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Assessing preferential choice of modern teaching methods: An insight into special educators' role in Saudi Arabia

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ABSTRACT: The study aimed at identifying the level of use of modern teaching methods by primary teachers of pupils with learning difficulties in Saudi Arabia. It also aimed to know if there are statistically significant differences in the level of use of teaching methods in comparison to the elementary school teachers. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, three instruments namely *survey, observation, interview* were used. *Survey* was distributed on a sample of randomly selected English teachers and instructors (n = 51) from the schools in the northern border region of Saudi Arabia. The researcher used three modern strategies, namely *cross-teaching, training method, multi-sensory*. The researcher used the *Analytical Descriptive Curriculum* to test the hypotheses. The results indicated that the use of modern methods is followed moderately and the teachers are found to be intermediate level users who need to be guided and encouraged to further advance their understandings about the latest intervention methods so that the desired objectives can be achieved.

Keywords: Learning Difficulties, Cross-Teaching, Training Method, Multi-Sensory.

1. Introduction

The field of learning difficulties has witnessed a great growth and development in the last two decades of the twentieth century. Its qualitative development during the current decade has continued its rhythms, in terms of its definition, identification, diagnosis and treatment. It focused on the dimensions of preventive, therapeutic, developmental and academic difficulties of learning in different frameworks such as medical, behavioral, psychological, neurological, and cognitive. (Fathi Al Zayat, 2007: 7)

The term *learning difficulties,* is one of the educational terms, that has attracted the attention of many researchers and those interested in the field of special education in general and learning difficulties in particular, to ensure the future course of action in this area of study. There is a substantial spread of institutions and associations specialized in learning difficulties which aim to provide appropriate treatment and educational services in the last two decades. The present study aims to seek appropriate teaching methods, and to search for the most conducive education set up, especially when low school achievement has become a challenge for all the stakeholders.

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So, this research aims to highlight the types and methods of modern teaching that would enhance the effectiveness of educational experience of the learners with learning difficulties (Al Hashimi & Al Wahaib, 2011: 54). It is a common believed that the pupils with learning difficulties differ from normal students so they do not get benefitted in the same proportion from the traditional methods used in teaching the normal ones. Therefore, it is necessary to teach such students using special and diverse teaching strategies and methods. The teacher should take into account this difference so that their teaching should reflect diversified teaching strategies and methods best suited to the learners' abilities and needs. Learning depends on the learner himself; his willingness, his ability to learn, and the activities he does. It is an active self-activity of the learner, and the role of the teacher is to develop those preparations such as designing and planning of educational content appropriate to the conditions of learning. Although, on one hand, the teacher's use of one or more strategies depends on his or her awareness of the teaching methods, various approaches and the characteristics of the learners, on the other hand, it also depends on his knowledge and proficiency in using different methods. All this depends on the curriculum structure, its objectives and the content and evaluation, which yield effectively the outputs.

Active learning is a good teaching strategy when teachers guide students' thinking about asking questions (Al Turki, 2013: 240) skills. The basic principles that must be taken into consideration while setting educational goals should be the needs of the child. The basic step is to choose the teaching method that should be employed to enable the student achieve the educational goals. Therefore, the use of the modern teaching methods should take into account the current level of performance of the student. This would help in stimulating the student's motivation to learn, and that in turn allows the student to gradually move from the current level of performance to the expected level proficiency skill (Al-Hashimi, et al 2011: 9). Research in psychological studies indicates that the early identification of pupils with learning difficulties helps to deal with their problems. Or else it becomes difficult to identify these students in the regular classes with traditional methods of instructions. Teachers can be helpful for these students by incorporating various modifications to their teaching strategies, among that the most important is the tools and educational activities or adopting the best suitable teaching method (Lerner, 2000: 53)

The use of modern teaching methods for people with learning difficulties is of vital importance in the area of special education, in order to make the learning process more encouraging and also to achieve the educational goals. Therefore, this research work discusses the level of use of some of these modern methods (*training method, cross-teaching method, multi-sensory method*) and their knowledge of the application of the tools of study (*survey, observation, interview*).

1.1 Research problem:

The search for the appropriate method to teach the learners with learning difficulties related to their needs is very important. Studies available related to the ways to use modern teaching methods for the learners with learning difficulties address the topic in general, as the study of Al Hazmi (2012: 54) addressed the recent trends in teaching methods. It was a preliminary study to find an advanced systematic teaching model and its importance. In the study

of Al Shanani (2010: 33), he aimed to know the level of use of modern teaching strategies by mathematics teachers of the primary students in Jordan.

