
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Inclusion between Equality and Equity: A Balance Model to an Equitable Quality Education for All

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| ABSTRACT

This research article aims at providing a balanced model for an equitable quality education for all students regardless of their learning impairments or disabilities. For reaching this goal, numerous adaptations should occur in every mainstream school environment. These adaptations include the training of teachers, administrative staff, and parents. Other adaptations should cover teaching approaches, methods, techniques and curriculum content. Essential, too, is the actual involvement of parents and allied health professionals as well as placement of students with the same learning disabilities in inclusive classes. This model provides two diagrams that show and demonstrate how an educational system can balance education equality and education equity, through the adaptations that should be effectively applied to an ordinary school environment, to really move from the pre-existing practice (Integration), which only ensures education equality for students with disabilities just like their nondisabled peers, to the new practice (Inclusion), which guarantees equitable quality education for all learners, including those with disabilities.

| KEYWORDS

Education, inclusion, education equality, education equity, education quality, disability, integration.

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

The concept of inclusion refers to an international agreed upon educational project that guarantees equitable quality education for all. The success of inclusive education / inclusion, as an international agreed upon educational project that calls for ensuring equitable quality education for all, depends on the way it is implemented to meet the needs of all learners alike and impact their educational attainment. In this regard, Fullan (1991, p.32) emphasizes that "no matter how promising an idea might be, it can not impact student learning if it is superficially implemented". Moreover, (Barton, 1997) believes that the success of inclusive education depends on the schools' philosophy in accommodating learners with special needs through the change of these schools' cultures and practices, rather than considering inclusion only as a response to the children difficulties in learning. Barton literally claims that "inclusive education is not about "special" teachers meeting the needs of "special" children in ordinary schools . . . It is not merely about placing disabled pupils in classrooms with their non-disabled peers; it is not about "dumping" pupils into an unchanged system of provision and practice. Rather, it is about how, where and why, and with what consequences, we educate all pupils" (Barton, 1997, P. 234). In the same flow as Barton, scholars such as (Mittler, 2000; Boot and Ainscow, 1998; Low, 1997; Muthu Krishna, 2000; Slavin, 1990; Slavin and Madden, 2000; Wedel, 1992) declare that inclusion is not simply about placing students with different special needs in schools alongside their normal peers, but it is more about many changes and adaptations that should occur in schools' environment to respond to all the different needs of these learners who are part of our society.

All in all, if a certain educational system is not really committed to this educational reform project (inclusion) through implementing it in light of superficial changes and adaptations of the school environment of that educational system, ignoring some necessary

ingredients of successful inclusion, such as adequate training of tutors, actual parental involvement, classification of learners according to their different learning difficulties, engagement of allied-health professionals, such as pathologists, occupational therapists, and school psychologists, it just serves the reinforcement of the existing practice, which ensures the principle of education equality while the principles of equity and quality are still farfetched.

2. Background and Context

The first signs of adopting inclusion started with the calls of some international conventions and announcements for acknowledging the right to education as an equal right among all people, regardless of all kinds of impairments, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948 - article 26 (UN, 1948), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) in 1966 – article 13 (UN, 1967), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1989 – article 2 (UN, 1989).

Inclusive education started emerging in 1990 (Kadiri, 2022), but as a global action, it was initiated in Spain in 1994 by the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action. In this international event, almost ninety-two governments and twenty-five international organizations were gathered together and unified to claim and reaffirm their international vital commitment to Education For All (EFA) (UNESCO, 1994). However, this project became more interesting with the announcement of its adoption as one of the seventeen sustainable development goals by the UN 2030 agenda for sustainable development in September 2015 (Kadiri, 2022). Inclusive education, as a sustainable development goal related to equitable quality education, is regulated in the fourth sustainable development goal (SDG4) of the UN 2030 agenda for sustainable development. This goal calls upon states to guarantee equitable quality education and vocational training for people with special needs and to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (UNDESA, 2016).

3. Concept Definition

It should be noted that in the domain of inclusive education, the use of language is important as there is a conflation between many related concepts; for instance, the term 'disability' overlaps with the conflating term 'special need', the concept of 'education equality' overlaps with the concept of 'education equity', whereas the concept of 'inclusive education' overlaps with other conflating terms, such as integration, inclusion, and mainstreaming, which might explain the different definitions of this concept by different scholars as there is no agreed upon definition of it (Barton, 1997 ; Runswick, 2011) although almost all the definitions fall in the same flow. Hence, in this section, the researcher starts with the definition of education as an umbrella term to which all these concepts are related, and then he moves on to shed light on other terms related to the domain of inclusive education, mainly the terms that overlap with each other, such as education quality, education equality, education equity, inclusion, mainstreaming, inclusive education, integration, special need, disability, and learning disability.

3.1 Education

Moore, (2010) defines education as a commitment between the individuals the society, considering the second part of this commitment, the society, as the source of knowledge that affects the first part, the individuals, to carry on some values and morals, whereas other scholars, such as Horne . H (1915, p6), relates education to the effect that schools have on individuals during their school time. In addition to the aforementioned definitions, education is regarded by (UNESCO, 2021) as a process that facilitates and simplifies the acquisition or learning of certain knowledge, beliefs, skills, habits and values.

