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# EVALUATION OF PREPARATION PROGRAM FOR TEACHERS SPECIALIZING IN LEARNING DISABILITIES IN SAUDI ARABIA

Omer Hussain

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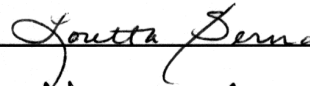
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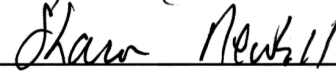


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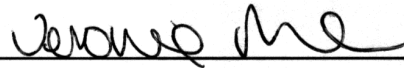
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**EVALUATION OF PREPARATION PROGRAM FOR TEACHERS SPECIALIZING  
IN LEARNING DISABILITIES IN SAUDI ARABIA**

**BY**

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**DISSERTATION**

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**Special Education**

The University of New Mexico  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

**December, 2009**

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents and wife. Without their patience, understanding, support, and most of all love, the completion of this work would not have been possible.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like first to express my gratitude to ALLAH for his great help in all stages of my personal and academic life.

I heartily acknowledge Dr. Liz Keefe, my advisor and dissertation chair, for continuing to encourage me through the years of learning and the long number of months writing and rewriting these chapters. Her guidance and professional style will remain with me as I continue my career.

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To my editor, Dr. Rebel Palm, though a small word of thanks is not enough for many months of work, I do thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Finally, I would like to express profound thanks to my family, father, mother, brothers and sisters for their warm encouragement and good wishes, and to my wife Screen Bakri for her love, patience and support. And never forget my kids, Yara and Mohannad.

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**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to provide an evaluation of the undergraduate special education teacher preparation program at King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. A final sample of 160 LD teachers provided the data used for analysis. Data for the study were collected by a survey consisting of five subscales: coursework, internship quality, classroom applications, professors' teaching skills, and personal learning experience. Descriptive statistics were run to describe the personal characteristics of participants. ANOVA was used to determine whether the independent variables—gender, teaching experience, and/or LD as first choice of specialization—predicted the teachers' perceptions of their preparation program. There was no statistically significant difference in perceptions by predicted independent variables. In general, results indicated that most LD teachers agreed their preparation program was effective. However, LD teachers rated



coursework and professors' teaching skills subscales as not effective. Althabet (2002) found a significant difference between male and female MR teachers while the current study did not find this significant difference. This is might be due to the improvement in the department since 2002 which now offers scholarships for females to get advanced degrees. This has equalized the differences in the teaching and training of female and male students. LD teachers offered their own suggestions for the improvement of their preparation program. Recommendations for teacher preparation programs and for future research are also provided.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>LIST OF FIGURES .....</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE .....</b>	<b>1</b>
Purpose of the Study .....	2
Significance of Study .....	2
Research Questions .....	3
Terms Definitions .....	3
Organization of the Study .....	5
Summary .....	5
<b>CHAPTER TWO .....</b>	<b>6</b>
The Education System in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia .....	7
Ministry of Higher Education .....	16
Preparation of Teachers of LD in Saudi Arabia .....	19
Learning Disabilities in Arabic Countries .....	22
Teacher Education in Special Education .....	23
Summary .....	36
<b>CHAPTER THREE .....</b>	<b>38</b>
The Problem .....	38
Purpose of the Study .....	39
Research Questions .....	39
Targeted Population .....	39
Research Design .....	42

Survey Instrument .....	43
Data Analysis .....	49
Data Collection .....	51
Ethical Considerations .....	53
Summary .....	53
<b>CHAPTER FOUR.....</b>	<b>54</b>
Data Entry Reliability .....	54
Sample Characteristics.....	55
Answers for Research Questions .....	57
Research Question 1 .....	58
Research Question 2 .....	67
Research Question 3 .....	70
Research Question 4 .....	74
Research Question 5 .....	78
Research Question 6 .....	81
Summary .....	82
<b>CHAPTER FIVE .....</b>	<b>84</b>
Findings and Discussion .....	86
Limitations of the Study.....	92
Recommendations.....	93
Summary .....	95
<b>References.....</b>	<b>96</b>

<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>Map of Saudi Arabia .....</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>Required Coursework with Description for Learning Disabilities Concentration..</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>English Version of KSU-LDS.....</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>Arabic Version of KSU-LDS.....</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>Communication Letters to Distribute the Questionnaire.....</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>Institutional Review Board Approval .....</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>Open-Ended Responses .....</b>	<b>124</b>

**LIST OF FIGURES**

<b>Figure 1. Students with Special Needs .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Figure 2. Schools for Students with Special Needs .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Figure 3. Special Education Teachers.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Figure 4. Classes for Special Education.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Figure 5. Number of Programs, LD teachers, and students with LD (Boys) .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Figure 6. Number of Programs, LD teachers, and students with LD (Girls).....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Figure 7. Piface.....</b>	<b>41</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table 1. Stages of the Educational System in Saudi Arabia .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Table 2. Summary Statistics on Special Education 2006/2007 (boys &amp; girls) .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Table 3. Credit Requirements for Special Education Program .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Table 4. Example of General Special Education Coursework.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Table 5. Required Coursework for LD Major .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Table 6. Reliability Coefficient by Survey Sections .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Table 7. Professionals who examined and revised the survey for validation .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Table 8. Cronbach's alpha for KSU-LDS and the subscales .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Table 9. Professionals who examined and revised the survey for validation .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Table 10. Cronbach's alpha for KSU-LDS and the subscales .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Table 11. Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Information.....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Table 12. Frequencies and Percentages of all Items in Coursework, the Internship Quality, Classroom Applications, and Professors' teaching skills .....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Table 13. Frequencies and Percentages of all items in Personal Learning Experience Subscale.....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Table 14. Mean and Standard Deviation of Coursework.....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Table 15. Mean and Standard Deviation of the Internship Quality.....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>Table 16. Mean and Standard Deviation of Classroom Applications.....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Table 17. Mean and Standard Deviation of Professors' teaching skills.....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Table 18. Mean and Standard Deviation of Personal Learning Experience .....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Table 19. Mean and Standard Deviation All Subscales.....</b>	<b>66</b>

<b>Table 20. Mean and SD for all Subscales by Gender.....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Table 21. Analysis of Variance for Coursework by Gender .....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Table 22. Analysis of Variance for Internship Quality by Gender .....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>Table 23. Analysis of Variance for Classroom Applications by Gender .....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Table 24. Analysis of Variance for Professors' teaching skills by Gender .....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Table 25. Analysis of Variance for Personal Learning Experience Subscale by Gender.....</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Table 26. Analysis of Variance for KSU-LSD Total.....</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Table 27. Means and Standard Deviation for all Subscale and Total KSU-LDS by Gender.....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Table 28. Analysis of Variance for Coursework by Teaching Experience .....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Table 29. Analysis of Variance for Internship Quality by Teaching Experience .....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>Table 30. Analysis of Variance for Classroom Applications by Teaching Experience.....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Table 31. Analysis of Variance for Professors' teaching skills by Teaching Experience .....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Table 32. Analysis of Variance for Personal Learning Experience Subscale by Teaching Experience.....</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Table 33. Analysis of Variance for KSU-LSD by Teaching Experience.....</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Table 34. Mean and SD for all Subscales by LD Teachers' First Choice.....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Table 35. Analysis of Variance for Coursework by LD Teachers' First Choice.....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>Table 36. Analysis of Variance for Internship Quality by LD Teachers' First Choice.....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>Table 37. Analysis of Variance for Classroom Applications by LD Teachers' First Choice.....</b>	<b>77</b>

<b>Table 38. Analysis of Variance for Professors' teaching skills by LD Teachers' First Choice.....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>Table 39. Analysis of Variance for Personal Learning Experience Subscale by LD teachers' First Choice .....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Table 40. Analysis of Variance for KSU-LDS by LD teachers' first choice .....</b>	<b>78</b>



## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

King Saud University (KSU) in Riyadh is one of two universities in Saudi Arabia with a special education department offering a bachelor's degree with a specialization area in learning disabilities (LD). However, King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah only recently added an LD program and none of the students have graduated yet. While the special education program at KSU has been in existence more than 20 years, the opportunities to obtain training in special education learning disabilities has been limited in Saudi Arabia. The teacher preparation program in LD at KSU has not been evaluated to assess its effectiveness.

Currently in Saudi Arabia, LD teachers are totally responsible for the development of assessment tools, identifying students with LD, making decision for special education eligibility, and providing appropriate instructions, accommodation, and modification for helping students with LD learn in their schools. Thus, LD teachers need to be well-prepared to be able to meet the students' needs and fulfill their responsibilities and provide appropriate assessment.

In more than 20 years of operation, only one evaluation study of the special education teacher preparation program at KSU has been conducted. Althabet (2002) studied the perceptions of mental retardation (MR) teachers about program effectiveness; however no study has been conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the LD specialization area. The study sought to address this problem by evaluating the effectiveness of the LD specialization area within the special education department by assessing the perception of previous students who have graduated from the program.

In an attempt to solve this problem, the National Commission for Academic Accreditation & Assessment (NCAAA) was established in 2003 in Saudi Arabia to improve the evaluation process of educational programs in the country. NCAAA's objective is to improve post secondary education and training seeking to address quality assurance systems and accreditation of post secondary institutions. The organization has begun to make effective and innovative contributions to the continuing improvement of quality in all disciplines of post secondary education in Saudi Arabia. However, the LD program in the special education department at KSU has not been evaluated and there is a need for data on the effectiveness of the LD teacher educational program.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to learn from the experiences of former students of the KSU LD specialization area in the special education program. Specifically the study sought to understand current LD teachers' perceptions of coursework, internship quality, classroom applications, professors' teaching skills, and personal learning experience. Using survey data, comparisons were made by gender, years of teaching experience, and whether LD was the respondents' first choice for a major or not. The data provided an evaluation by former students of the effectiveness of the LD educational program.

#### Significance of Study

Program evaluation is necessary to improve, understand, and provide guidance to program improvement. Evaluation can increase the understanding of a program and how it operates or to demonstrate overall effectiveness and quality (Weiss, 1998). The purpose of the current study was to evaluate the LD teachers' preparation program at KSU and identify suggestions for improvement. Based on the findings, suggestions and

recommendations can be made to help educational planners, policy makers, and teachers-trainers establish and implement improved preparation programs for the nation's teachers. Also, the finding of this study is beneficial directly to King Khalid University. The King Khalid University, which funded my study, is developing a new LD teachers' preparation program and findings of this study will be taken into account.

### Research Questions

Six research questions were posed by the study to evaluate the LD educational program. The questions addressing different aspects of the program are as follows:

1. How is the effectiveness of selected aspects of the LD major program perceived by LD teachers?
2. Are there differences in perceptions of the program by gender?
3. Are there differences between perceptions of recent LD teachers based on length of teaching experience?
4. Are there differences between teachers for whom LD was first choice of major and teachers for whom LD was not first choice?
5. What specific aspects of the LD program do the LD teachers list most frequently as strengths? As weaknesses?
6. What recommendations do the LD teachers most often mention for improvement of the LD major program?

### Terms Definitions

It is important to define the terms used in any study so there is a common understanding. The following terms need to be defined to clarify their meanings in relationship to the study.

*Learning Disabilities.* The Saudi definition states LD is a condition causing a consistent discrepancy between grade level and achievement. The discrepancy is not the result of mental retardation, sensory impairments, emotional/psychological disorders, or socioeconomic conditions (Sheaha, 2004).

*Learning Disabilities Teachers.* In Saudi Arabian these are public school teachers with Bachelor degree with major in LD, current primary teaching assignment teaching students with LD. Substitute teachers, student teachers, and teachers' aides were excluded from the definition (Sheaha, 2004).

*Teacher Preparation Program.* Teacher preparation programs and teachers education are university programs designed with the legal authorization to prepare teachers. Teacher preparation program and university program were used interchangeably for the purpose of the study.

*Program Evaluation.* This is a specialized area of research designed to examine and assess programs, their effectiveness, and to provide feedback in order to improve programs.

*Resource Room.* A resource room is a classroom (sometimes smaller classroom) where a special education program can be delivered to a student with LD. Student with LD who qualifies for special education services stays most of the day in regular class placement but needs some special instruction in an individualized or small group setting for a portion of the day. Sometimes this form of support is called withdrawal or pull out services (Hussain, 2004).

### Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter One includes the introduction to the study, purpose of study, research questions, term definitions, significance of the study, and organization and limitations of the study. The second chapter discusses the background of Saudi Arabia and Saudi Arabian education as well as reviews of related literature. Chapter 3 presents the methodology to be used in addressing the research questions posed by the study including the design, pilot study, validity and reliability of the survey, procedure of collecting data, and data analysis. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the analysis conducted to address each of the research questions. Chapter 5 discusses the findings of the study in relation to the literature as well as conclusions, and recommendations.

### Summary

This chapter presented an overview of the study. The overview included purpose, significance, and organization of the study. Research questions and term definitions were also presented. The next chapter will present a literature review and related work and background on Saudi Arabia.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In Saudi Arabia, as in many countries, there is a universal cry for quality education and the key to quality education is teachers. This study was an effort to explore the strengths, weaknesses, and adequacy of preparation of learning disabilities (LD) teachers at King Saud University in Saudi Arabia, from the perspectives of teachers themselves. The study examined the factors that are related to this program, and the teachers' perceptions of strengths and shortcomings of the program. This study is important to the Saudi education system because very few studies have focused on special education teachers' preparation programs, and no study to date has focused on LD teachers' preparation program in Saudi Arabia. This chapter will introduce the educational system in Saudi Arabia, Arabic and American studies and literature. General Background on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Occupying four-fifths of the Arabian Peninsula, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the largest country in the Middle East. In south-western Asia, the country lies at the crossroads of three continents: Europe, Asia and Africa. It borders the countries of Oman, Qatar, Yemen, Iraq, Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait and United Arab Emirates (a map of the country is in Appendix A).

Saudi Arabia has witnessed a noticeable increase in the number of its inhabitants in the last few years. The population grew from 6.6 million people in 1973 to 10.4 million people in 1983. Today the population is more than 20 million (Ministry of Information, 2007).

Islam is the official religion of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and its tenets are enshrined as law. Islam is at the heart of education and other aspects of life in the Kingdom (Abdulwasea, 1983). The Arabic language is the official language in all education in Saudi Arabia, although students also study the English language from fourth grade. Education is free to all students, at all levels.

The formal education of females in Saudi Arabia did not start until 1960 (Al Salloom, 1991). Females are separated in their education from males beginning at elementary school, at the age of 6. As far as the education programs and curriculum are concerned, all Saudi schools apply the same curriculum and programs, regardless of students' gender, to prepare students for the requirements of Saudi society. At the higher education levels, where necessary, female students listen to lectures from male teachers through the use of closed-circuit television, but curricula are similar for both men and women. For both genders, school starts at the age of six years (Al-Sheikh, 1992). The Elementary stage lasts six years (preschool and kindergarten are not required), Middle stage is three years, and high (secondary) school takes 3 years, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1  
Stages of the Educational System in Saudi Arabia

School Type	Grade	Age
Elementary	1-6	6-12
Middle	7-9	13-15
High School	10-12	16-18

#### The Education System in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

There are three authorities responsible for education policy and its implementation in the kingdom: the Ministry of Education administers education for boys

and girls; the Ministry of Higher Education has supervision over the universities and coordinates the development of higher education in the Kingdom; and the Organization for Technical and Vocational Education takes care of industrial, commercial and agricultural education, technical foremanship training, and all levels of vocational training (Sonbul, Al-Kateeb, Metwali, & Abduljawad, 2000). However, for the purpose of this study, more attention will be given to the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education.

### *Ministry of Education*

The Ministry of Education is the official organization supervising the education of males and females throughout the Kingdom. It was established in 1953 for the purpose of planning and supervising a project aimed at the provision of general education everywhere in the kingdom (Al Salloom, 1991). The Ministry provides and oversees the following types of education: general education (elementary, middle, and secondary), teacher training, special education, and adult education which is mostly for people who are unable to read.

*Educational Supervision Directorate.* The Educational Supervision Directorate (ESD) is a division of the Ministry of Education. The main roles of ESD can be summarized in four main points: (a) the direct supervision of all aspects of the educational process in schools; (b) helps schools to carry out its mission of education as required; (c) the advancement of the educational community surrounding area through participating in scientific, educational, cultural, and social activities; and (d) realization of the principle of effective communication by facilitating communication between the supervisory staff and the field. The number of centers in districts is based on how large a



city is. For example, in the city of Riyadh there are nine centers spread from west to east and north to south.

*The Directorate General of Special Education.* The Directorate General of Special Education (DGSE) is a division of the Ministry of Education. In 1962 the DGSE was established to develop and supervise programs for students with special needs. Ten years later, the DGSE was upgraded to include three major departments: (a) Educational Administration for the Blind, (b) Educational Administration for the Deaf, and (c) Educational Administration for Mental Retardation (MR). Since 1996, when a supervisor general was appointed, a new period of special education was initiated. Services must now include other categories of exceptionality, such as LD, emotional/behavioral disorders, autism, communication disorders, and physical and multiple disabilities. DGSE's role is the general overall planning and supervision of special education services for children with special needs in the kingdom. This includes identifying those children, planning suitable services, and providing services in the least restrictive environment.

The number of students serviced by DGSE cross the country has increased to 61,089 students distributed in 3,130 programs for the academic year 2006-2007. More detail is presented in Table 2 (The Directorate General of Special Education, 2007).

Table 2  
 Summary Statistics on Special Education  
 2006/2007 (boys & girls)

Type of Disability	Number of Institutes and Programs	Number of Students
1) Hearing Impairment:		
a) Deaf	300	4913
b) Hard of Hearing	120	3771
2) Visual Impairment :		
a) Blind	216	1606
b) Low Vision	2	2070
3) Mental Retardation	805	15856
4) Learning Disabilities	1237	11919
5) Gifted & Talented	314	17234
6) Students with Autism	65	515
7) Multi-disabled	62	504
8) Physical Disabilities	1	1642
9) More than Type	8	1059
Total	3130	61089

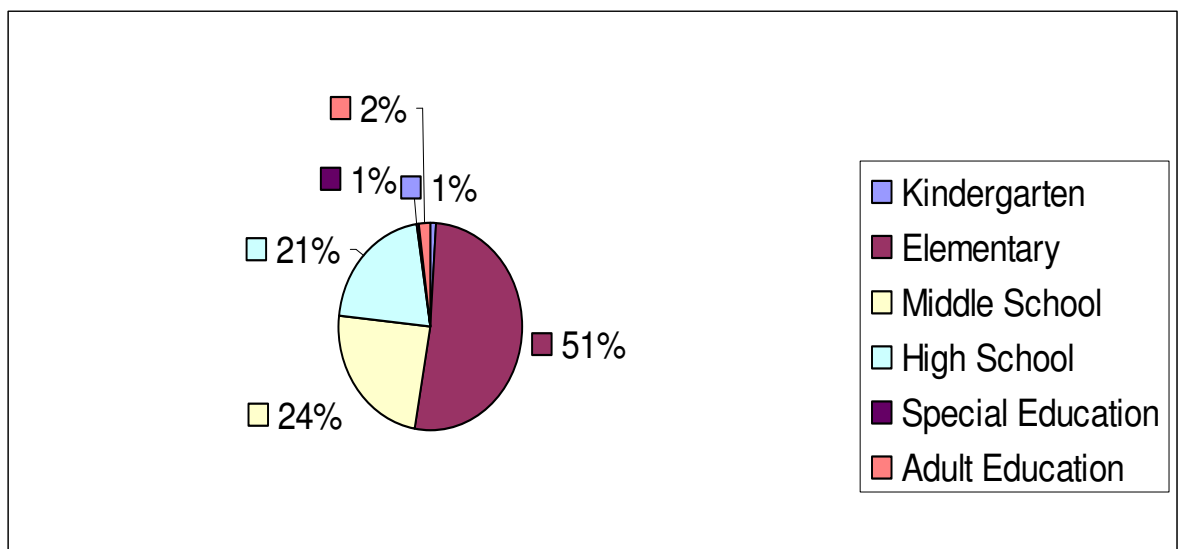
In addition to the educational services, DGSE provides all education tools free of charge such as textbooks, visual and hearing aids, teaching aids, and students' daily transportation. In addition, each student is given a monthly allowance depending on his education stage.

The teachers in these programs are also given an extra allowance over their salary ranging between 20% and 30% depending on whether they are special education teachers or subject matter teachers. Summary statistics for 2006-2007 of the spread of special education as compare to general education (Figures 1,2,3,4) show the percentage of

different aspects of special education in terms of students, teachers, schools, and classes (The Directorate General of Special Education, 2007). Figure 1 shows the percentage of students in the nation with special needs at 1%. This may seem to be very small percentage. This does not mean that there are not many students with special needs in the nation, it simply means that there is a lack of assessment tools used to identify and determine eligibility process. Also, due to cultural and social issues, such as the future of students with special needs and what type of job they will get after graduation of these programs, a majority of parents do not agree to place their children for special education services.

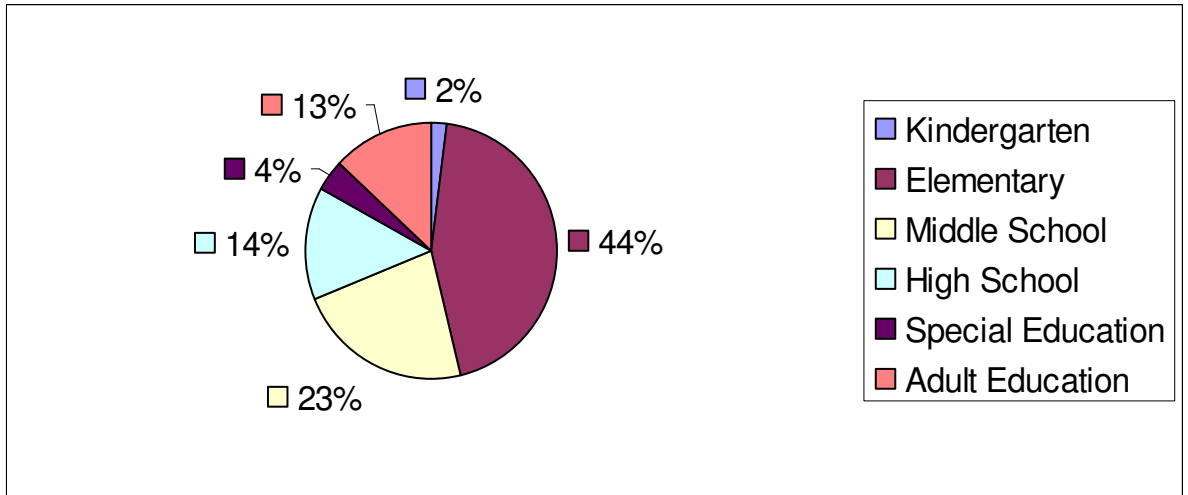
Figure 1

Students with Special Needs



Schools for students with special needs, as shown in Figure 2, shows that 4% of the schools in KSA are for those with special needs, mainly for students with mental retardation. The percentage of special education schools has decreased due to the development of inclusion, especially for deaf and blind students.

