Special Education Teachers' Perceptions of Challenging Behaviors in Students with Intellectual Disabilities

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine teachers' perspectives on the prevalence and interventions of challenging behaviors among students with intellectual disabilities. Seven special education teachers were specifically chosen to take part in individual interviews and focus groups in Taif city. Using Merriam's (2009) approach to constant comparative of the cases, the date from interviews and focus groups were transcribed and analyzed in conjunction with demographic background, teaching materials, and students' behavior plans. Three measure themes emerged that explained the challenging behaviors' prevalence and intervention, which included: (a) the most prevalent disruptive behaviors' (b) pre-behavior occurrence procedure; and (c) the most effective intervention technique. The study recommends deeply investigation in which intervention better suit a specific challenging behaviors and consider new intervention approaches. Finally, the author suggests further examination of the effect of challenging behaviors on teachers' self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and emotional exhaustion.

Keywords: Intellectual Disabilities- Behavioral Challenges – Behavioral Interventions.

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تصـورات معلمـي الـتربيـة الخـاصـة
حـول التحديـات السلـوكيـة للطلبـة ذوي الإعـاقـة الفكريـة

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مستخلـص

الغرض من هذه الدراسـة النوعيـة اكتشـاف تصـورات المعلمـين حـول انتشار المشكلات السلوكية وطرق التدخل الملائمة للطلبة ذوي الإعاقة الفكرية. سبعة معلمي تربية خاصة من مدينة الطائف تم اختيارهم بطريقة قصدية لإجراء المقابلات الفردية ومجموعة التركيز. استخدم الباحث منهجية Merriam (2009) المقارنة المستمرة في تحليل الحالات والبيانات المستخرجة من المقابلات الفردية ومجموعة التركيز والبيانات الأولية للمشاركين. أظهر تحليل النتائج ثلاثة محاور رئيسية تشرح انتشار التحديات السلوكية عند الطلبة ذوي الإعاقة الفكرية وطرق التدخل الملائمـة وتشمل: (أ) اكثير التحديات السلوكية انتشارا، (ب) طرق التدخل الوقائيـة القبليـة، و (ج) طرق التدخل الأكثر فعالية وكفاءة. كذلك اوصت الدراسة بالبحث المعمق لمعرفة ومناسبة تدخلات معينة لتحدي سلوكي محدد وتبني طرق جديدة في إدارة السلوك للطلبة ذوي الإعاقة الفكرية. وأخيرا يقترح الباحث مزيـدا مـن البحـث والدراسـة لمـدى تـأثير التحـديات السلـوكية علـى فعاليـة الـذات والرضـا الوظيفي والانهاك العاطفي لمعلمي التربية الفكرية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الإعاقة الفكرية – التحديات السلوكية – التدخلات السلوكية.

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Introduction

People with intellectual disabilities (ID) exhibit three to five times more challenging behaviors than the general population (Emerson & Einfeld, 2011; Esteves et al., 2021). It has been frequently emphasized that challenging behaviors are linked to the presence of ID (LIoyed & Kennedy, 2014). The prevalence of these challenging behaviors ranges between 10 and 30 percent (Jones et al., 2008; Holden & Gitlensen, 2006; Lundaqvist, 2013; Sturmy et al., 2008).

Aggression, stereotypes, self-injury, noncompliance, and self-stimulation are among the most frequent challenging behaviors exhibited by people with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (Fodstad et al., 2012; Luiselli, 2012; Horner et al., 2003). Consequently, individuals with ID and their caretakers who have limited access to community services, such as education and social interactions, are exposed to a high level of danger due to their challenging behaviors (Emerson, 2003). Individuals with ID incur greater service costs due to their challenging behaviors, such as intensive supervision, provider turnover, and employee injuries (Brown et al., 2013).

Educators and researchers are concerned about the nature, extent, and impact of challenging behaviors on students' and individuals' learning and life quality in general (Fodstad, 2011). According to studies, challenging behaviors increase the likelihood of social exclusion and unemployment among students with disabilities (Stevens & Martian, 1999). Previous studies and literature on intellectual disabilities have emphasized that the presence of challenging behaviors determines a person's quality of

life (Murphy et al., 2005). Individuals with ID may experience unfavorable personal outcomes and a diminished quality of life as a result of challenging behaviors (Emerson et al., 2001). It can cause limted inclusion, exclusion from services and programs, the restriction of friendships, and interference with learning and development (Cooper et al., 2009).

According to research, demanding behaviors can result in long-term hospitalization with an increased risk of physical injury (Holden & Gitlesen, 2006) and exploitation (Emerson et al., 2001; Glover & Olson, 2009). Challenging behaviors may also result in an increased reliance on confinement or isolation. These are examples of restrictive tactics with significant consequences for caregivers, including the risk of physical injury and emotional distress (Coper et al., 2009; Hastings & Brown, 2002).