3.2 Education Quality

However quality education is differently defined by different researchers, this research article only opts for one definition as a reference to define this term. As stated in (Ait Ben Assila and Igbida, 2022), there are two principles that identifies all the attempts to define quality education. "The first identifies the development of cognition of all learners as the major explicit goal of all education systems. Therefore, their success in this regard is an indicator of quality. The second emphasizes the role of education in promoting values and attitudes related to good citizenship and in creating conditions conducive to creative and emotional development" (Ait Ben Assila and Igbida, 2022. P:171). Thus, quality education, on the one hand, refers to the success and development of cognition of learners as an indicator of quality and as the supreme explicit goal of every education system. On the other hand, it refers to the contribution of education in building good citizens, through upgrading their values and attitudes of good citizenship, and in fostering their creative and emotional development, as a justification of their quality educational attainment.

3.3 Education Equality

As quoted in (Ait Ben Assila and Igbida, 2022. P:172), "equality is assimilated to persons, things having the same quantity, dimension, nature, quality or value". The term equality "is used by extension to designate the fact, for humans, of having the same rights, of being of equal conditions" (Ait Ben Assila and Igbida, 2022. P:172). As the same writers also quote, "equality at school can be expressed in two different but complementary ways: a quantitative equality and a qualitative one. He estimates that if for example 10% of individuals have cars, quantitatively the difference is between those who have cars and those who do not. But when 100% of

individuals have cars, the difference is of a qualitative nature, it is between those with luxury cars and those with low-end cars” (Ait Ben Assila and Igbida, 2022. P: 173). Hence, based on the aforementioned definitions, I can refer education equality in a mainstream school to all students benefiting from the same teaching opportunities, practices and materials regardless of their impairments, which I see unfair unless there are adaptations in these school practices and materials in the benefit of those with disabilities.

3.4 Education Equity

Equity in education refers to the equality education that students are provided within a certain educational system, taking into account the personal characteristics and impairments of learners and how the school deals with these characteristics. Thus, both the concepts of equality and equity are closely linked, complementary, and different at the same time. This complementarity is important as it indicates the need to clarify the unjust inequalities occur in a certain educational system to guarantee education equity for all. For example, if students are differently or in equally treated according to their impairments, this unequal treatment is not unjust, but equitable. Thus, sometimes some education equalities are to be considered as unjust, while some other education inequalities are to be considered fair (Ait Ben Assila and Igbida, 2022). In the same flow as (Ait Ben Assila and Igbida, 2022), (Eden, et al 2024) believe that equity in education refers to fair and just education, which ensures that all learners have the same educational opportunities to meet their learning objectives regardless of background or circumstance, relating this concept of equity to the concept of access, which refers to overcoming all barriers that hinder learners’ participation in and benefit from these educational opportunities. Eden et al believe that both equity and access form the cornerstone of an inclusive and fair education system if they are brought together (Eden, et al 2024).

3.5 Inclusive Education / Inclusion

The concept of inclusive education / inclusion is differently defined by many scholars as there is no standard or agreed upon definition of it (Barton, 1997; CSIE 2011), but almost all the definitions fall in the same vein. For instance, (UN, 2016) relates inclusion to a process of educational reform that targets international educational systems. This process of reform includes curriculum content, teaching methods, and structures to overcome barriers that face the teaching procedure of students with disabilities, and to provide all students with an equitable and participatory learning experience in a teaching environment that meets all the needs of these students regardless all their different impairments (UN, 2016, para.11). In the same regard, (Gupta, 2016) holds that inclusive education refers to the process of providing all students with adequate education which meets all their different needs and overcomes their obstacles in learning whatever are their different backgrounds, origins, circumstances, disabilities or abilities.

Almost all scholars, such as (UNESCO, 1994 ; Engelbrecht, 2013 ; Gupta, 2016 ; UN, 2016 ; Barton, 1997; CSIE 2011) see that the term ‘inclusive education’ refers to an educational process or project of that accommodates all the differences and learning disabilities of students through the change and adaptation of the school’s environment to meet their needs and guarantee an equitable quality education for everyone.

3.6 Integration

Integration can be defined differently; it can mean segregated or specialized classes that accommodate disabled students outside mainstream classes in a certain educational system, and it can also refer to the process of placing students with special needs in a mainstream class but without enjoying the same social and learning outcomes like their peers or with following a separate educational program (N. Eid, 2018).

The difference between integration and inclusion is that the former requires a student with a certain learning disability to be placed in a mainstream school sitting and educated separately in a special education program, suggesting that it is the learner who adapts to the situation of an educational system, while the later suggests that it is the educational system situation which has to be adapted to the needs of students to overcome their learning obstacles and guarantee equality in developing everyone’s participation (N. Eid, 2018).

3.7 Disability

The concept “disability” refers to any mental or physical impairment that hinders the person with that impairment condition from normally participating and interacting with the world surrounding him. In another way, disability refers to any lack of ability to perform a certain activity or activities just like other normal people (Arzie, 2023: P 10).