Figure 2  
Schools for Students with Special Needs



The percentage of special education teachers (Figure 3) shows that there is a shortage of teachers in special education which is due to many reasons. For example, there is only one department in a university that can offer a bachelor’s degree in special education in the nation.

Figure 3  
Special Education Teachers

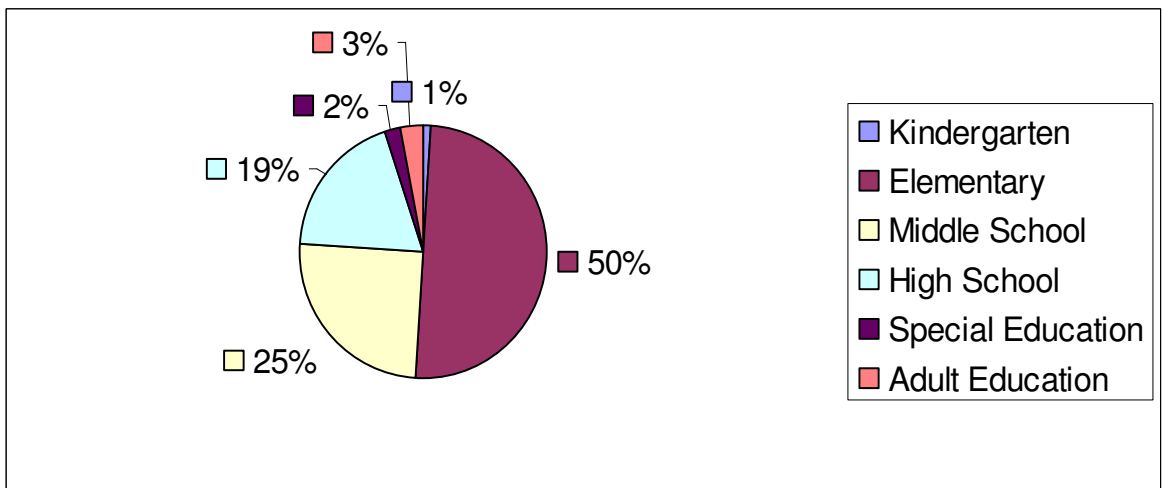
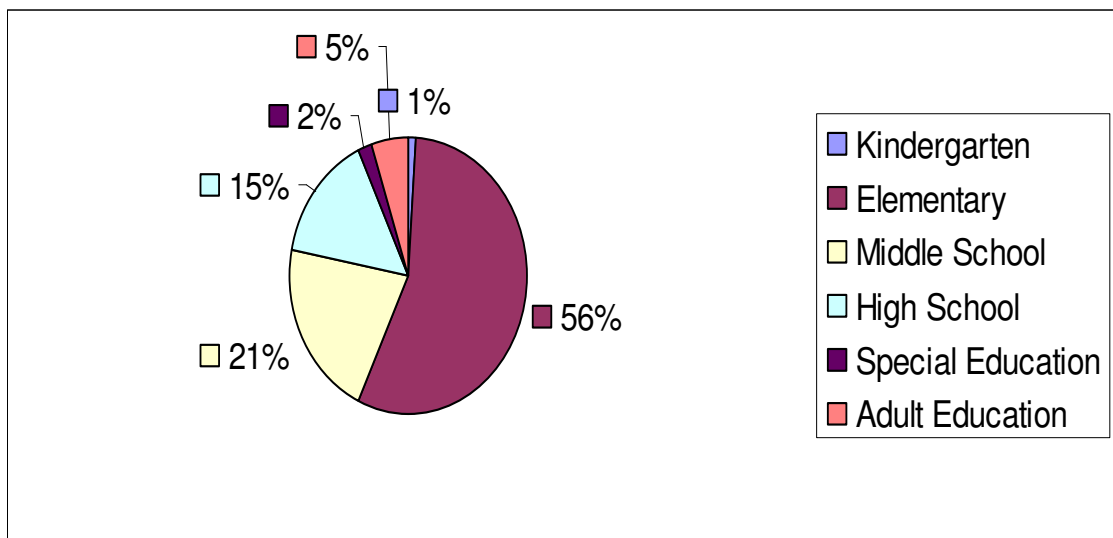


Figure 4 shows that special education classes exist in regular schools, the percentage is just 2%. These classes are mainly for blind and deaf students and rarely for students with mental retardation.

Figure 4  
Classes for Special Education



*Department of Learning Disabilities in the DGSE.* The Department of LD in the DGSE was established and started providing services in 1995/1996 as a part of a new emphasis on LD within the field of special education (Almosa, 1999). Unfortunately, prior to 1996, students with LD did not receive any special education services. The department has since improved its ability to identify and teach students with LD. Students with LD and LD programs have increased but, unfortunately, the number of LD teachers is not sufficient to serve students with LD as shown in Figure 5 and 6. These two tables, for example, show that 10,517 male students with LD are served by only 809 LD teachers, for a ratio of 13 students for every teacher. Also, those 10,517 male students are served in 728 schools, a ratio of 14 students for every school (The Directorate General of Special Education, 2007).

Figure 5

Number of Programs, LD teachers, and students with LD (Boys)

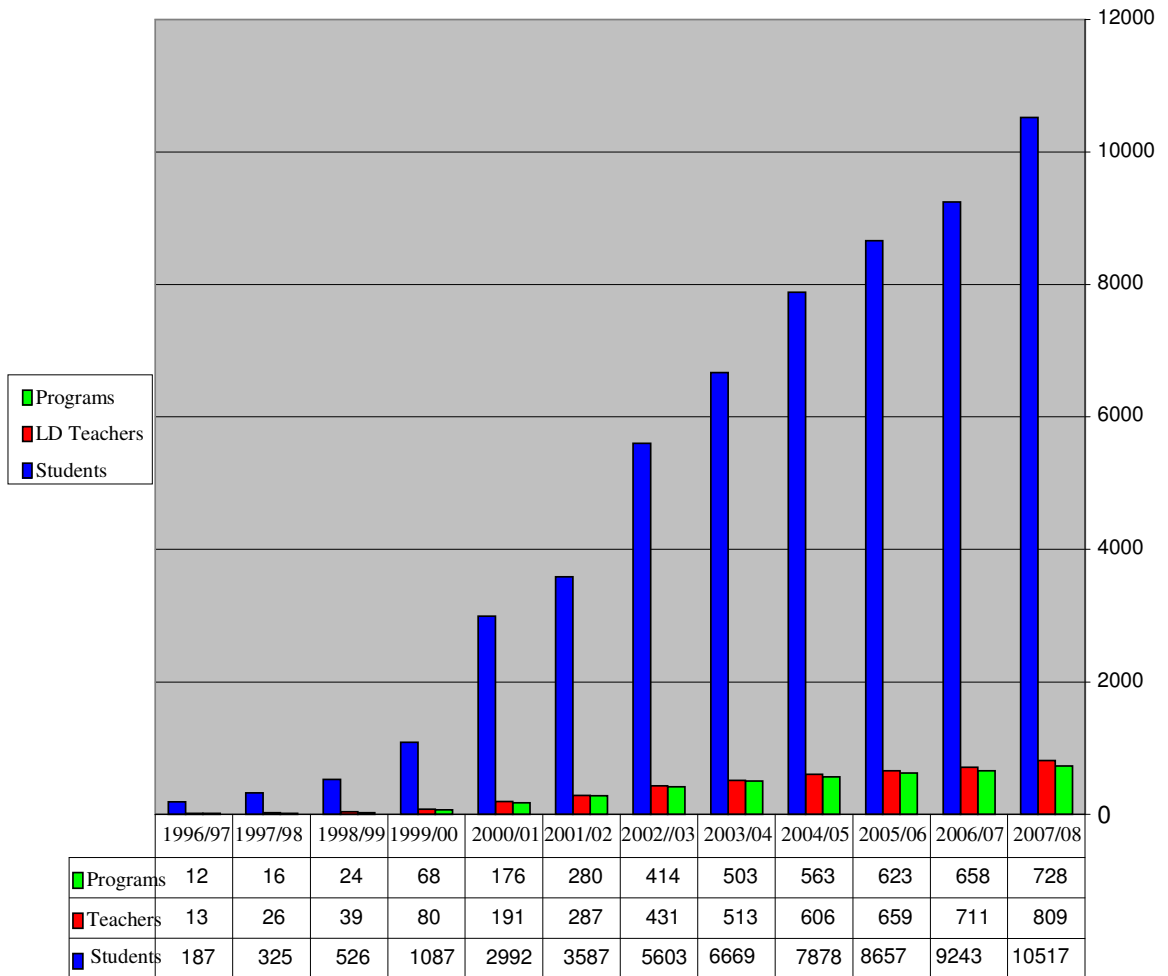
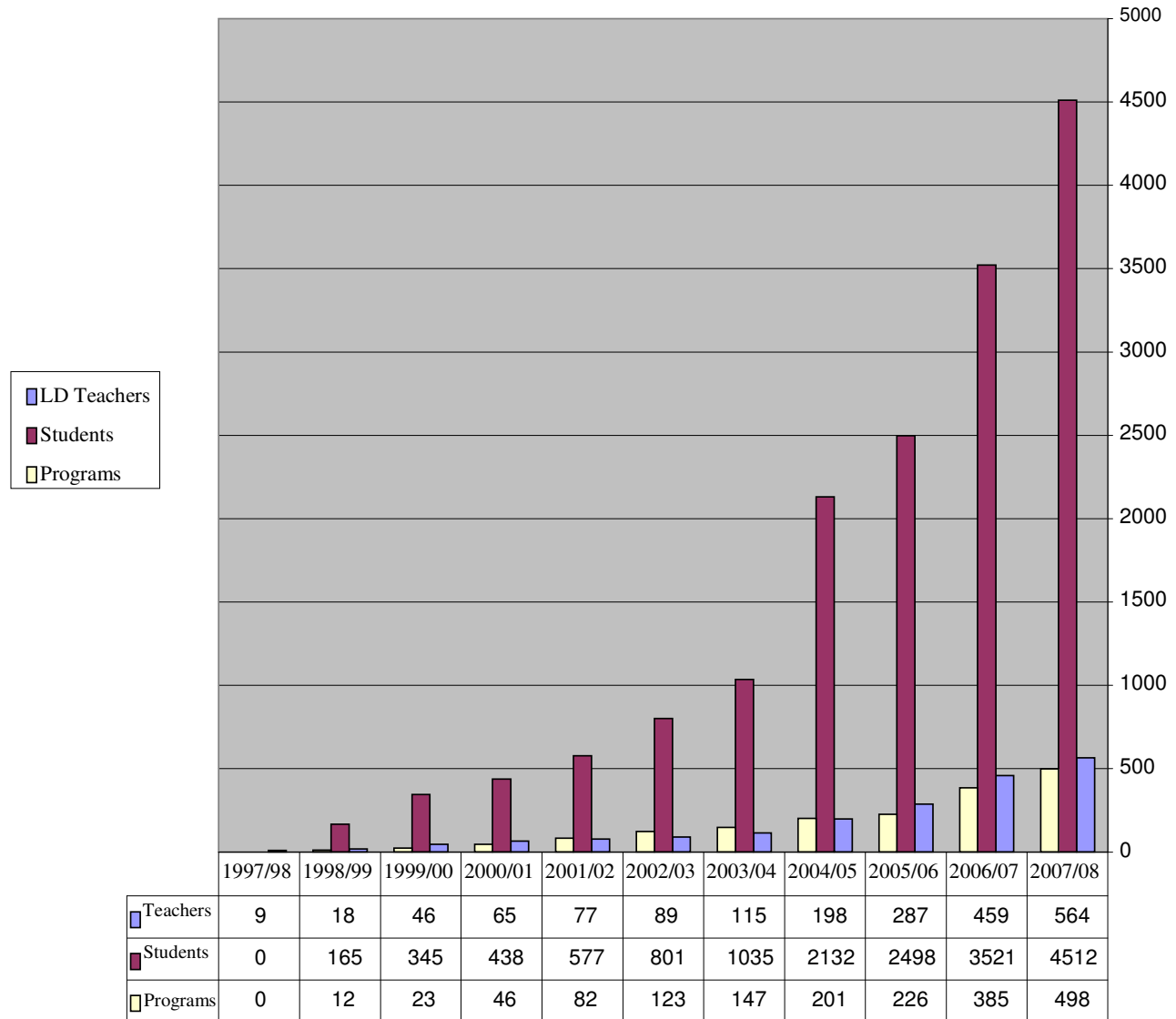


Figure 6  
 Number of Programs, LD teachers, and students with LD (Girls)



The Department of LD is responsible for providing appropriate educational services for students in regular school by identifying their difficulties in areas such as reading, writing, and math. The objectives of these educational services and programs can be summarized under four main goals: (a) identifying and assessing students with LD, (b) developing and implementing special education services, (c) consulting with

regular education teachers regarding their students who need special education, and (d) advising parents/guardians regarding homework and unusual concerns. According to the Department of learning disabilities (LD) (2007), LD is defined as “a condition that causes consistent discrepancy between grade level and achievement. This discrepancy is not the result of mental retardation, sensory impairments, emotional / psychological disorders or socioeconomic conditions” (The Directorate General of Special Education, 2007). The Department of LD creates eligibility criteria for those who are suspected to have LD in order to receive special education services. These criteria can be summarized in four main points as follows: (a) consistent significant discrepancy between chronological age expectations and one or more of the developmental or academic areas stated in the LD definition; (b) the primary cause of the student’s LD should not come from other factors such as sensory impairment, physical disability, motional/psychological factors, or socioeconomic conditions; (c) regular classroom resources are inappropriate for meeting the student’s needs, which requires immediate attention and special education services; and (d) approval of the identification and classification committee. More current approaches of identifying those with LD, such as response to intervention in USA, have not been applied yet by the LD department.

#### Ministry of Higher Education

The Ministry of Higher Education provides support and services for the Kingdom’s 21 universities. The Ministry is responsible for the supervision, coordination, and follow-up of post-secondary programs and the connections with the national development programs in different fields (Al Salloom, 1991).



### *King Saud University*

King Saud University (KSU) is Saudi Arabia's oldest and premier university, located in the capital Riyadh. The university was founded by King Saud in 1957. It was created to meet Saudi Arabia's shortage of professionals (Al Salloom, 1991). Today KSU has over 90,000 students, both male and female, although, with the exception of medical students, female students attend a different campus.

### *Department of Special Education at KSU*

The department was founded in 1985, and offered courses in the second semester of that year. The department vision is “For the special education department to be in the leading position between special education departments in the Kingdom and to be recognized as a distinguish department between special education departments in the world” (Department of Special Education, 2009). This vision will be accomplished through its mission. The department mission has three dimensions:

1. Teachers' Preparation: The department will accomplish its vision through the best preparation of special education teachers academically, morally, and educationally at the undergraduate level as well as preparing successful researchers, leaders, and administrators at the graduate level for them to be faculty members at universities and other educational organizations.
2. Scientific Research: Preparing national research projects and supervises, by request, other projects and taking the initiative to suggest joint projects at the national and international levels.

3. Services: providing consultation and training services for the government and private organizations as well as diagnostic and training services for the children and their families through the department specialized centers.

The main goal of the Department of Special Education is to prepare and train special education teachers to work with students with special needs. However, the department also provides a numbers of services related to special education, such as:

- writing and translating books on special education,
- conducting and evaluating research,
- consulting services for educational and social organizations, including participation in conferences and symposium,
- developing the awareness of special education in the Saudi community,
- designing and presenting training sessions and workshops, and
- presenting lectures to the Saudi public.

The length of the study for a bachelor degree is four years after the student receives a degree in one of the following specialized areas: visual impairment, hearing impairment, mental retardation, LD, emotional and behavioral disorders, and autism. A large number of teachers graduate to work in their specialized area, whether in the public schools or private centers to improve the quality of special education services. There are currently almost 2,500 students in the special education department at different levels.

#### *Admission Requirements*

The department of special education requires all students to have achieved at least average grade of 90% in their high school record (high school GPA) (Althabet, 2002). The department has increased the admission criteria from 80% in 1995 to 85% in 1999,

and finally 90% in 2004. This happens because of a large number of students apply every semester for special education which makes it harder for the department to accept all students. In addition, all students must pass a personal interview with a faculty member to be accepted in a bachelor program. Students first enter the program when they are 17-23, directly after graduating from high school.

#### Preparation of Teachers of LD in Saudi Arabia

The total program is 128 credit hours and is usually completed in four years. Additional credits hours are required to meet the university and college of education requirements as presented in Table 3. For the first two years of the program, all students have to take all the required general coursework in special education (51 credit hours) before deciding on their specialized area, for example LD. Examples of general special education coursework are presented in Table 4 and a complete list with descriptions is provided in Appendix B.

Table 3  
Credit Requirements for Special Education Program

Requirements for:	Credits
<b>Special Education:</b>	92
- 51 credits general courses in special education	
- 15 credits in LD	
- 12 credit internship (LD)	
- 14 Additional two selected majors in special education	
<b>College of Education:</b>	21
- 21 credits general education courses	
<b>The University:</b>	15
- General courses	
Total	128

Table 4  
Example of General Special Education Coursework

Course	Description	Credit
SPED 100	Introduction to Special Education	4
SPED 151	Assessment and Diagnosis in Special Education	4
SPED 260	Public Awareness of Handicapping Conditions	3
SPED 201	Behavior Modification	3

At third year, students decide on their specialization area (major) and start taking coursework in that area for period of a year and half. To complete in an LD, students must complete and pass coursework specializing in LD as shown in Table 5 (a complete list with description is in Appendix B). Their internship (12 credit hours) is in the last semester and students teach full time for one semester with supervision by faculty members of department of special education. This internship takes place in public schools.

Table 5  
Required Coursework for LD Major

Course	Description	Credit
SPED 254	Introduction to Learning Disabilities	3
SPED 264	Learning Disabilities in Reading and Writing	3
SPED 304	Developmental Learning Disabilities	2
SPED 314	Learning Disabilities in Perspective of Different theories	2
SPED 354	Case Study in Learning Disabilities	2
SPED 404	Teaching Methods For Learning Disabled Students	3
Total		15

The department prepares LD teachers to be responsible for

1. Planning and implementing screening and referral procedures,
2. Assessing students who may have LD,
3. Developing and implementing individualized instruction plans (IEP),
4. Providing direct instruction to student with LD,
5. Consulting with regular education teachers concerning students with LD, which may include teaching methods/strategies, behavior management, test taking accommodation,
6. Advocating for students with LD, including the resolution of issues and problems they may face in school,
7. Cooperating with school administration in coordinating scheduling for students who are receiving special education services, and
8. Consulting with parents concerning their students with LD.

### Learning Disabilities in Arabic Countries

The prevalence of LD in Arabic countries varies from country to country depending on the LD definition used for identification. It is a controversial issue as in many other countries such as the US. However, in Arabic countries it is more complex for many reasons such as lack of assessment tools. Awareness of disabilities, in general, and resources and grants for research are insufficient. Also, the cultural differences between the countries limit generalization of study findings. All these reasons lead the researchers to use and implement unreliable instruments which in turn lead to weak research. In Egypt for example, one study found that the prevalence of LD among fifth grade students was about 52% (Awad, 1988). In the United Arab Emirates, another study conducted to determine the prevalence of LD in fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students found that 13.4% of students have LD (Alzerad, 1991). In Saudi Arabia, the prevalence is (5%-10%) similar to that found in the USA (Salem, Majdi, & Ahmad, 2003). The differences in results between these studies are a result of the criteria used for identification. All these studies rely heavily on teachers rating scale and/or one test of reading or math as the only criteria for identification.

## Teacher Education in Special Education

### *Special Education Teachers in Arabic Research*

Arabic research is limited when it comes to the preparation of special education teachers. The majority of studies have focused on job satisfaction because jobs are limited and hard to get. Thus, teachers keep their jobs regardless of whether they like it or not which can lead to a feeling of dissatisfaction for those teachers who do not like teaching. This section will focus on Arabic studies that have focused on special education teachers.

Alkateeb, Alhadidi, and Elyan (1991) conducted a study in Jordan aimed to determine the effect of age, gender, teaching experience, teachers' qualification, and marriage status on their feelings about being special education teachers. They surveyed 250 special education teachers using a survey developed by the researchers themselves. All the participants had a bachelor degree in special education and were currently working as special education teachers in public schools in Jordan. Findings of this study showed that teachers were satisfied, in general, with being special education teachers. Their relationship with other teachers and students in schools were also positive. On the other hand, teachers were unsatisfied because they had a lot of work and difficulty in dealing with students with severe disabilities. More important is that there was a statistically significant difference by teachers' qualification. The special education teachers with more training were more satisfied than other teachers. In other words, better qualification may lead to job satisfaction.

Another study was conducted by Aldebabsah (1993) aimed to explore factors that may lead and relate to job satisfaction. The researcher used Maslach Burnout Inventory

(Maslach & Jackson, 1981) after the original survey was translated into Arabic. The researcher assumed that those teachers who have high burnout, according to the inventory, will be more dissatisfied. And those with less burnout will be more satisfied. So, he used the inventory as an indicator of job satisfaction. Participants were 308 special education teachers in public schools in Jordan. The participants were grouped according to their age, teaching experience, gender, and marital status. Findings of this study indicated that there was a negative correlation between teaching experience and teachers' qualification and burnout: those teachers with higher qualifications and teaching experience were less burned out.

