantages for inclusive education of deaf students?
6. From your viewpoint, what are the arguments and disadvantages for inclusive education of deaf students?

Section C: Issues and Factors that Influence Inclusive Education

1. In your opinion, what are the major factors that influence inclusive education for deaf students in general schools?
2. Do you believe that your school meets all the requirements of inclusive education for deaf students? Please explain.
3. Could you explain more about how your school environment/classroom is organised to include students with deafness?
4. Do you think that general schools have sufficient resources and are ready for the inclusion of deaf students? Explain.
5. Do you believe that pre-service and in-service professional training would be helpful for successful inclusion of deaf students? Could you explain more, please.
6. Explain how you feel about your training opportunities to help students with deafness in your school?
7. Do think that teachers' training can guarantee inclusive education? Explain that, please.
8. Could you tell me about the collaboration inside your school regarding inclusive education?
9. Could you tell me about assistance and collaboration you may get from the principal and parents of deaf students to manage the challenges of inclusive education in your school? How?

10. What unique challenges do deaf students have in your school? How do you deal with them?
11. Could you tell me how could you overcome these factors?
12. Are there any other issues or concerns that you wish to share that may be relevant to this research?

Thank you very much for your help and time

(Appendix B-3)

Semi-Structured Interview Schedule with Parents

Prompts for researcher:

- Completion of permission form
- Assurances of confidentiality
- Permission to record

I want to thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. This interview seeks to get your views regarding perceptions of parents of deaf students and their understanding regarding inclusive education of deaf students in general schools. It will also explore factors that influence inclusive education in general schools, and there are some key areas that we will cover during the interview. This interview should take between 45 and 60 minutes.

Inclusive School:

.....

Name & Code of Interviews:

.....

Date & Start and End Time:

.....

Section A: Understanding of Inclusive Education for Deaf Students

1. Let's talk about inclusion: tell me what is your understanding about inclusive education?
2. Explain what do you mean when you say your child's school is "inclusive" in your view?
3. Could you tell me about your experience in inclusive education?
4. Tell me what your experience in the area of deaf education? Or their needs?
5. What do you do to ensure that your child is included in inclusive school?
6. Could you tell me what is the ideal model of inclusion from your perspective?

Section B: Attitudes towards Inclusive Education

1. Describe how you feel about inclusive education for your child in general school?
2. Do you support the concept of inclusive education for students with deafness? Why?
3. Do you believe that deaf students should be included in general schools and why? Could you explain your answer more, please?
4. Do you believe that deaf students should be included in general classrooms and why? Could you please explain your answer more?
5. From your viewpoint, what are the arguments and advantages for inclusive education of deaf students?
6. From your viewpoint, what are the arguments and disadvantages for inclusive education of deaf students?

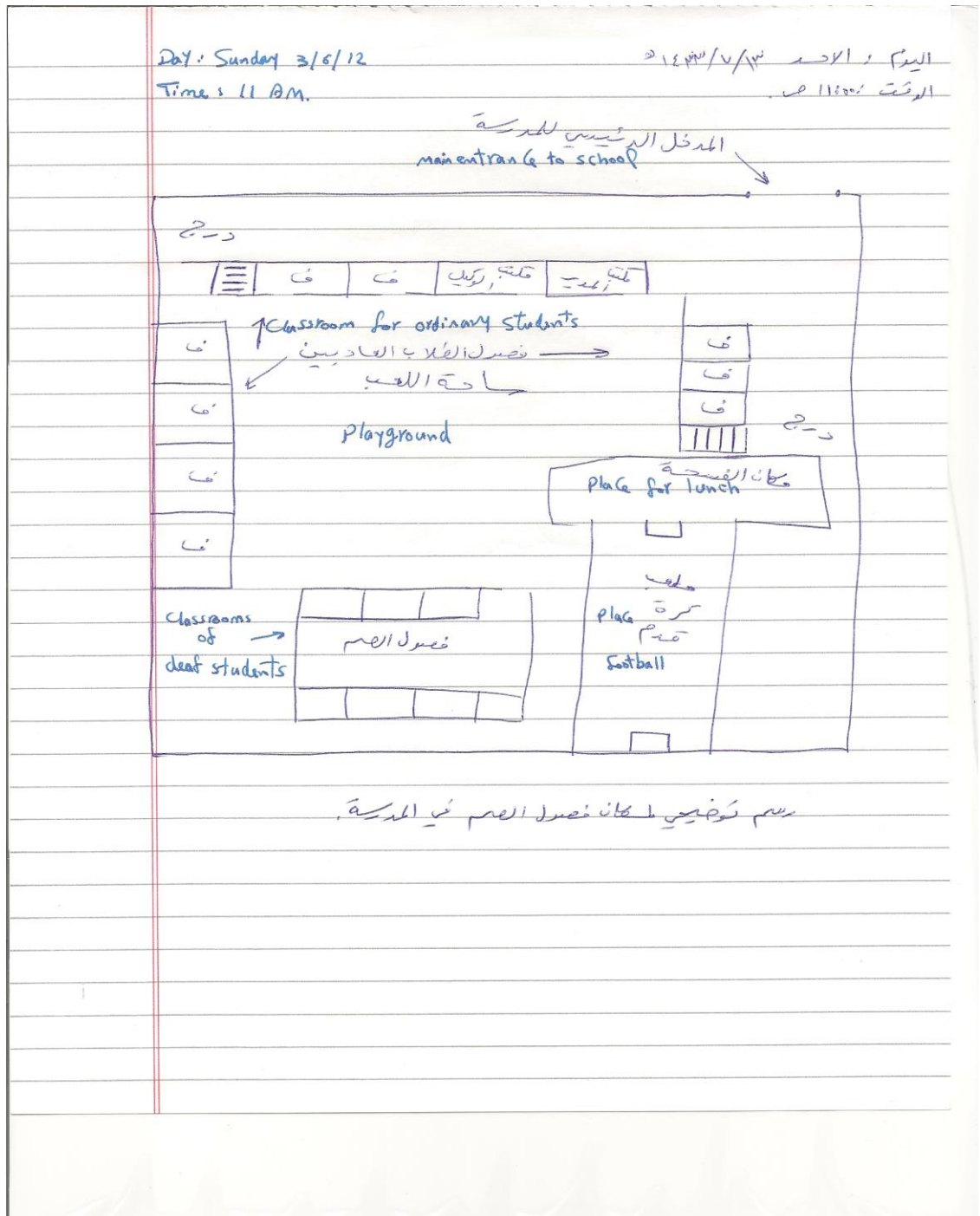
Section C: Issues and Factors that Influence Inclusive Education

1. In your opinion, what are the major factors that influence inclusive education for deaf students in general schools?
2. Do you believe that your child's school meets all the requirements of inclusion and his needs? Please explain.
3. Could you explain more about how your child's school environment/classroom is organised to include students with deafness?
4. Do you think that general schools have sufficient resources and are ready for inclusion of deaf students? Explain.
5. Could you tell me about the collaboration inside your child's school regarding inclusive education?
6. Tell me about assistance and collaboration you may get from the principal and teachers to manage the challenges of inclusive education in your school? How?
7. What unique challenges do deaf students have in your school? How do you deal with them?
8. Could you tell me how could you overcome these factors?
9. Are there any other issues or concerns that you wish to share that may be relevant to this research?

