

Teachers' and Educators' Attitudes toward the Inclusion of Children with Autism in Mainstream Schools

Nasser Mammeri

esn.mammeri@univ-blida2.dz

Said Bennouioua

saidbennouioua@gmail.com

Said Bennouioua

saidbennouioua@gmail.com

Abstract:

The present study aimed to identify teachers' and educators' attitudes toward the inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in mainstream schools, to determine the nature of these attitudes, and to examine whether they differ according to selected personal and professional variables, namely gender and professional experience. To achieve the objectives of the study, the descriptive-analytical method was adopted. An attitudes questionnaire concerning the inclusion of children with autism in mainstream schools, consisting of 41 items distributed across seven dimensions, was administered to a purposive sample of 57 teachers and educators working at the Psycho-Pedagogical Centre in Sour El Ghoulane, Bouira Province, during the 2025–2026 academic year. The findings indicated positive attitudes among teachers and educators toward the inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in mainstream schools. The results also revealed no statistically significant differences in teachers' and educators' attitudes attributable to gender or professional experience. These findings indicate a relative acceptance of the inclusion process among the participants, while emphasizing the importance of providing the educational, organizational, and training conditions necessary to ensure the successful inclusion of children with autism in the mainstream school environment.

Keywords: attitudes; inclusion; children with autism; mainstream schools.

Introduction:

Interest in educating and educationally and socially supporting children with special educational needs has become one of the key indicators of societies' commitment to the principle of equal opportunity and the right to education. Treatment of this group is no longer based solely on care and segregation; rather, contemporary educational policies have moved toward providing educational and social environments that allow them to learn, participate, and interact according to their abilities and individual needs. Within this framework, school inclusion constitutes an educational approach that seeks to provide children with special educational needs with opportunities for education and interaction within mainstream educational institutions, while providing the necessary adaptations, services, and support.

Children with autism are among the groups requiring specialized educational care, given the needs that may characterize them in the areas of communication, social interaction, behavior, and learning. Accordingly, including

¹ Received: 10.03.2026 Accepted: 19.08.2026 Publishing: 21.09.2026

these children in mainstream schools does not simply involve transferring them from specialized institutions to ordinary classrooms; it requires preparing appropriate educational and social conditions and providing specialized support that helps the child benefit from the educational process and interact with peers.

In Algeria, the field of care for children with special educational needs has received increasing attention through the establishment of specialized institutions and centers and the development of mechanisms for cooperation among the sectors concerned. In this context, cooperation between the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of National Solidarity, Family and Women's Affairs is noteworthy. One manifestation of this cooperation is the joint ministerial decision dated 13 March 2014 concerning the procedures for opening special classes within educational institutions and their supervision by the solidarity sector, thereby providing an educational framework that may contribute to the schooling of children with special educational needs alongside their peers.

The inclusion of children with autism is particularly important because its success requires an accurate understanding of the characteristics of this group and its educational, psychological, and social requirements. A child with Autism Spectrum Disorder may need educational and communication methods suited to his or her abilities, as well as continuous support that facilitates adaptation to the school environment. Hence, the teacher and educator play essential roles in the educational process: the teacher is responsible for the educational and academic aspects, while the specialized educator contributes to developing the child's independence and life, social, and psychological skills. Coordination between them is therefore an important element in achieving the objectives of inclusion.

Accordingly, teachers' and educators' attitudes toward including children with Autism Spectrum Disorder constitute a topic worthy of study, since their professional attitudes may be related to the way they interact with the child, the extent to which they accept the child's presence in the mainstream school, and their readiness to adapt educational and pedagogical practices to the child's needs. From this perspective, the present study seeks to examine these attitudes and identify their nature, while investigating their relationship with certain professional and personal variables.

1. Statement of the Problem:

Special education is an educational field intended to respond to the diverse needs of children who require services and educational methods appropriate to their characteristics and abilities, thereby helping them develop their potential and achieve greater adaptation and independence (Al-Rousan, 2001, p. 17). In light of this orientation, school inclusion has emerged as an approach seeking to provide children with special educational needs with opportunities for education and participation within the mainstream school environment rather than limiting services to separate institutions.