Alkhokon (1997) conducted a study in Palestine which proposed to determine the correlation between teaching stress and teaching experience, teachers' degree, age, gender, marriage status, and type of students' disabilities. A scale developed by the researcher was used to measure stress. A sample of 181 special education teachers in Palestine employed in public schools, was randomly selected to determine teaching stress. Kyriacou defined stress as "the experience by a teacher of unpleasant emotions such as tension, frustration, anxiety, anger and depression, resulting from aspects of his/her work as a teacher" (as cited in Alkhokon, 1997). Alkhokon concluded that there was a positive correlation between teachers' degree and stress. Another positive correlation existed between teaching experience and stress. In other words, the higher the degree and the more experience teachers have, the greater their stress. In my view, teaching stress among those teachers who have a bachelor degree and teaching experience, might be due to their responsibilities for supervision and training of new teachers and not necessarily to job satisfaction.



In Yemen, Hamed (1999) conducted a study aimed to identify the sources of burnout among teachers of students with MR and to investigate the impact of teacher's gender, teacher's degree, teacher's years of experience, and severity of disability on burnout. The researcher defined burnout as “a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. An increased feeling of emotional exhaustion is described as the key aspect of burnout” (p.18). A sample of 45 MR teachers, in public schools, was chosen randomly to participate in this study. The instrument was a questionnaire developed by the researcher and consisted of four dimensions: (a) work conditions such as school in urban or rural area, (b) severity of students' disabilities, (c) personal characteristics of the teacher such as whether teacher has any health conditions, and (d) the relation and collaboration between administrators and teachers. The findings revealed that severity of MR and work conditions were the two main sources of burnout. Findings also showed that there were no significant differences in burnout sources due to teacher's gender, educational level, and teacher's years of experience; however, teachers reported that working with students with MR was a source of burnout because they lack behavior modification techniques.

Al-Hadidi (2003) conducted a study in Jordan that aimed to explore difficulties faced by resource room teachers in Jordan. A resource room is a room in a school where students with special needs receive special education (pull out) services. Two hundred and nine resource room teachers in public and private schools participated in the study. A survey was developed by the researcher. This survey contained six dimensions: (a) difficulties related to identification, (b) difficulties related to teachers' responsibilities, (c) difficulties related to the resource room services, (d) difficulties related to instructional

materials, (e) difficulties related to dealing with parents, and (f) difficulties related to school administration and general education teachers. The results demonstrated that teachers face two major difficulties: (a) working with parents of students with special needs, and (b) identification and special education eligibility difficulties. Students' grade and type of school (public or private) were significantly related to difficulties faced by teachers. Those teachers in public schools face more difficulties in the resource room more than those in private schools. Other variables—teacher education, teacher gender, years of experience—lacked statistical significance.

#### *Special Education Teachers in Saudi Arabia*

Abduljabbar (2003) conducted a study to determine how age, teaching experience, degree, and specialization area affected teachers' perceptions of training necessary to prepare special education teachers. A survey was developed by the researcher to explore what training programs are necessary for special education teachers. The survey included four dimensions: (a) general training program such as knowing the special education law; (b) teaching program such as lessons planning and using appropriate instructions; (c) assessment and evaluation such as using formal assessment tools; and (d) training program on IEP such as developing and implementing IEP. Surveys were sent to special education teachers in Saudi Arabia (N=783). The study found (a) a high percentage of teachers agreed on the importance of the four dimensions in training; and (b) a significant difference in perception between special education teachers related to age, teaching experience, degree, specialization area, and number of inservice training programs taken by teachers.

Another study also was conducted by the same author, Abduljabbar (2002). The purpose of this study was to determine the skills necessary for LD teachers, their importance from LD teachers' perceptions, and to what extent the teachers actually possessed these necessary skills. A survey was developed by the researcher based on standards for LD teachers published by Council for Exceptional Children. The survey dealt with the following skills: academic skills, instructional skills, and work environment skills. Surveys were sent to teachers of students with learning disabilities in Saudi Arabia (N = 110). All these LD teachers worked in public schools. The study found that there is a significant difference by age among teachers and how they rank the importance of these skills. Those younger teachers ranked the skills as more important than did older teachers. In my view, this might be because of lack of teaching experience, so that fresh teachers thought that all skills are important while those older LD teachers with more teaching experience thought that not all skills are necessary. In addition, the study found that there is a significant difference among LD teachers by their GPA and the degree to which they possess these skills. Those with higher GPA and bachelor degree (not only a certificate) thought that these skills are important more than those LD teachers with lower GPA and who have only certificate in LD.

Abduljabbar (2004) conducted a study aimed to determine the extent to which special education and general education teachers were satisfied with their jobs. The researcher defined job satisfaction as "an affective response to one's job as a whole or a particular aspect of it" (p.34). The researcher used a job satisfaction scale of 17 items developed by Brayfield and Rothe. He validated the scale before administrating to a Saudi sample of 251 male teachers from both regular education and special education in

public schools. Principal components followed by varimax rotation yielded two factors: No-satisfaction and satisfaction. The analysis of data found a high level of job satisfaction among both special education teachers and regular education teachers. No significant differences in job satisfaction were found due to age, teaching experience, and academic degree. No significant differences in job satisfaction of special education teachers were found due to type of work. In general, all teachers participated in this study were satisfied with their job. Abduljabbar (2004) used teachers from different specialization areas, such as MR, LD, and deaf education teachers. In my opinion, it would be very beneficial to determine job satisfaction among teachers of the same specialization area.

The most recent research examined the perceptions of teachers of students with MR regarding their preparation program at KSU in Saudi Arabia. Althabet (2002) surveyed the teachers with a survey containing 36 items covering four domains: (a) coursework, (b) internship, (c) professors' grading, and (d) professors' teaching skills. This survey was developed by the researcher and it is the one I used as a foundation for my study. The study has a sample of 390 MR teachers in special segregated schools and inclusive settings. Althabet (2002) found that graduates of the program in MR were mostly positive about their overall preparation experiences and content. Out of the four domains, the teachers viewed their internship most positively ( $M=3.65$  on a five point Likert scale), followed by professors grading ( $M=3.05$ ), professors teaching skills ( $M=2.82$ ), and coursework ( $M=2.76$ ). Also, he found a significant difference between males and females. Male teachers perceived their preparation more positively than female teachers. However, the research did not find a statistically significant difference between

MR teachers by length of teaching experience. Interestingly, he found a significant difference among MR teachers who work in special segregated schools and MR teachers who work in inclusive settings. Those in inclusive settings perceived their preparation program more positively. Althabet, however, did not evaluate classroom applications necessary for every MR teacher, such as how to implement effective behavior management techniques.

#### *Evaluation of Teacher Preparation Programs in the United States*

The historical development of teacher education in special education was similar to the development of general education. However, some issues and concerns were a little different. Sindelar & Kilgore (1995) indicated four issues that exist in special education teacher preparation programs: (a) the severe shortage of special education teachers, (b) service delivery type (inclusion or pullout), (c) certification issues, and 4) teacher education curricula.

Teacher preparation programs in America have recently been required to take a new direction. The new requirements from federal legislation such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2001) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) have been especially important for special education teacher preparation programs. These programs are encouraged to establish collaboration between special education and general education personnel (Sindelar & Kilgore, 1995). NCLB Legislation defined a “highly qualified teacher” as a teacher (a) holding a bachelor’s degree, (b) demonstrating mastery of subject content knowledge, and (c) receiving full state certification (Paulsen, 2005). The current requirements of “highly qualified teachers” in every classroom by NCLB shook all teacher preparation institutions (McLeskey, Tyler, & Flippin, 2003).

Although the number of individuals who are currently teaching students with disabilities is unknown, the U.S. Department of Education (2002) reported that approximately 10% of the teachers who were teaching students with disabilities lack appropriate preparation. Considering the current NCLB requirement of “receiving full state certification”, the nationwide shortage of teachers, especially “highly qualified teachers,” is a critical issue in teacher education (McLeskey et al., 2003).

The purpose of evaluation studies in teacher education is the following: (a) accountability, (b) improvement, (c) understanding, and (d) knowledge production (Galluzzo & Craig, 1990).

Program evaluation is necessary to improve teacher education programs, however, in conducting evaluation, there are limitations and concerns. For example, Galluzzo and Crain (1990) indicated several issues in program evaluation, such as accurate identification of evaluation audiences (i.e. student teacher, practicing teachers, faculty, and students) is difficult and methodological issues. Also, other factors which may limit the evaluation study include identification of independent and dependent variables and evaluation design.

While numerous studies have been conducted to evaluate teacher preparation programs in general education, few studies have been conducted to evaluate special education teacher preparation programs.

Bouck (2004) conducted a study to explore the current state of secondary special education teachers for students with mild mental impairment (MMI) and leaning disabilities (LD). The sample was 378 secondary special education teachers for grade 9 to 12 in Michigan. An adapted version of the survey used by Conderman & Katsiyannis

(2002) was used Bouck's study. The adapted version includes demographic information questions, questions about the curriculum and instruction of students with MMI and LD, questions about teachers' perceptions of effectiveness and satisfaction with special education services for students with MMI and LD, and questions regarding teachers' preparation and professional development. In regard to teachers' preparation satisfaction, teachers expressed mixed feelings about their undergraduate program for their current positions as special education secondary teachers. The majority (47.1%) of teachers indicated that they were very satisfied to satisfied with their preparation program while 19% felt they were unprepared or very unprepared for their current positions. Also, only 46% of the participants indicated that they had practicum experience. Moreover, 65.6% of participants indicated that they had courses which concentrated on high school specifically.

Miller & Losardo (2002) conducted a study aimed at gathering graduates' perceptions of their preparation program in a statewide system of early child education (ECE) and early childhood special education (ECSE) interdisciplinary teacher preparation programs. The study was designed to collect data from graduates of seven states and NCATE approved blended teacher preparation programs during their first year of employment. A mailed survey was developed to indentify the perceived strengths of preparation in each competency area. The survey contained three sections beside the demographic information: 13 items about factors in current employment, 25 items for self-assessment in state competency areas with regard to the strength of the preparation program, and eight open-ended questions about the most and least valuable components and recommendations to improve the preparation program. Ninety-one graduates

participated in the study. Results indicated that there is a need in the preparation programs for more content and application in areas including working with families, behavior analysis, and working with children who have moderate to severe disabilities. In my view, the findings of this study are valuable and important because many teacher preparation programs focus only on instructional strategies and do not take into account the importance of other components such as dealing with parents and behavior management skills.

Wasburn-Moses (2005) investigated secondary LD teachers' perceptions of their preparation program and their recommendations to improve the program effectiveness. Surveys were mailed to 378 secondary LD teachers in the state of Michigan. The researchers received back 191 surveys. The survey contained four components: 1) demographic information such as gender, teaching experience; 2) roles and responsibilities included items such as co- or team-teaching with general education teachers and making adaptations accommodation for students; program evaluation contains items such as please indicate your satisfaction with the collaborative culture in your school; and teacher preparation such as, how well do you believe your undergraduate education program prepared you for that position? The surveys were field-tested with 10 LD teachers, however, no reliability or validity were reported in the study. The results indicated many LD teachers were not satisfied with their preparation program and, for program improvement, they suggested more training in areas such as curriculum and pedagogy, paperwork and legal issues, and student issues. Other recommendations were also given, such as establishing partnership between universities and schools/communities and training on how to develop and implement IEP. The results of this study



seem to be very beneficial to any special education teacher preparation program because the researcher covered important elements in teacher education such as roles and responsibilities of LD teachers in their positions. However, the researcher based his results on one item, "How well do you believe your undergraduate education program prepared you for that position?" to obtain teachers' perception on their preparation programs. Such a method does not provide enough information on the teachers' preparation program effectiveness.

Lovingfoss, Molloy, Harris, and Graham (2001) conducted a case study which proposed to evaluate the effectiveness of an undergraduate program in special education at the University of Maryland (UM) and how it was perceived by a teacher, Diana, who graduated from this program. The undergraduate program at UM is a 5-year program. Diana, a secondary-transition special education teacher, helps students with high-incidence disabilities (such as learning disabilities or behavior disorders) who are preparing to make transition to the world of work. Diana told her story about her first year in teaching and what type of difficulties she faced in that year. Diana indicated that she faced some difficulties in her first three years due to the gap and discrepancy between her preparation as a teacher of students with disabilities and her actual job as a special education teacher. Also, Diana referred to the importance of practicums to improve teachers' teaching skills. In my opinion, Diana referred to very important components in any teachers' preparation program, but the researchers did not report how they prepare teachers for content/subject areas.

Another qualitative case study was conducted by Busch, Pederson, Espin, and Weissenburger (2001) to obtain a special education teacher's views and feelings about

her first-year teaching experience through an interview. The participant was an LD teacher for students with LD from second grade (4 students) and sixth grade (11 students). Pullout model is the services type provided for students with LD in the school. She indicated that she was well prepared for her first year of teaching. She referred to several factors that made her well prepared: (a) the experience she had working in a general education setting prior to going into the special education teacher-training program; (b) the intensity of the one-year licensure special education program and links she had in classes directly to the field; (c) feedback provided by faculty members or supervisors was positive and supportive; and (d) the cooperation between teachers and her made her feel as if she was a real faculty in school and helped her get involved in all school activities, such as attending meetings and participating in problem-solving sessions. On the other hand, she recommended three areas to be improved in the program: (a) more training in behavior management techniques; (b) learning how to analyze IEP as a whole and not just some part of it; and (c) learning multiple formative assessment techniques such as curriculum based measurement (CBM). This study's findings reported the importance of the training in behavior management techniques; learning how to analyze IEP; and learning different assessment techniques such as curriculum based measurement (CBM). All these were included in my survey because of their importance for LD teachers.

Buck, Morsink, Griffin, Hines, and Lenk(1992) conducted a research review to analyze special education fieldwork literature and identified many unresolved issues. Two of these issues seem to be more important than others: 1) the role of early field experience, and 2) the length of time students participate in student teaching or an

internship. According to Buck et al. (1992), “we cannot answer questions about the number and type of field experience necessary to have a positive influence on future teaching behavior, the sequence of field experience, their length, or what responsibilities field-based students should assume” (p.113). Many professionals do not believe that one semester is sufficient; others argue that there is no positive correlation between length of time and improved performance.

Pavri (2004) conducted a study aimed at exploring the extent to which teachers felt prepared to enhance social functioning. The researchers interviewed 60 general and special education teachers of students with and without disabilities in inclusive settings. The interviews concentrated on teachers’ preparation preservice, inservice, and current training needs. Fifty percent of the general and special education teachers could not recall receiving any preservice preparation on providing social support to their students. Seventy-eight percent of the teachers received training inservice. Eighty five percent reported their need for more training, especially in dealing with challenging behaviors.

Finally, special education teachers’ perceptions on the effectiveness of their preparation program to teach students with special needs would logically determine teaching effectiveness, subsequent job satisfaction, and decision to stay or leave the profession. Research indicated that a relationship may exist between teachers’ perceptions of their preparation program and their decision to stay in or leave the profession (Brownell & Smith, 1993). Miller, Brownell, and Smith (1999) conducted a study to determine factors that contribute to special education teachers’ propensity to leave (leavers) or stay (stayers) in the special education classrooms. They surveyed 1,576 special education teachers in Florida. The survey used in this study was designed by the

researchers and it contained four dimensions: (a) historical factors such as preparation, age, race, teaching experience; (b) microsystem factors such as relationship with students; (c) mesosystem factors such as relationship with colleagues; and (d) exosystem factors such as salary and job benefits. Regarding teachers' perceptions of their preparation program and its relationship to attrition, results showed that there is a statistically significant difference between stayers and leavers indicating that there is a relationship between preparation effectiveness and teachers' decision to stay or leave the classroom. However, in my opinion, attrition is complex and identifying specific factors that lead to attrition is not easy because there are so many other factors that affect a teacher's decision to stay or leave. Billingsley (2004) stated that teacher qualification has received less attention in the special education attrition literature than other areas because "it is difficult to come to a consensus on what teacher "high qualify" means, the selection of any measure will likely be controversial" (p.44).

#### Summary

To summarize there are numerous studies on evaluation of teacher preparation programs which have been reviewed in this section. While many studies have attempted to evaluate teacher preparation programs, there is a paucity of research in the area of teacher preparation in special education in general and in LD in particular. The most frequent themes covered were internship or field experience, coursework, and students assessment practices. The most commonly recurring results were that graduates considered themselves well-prepared in some of their coursework and teaching skills, and they were partly satisfied with their preparation and overall experiences.

Many teacher education institutions evaluate their programs to meet accountability requirements for accreditation. Once their programs are accredited they do not publish their evaluation reports because the only purpose of the evaluation was to earn accreditation (Galluzzo & Craig, 1990). Adams and Craig (1983) indicated that 400 institutions reported conducting evaluation studies but in reality few evaluation reports can be found in the literature. Likewise, Althabet (2002) sent a letter to 90 special education teacher programs in the US requesting any evaluations. He received only three replies. This may explain the severe shortage of evaluation studies in the literature. Thus, this current study is an attempt to fill the gap of the severe shortage of evaluation studies in special education teacher preparation programs.

Generally, in American research, many studies have been conducted to determine attrition among special education teachers but fewer studies focus on burnout. This is probably due to the higher prevalence of alternative jobs in the US. Attrition in the US is higher than in Arabic countries because teachers who do not like teaching can quit and get another job. In Arabic countries, teachers must keep their jobs regardless of whether they like it or not due to limited job opportunity, this may increase the feeling of burnout. That is why attrition is not an important issue in Arabic countries. In the near future this might change due to the economic crisis and teachers in the US may keep their jobs whether they like them or not and this may lead to burnout more than attrition.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODS

This study was conducted to investigate the effectiveness of LD teachers' preparation program in Saudi Arabia. A description of the population of the study, the development and administration of the instrument, methods of data collection, and data analysis are discussed in the chapter.

#### The Problem

In Saudi Arabia, there is only one department of special education at King Saud University (KSU) which offers a bachelor's degree in LD. There is another LD program at King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah, but students have not graduated from the program yet, they are in third year of four-year program. There are other LD programs that offer a certificate after a bachelor's degree for those who want to work with students with LD and do not have a degree in special education. The department of special education at KSU was established more than twenty years ago, in 1985, but only one evaluation study of the program has been conducted since then by Althabet (2002). His study evaluated teachers' perceptions of the preparation program in mental retardation (MR), but no study has been conducted to evaluate the preparation program in LD. The purpose of the study is to provide information on the effectiveness of the LD preparation program of KSU from the perceptions of graduates from this program. This study use a survey to obtain LD teachers perceptions on the preparation program they have experienced at KSU in terms of coursework, internships, professors' teaching skills, classroom applications, and personal learning experience. Based on the results, I will make suggestions and recommendations which may help education planners, policy

makers, teachers-trainers, as well as all those involved in the effort, to establish and to implement better preparation programs for the nation's teachers.

#### Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the satisfaction of the LD specialization area at KSU as perceived by LD teachers who have graduated from KSU.

#### Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. How is the effectiveness of selected aspects of the LD major program perceived by LD teachers?
2. Are there differences in perceptions of the program by gender?
3. Are there differences between perceptions of recent LD teachers based on length of teaching experience?
4. Are there differences between teachers for whom LD was first choice of major and teachers for whom LD was not first choice?
5. What specific aspects of the LD program do the LD teachers list most frequently as strengths? As weaknesses?
6. What recommendations do the LD teachers most often mention for improvement of the LD major program?

#### Targeted Population

The target population of this study was teachers who have graduated from special education department at KSU, majoring in LD.

### *Participants*

There are 13 administrative regions in Saudi Arabia which are similar to states in the U.S. Each region has its own educational district. Riyadh Region comprises one educational district. Riyadh is the capital city of Saudi Arabia and is the largest education district in KSA in terms of the numbers of students, teachers, and schools (Ministry of Education, 1992). Riyadh has 191 male LD teachers in 177 schools and about 150 LD female teachers in 93 schools, for a total of 341 spread throughout 270 schools. All those schools are elementary schools. Other cities in KSA have smaller numbers of LD teachers. Moreover, since the education system throughout the country is highly centralized, i.e. all education districts implement the same curricula, under the same regulations, choosing this district for convenience should not impede generalizability of the findings to other education districts. In fact, when an education district covers an extended geographical area, drawing a sample that represents that district will effectively represent the whole country rather than drawing samples from smaller education districts, which would not make good sites for gathering representative samples of teachers.

For this study only 291 LD teachers were surveyed because the researcher was not allowed to distribute more than 100 surveys for female LD teachers according to the district rule. Thus, I assumed that the actual target population was 291, not the total 341 in Riyadh. Since the target population was small and known (291 LD teachers), it was important and useful to make sure that the sample drawn from the target population was representative prior to distributing the surveys. Sample size determination formula and a website were used to determine the sample size of the population as shown in Figure 7.



Rea and Parker (2005) indicated that in social sciences and education most researchers can be satisfied by choosing the 95 percent confidence level, which implies a 5 percent risk that the confidence interval is incorrect. Moreover, they referred to 95 percent as reasonable balance between the risks associated with Type I and Type II errors. For this and other reasons, the 95 percent confidence level was chosen.

Calculation revealed that a sample size of 166 participants should be in the study to be 95% confident that the sample was drawn from the target population using the following equations:

$$n = Z^2_{\alpha} (.25)(N) / Z^2_{\alpha} (.25) + (N - 1)(ME^2_p)$$

$$n = (1.96)^2 (.25)(291) / (1.96)^2 (.25) + 290 (.05)^2$$

$$n = 279.47 / .960 + .725$$

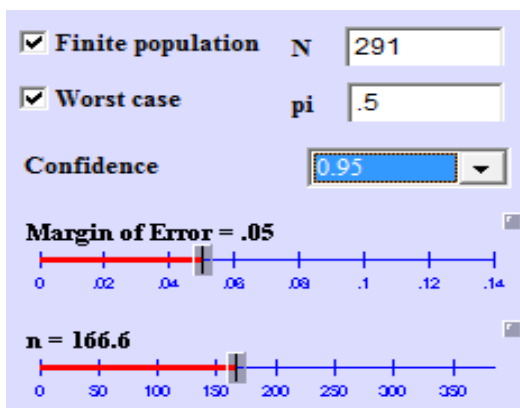
$$n = 279.47 / 1.6854$$

$$n = 166$$

Piface (available at <http://www.stat.uiowa.edu/~rlenth/Power/>) used to double check the correct sample size (Figure 7), got the same result from the formula. The goal was for 166 LD teachers to participate in this study.