1.2 Relevance of the present study:

- To diagnose effectively of students with learning difficulties in Saudi Arabia in order to select the appropriate teaching method best suited for the learners' needs.
- To determine the level of awareness and its application of modern methods in dealing with students with learning difficulties.
- To take advantage of modern teaching methods for such learners.
- To draw the attention of various stakeholders in the educational process to the need to use modern teaching methods that could be effective and result orientated.
- To aware the teachers of other possibilities that could be more effective than the ones they don't find very encouraging. It will help them in improvising their various aspects of teaching.

1.3 Objectives:

The current study aimed to identify the level of use of modern teaching methods by the primary school teachers for the learners with learning difficulties in the northern border region of Rafha, Saudi Arabia.

1.4 Research Questions:

The study case can be identified in a key question:

A. *What is the level of use of modern teaching methods by primary school teachers for students with learning difficulties in Saudi Arabia?*

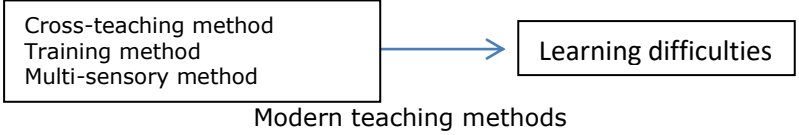
This can be further divided into two questions:

a. *What is the degree of difference in the use of modern methods of learning difficulties among the teachers in the primary stage?*
b. *Does the level of use of using modern strategies differ in terms of sex, qualification, and years of experience?*

2. Theoretical Framework of the Study

In 1962, Samuel Kirk, used the term "learning difficulties," to point out that a group of students with no disabilities found it difficult to acquire language and learning skills in normal teaching methods. They also did not have visual or auditory disabilities that prevented them from acquiring language and learning. Difficulty in listening, thinking, speaking, reading, writing, spelling, or solving mathematical problems or learning difficulties are lifelong difficulties that require continuous understanding and assistance during primary, secondary and post-school years (Kirk, 1963). These difficulties also have an important impact on the student in the classroom and academic achievement (Al Sayad, 2016). These difficulties also affect other aspects of his life, such as the social, emotional and behavioral aspects such as his inability to establish social relations and make friends, to engage in daily activities and to play with his friends (Al Zayat, 2006: 46).

The theoretical framework focuses on the following:



Modern teaching methods

2.1 First: Learning difficulties

Students with learning difficulties form a special category that seeks special attention and special services to help them solve problems that obstruct their mental, psychological and achievement progress. The educational definition of learning difficulties refers to the lack of growth of the mental abilities of an individual in a systematic manner which is represented in the weakness of the individual to learn literacy skills and numerical skills. There is a clear contrast between the mental abilities of an individual and his academic achievement, despite the fact that the cause of this deficit or variation is not physical or sensory (Al Rousan, 2001: 12)

2.1.1 What are the learning difficulties?

Learning difficulties are defined as deficits or disabilities that express themselves in the form of inability of an individual to learn and progress as per the level expected of him and the difficulty faced in acquiring new information and skills. Difficulties in underdevelopment or temporal delay in one of the school subjects are the result of psychological in nature rather than mental retardation or physical dysfunction (Al Din, 1991: 32). In 1984, the American Association for Children and Adults Learning Disabilities defined learning difficulties as "Special learning disabilities are chronic conditions of nerve origin that affects the growth, integration or use of verbal and nonverbal skills. Special learning difficulties are evident in high/medium grade individuals with less functional sensory organs and physical mobility so they need appropriate learning opportunities. The effects of these difficulties depend on the degree of its severity. Thus, his educational activities, regular life activities, professional and social life vary on the self-assessment of an individual (Hallahan, Kauffman & Lloyd, 2006: 53).

2.1.2 Classification of Learning Difficulties:

There are two types of learning difficulties: Developmental learning disabilities which are related to brain function, mental and cognitive processes which a child needs in academic achievement. These difficulties can be further divided into two sub-types; First (*Attention, Comprehension, and Memory*) and Second (*Thinking and Oral language*). The developmental learning disabilities represent three basic areas which need to be focused: linguistic, cognitive, Kinetic and visual skills. Academic learning disabilities represent Dyslexia, Dysgraphia and Dyscalculia, and these disabilities and others result from Developmental difficulties. (Peter, 2011:28).