3.8 Learning Disability

The term refers to any deficit that hinders someone’s learning process. According to (R. Lyon, 1996 P: 56), the term stands for any disorder in basic psychological processes responsible for using language. This disorder manifests itself in an imperfect ability to speak, read, listen, write, or understand and do mathematical calculations. Learning disabilities include perceptual disabilities, dyslexia, developmental aphasia, brain injury, and minimal brain dysfunction. However, “the term does not apply to children who

have learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage." (R. Lyon, 1996 P: 56).

3.9 Special Need

In their general meaning, both the terms 'special need' and 'disability' are considered synonymous, and they can be used interchangeably in this study. In the domain of education, learners who have certain learning deficits or have any restriction or lack of certain abilities to normally perform certain activities are referred to as 'learners with special needs' or 'learners with disabilities'.

4. Philosophies Behind the Idea of Inclusive Education

Inclusive education, as an internationally agreed upon project of reforming educational systems across the world, was not the result of coincidence, but there are two basic philosophies behind the idea of creating this global project. In my point of view, and according to the UN, the first philosophy behind the idea of inclusive education is the philosophy of "**Equity**". This philosophy is almost emphasized by all the United Nations' documents that call for the rights of children with disabilities, such as the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs for All, which calls for education for all to let no one behind (UNESCO, 1994). The second philosophy is the philosophy of "**Integration**", which can also be understood from the declaration of the UN Secretary General in April 2nd, 2014 on World Autism Awareness Day; "*schools connect children to their communities. Jobs connect adults to their societies*" (Della Fina & Cera, 2015).

Given that inclusive education is a gateway to integrate students into the educational systems, which would eventually integrate them into their societies, many countries in the world have adopted the international decrees to guarantee equitable education for all individuals regardless of their impairments. Inclusive education, as a humanistic and holistic approach to people with special needs, rests upon two main philosophies which serve as the pillars of inclusion, which are those of "equity" and "integration".

It goes without saying that these two philosophies behind the project of inclusion are of a great benefit on both individuals and society. On the one hand, the first philosophy ensures an equal access to education for everyone without discrimination. On the other hand, the second philosophy, through creating a certain connection between disabled and nondisabled individuals, helps in building good citizens and good societies where everyone is socially accepted and no one is socially excluded or discriminated regardless of our impairments. Moreover, inclusion also has a positive impact on teaching nondisabled pupils; it teaches them about disabilities, patience, cooperation, compassion and kindness towards the other (T. Jensen, 2022).

However, inclusive education might face some barriers in guaranteeing both equity and quality in educating both disabled and nondisabled students. Of course, no one can deny the great impact of inclusion on society in general, through ensuring the right to equitable quality education for people with disabilities, building confidence in them, and integrating them into their communities. It also has an impact on nondisabled ones through teaching them how to become patient, cooperative, compassionate, kind towards others, etc. Yet, inclusion might not be one hundred per cent successful in ensuring equitable quality education for all students unless if we change and adapt our schools' environment and practices to cater for all the needs of students with disabilities (SWD). Our mainstream schools' quality education might be affected due to some factors; when the teaching-learning process gets distracted either by the disruptive behavior of learners, taking into account that an inclusive class can include different students with different disabilities, or by more workload that is put on the teacher's back who finds it demanding to spread themselves among all the students in the same inclusive class, trying to meet all the different needs and objectives with all of them (Allan 2008; P 2), as not all learners learn the same way and not all of them have the same intelligences (Gardner, 1983 ; Farhat, 2023 ; Sasmita, et al, 2024). Furthermore, equitable quality education can also be affected due to the lack of some necessary ingredients and practices of successful inclusion, such as adequate training of school staff as well as parents, actual involvement of allied health professionals, actual involvement of parents of students as equal partners in this project, and adaptation and differentiation of teaching approaches, methods, strategies, materials, curriculum content, etc.

5. School Environment Adaptation as a Vital Ingredient for Equitable Quality Education For All

One of the characteristics of successful inclusive education is the change or adaptation of the educational system's situation to meet the needs of all learners regardless of all their learning disabilities. School's environment adaptation is considered an umbrella term that gathers together many other adaptations that occur in ordinary schools in the benefit of learners with special needs. However, the adaptation in a mainstream school's environment must be effectively applied; it doesn't only mean a superficial adaptation of teaching approaches, methods, strategies, techniques, and curriculum content, or inappropriate placement of students with special needs alongside their nondisabled peers in the same inclusive class. The change and adaptation of a school environment in the benefit of learners with disabilities must be understood in its wide sense, and it must start from an adequate training of educators, actual involvement of parents and allied-health professionals, such as school pathologists, occupational therapists and school psychologists.

In this regard, as we stated earlier, inclusion is more about various adaptations that must occur in schools accommodating learners with disabilities to effectively respond to all the different needs or learning disabilities of these learners, rather than a simple placement of students with different learning deficits in schools with other normal students, otherwise this project of inclusive education will not reach its desired goals, but only repeat the pre-existing practices. In the same line, Fullan (1991, p.32) believes that any promising idea will never have any impact on students educational attainment if it is superficially implemented.