Figure 7

Piface



As result, 65.6% (191) of the surveys were sent to male LD teachers and 34.3% (100) sent to female LD teachers. A total of 168 surveys were returned which represents 57.7% of all surveyed teachers (males and females). Of these, 111 of the 191 surveys sent to male LD teachers (58% of the sample) and 57 of the 100 sent to female LD teachers (57% of the sample) were returned. Eight surveys (4.7%) were excluded because they did not meet the criteria of inclusion, those participants had not graduated from KSU or their major was not LD. Thus, the final sample of this study was 160 participants which is 6 less than the target. In a sample this size, being short by only six should not affect the accuracy of the statistical analysis.

#### Research Design

Since the primary purpose of this study was to obtain perceptions, opinions, and attitudes from large number of teachers, the design of the current study was a survey research. A survey was used to gather information about the effectiveness of LD teachers' preparation program in Saudi Arabia from perceptions of teachers themselves. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) indicated that "surveys are used to learn about people's attitudes, beliefs, values, demographics, behavior, opinions, habits, ideas, and other types of information. They are used frequently in business, politics, government, sociology, public health, psychology, and education because accurate information can be obtained for large numbers of people with a small sample" (p. 233). Moreover, survey research design was used in many studies where evaluation of programs was the aim, such as Wasburn-Moses (2005).

## Survey Instrument

Since the main part of the survey already exists and had been administered in Saudi Arabia to a different target population, it is expedient to start from what other people have achieved and not start from scratch. Althabet (2002) conducted research about the perceptions of mental retardation teachers regarding their preparation program at KSU in Saudi Arabia. His survey used a five-point-likert scale and had four subscales: (a) coursework, (b) internship, (c) professors' grading, and (d) professors' teaching skills. Since the main purpose of the current study is the perception of LD teachers regarding their preparation at KSU, some terms of Althabet's survey had to be changed to fit the purpose of the current study, such as changing Mental Retardation to LD. A few changes have been made in the survey to fit the purpose of the current study. I found that there is a need to add to the survey six items that are related to classroom applications, such as *implement effective assessment methods*. The new survey named KSU-LDS has five subscales: coursework, internship quality, professors' teaching skills, classroom application and personal learning experience (see Appendix F). There are three parts in the survey: 1) eight demographic questions, 2) 33 close-ended items, and 3) 3 open-ended questions, for a total of 44 items and questions.

### *Validity and Reliability of Althabet's Survey*

Althabet (2002) used content validity to measure the validity of the survey. Content validity can be measured by having experts who are familiar with the purpose of the study to examine and revise items to assess what they are supposed to measure. Althabet (2002) selected 15 professionals from the Department of Educational Measurement and Research at the University of South Florida, the Department of

Special Education at KSU, and a group of graduates of Special Education program at KSU.

For reliability, Cronbach's alpha of estimating the internal consistency across items was used to determine the reliability of the survey. Cronbach's alpha for the four subscales is presented in Table 6. Cronbach's alpha for the entire survey was 0.856, which indicates that the instrument had a high level of internal consistency.

Table 6  
Reliability Coefficient by Survey Sections

Scale	Items	Reliability Coefficient
Courses	7-12	0.697
Internship	13-18	0.823
Professors' Grading	19-25	0.818
Professors' Teaching Skills	26-33	0.687
Overall Reliability		0.856

#### *Preparing the Research Instrument*

The survey was constructed using Brislin's (1970) back translation technique. In this technique he recommends the process as follows:

1. The original transcript was translated into the target language, in this case Arabic;
2. The target transcript was grammatically checked;
3. The target transcript then was translated back into the original language and checked against the original;
4. A pre-test was undertaken before actual administration.

In the present study this technique was followed precisely. Three competent Arab graduate scholars from English-speaking universities studying English literature, or translation or linguistics were independently contacted for this purpose. The first, who have specialized in translation between Arabic and English, was given the assignment of translating the instrument from English into Arabic. His result then was given to another scholar of Arabic for checking grammar. The process of back translation into the original language was carried out by the third scholar to check with the original one (see Arabic version of the survey in Appendix G).

#### *Validity and Reliability of the Survey in the First Pilot Study Validity*

For the purpose of establishing the validity of the survey, three types of procedures were used:

1. Prior to selecting the current survey, the researcher reviewed several studies that related to the concept of evaluation of teachers' preparation program to ensure the survey measured all aspects of the concept.
2. Content validity refers to the degree to which the survey has a credible content to measure what it is intended to measure (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). To ensure the instrument's validity, the survey was examined and revised by different professionals, who are interested in the field of special education, from different departments, such as special education, educational psychology, and curriculum and instruction in education as illustrated in Table 7.
3. After the survey was reviewed and examined by the professionals, the survey was distributed in summer 2007 by the researcher to 12 LD

teachers (6 males and 6 females), who graduated from special education department at KSU. Based on suggestions made by the LD teachers, minor changes and revisions, such as the wording of some questions, were made to the survey.

Table 7  
Professionals who examined and revised the survey for validation

Professional	Frequency
Special Education Program at UNM	1
Department of Educational Psychology at UNM	2
Department of Special Education in Saudi Arabia	4
Department of Educational Psychology in Saudi Arabia	2
Department of Curriculum and Instruction in Saudi Arabia	2
Total	11

*Reliability.* Reliability refers to the measurement of the internal consistency reliability of a survey (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Cronbach's alpha was calculated in order to measure the internal consistency of the instrument as a whole and for subscales. The computed Cronbach's alpha for this study was classified based on Kirk's (1984) classification of index of reliability: "Very high":  $\alpha \geq 0.90$ ; "High":  $\alpha = 0.70-0.89$ ; "Medium":  $\alpha = 0.30-0.69$ ; "Low":  $\alpha < 0.30$ . The resulting classification of the reliability index for the survey sections is reported in Table 8. The reliability for the survey as a whole is .807 indicating high internal consistency for the survey. However, the internship quality and professors' teaching skills subscales had low Cronbach's alpha (.252 and .397, respectively) according to the classification. There were two options to deal with low alpha in subscales: 1) deleting items that were poorly

correlated ( $< .3$ ) with other items in the subscale to improve Cronbach's alpha, or 2) implementing the survey with a larger sample size ( $> 20$ ) for a second pilot study before distributing the survey to the actual population. The second option was more appropriate for the researcher because a small sample size (12 LD teachers) has a negative influence on Standard Deviation ( $SD$ ) and makes it larger which in turn leads to low Cronbach's alpha as shown in the Equation 1. If the reliability of subscales is not improved then deleting items, which are poorly related with other items, will be the only alternative.

Table 8

Cronbach's alpha for KSU-LDS and the subscales

Scale	Items	Reliability Coefficient
Coursework	1-6	.486
The Internship Quality	7-12	.252
Professors Grading	13-19	.397
Professors' Teaching Skills	20-27	.919
Classroom Application	28-33	.672
KSU-LDS		.807

$$\alpha = \left( \frac{k}{k-1} \right) \left( \frac{SD_x^2 - \sum SD_i^2}{SD_x^2} \right) \quad (1) \text{Cronbach's Alpha Equation}$$

Where  $K$  is number of items and  $SD$  is the standard deviation

#### *Validity and Reliability of the Survey in the Second Pilot Study*

The researcher decided to conduct a second pilot study to improve the reliability of the survey. Participants of the pilot study were 30 LD teachers (14 females and 16

males). The survey was also changed from a five-point-likert scale to a four-point scale to improve the reliability.

*Validity.* The content validity was determined by a “panel of experts” that consisted of those professionals who were interested in the field of special education, from different departments, such as special education and educational psychology as illustrated in Table 9. The survey was piloted in October 2008 and underwent minor revisions and wording in the form of clarifications to the instructions. After reviewing the survey, the panel recommended deleting one item because it was not pertinent to my topic resulting to a final set of 33 items.

Table 9

Professionals who examined and revised the survey for validation

Professional	Frequency
Special Education Program at UNM	3
Department of Educational Psychology at UNM	1
Department of Special Education in Saudi Arabia	3
Department of Educational Psychology in Saudi Arabia	2
Total	9

*Reliability.* Cronbach’s alpha was calculated in order to measure the internal consistency of the instrument. The alpha coefficient was computed for the instrument as a whole and for subscales in the survey. The computed Cronbach's alpha for this study was classified based on Kirk's (1984) classification as indicated earlier. The results reported in Table 10. According to the classification, the survey has a good internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient reported of .88. As shown in Table 10 that Cronbach's alpha for coursework and the internship quality (.60 and .65, respectively) is lower than



other subscales. This might be due to the number of items in these two subscales being less than the number of other subscales. Number of items has a great influence on Cronbach's alpha as shown in Equation 1. This also has been supported by Cortina (1993).

Table 10

Cronbach's alpha for KSU-LDS and the subscales

Scale	Items	Number of Items	Reliability Coefficient
Coursework	1-6	6	.60
The Internship Quality	7-12	6	.65
Classroom Applications	13-19	7	.87
Professors' Teaching Skills	20-27	8	.92
Personal Learning Experience	28-33	6	.75
KSU-LDS	1-33	33	.88

### Data Analysis

The study was undertaken to investigate the perception of the teachers who have graduated from the special education department at KSU. The responses to the survey were coded. The data were analyzed using SPSS Graduate Pack 17.0 for Windows.

Demographic questions (A-H), such as gender and years of experience in teaching were to address the characteristics of the population. Descriptive statistics were used such as frequencies and percentages to analyze these questions.

Closed-Ended Questions descriptive statistics such as frequencies, means, and standard deviation were used to analyze the items/questions (1-33). Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test for differences between the independent variables of gender, years of experience, and choice of LD as a major. The dependent variable was the five

subscales and total scale of the KSU-LDS. Four of the five subscales (coursework, the internship quality, classroom applications, and professors' teaching skills) were four-point-Likert scales as follows: 1= strongly disagree (*SD*), 2= disagree (*D*), 3= agree (*A*), and 4= strongly agree (*SA*). In order to interpret the means, the mid-point of the four-point-scales had to be established. Accordingly, 1.00 – 1.49 = strongly disagree, 1.50 – 2.49 = disagree, 2.50 – 3.49 = agree, and 3.50 – 4.00 = strongly agree. The personal learning experience subscale was a five-points-Likert self-assessment type as follows: 1= inadequate, 2= weak, 3= average, 4= moderately strong, 5= very strong, and 9= N/A. The interpretation of this subscale is different than interpretation for the other four subscales because this subscale used five-points-likert-scale. In order to interpret the means, the mid-point of the five-point-scales had to be established. Accordingly, 1.00 – 1.49 = inadequate, 1.50 – 2.49 = weak, 2.50 – 3.49 = average, 3.50 – 4.49 = moderately strong, 4.50 – 5.00 = moderately strong.

Open-Ended Questions are the end of the survey, three open-ended questions (34-36) were provided to allow participants to address relevant issues not addressed through the closed-ended questions. These questions elicited feedback on the strengths, weaknesses of the LD specialization area, and any further comments or recommendations. There are many techniques for analyzing qualitative open-ended items and choice of analysis method depends on type of item and purpose of study (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). A constant comparison method of analysis was used for the open-ended items on the KSU-LDS. The analysis procedure was as follows: (a) all data from each participant was coded; (b) similarities in the data were noted and grouped into categories; and (c) categories were named.

Trustworthiness (reliability) is known as the extent to which one can believe in the research findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Trustworthiness was established by using peer debriefing method. In this method, all transcripts were shared a critical friend with experience in the field of special education, expertise in qualitative research, and awareness of the purpose of the study. This friend should be asked to code a random sample of the transcripts. Agreement was obtained by using equation as follows:

$$\text{Agreement} = \frac{\text{Number of agreement}}{\text{Total number of agreement + disagreement}} \times 100$$

For the current study, a sample of 50 responses was randomly selected to establish trustworthiness. The responses were reviewed and coded by a professor in Saudi Arabia to determine agreement. The level of agreement between the professor and the researcher was 88%. Each of the open-ended items (strengths, weaknesses, and comments) is addressed separately.

#### Data Collection

Approval for conducting research with human subjects was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of New Mexico and from Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia (see Appendix H & I). An official letter was written by the major advisor professor at the University of New Mexico to the Saudi Arabian-Cultural Mission to the US. This letter explained the purpose of the study and how important it was to conduct the study in Saudi Arabia. Then, the Saudi Arabian-Cultural Mission to the US wrote an official letter to King Khalid University (KKU), where I have scholarship from, to approve of the field trip. The dean of College of Education at KKU wrote an official letter to the Ministry of Education explaining the purpose and benefits

of the study for the educational system and society. My full name, job title, institution, and the title of the research project were required for the permission. After reviewing the research instrument and the purpose of the study, the Ministry of Education approved the study and issued an official letter to all schools in Riyadh, where services and programs are provided for students with LD. This official authorized distribution of the surveys to all LD teachers in schools that have LD programs requesting cooperation. The letter also explained that the survey had to be completed only by those who graduated from King Saud University majoring in LD. The Ministry of Education provided me with a list of schools' names and their contacts numbers to follow up with the surveys.

As explained earlier, there are nine educational supervision centers in Riyadh. The surveys were given to the nine centers by the researcher. The centers mailed the survey, by their special mail, to schools that provided LD programs. Then, schools distributed the surveys to these LD teachers of who agreed to participate in the study. I contacted all the nine centers to ensure that they mailed the surveys to the schools. After one week, I contacted the schools (approximately 250 schools) to ensure that they received and distributed the surveys to LD teachers. I allowed a month for the surveys to be completed and returned to the educational supervision centers. Another call was made those schools that had not returned the survey as a gentle reminder. I collected all the data from the educational supervision centers after two months of distribution. I gave 291 surveys to the educational supervision centers and I received back 168 surveys.

### Ethical Considerations

1. An IRB approval was obtained before conducting the study.
2. Permissions were obtained from KKU and Ministry of Education.
3. A cover letter informed the teachers of the purpose of the research.
4. The researcher is aware of the need to protect teachers' privacy and respect their feelings and rights.
5. All data were treated in such a way as to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of the teachers involved in the study. Coding will be used during the gathering and processing of data from the survey.

### Summary

In this chapter, the design of the study was discussed. Sampling procedures were described, the design of the research instrument was detailed, and the methods used to administer the instrument were explained. A list of the research questions was given, along with the statistical methods used to analyze the collected data. Tabulations of the data obtained from the survey instrument are contained in next chapter. Detailed analyses are also presented.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

The study was designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the LD preparation program at KSU in Saudi Arabia as perceived by LD teachers. Quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted of the data collected by the King Saud University— Learning Disabilities Survey (KSU-LDS) measuring the perceptions of LD teachers about their preparation program. The results are presented in three parts. First, characteristics of LD teachers who participated in the study and demographic information is presented providing a description of the study’s participants. Second, the results of the analysis to address each research question are presented as follows: (a) How is the effectiveness of selected aspects of the LD major program perceived by LD teachers?; (b) Are there differences in perceptions of the program by gender?; (c) Are there differences between perceptions of recent LD teachers based on length on teaching experience?; (d) Are there differences between teachers for whom LD was first choice and teachers for whom LD was not first choice?; (e) What specific aspects of the LD program do the LD teachers list most frequently as strengths? As weaknesses?; and (f) What recommendations do the LD teachers most often mention for improvement of the LD major program? Results from the open-ended questions will be presented at the end of the chapter.

#### Data Entry Reliability

In order to maintain reliability in data entry, data entry checks were conducted. Data were entered into the SPSS. The survey contained 41 questions and items. Surveys ( $n=160$ ) were completed and returned. There were a total of 6,560 individual data points

entered for the 160 surveys. Initially, all data were entered and re-checked, one by one, by the principal investigator. Also, the principal investigator used SPSS to check the data before conducting the actual analysis by using the descriptive statistics including: frequencies for categorical variables and descriptives (mean, range, standard deviation) for continuous variables. Each data point was checked to ensure it was within the limits for the particular data item. For example, gender was defined as 1 for male and 2 for female and the data check findings should have a maximum value of 2 and a minimum of 1, any number higher or lower than 1 and 2 should be considered as an error.

#### Sample Characteristics

The target population for the study was teachers graduating from the special education department at KSU and majoring in LD. Survey were sent to male (n=191, 65.6%) and female (n=100, 34.3%) LD teachers have attended KSU and majoring in LD. A total of 168 surveys were returned resulting in a response rate of 57.7% of all surveyed teachers. Eight surveys (4.7%) were excluded because they did not meet the criteria for inclusion as respondents had not graduated from KSU or their major was not LD. This resulted in a useable pool of 160 respondent including 105 males (65.6%) and 55 female LD teachers (34.4%). Table 11 reports frequencies and percentages for the items on the demographic information.

Participants were at various stages of their teaching. The majority of the participants, 133 (83.1%) of participants had more than 5 years of teaching experience while only 12 (7.5%) of the LD teachers had 1-4 years of teaching experience and 15 LD teachers (9.4%) had less than one year of teaching experience. The majority of participants' grades (91.8%) were in the middle, between good and very good. The

distribution of grades approximated a normal curve. The LD major was a first choice for 141 teachers (88.1%), while for only 18 teachers (11.9%) the LD major was not their first choice. The 18 teachers not choosing LD as their first choice indicated their choices were: mental retardation (n=6) deaf education (n=6), gifted education (n=3), and other majors (n=3) such as psychology.

Table 11  
Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Information

Variable	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	105	65.5
Female	55	34.4
<b>Teaching Experience</b>		
Less than a year	15	9.8
1-4 years	12	7.5
% years and more	133	83.1
<b>Grade</b>		
Pass	7	4.4
Good	58	36.3
V. Good	89	55.6
Excellent	6	3.8
<b>LD First Choice</b>		
Yes	141	88.1
No	18	11.9
<b>Alternatives</b>		
Mental Retardation	6	33.3
Deaf Education	6	33.3
Gifted Education	3	16.7
Other	3	16.7
<b>Reasons</b>		
It was the only alternative	26	16.4
My personal interest in the field	59	37.1
Easiness of the major (or it was less difficult than other majors)	7	4.4
Guarantee of a job	39	24.5
More salary	3	1.9
Other	25	15.7
<b>Recommending Special Education to Friends</b>		
Yes	131	82.4
No	28	17.6



Participants had various reasons for becoming LD teachers. Interestingly, 59 (37.1%) of the teachers selected an LD major because of their personal interest. Thirty nine teachers (24.5%) selected an LD major because of they were guaranteed jobs. LD was the only alternative available for 26 teachers (16.4%) and this can be connected with responses to the question asking if an LD major was their first choice. The respondents indicated LD was not their first choice but since other majors were not available they selected an LD major. The remaining 25 teachers (15.7%) indicated they wanted to be LD teachers so they could help their own children with school assignments and the LD is a relatively new major.

Recommending the special education field to friends was also reported. Teachers (n=131, 82.4%) indicated they would recommend the field to friends and 28 teachers (17.6%) would not recommend the field to their friends.

#### Answers for Research Questions

The KSU-LDS addressed five selected aspects or elements of preparation programs. These elements were important for any teachers' preparation program including: coursework, internship quality, classroom applications, professors' teaching skills, and personal learning experience. Means were calculated for each of the subscales on the KSU-LDS as well as the total scale and used in further analysis. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used to interpret the findings of the analysis for each research question. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test for differences between the independent variables of gender, years of experience, and choice of LD as a major. The dependent variable was the five subscales and total scale of the KSU-LDS. A probability level of  $p=.05$  or less was used as the criteria for accepting or

rejecting the null hypothesis. Each research question was analyzed for its effect on each of these five subscales. SPSS, v.17 was used for the analysis. The findings for each research question are addressed separately.

#### Research Question 1

*How is the effectiveness of selected aspects of the LD major program perceived by LD teachers?*

The effectiveness of the LD program was measured by a survey with five subscales and a total scale score (coursework, internship quality, classroom application, professors' teaching skills, personal learning experience, and the total KSU-LDS). The five subscales were tested separately and all together to answer this question. Table 12 and 13 present the frequency distribution for each of the items and the percentage

Table 12

Frequencies and Percentages of all Items in Coursework, the Internship Quality, Classroom Applications, and Professors' teaching skills

NO	Items	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Coursework</b>									
1	The number of courses given in the LD major was sufficient	12	7.6	59	37.3	60	38	27	17.1
2	The LD courses given in LD major program need to be updated **	92	57.9	59	37.1	6	3.8	2	1.3
3	The content material in the LD courses was sufficient for teachers in the field	27	17.4	67	43.2	51	32.9	10	6.5
4	Course work in the LD major was too theoretical **	97	61	47	29.6	12	7.5	3	1.9
5	Textbooks in the LD major were written clearly	9	5.7	41	25.9	90	57	18	11.4
6	There is a gap between university coursework and the reality of LD in the resource room **	99	61.9	48	30	9	5.6	4	2.5
<b>The Internship Quality</b>									
7	The length of the internship was sufficient	32	20	35	21.9	62	38.8	31	19.4
8	Students receive timely feedback from their supervisors during the internship	29	18.4	50	31.6	59	37.3	20	12.7
9	The internship was more useful than the classroom work	2	1.3	13	8.1	53	33.1	92	57.5
10	The internship provided practical experiences for dealing with school administration	0	0	6	3.8	75	46.9	79	49.4
11	In the internship, I applied instruction methods that I learned in the course of Teaching Students with LD	13	8.2	37	23.4	89	56.3	19	12
12	The internship allowed me to use my thoughts/ideas of special education in a practical way	12	7.5	44	27.5	74	46.3	30	18.8
<b>Classroom Applications</b>									
13	Develop Individualized Educational Plan	13	8.1	33	20.6	80	50	34	21.3
14	Implement Individualized Educational Plan	14	8.8	38	23.9	78	49.1	29	18.2
15	Implement effective behavior management techniques	10	6.3	44	27.5	90	56.3	16	10
16	Implement effective teaching strategies	6	3.8	46	28.8	86	53.8	22	13.8
17	Implement effective assessment methods	7	4.4	45	28.1	93	58.1	15	9.4

Table 12 continued									
18	Collaborate with parents	12	7.5	65	40.6	68	42.5	15	9.4
19	Collaborate with professionals at school (e.g. psychologist )	25	15.8	63	39.4	64	40.5	6	3.8
<b>Professors' Teaching Skills</b>									
20	Use many instruction methods	18	11.3	57	35.6	63	39.4	22	13.8
21	Maintain students' attention	15	9.4	61	38.1	66	41.3	18	11.3
22	Fit their teaching methods to students of different levels	12	7.5	68	43.3	60	38.2	17	10.8
23	Provide websites for LD	31	19.6	81	51.3	39	24.7	7	4.4
24	Meet the individual needs of students	15	9.5	72	45.6	57	36.1	14	8.9
25	Use technology in their instruction	23	14.4	69	43.1	50	31.3	18	11.3
26	Provide sufficient time for office hours	16	10	67	41.9	62	38.8	15	9.4
27	Maintain good students-faculty interaction outside of classroom	20	12.5	67	41.9	61	38.1	12	7.5

\*\* *Negatively coded items*

Table 13

Frequencies and Percentages of all items in Personal Learning Experience Subscale

No.	Items	N/A		Inadequate		Weak		Average		Moderately Strong		Very Strong	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Personal Learning Experience</b>													
28	Providing relevant examinations /assessments. [either/or NOT both]	7	4.4	5	3.3	17	11.1	64	40.8	49	32	18	11.3
29	Implementation of various assessment methods	3	1.9	8	5.1	25	15.9	76	48.4	40	25.5	8	5.1
30	Providing sufficient time to complete examinations	7	4.4	6	3.9	15	9.8	60	39.2	50	32.7	22	14.4
31	Providing sufficient time to complete assignments	6	3.8	4	2.6	31	20.1	67	43.5	42	27.3	10	6.5
32	Working with students to promote academic success	10	6.3	10	6.7	43	28.7	49	32.7	32	21.3	16	10.7
33	Providing opportunities to discuss my academic progress.	10	6.3	11	7.3	45	30	51	34	28	18.7	15	10

### *Subscale 1: Coursework*

This subscale included 6 items (cour1 – cour6). There were three negatively coded items in this subscale (NigCour2, NigCour4, and NigCour6). These three items were reverse coded prior to conducting the data analysis. Table 14 shows that the overall mean of coursework was 2.01 (*SD* .46) falling into “disagree” range.