2.1.3 Reasons for Learning Difficulties:

The causes of learning difficulties are still vague, but most definitions of learning difficulties are combined to link learning disabilities with simple brain injury or simple dysfunction. But in reality they are associated with one or more of the following factors:

*Brain injury***:** It occurs during the prenatal, perinatal and postnatal periods as the prenatal causes are maternal malnutrition, alcohol or drugs. The causes of perinatal are such as lack of oxygen and obstetric injuries as a result of the use of sharp medical instruments. The post-natal causes include accidents, falling from higher or childhood illnesses such as encephalitis, meningitis, measles and fever (Mercer, 1997: 33).

*Genetic factors***:** Several studies refer to the impact of genetics on learning disabilities (Plomin et al, 2010). DeFries, Fulker, and Labuda (1987) applied the reading tests on a sample of 125 families who suffered from learning disabilities and they had family history of such cases, achieved

low grades compared to that of the families without such history, suggesting that genetics has an impact on learning disabilities.

Biochemical factors: The human body produces chemicals to achieve balance of body and represent the secretion of endocrine glands that pour directly into the blood; the excessive secretions of the thyroid gland lead to learning disabilities.

2.1.4 Characteristics of children with learning disabilities

- The child, who suffers learning disabilities, has no learning problems as such, but has difficulty in the aspect of learning.
- He suffers lack of social interaction
- His IQ is not low, but he suffers from a deficiency in one or more basic psychological processes.
- His educational achievement does not correspond to his mental abilities.
- He seems less mature than his classmates (Goodman, Wendy, 2007: 12). Although students with learning difficulties do not suffer from low intelligence whose IQ ratios are average or above average, they suffer from a deficiency in cognitive and cognitive aspects
- The low level of dyslexia
- The weakness of their cognitive environment
- Lack of cognitive skills

*2.2 Learning Difficulties***:** There are several criteria to be checked before judging that the child has learning difficulties and these tests. There are behavioral characteristics that are common in cases with learning difficulties and teachers can detect early cases with learning difficulties using behavior standards of learners using various tests. Cases due to mental retardation, visual, auditory, kinetic or emotional disturbances could be excluded. Maturity rates vary from a student to other and this imbalance is one of the reasons for learning difficulties.

Divergent Views:

- It depends on the calculation of the discrepancy between students' mental performance and expected performance (Nathwani, 2003: 13). One of the goals of modern special education is to improve the performance of individuals with learning disabilities, both in terms of knowledge and skills as well as their active communication with the community, based on their individual energies and abilities (Al Khatib, 2014: 18)
- Normal individuals use many strategies to preserve and recall information when needed, and develop their own strategies independently. However, the individuals with learning disabilities do not do this on their own; rather they need professional guidance to teach them such strategies.
- Hallahan et al (2006: 54) mentioned that students with learning difficulties suffer from a lack of strategies for working memory that forms the basis for the transmission of information to long-term memory. It has been observed that they lack appropriate practices to develop such strategies. Moreover, individuals with learning disabilities are found to be less efficient than ordinary ones with regard to audio and visual memory; they

have problems choosing the right strategies to help them integrate new knowledge with previous knowledge. (Al Miqdad, 2014: 82).

2.4 Modern teaching methods: The modern method is the strategy used by the teacher in his work, his behaviors and his relations with his students in the classroom represent the scientific practices or methods. The teachers' behaviors that is reflected in his management of the classroom, his interaction with his students, social relations and others, have an impact in the formation of the psychological atmosphere for students in the classroom so that the learners can easily be directed towards the teacher and his study materials (Al Mahdi, 2010: 17). Cognitive strategies differ from the learning strategies generally. The cognitive strategies are more general than learning strategies which are defined as the skills and methods used by the individual in their treatment of learning attitudes associated with how to acquire information, use it in the most effective ways of learning, recalling, retrieving, synthesizing and deriving the best suited learning strategies for him from the various educational strategies. While education strategies are mostly focused on learner-centric approach, education strategies are the methods or techniques used by the teacher in teaching students. It has been observed that the success or effectiveness of individuals' performance on tasks vary depending on the strategies followed for normal and special cases. (Al Zayat, 2007: 163).