Thank you very much for your help and time

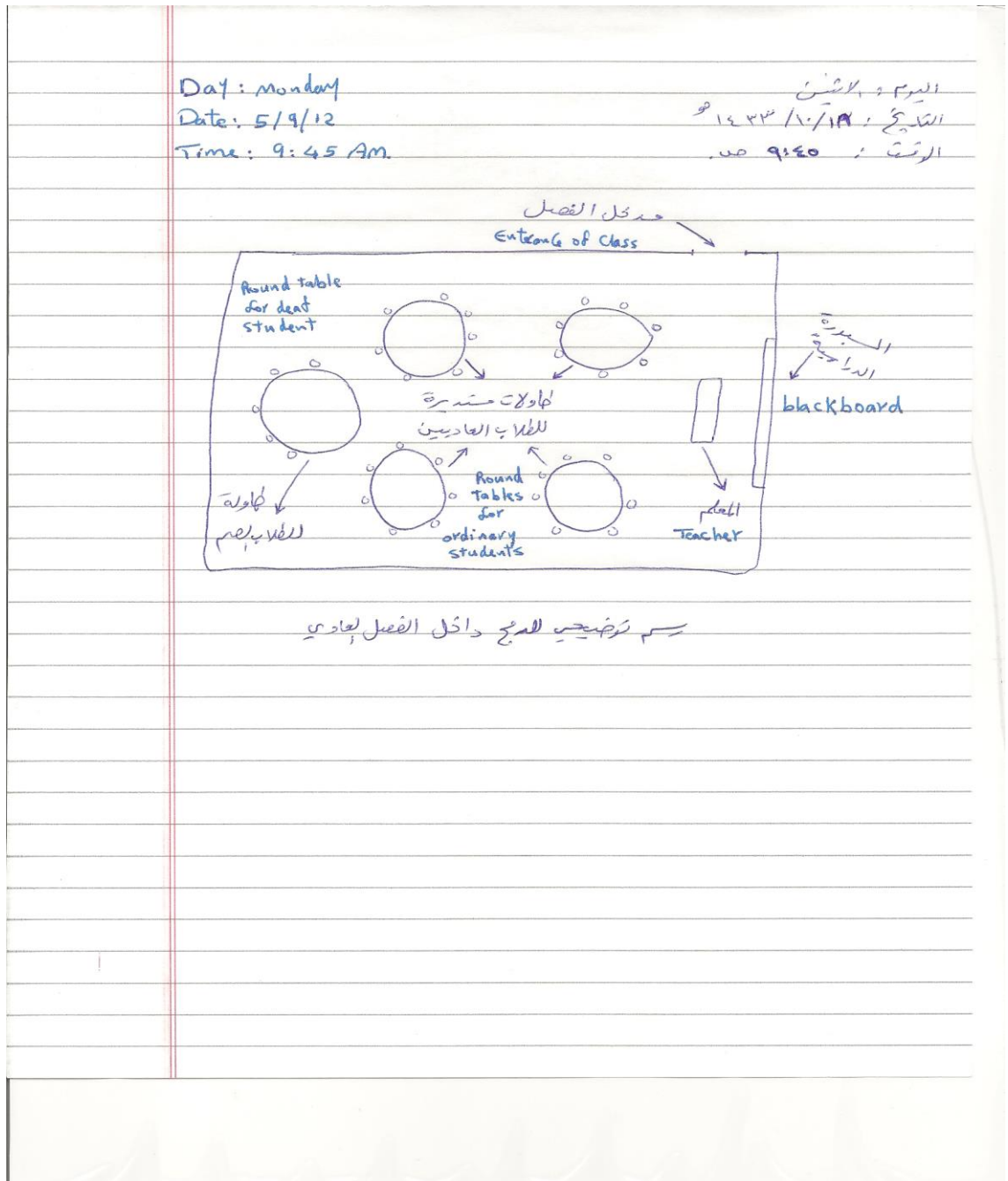
(Appendix C-1)

Diagram (1) observation, shows the classrooms of deaf students were completely isolated in separate building in the corner of the general school.



(Appendix C-2)

Diagram (2) observation shows that inclusive education within-classroom, where deaf students sitting with each other on a round table.



(Appendix D)
The Ethical Research Approval

EA2
Ethical Approval Form:
Human Research Projects

**Please word-process this form,
handwritten applications will not
be accepted**



This form must be completed for each piece of research activity whether conducted by academic staff, research staff, graduate students or undergraduates. The completed form must be approved by designated authority within the Faculty.

Please complete all sections. If a section is not applicable, write N/A.

1 Name of Applicant	Abdulaziz Abdullah Z Alothman	
	Department: PhD programmes	Faculty: Centre for Educational Research and Development
2 Position in the University	Full time PhD student	
3 Role in relation to this research	Primary investigator	
4 Brief statement of main Research Question	The main research question will be that "What are the perspectives and attitudes of schools principals, teachers and parents toward inclusive education for deaf students in Saudi Arabia?"	
5 Brief Description of Project	<p>In many countries throughout the world, deaf children are increasingly being educated in mainstream school environments. The successful implementation of inclusive education is dependent in the first place on educators, teachers, and parents positivity about it. Teachers, parents and school principals' beliefs, attitudes and judgments play a part in ensuring the success of inclusion practices in schools (Norwich, 1994). In Saudi Arabia the empirical research in the field of deaf education is a new area for both research and development, especially in inclusive education. My interest in this area of research stems from my own experience in deaf education. I have worked as a teacher for deaf students at special and mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia where there is a lack of research focusing on inclusive education and deaf learners. Therefore, I believe that the goal of this research is to fill the gaps of such an area. Also, the findings of this study will contribute significantly towards setup of strategies and the decision-making in education of deaf students to make them more successful academically and socially in Saudi Arabia.</p> <p>Purpose and Aims of the Research</p> <p>The purpose of this study is to carry out and explore the perspectives and attitudes of schools principals, teachers and parents of deaf students in inclusion primary schools towards the inclusive education of deaf students, and to investigate the factors and barriers that may influence the implementation of inclusive education and necessary change in regard to achieving full inclusive education for deaf students in Saudi Arabia, Riyadh city. The study will attempt to achieve the following aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigate the beliefs of schools principals, teachers and parents of deaf students regarding inclusive education for deaf students. - Investigate the understanding of schools principals, teachers and 	