Table 14

Mean and Standard Deviation of Coursework

No.	Items	Mean	SD
1.	The number of courses given in the LD major was sufficient	2.65	.85
2.	The LD courses given in LD major program need to be updated **	1.48	.63
3.	The content material in the LD courses was sufficient for teachers in the field	2.28	.82
4.	Course work in the LD major was too theoretical **	1.50	.71
5.	Textbooks in the LD major were written clearly	2.74	.73
6.	There is a gap between university coursework and the reality of LD in the resource room **	1.49	.71
Coursework Total		2.01	.46

\*\* Negatively coded item

The lowest ratings were for the negative items; these items were reversed and interpretation of these items should follow the rule of negative item interpretation. For example, the mean of *The LD courses given in LD major program need to be updated* was  $M=1.48$  which, according to the rating, indicate strongly disagree; however, since this was a negative item and had been already reversed, the interpretation also should be reversed from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” Thus, this means LD teachers strongly agreed the LD courses needed to be updated.

### *Subscale 2: The Internship Quality*

This subscale includes 6 items (Inter7 – Inter12). There were no negative items in this subscale. Table 15 illustrates the overall mean for this subscale was  $M= 2.90$  ( $SD .45$ ) indicating that the LD teachers mostly agreed that the internship quality was effective.

Table 15

Mean and Standard Deviation of the Internship Quality

No.	Items	Mean	SD
7.	The length of the internship was sufficient	2.58	1
8.	Students receive timely feedback from their supervisors during the internship	2.44	.93
9.	The internship was more useful than the classroom work	3.47	.70
10.	The internship provided practical experiences for dealing with school administration	3.46	.57
11.	In the internship, I applied instruction methods that I learned in the course of Teaching Students with LD	2.72	.78
12.	The internship allowed me to use my thoughts/ideas of special education in a practical way	2.76	.48
	Internship Quality Total	2.90	.45

The lowest rated item was *Students receive timely feedback from their supervisors during the internship* with a mean =2.44 ( $SD .93$ ). The LD teachers mostly strongly agreed with the statement, *The internship was more useful than the classroom work* indicating the internship was very effective as evidenced by the highest mean in this subscale  $M= 3.47$  ( $SD .70$ ).

### *Subscale 3: Classroom Applications*

The Classroom Application subscale contained 7 items (class13 – class19). Table16 illustrates the subscale mean was 2.65 ( $SD .58$ ) indicating that the LD teachers

agreed their preparation in applying classroom skills was effective. The item, *Collaboration with professionals at school* received the lowest rating as evidenced by the lowest mean in this subscale of 2.32.

Table 16  
Mean and Standard Deviation of Classroom Applications

No.	Items	Mean	SD
13.	Develop Individualized Educational Plan	2.84	.85
14.	Implement Individualized Educational Plan	2.77	.85
15.	Implement effective behavior management techniques	2.70	.73
16.	Implement effective teaching strategies	2.78	.72
17.	Implement effective assessment methods	2.73	.69
18.	Collaborate with parents	2.54	.76
19.	Collaborate with professionals at school (e.g. psychologist )	2.32	.78
	Classroom Application Total	2.65	.58

#### *Subscale 4: Professors' Teaching Skills*

The subscale focused on professors' teaching skills with eight items (teach20 – teach27) and no negatively coded items. All the items, means, and standard deviations are presented in Table 17. The overall subscale mean was 2.42 (*SD* .61) indicating that LD teachers disagreed professors' teaching skills were effective. The lowest rating was for *Provide websites for LD*.



Table 17  
Mean and Standard Deviation of Professors' teaching skills

No.	Items	Mean	SD
20.	Use many instruction methods	2.56	.86
21.	Maintain students' attention	2.54	.81
22.	Fit their teaching methods to students of different levels	2.52	.78
23.	Provide websites for LD	2.14	.77
24.	Meet the individual needs of students	2.44	.78
25.	Use technology in their instruction	2.39	.86
26.	Provide sufficient time for office hours	2.48	.80
27.	Maintain good students-faculty interaction outside of classroom	2.41	.80
	Professors' teaching skills Total	2.42	.61

*Subscale 5: Personal Learning Experience*

This subscale was designed to be as a self-assessment measure of LD teachers' perceptions about the LD program. This subscale contains six items (prog28 – prog33) with no negatively items. Table 18 illustrates the LD teachers rated the effectiveness of the program in average as evidenced by the subscale mean of 3.14 (*SD* .74). The lowest rated item had a mean of 2.94 for *providing opportunities to discuss my academic progress*. The highest mean was 3.44 for *providing sufficient time to complete examinations*.

Table 18  
Mean and Standard Deviation of Personal Learning Experience

No.	Items	Mean	SD
28.	Providing relevant examinations /assessments. [either/or NOT both]	3.38	.94
29.	Implementation of various assessment methods.	3.10	.90
30.	Providing sufficient time to complete examinations	3.44	.98
31.	Providing sufficient time to complete assignments.	3.15	.90
32.	Working with students to promote academic success.	3.01	1.0
33.	Providing opportunities to discuss my academic progress.	2.94	1.0
	Personal Learning Experience Total	3.14	.74

*KSU-LDS Total Scale*

To answer the first research question, a mean score was calculated for all of the items on the KSU-LDS and used for analysis. Table 19 reports the mean of the five subscales' and the total KSU-LDS scale. The KSU-LDS mean was 2.59 (*SD* .40), indicating the LD teachers agreed the preparation program was effective. These findings are similar to Althabet's (2002) findings where MR teachers rated their program effectiveness in the middle of the scale (neither agree nor disagree).

Table 19  
Mean and Standard Deviation All of Subscales

Subscales	Mean	SD
Coursework	2.01	.46
The Internship Quality	2.90	.45
Classroom Application	2.65	.58
Professors' teaching skills	2.42	.61
Personal Learning Experience	3.04	.82
KSU-LDS Total	2.59	.40

## Research Question 2

*Are there differences in perceptions of the program by gender?*

One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine if there were differences in the perceptions of LD teachers when compared by gender. The assumptions for ANOVA were checked prior to conducting the analysis to ensure no assumption was violated. All the assumptions were met. Table 20 presents the means and *SDs* for gender for each subscale and the KSU-LDS total. There were small differences between the means for male and female LD teachers. The independent variable for the ANOVA was gender and the dependent variables were the subscales and total scale scores of the KSU-LDS. A probability level of  $p=.05$  was used as the criteria for accepting or rejecting the null hypothesis.

Table 20

Mean and SD for all Subscales by Gender

Subscale	Gender	Mean	SD
Coursework	Male	1.98	.45
	Female	2.07	.47
The Internship Quality	Male	2.93	.44
	Female	2.84	.46
Classroom Application	Male	2.59	.59
	Female	2.77	.55
Professors' teaching skills	Male	2.43	.64
	Female	2.40	.56
Personal Learning Experience	Male	3.16	.77
	Female	3.12	.68
KSU-LDS Total	Male	2.61	.39
	Female	2.64	.39

*Subscale 1: Coursework*

This subscale included 6 items (cour1 – cour6). There were three negative coded items in this subscale (NigCour2, NigCour4, and NigCour6). These three items were reverse coded prior to conducting the data analysis. The ANOVA findings indicated there were no statistically significant differences for the coursework subscale by gender and the null hypothesis was retained. Table 21 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 21  
Analysis of Variance for Coursework by Gender

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.25	1	.25	1.20	.27
Within Groups	31.86	150	.21		
Total	32.12	151			

*Subscale 2: The Internship Quality*

The results of one-way ANOVA found there were no statistically significant differences by gender for the internship quality subscale and the null hypothesis was retained. Table 22 presents the results of the analysis.

Table 22  
Analysis of Variance for Internship Quality by Gender

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.29	1	.29	1.41	.23
Within Groups	31.60	154	.20		
Total	31.89	155			

*Subscale 3: Classroom Applications*

The result of one-way ANOVA found there were no statistically significant difference by gender and the null hypothesis was retained. Table 23 presents the results of the analysis.

Table 23

Analysis of Variance for Classroom Applications by Gender

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.11	1	1.11	3.29	.07
Within Groups	52.38	155	.33		
Total	53.49	156			

*Subscale 4: Professors' Teaching Skills*

The result of one-way ANOVA found there were no statistically significant differences by gender and the null hypothesis was retained. Table 24 presents the results of the analysis.

Table 24

Analysis of Variance for Professors' teaching skills by Gender

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.02	1	.02	.07	.78
Within Groups	56.63	153	.38		
Total	58.65	154			

*Subscale 5: Personal Learning Experience*

The result of one-way ANOVA found there were no statistically significant differences by gender and the null hypothesis was retained. Table 25 presents the results of the analysis.

Table 25

## Analysis of Variance for Personal Learning Experience Subscale by Gender

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.06	1	.06	.11	.74
Within Groups	87.39	158	.55		
Total	87.45	159			

*KSU-LDS Total Scale*

The result of one-way ANOVA found there were no statistically significant differences by gender and the null hypothesis was retained. Table 26 presents the results of the analysis.

Table 26

## Analysis of Variance for KSU-LSD Total

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.02	1	.02	.17	.68
Within Groups	24.63	158	.15		
Total	24.66	159			

## Research Question 3

*Are there differences between perceptions of recent LD teachers based on length on teaching experience?*

One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine the effect of length of teaching experience on LD teachers' perceptions of the whole LD teachers' preparation program effectiveness. Participants were in three different groups according to the length of teaching experience (1= less than a year, 2= 1-4 years, and 3= 5 years and more). Assumptions for ANOVA were checked before conducting the analysis to ensure that no assumption was violated. All the assumptions were met. All subscales were tested

first separately and then all together to answer this question. Table 27 reports the means and SDs for teaching experience groups for each subscale and the whole survey

Table 27  
Means and Standard Deviation for all Subscale and Total KSU-LDS  
by Gender

Subscale	Teaching Experience	Mean	SD
Coursework	less than a year	2.06	.44
	1-4 years	2.09	.47
	5 years and more	2.00	.46
Internship Quality	less than a year	2.96	.34
	1-4 years	2.96	.35
	5 years and more	2.87	.47
Classroom Applications	less than a year	2.82	.56
	1-4 years	2.72	.73
	5 years and more	2.61	.57
Professors' Teaching Skills	less than a year	2.56	.59
	1-4 years	2.77	.56
	5 years and more	2.35	.61
Personal Learning Experience	less than a year	3.07	.54
	1-4 years	3.51	.81
	5 years and more	2.97	.75
KSU-LDS Total	less than a year	2.69	.31
	1-4 years	2.80	.43
	5 years and more	2.55	.39

*Subscale 1: Coursework*

This subscale included 6 items (cour1-cour6). There were three negative coded items in this subscale (NigCour2, NigCour4, and NigCour6). These three items were reverse coded prior to conducting the data analysis. The result of one-way ANOVA found there were no statistically significant differences by length of teaching experience and the null hypothesis was retained. Table 28 presents the results of the analysis

Table 28

## Analysis of Variance for Coursework by Teaching Experience

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.114	2	.05	.26	.76
Within Groups	32.00	149	.21		
Total	32.12	151			

*Subscale 2: The Internship Quality*

The result of one-way ANOVA found there were no statistically significant differences by length of teaching experience and the null hypothesis was retained. Table 29 presents the results of the analysis

Table 29

## Analysis of Variance for Internship Quality by Teaching Experience

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.23	2	.11	.56	.57
Within Groups	31.66	153	.20		
Total	31.89	155			

*Subscale 3: Classroom Applications*

The result of one-way ANOVA found there were no statistically significant differences by length of teaching experience and the null hypothesis was retained. Table 30 presents the results of the analysis



Table 30

## Analysis of Variance for Classroom Applications by Teaching Experience

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.54	2	.27	.79	.45
Within Groups	52.94	154	.34		
Total	53.49	156			

*Subscale 4: Professors' Teaching Skills*

The result of one-way ANOVA found there were no statistically significant differences by length of teaching experience and the null hypothesis was retained. Table 31 presents the results of the analysis

Table 31

## Analysis of Variance for Professors' teaching skills by Teaching Experience

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.01	2	1.01	2.71	.07
Within Groups	56.63	152	.37		
Total	58.65	154			

*Subscale 5: Personal Learning Experience*

The result of one-way ANOVA found there were no statistically significant differences by length of teaching experience and the null hypothesis was retained. Table 32 presents the results of the analysis.

Table 32

Analysis of Variance for Personal Learning Experience Subscale by Teaching Experience

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.67	2	.83	1.53	.21
Within Groups	85.79	157	.54		
Total	87.45	159			

#### *KSA-LSD Total Scale*

The result of one-way ANOVA found there were no statistically significant differences by length of teaching experience and the null hypothesis was retained. Table 33 presents the results of the analysis

Table 33

Analysis of Variance for KSU-LSD by Teaching Experience

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.69	2	.34	2.26	.10
Within Groups	23.97	157	.15		
Total	24.66	159			

#### Research Question 4

*Are there differences between teachers for whom LD was first choice of major and teachers for whom LD was not first choice?*

One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine whether there were differences on the subscales and total KSU-LDS scale scores when compared by whether LD as the first choice or not. Participants were in two different groups according to their answers of whether LD was the first choice or not (1= yes and 2= no). Assumptions for ANOVA were checked before conducting the analysis to ensure that no

assumption was violated. All the assumptions were met. All subscales were tested first separately and all together to answer this question. Table 34 represents the means and standard deviations by subscale and total scale for first choice or not.

Table 34

Mean and SD for all Subscales by LD Teachers' First Choice

Subscale	LD Teachers' First Choice	Mean	SD
Coursework	Yes	2.01	.44
	No	2.01	.44
Internship Quality	Yes	2.90	.45
	No	2.91	.41
Classroom Applications	Yes	2.60	.60
	No	2.66	.47
Professors' teaching skills	Yes	2.41	.63
	No	2.50	.46
Personal Learning Experience	Yes	3.18	.76
	No	2.92	.51
KSU-SLD Total	Yes	2.62	.40
	No	2.61	.33

#### *Subscale 1: Coursework*

This subscale included 6 items (cour1 – cour6). There were three negative coded items in this subscale (NigCour2, NigCour4, and NigCour6). These three items were recognized and reversed before conducting the whole data analysis. The results of the ANOVA indicated there were no statistically significant differences by whether LD was the first choice or not and the null hypothesis was retained. Table 35 presents the findings for the analysis.

Table 35

## Analysis of Variance for Coursework by LD Teachers' First Choice

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.00	1	.00	.00	.99
Within Groups	32.12	150	.21		
Total	32.12	151			

*Subscale 2: The Internship Quality*

The results of the ANOVA indicated there were no statistically significant differences by whether LD was the first choice or not and the null hypothesis was retained. Table 36 presents the findings for the analysis.

Table 36

## Analysis of Variance for Internship Quality by LD Teachers' First Choice

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.00	1	.00	.00	.94
Within Groups	31.89	154	.207		
Total	31.89	155			

*Subscale 3: Classroom Applications*

The results of the ANOVA indicated there were no statistically significant differences by whether LD was the first choice or not and the null hypothesis was retained. Table 37 presents the findings for the analysis.

Table 37  
 Analysis of Variance for Classroom Applications  
 by LD Teachers' First Choice

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.00	1	.00	.00	.98
Within Groups	53.49	155	.34		
Total	53.49	156			

*Subscale 4: Professors' Teaching Skills*

The results of the ANOVA indicated there were no statistically significant differences by whether LD was the first choice or not and the null hypothesis was retained. Table 38 presents the findings for the analysis.

Table 38  
 Analysis of Variance for Professors' teaching skills  
 by LD Teachers' First Choice

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.10	1	.10	.26	.60
Within Groups	58.54	153	.38		
Total	58.65	154			

*Subscale 5: Personal Learning Experience*

The results of the ANOVA indicated there were no statistically significant differences by whether LD was the first choice or not and the null hypothesis was retained. Table 39 present the findings for the analysis.

Table 39

Analysis of Variance for Personal Learning Experience Subscale  
by LD teachers' First Choice

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.10	1	1.10	2.02	.15
Within Groups	86.35	158	.54		
Total	87.45	159			

#### *KSA-LSD Total Scale*

The results of the ANOVA indicated there were no statistically significant differences by whether LD was the first choice or not and the null hypothesis was retained. Table 40 presents the findings for the analysis.

Table 40

Analysis of Variance for KSU-LDS by LD teachers' first choice

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.00	1	.00	.01	.91
Within Groups	24.66	158	.15		
Total	24.66	159			

#### Research Question 5

*What specific aspects of the LD program do the LD teachers list most frequently as strengths? As weaknesses?*

#### *Program Strengths and Weakness*

There were 160 survey respondents; however, only 132 completed the open-ended items and not every respondent had comments for each item. It was interesting to note that in approximately 50% of the open-ended items respondents did not have any comments about program strengths. It is unknown whether they actually thought there

were no strengths to the program or If they simply did not complete this item. However, some of the responses did not exactly appear to be identification of strengths but were actually weaknesses of program. On the other hand, nearly all of the LD teachers had some comment about program weaknesses. Very few left the space for comments on program weaknesses blank. All the comments were then categorized into three categories: coursework, internship, and professors. Each category will be presented and discussed.

*Coursework Content.* While there were a number of positive comments about course and course content, several LD teachers noted the courses were theoretically driven and did not address actual practice in classrooms. Two of the respondents were from female LD teachers. One female respondent said “I had learned to help children with their studies in reading, writing, and mathematics”. A second female respondent stated “I have learned strategies that are useful for my own kids”. Other comments addressed the LD major being new, very nice facilities for special education, the ability to do papers and presentations rather than exams, and learning a working knowledge of LD strategies.

In contrast, the LD teachers had a number of comments to make about weakness in their coursework ranging from “assignments not making sense” to “needing to updated teaching materials to include technology”. The majority of the comments on coursework addressed the lack of courses on how to teach mathematics, reading, spelling, and science. LD teachers also noted “the classes were lectures and they did not have an opportunity to practice what was being taught”. They thought there were too many students in a class, a lot of repetition in the classes, no case studies, and a reliance on

exams as the only evidence of learning. LD teachers felt they had not learned a number of things they needed to know such as how to work with an individual education plan (IEP), parents, administrators, and thought many of their classes were irrelevant to teaching LD students. They did note one LD methods class was not enough, materials need to be updated, and translations to Arabic were bad or inadequate.

*Internship.* The usefulness of the internship, especially in dealing with school administration was the only comment provided by the LD teachers as a strength of the LD teachers' preparation program. On the other hand, the largest number of LD teachers indicated as a weakness a disconnect between reality, the school where they would be teaching, and what they were learning in the classroom. This disparity was addressed by a female LD teacher who stated that "there is a gap between what I learned at university and in the field". Another male LD teacher commented that "there is a gap between what I learned at university and the reality of LD in the resource room". Both male and female LD teachers also commented that "the university had no resource room on campus for to practice working with LD students prior to the internship". They thought internships were too short and LD teachers wanted to make more school visits prior to beginning their internships. One female LD teacher also thought "the materials needed for the internship were too expensive".

*Professors.* Twenty-six of the respondents commented on professors and felt the "professors were helpful", "good instructors", and "very nice". LD teachers did feel some professors were better than others, more knowledgeable, or nicer. In contrast, LD teachers discussed the need for their professors to be better qualified in the eyes of their students. LD teachers thought there was no collaboration between schools and the



university so training did not reflect what the LD teachers would find in schools. LD teachers also thought there was shortage of professors in the special education department. They wanted professors to use English terminology in classes so they would be able to use electronic resources to find more information about a topic. Most LD teachers indicated “professors should lecture less and help students help to learn skills needed in the classrooms”.

#### Research Question 6

*What recommendations do the LD teachers most often mention for improvement of the LD major program?*

Most of the LD teachers had comments and recommendations for the program. Their comments were categorized as: addressing coursework, professors, internships, and needs.

The coursework category found LD teachers wanting more coursework in teaching reading, mathematics, spelling, and science. They did not feel this was covered adequately in their classes and they wanted and needed additional information. A male LD teacher said “I had to research how to teach these subject areas and learn teaching strategies on my own”. LD teachers also wanted more activities and strategies taught in classes and felt it was important for their preparation to be connected to what they would actually be doing in their own classrooms. LD teachers also wanted to be taught to learn using the same materials they would find in a classroom as well as focusing on IEPs. Another female LD teacher noted that she wanted “more guest lecturers at university classrooms who had actual experience working with LD students”.