2.5 Training method: The training method is one of the modern methods used by the researcher. It aims to create a new role of the students; the decisions on effective performance are basically transformed from the teacher to the learners. These decisions are the conditions, the place, the sequence of the tasks, the time of the start of each a dynamic assignment, and asking questions for illustration. In this method, the teacher explains and presents the skill and monitor the performance. The role of the students is to move among students, observe and watch the individual attempts by each student. The training method requires the preparation of information of required homework or the dynamic assignment, to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of time allotted for the performance of skill in the process of communication between the teacher and the student. Moreover, this method enables the student to exchange experience with the teacher personally (Mosston & Ashorth, 2002, 1999: 24). The training method is useful for enabling the student to make many decisions about the subjects of the study and to draw experience on the subjects from the teacher in person (Avanzini, 2000: 97).

Cross-teaching method: It is an interactive method which creates a reality that leads to a new set of core objectives, which meet the new social and psychological requirements of both the teacher and the student. The role of the teacher is to prepare and design the paper of assignment and to explain the skill required to apply in detail. Then he gives an example and asks the students to define the roles and nature of relationships among the events, facts, characters etc. He clarifies the things unclear and elaborates the details to the learners as well.

3. Literature Review

Teachers specialized in special education require specific competence. They must acquire this competence in their initial (Pegalajar-Palomino, 2014) and permanent education (Sykes et al., 2010; Conklin, 2012; Pegalajar-Palomino, 2014). To make their work in the classroom effective they must use, mix and adapt different strategies, resources and opportunities to the different

characteristics, levels and needs of students (Ruiz Rodríguez, 2003; Martínez Geijo, 2007; Pegalajar-Palomino, 2011; González-Peiteado, 2013). Therefore, Special Education is different from the one that takes place in the regular classroom, demanding more dedication from the teacher. In his study of the methods (old and new/modern) of teaching Arabic language, Al-Hawas (2011) mentioned that an interview conducted on the choices between the old style (with its effects of memorization and information stuffing) and the modern methods (with focus on comprehensive function such as the teacher, learner, and the educational materials). The researcher used the semi-experimental method on a sample of female students (n = 50), selected from the government schools in Muscat, Oman. Various new technologies such as audio, video, computers and internet used for the experimental group in order to deliver effective instructions, whereas, the control group was taught using traditional ways. The results of the study showed statistical differences between the experimental group and the control group due to the methods used for instruction. The study of Al-Shanani (2010) showed the degree of the use of the teachers of the first three stages of the modern teaching strategies in mathematics in Jordan and the study was limited to five strategies of teaching (direct teaching, problem solving and investigation, learning in groups, learning through activities and critical thinking strategy). To achieve the objectives of the study, two tools were used: survey and observation card. The survey was conducted on teachers (n=205) who were randomly selected from the schools affiliated to Directorate of education from Az-zarqa Al-oula province. While the sample of the observation card collected by teachers (n = 5) chosen from the same schools deliberately. And the results of the five strategies indicated that there were statistically significant differences in the degree of use of the five strategies in terms of both the variables (experience and educational qualification).

The study of indicated that there are many methods and strategies of teaching that can be used with students with learning difficulties such as training based on Task analysis and simplification, Multi- sensory strategies, positive learning method, direct method, aloud learning method, individual learning style, advanced experience in organizations, method of games, diagnostic teaching method (Badr, 2005; Abu Nyan, 2001; Gagnon, 2001). Wanzek et al (2006) emphasized that educational factors and non-professional educational practices by some teachers who classify students with learning difficulties as lazy and see their weaknesses as their own problems. Therefore, they are unable to use effective strategies and educational curriculum, to train on social, physical and motor skills in oral communication. We find that the teachers focus more on memorizing and listening than the educational experiences depend on body and sensory-motor skills.

The results of Gadour's (2006) study showed that the external factors that are characterized by defects in the educational process, is one of the reasons that the teachers are not interested in or are aware of learners' problems in learning so that the best suited appropriate educational practices can be adopted. Jennings (2009) undertook a study entitled 'Problems faced by teachers of students with learning Ddifficulties in California'. The study sample consisted of teachers (120), including 70 male teachers of intermediate schools. The study found the impact of financial problems such as salaries and incentives, including their qualifications, professional training and practices affect the teachers 'performance.