	<p>parents of deaf students regarding concept of deafness and needs of deaf children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigate the factors that influence schools principals, teachers and parents' perspectives and attitudes towards inclusion deaf students. - Explore schools principals, teachers and parents' beliefs about the barriers of inclusive education for deaf students. - Explore school principals, teachers and parents' perceptions about the process of change from partial inclusion to achieve full inclusive education for deaf students. <p>Within the context of my study, and according to Punch (1998), the approach used in research depends on what the researcher is attempting to discover or examine. This study will be a qualitative study grounded in interpretive philosophy, where it will look for interpretations of the social world (Crotty, 2003), this means that the present study will assume that participants would be able to provide useful information from their experiences regarding inclusive education for deaf children in mainstream schools within the Saudi Arabian socio-cultural context. Consequently, I will adopt the qualitative method 'interviews' because it is more convenient, where Creswell (2003) claims that the interpretive approach can be very useful in new areas of research. Denzin & Lincoln (2000) argued that the qualitative method assists the researcher to clarify why things happened from an insider's point of view. In addition, as a qualitative researcher, the purpose of the study will be to build knowledge by describing and interpreting the phenomena of the world in an attempt to gain a shared meaning with others about inclusive education for deaf children. Therefore, Interview schedule - interviews will be semi-structured. The intention is to capture the insights, observations and perspectives of the schools principals, teachers and parents who are involved in education of deaf students in inclusion school.</p>
	<p>Approximate Start Date: 23/05/2011</p> <p>Approximate End Date: 29/01/2014</p>
6 Name of Principal Investigator Supervisor	<p>Professor Howard Stevenson</p> <p>Email address: hstevenson@lincoln.ac.uk</p> <p>Telephone: 01522 837333</p>
7 Names of other researchers or student investigators involved	<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p>

<p>8 Location(s) at which project is to be carried out</p>	<p>The study will consist of all inclusive primary schools for deaf students in Riyadh city, Saudi Arabia. There are 12 inclusion primary schools for deaf students in Riyadh; the participants will be 12 schools principals, 15 parents and 20 teachers from all inclusion primary schools, where the full sample will be 47 participants. The choice to have 47 participants involved is made from a belief that this would provide sufficient data. Another reason is resources (time and budget) allocated for this study. It is highlighted that the number of 47 participants are not totally fixed as it might be more or less depending on the data generated. The technique will be use saturation sampling (Mason, 2010) where including more participants will stop once no more new data or issues emerge. The participants will be those school principals who have deaf students in their school, and those teachers who work with deaf students in their classrooms and those parents who have deaf child who study in inclusion school.</p>
<p>9 Statement of the ethical issues involved and how they are to be addressed –including a risk assessment of the project based on the vulnerability of participants, the extent to which it is likely to be harmful and whether there will be significant discomfort.</p> <p>(This will normally cover such issues as whether the risks/adverse effects associated with the project have been dealt with and whether the benefits of research outweigh the risks)</p>	<p>Research ethics is an important issue in researches. This research will be in accordance with Ethical Principles for conducting research with Humans, Lincoln University. The researchers should ensure that the result of their work causes no risk or harm to participants. Malin (2003: p. 22) argues that "the rightness or wrongness of the research is judged according to its consequences". There are three ethical areas which all researchers should consider: (1) the protection of their participants, (2) the confidentiality of research data and (3) the avoidance of deception of research subjects (Wallen & Fraenkel, 2001). In this study, ethical issues will be taken into account.</p> <p>I will request permission from local education authority to conduct this study at the inclusion primary schools for deaf students in Riyadh city. Another letter will also request informed consent that will be signed from the participants who willing to be member in this study from school principals, teachers and parents to explain to them the purpose of the study. It will be ensured that these participants understand the nature of the research and the process in which they will be engaged prior to the start of the research. Also, I will be clear with the participants where they have the right to withdraw from the research at any time if they so wish (BERA, 2004).</p> <p>Confidentiality will be taken into consideration in this study. The researcher will not identify the participants or the school which is involved. Participants will be represented in this study by numbers and letters. No minors will be involved in this research. Nor will it be necessary to discuss any individual student by name. Participants will be informed that they should not refer to named students, and if they do so, any name reference will be removed. Also, With the interviewee's permission (indicated on the consent form) interviews will be audio recorded for the purposes of transcription. All interviewees will be aware that they can ask for the tape to be turned off at any stage during the interview. Also, they will be offered copies of the interview transcripts for validation. All data will be stored securely on an encrypted computer. Back up material will be stored on an external hard disk that will be kept in a locked store, protecting it from loss or theft. Consequently, I will be aware of all ethical issues when carrying out this research, also my research will be overseen by my supervisor, who will be asked about any matter in relation to ethical issues.</p> <p>In addition, this study will be the first in Saudi Arabia and may indicate further areas of research that could be conducted in this field. However, there are some important issues in this research including firstly, there are no previous studies in Saudi Arabia relating to this study and there has been no research conducted on school principals, teachers and parents of deaf students regarding their perspectives and attitudes</p>

	<p>towards inclusive education for deaf students. Thus, this study will address this gap. Secondly, because of the longitudinal nature of the interviews, it raises some concerns about the participants. They might not fulfill their obligations to the researcher before the end of the data collection period. Furthermore, there are some significant cultural issues that may influence the methods and data collection processes. Culturally, Saudi Arabian people are not familiar with research data collection methods such as interviews, especially when researchers use audio recording during each interview with participants.</p> <p>Thirdly, while the main study will be conducted in Saudi Arabia, this study will be presented in English at the University of Lincoln, UK. Therefore, I have some concerns about the time and effort which will be required in the translation and construction of data collection methods. In addition, there is a concern about the amount of time which will be taken to obtain approval from the responsible authorities and participants prior to the data collection stage. Therefore, it is essential that each stage is carried out in a timely manner.</p>
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Ethical Approval From Other Bodies

10 Does this research require the approval of an external body ?	Yes (X)	No ()
	If “Yes”, please state which body:- The local education authority in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia	
11 Has ethical approval already been obtained from that body ?	(X)Yes	-Please append documentary evidence to this form.
	() No	- If “No”, please state why not:- Please note that any such approvals must be obtained and documented before the project begins.

APPLICANT SIGNATURE

I hereby request ethical approval for the research as described above.

I certify that I have read the University’s **ETHICAL PRINCIPLES FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH WITH HUMANS AND OTHER ANIMALS**.

Applicant Signature

AZIZ

PRINT NAME

Abdulaziz Abdullah Alothman

Date

04/11/2012

FOR STUDENT APPLICATIONS ONLY –

Academic Support for Ethics

Academic support should be sought prior to submitting this form to the CERD Research Ethics Committee.

