

Inclusive Education in Tunisia: Expectations versus Reality

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Abstract

The study aimed to investigate the barriers to the implementation of inclusive education practices in Tunisia. This study is distinguished by a focus on the psychological barriers to inclusive education. Second, it is distinguished by using speech act theory to investigate Tunisian inclusive education provisions. A mixed-methods research approach was used to achieve the study's goal. A questionnaire was used to collect data from a stratified sample of forty-four English teacher. The qualitative data was collected by analyzing five legal provisions using the Speech Act theory. According to the findings, various issues such as inappropriate policy development, insufficient support and resources, and curriculum issues hampered the implementation of inclusive education. Furthermore, an examination of the provisions revealed that the actual outcomes fell short of the authorities' expectations, highlighting the need for additional action and support to achieve true inclusivity in education. As a result, policymakers and educators must address these issues and provide comprehensive support to ensure that all students have equal access to high-quality education.

Keywords: Inclusive education , barriers, provisions , Students with special needs

ملخص

أجريت هذه الدراسة لبحث العوائق التي تحول دون تنفيذ ممارسات التعليم الدامج في تونس. تم استخدام منهج بحثي مختلط الأساليب لتحقيق هدف الدراسة. وتم استخدام استبانة لجمع البيانات من عينة طبقية مكونة من 44 مدرسا للغة الإنجليزية. وتم استخدام الإحصاء الوصفي على شكل التكرارات والنسب المئوية لتحليل البيانات. تم جمع البيانات النوعية من خلال تحليل خمسة أحكام قانونية باستخدام نظرية قانون الكلام. ووفقا للنتائج، فإن قضايا مختلفة مثل تطوير السياسات غير المناسبة، وعدم كفاية الدعم والموارد، وقضايا المناهج الدراسية أعاقت تنفيذ التعليم الدامج. علاوة على ذلك، كشف فحص الأحكام أن النتائج الفعلية كانت أقل من توقعات السلطات، مما سلب الضوء على الحاجة إلى إجراءات إضافية ودعم لتحقيق الشمولية الحقيقية في التعليم. ونتيجة لذلك، يتعين على صناعات السياسات والمعلمين معالجة هذه القضايا وتوفير الدعم الشامل لضمان حصول جميع الطلاب على فرص متساوية للحصول على تعليم عالي الجودة.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

التعليم الجامع، المعوقات - الأحكام، الطلاب ذو الاحتياجات الخاصة

1 Introduction

In most countries, the concept of inclusive education is a newly developed educational system. The field of inclusive education gained importance in many developed countries in the 1980s and more recently in some developing countries. There has been a long history of institutionalization, segregation, and exclusion in the education of children with disabilities. However, the environment has changed because of international advocacy by human rights defenders and statements from international organizations. Despite the multiple reforms and projects, inclusive education is not fully implemented in Tunisia. We believe that the provisions made regarding inclusive education are just words on paper. Even though some attempts have been made, we lack inclusive education in Tunisia due to some obstacles that prevent its effective implementation. This study aims to explore teachers towards the curriculum used in teaching SEN students and the issued policies regarding inclusive education in Tunisia. This study aims to investigate the specific challenges faced by educators and administrators in implementing inclusive education as well as to assess the effectiveness of the existing policies and resources in promoting inclusive education in schools.

The significance of this study is twofold. First, it is characterized by the focus on the attitudinal barriers to inclusive education. Second, it is characterized by investigating the Tunisian provisions of inclusive education using speech act theory.

Therefore, based on the above-stated aims and significance, the research questions are as thus:

- What are the barriers to implementing inclusive education in Tunisia?
- To what extent do the provisions of the current education system in Tunisia support inclusive practices? Additionally, how do these barriers and provisions affect the educational outcomes of students with disabilities in Tunisia?

The study intends to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced in implementing inclusive education in Tunisia. Furthermore, analyzing the provisions and laws through speech act theory will shed light on any discrepancies between official regulations and the actual practice of inclusive education in the country.