LD teachers had some definite thoughts on their internships: primarily they wanted the internship to be a year long rather than a semester in length. They also wanted

to make more visits to LD classrooms to observe how LD teachers are working with students. Increased supervision visits and more feedback from professors was also requested.

When talking about professors, LD teachers felt the special education department needed to be more aware of what was actually happening in the classrooms. Teachers valued having more highly qualified professors with LD teaching experience. One male LD teacher suggested “having LD teachers from school, who teach students with LD, was important”. They also requested more feedback from professors during internships as well as additional collaboration between the school district and university professors.

LD teachers also discussed a number of areas where they felt there were needs. They wanted to have English textbooks and English classes, better translations into Arabic, and additional information on other disabilities, since many students are identified with more than one disability. They wanted lessons to be more creative, include case studies, as well as being able to do more practical applied projects or presentations and fewer exams. LD teachers needed more information on developing an IEP, working with middle school students, making lesson plans, and better classroom materials. LD teachers did want to have access to additional education through advanced degrees and access to workshops and training before and after graduation.

### Summary

The study was designed to evaluate the effectiveness of the LD preparation program at KSU in Saudi Arabia as perceived by LD teachers. Quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted to answer the research questions. Quantitative data showed that the LD teachers’ preparation program was adequate. Also, the differences

between the independent variables of gender, year of experience, and choice of LD as a major were not significant. In contrast, the open-ended survey data provided very beneficial, while sometimes surprising, responses. These responses provided valued suggestions and comments to improve the LD teachers' preparation program.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

The special education preparation program at KSU in Saudi Arabia has been in existence for more than twenty years but there is little information on the effectiveness of the program. The primary purpose of the study was to examine the perceived effectiveness of the LD teachers' preparation program at KSU by eliciting information from program graduates working as LD teachers in Saudi Arabia. A survey was used to gather information about the effectiveness of LD teachers' preparation program and to answer the research questions. The survey (KSU-LDS) has five subscales: coursework, internship quality, professors' teaching skills, personal learning experience and classroom applications. There are three parts in the survey: (a) eight demographic questions, (b) 33 close-ended items, and (c) 3 open-ended questions, for a total of 44 items and questions.

When analyzing the demographic information between groups, several differences were identified. The sample of 160 participants in this study included 105 males (65.6%) and 55 female LD teachers (34.4%). There were fewer females than male graduates of the program and this might be due to the conservativeness of the Saudi Arabian society. Due to the separation of the sexes, it may have been more difficult to reach female teachers especially when the researcher was male. The study had similar findings to Althabet's (2002) as to gender of respondents.

The majority of the participants, 133 (83.1%), had more than 5 years of teaching experience, while only 12 (7.5%) of the LD teachers had 1-4 years and 15 (9.4%) had less than one year of teaching experience. This is not unexpected since the study was conducted only in the city of Riyadh. Because most student teachers were from Riyadh

they wanted to live in Riyadh and pursue their careers in the city. The lifestyle in is also preferred by many Saudi Arabians and many teachers want to teach in Riyadh but there are not enough teaching positions for everyone. The Ministry of Education requires all new teachers to work somewhere else for several of years before they can move back to Riyadh. Teachers currently working in Riyadh have already fulfilled their other obligations and found an opening in Riyadh. Riyadh because of government requirements tends to have more experienced teachers and this explains why 83% have more than 5 years of teaching experience.

Participants had various reasons for becoming LD teachers. Interestingly, 59 (37.1%) of the teachers selected an LD major because of personal interest. In the first two years of the LD preparation program students usually study general special education courses about all of the disabilities within special education and as they study all disabilities, teachers may be attracted to LD and choose an LD major. Those teachers choosing to work with LD students may be more likely to be creative and passionate about their teaching position. Saudi Arabia anticipates shortage of LD teachers in the future due to only one university offering a bachelor's degree in LD teaching, the potential shortage may account for the 39 teachers selecting an LD degree because they were guaranteed a teaching position upon graduation.

It was interesting most of the respondents (n=131, 82.4%) indicated they would recommend the special education field to friends, and only 28 (17.6%) would not. These findings were similar to Althabet's (2002) findings indicating 87% of participants would recommend the field to their friends. It appears special education teachers are satisfied with their positions and are willing to recommend the field to friends.

## Findings and Discussion

### *Research Question 1*

*How is the effectiveness of selected aspects of the LD major program perceived by LD teachers?*

Overall, LD teachers agreed their overall preparation program was effective. However, LD teachers disagreed about the effectiveness of the coursework. This was also supported by participants' responses on the open-ended questions when they were asked about the program weaknesses and what recommendations could be given for improvement. LD teachers commented, "no coursework in math, reading, and spelling", "need more coursework in LD teaching methods", and "offering coursework in math, reading, and spelling". The majority of LD teachers indicated coursework needed to be improved to meet the learning requirements of LD students. LD teachers in the field are required to help students with math and reading but LD teachers had no coursework in teaching math, reading, and Arabic in their LD preparation program.

LD teachers agreed the internship was effective. The lowest rated item was, *Students receive timely feedback from their supervisors during the internship* with a mean =2.44 (*SD* .93). This was probably because there are few faculty in the department and this limits the number of visits faculty can make to observe students, limiting feedback. In open-ended questions, LD teachers indicated, "in internship, no supervisors available to answer our questions" and "feedback were so limited". In addition to a shortage of faculty, there is also a problem in that the entire cohort of student teachers is spread over a large geographic area. Schools in Saudi Arabia are smaller than schools in the United States and each school can only have 1-3 student teachers for an internship. The study

was conducted in the capital city of Riyadh with more than 600 schools, making it difficult for faculty to travel to the schools every week to supervise the student teachers.

Although LD teachers thought their preparation program effective, majority of LD teachers *Strongly Agreed* the length of internship was inadequate. This was also supported by participants' responses on the open-ended questions when they were asked about the program weaknesses and what recommendations could be given for improvement. LD teachers commented, "the length of internship should be increased to one year rather than one semester", "internship was so good but was not enough", and "one semester is not enough for internship, it has to be for two years".

LD teachers agreed their LD preparation program in applying classroom teaching skills was effective. However, LD teachers disagreed with the statement, *Collaboration with professionals at school*. The professionals, such as psychologists, are at the district level and only go to schools upon request and do not have a regular visitation schedule. The only professional in a school is the counselor and he/she is responsible for the entire school including students with or without LD. There are approximately one or two counselors for at least 300 students in a school. For all intents and purposes, this means there is no professional or teaching professional for student teachers to access at the school.

Professors' teaching skills were perceived as ineffective especially when it came to the statement, *Provide websites for LD*. This might be because the Arabic LD websites are poor compared to English websites, leading professors to rely heavily on books rather than websites. The majority of Arabic websites summarizes books and do not provide practical experience, research, or resources for teachers and students.

Another possible reason for the perceived ineffectiveness of professors' instruction may be the limited number of LD faculty and the large number of students. This was also supported by participants' responses on the open-ended questions when they were asked about the program weaknesses and what recommendations could be given for improvement. LD teachers commented, "there is a shortage of professors in the special education program", "professors need to use English terms in class to allow us to use internet to find more information", and " wanted professors to lecture less and practice more in the classroom".

LD teachers rated the personal learning experience subscale as average. The lowest rated item had a mean of 2.94 for *Providing opportunities to discuss my academic progress*. This might be a limitation because there were no other assessment methods except exams (final and mid terms), limiting the opportunity to discuss progress. On the other hand, the highest mean was 3.44 for *Providing sufficient time to complete examinations*. The rule of Saudi Arabian universities is to set a time limit of two hours for examinations except for medical departments which is usually enough for these types of exams.

#### *Research Question 2*

*Are there differences in perceptions of the program by gender?*

The results of one way ANOVA indicated there were no statically significant differences between male and female LD teachers in their perceptions of the whole LD preparation program. These findings were contrary to Althabet's (2002) findings there was a statistically significant differences between male and female MR teachers. There maybe several reasons for Althabet's (2002) findings: first, he used a larger sample size;



a large sample size increases the F value and makes any small difference significant (Moore, 1995). Althabet collected data on MR teachers and at the time all MR programs were in segregated separate schools. It may have been easier to go to the schools and distribute surveys to MR teachers in these special schools. Second, Althabet collected data nearly nine years ago and there were few Saudi Arabian female professors in the department. As recently as nine years ago, all coursework for females was taught by male professors over closed-circuit television or by unqualified professors. Male students participated in classes taught by male Saudi Arabian professors with Ph.D.s in special education from American universities. Educational conditions nine years ago may account for Althabet's findings and these conditions have changed over the last nine years with United States educated Ph.D.s completing their degrees and returning to Saudi Arabia to teach in the university. LD teachers (male and female) are now taught by highly qualified professors and are implementing the same curriculum.

### *Research Question 3*

*Are there differences between perceptions of recent LD teachers based on length of teaching experience?*

The results of one way ANOVA indicated that there were no statically significant differences between LD teachers based on the length of teaching experience (1= less than a year, 2= 1-4 years, and 3= 5 years and more). Length of teaching experience did not make a difference in respondents' perceptions of their preparation program. This might be accounted for by the majority of the respondents having more than 5 years of teaching experience. Althabet (2002) found this to be true also; however, he did find there was statistically significant difference between recent and older MR teachers in perceptions of their internship. More recent program graduates might have a better recollection of their

internships than to teachers with more time since completion of their training program.

#### *Research Question 4*

*Are there differences between teachers for whom LD was first choice of major and teachers for whom LD was not first choice?*

The results of this question cannot be compared to Althabet's study (2002) or other studies because this question was not a part of their research questions. This question was added to this study because in recent years, a majority of students in special education department would like to specialize in the area of LD. This is supported by the results that 141 teachers (88.1%) chose LD as their first choice. Thus, it was necessary to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between teachers for whom LD was their first choice of major and teachers for whom LD was not their first choice. The results of the ANOVA indicated there were no statistically significant differences by whether LD was the first choice or not. This might be because the majority of participants (88.1%) chose LD as their first choice, while for only 11.9% of participants the LD major was not their first choice. This lack of variability may have affected the power to find any difference between groups.

#### *Research Question 5*

*What specific aspects of the LD program do the LD teachers list most frequently as strengths? As weaknesses?*

LD teachers found several strengths in the LD educational program and interestingly these were also considered to be weaknesses by respondents. There were also fewer comments about strengths than weaknesses. A number of respondents felt their professors were nice but also said they needed to be more knowledgeable. Respondents thought the coursework was too theoretically rather than addressing actual

practice as it occurs in the classroom. Internships were appreciated but also thought to be too short.

LD teachers had a number of comments about programs weaknesses. Their comments centered on coursework, internships, and professors. Teachers felt a weakness of the program was the lack of specific courses in teaching math, reading, spelling, and science. To the LD teachers these needed to be component of the training program as this is what they are expected to do every day in the classroom. Learning Disabilities teachers found other aspects of their daily teaching life were not addressed in their coursework such as IEPs, working with school administrators, and parents. Teachers thought there was a disconnect between what and how coursework was delivered in the classroom and what they needed when they had their own classrooms. Teachers also wanted their professors to be better qualified, lecture less, and give students the opportunity to practice what was being taught in the classrooms.

#### *Research Question 6*

*What recommendations do the LD teachers most often mention for improvement of the LD major program?*

When asked for changes or improvements to the program, respondents thought the program needed to include how to teach reading, mathematics, spelling, and science. They did not feel this was covered adequately in their classes and they wanted and needed additional information. A number of the LD teachers said they had to research how to teach these subject areas and learn teaching strategies on their own. LD teachers also wanted more activities and strategies taught in classes and felt it was important for classroom learning to be connected to what they would actually be doing in their own classrooms. LD teachers wanted the internship to be longer with more supervision so they

would feel more comfortable and prepared in their own classrooms. Additional materials in English and Arabic were also a need as well as professors using a different teaching style to include more practice in class, more applied projects, and additional information on developing IEPs, making lesson plans, and working with middle school children.

#### Limitations of the Study

Data from the survey instrument was gathered only from LD teachers currently teaching in the schools. The target population of the study was limited to those currently employed teachers who had received their Bachelor of Arts Degree in special education with a major in LD at KSU. The study did not seek the perceptions of current students in teacher preparation programs, professors teaching and researching in this area, or others knowledgeable about teachers' preparation programs.

The study was limited to the use of a survey instrument as the primary method of gathering data. Criticism for self-reported techniques might apply to the study. For example, the accuracy and honesty of respondents may be questionable. However, careful procedures were taken to eliminate this threat which were addressed in chapter 3.

Finally, it is important to bear in mind very few studies have explored special education teachers' preparation programs in Saudi Arabia. Social, cultural, economic and educational differences between countries dictate caution in generalizing from research completed in one country to research completed in another. As such, there is an important need for research on the effectiveness of special education teachers' preparation programs to be completed in many countries where the local circumstances can be taken into account in the design of the study.

## Recommendations

### *Program Recommendations*

Recommendations to improve the effectiveness of LD the teachers' preparation program are presented based on the findings of the current study. LD teachers who participated in this study suggested ways to improve coursework content, internship and training, and professors' teaching skills.

*Coursework Content.* While this was not a significant finding, some LD teachers did suggest that the order of classes in the program was not logical. They said that sometime a course that had more basic information was presented after a course with more advanced information. Therefore, it might be beneficial to review the order of classes. Even though the statistical analysis did not find this area significant, the open-ended questions revealed dissatisfaction with coursework content and suggestions for improvement. The majority of LD teachers indicated that they had no courses in math, reading, and Arabic in their program. Teaching math, reading, and Arabic is what they are expected to do every day in the classroom. Therefore, it would be beneficial to require coursework in math, reading, Arabic, and courses on how to teach these subject areas prior to the internship.

Learning Disabilities teachers felt a weakness of the program was the lack of practicing in classrooms, especially in courses about teaching methods. Methods courses will be more beneficial if they let students practice what they learn in university in their classrooms.

Different assessment methods, rather than exams, should be used to assess the students' learning, such as doing papers, presentations, and school visits. Finally,

teaching students how to develop IEPs should be required before the internship because training on IEPs is not available in schools.

*Internship and Training.* Collaboration between special education departments and districts should be established to allow students to visit schools and practice what they learned in university. LD teachers believed that training time spent (internship and training) in actual classroom situations are the most important part of a special education teacher' preparation program. All special education teachers' preparation programs need to continue to emphasize these types of experiences. Such experiences should begin early in the program and continue through to the internship and practicum. The length of internship has to be for one year. Finally, students have to receive feedback regularly from their professors to improve their teaching skills.

*Professors' Teaching Skills.* First, special education departments should hire more faculty to fulfill the needs of huge number of students. Also, professors should always provide training for their students by practicing in classrooms. Moreover, professors have to be connected to the field and presenting real case studies to their students. Professors should lecture less and help students learn the skills they need and practice these skills in their classrooms. In addition, it would be very useful for special education departments to give opportunity to students to evaluate their professors at the end of every semester; this evaluation helps to improve the teaching quality in the classroom.

#### *Research Recommendations*

As long as the special education program at KSU and other new programs remain in existence, program evaluation should be a continuing process. In order to continue to maintain a high quality program, ongoing assessment is necessary. It would be beneficial

also to survey new special education teachers immediately following their first year of teaching, requesting feedback regarding personal satisfaction with the preparation program.

The data for the current study were collected from LD teachers who graduated from special education department at KSU. Different perspectives on teaching profession effectiveness could be assessed by also collecting survey data from professors, parents, current students, or others who might be interested in teacher education.

This study raises an issue about the special education teachers' knowledge of content areas such as math. This issue has not been investigated yet and it would be beneficial to conduct more research in this area.

Finally, in the current study, I received very beneficial responses through open-ended questions. It would be beneficial to conduct a more in depth study using interviews to address satisfaction with teachers' preparation program.

#### Summary

This chapter contained a review of the methodology used in this study, a summary of the findings, discussion, and the corresponding recommendations concerning the LD teachers' preparation programs effectiveness. The recommendations of this study have important implications for new LD teachers' preparation programs. Future research regarding the importance of evaluation for LD teachers' programs for improvement have been outlined and warrant investigation.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Map of Saudi Arabia





## Appendix B

## Required Coursework with Description for Learning Disabilities Concentration

No.	Course	Credit
1.	Educational Technology and Communication	2
2.	Introduction to Mental Retardation	3
3.	Introduction to Giftedness and Creativity	3
4.	Learning Disabilities in Reading and Writing	3
5.	Introduction to Learning Disabilities	3
6.	Educating Exceptional Children in Regular Schools	3
7.	Mental Abilities and Theories of Mental Structure	3
8.	Mental Retardation from Theoretical Perspectives	2
9.	Developmental Learning Disabilities	2
10.	Learning Disabilities in Perspectives of Different Theories	2
11.	Curriculum for Exceptional Children and its Structure	3
12.	English Texts and Terminology	2
13.	Working with Families of Exceptional Children	3
14.	Producing and Using Educational Materials	1
15.	Research Methods in Psychology	2
16.	Case Study in Learning Disabilities	2
17.	Skills Adaptive Behavior for Students with Mental Retardation	3
18.	Teaching Methods for Students with Learning Disabilities	3
19.	Administration and Supervision in Special Education	2
20.	Controversial Issues in Special Education	3
21.	Internship	12
Total		62

### **SPED 253 Introduction to Mental Retardation (3 credit-hours)**

The purpose of this course is to provide students with the basic knowledge in the field of mental retardation that includes basic definitions, causes, classification system as well as characteristics and needs. The other focus of this course is to increase students understanding of the approaches of services delivery systems and the historical development of these services.

### **SPED 255 Introduction To Giftedness And Creativity (3 credit-hours)**

- 1) To give students general background on the concept of giftedness creativity and related theories.
- 2) To introduce students to tools and methods necessary for identifying the gifted and creative.
- 3) Identification of the characteristics and needs of the gifted and creative in light of recent differing theories.

### **SPED 264 Learning Disabilities in Reading and Writing (3 credit-hours)**

The goal of this course is to introduce the student to the nature of reading and writing, the types of learning disabilities in both reading writing and their connections.

### **SPED 254 Introduction to Learning Disabilities (3 credit-hours)**

The goal of this course is to study the field of learning disability from a historical point of view, introduce students to the characteristics and needs of students with learning disabilities including physical developmental, psychological, emotional, social, and academic characteristics of these students.

### **SPED 385 Educating Exceptional Children in Regular Schools (3 credit-hours)**

This course aims to provide the student with the main principles of educating the certain types of handicapped students in regular schools. This could be achieved by providing the student with the following: 1- The concept of main streaming and its different methods and problems. 2- The programs by which the special education services can be introduce in regular schools such as: resources room, the itinerant teacher and teacher consultant. 3- The advantages and limitations of different systems. 4- The specific role of each regular and special classroom teacher in educating the handicapped students.

### **SPED 265 Mental Abilities And Theories of Mental Structure (3 credit-hours)**

This course provides student with general background on mental abilities through the study of varying mental structure theories, especially that which uses factor analysis such as, the two-factor models multi-factors mode, the hierarchy model, and guilford's

structure of intellect model. The students will also be introduced to the historical evolution of studying mental abilities and the classification of these abilities with a focus on differing abilities that contribute to creative thinking and in relation to general intelligence.

**SPED 263 Mental Retardation in the Perspective of Different Theories (2 credit-hours)**

This course is designed to discuss the concept of mental retardation in the perspective of different theories. Emphasis is placed on learning theories and their applications in educating and training mentally retarded students.

**SPED 304 Developmental Learning Disabilities (2 credit-hours)**

The goal of this course is to introduce the student to the developmental learning disabilities in preschool level, and its different types (cognitive, social, emotional and motor). It also covers the methods used to evaluate and remediate the disabilities.

**SPED 314 Learning Disabilities in Perspective of Different Theories (2 credit-hours)**

The goal of this course is to study the theories related to learning disabilities from historical development along with the affect these theories and the consequent research have on understanding the nature of learning disabilities. It also presents the concept of learning disabilities in light of theory and the applications of these theories in teaching students.

**SPED 371 Curriculum Development for Exceptional Children (3 credit-hours)**

This course is designed to provide the student with theoretical and practical background in the area of curriculum development for exceptional children.

**SPED 392 English Texts and Terminology (2 credit-hours)**

This course aims to provide the student with the following: The basic terminology used in the field of special education. This would be achieved by reading in certain English texts.

**SPED 390 Working with Families of Exceptional Children (3 credit-hours)**

This course is designed to provide the student with a background concerning the reaction of families toward different disabilities, guidance and counseling methods, and needs of families.

**SPED 354 Case Study in Learning Disabilities (2 credit-hours)**

The goal of this course is to:

1. Study in a comprehensive and precise way a student who has learning disabilities.
2. Evaluate and identify his disabilities.
3. Analyze the student's skills and develop an educational plan which contains the goals and skills that will be presented to the student.

**SPED 353 Adaptive Behavior Skills for Students with Mental (2 credit-hours)**

Topics covered in this course include the concept of adaptive behavior and the dimensions of adaptive behavior skills as well as the type of maladaptive behavior problems and treatment procedures dealing with those problems. The other purpose of this course is to train students on the application of adaptive behavior scales to identify the degree and level of adaptive behavior of mentally retarded children.

**SPED 404 Teaching Methods For Learning Disabled Students (3 credit-hours)**

The goal of this course is to introduce the student to the teaching methods for learning disabled students in different academic fields such as language, math social science and natural science. It is also concerned with the necessary skills and strategies for students with learning disabilities to increase their academic level and improve their social behavior.

Appendix C  
English Version of KSU-LDS

**University of New Mexico**  
**Informed Consent Cover Letter for Anonymous Surveys**

**“Evaluation of Preparation Program for Teachers Specializing in  
Learning Disabilities in Saudi Arabia”**

Omer Hussain from the Department of Educational Specialties, UNM, U.S.A is conducting a research study. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the learning disabilities (LD) program at King Saud University, Saudi Arabia. You are being asked to participate in this study because you're an LD teacher who graduated from King Saud University.

Your participation will involve your perceptions regarding the preparation program. The survey should take about 20-30 minutes to complete. Your involvement in the study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate. There are no names or identifying information associated with this survey. The survey includes questions such as, What was the most important reason/motivation for becoming a teacher of LD?. You can refuse to answer any of the questions at any time. There are no known risks in this study, but some individuals may experience discomfort when answering questions. All data will be kept for two years in a locked file in Omer Hussain's office and then destroyed.

