

Exploring Teachers' Pedagogical Approaches to Encouraging Independence in VI-School Students: A Case Study of Curriculum Implementation in Riyadh, KSA

Alabdan Abeer Mansour¹, Dr. Jean Ware²
Bangor University, North Wales^{1,2}

ABSTRACT

Visually impaired (VI) students require the same skills as their sighted peers to prepare them for work and life, as well as support for access to the general curriculum and an additional skills curriculum. The Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) is tailored to provide knowledge and skills VI students need, allowing them equal opportunities in and beyond school (Hatlen, 1996).

This research investigates additional skills programmes for VI students and how they are supported for success in KSA. The research question is as follow: How is the ECC conceptualised and implemented within KSA's educational system and how does it interface with societal, cultural and political considerations?

A sequential mixed methods research design was employed includes classroom observations, a demographic data survey and semi-structured teacher interviews collected from schools catering to VI students in Riyadh.

Data were coded and thematically analysed, with Norwich and Lewis's (2005) ideas on commonality and differentiation of pedagogic positions constituting the analysis framework. Recent findings suggest that teachers more experienced with VI students have a greater understanding of the additional curriculum. It was also found that, even in special schools, additional skills were either assimilated or separated from the general curriculum, with uneven implementation influenced by several factors, including time, space, resources, support, motivation and parental involvement.

The research results will contribute to the improvement and extension of future Special Educational Needs (SEN) skills programmes in KSA.

Keywords: Visual-Impairment; Expanded Core Curriculum; Curriculum Accessibility; Pedagogy; Equal opportunities; Saudi Arabia.