2 Literature Review

The concept of inclusion has been defined in a variety of ways. Moriña (2017) has stated that inclusive education is “an educational approach proposing schools in which all students can participate and are all treated like valuable school members” (p.3). In this respect, inclusive education seeks to enhance each student’s learning and participation in a shared educational setting. Similarly, Stainback et al. (1996, p. 36) have claimed that inclusive schools are “places where everyone belongs, is accepted, and is supported by his or her peers and other members of the school community in the course of having his or her educational needs met” (cited in Kearney & Kane, 2006, p. 203). This definition of inclusion emphasizes the importance of accepting differences and valuing the sense of belonging of SEN students in an educational context. Akbarovna (2022) has provided a comprehensive definition of inclusion, stating,

Inclusive education is a process aimed at integrating disabled children into the educational process and adapting secondary schools to disabled children, which aims at social justice and equality. Inclusive education is based on a social model and it considers the problem not in the child, but in the program and methodology. (p. 248)

Multiple definitions have been provided in the literature about inclusion and inclusive education. Stubbs (2008, p. 38) has argued that definitions of inclusive education are constantly changing as the practice spreads to more contexts and cultures and as analysis of this practice becomes more in-depth. If inclusive education is to continue to be a genuine and valuable response to addressing educational human rights challenges, definitions must continue to change.

Even though inclusion has been widely defined in the literature, terms like mainstreaming and integration are still used synonymously with it. Berg (2005) has differentiated between the two concepts. According to her, inclusion means placing students with special needs in regular schools whether or not they adhere to the requirements of traditional curricula, whereas mainstreaming means placing SEN students in regular education classes only when they can achieve traditional academic standards with the bare minimum of help (Berg, 2005, p. 17).

Gaad (2011) states that “the history of inclusion has been described as going from neglect in the early 20th century to segregation-based individual needs in the period 1920s-1960s and on to the present”(p.9). Inclusive education in Tunisia started in 1958, with various educational reforms established to ensure everyone has access to education. Making the Tunisian educational system more efficient, inclusive, and equitable is the goal of these reforms, and to do so, “specific objectives were set, including restoring meaning to education and making students more active in educational development, as well as equipping teachers to deal with the weakest students.” (Summary Tunisia Country Report on Out-of-School Children, 2014, p. 1)

In 2003, the Tunisian government developed a strategy for the full inclusion of children with special needs in regular schools with the assistance of accredited associations. The project of individualized education, or “*le projet educative individualisé*,” was launched in 2003. To achieve the integration and development of this project, the participation of different professions was needed. However, the project lacked funding because of the revolution, so the goal has not yet been achieved (Persson, 2013, p. 28).

The rise in integrative schools in Tunisia that accept students with disabilities and special needs indicates an uptick in interest in inclusion. From 162 in 2004 to 265 in 2008, the number of students with special needs enrolled in Tunisian schools increased. In addition, more students (1,134 students in 2009) were enrolled in public schools in Tunisia (Gaad, 2011, p.5).

The main goal of inclusive education is to create an environment in which children who require assistance may gain effective knowledge. In this vein, Akbarovna (2022) has claimed that the main goal of inclusive education is “to create conditions for children who need help to acquire effective knowledge. In these conditions, it is necessary to integrate and rehabilitate children in need of assistance, choosing the appropriate type of effective inclusive training for them” (p.250). However, numerous obstacles prevent the implementation of inclusive education, leading to the complete segregation of disabled students. In this respect,

Mokaleng and Mowes (2020) have stated that “ despite efforts from national and international organizations to ensure that inclusive education practices are implemented, there are still learners who are taught in segregated, special schools in many parts of the world” (p.79)

In a study about inclusive education, Ahmad (2012) asserted five barriers to inclusive education: barriers related to time and skills, physical barriers, attitudinal barriers, curricular barriers, and communication barriers (p. 2). He claimed, “Lack of training in teaching children with special needs is often cited as a problem by general educators. These teachers often feel unprepared to educate children with special needs, especially with recent emphasis on test scores and accountability” (Ahmad, 2012, p.2).