This includes children with autism, particularly cases whose characteristics and abilities allow them to benefit from the mainstream educational environment, while taking into account the child's needs and level of ability to adapt and learn. The importance of this approach increases in view of the need to provide educational and social opportunities that help the child develop abilities and interact with others, while also supporting the family in meeting the requirements of care.

Nevertheless, the inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder remains an issue requiring empirical investigation because its success does not depend only on official decisions and regulations or on providing a place within the school; it is also affected by the readiness of educational staff to accept the child and deal with his or her characteristics and needs. The teacher and educator are essential elements in implementing educational and pedagogical programs and in creating an environment that helps the child interact and adapt. Differences in professional experience, training, and previous experiences may also lead to variation in attitudes toward inclusion. The issue of inclusion in special education has generated extensive discussion between supportive and cautious positions, particularly concerning the capacity of mainstream schools to respond to the diverse needs of children with disabilities. This has led to the emergence of multiple models of inclusion, including special classes attached to mainstream schools (Al-Rousan, 2013, p. 31). Studying the attitudes of educational personnel is therefore important for understanding their acceptance of inclusion and the factors that may be associated with these attitudes.

Given the important role played by teachers and educators in the educational, pedagogical, psychological, and social support of children with autism, the present study seeks to identify the nature of their attitudes toward including this group in mainstream schools and to examine whether these attitudes differ according to selected professional and personal variables.

Accordingly, the research problem can be formulated through the following main question:

What is the nature of teachers' and educators' attitudes toward the inclusion of children with autism in mainstream schools?

The following sub-questions arise from this main question:

Are there statistically significant differences in educators' attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools attributable to professional experience?.

Are there statistically significant differences in teachers' attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools attributable to professional experience?.

Are there statistically significant differences in educators' attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools attributable to gender (male/female)?.

Are there statistically significant differences in teachers' attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools attributable to gender (male/female)?.

2. Study Hypotheses:

General Hypothesis:

Teachers and educators have attitudes toward the inclusion of children with autism in mainstream schools.

Sub-Hypotheses:

There are statistically significant differences in teachers' attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools attributable to gender (male/female).

There are statistically significant differences in teachers' attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools attributable to professional experience.

There are statistically significant differences in educators' attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools attributable to gender (male/female).

There are statistically significant differences in educators' attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools attributable to professional experience.

3. Importance and Objectives of the Study:

3.1. Importance of the Study:

The topic of educational inclusion in mainstream schools for children with special educational needs has received limited attention in Algeria. Therefore, the importance of the present study lies in examining teachers' and educators' attitudes toward the inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in mainstream schools.

The researcher seeks to contribute new knowledge to the field of special education in Algeria by studying the type of attitudes held by teachers and educators toward the inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. They are considered particularly knowledgeable about these cases: the educator prepares children with autism for the inclusion process, while the teacher receives them. This makes it possible to examine the usefulness of including this group in mainstream schools, identify the causes of the disorder and methods of care, and provide children with opportunities to integrate with typically developing children rather than remain isolated.

3.2. Objectives of the Study:

- To identify teachers' and educators' attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools.
- To determine the effect of gender and seniority (professional experience) in teaching on teachers' and educators' attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools.
- To provide a set of recommendations derived from a realistic field study that may support appropriate care for children with autism within a policy of genuine educational and social inclusion.

4. Study Concepts:

4.1. Attitudes:

An attitude is a relatively stable acquired predisposition among individuals that determines their responses to certain ideas or persons. Each person has two types of attitudes: attitudes toward others, i.e., general or social attitudes, including attitudes toward general topics and events; and attitudes toward the self, which comprise a set of attitudes toward the events and circumstances of one's life (Wali Mohammed, 2004, p. 141).

Operational definition of attitudes:

In the present study, attitudes refer to the set of responses and positions expressed by teachers and educators toward the inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in mainstream schools, as determined by the total score obtained by the respondent on the teachers' and educators' attitudes scale toward the inclusion of children with autism in mainstream schools used in the study.

