

# Leading Inclusive Education: Effective Practices.

Dr. Abdulsalam Mahmoud Hatamleh\*  
Jordan.

\*Email ID: [abdulsalam.hatamleh@gmail.com](mailto:abdulsalam.hatamleh@gmail.com)  
Mob. ph.: +962798560025

**Citation:** Hatamleh, Abdulsalam Mahmoud. (2024), Leading Inclusive Education: Effective Practices *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 30(8) 138 - 149,  
Doi: 10.53555/kuey.v30i8.6960

## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

This study aimed to reveal the level of effective practices in leading inclusive education in inclusive mainstream schools in Irbid, Jordan, as a part of the initiative "Strengthening the Support System for Primary and Secondary Education Enrollment and Learning for Vulnerable Groups in Irbid Governorate", which is funded by the World Vision International Association in Irbid Governorate, considering the variables; (Gender, years of experience, number of courses and learning communities for implementing inclusive education, and academic qualification). A total of (12) principals of inclusive schools were recruited, who were selected utilizing a purposive sampling method. The descriptive method was used. The researcher developed a questionnaire with fifty items distributed over five areas measuring effective practices in inclusive education leadership. These areas include school principals' practices to integrate students with disabilities, promoting awareness of inclusion programmes, implementing development plans, empowering and training the teaching staff, and confronting challenges. The results of the descriptive analysis revealed that school principals have a high level of effective practice in leading inclusive education. No statistically significant differences ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) were observed attributable to the variables (gender, years of experience, number of courses, learning communities, and academic qualification). The findings also demonstrated the necessity of providing school principals with specific training in inclusive education. A number of suggestions were provided in light of the study's results.

**Keywords:** inclusive education, inclusive education leadership, inclusive schools, effective practices.

## Introduction:

One of the core goals of inclusive education is to provide equitable access and opportunity to education to all vulnerable students, including those with disabilities and ensure their access to all programs, services and facilities in educational institutions. Leadership for inclusive education plays a crucial role in improving education locally and globally. Undoubtedly, leaders of inclusive schools make a significant effort to communicate and engage with stakeholders such as students with disabilities, their families and organizations to create a holistic approach to learning and development. They form efficient administrative teams dedicated to equity, giving all vulnerable students opportunities and access to quality education. They also have a shared vision for change and the strategies to carry it out. This research examines what it means to lead inclusive education in mainstream schools and what methods work best to ensure that every vulnerable or excluded from school can benefit from this integration regardless of any challenges they face.

The efforts that have been undertaken historically to improve education for students with disabilities and integrate them with their typical peers in general schools must be examined to demonstrate the benefits they gained from this integration. As Osgood (2005) points out, prior to the 1950s, general education curricula were not widely accessible to students with disabilities, nor were they integrated into the general education settings. It was common practice to provide persons with disabilities with basic necessities like food, shelter, and medical attention while keeping them entirely segregated from their peers in specialised facilities (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). However, according to Bartlett, Etscheidt, and Weisenstein (2007), children with disabilities

were not given equitable assistance, cognitive evaluation, or educational services compared to their typical peers.

After decades of educational practices based on isolation and exclusion of persons with disabilities from education, occurring in the nineteenth century in European countries, care for them evolved to include placing them in private institutions that provide them with special services such as accommodation and health care while keeping them isolated from society. Calls and efforts were made to offer persons with disabilities proper rehabilitation. This stage was distinguished by providing various programs that qualified persons with disabilities for careers and professions that fit their abilities. Finally, in 2016, the integration stage, which many societies have adopted successfully, was the best solution that supports persons with disabilities' right to access quality education (Al-Hamad and Al-Atoum, 2016).

It is worth noting that adopting standards and indicators to control inclusive education programs is based on several foundations that can be highlighted by ensuring that these programs reflect the real needs and expectations of the inclusive educational system, the families of the most vulnerable children, teachers of those students, and the service providers. Furthermore, the criteria for evaluating the quality of programs should focus on the various processes in the program in terms of the mechanism of their implementation, the extent of parents' satisfaction with them, and the noticeable changes in the education of students with disabilities/or those most in need of education. In addition, the comprehensive program includes adequate tools for collecting data and conducting appropriate evaluations, as well as work to involve all relevant parties in evaluating the program. Additionally, evaluation criteria should be regularly developed to measure the program's quality in line with the international standard for evaluation and to inform those concerned with the evaluation results to be demonstrated in their up-to-date rehabilitation and integration plans (Al-Ghalilat and Al-Sammadi, 2015).