Attitudinal and institutional barriers are two of the most significant hardships to inclusive education. Pivik et al. (2002) have argued that institutional barriers are those caused by the institutional bureaucracy in educational institutions and school boards, healthcare settings, leisure activities, and non-profit organizations (p. 99). Attitudinal barriers are incarnated in both parents and teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. Ahmad (2012) has affirmed that parents are hesitant to enroll their child in a classroom with a disabled student, and teachers worry that the special needs students will monopolize their time and prevent them from giving other students the proper education. (p.5). In addition, Rajovic and Jovanovic (2013) have maintained that teachers' beliefs and attitudes are crucial in ensuring the success of inclusive practices Since teachers' acceptance of inclusion policies is likely to have an impact on their commitment to implementing them. (p.83)

Concerning institutional barriers, Nurhayati et al.(2023) have argued that “issues related to accessibility are no less important, so far, many schools do not yet have adequate infrastructure. This impacts children with special needs who are less independent in their mobility in school, so they depend on the people around them.” (p.4)

In Tunisia, the implementation of inclusive education remains low and is still a phenomenon despite the provisions issued regarding this matter. This situation is caused by government policies, education curriculum management, and community awareness of the status of inclusive schools in the country. Furthermore, studies on inclusive education in Tunisia are scarce. Therefore, this study intends to shed light on teachers regarding the curriculum used and policies issued.

Following the above-mentioned barriers, this study focuses on investigating two types of barriers: curricular and barriers related to policy in implementing inclusive education in Tunisia. This study aims to identify the barriers and bottlenecks hampering the implementation of inclusive education in Tunisia. In addition, the study's purpose is to analyze the provisions and laws regulated by Tunisian authorities through speech act theory.

3 Methods and Materials

The following sections will deal with the research design, the participants, the research instruments, and the research procedures of this study.

3.1 Research Design

In this study, the researcher adopted a mixed-research design. It integrates aspects of qualitative and quantitative research techniques into one investigation. Using both qualitative and quantitative data, this method enables researchers to gain a deeper understanding of a research problem and produce a more thorough and nuanced analysis.

3.2 Participants

Forty-four teachers completed the questionnaire. They are English teachers who work in various schools throughout Tunisia. There were thirty-three females (76.7%) and nine males (20.9%) among the forty-four participants. In terms of teaching experience, the majority of participants (61, 4%) have been teaching English for more than ten years. Furthermore, secondary schools are attended by more than half of the respondents (60%), followed by elementary schools (32%, 5%). The demographic information of the respondents is provided in Table One.

Table 1: *Demographic information of the participants*

		Count	Column N %
Gender	Missing	1	2,3%
	Male	9	20,9%
	Female	33	76,7%
Teaching experience	1 to 5	14	31,8%
	5 to 10	3	6,8%
	more than 10	27	61,4%
School affiliation	Primary	3	7,5%
	Elementary	13	32,5%
	Secondary	24	60,0%

3.3 Research Instruments

The questionnaire

For the quantitative approach, a structured questionnaire was used as an instrument of data collection. Because it can examine a wider range of issues and relies on self-reports from respondents representing a larger population, it was chosen as the research tool. The decision to use a questionnaire was taken because it is “easy to construct, extremely versatile, and uniquely capable of gathering a large amount of information quickly in a form that is readily processable” (Tavakoli, 2012; p.512). A Likert Scale is employed in this questionnaire. Brace (2008) states that the Likert scale is simple to use in paper or electronic self-completion questionnaires, and it is frequently provided to respondents as a self-completion section in an interviewer-administered survey (p. 73).

The Speech Act Theory

Regarding the qualitative analysis, the goal is to understand the phenomenon under study by studying small samples. This type of research does not attempt to control contextual factors but instead focuses on understanding the phenomena from different perspectives. The provisions and laws will be analyzed using the speech-act theory. The speech-act theory establishes a framework for investigating how language is used to perform actions and convey meaning. This method allows for a more in-depth understanding of the underlying intentions and communicative aspects of the provisions and laws under consideration.

The qualitative analysis is conducted to analyze the five education articles using the speech-act theory. According to Yule (1996; p. 53), speech acts perform five different types of general functions, including representatives, expressives, directives, commissives, and declaratives. Representatives are speech acts in which the speaker swears to the veracity of the propositions they make. Speech acts known as "expressives" are used to convey a psychological state. Directives are speech acts used by the speaker to persuade the listener to do something. Commissions are speech acts that bind the speaker to a future course of action. Declarations are speech acts whose utterances change institutional conditions immediately and which frequently rely on complex extra linguistic institutions.

3.4. Research Procedures

For this study, the quantitative data were collected during June and July 2023. The researcher managed to collect forty-four questionnaires completed successfully. Then the researcher collected and translated The Five articles of the Education Act of 2002 for the qualitative analysis

4 Results

4.1 The Quantitative Analysis

The analysis of the questionnaire will be divided into two sections: barriers related to policies, and barriers related to resources and facilities.