4.2. School Inclusion:

It is "a process aimed at achieving the educational and social inclusion of children with special educational needs and enabling them to attend mainstream schools and nurseries with other typically developing children, thereby providing them with an appropriate living and educational environment" (Al-Awalmeh, 2003, p. 208).

Operational definition of school inclusion:

In the present study, school inclusion refers to providing children with Autism Spectrum Disorder with the opportunity to attend ordinary primary schools and participate in educational and social activities and situations alongside their typically developing peers, while providing the necessary educational adaptations and services according to their needs and abilities.

4.3. Public Primary Schools:

They are "official institutions in society responsible for raising children and working to develop their abilities in various fields. They work alongside the family by providing services for socialization, instilling human values, and providing general education services from the first through the fifth year of primary education."

Operational definition of public primary schools:

In the present study, public primary schools refer to educational institutions belonging to the Ministry of National Education that receive children at the primary-education stage and in which the inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder with their typically developing peers may be implemented according to the available educational regulations and resources.

4.5. Autism Spectrum Disorder:

The researcher defines it as "a pervasive developmental disorder affecting many aspects of development, not limited to the intellectual or social aspect, but extending to the cognitive-intellectual, social, and linguistic aspects and related communication, as well as the emotional and play aspects" (Adel Abdullah Mohammed, 2011, p. 16).

Operational definition of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder:

In the present study, children with Autism Spectrum Disorder are children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder by qualified authorities or specialists, who are of primary-school age and may be candidates for educational inclusion in mainstream schools according to their individual characteristics and needs.

6. Previous Studies:

A number of studies have addressed teachers' and educational personnel's attitudes toward including children with special educational needs in mainstream schools, with particular attention to children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The following is a presentation of the studies most relevant to the present study:

6.1. Study on the School Inclusion of Children with Disabilities—Autism in France (2015):

This study sought to identify teachers' attitudes toward including children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in mainstream schools, as well as the attitudes of typically developing pupils and parents toward the inclusion process. The study adopted a descriptive, quantitative, analytical approach and included a sample of 27 teachers and 27 pupils from mainstream schools. An electronically administered questionnaire and interviews were used to collect data. The results showed positive attitudes toward the inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, particularly when the severity of the disorder was mild; this factor was statistically associated with participants' attitudes toward inclusion.

Study by Al-Samadi (2008):

6.2. Entitled "Teachers' Attitudes toward Including Students with Disabilities in the First Three Grades with Typically Developing Students in Arar Governorate, Saudi Arabia." It aimed to identify the attitudes of first-three-grade teachers toward including students with disabilities with their typically developing peers through three dimensions: social, academic, and psychological. The study adopted the descriptive-analytical method and selected a purposive stratified sample of 142 teachers, representing 20% of the study population. Aisha Al-Hunaini's (1989) questionnaire was used after modification to suit the objectives of the study. The results indicated positive teacher attitudes toward inclusion, with no statistically significant differences in attitudes according to the dimensions

included in the scale. The study recommended expanding research into the attitudes of different actors involved in inclusion, including teachers and administrators, according to their specializations and responsibilities.

Study by Mohammed Kamel and Abu Al-Futouh Ahmed (2011):

6.3. Entitled “Attitudes of Primary-School Teachers toward Including Children with Autism with Their Typically Developing Peers in Public Schools,” and conducted at Benha University in Egypt. It aimed to identify the nature of primary-school teachers’ attitudes toward including children with autism and to examine their relationship with variables including gender, educational qualification, specialization, and teachers’ knowledge of autism-related aspects and educational strategies used in dealing with it. The researchers adopted the descriptive-analytical method and applied the study to a purposive sample of 60 teachers, including 22 males and 38 females. A questionnaire prepared by the researchers included 35 statements distributed across psychological, academic, and social dimensions. The results showed negative attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools and found no significant effects of gender, educational qualification, or specialization on participants’ attitudes.