The findings from this project will provide information on the effectiveness of the LD program at King Saud University. The purpose is to improve teacher preparation programs in the area of LD. If published, results will be presented in summary form only.

If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to call me at Saudi Telephone: +966554636264 or in the US at (505) 610-2285. If you have questions regarding your legal rights as a research subject, you may call the UNM Human Research Protections at (505) 272-1129.

By returning this survey in the envelope provided, you will be agreeing to participate in the above described research study.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Omer Hussain  
Doctoral Student

Protocol# 09-175

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APPROVED 4/17/2009 <span style="float: right;">VERSION 4/1/2009</span>
The University of New Mexico Institutional Review Board

**Part 1.****Demographic Information**

Please choose only one panel/ square on each of the following items:

**A. What is your gender?**

1. Male  
2. Female

**B. What Certificate do you hold?**

1. Bachelor  
2. Diploma after a bachelor  
3. Other (specify) .....

**C. Place of Study?**

- University .....
- College .....
- Department.....
- Major.....

**D. How many years of experience in teaching students with Learning Disabilities?**

1. Less than a year  
2. 1-4 years  
3. 5 years or more

**E. What was your average grade upon graduation?**

1. Excellent  
2. V. Good  
3. Good  
3. Pass

**F. Was the learning disabilities major the first choice for you?**

1. Yes  
2. No

If not, what was the first choice (specify) .....

**G. What was the most important reason/ motivation for becoming a teacher of LD?  
(chose only one)**

1. It was the only alternative I had  
2. My personal interest in the field  
3. Easiness of the major (or it was less difficult than other majors)  
4. Guarantee of a job  
5. More Salary  
6. Others (specify) .....

**H. Would you recommend a friend to select the special education field?**

1. Yes  
2. No

**Part2:**

Please tick the appropriate answer by putting (✓) in the column of your choice.

- Tick (✓)    **4**    if you *Strongly Agree* with the statement  
                  **3**    if you *Agree* with the statement  
                  **2**    if you *Disagree* with the statement  
                  **1**    if you *Strongly Disagree* with the statement

No.	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>Coursework</b>					
1.	The number of courses given in the LD major was sufficient	4	3	2	1
2.	The LD courses given in LD major program need to be updated	4	3	2	1
3.	The content material in the LD courses was sufficient for teachers in the field	4	3	2	1
4.	Course work in the LD major was too theoretical	4	3	2	1
5.	Textbooks in the LD major were written clearly	4	3	2	1
6.	There is a gap between university coursework and the reality of LD in the resource room	4	3	2	1
<b>The Internship Quality</b>					
7.	The length of the internship was sufficient	4	3	2	1
8.	Students receive timely feedback from their supervisors during the internship	4	3	2	1
9.	The internship was more useful than the classroom work	4	3	2	1
10.	The internship provided practical experiences for dealing with school administration	4	3	2	1
11.	In the internship, I applied instruction methods that I learned in the course of Teaching Students with LD	4	3	2	1
12.	The internship allowed me to use my thoughts/ideas of special education in a practical way	4	3	2	1

No.	Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree		
<b>Classroom Applications:</b>							
<b>My teacher preparation program prepared me to effectively:</b>							
13.	Develop Individualized Educational Plan	4	3	2	1		
14.	Implement Individualized Educational Plan	4	3	2	1		
15.	Implement effective behavior management techniques	4	3	2	1		
16.	Implement effective teaching strategies						
17.	Implement effective assessment methods	4	3	2	1		
18.	Collaborate with parents	4	3	2	1		
19.	Collaborate with professionals at school (e.g. psychologist )	4	3	2	1		
<b>Teaching Skills:</b>							
<b>The faculty had demonstrated the ability to:</b>							
20.	Use many instruction methods	4	3	2	1		
21.	Maintain students' attention	4	3	2	1		
22.	Fit their teaching methods to students of different levels	4	3	2	1		
23.	Provide websites for LD	4	3	2	1		
24.	Meet the individual needs of students	4	3	2	1		
25.	Use technology in their instruction	4	3	2	1		
26.	Provide sufficient time for office hours	4	3	2	1		
27.	Maintain good students-faculty interaction outside of classroom	4	3	2	1		
<b>LD Program Effectiveness</b>							
How effective was your LD program in the following areas:							
Please rate yourself along the following dimensions. For each indicator, record your self-perception by checking the appropriate number, using this scale:							
1= inadequate		2= weak					
3= average		4= moderately strong					
5= very strong		N/A = not applicable					
28.	Providing relevant examinations /assessments. [either/or NOT both]	N/A	5	4	3	2	1
29.	Implementation of various assessment methods.	N/A	5	4	3	2	1
30.	Providing sufficient time to complete examinations	N/A	5	4	3	2	1
31.	Providing sufficient time to complete assignments.	N/A	5	4	3	2	1
32.	Working with students to promote academic success.	N/A	5	4	3	2	1
33.	Providing opportunities to discuss my academic progress.	N/A	5	4	3	2	1



**Part 3.**

**Open-ended questions**

**34- Describe the strengths of the Learning Disabilities major at KSU:**

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**35- Describe weaknesses of the Learning Disabilities major at KSU:**

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**36- What do you recommend to improve Learning Disabilities major at KSU?**

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**Thank you**

## Appendix D

## Arabic Version of KSU-LDS

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

المكرم معلم / معلمة صعوبات التعلم رعاك الله  
السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته.. وبعد:-

بداية أشكر لكم تفضلكم الإجابة على فقرات هذا الاستبيان. يهدف هذه البحث إلى معرفة آراء خريجي مسار صعوبات التعلم بقسم التربية الخاصة حول أثر الدراسة بقسم التربية الخاصة على الأداء الوظيفي كمعلم/معلمة صعوبات التعلم. وهي لغرض رسالة دكتوراه الفلسفة في تخصص التربية الخاصة/ صعوبات التعلم بعنوان:

**"تقييم برنامج اعداد معلمي صعوبات التعلم في المملكة العربية السعودية"**

وإذا ما نجحت هذه الاستبانة في الحصول على معلومات صادقة، فإن نتائجها سوف تتحول إلى مادة علمية يمكن أن يستفيد منها القارئون على برامج التربية الخاصة في الكليات والجامعات في المملكة العربية السعودية في تطوير وتحسين برامج التربية الخاصة. وعليه، فإن تعاونكم أخي المعلم / أختي المعلمة وصدقكم في الإجابة عن فقرات هذه الاستبانة يعد مطلباً أساسياً لنجاح البحث وبالتالي الباحث.

واؤكد لكم أخي المعلم / أختي المعلمة بأن هذه الاستبانة سوف تعامل بسرية تامة؛ فلا حاجة لذكر الإسم، ولن يطلع على هذه الاستبانة أحد خلاف الباحث، وستستخدم فقط لأغراض هذا البحث.

❖ تأكدوا من فضلكم أنكم أكملت جميع البيانات المطلوبة في هذه الاستبانة.

أخيراً وليس آخراً، لايفوتني إلا أن أعبر لكم مقدماً عن جزيل شكري ووافر تقديري لما بذلت من وقت وما أظهرتم من صدق في إجاباتكم.

الباحث

عمر بن علوان عقيل

طالب دكتوراه

الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية

Email: [omaragail@hotmail.com](mailto:omaragail@hotmail.com)

جوال: 0554636264

**القسم الأول**  
**معلومات شخصية**

الرجاء اختيار إجابة واحدة فقط لكل فقرة مما يلي:

أ- الجنس

1. ذكر
2. أنثى

ب- المؤهل

1. بكالوريوس
2. دبلوم صعوبات تعلم (بعد البكالوريوس)
3. أخرى (حدد) .....

ج- مكان الدراسة:

- الجامعة .....
- الكلية .....
- القسم .....
- التخصص الدقيق .....

د- عدد سنوات الخبرة في تدريس ذوي صعوبات التعلم:

1. أقل من سنة
2. 1-4 سنوات
3. 5 سنوات فأكثر

هـ- تقديرك عند التخرج:

1. ممتاز
2. جيد جداً
3. جيد
4. مقبول

و- هل كان مسار صعوبات التعلم الاختيار الأول من مسارات التربية الخاصة؟

1. نعم
2. لا

إذا كانت الإجابة (لا) الرجاء تحديد ماذا كان الاختيار الأول من المسارات .....

ز- ماهو سبب اختيارك لمهنة معلم صعوبات التعلم؟ (أختر واحدة فقط)

1. لكونه الخيار الوحيد الذي كان أمامك
2. اهتمامي الشخصي في ميدان صعوبات التعلم
3. سهولة التخصص
4. ضمان الوظيفة
5. مرتب أعلى
6. أمر آخر (يرجى التحديد) .....

ح- هل تنصح صديقك باختيار تخصص التربية الخاصة؟

1. نعم
2. لا

## القسم الثاني فقرات الأستبانة

فضلاً اقرأ كل عبارة جيداً وأجب عنها بما يعبر عن رأيك نحو دراستك بقسم التربية الخاصة والعمل كمعلم/معلمة صعوبات التعلم وذلك بأن تضع علامة  أمام اختيارك الذي يعبر عن وجهة نظرك كما يلي:

- ضع علامة  على الرقم ( 4 ) إذا كنت توافق على العبارة بشدة
- ضع علامة  على الرقم ( 3 ) إذا كنت توافق على العبارة
- ضع علامة  على الرقم ( 2 ) ، إذا كنت لا توافق على العبارة
- ضع علامة  على الرقم ( 1 ) إذا كنت لا توافق على العبارة بشدة

ت	الفقرات	أوافق بشدة	أوافق	لا أوافق	لا أوافق بشدة
<b>البعد الأول: المقررات الدراسية</b>					
1	عدد المقررات المقدمة ضمن مسار صعوبات التعلم كان كافياً	4	3	2	1
2	تحتاج مقررات صعوبات التعلم الى التطوير والتحديث	4	3	2	1
3	محتوى مقررات مسار صعوبات التعلم كاف لتخريج معلمي صعوبات التعلم	4	3	2	1
4	الكتب المقررة في مجال صعوبات التعلم تركز على الجانب النظري غالباً	4	3	2	1
5	الكتب المقررة في مجال صعوبات التعلم واضحة ومفهومة	4	3	2	1
6	هناك فجوة بين ما تعلمته في الجامعة وبين ما وجدته فعلياً في المجال	4	3	2	1
<b>البعد الثاني: التدريب الميداني</b>					
7	المدة المخصصة للتدريب الميداني في مجال صعوبات التعلم كافية	4	3	2	1
8	في التدريب الميداني تلقيت التغذية الراجعة من المشرف أولاً بأول	4	3	2	1
9	التدريب الميداني أكثر فائدة من دراسة المقررات	4	3	2	1
10	يعطي التدريب الميداني خبرة عملية في التعامل مع ادارة المدرسة	4	3	2	1
11	طبقت في التدريب الميداني مآدرسته في مقرر طرق تدريس ذوي صعوبات التعلم	4	3	2	1
12	أتاح لي التدريب الميداني فرصة تطبيق الأفكار التي تعلمتها في مجال التربية الخاصة بطريقة عملية	4	3	2	1
<b>البعد الثالث: التطبيقات العملية في الصف الدراسي</b> دراستي في قسم التربية الخاصة أعدتني لأداء المهمات التالية:					
13	إعداد الخطة التربوية الفردية	4	3	2	1
14	تطبيق الخطة التربوية الفردية	4	3	2	1
15	تطبيق الأساليب الفعالة لضبط وتعديل السلوك	4	3	2	1
16	تطبيق الأساليب والاستراتيجيات التدريسية الفعالة	4	3	2	1
17	تطبيق طرق واساليب التقييم والتشخيص	4	3	2	1
18	التعاون مع أولياء الأمور	4	3	2	1
19	التعاون مع الأخصائين في المدرسة (مثل الأخصائي النفسي وأخصائي النطق والكلام)	4	3	2	1

البعد الرابع: مهارات التدريس كان أعضاء هيئة التدريس قادرين على:							
ت	الفقرات	أوافق بشدة	أوافق	لا أوافق	لا أوافق بشدة		
20	استخدام طرقٍ متعددة في التدريس	4	3	2	1		
21	شد انتباه الطالب/الطالبة	4	3	2	1		
22	تطبيق طرق التدريس المناسبة لمستويات الطلاب/الطالبات	4	3	2	1		
23	توجيه الطلاب/الطالبات لبعض المواقع الإلكترونية في مجال صعوبات التعلم والتربية الخاصة	4	3	2	1		
24	الاستجابة للاحتياجات الفردية للطلاب/للطالبات	4	3	2	1		
25	استخدام أجهزة حديثة في التدريس (مثل الحاسب الآلي)	4	3	2	1		
26	إعطاء وقتٍ كافٍ للساعات المكتنية	4	3	2	1		
27	إعطاء فرصة للتفاعل مع الطالب/الطالبة خارج الفصل الدراسي	4	3	2	1		
البعد الخامس: فاعلية برنامج صعوبات التعلم بقسم التربية الخاصة كيفية تقييم مدى فاعلية برنامج صعوبات التعلم في النقاط التالية:							
		تنطبق				لا تنطبق	
		بصورة كبيرة جدا	بصورة كبيرة	بصورة متوسطة	نادرا	أبدا	لا تنطبق
28	اعطاء اختبارات فصلية مناسبة وذات علاقة بالمقرر الدراسي	5	4	3	2	1	0
29	تطبيق اساليب مختلفة من التقييم (مثل الاختبارات، البحوث، أو الزيارات الميدانية)	5	4	3	2	1	0
30	أعطاء وقتٍ كافٍ لأكمال الاختبارات	5	4	3	2	1	0
31	أعطاء وقتٍ كافٍ لأكمال المتطلبات الصفية (مثل بحث أو زيارة ميدانية)	5	4	3	2	1	0
32	العمل مع مجموعات طلابية صغيرة لتحسين المستوى الأكاديمي	5	4	3	2	1	0
33	اعطاء فرصة لمناقشة التقدم الدراسي (مثل: مناقشة أسئلة الاختبار/ مناقشة درجة الاختبار/الواجب)	5	4	3	2	1	0

**القسم الثالث**  
**الإجابات المفتوحة**

أمامكم الفرصة لأبداء الرأي حول:

34- وصف نقاط القوة في مسار صعوبات التعلم بجامعة الملك سعود:

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35- تحديد نقاط الضعف في مسار صعوبات التعلم بجامعة الملك سعود:

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36- تدوين مقترحات أو توصيات لتطوير مسار صعوبات التعلم بجامعة الملك سعود:

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\* (بإمكانكم استخدام خلف الورقة أو ورقة إضافية إن احتجتم لذلك)

انتهت فقرات الاستبانة  
شكرا جزيلاً لمشاركتكم  
الباحث

Appendix E

Communication Letters to Distribute the Questionnaire

In The Name of Allah, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate

Ministry of Education

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Number: 16/453

Ministry of Education

Date: 11/10/1429 Hijra

Women's Education Affairs

Documents: Evaluation Program

General Administration for Education for Women in the Area of Riyadh

Director of Education Center ( Al Badeea, Al Rawaby, Al Nahdah, Al Janoub) May God extend her life.

To: All schools that Apply learning disabilities program.

From: Educational Affairs Assistant

Regarding: Facilitation of the assignment for the researcher: Omer A. A. Hussain

May God's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be Upon You

In reference to the letter of the Dean of the College of Education, King Khaled University, numbered 580/39, dated 10/22 regarding the application of the study of researcher Omer A. A. Hussain entitled " Evaluation of Preparation Program for Teachers Specializing in Learning Disabilities in Saudi Arabia" for the Ph.D. degree, we hope that you facilitate the researcher's job by having the Learning Disabilities Teachers fill out the attached questionnaire and return them to the administration of Special Education by 20/11/1429 Hijra at the latest. We would also like to stress the necessity of writing the name of the researcher on outside of the envelope to facilitate the questionnaire count.

We thank you for your cooperation, and best of luck.

Doctor: Al Bandy Bent Abdullah Al Saud

Signature: signed

Seal of Ministry of Education

Special Education Administration

STATEMENT

I, Mohamed E. Ali, certify that I am competent to translate from English into Arabic, from Arabic into English, that I am a certified court interpreter in the State of New Mexico, that I am a member of The New Mexico Translators and Interpreters Association, that I am a member of NAJIT, The National

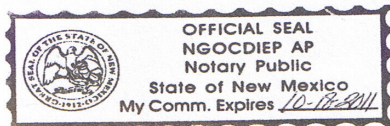
Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators, and that this is an accurate translation of the original document in Arabic to the best of my knowledge and ability.

Mohamed Ali *[Signature]*

Subscribed and sworn to before me this *24th* day of *March* 2009

My commission expires on *10-18-2011*

Notary Public *[Signature]*



In The Name of Allah, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate  
Ministry of Education

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia  
Ministry of Education  
The General Administration of Education of Riyadh ( Boys )  
Planning and Development Unit  
To: Principals of Schools that Apply Learning Disabilities Program May Allah Reward them with success  
From: Assistant General Manager for Educational Affairs  
Regarding: Facilitation of a researcher's assignment  
May God's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be Upon You

Number: 122985

Date: 27/10/1429 Hijra

Enclosures: 1

Based on generalization number 610/55 dated 9/17/1416 Hijra by his majesty the minister, which authorizes the general administrations of education to issue letters to researchers permitting them to conduct research and studies, the researcher Omer A. A. Hussain, a graduate student at the college of education, King Khaled University, who is studying for his PhD in the United States of America, submitted his request to conduct a study entitled: " Evaluation of Preparation Program for Teachers Specializing in Learning Disabilities in Saudi Arabia". The study requires the application of the research tools on a sample of the teachers specializing in Learning Disabilities in the city of Riyadh.

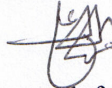
For the purpose of completing the required papers, we hope that you facilitate the mission of the researcher taking into consideration that he will bear all responsibility regarding the different aspects of the research and that the permission of the general administration for education does not necessarily mean its approval of the research topic or the methodology and means used in the study or how to treat them. May Allah extend your life and guide your steps.

Doctor Mohammed Ben Abdul Aziz Al Sedeiry

Signature: signed

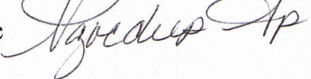
STATEMENT

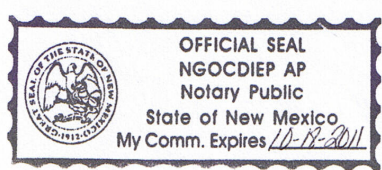
I, Mohamed E. Ali, certify that I am competent to translate from English into Arabic, from Arabic into English, that I am a certified court interpreter in the State of New Mexico, that I am a member of The New Mexico Translators and Interpreters Association, that I am a member of NAJIT, The National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators, and that this is an accurate translation of the original document in Arabic to the best of my knowledge and ability.

Mohamed Ali 

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 27<sup>th</sup> day of March 2009

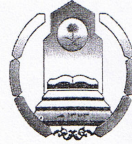
My commission expires on 10-18-2011

Notary Public 





بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



وزارة التربية والتعليم  
Ministry of Education

المملكة العربية السعودية

وزارة التربية والتعليم

شئون تعليم البنات

الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم للبنات بمنطقة الرياض  
إدارة التربية الخاصة

الرقم : ١٦/٤٥٣  
التاريخ : ١١/١٠/١٤٢٩ هـ  
المشروعات : الرياضيات

مديرة مركز التربية والتعليم ( البديعة - الرياض - المنطقة - الجنوب )

حفظها الله

جميع المدارس المطبق بها برامج صعوبات تعلم

إلى /

من / المهندسة للشئون التعليميه

بشأن: تسهيل مهمة الباحث / عمر بنه علوانه عصيل

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته وبعد،،

إشارة إلى خطاب عميد كلية التربية بجامعة الملك خالد نزع الرضيم ٢٩/٥٨٠ بتاريخ ١/٤٤

بشأن تطبيق دراسة الباحث / عمر بنه علوانه عصيل

بعنوان (تصميم برنامج إعداد معلم صعوبات التعلم في المملكة العربية السعودية)

للحصول على درجة / الدكتوراه

عليه نأمل تسهيل مهمة الباحث بتعبئة الاستبانة المرفقة من

قبل ملء استبانة صعوبات التعلم

وإعادتها لإدارة التربية الخاصة في موعد أقصاه ١١/١٠/١٤٢٩ هـ.

كما تؤكد على ضرورة كتابة اسم الباحث على المظروف الخارجي تسهيلاً

لعملية فرز الاستبانات.

شؤون  
١٦/٤

شاكربن لكم تعاونكم،،

والله الموفق،،

د. البندري بنت عبد الله آل سعود

١١/١٠/١٤٢٩

وزارة التربية والتعليم  
إدارة التربية والتعليم للبنات  
إدارة التربية الخاصة  
رقم الوارد : ٥٣ / ٢٧  
التاريخ : ١٧ / ١٠ / ١٤٢٩ هـ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



المملكة العربية السعودية  
وزارة التربية والتعليم  
الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم بمنطقة الرياض (بنين)  
وحدة التخطيط والتطوير

الرقم: ١٥٥٩١٥  
التاريخ: ١٤٢٧/١٠/١١  
المرفقات: ١

إلى : مديري المدارس الملحقة بها برامج صعوبات التعلم  
من : مساعد المدير العام للشئون التعليمية  
بشأن: تسهيل مهمة باحث

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته وبعد :

بناء على تعميم معالي الوزير رقم ٥٥/٦١٠ وتاريخ ١٧/٩/١٤١٦هـ القاضي بتفويض الإدارات العامة للتربية والتعليم بإصدار خطابات السماح للباحثين بإجراء البحوث والدراسات ، تقدم إلينا الباحث / عمر بن علوان عقيل - أحد طلاب الدراسات العليا بكلية التربية / جامعة الملك خالد ، والمبتعث لدراسة الدكتوراه بالولايات المتحدة الأمريكية - بطلب إجراء دراسة بعنوان: (( تقييم برنامج إعداد معلمي صعوبات التعلم في المملكة العربية السعودية )) . وتتطلب الدراسة تطبيق أداة البحث على عينة من معلمي صعوبات التعلم بمدينة الرياض .