5.1 Actual Parental Involvement as an Aspect of School environment Adaptation

Among the necessary changes and adaptations that should occur in the school environment for successful inclusion, parental involvement stands out as an important requirement for the ideal implementation of inclusive education project. Indeed, parents of students with disabilities play a vital role in the success of inclusive education if they are well trained and actually involved as equal partners in this educational project (DES, 1978). In this regard, Warnock states that *"the successful education of children with special educational needs is dependent upon the full involvement of their parents: indeed, unless the parents are seen as equal partners in the educational process, the purpose of our report will be frustrated"* (DES, (1978, p. 150) ; Runswik, (2011, P. 114)).

Parents are the role model for their children as they accompany them through the critical periods of their life. Subsequently, the parents always provide support, encouragement and love for their children. For all these reasons, involving parents in the process of students' integration in the inclusive education project has gained a significant importance. Through involving parents of SWD in inclusion, they can participate in the education of their children in their home environment and help maximizing the benefits of inclusion, especially if they are supported with adequate training to deal with their disabled children. Furthermore, parents of students with disabilities can really help their children integrate in inclusive education through sensitizing them to the importance of inclusion and to the naturality of human diversity.

According to (DES, 1978; Sanacore, 1996), involving parents of students with disabilities in the project of inclusive education is seen as one of the pillars that can support it and make it a successful project. (Sanacore, 1996) holds that parents are to be considered as equal partners in the process of promoting education for both students with and without disabilities. He also believes that teachers have to be aware of the different cultural backgrounds of students so that they well comprehend their situations; the students' different cultural backgrounds can be better understood by teachers if there is a real contact and communication between the parents of students and teachers. Moreover, when parents are actually involved in this project of inclusive education, they can learn new techniques and strategies to better deal with their children at home. Hence, this involvement of parents in their children's education contributes to developing a harmonious home-school partnership, which is effective and beneficial for parents, their children and inclusion in general as stated in (Sanacore, 1996: P 225), "...the positive influences that the Effective Partners in Secondary Literacy Learning program continues to have on parents. These influences include parents learning new strategies for helping their children and parents gaining new insights concerning literacy and learning".

5.2 Actual Involvement of Allied Health Professionals as an Aspect of School Environment Adaptation

Involvement of allied health professionals, such as speech-language pathologists (SLPs), occupational therapists, and school psychologists, in inclusive education is crucial for the success of this project in every educational system. On one hand, these specialists would first play a vital role in the identification and assessment of students' needs, and then offer a great support for educators, administrative staff, students with disabilities, and also their parents, through a collaborative work on plans and strategies to deal with these students and meet their special needs, which would surely foster inclusive education environment. On the other hand, involving specialists in the project of inclusive education would have a great impact on the students' educational attainment quality and also on their families who would equally benefit from their collaborative work with these specialists, teachers, and administrative staff to foster home education environment.

In this regard, (Campbell et al, 2016) believe that involvement of speech-language pathologists (SLPs) is really crucial in fostering inclusive education environment and supporting students with communication disorders to fully participate in academic and social aspects of school life. They argue that the collaboration of Speech Language Pathologists with teachers would play a great role in implementing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles; they could collaborate with teachers in developing, tailoring and implementing individualized education plans and strategies that would successfully address the special needs of students with communication disorders and support the inclusive education environment in general. SLPs would also play an essential role in helping students with communication disorders access and participate in inclusive educational settings, through sharing expertise on communication strategies and providing direct therapy, consultative services. Not only this, but SLPs could also play an important role in assessing students' speech and language skills as well as providing them with targeted interventions which are specifically designed to develop the students' communication abilities and foster their ability of engagement and interaction with their peers and the curriculum content (Campbell et al, 2016). Almost in the same line, (Gillett-Swan & Osborne Burton, 2023) declare that Speech Language Pathologists' would play a vital role in implementing inclusive design in educational and health settings as they are well-positioned to assess and identify the different needs of children, especially those with speech language impairments. This implementation of inclusive design principles in speech-language pathology aligns with the Sustainable

Development Goals, especially goal number 4, which is related to quality education (SDG 4) and goal number 3, which is related to good health and well-being (SDG 3). Moreover, through the implementation of inclusive design principles, SLPs would effectively contribute to the achievement of these global objectives, especially if collaborating with educators, architects, and other stakeholders to ensure effective inclusive environment that supports the needs of all children, including those with speech and language impairments (Gillett-Swan & Osborne Burton, 2023).

Occupational Therapists' involvement in inclusive education would also offer a great help in facilitating effective support for students with disabilities in mainstream schools. Their role is crucial in assessing and identifying students' different special needs, suggesting adequate modifications, changes, and therapeutic interventions that can suit the diverse situations of these students in collaboration with teachers, other school staff and parents as well, taking into account that therapists can serve as a bridge between the families of students and school, ensuring that parents are actually involved and informed about their children's needs and progress (Meuser et al, 2022 ; Sajid et al, 2024).