Study by Ghrab and Ghadri (2017):

6.4. Entitled “Teachers’ Attitudes toward Including Persons with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools,” at Djelfa University in Algeria. It aimed to identify the nature of mainstream-school teachers’ attitudes toward including children with special educational needs and to examine differences according to gender, academic qualification, field of specialization, and years of experience. The study used the descriptive method with a sample of 132 male and female teachers, including 21 male teachers and 111 female teachers, using a scale measuring teachers’ attitudes toward inclusion in public schools. The results showed positive attitudes toward inclusion, with differences among the psychological, academic, and social dimensions of the scale. Attitudes were not affected by gender, specialization, or academic qualification, whereas differences related to years of experience appeared in favor of those with greater experience.

6.5. Commentary on Previous Studies:

Reviewing the previous studies shows growing research interest in teachers’ attitudes toward including children with special educational needs in mainstream schools. This corresponds with the present study in focusing on attitudes as one of the factors affecting the success of inclusion. Most previous studies also agree with the present study in adopting the descriptive method and using questionnaires or scales to identify the nature of educational personnel’s attitudes.

Nevertheless, the studies differ in the nature of their target groups. Some addressed persons with special educational needs in general, whereas others focused specifically on children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. They also varied in the professional groups included: most focused on teachers, whereas the present study seeks to broaden the target group to include teachers and specialized educators, allowing the inclusion process to be viewed from a more comprehensive perspective given the different roles of the actors participating in the educational process.

The findings of previous studies reveal clear variation in attitudes toward inclusion. Some studies reported positive attitudes, such as Al-Samadi (2008) and Ghrab and Ghadri (2017), whereas Mohammed Kamel and Abu Al-Futouh Ahmed (2011) found negative attitudes among primary-school teachers toward including children with autism. The French study (2015) indicated that positive attitudes were associated with lower disorder severity, particularly cases classified as mild. This variation underscores the importance of studying factors associated with teachers’ and educators’ attitudes rather than assuming that their attitudes toward inclusion are homogeneous.

Accordingly, the present study was conducted to identify the nature of teachers’ and educators’ attitudes toward including children with mild Autism Spectrum Disorder in mainstream schools and to determine whether these attitudes are affected by gender and years of experience.

7. Study Procedures:

7.1. Research Method:

The nature of the topic, objectives, and questions of the study requires selecting an appropriate method for collecting and analyzing data and reaching accurate results concerning teachers’ and educators’ attitudes toward including children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in mainstream schools. Since the present study aims to identify the nature of these attitudes and examine differences according to selected personal and professional variables, the descriptive-analytical method was adopted.

7.2. Study Sample:

The sample is a fundamental methodological element in educational, psychological, and social research, as its selection is related to the researcher's ability to achieve the study objectives and reach findings reflecting the characteristics of the research population. Based on the nature and objectives of the present study, participants were selected purposively because this method was considered appropriate to the topic and to the characteristics required of participants, namely direct experience in educating, teaching, and supporting children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

The study sample consisted of 57 members of the educational team working at the Psycho-Pedagogical Centre in Sour El Ghazlane, including teachers and educators involved in caring for this group.

7.3. Study Boundaries:

7.3.1. Geographical boundaries: The field study was conducted at the Psycho-Pedagogical Centre in Sour El Ghazlane, Bouira Province, as the field setting in which the study was implemented and data concerning educational-team members' attitudes toward the inclusion of children with autism in mainstream schools were collected.

7.3.2. Temporal boundaries: The field study was conducted during the 2025–2026 academic year, from 10 October 2025 to 5 December 2025, the period allocated for administering the study instrument and collecting data from the sample.

7.3.3. Human boundaries: The study sample consisted of 35 members of the educational team working at the Psycho-Pedagogical Centre in Sour El Ghazlane who had a direct relationship with educating, teaching, and supporting children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The sample included the professional group targeted by the study according to the characteristics of the research population.

7.4. Study Instrument:

The instrument consisted of a questionnaire on attitudes toward the inclusion of children with autism in mainstream schools. It comprised 41 items distributed across seven (07) dimensions.