ونظراً لاكمال الأوراق المطلوبة ، نأمل تسهيل مهمة الباحث مع ملاحظة أن الباحث يتحمل كامل المسؤولية المتعلقة بمختلف جوانب البحث ولا يعني سماح الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم موافقتها بالضرورة على مشكلة البحث أو على الطرق والأساليب المستخدمة في دراستها ومعالجتها .

والله يحفظكم ويرعاكم ،،،

١٠/٢٧

د. محمد بن عبدالعزيز السديري

١٠

## Appendix F

## Institutional Review Board Approval



THE UNIVERSITY of  
NEW MEXICO

Main Campus Institutional Review Board

Human Research Protections Office

MSC08 4560

1 University of New Mexico~Albuquerque, NM 87131-0001

<http://hsc.unm.edu/son/research/HRRC/>

17-Apr-2009

Responsible Faculty: Liz Keefe

Investigator: Omer Hussain

Dept/College: Educational Specialties Ed Spec

*SUBJECT: IRB Determination of Exempt Status*

*Protocol #: 09-175*

*Project Title: Evaluation of Preparation Program for Teachers Specializing in Learning Disabilities in Saudi Arabia.*

*Approval Date: 17-Apr-2009*

The Main Campus Institutional Review Board has reviewed the above-mentioned research protocol and determined that the research is EXEMPT from the requirements of Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regulations for the protection of human subjects as defined in 45CFR46.101(b) under category 2, and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations as defined in 21CFR50.1 and 21CFR56.101 do not apply to research. Therefore, this research project is not subject to continuing review.

**Changes to the Research:** It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to inform the IRB of any changes to this research. A change in the research may disqualify this project from exempt status. Reference the protocol number and title in all documents related to this protocol.

Sincerely,

J. Scott Tonigan, PhD

Chair

Main Campus IRB

## Appendix G

## Open-Ended Responses

No.	Sex/ Exp.	Question	Answers
1	F 3	Strengths  Weakness  Recommen.	Some professors were more helpful than others  -Too many expensive materials were required for the internship - assignments sometime did not make sense at all, for example, imagine and write a discussion between parent and LD teachers as an assignment for a class.  More attention should be given to teaching quality and not how the classroom looks like.
2	F 3	Strengths  Weakness  Recommen.	- The best major in the special education department - I learn how to help their own children with school assignment  Shortage of coursework that help in the field.  - more teaching methods coursework - increase the length of internship to one year rather than one semester
3	F 3	Strengths  Weakness  Recommen.	It is the only major that can be in regular school, not in segregated school.  - Attention is only given to theoretical side not for practice - no coursework in math, reading, and spelling  - need more coursework in LD teaching methods - increase the length of internship to one year rather than one semester
4	F 3	Strengths  Weakness  Recommen.	It helps to determine which strategies help students with math, reading, spelling  - Attention is only given to theoretical side not for practice -there was a gap between what I have learnt and the reality in the resource room  - Connect what we have learnt it to the real life in the resource room - practicing all activities and strategies rather than describing them by professors - increase the length of internship to one year rather than one semester

5	F 3	Strengths ----- Weakness - unqualified professors teaching some classes - students have no idea how to teach math, reading, spelling  Recommen. -spreading the awareness of LD in campus and community -bringing all teaching materials and letting the students practice them in the classroom - increase the length of internship to one year rather than one semester - LD teachers need to learn how to teach math, reading, spelling - providing coursework in math, reading, and spelling
6	F 2	Strengths LD textbook are very good  Weakness There is a gap between what I learned at university and the reality of LD in the resource room. -Professors don't teach us about how to teach math, reading, and spelling - no coursework at all in math, reading, spelling  Recommen. - LD teachers need to learn how to teach math, reading, spelling - providing coursework in math, reading, and spelling
7	F 3	Strengths LD textbook are good in general  Weakness There is a gap between what I learn it at university and the resource room  Recommen. - increase the length of internship to one year rather than one semester - providing workshops for LD teachers after graduation
8	F 3	Strengths Some qualified professors who teach LD coursework are very good  Weakness In internship, no supervisors available to answer our questions -every thing is different in internship than what I learn it in at KSU - school visits are not  Recommen. - professors should use similar scales and materials that are available in the resource room.
9	F 3	Strengths -study at university was easy and interesting - I have learnt some strategies that are useful for my own kids. - new major relatively  Weakness Some professors did not teach us how to use strategies to help students with LD  Recommen. Special education department should be aware of what some professors teaching in their classroom
10	F 3	Strengths No strengthens Weakness ----- Recommen. -----

11	F 3	Strengths	- the internship was so good
		Weakness	The coursework were not enough to cover everything in LD The teaching method class was not enough to teach students with LD
		Recommen.	- focusing on IEP - letting students visits school regularly so that they have idea how the field is before internship - improving teaching method class
12	F 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	Too may students in the class
		Recommen.	-----
14	F 3	Strengths	Providing great information about special education
		Weakness	LD teachers do not have information on how to teache math, reading, and spelling
		Recommen.	Offering coursework in math, reading, and spelling -letting students to visit resource rooms to see different teaching methods and materials -bringing guest speaker form the filed to give lectures about teacher students with LD
15	M 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	Shortage of faculties in special education department - avoiding assignment like presentation, paper, and literature review and rely on only exams.
		Recommen.	Collaboration between districts and special education department
16	M 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	- no coursework was offered in math, reading, spelling - no collaboration between professors and LD teachers to develop LD services - repetition in many classes in the department
		Recommen.	- providing examples of real stories, case studies, and school visit while studying at university - developing collaboration between LD teachers and faculties - pay more attention to teaching methods for math, reading, spelling
17	M 2	Strengths	Very good professors in LD major
		Weakness	No chance to implement methods and strategies prior to internship
		Recommen.	- Increase school visits - dividing all coursework that has 4 credit hoarse into 2 parts: learning from professors and implementing that in resource room. -establishing what is known as student-teacher in the third year after students getting basic special education knowledge

18	M 3	Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- covering the history of LD</li> <li>- covering the LD causes and characteristics</li> <li>- knowledgeable some professors in LD major</li> </ul>
		Weakness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no connection between what I learn at university with the real life of LD in resource room.</li> <li>- no classes in math, reading, spelling that are important for students with LD</li> <li>- shortage of professors in LD major which influences supervision and teaching quality</li> <li>- too many students in the classroom at university</li> </ul>
		Recommen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- hiring highly qualified professors who specializing in LD</li> <li>- providing training for students from third year</li> </ul>
20	M 3	Strengths	Professors who specialized in LD were much better than other
		Weakness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no training on IEP</li> <li>- no training on how to deal with parents</li> <li>- I wish I had many school visits prior to internship</li> </ul>
		Recommen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- providing training for student in school before graduation</li> <li>- adding more coursework on lesson plan and IEP for elementary and middle LD students</li> </ul>
21	M 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	-no school visits prior to internship
		Recommen.	- inviting good LD teachers to present about LD from their experience, talk about how they implement IEP, and how they identify students with LD in real life
22	M 3	Strengths	Some professors in LD major were very good
		Weakness	<p>All learning at the university was based on lecturing, nothing to practice and implement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- studying courses in MR</li> <li>- no examples of case studies</li> </ul>
		Recommen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increasin the length of internship</li> <li>- increasing school visits</li> </ul>
23	M 3	Strengths	Faculties are so nice
		Weakness	Coursework need to be updated
		Recommen.	-----

24	M 3	Strengths	Some professors who specialized in LD were very good
		Weakness	Shortage of Arabic resources such as websites and books Gap between what I learned at university and field I had no access to school to implement what I learn form coursework
		Recommen.	- focusing on research skills that help students on how to find important information - collaborating with distracts to let students visiting schools and practicing strategies with LD students
25	M 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	-a big difference between the information at university and dealing with students with LD in the field -in internship, there was almost zero supervision visits by professors -no opportunity for LD teachers to get higher degree because of tough admission requirements in the country, such as very high GPA and English proficiency.
		Recommen.	-----
26	M 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	Shortage of LD professors Choosing Ld major have to be after 2 years of studying general classes in education and special education
		Recommen.	- increase LD professors - providing opportunities to get higher degree
27	M 3	Strengths	Some LD professors were good
		Weakness	There is a gap between what I learn at university and the reality of LD in resource room
		Recommen.	Adding classes in math, reading, and spelling
28	M 3	Strengths	Ld professors were so nice
		Weakness	I am supposed to help students with LD in math, but there was no classes at all in math at university. So, how I am going to teach math
		Recommen.	Providing classes on teaching math, methods and strategies
29	M 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	Very poor preparation when it comes to identification of students with LD
		Recommen.	- teaching some classes out side the university, for example in resource room in school -Inviting LD teachers, in class, who have experience to present about LD from their experience -arranging open meeting with LD teachers and students at university to sharing their experience of LD.



31	F 3	Strengths	Internship helped on how to deal with school administration
		Weakness	- there is a gap between what I learned at university and reality of LD in school - some coursework need to be updated
		Recommen.	Providing workshops and training for LD teachers
32	F 2	Strengths	The best thing in the program was the internship
		Weakness	studying at university rely heavily on theoretical knowledge that has nothing to do with practice in reality
		Recommen.	-----
33	F 3	Strengths	Very nice professors
		Weakness	Very week preparation when it comes to math, reading, and spelling The gap between what I learned and reality is big.
		Recommen.	-----
37	F 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	No connection between studying at university and reality of LD in schools.
		Recommen.	- increase the length of internship - providing examples and materials, such as IEP forms and assessment forms that help in the field.
38	F 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	-Professors rely heavily on exams and ignoring school visits reports, presentations, and papers. -the length of internship is not sufficient -shortage of teaching methods -shortage of using technology in teaching such as computers, overhead projector. - some coursework were so long and benefit is so limited in reality - learning at university if different than reality
		Recommen.	- A connection should be established between school visits and coursework at university - letting students visit schools as many as possible -increase the length of internship - increase the supervision visits by professors
39	F 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	Preparation in developing IEP is week
		Recommen.	Inviting guest speakers who have experience in LD

40	F 3	Strengths ----- Weakness The department does not offer coursework in math and spelling. I have learned by reviewing text books in teaching math. Recommen. Offering classes in math
41	F 3	Strengths ----- Weakness - too many courses that are not relevant to LD - there is a difference between what I learn and working in the field Recommen. - the department has to offer more courses in teaching methods and strategies
42	F 3	Strengths Internship was the best thing Weakness Only studying in classrooms, I never had a chance to visit school before internship Recommen. -----
43	F 3	Strengths ----- Weakness -Professors only lecture we were just listening, never practice any thing in classroom - After graduating and working in field, I could not teach spelling and math because I don't have basic knowledge of math and spelling. Recommen Professors need to be more creative and not only rely to textbooks.
44	F 3	Strengths - internship was good because I practice what I learn Some classes were wonderful such as current issues in special education Weakness Some textbooks are so old - preparation is so week when it comes to math and spelling Recommen. Arranging school visits
45	F 3	Strengths No strength in the major Weakness -Teaching methods classes were not enough, I figure out some strategies my self -We don't have school visits to see how the resource room looks like and how LD teachers organize their work. - I teach my self how teach math, reading, and spelling, I did not learn that at university Recommen. Arranging school visits to see what LD teachers do in reality
46	F 3	Strengths - internship was so good - some professors deal with students in very professional way Weakness - Preparation was enough to help students with LD Recommen. -offering coursework in math and spelling to help students with LD

47	F 3	Strengths ----- Weakness The program does not prepare me to implement strategies in content areas. Recommen. There ahs to be a collaboration between special education department and schools districts
48	F 3	Strengths ----- Weakness Only lecturing in classrooms without practicing Recommen. Letting students to implement what they learn in classroom such as strategies to students with LD prior to internship
49	F 3	Strengths Sometime we did paper and presentation rather than exams Weakness Lake teaching methods textbooks Most students after graduation don't know how to teach math Recommen. Increase length of internship Providing assignments that show students how to be creative
50	F 3	Strengths ----- Weakness ----- Recommen. More supervision visits are required to help students in internship receive feedback regularly
51	F 3	Strengths Some professors who specialized in LD were excellent Weakness - too many students in classroom - having only one general coursework of LD teaching methods Recommen. -offering coursework in math teaching methods. -offering coursework in literacy for students with LD -translating books about LD - offering English coursework to help for learning from English LD websites and textbooks
52	F 3	Strengths ---- Weakness I was disappointed when I fist start teaching because the gap between field and preparation Recommen. -----
55	F 3	Strengths The organization of some coursework was so effective Weakness - coursework were so general Recommen. -----
56	F 3	Strengths Strong background and knowledge of LD Weakness - no practice at all - there is a deference between what we learn it at university and working with students with LD - internship is short Recommen. Improving practices of strategies in classroom or in schools

57	F 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	All coursework focus only on lecturing without practicing any thing
		Recommen.	-practicing methods and strategies in classroom and later in school - strategies and methods of teaching students with LD are absolutely needed - professors should improve materials that used in classroom
58	F 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	The internship length is not enough
		Recommen.	-----
59	F 3	Strengths	The internship was so useful
		Weakness	I don't have experience in teaching math, reading, and spelling Some text were not clear and not good
		Recommen.	Teaching math and reading skills before graduation
60	F 3	Strengths	Internship likes real teaching, I learn a lot from internship
		Weakness	No experience in how to teach reading, math, and spelling some translated books are poor and difficult to understand
		Recommen.	Math, reading, and spelling have to be taught to students before graduation
61	F 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	I was not able to practice teaching prior to internship I did not receive feedback from supervisor in internship
		Recommen.	Practicing strategies and methods in classroom before graduating from university Providing methods on how to deal with classroom teachers, administration, and parents
62	F 3	Strengths	There are many strategies that help students with LD
		Weakness	Some LD coursework were taught by professors whom LD was not their major What I get from university was different the working in the field
		Recommen.	The internship needs to be for more that one semester.
64	F 3	Strengths	New major relatively
		Weakness	-----
		Recommen.	It is preferred to increase the internship to one year and more
65	F 3	Strengths	New major relatively
		Weakness	Too many classes
		Recommen.	-----
66	F 3	Strengths	Internship
		Weakness	-All coursework are only lecturing and theoretical - no connection and collaboration with LD teachers from the field while studying at university -no implementation of strategies at all
		Recommen.	- letting students visit schools and see what is going on schools

67	F 3	Strengths	Professors who specialized in LD were so good
		Weakness	-the internship was not enough, it was just for one semester -teaching only focus on theory and no practice at all
		Recommen.	-----
68	F 3	Strengths	-Very interesting major -Coursework were good
		Weakness	Internship length was not enough
		Recommen.	- offering coursework in math and spelling - training students on how to use technology to help students with LD - training students on how to develop teaching materials for students with LD
69	F 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	Not focusing on math, reading, and spelling
		Recommen.	More attention should be given to school visits to share experience with LD teachers
70	F 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	No coursework in math, reading, spelling, and writing
		Recommen.	We need to learn how teach math and reading
72	M 2	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	-The length of internship, one semester, is not enough -some professors were not interested in teaching, they just want to finish the class -some areas in LD were not covered in the preparation program such emotional and behavior problems of students with LD
		Recommen.	Providing sufficient time for internship
73	M 2	Strengths	the coursework of Case Study in LD and Teaching Methods were the best classes because they help me directly on how to deal with students with LD
		Weakness	I was not prepared to teach math
		Recommen.	Internship has to be for one year
74	M 1	Strengths	Information in books should be enough if implementing was used
		Weakness	No practicing except for internship
		Recommen.	Reduce other courses that were not relevant to LD
75	M 1	Strengths	Very excellent professors
		Weakness	Very few books in LD There is a gap between learning and implementing in the field
		Recommen.	The internship should be for one year Offering more coursework in teaching methods in math, reading, and spelling
76	M 1	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	- coursework were not enough - too many courses that irrelevant to LD
		Recommen.	-----

77	M 2	Strengths	Some professors were so nice
		Weakness	Few courses in LD No practicing at all
		Recommen.	Omitting courses that irrelevant to LD Offering many school visits in each semester
78	M 2	Strengths	No strengths in the major
		Weakness	Learning based only on lecturing without any practice Information about LD is old and sometime not useful
		Recommen.	Increase school visits Letting students to work directly with students with LD
79	M 1	Strengths	Some professors in LD are so knowledgeable
		Weakness	Very few books in LD
		Recommen.	Teaching reading, math, and spelling at university
80	M 2	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	-----
		Recommen.	Offering courses in math, reading, and spelling before graduation
81	M 1	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	-----
		Recommen.	Reduce courses and focus on training
82	M 1	Strengths	Some LD professors have a lot of experience in teaching LD coursework
		Weakness	There is no connection between learning at university and working in the field
		Recommen.	Fire some professors who are not specialized in LD
83	M 1	Strengths	Professors who specialized in LD were so nice
		Weakness	No practicing at all
		Recommen.	Fire some professors who are not specialized in LD
84	M 1	Strengths	Some professors were better than others
		Weakness	No practicing at all in classrooms
		Recommen.	Fire some professors who were not specialized in LD
85	M 3	Strengths	The sequence of coursework were very good
		Weakness	Very long lectures with no practice make so boring for students
		Recommen.	-----
86	M 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	Some professors were not specialized in LD
		Recommen.	One year should be for internship not one semester Explaining to students the difficulties that may face them in internship

87	M 3	Strengths	Some professors were perfect
		Weakness	No or little attention was given to practice
		Recommen.	-more attention should be given to practice The internship has to be for one year instead of one semester - professors have to deal with students in nice manners
88	M 3	Strengths	Coursework are good in theoretical side but not for practice
		Weakness	No practice while studying at university before the internship
		Recommen.	More school visits Increase number of supervision visits
89	M 1	Strengths	Some professors were so nice
		Weakness	Coursework were weak and not enough Length of internship is not enough
		Recommen.	-----
90	M 3	Strengths	Very strong coursework
		Weakness	Some professors talk about research and articles in the US that are not appropriate in Arabic Only lectures without practicing
		Recommen.	Hiring many professors who specialized in LD
91	M 3	Strengths	Too many coursework in LD
		Weakness	A big difference between learning at university and practicing in the field
		Recommen.	-----
92	M 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	Very few professors in the department No resource room in the department
		Recommen.	Translating books to Arabic Offering courses in English
94	M 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	-----
		Recommen.	Concentrating should be for practice not only theoretical and lecturing
95	M 2	Strengths	teaching students with behavior modification techniques
		Weakness	I was not prepared at all to teach math, reading, science, and spelling.
		Recommen.	The internship should be for one year
96	M 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	-----
		Recommen.	Preparing students to teach math and reading. Providing students with materials that useful for teaching students with LD

97	M 3	Strengths	The major is so good and organized
		Weakness	Old textbooks were used sometime for some classes
		Recommen.	-updating textbooks
98	M 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	-----
		Recommen.	Practicing what we learn in classroom to real life in schools
99	M 3	Strengths	Some professors who specialized in LD were knowledgeable
		Weakness	No connection between my learning at university and working with students with LD in the field
		Recommen.	-----
100	M 3	Strengths	There are very knowledgeable professors in LD
		Weakness	Teachers cannot teach math, reading, and spelling because they were not prepared properly No information on how to deal with students with spelling problems
		Recommen.	Omitting some courses that unrelated to LD Teaching strategies that are useful for teaching ADHD and dyslexia
101	M 3	Strengths	In LD major, some professors were so nice
		Weakness	In lectures, only talking no practicing at all. There were no courses in math While studying at university I have no connection to the field
		Recommen.	-offering courses in math, reading and spelling -having conference for students and LD teachers to share experience
102	M 3	Strengths	In LD major, some professors were so nice
		Weakness	Exam is the only thing required. We did not have a chance to write a paper nor presentation.
		Recommen.	Professors should accept feedback from students regarding their teaching School visits for every class are needed to improve our understanding of the nature of LD
103	M 2	Strengths	Internship was a great experience
		Weakness	No courses require school visits Too many courses that are irrelevant to LD
		Recommen.	Omitting courses that irrelevant to LD Collaborating with districts to allow students visit schools.
104	M 3	Strengths	Teaching Methods for Students with LD was the best course
		Weakness	-professors don't use English terms to help students do more research -big difference between working in the field and information we have learnt at university
		Recommen.	Internship should not be in the last semester, it should be in the middle so that we have some experience to share it in the class.



105	M 2	Strengths	Some course were easy and interesting
		Weakness	No practicing for strategies in the classroom at all.
		Recommen.	Inviting guest speakers to talk to students about field and sharing experience
106	M 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	-----
		Recommen.	Offering courses in math, reading, and spelling
107	M 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	I was not prepared to develop IEP
		Recommen.	Offering training for students by having LD teachers who have experience train student at university
109	M 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	Too many courses for college and university requirements only lectures no practice.
		Recommen.	Offering about 2-5 hours weekly to practice in schools with students with LD
110	M 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	-----
		Recommen.	More practicing
111	M 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	Internship and practicing was only in the last semester
		Recommen.	Practicing teaching methods in the classroom before graduation
112	M 3	Strengths	----
		Weakness	Too many courses about all special education categories
		Recommen.	Inviting LD teachers to present in the classroom to share their experience about working with students with LD
113	M 3	Strengths	[-----
		Weakness	- Internship was not enough - no courses were in how teaching math, reading, and spelling
		Recommen.	Increase the length of internship to one year. Practicing are important for every single course Offering courses on teaching math, reading, and spelling
114	M 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	The teaching method class was not enough to teach students with LD
		Recommen.	Concentrating should be for practice not only theoretical and lecturing
116	M 3	Strengths	Internship was good
		Weakness	-----
		Recommen.	Offering courses on teaching math, reading, and spelling
117	M 3	Strengths	-----
		Weakness	Big gap between learning at university and the field
		Recommen.	-----

118	M 3	Strengths ----- Weakness No school visit while taking classes Poor textbooks Recommen. -----
124	M 3	Strengths ----- Weakness LD teachers were not prepared to teach math, reading, and spelling Recommen. -----
125	M 3	Strengths Professors who are specialized in LD were so good Weakness No coursework in math, reading, and spelling Recommen. Providing English textbooks because Arabic textbooks are poor Adding training on how to develop an IEP
127	M 3	Strengths ----- Weakness Textbooks are old and focus only on theories, nothing for practice Recommen. Inviting LD teachers who have experience to lecturing in classroom
131	M 3	Strengths ----- Weakness No coursework in math and reading Recommen. -----
132	M 3	Strengths Very great information on LD Weakness ----- Recommen. Avoiding teaching irrelevant coursework