### **Problem Statement:**

While there is a wealth of research and studies on inclusive education, there is still a dearth of studies examining administrative practices and leadership in inclusive schools. This is because the role and responsibilities of school principals, leaders, and educators and the required professional standards have not been clearly defined for implementing the inclusive education programme in Jordan. Previous studies have not only failed to identify the inclusive schools that would serve as a mainstream centre for teaching students with disabilities, they also failed to address the nature of the so-called specialised teams, which play a fundamental role in implementing the inclusive education program, nor the standards for accepting persons with disabilities into general education schools were specified. However, Jordan has achieved great strides in inclusion education. For instance, the Jordanian Ministry of Education recently signed an agreement with the World Vision Association (2021-2024) to sponsor a program that supports the inclusion of vulnerable students, including students with disabilities, in primary and secondary education in Irbid Governorate. Therefore, this study sought to reveal the level of effective leadership practices in inclusive general schools in Irbid Governorate. The study will try to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of effective practices of leaders of inclusive general schools in Irbid Governorate, from their viewpoint of principals of inclusive schools, in the following areas:
  - a) Principals' role in the inclusion of the most vulnerable students into inclusive schools in Irbid Governorate?
  - b) Providing awareness of the inclusion of programs in inclusive general schools in Irbid Governorate?
  - c) Implementing the development plan for inclusive general schools in Irbid Governorate?
  - d) Training and empowering the educational staff in inclusive general schools in Irbid Governorate?
  - e) Facing challenges in leading inclusive education in inclusive general schools in Irbid Governorate?

### **Objectives:**

This study aims to reveal the level of effective practices of principals of inclusive schools in Irbid Governorate by measuring their responses to the five areas included in the study.

### **Importance:**

This study gains significance from the importance and the novelty of the program "Strengthening the Support System for Primary and Secondary Education Enrollment and Learning for Vulnerable Groups in Irbid Governorate", which Jordan has implemented in Jordanian general schools. The Ministry of Education has approved the program's implementation following the ten-year inclusive education strategy. Since this program is of great importance, the researcher conducted this study to introduce a novel scientific addition that enriches the literature on the leadership of inclusive education in light of the dearth of Arab and local studies on this topic.

### **Limitations:**

- **Objective limits:** leading inclusive education and effective practices

- **Human limits:** male and female principals of inclusive public schools participated in the World Vision project/Jordan.
- **Spatial limits:** inclusive government schools in Irbid Governorate.
- **Time limits:** academic year 2023/2024

### Literature Review:

#### Inclusive Education:

According to Unesco, inclusive education should secure and ensure the right of all children with disabilities to access, attend, participate and succeed in their mainstream local school. To achieve educational goals in this area and offer all students a quality education, inclusive education necessitates increasing the ability of the local school personnel and reducing physical barriers that impede the access, attendance, and involvement of students with disabilities (Unesco, 2018).

Inclusive education, as stated in the Ten-Year Strategy for Inclusive Education, is placing all students, regardless of any challenges they may face, in their age-appropriate general education classes in their neighborhood schools to receive all high-quality supportive services and programs that enable them to succeed in core curricula (Alquraini, and Gut, 2012; Bui, Quirk, Almazan, and Valenti, 2010). Al-Zayat (2009) defines inclusive education as teaching persons with disabilities, regardless of their type or severity, in regular schools with their typical peers so that they receive the same regular education programs with their inputs and processes.

These definitions of inclusive education indicate an urgent need to establish a culture and commitment to educating all students with disabilities as well as their typical counterparts in regular schools. All values, principles, and legislation emphasise ensuring that students with disabilities enjoy full citizenship and undiminished rights in education, reaching their full potential and academic abilities, and providing services based on equal opportunities and non-discrimination.

It should be noted that justice, equality, and acceptance of diversity are values that see students with disabilities as members of the student body and the centre of the educational process (Al-Khatib, 2004). These values also support their right to a high-quality education in an inclusive learning environment like their peers without disabilities (Ministry of Education, 2019).

Since the beginning of the 20th century, one of the most critical issues gaining the great attention of educators is the right to access education. National and international educational institutions have also paid close attention to providing educational opportunities for students of all mental and physical abilities, and they have increased support for the notion that education is a fundamental human right. Certain educational concepts universally apply to all individuals, including students with special needs, which is the most crucial (Gregory, 2018).

Under the slogan "Our rights are one; our methods are different....Inclusive education is a right for everyone" The Ministry of Education in Jordan developed the 10-Year Strategy for Inclusive Education based on the Text of Article (18/ h) of the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (20) of the Year 2017. This strategy was adopted within its educational concept of inclusion, which means integrating children with disabilities into the least restrictive environment in mainstream schools.

The general goal of the 10-Year Strategy for Inclusive Education is that by 2029, the percentage of school-aged children with disabilities enrolled in mainstream schools reaches 10% of the total number of school-aged children with disabilities while providing them with all the requirements of inclusive education. This would enable them to fully enjoy education and access all educational institutions' programs, services and facilities. They will also have access to quality education in an environment that accepts differences and diversity and provides a supportive learning and teaching environment for all students (MOE, 2019).

Inclusive education typically focuses on special education to ensure that children with disabilities receive the support they need to learn and grow while being included in regular classrooms. However, in recent years, the concept of inclusive education has expanded to include a broader definition that addresses all forms of exclusion, marginalization, disparities of opportunity and inequalities in accessing, participation and learning outcomes. Unesco (2015) defines inclusive education as a process of focusing on and responding to the diverse needs of all learners, removing barriers impeding quality education, thereby increasing participation in learning and reducing exclusion within and from education.

Notably, it involves creating an education system that ensures access, participation, and learning achievement for all, including people disadvantaged by disability, gender, poverty, cultural, ethnic or linguistic group, migration, conflict, and homelessness.