The study of Al Harithi (2009) aimed to identify the obstacles faced by the school administration in the application of modern teaching strategies, which were necessary to know the difficulties and obstacles encountered by the learners so that appropriate solutions could be adopted. The researcher used the descriptive-survey method. The study was applied to a sample of 99 individuals which included 41 educational supervisors, 23 administrative staff, 35 representatives of schools from three educational districts: Riyadh, Makkah and the Eastern regions. The results showed that lack of proper technical support in Makkah & Eastern regions was the dominant issues that prevented the professionals to have further enhance their educational and professional experience. Since Riyadh is the capital city of the kingdom, such issues were not there and the professionals had good exposure of the modern methods and expertise.

The method of using multiple senses in improving reading, writing and spelling skills in students with learning difficulties found to be very effective (Joshi, Dahlgren, and Jodin, 2002). The study sample consisted of first grade students (n = 56) showed that the experimental group which was studied by using the multi-sensory manner showed significant improvement in achieving the desired objectives.

The study of Al Khatib (2014) aimed to identify the prevailing learning methods and the thought process of students with difficulties in learning mathematics, and its relation to their achievement in an educational process. The study also aimed to check the impact of gender on learners' attitudes towards mathematics. The study sample consisted of students with learning difficulties (n=100). The study used a list of the modified learning methods of Collop and McCarthy (2005) as a *Diagnostic Assessment Scale* to evaluate learning difficulties in Mathematics (Zayat, 2008) and *Learning Styles Scale* to assess their attitudes towards mathematics. The results showed a correlation between learning methods and their thought process. Students with high attitudes towards mathematics showed significant improvement in all the methods applied for instruction.

In previous studies, many researchers used comparisons between modern and old teaching methods as well as the extent of knowledge and the differences between them which distinguish them in their application depending on the subject matter such as mathematics and Arabic. It has not been dealt so far to assess the level of the use of the modern methods by the primary school teachers, which is supposed to be the foundation stage of any educational process. An appropriate intervention technique at this stage would yield better results in the subsequent stages and would form the bases for further academic achievement. Therefore, the current research was limited to this objective and sought to determine the level of use and to identify the most important obstacles.

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Hypotheses

a. There are no statistically significant differences between the teachers of the primary stage in the level of use of modern methods: cross-teaching, training, multi - sensory).
b. There are differences of statistical significance among the teachers of the primary stage in the level of the use of modern methods: cross-teaching, training, multi - sensory).

c. There are no statistically significant differences in the level of the use of modern teaching methods in terms of variables like, gender (male & female), qualification (bachelor, postgraduate, diploma), Years of experience (long, medium, short).
d. There are statistically significant differences in the level of use of modern teaching methods in terms of variables like, gender (male & female), qualification (bachelor, postgraduate, diploma), Years of experience (long, medium, short).

4.2 Study Procedures:

4.2.1 Methodology

The researcher used the analytical descriptive approach, which is appropriate to the nature of the study, its problem and its objectives. Emphasis was placed on the level of use of modern teaching methods for people with learning difficulties in the northern borders of Rafha, Saudi Arabia.

4.2.2 Study sample

The survey was applied to a sample of 51 teachers from randomly selected primary schools in Rafha, the northern border areas of Saudi Arabia. The survey items were completed in 36 items on three focus areas: learning environment, teacher & students, and each one consists of 12 items. Interview note or card consists of 12 items.

4.2.3 Limitations of the study

Time: The first semester of the academic year 2017/2018 (September to December)

Place: This study was applied to identified government schools in the northern border area of Rafha, Saudi Arabia

Subjects: Primary school teachers from some selected schools in the northern border area of Rafha, Saudi Arabia.

4.3 Tools

The tools of the field study were *survey, interview, observation*, which were prepared in order to identify the level of use of modern methods from the point of view of special educators/teachers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The *survey* tool in its final form consisted of 3 areas: the first area is related to the learning environment and consisted of 12 items, the teacher area consisted of 12 items and the curriculum area consisted of 12 items. The validity and stability of the tool was verified by the professionals involved in the area of study. The second tool was *observation* which was consisted of 15 items and the third tool, i.e. the *interview* consisted of 12 items which helped in data collection. All the questionnaires were prepared by the researcher himself (see Appendix 1).

The questionnaire in its final form was applied to 51 teachers from various government schools in the northern border region of Rafha, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The method of answering the questionnaire was prepared in a four points Likert scale (often - sometimes - rarely - never), giving the teacher the opportunity to determine the level of modern methods used. The teacher selects one answer for each item of the questionnaire and the score is calculated on a scale (0 – 1 – 2 - 3) and thus the total score ranges from 0 to 108.The high and low score indicates the level of

use of methods of instruction.