The questionnaire was designed by Special Education Professor Zineb Choukir. It measures the attitudes of parents, teachers, educators, and administrators toward the inclusion of persons with special educational needs and is directed toward different types of disabilities.

Table 1. Dimensions of the Attitudes Scale

Dimensions	Domains
Dimension 1	Types and benefits of inclusion
Dimension 2	Objectives and rationales of inclusion
Dimension 3	General benefits of inclusion
Dimension 4	Effects of inclusion on the academic aspect
Dimension 5	Effects of inclusion on the psychological, behavioral, and social aspects
Dimension 6	Effects of inclusion on the teacher
Dimension 7	Effects of inclusion on the school

7.5. Psychometric Properties of the Teachers' and Educators' Attitudes Questionnaire toward the Inclusion of Children with Autism in Mainstream Schools

7.5.2. Discriminant Validity:

Table 2. Calculation of the Instrument's Discriminant Validity

	Upper group n=6	Upper group n=6	Lower group n=6	Lower group n=6	t value	Statistical significance
Discriminant validity	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation	t value	Statistical significance
Discriminant validity	71.50	3.61	55.66	2.80	8.47	Statistically significant at 0.05

The results presented in Table 14 show statistically significant differences between the upper and lower groups, with a t value of 8.47 at the 0.05 significance level, in favor of the upper group. This indicates that the instrument

is capable of discriminating between individuals with high and low scores, confirming that it has appropriate discriminant validity and is suitable for application in the present study.

7.5.3. Instrument Reliability: Cronbach's Alpha:

Table 3. Reliability of the Instrument Using Cronbach's Alpha:

Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
41	0.70

The reliability of the instrument was verified using Cronbach's alpha for internal consistency. The reliability coefficient was 0.70, a value indicating an acceptable level of reliability and confirming that the instrument used in the present study has an appropriate degree of reliability and is suitable for application.

8. Presentation, Discussion, and Interpretation of Study Results:

8.1. Results of the General Hypothesis:

The general hypothesis states that teachers and educators have positive attitudes toward including children with mild autism in mainstream schools.

Analysis of the frequencies and percentages presented in the table for the general hypothesis shows, in general, that participants' responses tend to support the inclusion of children with mild autism in mainstream schools, with some reservations related to the conditions and mechanisms of implementation.

The results showed high agreement with several statements reflecting the positive aspects of inclusion. Agreement with item 40, concerning the need for cooperation between the social worker and school administration, reached 94.7%, the highest agreement rate in the table. Agreement with item 39, emphasizing the need for organized effort by the administrative staff, reached 84.2%. Agreement with items 3 and 4, concerning the importance of partial inclusion, reached 80.7%, while agreement reached 75.4% for items 22, 27, and 29, and 73.7% for items 31 and 33. These percentages indicate participants' awareness of the importance of inclusion for developing communication and social interaction and the ability to integrate into society.

Positive attitudes are also reflected in the high rates of agreement that inclusion contributes to the development of social and behavioral skills: agreement with item 2 reached 68.4%, item 11 reached 71.9%, and item 20 reached 64.9%. This reflects teachers' and educators' awareness of the potential social, psychological, and educational benefits of inclusion.

In contrast, the results revealed some reservations among participants regarding inclusion, particularly concerning implementation conditions. A total of 47.4% agreed that full inclusion might deprive the child of benefiting from specialized curricula; 42.1% indicated that inclusion might cause some problems within the school; and 52.6% agreed that inclusion reduces opportunities for individualized education. In addition, 56.1% agreed with the statement concerning the teacher's lack of welcome for inclusion because of fear of its effect on classroom performance.

Accordingly, based on the overall distribution of responses, the findings support the existence of positive attitudes among teachers and educators toward including children with mild autism in mainstream schools.

8.2. Results of the First Sub-Hypothesis:

There are statistically significant differences in teachers' attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools attributable to gender (male/female).