Inclusion can be seen as a social justice-oriented approach to education designed to ensure every child's fundamental human right to individually, culturally and developmentally appropriate education and by expanding the concept of exclusion beyond those with different needs to include other axes of disadvantage, such as age, race, social class and gender. Some studies have shown that exclusion may consist of depriving students of using the school building and participating in learning activities because of ability, age, race, class, and gender. These studies are critical because they shed light on exclusion and inclusion in education. They also help understand how students are excluded and this process's patterns. It also shows the benefits accompanying inclusion and how to find solutions to similar challenges. Some researchers point out that social justice cannot be achieved when students (and their parents) are excluded from mainstream educational processes (Ryan, 2006).

Understanding the significance of equality is also crucial when looking at inclusive education. The concepts of "equity" and "equality" are distinct and provide somewhat different results regarding involvement, accessibility, and educational attainment. While equality demands that every child be treated equally, equity does not mean everyone must be treated the same way. To achieve equity in education, leaders must recognise the particular difficulties and obstacles each person and family faces and work to remove them (Int. Child Education 2021).

In Jordan, as a part of the initiative "Strengthening the Support System for Primary and Secondary Education Enrollment and Learning for Vulnerable Groups in Irbid Governorate," the MOE applied an inclusive project that included twelve public schools in Irbid Governorate from March 2021 until May 2024, which included equipping the difficulty rooms in the schools, rehabilitating some facilities to facilitate the inclusion of students with disabilities, providing the resources room with the necessary educational aids and stationery, in addition supporting teacher in each school under the project of the World Vision Association, and two of the project schools were provided with a multidisciplinary team, in addition to activities, initiatives, clubs, training, and learning communities to exchange experiences between these schools.

The program employed a multidisciplinary team consisting of (7) individuals specialised in the fields of physical and occupational therapy, speech, visual and hearing rehabilitation, educational guidance, and nursing (Al-Falahat, Al-Saaida, Al-Safasfa, Al-Rahamneh, 2022). It includes a resource room that provides educational support to students with disabilities (Mercy Corps, 2021).

### **Inclusive education leadership**

According to the Inclusive Leadership Guidebook, its leadership approach values diversity, invites and welcomes the individual contribution of all, and encourages full participation in decision-making processes and shaping reality. The goal of leadership for inclusive education is creativity, change and innovation while balancing the needs of all. Inclusive education leaders value human beings, recognise fundamental human rights, recognise the perspectives of others and complex systemic interconnectedness, and recognise the roles and responsibilities inherent in leadership structures. They also dare to collaborate and be accountable for results (Mississippi Dept. Education. 2023).

The foundation of the inclusive education leadership model is that every individual has a right to fundamental human rights. Promoting attitudes and behaviours that deliberately lower barriers for those who risk discrimination and exclusion from society and education is crucial to inclusive education leadership. Leaders in inclusive education also steer clear of the conventional hierarchical leadership style and promote community involvement in all aspects of the school or educational system. In many educational institutions, a traditional power hierarchy and structure discourages inclusiveness and emphasises individual leadership and ability more than working as a team or a community. Along with excluding anyone who challenges this hierarchy, these leaders lack the personal qualities required to influence others and do not have the necessary privileges to occupy official positions of authority. To be effective, leadership for inclusive education must promote equitable and horizontal relationships that also transcend broader divisions between gender, race, social class, and disability in all their forms (Ryan, 2006).

However, the change and innovation that leads to inclusive education requires trustworthy leaders who are able to listen, communicate vision, and build consensus among diverse stakeholders. Educational institutions have to be empowered by leaders for inclusive education, who bring together an adaptable and responsive team with a shared vision that enables leaders to build the policies, processes, curricular approaches and interventions needed for their school community. (Childhood Education Int. 2021). Furthermore, developing an intentional, cooperative process for school development that considers all stakeholders and brings together individuals with various abilities, backgrounds, and resources is necessary for inclusive education leadership. According to Ryan, to ensure that all parties involved understand one another and are aware of the realities and risks of exclusive practices, practices for leading inclusive education must be implemented. These practices include advocating for inclusion, educating participants, developing an awareness of constructive criticism,

fostering dialogue, emphasising student learning and classroom practice, and adopting comprehensive strategies for decision-making and policy-making (Ryan, 2006).

### Leadership traits in inclusive education

The majority of inclusive education leaders understand and accept the necessity of making substantial systemic changes. These transformations require compassionate and visionary leaders to successfully navigate the cooperative planning needed to meet interconnected needs for monetary, human, technological, and pedagogical resources. According to Harvard University research, influential leaders possess the following qualities (Bourke, J., & Titus, A. 2019):

1. **Visible commitment:** inclusive leaders typically articulate an authentic commitment to diversity, challenge the status quo, hold others accountable and make diversity and inclusion a personal priority.
2. **Humility:** They are modest about capabilities, admit mistakes, and create the space for others to contribute.
3. **Awareness of bias:** They show awareness of personal blind spots and flaws in the system and work hard to ensure meritocracy.
4. **Curiosity about others:** They demonstrate an open mindset and deep curiosity about others, listen without judgment, and seek empathy to understand those around them.
5. **Cultural intelligence:** They are attentive to others' cultures and adapt as required.
6. **Effective collaboration:** They empower others, pay attention to diversity of thinking and psychological safety, and focus on team cohesion."