Barriers related to policies

The inter-item reliability of the items in this section was measured by Cronbach’s alpha. The results obtained show that the inter-reliability between the items in this section is ,434. This value indicates a moderate level of inter-item reliability among the items in this section. It suggests that there is some consistency in the responses given by participants to the items in this section.

The first section comprises three questions about the policies of inclusive education in Tunisia. The results of the analysis are summarized in Table Two. In light of the responses, it seems that most of the participants agreed with the three views regarding policies.

Table 2: Barriers related to policies

	strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		strongly disagree	
	Co unt	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %
1-The successful implementation of inclusive education policies in Tunisia depends on strong leadership.	21	48,8%	18	41,9%	3	7,0%	1	2,3%	0	0,0%

2-Despite the provisions and laws regarding inclusive education, Tunisian schools still witness exclusive practices.	9	20,5%	34	77,3%	0	0,0%	1	2,3%	0	0,0%
3-Policies at Tunisian schools should encourage inclusive education.	20	45,5%	22	50,0%	0	0,0%	1	2,3%	1	2,3%

A statistical analysis of the three items in this section shows that Twenty-Two respondents (48, 8%) strongly agreed that leadership skills are necessary for inclusive education to thrive in Tunisia. Leadership skills are key components of transforming educational systems to promote inclusive values and long-lasting change. Thirty-four participants (77%) agreed that there is still some exclusion in some Tunisian schools, even though inclusive education policies are in place and schools strive to be inclusive institutions. Finally, 50% of the teachers (twenty-two in total) agreed that policies at Tunisian schools should support inclusive education and its implementation. These findings emphasize the importance of not only implementing inclusive education policies but also ensuring that they are effectively implemented and supported by schools. Teachers must receive adequate training and resources to create inclusive learning environments that meet the diverse needs of all students

Barriers related to resources and facilities

Three items were made about resources and facilities. The reliability in this section is,694. The reliability score of,694 indicates a relatively high level of dependability in the resources and facilities mentioned. This suggests that the items produced are likely to be consistent in terms of quality and availability. According to the overall trend of the responses, it appears that the respondents disagreed with most of the statements.

Table 3:Barriers related to resources and facilities

	strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		strongly disagree	
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %
1- Functionally diverse students have easy access to educational facilities and services.	0	0,0%	22	50,0%	10	22,7%	7	15,9%	5	11,4%

2-Schools have the assets needed to help and support SEN students.	1	2,3%	4	9,1%	0	0,0%	18	40,9%	21	47,7%
3-Modified materials are developed for the benefit of SEN students.	5	11,4 %	11	25,0%	2	4,5%	19	43,2%	7	15,9%

An analysis of Table Three shows that twenty-two of the teachers (50%) believed that schools and facilities in Tunisia are not well equipped to help students with functional diversity access educational institutions. However, 47.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed that Tunisian schools have the necessary resources to assist SEN students in their learning, and 43.2% were of the view that there are no adequate materials provided to schools to assist SEN students. These findings highlight a significant concern among teachers in Tunisian schools about a lack of resources and support for students with functional diversity. A sizable proportion of respondents believe that the current educational system is unprepared to meet the needs of SEN students, both in terms of infrastructure and materials. This suggests that improved provisions and investments in inclusive education are urgently needed in Tunisia.

4.2 The Qualitative Analysis

The most important pragmatic reflections seen in political discourse are “speech acts,” because the discourse implies immediate actions. The words used in speech can have an extreme impact on the way that future events can happen. These are promised, declared statements that make a radical change of perspective. Sentences are not made in isolation but rather are context-dependent in their meaning. The interpretation of any sentence depends on the interpretation of the relationship between contexts.

Five articles of the Education Act of 2002 in Tunisia place particular emphasis on students with special educational needs. Article Four states that the State has the responsibility to create the conditions necessary for students with special needs to exercise their right to an education. Article Nine declares that all students will receive top-quality instruction from the school as they work toward their educational objectives. General knowledge, as well as theoretical and practical learning, will all be covered in the instruction. The purpose of teaching is to help students discover their talents and abilities, improve their capacity for self-education, and get them ready to participate in a society that values education.