Table 4. First Sub-Hypothesis According to Teachers' Gender

Gender differences	Gender	Mean	Standard deviation	t value	Significance level	Sig.	Significance of differences
Gender differences	Male	62.00	5.61	0.39	0.05	0.30	Not significant
Gender differences	Female	61.00	7.41	0.39	0.05	0.30	Not significant

The results in Table 23 show that the mean attitude score for male teachers was 62.00, with a standard deviation of 5.61, compared with 61.00 for female teachers, with a standard deviation of 7.41. Although there is a small

difference in the means in favor of males, the t-test value of 0.39 and significance level of 0.30, which is greater than 0.05, confirm that the difference is not statistically significant.

This result indicates that gender was not a factor affecting teachers' attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools, meaning that male and female teachers have broadly similar perceptions and attitudes toward inclusion. This may be attributed to similarities in working conditions, professional experience, and training related to working with children with special educational needs. Therefore, there are no statistically significant differences in teachers' attitudes toward inclusion according to gender.

8.3. Results of the Second Sub-Hypothesis:

There are statistically significant differences in educators' attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools according to professional experience of teachers.

Table 5. Second Sub-Hypothesis According to Teachers' Professional Experience:

Analysis of variance for professional experience	Analysis of variance for professional experience	Analysis of variance for professional experience	Analysis of variance for professional experience	Analysis of variance for professional experience	Statistical significance	Statistical significance
	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	SIG	Not statistically significant at 0.05
Between groups	56.034	2	28.01	0.60	0.55	Not statistically significant at 0.05
Within groups	1571.047	34	46.20			Not statistically significant at 0.05
Total	1627.018	36				Not statistically significant at 0.05

The second sub-hypothesis states: "There are statistically significant differences in educators' attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools according to the professional-experience variable of teachers."

The results of the one-way analysis of variance (One-Way ANOVA) presented in Table 24 show that the calculated F value was 0.60, while the statistical significance value was SIG = 0.55, which is greater than the significance level adopted in the study ($\alpha = 0.05$). This result indicates that there are no statistically significant differences between the mean attitudes of teachers toward including children with autism in mainstream schools according to different levels of professional experience.

8.4. Results of the Third Sub-Hypothesis:

There are statistically significant differences in educators' attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools attributable to gender (male/female).

Table 6. Third Sub-Hypothesis According to Educators' Gender

Gender differences	Gender	Mean	Standard deviation	t value	Significance level	Sig.	Significance of differences
Gender differences	Male	66.00	4.86	1.60	0.05	0.062	Not significant
Gender differences	Female	62.46	4.61	1.60	0.05	0.062	Not significant

Table 25 shows that the mean attitude score for male educators was 66.00, with a standard deviation of 4.86, whereas the mean for female educators was 62.46, with a standard deviation of 4.61. Given $t = 1.60$ and $Sig = 0.062$, a value greater than 0.05, there are no statistically significant differences in educators' attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools attributable to gender.

Accordingly, the third sub-hypothesis, which assumes the existence of differences, is rejected, while the null hypothesis stating that there are no statistically significant differences in educators' attitudes according to gender is accepted.

8.5. Results of the Fourth Sub-Hypothesis:

There are statistically significant differences in educators' attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools attributable to professional experience.

Table 7. Fourth Sub-Hypothesis According to Educators' Professional Experience:

Analysis of variance for professional experience	Analysis of variance for professional experience	Analysis of variance for professional experience	Analysis of variance for professional experience	Analysis of variance for professional experience	Statistical significance	Statistical significance
	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	SIG	Not statistically significant at 0.05
Between groups	63.00	2	31.50	1.36	0.28	Not statistically significant at 0.05
Within groups	391.20	17	23.01			Not statistically significant at 0.05
Total	454.20	19				Not statistically significant at 0.05

Table 26 shows that the one-way analysis of variance for educators' professional experience yielded an F value of 1.36, while the statistical significance was $Sig = 0.28$, which is greater than the adopted significance level of 0.05. This indicates that there are no statistically significant differences in educators' attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools attributable to professional experience.