### Applying leadership practices for inclusive education

Examining every facet of the educational system—from regulations to the curricula taught in classrooms to the layout of the learning space is necessary to create a welcoming environment. By combining the inclusiveness vision and practice, leaders may demonstrate how understanding and action are interdependent.

The process of inclusion looks for new and improved approaches to meet the diverse educational requirements of students. For the inclusive education team within the school leadership to effectively address the evolving demands of the community, the inclusive education leader must ensure that stakeholders and community members are aware of the value of inclusion. It is important to remind staff that inclusion is a fundamental and enduring goal that will feature prominently in all aspects of the school, and professional development opportunities should be provided to support staff in dialogue and learning about how to create an inclusive school environment (Ila, 2021).

Effective practices are the most effective practises and administrative tasks for leading inclusive education in public schools, as included in the World Vision Association/Ministry of Education project. Effective practices in this study are school principals practice integrating students, raising awareness of integration programs, implementing the development plan, training and empowering teachers, and confronting difficulties.

### The Leadership Guide for Inclusive Education identifies four critical areas for development:

The Inclusive Education Leadership Practice has identified some critical areas for inclusive practice (Mississippi Dept. Education. 2023):

1. **Self-awareness:** Self-aware leaders admit mistakes and show weaknesses, practice self-reflection and mindfulness, and challenge stereotypes.
2. **Shared vision:** Inclusive leaders co-create a shared vision to implement with other stakeholders.
3. **Relationships with colleagues and community members:** Building relationships with colleagues and community members creates a sense of belonging and goal pursuit in a safe environment while avoiding negative thinking.
4. **Creativity and change management:** Leaders share responsibility, empower individuals, and develop strategies to deal with the complexities of crises and different projects.

At the individual, corporate, and societal levels, inclusive education leadership has a lot to offer. In addition to fostering an environment that results in higher employee satisfaction and a more positive impact on the organisation's or educational institution's environment, leadership with the true personality of leaders and awareness of inclusive education enables them to be more compassionate and empathic.

It's essential to keep in mind that every school and system has different demands and challenges. The ideal inclusive school does not have a single model. Nonetheless, a leader in inclusive education understands the value of continuing to be adaptable and dedicated to raising all children's learning and achievement levels. Constructing an inclusive school will remain prosperous as long as various approaches and teamwork are employed to solve issues and overcome obstacles (Bortini, Paola; Paci, Angelica; Rise, Ann; Rojnik Irene, 2016)

### Challenges of Leading Inclusive Education

The goal for an inclusive environment must be communicated clearly and consistently by leaders starting major change initiatives in their schools. Leaders must also help others comprehend this vision, the supply of

resources, and skills development. However, without continuous assistance, people could struggle to embrace the inclusionary mindset and modify their present behaviours. As part of its goal to raise awareness of inclusive education, this support includes professional development to prepare teachers and staff to better understand themselves in their mission to be more aware of inclusive education. Professional development can also provide the necessary tools to develop policies, practices, curricula, and inclusive learning environments to support all children in meeting their educational needs.

Generally, incorporating inclusive education methods into curricula and teaching practices requires novice and experienced teachers to be aware of the need of students to modify learning settings to fit students better. The ongoing changes in education make it imperative to give teachers and staff the tools and support systems they need to handle these changes. Furthermore, there are challenges related to school finances, technology infrastructure, standardised testing, teacher quality, and community needs such as health care. The health and well-being of children and students is a critical element that affects their ability to learn and grow. As leaders consider ways to address these challenges and redistribute existing resources more inclusively and equitably, they will find that collaborative and creative thinking are valuable tools. For example, community partnerships with other organisations may alleviate some burdens (Global Campaign for Education, n.d.)

Ultimately, having access to education is essential to creating more just, sustainable, democratic, and peaceful societies. It is also a human right. By 2029, Jordan's ten-year inclusive education policy hopes to provide possibilities for lifelong learning for everyone. Inclusive education leaders who are willing to implement the procedures and policies needed to make this a reality are needed.

### **Previous Studies:**

Due to the novelty of the subject of the study both locally and regionally, it was difficult to find studies on inclusive education, particularly on leadership and administration, as these studies focused on the inclusion of individuals with disabilities and the oversight aspect of this integration. We provide an overview of a few studies, the most significant of which are:

Qatnani (2021) conducted a study that aimed to reveal the attitudes of UNRWA school principals and teachers towards integrating students with special needs into regular schools and their relationship to some variables such as the nature of the work, the teacher's specialisation, the nature of the school, and experience using the descriptive survey method. The study sample consisted of (102) special education principals and teachers. A questionnaire of (14) items represents a positive or negative trend towards integrating students with special needs into regular schools. The study's results indicated that the attitudes of principals and teachers were moderate. A statistically significant difference in teachers' attitudes was observed favouring special education teachers, as their attitudes were high, while the attitudes of teachers of other specialisations were moderate.