In the same vein, (Jeremy et al, 2024) argue that the collaborative efforts between teachers and allied professionals, such as therapists, foster inclusive education outcomes for students with divers learning disabilities. This collaborative work leads to more tailored and effective educational strategies, provides a holistic support for students with disabilities, and addresses both their academic and non-academic needs, including their physical, emotional, and social development, which are vital for comprehensive inclusion. Moreover, this collaborative work between teachers and allied professionals also provides teachers with great opportunities to benefit from the knowledge and skills of these allied professionals; by working together, teachers can learn more specialized techniques and strategies to enhance their teaching practices with students with disabilities, which would effectively improve the classroom dynamics and enrich and promote the inclusive environment, especially if educational policies support and facilitate teachers–allied professionals' collaborative work through providing adequate resources and time for collaboration, which would help implementing an effective and fruitful inclusive education (Jeremy et al, 2024).

Not only the involvement of pathologists and therapists is Important for good implementation of inclusive education, but also the involvement of school psychologists is crucial for developing good inclusive environment and practices that ensure quality education for all students. On one hand, School psychologists play a central role in supporting inclusive education environment for students with disabilities as they can collaborate with other professionals, using a variety of diagnostic strategies and tools, to diagnose the students' specific disorders and needs, especially those with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) (Williams et al. 2005). On the other hand, school psychologists can collaborate with parents, and school staff to provide insights and guidance on best practices for handling students with ASD, which would ensure best inclusive environment that guarantees quality educational attainment for them and serve their social integration as well; for instance, they can participate in setting appropriate educational goals with teachers and parents, they can participate in adapting the educational program to support the students' needs and their social integration, they can provide teachers, other school staff, and also parents with training to increase awareness and understanding of ASD, and they can provide teachers with the best strategies for classroom management, instructional techniques, and behavioral interventions (Williams et al. 2005), which would promote good inclusive education environment and guarantee quality education for all students. Moreover, as stated in (Williams et al. 2005 P: 118), school psychologists can play a vital role in bringing theory into practice; through the use of evidence-based practices (EBPs) in mainstream schools for students with disabilities, including those with autism spectrum disorders, school psychologists bridge the gap between research and practice.

5.3 Training as an Aspect of School Environment Adaptation

When talking about the importance of training and support for the success of inclusive education, we don't solely mean teachers, but also administrative staff and parents of students with disabilities. In this regard, many researchers declare that training and support is vital for teachers (Carew et al, 2019; Delubom et al, 2020), administrative staff (Ogba et al, 2020), and parents equally (Barlow et al. (2008) ; Machalick et al. (2015) ; Rios and Burke, (2020)) as these educational actors have a significant impact on students with disabilities. Thus, they should be supported and kept acquainted with the innovative skills to deal with students with disabilities.

5.3.1 Teachers' Training

Concerning teachers training and support, it is taken as settled that being a teacher requires far more qualifications than knowledge of the subject only; it rather demands a good training on many aspects of teaching, such as planning, learning styles, teaching modes, material devising and selection, educational psychology, learners' types, teaching approaches, methods and techniques, ICT, ect.

Teaching able-bodied learners is indeed a demanding task as the lecturer has to cater for many teaching aspects, ranging from classroom management to lesson plan devising, let alone teaching students with disabilities, which is far more demanding task and requires in-depth knowledge of pedagogy and educational sciences and a special training on how to adapt approaches, methods, strategies, materials, curriculum content, classroom settings and arrangement to positively respond to the various special needs of these learners. It is worth noting that a special training and continuous guiding is a crucial factor in providing equitable

quality education and tutoring for SWD. Not only this, but dealing with students who have different disabilities requires training on many other skills, such as using sign language (for the mute and the deaf), using brail way of reading (for the Blind), providing first aid when urgently necessary, ect.

In this regard, (Carew et al, 2019) declares that the training which is provided to teachers who deal with students with disabilities plays a vital role in enhancing equitable quality education that is offered to these students. Almost in the same flow with (Carew et al, 2019), a study conducted by (Delubom et al, 2020) reveals that it is really demanding for educators who lack special training and teaching qualifications to effectively teach students with disabilities and apply innovative teaching strategies that can impact the learning of all students. According to the same study, the lack of training for teachers has a negative impact on the possible admission of students with disabilities in TVET colleges as well as a negative impact on the ability of expanding the width of limited programs offered to students with disabilities. Moreover, (Delubom et al, 2020) suggest that teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education might be more positive if they receive an adequate training and appropriate support from their management to handle SWD.

5.3.2 Administrators' Training

As for administrators' training and support, it is stated in (Ogba et al, 2020; P:77) that both teachers and administrators must undergo high quality training regarding many aspects of scholastic life to ensure that they remain focused in equally providing all children with real and good learning opportunities that meet the needs of all of them. It is also worth mentioning that good training for administrators equips them with the necessary requirements to manage both material and non-material resources in mainstream schools. Not only this, but both teachers and administrators become more confident in implementing inclusive education, acquiring positive attitudes towards students with disabilities, and becoming more knowledgeable about the various pedagogies that come into play when dealing with these students (Ogba et al, 2020; P:76).