Accordingly, differences in years of professional experience among educators did not result in substantial differences in their attitudes toward inclusion. Therefore, the fourth sub-hypothesis, which assumes the existence of differences, is rejected, while the null hypothesis stating that there are no statistically significant differences attributable to professional experience is accepted.

9. Discussion of Study Results:

This section discusses the field results obtained, interpreting them in light of the study hypotheses and comparing them with the findings of previous studies in order to determine the extent to which they agree or differ.

9.1. Discussion of the General Hypothesis:

The general hypothesis proposed the existence of attitudes among teachers and educators toward including children with mild autism in mainstream schools. The findings showed positive attitudes among the participants toward inclusion, confirming the general hypothesis.

This finding is consistent with the study of teachers' attitudes toward including persons with special educational needs in mainstream schools (Djelfa University, 2017), which found positive attitudes toward inclusion and no statistically significant differences according to gender, specialization, or academic qualification, except for years

of experience. It is also consistent with the study “School Inclusion of Children with Disabilities: The Particular Case of Children with Autism” (France, 2015), which found positive attitudes toward including children with autism, particularly in mild cases of the disorder.

In contrast, this finding differs from Mohammed Kamel Abu Al-Futouh Ahmed’s (2011) study of primary-school teachers’ attitudes toward including children with autism with their typically developing peers, which found negative attitudes toward inclusion.

9.2. Discussion of the First Sub-Hypothesis:

The study hypothesized statistically significant differences in teachers’ attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools according to gender. The results showed no statistically significant differences between males and females; therefore, the hypothesis was not supported.

This finding is consistent with Mohammed Kamel Abu Al-Futouh Ahmed (2011), who found no differences in attitudes toward including children with autism attributable to gender. It is also consistent with the study of teachers’ attitudes toward including persons with special educational needs in mainstream schools (Djelfa University, 2017), which likewise found no significant differences between males and females. This may be explained by similarities in working conditions and professional experiences among the participants, resulting in similar attitudes toward inclusion.

9.3. Discussion of the Second Sub-Hypothesis:

The study hypothesized statistically significant differences in teachers’ attitudes toward including children with autism according to professional experience. The results showed no statistically significant differences, meaning that the hypothesis was not supported.

This result agrees with the findings of Aisha Al-Hunaini (1989) and Mohammed Kamel Abu Al-Futouh Ahmed (2011), which found no differences in attitudes attributable to professional experience. It differs, however, from the study by Turkiya Ghrab and Saliha Ghadri (2017), which found statistically significant differences according to experience.

9.4. Discussion of the Third Sub-Hypothesis:

The third sub-hypothesis stated that there are statistically significant differences in educators’ attitudes toward including children with autism in mainstream schools according to gender. The results showed no statistically significant differences between male and female educators; therefore, the hypothesis was not supported.

This result is consistent with Mohammed Kamel Abu Al-Futouh Ahmed (2011) and the study of teachers’ attitudes toward including persons with special educational needs in mainstream schools (Djelfa University, 2017), both of which found no differences in attitudes attributable to gender. This may be explained by similarities in the experiences and professional conditions under which male and female educators work.

9.5. Discussion of the Fourth Sub-Hypothesis:

The study hypothesized statistically significant differences in educators’ attitudes toward including children with autism according to professional experience. The results showed no statistically significant differences, indicating that differences in years of experience did not substantially affect educators’ attitudes toward inclusion.

This finding agrees with the studies of Aisha Al-Hunaini (1989) and Mohammed Kamel Abu Al-Futouh Ahmed (2011), whereas it differs from the study by Turkiya Ghrab and Saliha Ghadri (2017), which reported statistically significant differences according to professional experience.

Study Conclusions:

10. The study reached the following conclusions:

- Positive attitudes among teachers toward including children with autism in mainstream schools.
- Positive attitudes among educators toward including children with autism in mainstream schools.
- No statistically significant differences in teachers’ attitudes attributable to gender.
- No statistically significant differences in educators’ attitudes attributable to gender.
- No statistically significant differences in teachers’ attitudes attributable to professional experience.
- No statistically significant differences in educators’ attitudes attributable to professional experience.