A study by Melhem, Abu Al Rub, and Oleimat (2021) aimed to identify the role of public school principals in facing the difficulties of integrating students with special needs, according to the Special Education Law (2018) within the Green Line, from the point of view of principals and teachers. It is also aimed to reveal whether there are statistical differences in the role of public school principals in facing the difficulties of integrating students with special needs according to the Special Education Law (2018) due to the effect of variables (gender, educational qualification, years of experience, educational level, job) using the descriptive approach. The study sample (n=510) was selected by a simple random method. The results revealed that the role of public school principals in confronting the difficulties of integrating students with special needs was high. However, there were no statistically significant differences at the significance level ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) for the role of public school principals in facing the difficulties of integrating special needs students due to the variables gender, experience, and educational stage. In contrast, differences were observed due to the job favouring of a job (Principals).

Ababneh and Al-Khamrah (2020) studied the status quo of programs, services and practices offered to students with disabilities in inclusive schools in Jordan from principals' and teachers' perspectives. It also sought to identify the differences in the principals' and teachers' perceptions of the status quo of programs, services, and practices offered to students with disabilities in inclusive schools, considering gender, position, qualification, and experience in inclusive programs. A total of (22) school principals and (97) teachers were selected and purposefully recruited for the study. A descriptive survey design (a questionnaire) was used. The status quo of programs, services and practices provided for students with disabilities in inclusive schools in Jordan was moderate. Significant differences in the principals' and teachers' perceptions were found due to qualifications favouring BA holders. In contrast, no statistical differences were found due to gender, position, work experience, or experience in inclusive programs.

Blublitz (2016) examines the leadership strategies and inclusive learning behaviours used by special education superintendents and principals who successfully led inclusive practices in two school districts in Illinois. Interview data indicated that superintendents and special education directors from both districts had positive views of inclusion, and leaders from both districts reported that professional development, provision of

funding, and collaboration with stakeholders were essential to ensuring the success of the comprehensive special education program. Individualised education and meeting the needs of all children were themes that emerged from the interview data.

Hack (2014) conducted a quantitative study to examine the attitudes of 135 middle school principals in Pennsylvania toward inclusive education. Hack identified factors that influenced school principals' attitudes. In addition, the relationship between school principal attitudes and placement recommendations for students with disabilities was examined. The study showed that the majority of school principals had positive attitudes toward inclusive education. The demographics of school principals were not related to their attitudes toward inclusion. School principals with experience teaching Special Education had more positive attitudes towards inclusion. Furthermore, a significant correlation between principals' attitudes and experience with students with disabilities was observed, and there was also a relationship between principals' experiences with students with disabilities and recommending a less restrictive educational setting.

Stith (2013) conducted a quantitative study to examine the perceptions of 50 Virginia elementary principals toward the inclusion of students with disabilities, as well as the relationship between principal attitudes, principal training, experience, placement decisions, and state assessment data. However, no statistically significant relationship was found between school principals' training or experience in special education and their attitudes. However, there was a statistically significant relationship between placement decisions, state assessment decisions for students with disabilities, and school principals' attitudes toward inclusion. Principals agreed or strongly agreed that students with and without disabilities benefit from inclusive education. There was a significant association between principals' attitudes toward inclusion and placement decisions for inclusive education.

After examining earlier research on the role of leadership in inclusive education, it was found that several axes in those studies were either entirely or partially identical to those in the current research on leaders' perspectives. This belief leads to a somewhat effective leadership practice in leading inclusive education. The study (Melhem, Alimat, and Abu Al-Rub, 2021) was similar to the current research in terms of facing difficulties, and the studies of Bublitz (2016), Hack (2014), and Stith (2013) in terms of the positive attitude of leaders to inclusive education.

In contrast, Qatnani (2021) and Al-Khamra and Ababneh (2020) found conflicting evidence regarding principals' negative attitudes towards inclusive education in regular schools. These studies differ in that the schools in question are not equipped, lack conceptual and practical knowledge of inclusive education, and lack the experience and logistical support necessary to be inclusive. The study was implemented in schools as part of an inclusive training and logistical support effort, and the methods proved highly successful.

## Methodology

### Approach:

The descriptive survey method was utilised to achieve the study's objectives because it suits the nature of the study goals, as the descriptive method describes the phenomenon and its reality. (Al-Assaf, 2012).

### Study Population and Sample:

Deciding a sample is one of the primary steps for any study. The researcher determines the study population, and since the study populations are often large, the researcher resorts to selecting his study sample from that population, which is a relatively small group of the original population that is representative of it and represents all the characteristics present in faithfully (Melhem, 2007). The study sample (n=12) in this research consisted of (5) male and (7) female principals of inclusive schools involved in the World Vision Association project in Irbid Governorate. Details are listed in Table (1).

**Table (1). Description of the study sample**

Variables	Category	Frequency	%
Gender	male	5	%41.7
	female	7	%58.3
	total	12	100.0
Qualifications	Higher Diploma	5	%41.7
	Master's	3	%25
	PhD	4	%33.3
	total	12	100.0
Experience	>10 years	12	100.0
Number of courses	3	12	100.0
	total	12	100.0

### Instrument:

The instrument used aimed to measure effective practices for leading inclusive education in schools involved in the World Vision Association project in Irbid Governorate. Our research has benefited from the study (Al-Qabali and Mahasis, 2023) in designing the questionnaire. The initial version of the instrument was presented to (10) experts in education and special education from Jordanian universities to judge its relativeness to the study's objective and what it intended to measure with a percentage of (80)% agreements or higher. Then, the questionnaire was administered to intended inclusive school principals. The statistical analysis program SPSS was used to extract the results. The three-way Likert scale (high, medium, low) was used.