Psychometric characteristics of the questionnaire:

Reliability was calculated in two ways:

Virtual reliability (arbitrators): The aim is to know the validity of the questionnaire and its relevance to the study sample. This type of reliability was calculated in two ways: first one, to apply to 51 teachers in government schools, and second one is to present the items of the questionnaire to a group of professors specialized in the field of learning difficulties and methods of teaching curricula.

Internal consistency reliability: This type of reliability is calculated by calculating the correlation coefficients between each Statistical hypotheses of the research.

To answer the first research question of the study, the following categories were formed to evaluate low, moderate and high level users in terms of methods of instruction followed by the professionals involved in special education.

1. Not more than 1.99 is considered lower use as statistically significant
2. Lot less or more than 2 to 2 .99 is considered moderate use and is statistically significant
3. Not more or less than 3 is considered High use and is statistically significant.

The researcher calculated the arithmetical averages and the standard deviations of the degree of use of the three teaching methods.

T-Test was conducted to test the differences between the arithmetic averages of the samples to see the choices made by the teachers among three teaching methods. The arithmetical averages and standard deviations of the study sample are all in descending order:

Field	**Arithmetical average**	**Standard deviation**	**Order**	**Degree**
Questionnaire	4.06	0.62	1	High
Interview	3.56	0.96	2	Medium
Observation	3.40	0.61	3	Medium
Total	3.95	0.65		Medium

Table 1. Arithmetic averages of the tools

No	**Items**	**Arithmetical average**	**Standard deviation**	**Order**	**degree**
1	Large number of the students in the classes	3.93	0.76	1	High
2	Lack of accurate diagnosis of students with learning difficulties	3.78	0.58	2	High
3	Lack of a special room (resource room) to teach students with learning difficulties	3.63	0.74	3	High
4	Lack of awareness of parents	3.60	0.74	4	High
5	The inadequacy of material resources, which affects the use of modern methods	3.45	0.93	5	Medium
6	The inadequacy of valid environmental resources such as buildings	3.43	0.84	6	Medium

7	Availability of educational resources for modern teaching	3.40	1.26	7	Medium
8	Inadequate curricula for students with learning difficulties	3.39	1.28	8	Medium
9	Lack of teaching means in schools	3.37	1.21	9	High
10	The administration's ignorance of the needs of students with learning difficulties	3.32	1.15	10	Medium
11	Lack of a suitable learning environment for people with learning difficulties	3.28	1.13	11	High
12	Lack of clarity in treatment programs	3.23	1.9	12	Medium
	Overall (in general)	3.56	0.98		High

Table 2. Mathematical averages and deviations of the sample of the study on the questionnaire on the educational environment

As it can be observed from the table 2 that the average calculation of the level of use of teachers reached (3.56) and with a standard deviation (0.98), indicates that the level of use is high in this questionnaire (reliability was tested to be 99%).

No	**Items**	**Arithmetical average**	**Standard deviation**	**Order**	**Degree**
1	Determines the skill that he wants to give to the student	3.53	0,78	1	High
2	Use more than one sense during teaching	3.33	0,86	2	High
3	Organizes the presentation to make it proportionate to everyone	3.28	0,93	3	Medium
4	Uses a strategy suitable for individuals and groups	3.25	0.98	4	Medium
5	Takes into account all levels during teaching	2.88	1.11	5	Medium
6	The teacher's ability to provide skills gradually from easy to hard	2.38	1,14	6	Medium
7	Trains the students in a cross-teaching way	2.30	1,16	7	Medium
8	Arranges his ideas and organizes his explanation	2.28	1,12	8	High
9	Experience exceeds 5 years	2.21	1,9	9	High
10	Applys modern teaching models	2.16	1,6	10	Medium
11	Helps the learner to understand and memorize the information	2.11	1,5	11	Medium
12	Most teachers have high educational qualification	2.11	1,5	12	Medium
	Overall (in general)	3.10	0.98		Medium

Table 3. Averages and standard deviations of teacher’s responses

Table 3 shows that the arithmetical average of the teachers' use of modern methods in general is 3.10 with a standard deviation of 0.91. It indicates that the use of the methods is moderate. The reliability of this test was found to be 95%.