- Undergraduate / Postgraduate
Taught application

Academic Member of staff nominated by the
School/Department (consult your project tutor)

- Postgraduate Research Application

Director of Studies

I support the application for ethical approval



01/10/12

Academic / Director of Studies Signature
Howard Stevenson
PRINT NAME

Date

FOR COMPLETION BY THE CERD RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Please select ONE of A, B, C or D below:

- ☒ **A. The CERD Research Ethics Committee gives ethical approval to this research.**
☐ **B. The CERD Research Ethics Committee gives conditional ethical approval to this research.**

10 Please state the condition (inc. date by which condition must be satisfied if applicable).

- ☐ **C. The CERD Research Ethics Committee cannot give ethical approval to this research but refers the application to the University Research Ethics Committee for higher level consideration.**

11 Please state the reason

- ☐ **D. The CERD Research Ethics Committee cannot give ethical approval to this research and recommends that the research should not proceed.**

12 Please state the reason, bearing in mind the University's ethical framework, including the primary concern for Academic Freedom.

Signature of the Chair of the CERD Research Ethics Committee



4/12/2012

Signature

Date

(Appendix E-1)

Information Permission Form

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research study. This information sheet will give you information about the research and your rights in relation to the data you provide. I am a full-time PhD student in the Centre of Educational Research and Development at the University of Lincoln in the UK.

The purpose of the research is to explore inclusive education practices in Saudi Arabia: deaf education perceptions, voices of schools' principals, teachers and parents. It seeks to get perceptions and understanding of schools' principals, teachers and parents towards inclusive education of deaf students in general schools. It will also explore the complexity and factors that influence inclusive education in general schools. Data will be collected through interviews and observations and it is hoped that this research may be useful in providing a more general understanding of the complexity of inclusive education, hence modifying the current policies of the inclusive education of students with deafness in Saudi general schools. Also, it is hoped that the findings of this research could provide the policymakers with insights regarding the kind of services required for deaf students.

Informed consent

Ensure that all participants may ask at any time for clarification of anything they do not understand or would like explained further. Participants are not obliged to answer any of the questions that are put to them and they are free to withdraw at any time. Also, no expenses can be paid for contribution to the research. Confidentiality is of the highest priority and the greatest care will be taken to ensure that no respondent is identified or identifiable in this work. Ensure that schools and participants will be made anonymous; names from interviews and schools will not be mentioned in any publications that arise from the research.

The researcher will ask permission to record the interview. Interview tapes and transcripts will be used only for research purposes, and third parties will not be allowed access to them during or after the course of the research project. Any interview

transcripts will be encoded so that no record of the participants' names and data exists side by side.

My contact details

If you require any further information on this project prior to consenting to participation, please contact me: Abdulaziz A. Alothman

Mobile: 0503479099 / 00447872009019

Email: Abdulaziz517@hotmail.com

Permission

I understand the nature and purpose of this research and I agree to participate.

I do/do not consent to the interview being recorded.

I do/do not wish to be sent a transcript data of our interview.

I do/do not wish to be sent a summary report of the findings when the project is completed.

Name:

Signed:

Date:

Contact (if needed):

Appendix (E-2)

Permission From the Local Educational Authority

الرقم: ٢٤٤١٤٧
التاريخ: ٢٠١٨/٨/٢٢
المشروعات:



الملك عبدالعزيز آل سعود
وزارة التربية والتعليم
الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم
إدارة التخطيط والتطوير

تسهيل مهمة باحث

الاسم		بطاقة السجل المدني	
عبد العزيز عبد الله زيد العثمان		١٠٥٢١٢٨٣٠١	
العام الدراسي	الدرجة العلمية	الكلية	الجامعة
١٤٣٣/١٤٣٤ هـ	دكتوراه	التربية	لنكون
عنوان الدراسة: آراء واتجاهات المدرء والمدرسين وأولياء أمور الطلاب الصم وضعاف السمع نحو دمج الطلاب الصم وضعاف السمع في المدارس العادية في مدينة الرياض			
عينة الدراسة : مدرء ومعلمين وأولياء أمور.			

وفقه الله

المكرم مدير مدرسة

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته ، وبعد :

بناء على تعميم معالي الوزير رقم ٥٥/٦١٠ وتاريخ ١٧/٩/١٤١٦ هـ بشأن تفويض الإدارات العامة للتربية والتعليم بإصدار خطابات السماح للباحثين بإجراء البحوث والدراسات ، وحيث تقدم إلينا الباحث (الموضحة بياناته أعلاه) بطلب إجراء دراسته ، ونظراً لأكمال الأوراق المطلوبة نأمل تسهيل مهمته.

مع ملاحظة أن الباحث يتحمل كامل المسؤولية المتعلقة بمختلف جوانب البحث ، ولا يعني سماح الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم موافقتها بالضرورة على مشكلة البحث أو على الطرق والأساليب المستخدمة في دراستها ومعالجتها.

شاكرين لكم وتقبلوا تحياتي ، ، ،

مدير إدارة التخطيط والتطوير



عبد الله السمحان

(Appendix G-1)
Interview Transcript with School's Principal

(English version)

Section A: Understanding of Inclusive Education

1. Tell me what is your understanding about inclusion?

Inclusion generally means those students who are suffering from permanent disability would be with the community in order to maintain of their feelings is well; also, in other words, not to raise their awareness of the difference between them and others. I can see it as a moral issue which leads us to accept students as part of humanitarian support.

2. Explain what you mean when you say your school is "inclusive".

It is means to me that our general school has a programme or special education classes for students with disabilities; for example, admission of a child with deafness in general schools near their home to come with their hearing brother, and placing them in different classrooms with other deaf students (*What about the participation of deaf students together with non-deaf?*) Unfortunately, we do not have a special budget for this special education programme. Sometimes, students with deafness are involved with non-deaf students in some activities such as school trips and occasionally in some lessons, including sports and arts.

3. Could you tell me about your qualifications and experience in inclusive education?

I have been the principal of this inclusive school for three years. (*Have you got any certificates or training?*) Not yet, but the experience maybe comes with practice in school!.

4. Tell me what is your experience in the area of deaf education?

If you mean any certificates or courses for education of the deaf, I do not have anything like this, but I've experience as a school's principal for more than 11 years. (*Is that inclusive schools?*) No, it is in general schools before being appointed in this inclusive school for deaf student. Really, I wish I could appreciate and communicate by sign language with deaf students. (*Why are you not looking for suitable courses to deal with deaf students in your inclusive school?*) Well! My brother, you know I am old and these

training courses need several sessions and follow-up effort, and may not be available. Also, we have a lot of concerns and actions within the school day. (*Do you request and discuss some important courses with the local educational authority?*). Well! This is a situation that requires a special member of staff to follow up with them.

5. Could you tell me about the different educational needs for deaf students?

Oh..., I expect something like hearing aids and sign language and special teachers.

6. What do you do to ensure that students with deafness are included in your school?

Well, the idea of inclusive education is excellent, but there are requirements and needs for all inclusive schools not just our school, which should be equipped for placement of those students with deafness. (*Like what?*) I can tell you, for examples, gyms, resting places and dining hall. I expect this is very important for the situation of deaf and hearing students to be active together. (*What about their learning?*) Well! I do my best as a principal; I try to check the preparation notes of teachers every week. As you see what is currently available: solid ground unsuitable for sports' playing; the sports field is not covered regarding the heat of the sun. I believe that sometimes the spatial potential of our adherence to develop students' participating in one place. (*Who is responsible for that?*), but for quality assurance procedures it is the responsibility of the Local Educational Authority.