### Results

**Results of the first question:** What is the level of effective practices of leaders of inclusive general schools in Irbid Governorate, from their viewpoint of principals of inclusive schools?

Descriptive analysis was conducted to answer this question. Results are presented in detail in Table (2) below.

**Table (2) Results of the descriptive analysis for the sample's responses to "Principals' practises for the inclusion of students with disabilities"**

N	Items	Mean	Std.	Rank	Level
1	Encourage the inclusion of students with disabilities in cooperative learning within groups (normal and disabled)	3.00	0.00	1	high
3	Create the appropriate environment for a multidisciplinary team to implement the goals of inclusive education	3.00	0.00	2	high
4	Document the achievements of a multidisciplinary team in specific files.	3.00	0.00	3	high
2	Contribute to the necessary administrative arrangements (time and place) to implement multidisciplinary team meetings	2.93	0.27	4	high
5	Allow multidisciplinary team members to achieve	2.93	0.27	5	high
6	Follow the work of multidisciplinary team members to achieve inclusion goals	2.71	0.47	6	high
7	Periodically bring special education experts to regular meetings of a multidisciplinary team in cooperation with the Department of Education	2.36	0.75	7	high
8	Involve parents of students with disabilities in multidisciplinary team meetings	2.36	0.63	8	high
9	Involve typical students and those with disabilities in interdisciplinary team meetings	2.07	0.48	9	moderate
10	Contribute to reducing the multidisciplinary team's burdens (shifts and other administrative tasks).	2.07	0.73	10	moderate
	Total	2.64	0.20		high

**Table (3) Descriptive analysis of the sample's responses to the second area: Awareness of inclusion programs in inclusive schools**

	Items	Mean	Std,	Rank	Level
2	Supervising awareness programs related to integration and explaining its goals to school students through the school broadcast	3.00	0.00	1	high
3	Supervising awareness programs about inclusion and explaining its goals to teachers and administrators at the school	3.00	0.00	2	high
8	Contributing to spreading the spirit of cooperation between school students and people with disabilities inside and outside the classroom	3.00	0.00	3	high
4	Supervising awareness programs about inclusion through bulletins, quarterly magazines, and brochures directed to the local community via the school's official social media accounts.	2.93	0.27	4	high
6	Providing resources and references related to the inclusion program in the school library	2.86	0.36	5	high

9	Distributing billboards related to the inclusion program in significant places in the school	2.86	0.36	6	high
10	Facilitating the counsellor's work with individual and group counselling sessions related to the inclusion program	2.43	0.65	7	high
1	Supervising awareness about inclusion programs and clarifying their goals to parents	2.29	0.61	8	moderate
7	Supervising the organisation and the visits of a multidisciplinary team and the rehabilitation centers	2.14	0.95	9	moderate
5	Involving rehabilitation centers and civil society organizations to contribute to reviving Arab and international events for people with disabilities on the school campus	1.57	0.85	10	low
	Total	2.61	0.19		high

**Table (4) Descriptive analysis of the sample's responses to the third field: Implementing the development plan for the inclusive school**

	Items	Mean	Std.	Rank	Level
4	Providing the necessary educational means for the individual educational plan for students with disabilities learning in the resources room	3.00	0.00	1	high
6	Implement the educational supervisor's notes on the individual educational plan for people with disabilities and follow up on it	3.00	0.00	2	high
9	Preparing an appropriate academic environment for people with disabilities to conduct tests	3.00	0.00	3	high
1	Ensuring the full implementation of the individual educational plan for students with disabilities	2.93	0.27	4	high
2	Holding periodic meetings with a multidisciplinary team, faculty, staff, and students with disabilities about implementing the individual educational plan	2.86	0.36	5	high
7	Providing sufficient time for the multidisciplinary team to prepare the individual educational plan for each case	2.86	0.36	6	high
8	Providing the educational means and tools necessary to achieve the plan's objectives	2.79	0.43	7	high
5	Ensuring the participation of parents of students with disabilities in preparing the individual educational plan for their children	2.57	0.65	8	high
3	Supervising the organisation of the daily movement of students with disabilities between the classroom and the resource room	2.21	0.70	9	moderate
10	Periodically survey the satisfaction of students with disabilities and their parents regarding the services provided	1.14	0.54	10	moderate
	Total	2.74	0.19		high

**Table (5) Descriptive analysis of the sample's responses to the fourth field: Training and empowering the educational staff in inclusive schools**

	Item	Mean	Std.	Rank	Level
1	Investigate the needs of school employees regarding the inclusion program and provide them with the necessary information	3.00	0.00	1	high
3	Periodically promote the achievements of the inclusion program and demonstrate the contribution of the educational body to the success of the program	3.00	0.00	2	high
6	Provide incentives (moral/material) to teachers for their initiatives in classroom and extracurricular practices with students with disabilities.	3.00	0.00	3	high