5.3.3 Parents' Training

Training should not only include teachers and administrators as they are the ones interacting with students within their school environment, but also parents as they spend more time with their children teaching and educating them in their home environment. Taking into consideration that parents may be at risk of psychosocial distress and may lack confidence (self efficacy) in their own abilities to contribute to their children's education and care, benefiting from effective training and support programs (TSP) can help parents acquire skills to deal with their disabled children in their home environment and increase their parental self-efficacy (PSE) to handle their disabled children and effectively participate in their education and care, which can also be one way to enhance their psychosocial well-being (Barlow et al, 2008; P 56). In the same view, Machalicek et al. (2015) declare that training parents of students with intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD) is crucial, especially those with autism, to implement evidence-based interventions to decrease parent stress and depression and increase mental health alongside applied behavior analytic interventions to increase child adaptive behavior skills and decrease challenging behavior. Machalicek et al. (2015) hold that training parents of SWD often involves teaching parents strategies to improve their children's communication, social skills, and behavior management, which can be effective to empower parents as active participants in their children's development and education. Furthermore, what has been stated by Marlow et al. (2008) and Machalicek et al. (2015) is confirmed by (Rios and Burke, 2020) who believe that providing parents of students with disabilities with adequate training, support and resources can empower them to become more effective advocates for their children as well as for broader educational reforms that benefit all students with disabilities (Burke et al, 2020).

Sadikovna et al. (2023) also highlight the importance of training programs for parents of children, particularly those with cochlear implants, to effectively support their children's auditory and language development. In their study, Sadikovna et al. (2023) emphasize the effectiveness of family-centered approaches, such as Auditory Verbal Therapy (AVT), which focuses on integrating auditory learning into daily activities to promote listening and speaking skills in children with cochlear implants. Moreover, the study stresses the idea of involving parents and other stakeholders in the design process to come up with well-tailored interventions that can meet the special needs of their children and maximize the benefits of cochlear implants for them.

5.4 Differentiating and Adapting Teaching Practices and Materials as an Aspect of School Environment Adaptation

Differentiation and adaptation of approaches, methods, strategies, techniques, curriculum content, material selection, classroom settings, visual aids, activities, and didactic support is one of the vital qualities of a successful tutor as no two would disagree that pupils have different learning styles and different intelligences (Gardner 1983 ; Farhat, 2023 ; Sasmita et al, 2024). Even in a normal class a teacher has to vary their teaching practices and materials in order to meet and positively respond to the various learning styles, needs and interests of students as the differential pedagogy suggests, let alone an inclusive class that requires more efforts from the teacher to opt for differential teaching practices and materials to meet the different needs and interests with all students (Norwich and Lewis, (2001) ; Siti Huzaimah and Zaimuariffudin Shukri , 2024).

In an inclusive class, where students do not only have different learning styles and intelligences, but also different learning disabilities, the teaching learning process becomes more challenging. Thus, an inclusive class requires tremendous changes and adaptations in all teaching practices and materials to guarantee that these learners who have special needs and different learning styles benefit from equitable and quality education altogether.

6. A Balance Model to an Equitable Quality Education For All

As aforementioned in the research article at hand, inclusion suggests that it is the school environment and practices which must be adapted or changed to support students with disabilities in meeting their special learning needs (education equity, where all students benefit from the same teaching resources, school practices, and opportunities, with the necessary changes and adaptations in the benefit of those with disabilities), in contrast to integration which suggests that it is the student with disability who is supposed to adapt to the preexisting school environment and practices (education equality, where all students benefit from the same teaching resources, school practices, and opportunities, hoping that those with disabilities adapt to these teaching resources and practices). The following two figures explain how an educational system can balance education equality and education equity to guarantee an equitable quality education for all, where all students enjoy the same right to education with the necessary changes and adaptations in the benefit of those with disabilities to ensure their equitable education in light of a quality educational attainment.