Article Eleven is about the educational staff and their roles in the institutions. It states that the education staff will uphold the principles of fairness and equal opportunity for all while performing their professional duties. Additionally, they must develop relationships with

students that are based on fairness, objectivity, and respect for their individual rights and identities. Finally, Articles Thirty and Thirty-Two are about the curriculum and the institutions. In the section of Article Thirty about educational institutions, it is stated that special educational institutions with unique curricula and educational systems may also be established by decree. According to Article Thirty-Two, when creating a school project, schools must consider the students' special needs as well as their social environment.

Speech Act theory has been kept in mind while examining the five articles of the Education Act (2002). Examining the articles from a global perspective reveals that they all express a declaration. Declarations are utterances that are made with the intent of causing immediate changes in institutional affairs. An analysis of Article Four shows that the state is committed to providing free education to children of school age. This is revealed through the commissive Speech Act, in which the government used to make commitments about upcoming actions, illustrated by the statement “The state provides free education to all who are of school age”. Furthermore, the representative speech act is also noted in this act using the verb give “and gives all students an equal chance of enjoying this right”. Finally, the statement “it is incumbent on the state to provide the conditions that will enable pupils with special needs to exercise their right to education” is a directive speech act in which the state is called upon to provide SEN students with the same right to education as their normal peers.

Article 4

“ The state provides free education to all who are of school age, and gives all students an equal chance of enjoying this right’ ... “It is incumbent on the state to provide the conditions that will enable pupils with special needs to exercise their right to education”

The analysis of Article Nine shows that, at face value, it is a commissive speech act in which the state imposes itself on some future course of action. However, it is a representative speech act, which is a statement on language policy.

Article 9

“In the pursuit of their teaching goals, school [s] will endeavor to provide an excellent education for all learners. Instructions will include general knowledge as well as theoretical and practical learning. The aim of teaching is to develop pupils’ gifts and skills, increase their capacity for self-education and prepare them for access to an educated community.”

Article Eleven is a directive speech act illustrated by the command issued by the state to the educational professionals to respect the principles of fairness and equality in their relation with the pupils and in their professional duties.

Article 11

“In the course of their professional duties, the education staff will respect the principles of fairness and equal opportunity for all. They shall also build relationships with student[s] based on equity, objectivity and regard for their rights and personalities”

Analyzing Article Thirty shows that the statement is a declaration in which the state authorizes the establishment of new special education institutions with special curricula.

Article 30

“Special education institutions with special curricula and educational systems may also be created by decree”

The speech act involved in Article Thirty-two is a directive, asserted through the use of the modal verb “shall” This article implies that education institutions are obliged to impose certain changes to the social environment to meet the needs of SEN pupils. Moreover, this article is a declaration that the statement causes immediate adjustments to the institutional situation.

Article 32

“Schools shall take their social environment and the special needs of the students into account when designing their school project”

According to the previous point's analysis, both commissive and directive speech acts are frequently used in the articles. The directives represent the state's power and dominance. These speech acts are frequently used to enforce rules, regulations, and commands, demonstrating the state's authority. Furthermore, acts of commissive speech demonstrate the state's commitment to fulfilling promises and obligations, strengthening its position of influence.

5 Discussion

This research was conducted to examine the barriers that prevent implementing inclusive education in Tunisia, and the extent to which the issued provisions support inclusive education. Regarding the first research question, the results indicated that special needs students still witness exclusive practices in Tunisia. Furthermore, a lack of assets and materials was among the barriers to implementing inclusion. Answering the second research question, the provisions and laws issued do support inclusivity in the educational system. This is revealed through the use of both the directives and commissive speech acts in almost all provisions. However, the expectations regarding these laws did not meet the reality of putting inclusion into action.

The findings of this study are consistent with other studies namely Mokaleng and Möwes(2020). The current data support the findings of other researchers concerning issues affecting the implementation of inclusive education. The quantitative analysis of this study reveals that Tunisian teachers believe that the successful implementation of inclusive education depends on strong leadership. The findings are consistent with Mokaleng and Möwes (2020) who noted that 95, 5% of the teachers claimed that for successful inclusive education to be implemented, teachers require supportive leadership (p.80). In the same vein, Qeleni (2013) argued that school leaders could influence the implementation of inclusive education when they support teachers with appropriate leadership (cited in Mokaleng & Möwes, 2020, p. 84).