8	Open permanent channels of communication between all school employees in making decisions and solving problems related to inclusion programs	3.00	0.00	4	high
9	Constantly urge the teaching staff to benefit from the expertise of a multidisciplinary team	3.00	0.00	5	high
10	Open the way for the educational staff to enrol in available courses and degrees that are related to inclusion programs	3.00	0.00	6	high
2	Involve school staff and a multidisciplinary team at all events	2.93	0.27	7	high
7	Encourage faculty to conduct action research to develop their teaching practices regarding the inclusion program continually	2.79	0.43	8	high
4	Coordinate the regular classroom teacher and an interdisciplinary team	2.50	0.52	9	high
5	Attract experts in the field to conduct training courses and workshops related to the educational body's programs in coordination with the Education Department.	1.64	0.93	10	low
	Total	2.79	0.16		high

**Table (6) Descriptive analysis of the sample's responses to the fifth domain: Facing the difficulties in inclusive schools**

	Items	Mean	Std.	Rank	Level
1	Providing specialized and precise curricula by the Ministry of Education for the inclusion program	3.00	0.00	1	high
2	Provide a suitable resource room in a calm and nondisturbance area, with appropriate lighting... within the school building to implement the method of individualizing education.	3.00	0.00	2	high
3	Convince the local community of the necessity of accepting the integration programme	3.00	0.00	3	high
4	I have provided an integrated team of specialisations since the beginning of the academic year	3.00	0.00	4	high
5	I provide means of public security and safety for students with disabilities within the school building within international standards	3.00	0.00	5	high
6	Provide a safe, educational environment for people with disabilities that is cooperative and participatory	3.00	0.00	6	high
7	Participate in preparing intervention plans to address the repeated unexcused absence of people with disabilities	3.00	0.00	7	high
8	Participate in preparing intervention plans for school delays and repeated failure for people with disabilities	3.00	0.00	8	high
10	Viewing the inclusion program represents an additional burden on my responsibilities as school principal	3.00	0.00	9	high
9	Provide safe transportation for people with disabilities in cooperation with parents	1.00	0.00	10	low
	Total	2.80	0.00		high

### Discussion:

The study's findings revealed that the sample's overall response was high. The researcher explained this result by the fact that the inclusive schools in Irbid, the focus of the study, have been trained and continue to be supported by the World Vision Association initiative in terms of learning community meetings to share knowledge and experiences. For Jordan's Ministry of Education, this is a crucial metric. It must create the necessary arrangements and train resource room supervisors, instructors and administrators (principals) in inclusive schools to put this approach into practice and activate it. According to the Ten-Year Strategy for Inclusive Education 2019-2029, an inclusive education team in the schools and a multidisciplinary team in

some gave professionalism to inclusive education and its leadership in these schools. Promoting inclusive education and bringing it to the attention of all relevant parties, including the school personnel, was crucial in boosting the efficacious practices that improved the inclusive school's productivity.

### Recommendations:

In light of the study results, the research recommends the following:

1. Providing all schools where the Ministry of Education wants to implement the ten-year plan for inclusive education with adequate structural and technical support.
2. Appointing assistant principals in inclusive schools who specialise in special education or difficulties will impact the inclusive school's leadership success.
3. Identifying two inclusive schools in each school cluster (for boys and girls) with all the services required, including multidisciplinary teams, so that each school acts as a hub for both male and female students with disabilities, concentrating all resources and services on them and offering a role model environment for caring for people with disabilities, rather than by dividing up the work among distinct schools, whose attendance might not be adequate for the goal.
4. Identifying two inclusive schools in each district (females and males) that contain all the necessary services, specifically multidisciplinary teams, so that each school serves as a gathering point for students with disabilities (males and females) and focuses all efforts and services on them and provides a model environment for caring for people with disabilities, instead of By distributing the attempt to separate schools, whose presence may not be sufficient for the purpose.
5. Defining the role of school principals of both genders in the terms mentioned in the questionnaire as the assignments regulating their practices in the inclusive education program.
6. Determine specific criteria for accepting students with disabilities into inclusive schools based on the specialists' diagnosis of their condition.
7. Allocating two or more resource rooms within the school building, one for students with learning difficulties, the gifted and students who drop out and are older than their classmates.
8. Engaging all-inclusive school staff in intensive courses on dealing with people with disabilities.