11. Recommendations:

In light of the findings obtained, the following recommendations may be proposed:

- Promote a culture of educational inclusion for children with special educational needs, particularly children with autism, within society and educational institutions.
- Provide the material and human requirements necessary for successful inclusion, including special classes and resource rooms.
- Strengthen specialized and continuous training for teachers and educators in Autism Spectrum Disorder and inclusion strategies.
- Strengthen coordination between the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of National Solidarity, Family and Women's Affairs to activate educational-inclusion policies.
- Encourage further studies on the school inclusion of children with autism, focusing on the roles of psychological, educational, and clinical specialists in ensuring successful inclusion.

12. Suggestions for Future Research:

- Conduct similar field studies on larger samples and in different regions of Algeria to assess the possibility of generalizing the findings.
- Conduct studies examining the attitudes of other groups toward including children with autism, such as parents, psychological and educational specialists, and administrators.
- Study the effect of specialized training and professional-development programs on improving teachers' and educators' attitudes toward including children with autism.
- Conduct studies addressing the obstacles facing the implementation of educational inclusion for children with autism in mainstream schools.
- Study the effectiveness of specific educational strategies and programs in improving the academic and social adaptation of included children with autism.
- Encourage research addressing the role of multidisciplinary teams in planning inclusion, following up on included children, and evaluating the outcomes of the process.

References:

Arabic References:

- Abu Al-Futouh, Muhammad Kamal, and Ahmad Omar, Muhammad. (2011). Attitudes of primary-school teachers toward integrating children with autism (autistic children) with their typically developing peers in public schools: A psychological study in light of some variables. In Complete Proceedings of the Second Scientific Conference of the Department of Mental Health, Faculty of Education, Benha University (Vol. 1, pp. 415–464). Benha, Egypt: Benha University.
- Al-Rousan, Farouq. (2001). Psychology of Exceptional Children (5th ed.). Amman, Jordan: Dar Al-Fikr for Publishing and Distribution.
- Al-Rousan, Farouq. (2013). Issues and Problems in Special Education (3rd ed.). Amman, Jordan: Dar Al-Fikr for Publishing and Distribution.
- Subhi, Tayseer. (1994). Care of Persons with Special Educational Needs (1st ed.). Amman, Jordan: Al-Quds Open University Publications.
- Adel, Abdullah Mohammed. (2011). An Introduction to Autism Disorders: Behavioral and Emotional Disorders (1st ed.). [Place and publisher information require verification against the original edition].
- Al-Samadi, Ali Mohammed Ali. (2010). Teachers' attitudes toward integrating students with disabilities in the first three grades with typically developing students in Arar Governorate. Journal of the Islamic University for Human Research, 18(2), 785–805.
- Al-Hunaini, Aisha Ahmed. (1989). Attitudes of primary-school principals and teachers toward integrating students with physical disabilities in mainstream schools in the Directorate of Education of Zarqa Governorate (Unpublished master's thesis). The University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan.
- Mohammed, Wali, Basem, Mohammed Mohammed. (2004). Social Psychology (1st ed.). Amman, Jordan: Dar Al-Thaqafa Library for Publishing and Distribution.
- Mukhtar, Mohieddin. (1982). Lectures in Social Psychology. Algeria: Office of University Publications.
- Marsali, Houria, and Daoudi, Kheira. (2020). Teachers' attitudes toward integrating children with special educational needs in primary schools: A field study in schools in Djelfa Province. Al-Wahat Journal for Research and Studies, 13(2), 1–21.

Foreign References:

- Hayek, H. (2015). School inclusion of children with disabilities: The particular case of children with autism (Doctoral dissertation, Université de Bretagne Occidentale, France).
- Haring, T. G., & Ryndak, D. L. (1994). Strategies and instructional procedures to promote social interactions and relationships. In E. C. Cipani & F. Spooner (Eds.), *Curricular and instructional approaches for persons with severe disabilities* (pp. 289–321). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.