7. Could you tell me what is the ideal model of inclusion from your perspective?

I do not know what these models are, but the idea of inclusive education for special needs students is perfect.

Section B: Attitudes towards Inclusive Education

1. Tell me what you believe about inclusive education?

My brother, inclusive education is perfect and a great idea for students with special needs, but remember my early point regarding providing appropriate school buildings with good environment such as facilities and all devices. (*Do you support inclusion?*)

As you know, a principal has additional salary regarding inclusive schools, so yes, suitable sometimes – why not, as long as we get extra profit because we are an inclusive school.

2. Describe how you feel about the inclusive education of deaf students?

I think the idea of inclusive education of students with deafness may be appropriate in terms of their psychological and social issues, but I am not sure that all deaf students would be suitable to be learning in an inclusive school. (*Why?*) Deaf students require special care because of their disability, also maybe some of their categories cause harm to himself or non-deaf students. I believe that inclusive education for deaf student need a deeper study from the Ministry Education. (*Okay, from your point of view is this only talking about the deaf students or all categories of special education?*) I think inclusive education would be more acceptable with different categories of special needs than deaf students!!

3. Do you support the concept of inclusive education for students with deafness? Why?

I cannot generalize that all deaf students have to be in inclusive education because their situation is different from other disabilities. (*Why?*) They have a different way to communicate with others; such sign language is difficult for ordinary students and schools to learn, so how they can share with others without a common language among them? In reality, I have stopped thinking regarding the idea of inclusive education for deaf students. (*Have you communicated with them?*), Well! Addressing these students requires special ways which I do not have; they have difficult ways to communicate; even if I try I will not understand them and they do not understand me, as you know.

4. Do you believe that deaf students should be included in general schools and why? Could you explain your answer more, please?

Well, as I said the idea of inclusive education is beautiful and humanized, etc. But, it is not a requirement that the inclusive schools are suitable for all students with special needs or we have to be forced to apply it; sorry, this is my view individually.

5. Do you believe that deaf students should be included in general classrooms and why? Could you please explain your answer more?

I can say that, if the general school may not suit them, what about inclusion in the classroom and mix of students, ordinary and deaf. I believe the idea of inclusive education in the classroom is inappropriate, totally. (*Could you tell me why, please?*). Look my brother, there would be no understanding each other, if we used different languages for communication. Ordinary students use speech language and deaf students using sign language – how are they kept in one place?!!

6. From your viewpoint, what are the arguments and advantages for inclusive education of deaf students?

Inclusive education has advantages and positive points, including that the student with deafness does not feel the isolationism of the community, and also provides unified state schools that can be used by ordinary students and students with special needs. I can say that inclusive education of deaf students in general school settings would help them to be familiar and interact with their peers, non-deaf students, which may improve self-confidence and friendship with others.

7. From your viewpoint, what are the arguments against and disadvantages for inclusive education of deaf students?

There are some disadvantages for inclusive education of deaf students which might be more than its advantages; some deaf students have nervousness, physical strength, aggression. Also, I think, due to the lack of specialists in the area of deafness and psychology, this may hinder such purposes from being achieved in general schools; as well, inclusion requires careful monitoring of deaf students in the school. I see all this seems to be barriers and comes to be disadvantages if not provided.

Section C: Issues and Factors that Influence Inclusive Education

1. In your opinion, what are the major factors that influence inclusive education for deaf students in general schools?

I can say providing suitable school buildings and the provision of facilities of education for students with deafness. Moreover, provide those specialists to serve the deaf students and their family; also, collaboration between school and home.

2. Do you believe that your school meets all the requirements of inclusive education for deaf students? Please explain.

Sorry, of course no; there are many needs and educational facilities not available. I can tell you something: for two years we did not get any educational facilities or resources from the local educational authority. Additionally, we are in a school that built almost 30 years ago, and is not suitable and needs a lot of modifications and repairs. You can see this school is poor regarding facilities. I have never heard of any differences in other inclusive schools for the deaf. (*Is there any constant contact with the local educational authority about those needs?*). We try with them from time to time about our requirements.

3. Could you explain more how your school environment/classroom is organised to include students with deafness?

There are special classrooms in our school for deaf students; those classrooms are independent in a special part of the school. The classrooms for deaf students have been equipped as to what we receive from the departments of the Local Educational authority, or through some teachers who (volunteering) prepare their classrooms, may God give them good.

4. Do you receive any support from the Local Educational Authority regarding the inclusion of deaf students?

There are some simple facilities and resources, but I can say not all what we need in our school. (*Why is that?*) Sometimes these facilities and resources may not be available in the Local Educational Authority, or may not be available due to the lack of financial resources.

5. Do you think that general schools have sufficient resources and are ready for the inclusion of deaf students? Explain.

I do not know, but I expect all inclusive schools to be one case; we follow the one local educational authority. It may be by some inclusive schools have individual efforts and the collaboration of the teachers.

6. Do you believe that pre-service and in-service professional training would be helpful for the successful inclusion of deaf students? Could you explain more, please?

Yes, it very useful and excellent for improving knowledge for me as principal and all school staff, but actually the inclusive school misses a lot of these short and long courses. (*Why does that happen?*) As I a principal probably afford something from the default, but in the first place the local educational authority should provide such courses. (*Have you asked them?*) We did but you know the work of the school routine; this may make you busy in regard to following-up with the Local Educational Authority.

7. Explain how you feel about your training opportunities to help students with deafness in your school.

Well, you ask for something that is very important, but their answers would be unsatisfactory for you. Sorry, I have not seen such training related to inclusive education. We know training is significant for principals, teachers and all school staff, but there are no specialized training courses to deal with principals and how to work with deaf students in the inclusive school. I have no idea of how to deal with students with special needs, in particular deaf students. I have long experience as principal but in general schools, not in inclusive schools.

8. Do you have professional certificate in inclusive education for deaf students?

No, my brother, we do not have this experience although it is importance to us as principals. (*Why that?*) Eh..., probably this will be available in the near future.

9. Do think that principals' training can guarantee inclusive education? Explain that, please.

I think about that very much, you know about the importance of training, especially with regard to people with special needs.

10. Could you tell me about the collaboration inside your school regarding inclusive education?

Yes, my brother, I think that collaboration is required and very important. I can say that we try as much as possible in our school to work as a team.

11. Tell me about assistance and collaboration you may get from teachers and parents of deaf students to manage the challenges of inclusive education in your school? How?

Truly, there is fair enough collaboration between teachers and school principal to manage the challenges of inclusive education of deaf students, thank God, but we are trying for more collaboration between us which I hope to develop for the better. (*What about parents?*) Regarding parents, we have to suffer interacting with them, while probably their role is useful but most of them do not have knowledge about inclusion.