### References:

1. Al-Hamad, Ali and Al-Atoum, Naeem. (2016). Inclusion for people with special needs. Jordan: Dar Al Masirah.
2. Al-Khatib, Jamal (2004). Teaching students with special needs in regular schools. Jordan: Dar Wael.
3. Al-Zayat, Fathi. (2009). Integrating people with special needs: (philosophy, method, and mechanisms). Cairo: Universities Publishing House
4. Ababneh, Ghaith and Al-Khamrah, Hatem. (2020). The Status Quo of Programs, Services and Practices Provided for Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Schools in Jordan. Journal of the Islamic University for Educational and Psychological Studies. Volume (28) ed (5) 847-871.
5. Al-Assaf, Saleh (2012). Introduction to research in behavioural sciences. Egypt: Dar Al-Zahraa for Publishing and Distribution
6. Al-Ghalilat, Ahmed and Al-Samadi, Jamil. (2015). Develop standards to ensure inclusive education programs and examine the degree of their application to the programs offered in Jordan. Educational science studies. V (3) p (1). 24-46
7. Al-Falahat, Fayza, Al-Saaida, Amjad, Al-Safafeh, Enas, and Al-Rahmaneh, Muhammad (2022). Training guide for the inclusion and diversity program in education. Ministry of Education / Jordan. Oman
8. Al-Qabali, Yahya and Mahasis, Sami (2023). The reality of inclusive public school principals exercising their supervisory role over the inclusive education program in the capital, Amman. Arab Journal of Science and Research Publishing. 7(12). 102-121
9. Qatnani, Hiyam (2019). Attitudes of teachers and principals in UNRWA schools towards integrating students with special needs into regular schools and their relationship to some variables. Mutah Journal for Research and Studies/Humanities and Social Sciences Series. Mutah Zam University, Volume 34, Issue 5.
10. Project to strengthen the system to support primary and secondary education enrollment and learning for the most needy groups (March 2021) Reference 21/81.
11. Melhem, Sami (2007). Research approach in education and science curricula psychology. Jordan: Dar Al Masirah
12. Melhem, Maison, Abu Al Rub, Majeda and Oleimat, Saleh (2021). The Role of Public School Principals in Facing the Difficulties of Integrating Students with Special Needs According to the Special Education Law 2018 Within the Green Line from the Point of View of Principals and Teachers. Journal of Al-Quds Open University for Educational & Psychological Research & Studies, v (12), ed (33).
13. United Nations Educational and Cultural Organization (2018) Defining the scope of inclusive education [PDF file] Reference:
14. [https://unesdoc.unesco.org/in/rest/annotationSVC/DownloadWatermarkedAttachment/attach\\_import\\_58fc96e5-0c-4f99-9859-3f43127961d8?\\_=265773eng.pdf](https://unesdoc.unesco.org/in/rest/annotationSVC/DownloadWatermarkedAttachment/attach_import_58fc96e5-0c-4f99-9859-3f43127961d8?_=265773eng.pdf)

15. Mercy Corps. (2021). Procedural guide to inclusive education, 1st edition. Ministry of Education / Jordan, Amman.
16. The Ministry of Education. 2019. Ten-Year Strategy for Inclusive Education. Jordan Amman.
17. Bui, X., Quirk, C., Almazan, S., & Valenti, M. (2010). Inclusive education research and practice. Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education, 1-14.
18. Alquraini, T., & Gut, D. (2012). Critical components of successful inclusion of students with severe disabilities: Literature review. *International Journal of Special Education*, 27(1), 42-59.
19. Avramidis, E., & Norwich, B. (2002). Teachers' attitudes toward integration/inclusion: A review of the literature. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 17, 129-147. doi: 10.1080/08856250210129056
20. Bartlett, L. D., Etscheidt, S., & Weisenstein, G. R. (2007). *Special education law and practice in public schools*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
21. Bourke, J., & Titus, A. (2019, March 29). Why inclusive leaders are good for organisations, and how to become one. *Harvard Business Review*. <https://hbr.org/2019/03/why-inclusive-leaders-are-good-for-organizations-and-how-to-become-one>
22. Bublit, G. (2016). Effective strategies for district leadership to create successful inclusion models: Special education directors and school reform in the context of a least restrictive environment. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1804049365).
23. Childhood Education International (2021). Inclusive Leadership Brief. Retrieved from: <https://ceinternational892.org/wpcontent/uploads/2021/07/inclusiveLeadershipBriefJuly2021.pdf>.
24. Global Campaign for Education. (2015). SDG4's ten targets.
25. <https://campaignforeducation.org/en/who-we-are/the-international-education-framework-2/the-sustainable-development-goal-4/sdg4s-10-targets>.
26. Gregory, J. (2018). Not my responsibility: the impact of separate special education systems on educators' attitudes toward inclusion. *Educational Policy Analysis and Strategic Research*, 13(1), 127-148.
27. Hack, A. J. (2014). Pennsylvania middle school principals' attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular education classroom. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1650670597).
28. Ila. (2021, March 5). The key to inclusive leadership: The why, how & what to being an inclusive leader. Medium. <https://ilageneration.medium.com/the-key-to-inclusive-leadership-the-why-how-what-to-being-an-inclusive-leader-7a4b1b767bcf>
29. Mississippi Dept. Education. (2023). Inclusive Leadership Guide. Mississippi State University
30. Osgood, R. L. (2005). *The History of Inclusion in the United States*. Washington: Gallaudet University Press
31. Ryan, J. (2006). Inclusive leadership and social justice for schools. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 5(1), 3-17.
32. Stith, A. L. (2013). Principals' attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1493904574).
33. Bortini, Paola; Paci, Angelica; Rise, Ann; Rojnik Irene. (2016). *The inclusive leadership handbook – theoretical framework*. Inclusive leadership.
34. Retrieved from <https://inclusiveleadership.eu/>
35. UNESCO. (2015). Education 2030: Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all; 2016. p. 7. Retrieved from:
36. [https://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/education-2030-incheon-framework-for-action-implementation-of-sdg4-2016-en\\_2.pdf](https://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/education-2030-incheon-framework-for-action-implementation-of-sdg4-2016-en_2.pdf)