6.1 Ordinary School Environment

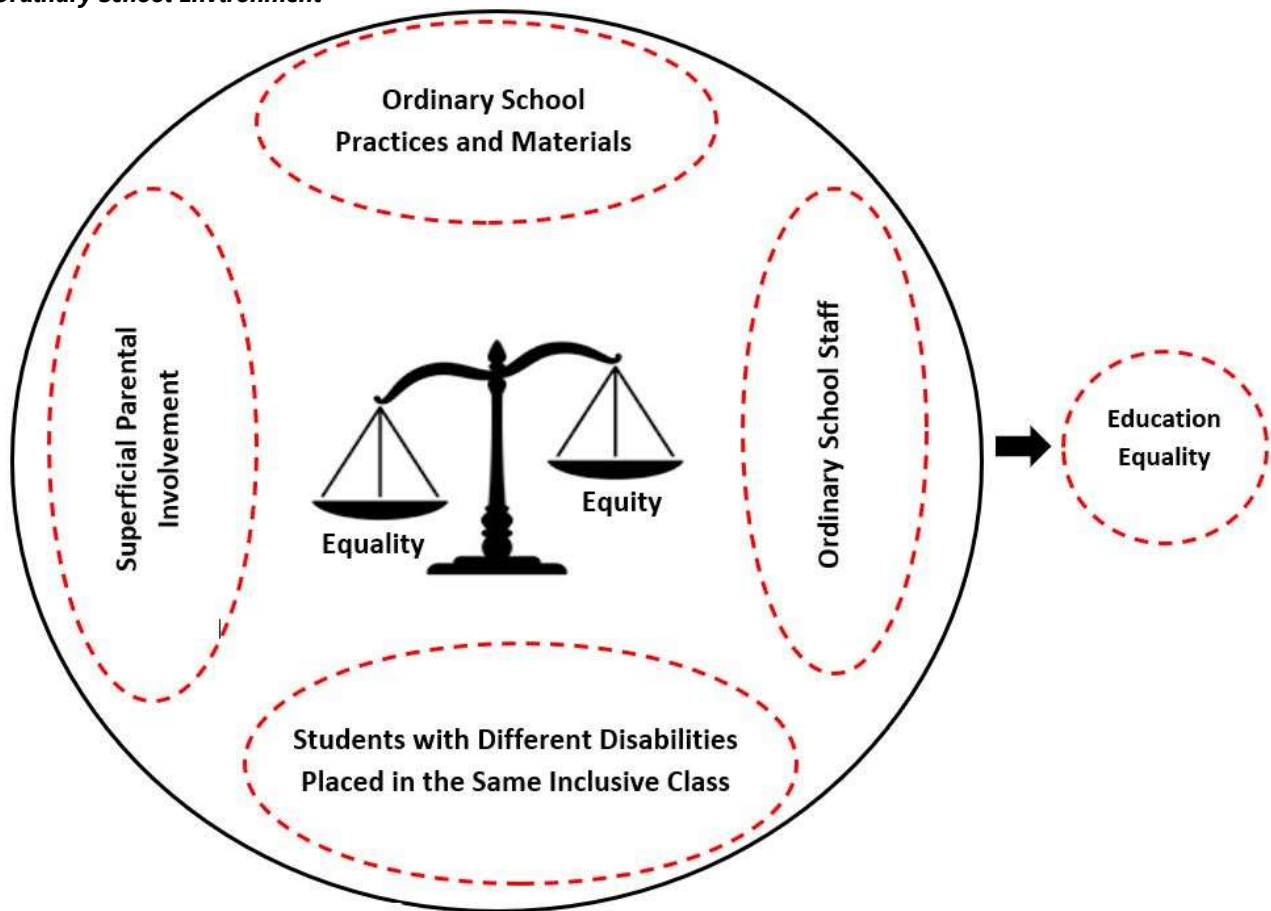


Figure 6.1: Ordinary School Environment (Elfaizi and El Aouri, 2024)

The figure above (figure 6.1) shows how an ordinary school environment just serves the preexisting practice, which can be referred to as integration or education equality, if no adaptations and changes occur in the environment and practices of this school in the benefit of students with disabilities. Thus, a school environment and teaching practices, which are not well adapted to meet the special needs of students with disabilities just like their peers in a mainstream school, do not serve the fourth sustainable development goal (SDG4) initiated by the UN concerning guaranteeing equitable quality education for all students, including those

with disabilities; it only serves to reinforce the preexisting practice that guarantees education equality where all students, including those with disabilities, enjoy the same equal right to education and benefit from the same teaching resources, teaching practices, and the same opportunities, without putting much emphasis on the learning disorders and barriers that might hinder the learning opportunities of those with disabilities, and without adapting the school environment and practices to suit the needs of these disabled students and meet the teaching learning objectives with all students alike.