The results of this study also indicate that the majority of the participants (77%) felt that exclusion still exists in Tunisian schools. This finding is consistent with Mokaleng and Möwes (2020; p.80) study which noted that 71.1% of the teachers affirmed that exclusion persists in certain schools in Namibia. The results of their study revealed that, despite policies in place and schools claiming to be inclusive institutions, the majority of teachers agreed that there was still some exclusion. (Mokaleng & Möwes, 2020, p.84)

Furthermore, twenty-two of the teachers (50%) agreed that Tunisian policies encourage inclusive education. In this respect, a summary report issued by UNICEF in October 2014 stated that several policy reforms have been implemented. These reforms aimed to meet the needs of all children and provide them with equal educational opportunities. Furthermore, the implementation of support programs demonstrated a dedication to inclusivity and ensuring that no child falls behind in their educational journey (p.1)

50% of the teachers agreed with the fact that schools provide easy access to functionally diverse students, whereas 22, 7% were neutral and 15, 9% disagreed with the statement. Pivik et al. (2002) stated that physical access, the opportunity for optimal learning and social experiences, and a nurturing climate are all required for creating inclusive school environments (p.104). This can be accomplished by providing accessible infrastructure such as ramps, elevators, and wide doorways to students with physical disabilities. Sharma et al. (2018; p.7) found that an important factor that created a barrier to inclusive education in the Pacific was the lack of adequate infrastructure within the community. This could be resolved by careful planning that emphasizes enhancing mobility and transportation to make it easier for people with special needs to get around.

Moreover, 47, 7% of the teachers strongly disagreed with the fact that schools are equipped with the necessary resources and materials to support SEN students. According to the findings of Mokaleng and Möwes's (2020) study, most teachers believed that adequate support should be available to assist mainstream teachers in meeting the needs of special learners in inclusive classes. These teachers believed that with the right support, they would be better prepared to create an inclusive learning environment that catered to all students' diverse needs. They claimed that due to a lack of resources in schools, teachers find it difficult to deal with students who have special needs. Furthermore, it is possible that resources are unavailable, resulting in learners' needs not being met. (Mokaleng & Möwes, 2020; p.86)

Nineteen of the teachers (43, 2%) claimed that modified materials are not developed for the benefit of SEN students. These findings are inconsistent with Mokaleng and Möwes (2020; p.87) who concluded that teachers concurred that an adaptable curriculum gave all students a chance to learn and gain from education. Similarly, Miles et al. (2001) stated that flexible curricula allow all students to learn, gain from their education, and have their successes recognized.

The qualitative analysis of the provisions demonstrated that the Tunisian authorities try to enforce rules and regulations regarding implementing inclusive education. This is manifested in commissive and directive speech acts in the above-studied articles. However, the authority's expectations did not meet the reality. Despite the efforts made by the Tunisian

authorities to enforce rules and regulations on inclusive education, several challenges hindered their successful implementation. These challenges included limited resources and infrastructure, negative attitudes toward inclusion, and a lack of materials and services dedicated to teaching SEN students. As a result, the actual outcomes fell short of the authorities' expectations, highlighting the need for further action and support to achieve true inclusivity in education.

6 Pedagogical Implications

In Tunisia, implementing inclusive education has several pedagogical implications that can benefit the education system. Inclusive education aims to provide equal opportunities for learning and participation for all students, including those with diverse learning needs and abilities. First and foremost, developing and implementing Individualized Education Plans for students with special needs will become an essential component of inclusive education. Setting specific goals and strategies to address each student's unique learning needs is part of this process. Second, teachers will require ongoing professional development to enhance their skills in addressing diverse learning needs. Training programs can focus on inclusive teaching strategies, behavior management, and effective communication with students, parents, and support staff.

7 Conclusion

The present study looked at the expectations of the Tunisian authorities towards inclusive education and the reality of implementing it in schools. The study concludes that the barriers that hamper the implementation of inclusive education in Tunisia manifest themselves in the lack of adequate infrastructure as well as inappropriate materials and curriculum. Furthermore, despite the efforts of the Tunisian authorities to implement inclusive education, the results indicate that exclusion still exists. As a result, the Tunisian authorities are urged to research the reasons behind excluding SEN students and work to develop solutions that will guarantee the success of inclusive education.

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