S.N	Statement	Arithmetical average	Standard deviation	Order	Degree
1	Do you use a variety of styles?	3.45	0.85	1	High
2	Do you use a multi-sensory strategy?	3.30	0.89	2	Middle
3	Do you prefer the cross-teaching method?	3.15	1.08	3	Middle
4	Do you prefer training style?	3.12	1.10	4	Middle
5	Do you organize workshops to benefit students from the strategy?	2.23	0.95	5	Low
6	Do you consider the individual differences observed during teaching?	2.18	0.88	6	Middle
7	He loses focus after a short time.	2.13	1.2	7	Low
8	He cannot finish his tasks.	2.11	1.7	8	Middle
9	Moving from one place to another during the explanation	2.8	1.5	9	Middle
10	He Plays with his classmates' belongings	2.4	1.9	10	Low
11	Low degree in all subjects	2	1.1	11	Middle
12	He excels in some subjects	1.99	1.6		Middle
	Overall (in general)	2.64	0.95		Middle

Table 4. Averages and standard deviations of students' performance.

In table 4, we note that the arithmetic average of the level of the method using totally amounted to 2.64, with a standard deviation of 0.95. It indicates that the degree of use of modern methods with an moderate degree after the teachers fulfill the items concerning the students. In addition, the statistical analysis showed that it is implemented modern teaching methods, on average, with a degree of confidence 95%.

S.NO	Performance to be observed	Available	Unavailable
1	The teacher determines the skill which student should acquire		
2	The teacher uses more than a sense during teaching		
3	The teacher organizes the presentation to make it fit for everyone		
4	The teacher uses an individual and group strategy		
5	The teacher considers all levels during teaching		
6	The teacher grades during teaching the easy-to-hard skill		
7	The teacher trains students on the cross-teaching method		
8	the teacher Diversifies in his methods of explanation		
9	The teacher uses modern methods that help to attract the attention of students		
10	The teacher uses a multi-sensory strategy		
11	The teacher gives the student enough time to apply the skill		

12	The teacher provides feedback individually		
13	The teacher explains the role of each student		
14	The teacher watches the student while applying the skill		
15	The teacher evaluates the performance of student continuously		

Table 5. Model of the teacher's performance note during the implementation of modern teaching methods

When a note card is applied while the teachers use the modern methods, it demonstrate different application strategies from one method to another

While observing the teachers, the items to be observed are limited so that the level of use the modern methods of teaching can be determined as follow:

S.NO	**Performance to be observed**	**Available**	**Unavailable**	**Teachers responded in *Yes***
1	He determines the skill which student should acquire	✓		33
2	He uses more than one sense during teaching	✓		21
3	He organizes the presentation to make it fit for everyone		✓	12
4	He uses an individual and group strategy	✓		46
5	He considers all levels while teaching	✓		19
6	The teacher grades during teaching the easy-to-hard skill	✓		31
7	The teacher trains students on the cross-teaching method		✓	32
8	the teacher diversifies in his methods of explanation	✓		45
9	He uses modern methods that help to attract the attention of students	✓		43
10	The teacher uses a multi-sensory strategy		✓	24
11	He gives the student enough time to apply the skill	✓		22
12	He provides feedback individually		✓	11
13	The teacher explains the role of each student	✓		43
14	The teacher watches the student while applying the skill	✓		36
15	teacher evaluates the performance of student continuously	✓		47

Table 6. Use the modern methods of teaching note

The observation demonstrate that the teachers use the modern methods and the most frequently used one was the cross-teaching method as 32 teachers out of 51 responded in favor of this method. Twenty four teachers were observed to be in the favor of multi-sensory strategy and only 19 were found to be in favor of the training method.

Interview tool

Fifty one teachers had undergone interview that includes a set of questions about the level of use of modern teaching methods, and the arithmetical average and standard deviation were used to determine the degree of use.

S.NO	Questions	Arithmetical averages	Standard deviation	Teachers responses in *yes*	Degree
1	Do you have the skill of planning?	3.31	0.78	48	High
2	Do you use a cross-teaching whiteboard?	3.33	0.86	40	High
3	Do you use various types of methods?	3.28	0.93	50	High
4	Do you use a multi-sensory strategy?	3.25	0.98	21	Middle
5	Do you prefer the cross-teaching method?	2.88	1.11	18	Middle
6	Do you prefer training style?	2.38	1.14	23	Middle
7	Do you organize workshops to benefit students from the strategy?	2.30	1.16	5	Middle
8	Do you consider the individual differences during teaching?	2.28	1.12	49	High
9	Do you watch students while you are performing skills?	2.21	1.9	45	High
10	Do you distribute the roles to students according to their abilities?	2.16	1.6	17	Middle
11	Do you provide feedback in a timely manner?	2.11	1.5	24	Middle
12	Do you divide the students according to their levels?	2.11	1.5	46	Middle

Table 7. Evaluation of the honesty and consistency of the interview card

After interviewing the use of modern methods was determined and the results showed that the teachers' use modern methods with arithmetical average 2.31 and standard deviation of 1.5 preferred training method. Twenty 23 teachers were in favor of training method whereas only eighteen and twenty one responded in favor of cross-teaching and multi-sensory methods of instructions respectively..

5. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to identify the level of use of primary teachers for modern teaching methods for children with learning difficulties (*cross-teaching, training method, multi-sensory*). This study attempted to answer the following questions:

a. What is the level of modern teaching methods use by teachers of primary stage for students with learning difficulties in Saudi Arabia?

b. Does the degree of the use of learning difficulties or modern strategies by teacher differ in terms of their gender, qualification, and years of experience?

The First question:

a. What is the level of modern teaching methods use by teachers of primary stage for students with learning difficulties (cross-teaching, training method, multiple senses)?

The following hypothesis arose from this question:

There are no statistically significant differences (a = 0.05) between the level of use of primary school teachers for the training method, the cross-teaching method and the multi-level sensory

method. The percentages of teachers in the schools were calculated which refers to the level of each one use of the three methods in the questionnaire. Moreover, the averages are calculated for the number of teachers who indicate the extent to which the three methods in the questionnaire are used by finding a total arithmetical average for the use of each method. Also, the standard deviation is calculated for teachers' responses of the use of the three methods said in the questionnaire. In addition to this, it's worth noting here that the teachers ' response was graded in terms of the extent of use of each method; it shows the percentages, arithmetical averages, and standard deviations of the degrees of the three teaching methods. The correlation coefficients between the grades of teachers ' practice for each method were calculated. Therefore, t-test was used to test the differences between the arithmetical averages of the samples associated with the level of the three methods of teaching used by the teachers.

The correlation coefficients of the level of teacher practice for each of the three teaching methods were also calculated. Therefore, the t-test was used to test the differences between the arithmetical averages of the samples associated with the levels of the teachers' use of the three methods of teaching. So, it clearly showed that the training method with an average total use is 2.13, i.e. 68% use, is preferred more than the other two teaching methods (cross-teaching method and multi-sensory method). The average total use of the cross-method was 37% and the average use of the multi-sensory method was 1.92 with 48% use.

The second question:

b. Is there an impact on the academic qualification, the experience and the gender of the teacher in the level of the training method, the cross-teaching method and the multiple senses method for primary school teachers?

The following hypothesis arose from this question: There are no statistically significant differences (a = 0.5) in the level of primary school teachers' use for the training method (cross-teaching method, training method, and multiple senses) in terms of their academic qualification, experience and gender. To answer this question and to recognize the impact of educational qualification, experience, and gender on each of the methods, a single variation analysis of multiple variables (one-way Manova) was performed. It is clear from this that there are statistically significant differences (H>05) between the three educational qualification levels (bachelor, postgraduate, diploma). Bachelor degree holders are more in favor of the use of the training method whereas teachers with post graduate and diploma degree use the training method and the multi- sensory methods.

In terms of gender variable, there is no difference as such found among the teachers' preference over the methods. There were statistically significant (H > 0.5) between the three levels of expertise (Long, Medium, and Short), or in terms of teachers' years of experience. Teachers with long years of exposure in teaching showed their preference in favor of cross-teaching method and multi-sensory method. Both male and female respondents shared the same views. There were no statistically significant differences (H > 0.5) between short and medium range of years of teaching experience in terms of cross-teaching method and multi-sensory method.

Conclusion & Recommendations

In the light of these conclusions, it is imperative to hold training courses for regular classroom teachers for special needs in general, with learning difficulties in particular. It is also favorable to increase the time duration of field training in institutions specialized in special education, in order to provide teachers with the practical expertise and also to teach them how to deal with cases with special needs in general, and with learning difficulties in particular. It is necessary that the Ministry of Education should pay attention to the problems of teachers with learning difficulties in the departments of education so that effective teaching/training can be carried out. The results recommend further studies on the issue such as problems related to the teacher's competence in the use of diagnostic tests and remedial plans. Teachers should use modern and individualized methods to teach learning people with difficulties and provide means, tools and curricula best suited to the learners' needs.

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