6.2 Adapted School Environment

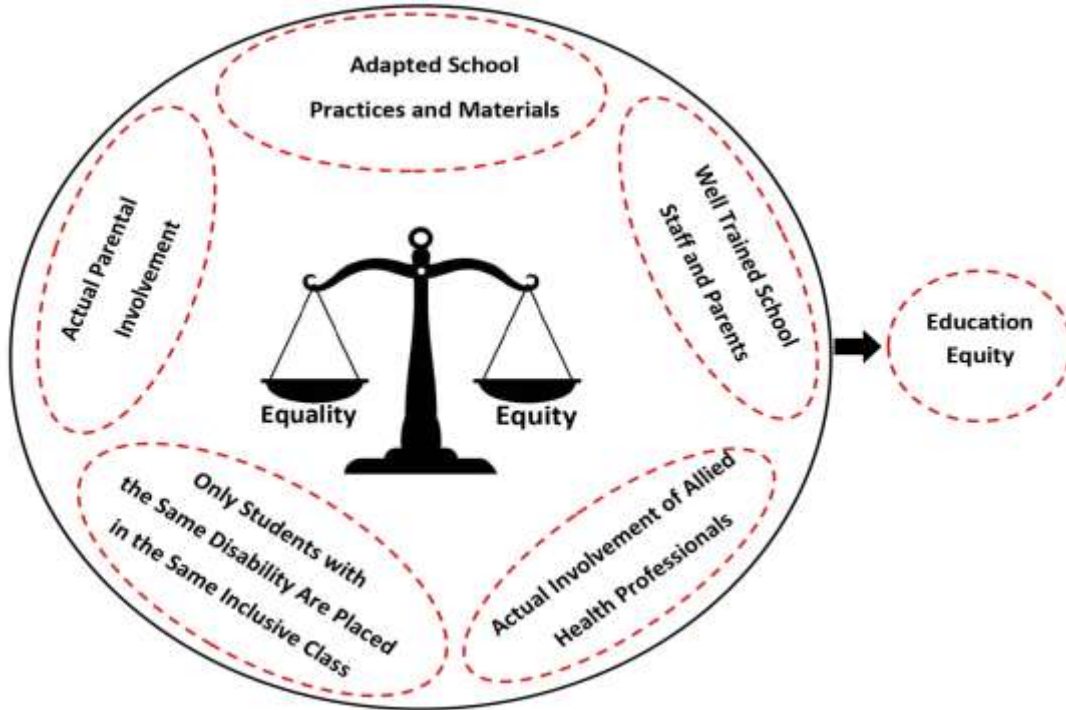


Figure 6.2: Adapted School Environment (Elfaizi and El Aouri, 2024)

The figure above (figure 6.2) shows some necessary adaptations that must actually occur in an ordinary school environment in order to really move from the preexisting practice (integration), which guarantees education equality to all students alike whatsoever their impairments, to another developed practice (inclusion), that guarantees equitable quality education for all students, including those with disabilities, and take into consideration the crucial adaptations in the school environment and practices that suit their impairments which hinder their learning opportunities. Hence, these adaptations in the school environment should be actually put into practice in every educational system to effectively embrace the inclusive education objectives with all students, especially those with disabilities; if these crucial adaptations and changes in the mainstream schools are not well implemented and are not actually put into practice, inclusion is only superficially implemented and will not effectively embrace its objective of ensuring equitable quality education for all.

All in all, the balance model to equitable quality education for all suggests that many crucial changes and adaptations must occur in the ordinary school environment to guarantee an equitable quality education for all students, especially those with disabilities. Among these adaptations, the involvement of allied-health professionals is of great benefit to the right implementation of inclusion, especially in terms of disability and need diagnosis, and training and support of parents, teachers and other school staff. Not only this, but allied-health professionals, if they collaborate with teachers, would also help them set good teaching plans and goals that serve the students' different needs, help them differentiate their teaching techniques, methods, approaches and strategies, and teach them some techniques of classroom management and emergency interventions. Another necessary adaptation that this model suggests is the actual involvement of parents of both disabled and nondisabled students, which would create a harmonious relationship between the school environment and the home environment. Actual involvement of parents, as equal partners in the project of inclusion, would also keep parents up to date regarding their children's schooling on the one hand and support their inclusion through sensitizing them to the importance of this educational and social project on the other hand. Training, as an important ingredient of successful inclusion, is also another crucial adaptation that must occur in every mainstream school environment to serve students with disabilities' equitable quality education; by providing parents, teachers, and other school staff with adequate training on handling students with disabilities, they would better know about the different disabilities of students as well as the best techniques and strategies to deal with them either at school or at home, which would serve inclusion the best. Moreover, teachers who are well trained to deal with students with disabilities would be skilled and knowledgeable

enough to choose the best teaching plans, techniques, methods, strategies, approaches and content that serve each disability the best, rather than teachers who are not. Finally, in order to guarantee quality education for all students in an inclusive class, the balance model to equitable quality education suggests that it is better for an inclusive class to only include students with the same disability alongside their nondisabled peers, rather than accommodating students with different disabilities alongside their nondisabled peers; this serves inclusion the best through decreasing the rate of disruptive behavior in the inclusive class, decreasing the load work that is put on the teachers' back, trying to deal with students with different disabilities and their nondisabled peers and spread themselves among all of them, taking into account that not all students learn the same and not all disabilities require the same teaching method, technique, strategy, resources, content, and materials to deal with them. Thus, when classifying students according to their disabilities in inclusive classes, we might guarantee a quality education for them and for their nondisabled peers.

7. Conclusion

To sum up, for the inclusion project to be effectively implemented in any educational system, numerous crucial adaptations should be applied to the school environment of that educational system. These adaptations include actual involvement of allied health professionals and parents of students as equal partners in this educational project, adequate training of school staff and parents of students with disabilities, placement of students according to their disabilities in inclusive classes, and adaptation of school practices and materials to the special needs of these students with disabilities. However, these adaptations wouldn't have a great impact on the students' equitable quality education unless they are actually implemented in any mainstream school; if these adaptations are superficially applied in any mainstream school, they don't serve the new practice (inclusion) but they only serve to reinforce the pre-existing practice (integration). Thus, a balanced model for an equitable quality education for all is devised to balance education equality and education equity in every mainstream school environment, following and respecting all the previously stated adaptations, which would effectively have a positive impact on ensuring an equitable quality education of all learners alike.

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