12. What unique challenges do deaf students have in your school? How do you deal with them?

I think their inability to communicate with the non-deaf students, and misunderstanding of the common language between them. (*How to deal with that?*) Maybe those teachers of deaf students can do more than me, because they can deal with and use sign language, but I encourage them to create opportunities for interaction at break time.

13. Does the inclusion of deaf students in your school make your work difficult? Why?

To some extent, but the collaboration between the teachers and the school administration helps a lot on the conduct of the daily work, but we need more collaboration from parents of deaf students.

14. Could you tell me, how could you overcome these factors?

We are trying to communicate with the local educational authority, as well as collaboration, and individual efforts for some teachers, and something like this.

15. Are there any other issues or concerns that you wish to share that may be relevant to this research?

I can argue that the most important thing is equipping school buildings, facilities, sports halls, school transportation for students, and providing additional money for inclusive school to arrange to the needs of students with deafness.

(Appendix G-2)
Interview Transcript with Teacher

(English version)

Section A: Understanding of Inclusive Education

1. Tell me what is your understanding about inclusion?

Through my years of teaching, the inclusive education which has applied is different from that what we had learnt and know about in the developed countries. Inclusion in our school is just like placement only, instead of the institutes and special schools. May be they do it because we are not to be left behind the world of education of special needs students. *(Sorry, Whom?)* The Ministry of Education and the Local Educational Authority. Inclusive education has two types, partial and full inclusion: partial includes placing a child with deafness in a special class in a general school, however including him with general activities of the school – which should be near their home. Partial inclusion is a class attached to a general school for the deaf who participate in educational activities in public. However, the full inclusion comprises specific processes which consider the case of the child and his level, which will determine the placing of him with the general class of non-deaf students.

2. Explain what do you mean when you say your school is "inclusive"?

Overall, implementation of inclusion was very bad from the beginning; there was no qualify for the school community nor the rehabilitation of the school placement. I can argue that there was only enthusiasm to implement that idea such as some countries that did it. For example, in Riyadh, at the beginning of the implementation the idea of inclusive education, the basic goal, was looking for classes that are available in the schools, not the factors that help the success of the inclusion. I can argue that what was originally taught in university education is not seen in reality in our schools; also there was no careful thinking about preference of placement, willingness of the school's community, facilities and resources. *(Why was this?)* Primarily responsible for this is the local educational authority, from the beginning, was not what it should be.

3. Could you tell me about your qualifications and experience in inclusive education?

As you know, we as teachers of deaf students especially in primary school specialize in the education of the deaf. Also, we all hold a bachelor's degree in deaf education. Regarding inclusive education, we have some information from when we were at the University.

4. Tell me what is your experience in the area of deaf education?

As a specialist in the field, I can see those students with deafness have a specific difficulty in their hearing and need to compensate for this deficiency. In terms of their education, those students are a 'normal person': they can learn but need some educational services. I can argue the most important requirements for deaf students: first, how to deal and communicate with them, providing hearing aids for them and a suitable school environment.

5. Could you tell me about the different educational needs for deaf students?

As mentioned previously, those students are special and need special education, which includes facilities, equipment, methods and different ways of communication to help those students. I am using total communication with each student; also, I am using these available facilities.

6. Tell me about things you do to ensure that students with deafness are included in your class/school.

I try to make my classroom suitable for deaf students by providing facilities and materials to support the learning process. Also, I am working to communicate with each deaf student by his favourite way of communication, such as total communication, finger spelling and sign language. Additionally, I would like to comment on the important point regarding the teacher's view about inclusive education, where it should be taken into account, if inclusion was implemented without enthusiasm and assistance of the teachers, I expect there would not be the positive outcomes for inclusive education. And the opposite of that is true.

7. Could you tell me what is the ideal model of inclusion from your perspective?

You mean models such medical and social. (*What do you think?*) I think inclusive education of deaf students is more to be a social model. Inclusive education is a humanistic and social issue. Some severe disabilities should be seen as a medical model.

Section B: Attitudes towards Inclusive Education

1. Describe how you feel about the inclusive education of deaf students.

Maybe not all deaf students with different needs can be included in inclusive education. I can argue that, why we not divide those students into two types regarding educational placement: the first, anyone who has that ability and achieves high levels of learning can be in the general school; and the second: those who have a low level of learning, maybe studying in special schools is better for them because our schools are not as good for those students. (*Could you tell me why, please?*) Because their level of abilities is limited and they have many educational needs, which are not available in our school; moreover, there are many students many in general schools and so it is difficult to deal with those students.

2. Do you believe that deaf students should be included in general schools and why? Could you explain your answer more, please?

Yes, according to the capability of the deaf student and his academic potential. Also, some of them could possibly be included into some general lessons. (*Such as what, please?*) Like lessons of art and sport because they're practical lessons, but I will add an important thing where our inclusive schools in Saudi Arabia are not suitable, or I can say inclusive education of deaf students within general school settings is acceptable if the school provides all the essential facilities and needs. Moreover, there are other factors that help inclusive education that are missing, such as collaboration with parents of deaf students and working as a group to ensure implementation of inclusive education and providing the important requirements and needs. Without reservation, I can say that the inclusive education for deaf students does not exist in our schools.

3. Do you support the concept of inclusive education for students with deafness in general schools? Why?

I can say yes it suitable for a large number of deaf students. But, we need to make a diagnosis for those basic needs and do planning related to how we can apply it. We need to rethink how we work to make inclusive education a success. I expect the problem is that we apply inclusive education in order to be among the developed countries without considering what is the infrastructure to implement it. I think we must study such subjects as provision, and organize workshops and courses as well as taking advantage and experience of other countries that precede us in the field of inclusive education of deaf students.

4. Do you believe that deaf students should be included in general classrooms and why? Could you please explain your answer more?

Well, I do not expect a student's capability and the equipment of the general classes to be suitable and help in inclusive education. Inclusive education in the general classroom needs to prepare the general classroom environment and ordinary teachers and students to accept those students; many of these things are not available in general classes or even in special classes for deaf students. I do not expect that deaf student can be taught in general classrooms, which will be very difficult for them. But, in my opinion, they would be included in some easy subjects which do not require effort and which focus on more visual parts, such as Art education and Physical Education, and not include them in Science and Math's lessons. We are not prepared now for the full inclusive education of deaf students; many inclusive schools – or you can say all in Saudi Arabia – require a lot of the basic needs which are not available.

5. From your viewpoint, what are the arguments and advantages for inclusive education of deaf students?

If the inclusive education has the correct application of all the circumstances of the sound, I imagine it's a positive, more than 80%, for the student and parents, and the community, but if applied indiscriminately it may be many negative things. The advantages could be firstly, social outlook towards the child as the son goes to general school better than to go to special school, which is isolated or for disabled students. Also, in terms of social, it gives parents enthusiasm for having their son taught at an inclusive school. Secondly, positive impact on the deaf student himself as he goes with

his brothers and relatives and neighbours to one school, as opposed to a special school. In the same school, the deaf student can learn from other students and have friends; also, it may be that the deaf student has confidence in his abilities through interacting with others. Another advantage: there is a clear positive change to general teachers and members of the school in their outlook towards student with deafness, which may lead to a positive influence on the general view of society.

6. From your viewpoint, what are the arguments against and disadvantages for inclusive education of deaf students?

Sometimes there is lack of understanding and awareness from school staff and ordinary students about deaf students, which leads to non-acceptance of those students in general schools, or looking at them as inferior and perhaps described as a kind of cynicism and perhaps described as insane, or abusing for example: take his belongings and tools if there is no follow-up from teachers or school administration. Also, inclusive education has disadvantages regarding the difficulties of the National Curriculum for deaf students, which sometimes leads those students to be frustrated, hate school, and have repeated absences from school. This is a negative thing, if the curriculum is not suitable for the student and perhaps he describes himself as stupid or less than others. Even with all these disadvantages, it seems that inclusive education for deaf students, even with a bad experience applied in our schools, is positive psychologically and socially and educationally for deaf students.

Section C: Issues and Factors that Influence Inclusive Education

1. Could you tell me what are the major factors that influence inclusive education for deaf students in general schools?

There are several factors that are very important and that could be real reasons for the success of implementation of inclusive education influentially and effectively 100% in school: 1) providing the special equipment in school and classrooms; 2) creating and adopting appropriate curricula; 3) providing training courses for school staff; 4) parents cooperating with the school; and 5) awareness-raising of the school community as well as providing all needs for deaf students, such as hearing aids. Furthermore, there are other factors that affect inclusive education: educational policies that do not suit our schools, which includes the systems, budgets, knowledge of staff, administrators,

teachers, and parents. I wonder why there are no basics things in classroom for the deaf students such as carpet, classes which isolate the external sound, hearing aids, using of technology include smart board and projector. I can say that it should be all classrooms for deaf students have to be equipped with these means. Also, sometimes there is inaccurate diagnosis of the degree of hearing loss.

2. Do you believe that your school meets all the requirements of inclusive education for deaf students? Please explain?

No, no I do not think so. (*Sorry, why?*). There are individual efforts from some teachers, and there is continued contact with the school administration in order to provide the needs but you can see our school by yourself. There could be some financial or administrative barriers we do not know about. I think the school administration and local educational authority are responsible for that.

3. Could you explain more how your school environment/classroom is organised to include students with deafness?

I can say to you that there are no facilities and other needs to meet and assist deaf students' education in our school. I have an opinion – you can recommend it to the education makers: why not, before they put the idea of inclusive education into practice, visit some of the developed countries in the field of inclusive education for deaf education and benefit from these experiences and apply them as well as the occasion of that to our culture? Also, the local educational authority should apply inclusive education gradually and follow-up and provide these inclusive schools with support for a period of time. After that, look for the positives, negatives and barriers of this experience in regard to provide recommendations to all inclusive schools.

4. Do you think that general schools have sufficient resources and are ready for the inclusion of deaf students? Explain.

The problem in all inclusive schools is not sufficient resources, but sometimes there is a difference which depends on the enthusiasm of the teachers and school administration. But, providing sufficient resources is the duty of the Ministry of Education or the Local Educational Authority.

5. Do you believe that pre-service and in-service professional training would be helpful for the successful inclusion of deaf students? Could you explain more, please?

Well done; you talk about the most important reasons for the development of an inclusive school environment. Training and workshops surely play a big role in dealing with deaf students and are important to teachers and all school staff. Professional training is very important and all staff who work in inclusive schools should have to use sign language, especially the school principal. The Local Educational Authority should not appoint a principal unless he has basic training about inclusion. They have to know how to deal with deaf students. But, to be honest with you, the reality in schools is different; schools' principals do not have any information about the education of the deaf in inclusive schools. *(Sorry, who is responsible for the provision of training courses?)* Of course, the Local Educational Authority is in charge; also school administration has to contact them about this training. These professional courses, workshops and exchange visits for the transfer of expertise and knowledge sharing are very important to us.

6. Explain how you feel about your training opportunities to help students with deafness in your school?

Unfortunately, although it is importance but there is no specialized training. Sometimes there are training courses but they are non-specialized in deaf education of inclusive education. *(Who do you think is responsible for providing?)* It is supposed to be arranged between the principals and the Local Educational Authority, but the problem is if the school principal does not know what courses are important. *(Do you propose these courses to the principal?)* The school principal is busy with managing the school, and sometimes he asks us about this training, is it necessary to you?! I will request that from Local Educational Authority. I can argue that the problem is the principal not knowing about the needs of deaf students in inclusive schools.

7. Do think that teachers' training can guarantee inclusive education? Explain that, please.

I think training all teachers of deaf students is very important, as well as principals and all staff. If they have the ability to work with deaf students, the situation of inclusive education can work very well. Of course, facilities are very important.

8. Could you tell me about the collaboration inside your school regarding inclusive education?

I can say that there is a limited collaboration in our school.

9. Tell me about assistance and collaboration you may get from the school's principal and parents of deaf students to manage the challenges of inclusive education in your school? How?

I cannot answer here it is yes! The meeting does not happen often, but in the minority of cases, for example, if there is a problem at school or just a behavioural problem has not been able to be solved in the school, or in cases where the problem is a student who fails repeatedly. Sometimes, there is teamwork in extraordinary things, but in normal mode or in order to discuss the subject of inclusive education or assess the current situation, it never happened. During my experience as a teacher in three Local Educational Authorities this did not happen. (*What do you think about the role of parents?*) Yes, the role of parents is very important and basic, and their support of inclusive education leads to success in practice. But, the big problem is that parents do not have knowledge about inclusive education. But their enthusiasm is to include their son in a general school instead of a special school, and you know the customs and traditions regarding how the disabled child is seen.

10. What unique challenges do deaf students have in your school? How do you deal with them?

We as teachers try to make inclusive education for deaf students a success. (*How?*) We try to include deaf students with non-deaf in some activities, such as lunchtime, sports activities. Some teachers try to provide educational resources to support their students' requirement.

11. Could you tell me, how could you overcome these factors?

For example, in relation to the difficulty of the 'curriculum' and unsuitability for students with deafness, we as teachers work to simplify and summarize the important chapters; some deaf students have less enthusiasm to attend school because of the curriculums. We as teachers are working as much as we can to provide visual teaching aids to give the opportunity for all deaf students to learn.

12. Are there any other issues or concerns that you wish to share that may be relevant to this research?

My wish is that our schools are the best inclusive schools to provide the service to all students with special needs, but we have to pay for this wish, such as providing schools with all their needs and requirements, collaboration of staff, and awareness of society. Also, the media is working to raise awareness of people about disability and inclusive education. Finally, I would say that inclusive education is generally excellent direction, humanitarian and educational, which must be achieved in our schools.

(Appendix G-3)
Interview Transcript with Parent

(English version)

Section A: Understanding of Inclusive Education

1. Tell me what you understand about inclusion?

The definition shows from its name, which is inclusion of those students who have special circumstances or problems; for example, one has a shortage in some senses, or disability; also placing different nationalities, castes and backgrounds together in one place. In other words, the development of people with special needs in the general school to participate, such as in activities and trips, for example.

2. Explain what do you mean when you say your child's school is "inclusive"?

Firstly, I would explain to you that the idea of allocating a special school for a particular type of disability is not convincing, and can be harmful to the child and their parents, but if that child with special needs stays in the general school with his ordinary peers and neighbours, this idea is very beautiful and humane. Let me explain that for you more: it should be change the name of a disabled child. I think their placement in such a school is the best method for them to learn and have friends. Those students would be involved with other student and participate in school trips and extra-curricular activities.

3. Could you tell me about your experience in inclusive education?

I have some words of sign language; we talk at home with my son by sign language. My son's school is doing everything for those deaf students.

4. Tell me what is your experience in the area of deaf education? Or their needs?

I think the school works well with our children.

5. What do you do to ensure that your child is included in the inclusive school?

Well, if you mean follow-up and contact with the inclusive school, I can say that I and other parents trust the administration and teachers of the school and they were keen on

the students being interested and involved in school activities. (*I mean, you are ensuring that the school achieves the goals of inclusive education?*) Look, my brother, in the school all staff are qualified and have the ability to provide what benefits our children; also, I think there is a follow-up committee in the local educational authority which has that role.

6. Could you tell me what is the ideal model of inclusion from your perspective?

You know that there are many parents who do not have that knowledge about inclusive education or how deaf students learn. However, we support inclusive education and trust in the inclusive school to help our children.

Section B: Attitudes towards Inclusive Education

1. Describe how you feel about including your child in general school?

As I told you earlier, I am a supporter of the idea of inclusive education. Also, I hope that there are no special schools for those with special educational needs to be isolated in the future. You can see that it is a positive thing where those students with disabilities can develop confidence in themselves, as to have a positive impact on the students in their social life.

2. Do you support the concept of inclusive education for students with deafness? Why?

Yes, 100%, because it is simply the natural place to stay and learn with his peers and his brothers in general school. Inclusive education in school is an example of interaction with the outside world. It is also important in relation to creating relationships with ordinary students.

3. Do you believe that all deaf students should be included in general school and why? Could you explain your answer more, please?

Certainly, we must maintain the common sense and feelings of deaf students and not make them feel inferior and put them in special schools which may affect their employment after graduation, or their future lives.

4. Do you believe that all deaf students should be included in general classrooms and why? Could you please explain your answer more?

Answering this question may be a little complicated. There may be problems for deaf student through their communication with ordinary students, or deaf students feel that their academic level is less than their ordinary peers which may affect their character and they may completely reject the school. However, I see that the inclusive education of deaf students in general school in separate classes or units are more appropriate to their level and abilities.

5. From your viewpoint, what are the arguments and advantages for inclusive education of deaf students?

There are many positives and advantages, including with placing them in general school, we are not losing a member of the community; also maintain the psychological aspects of deaf students and a sense of inferiority and lack of self-criticism.

6. From your viewpoint, what are the arguments against and disadvantages for inclusive education of deaf students?

There are some disadvantages when deaf students are included in these schools, such as difficulties and challenging curriculum, delay of school transport, the distance between the school and home. Also, sometimes, children have fear of mocking and shaming which comes from ordinary students.

Section C: Issues and Factors that Influence Inclusive Education

1. In your opinion, what are the major factors that influence inclusive education for deaf students in general schools?

Eh..., it could be distance of the inclusive school from the house of the child. Sometimes, the lack of specialists such as speech therapist and hearing aids. I can argue that there should be a committee in school monitoring such problems and developing solutions to improve its cases.

2. Do you believe that your child's school meets all the requirements of inclusion and his needs? Please explain.

Well, I expect them to do so.

3. Could you explain more how your child's school environment/classroom is organised to include students with deafness?

I have no accurate answer to your question, but they are extraordinary classes in a separate part of the school to avoid the appearance of problems between the ordinary and the deaf, as well as easy to keep control of.

4. Do you think that general schools have sufficient resources and are ready for the inclusion of deaf students? Explain.

I will be honest with you: I cannot answer your question whether yes or no, but I expect these schools are supposed to meet their needs and have everything available.

5. Could you tell me about the collaboration inside your child's school regarding inclusive education?

I think they work very well together.

6. Tell me about assistance and collaboration you may get from the school's principal and teachers to manage the challenges of inclusive education in your child's school? How?

I think my son's school works well; I notice the level of my son is progressing. He is now able to communicate fluently by sign language and he can write as well as account the figures. I see that school is cooperative and keen to teach our deaf children.

7. What unique challenges does your child have in an inclusive school? How do you deal with them?

I see the most important challenges is how the deaf child has friends from ordinary students; also, how he is able to protect himself and prove himself, not feeling weak and disabled. Moreover, providing the hearing aids and their maintenance.

8. Could you tell me, how could you overcome these factors?

I expect the school is responsible for the child, particularly those with special needs. At home, we have the problem of the difficulty of the curriculum, thus we rely on what is offered to him in the school by the teacher.

9. Are there any other issues or concerns that you wish to share that may be relevant to this research?

Providing hearing aids for the deaf student; encourage those students to continue studying in inclusive schools.

(Appendix F)

An example of Coding from some Pieces of the Original Interview

- **Tell me what your understand about inclusion?**

Inclusion generally means those student who is suffering from permanent disability would be with the community in order to maintain of their feelings is well. Also, in the other word, not to raise their awareness of the difference between them and others. I can see it as a moral issue which lead to accept students as part of humanitarian support.

→ UI1

→ UI2.3

- **Could you tell me about your qualifications and experience in inclusive education?**

As you know that, we as a teachers of deaf students especially in primary school are specialize in the education of the deaf. Also, we all hold a bachelor degree in deaf education. In regarding inclusive education we have some information when we were in the University.

→ UD2

- **From your viewpoint, what are the against and disadvantages for inclusive education of deaf students?**

There are some disadvantages for inclusive education of deaf students which might be more than its advantages, some deaf students have nervousness, physical strength, aggression. Also, I think due to the lack of specialists in the area of deafness and psychology, this may hinder such purposes from being achieved in general schools, as well, inclusion require careful monitoring for deaf students in the school. I see all this seems to be barriers and come to be disadvantages if do not be provided.

→ AT3.1

→ FC1

- **Do you support the concept of inclusive education for students with deafness? Why?**

Yes 100% because it is simply the natural place to stay and learn with his peers and his brothers in general school. Inclusive education in school is example for interaction with the outside world. Is also important in related to create relationships with ordinary students.

→ AT1.1

→ AT4.2