Limitations in cognitive function and adaptive behaviors are factors contributing to the challenging behaviors of students with ID (American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, 2021). Moreover, the social environment in which a person with ID resides is crucial for reinforcing the behaviors (Emerson & Einfeld, 2011; Esteves et al.,2021). It is important to note that a lack of communication skills among individuals with ID is one of the most influential factors in challenging behavior (Hello et al., 2013; Chow, 2018). 80 percent of students with ID have communication skills that are rated as below average or very poor (Diken, 2019). Additionally, the communicative classroom environment created by peers in special classrooms and schools affects the frequency and severity of challenging behaviors (Hofmann & Mullar, 2022).

It is important that the functions of challenging behaviors are acknowledged, including social functions like seeking attention and avoiding intimate contact t. It is essential when developing the content of treatment plans to evaluate the function of behavior (Emerson & Bromley, 1995; Didden, Duker, & Korzilius, 1997). However, challenging behaviors in people with intellectual disabilities can also result from physical causes such as constipation, dental pain, and various infections (Ali et al., 2014). This is difficult because individuals with ID may have a limited capacity to communicate their suffering, which may aggravate the situation.

Different approached, including social, psychological, behavioral, and medication approaches have been utilized to address challenging student and ID individual behaviors (Ali et al., 2014). Because the behaviors are so complex and can be explained from various perspectives, such as social, medical, and physiological, there are numerous treatment variations. From a communication standpoint, functional communication training (FCT) combines decreasing levels of difficulty with differential reinforcement for adopting communication techniques (Durrand, 1990; Carr & Durrand, 1985). FCT techniques have been demonstrated to be effective evidence-based practices for intellectually disabled children and adults (Kurtz et al., 2011). The field of physiology also offers function-based intervention as a method for treating challenging behaviors. In general, psychologists concentrate on the variables surrounding the behavior rather than the behavior's topography (Vance, 2008). Before implementing a functionally-based intervention, It is important to do a functional evaluation in order to determine reinforcers associated with challenging behaviors (Lambert et al., 2012). Functional-based

intervention is a broad range of practices that have been shown to reduce instances of challenging behavior. Multiple types of differentiated reinforcements, adjusting task difficulty, modifying the instructional process, and enriching the environment, for instance, have been shown in studies to be common and effective strategies for managing behavior (Bambara & Kern, 2005; Knoster & LIewelly, 2007; March et al., 2000; Geiger et al., 2010).

Educators rely heavily on interventions based on behavioral principles to manage students with ID behaviors. Applied behavior analysis (ABA) is a systematic scientific approach that identifies environmental factors that affect socially relevant conduct and then develops individualized, practical interventions (Baer et al., 1968). This method is highly Effective for teaching basic communication, games, sports, social interaction, everyday living, and self-help abilities. In the field of behavioral interventions for children with developmental disabilities, the ABA has shown even more rapid growth as evidenced due to the rise of service providers and qualified experts (Cooper et al., 2007; Shook, 2005). Evidence suggests that ABA has contributed to the steady development of cognitive, language, and social skills in children with ASD since the mid-1980s. (Yu et al., 2020).

Individuals with and without intellectual disabilities are treated for problematic behaviors with a variety of non-pharmaceutical interventions. According to the Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee (2008) of the United States, physical exercise is consistent physical activity that protects against the early signs of cognitive decline and has a positive effect on depression, anxiety, and distress sensations. There are very few

disadvantages or adverse effects associated with exercise therapy, which is an additional argument for its use (Lox et al., 2010). Nonetheless, according to a review of 20 studies, exercise programs are associated with a significant decrease in challenging behaviors (Ogg-Groenedaal et al., 2014). On the other hand, demanding behavior medications have been used to treat challenging behaviors in individuals with ID. Deb et al. (2009) proposed the use of medication procedures when non-medication interventions have failed and the individual with ID and other existences are in danger. However, professionals have expressed skepticism regarding the efficacy of medication in treating behavioral issues (Deb et al., 2015).

Other possible therapies may include food and vitamin supplements, Special consideration is given to floor time, holding, medication, sensory integration, speech and music therapy, and other modalities. education (Green et al., 2006; Hess et al., 2008). However, there is little empirical evidence to support the efficacy of these techniques, and the evidence that is available yields mixed results (Foxx, 2008; Smith, 1999). Indeed, different discipline strategies target different situations, and it is emphasized that certain practices should be carried out using various strategies (Aksoy, 2020). These are typically categorized as behavior modification -based discipline approaches, control approaches (reality therapy), social discipline (rational choices) approaches, assertive discipline approaches, instructional approaches, and effective communication approaches in the literature (e.g., Canter & Canter, 1992; Edwards, 1993; Glasser, 1992; Jones & Jones, 2007; Wolfgang, 1995). However, the impact of challenging behaviors extends beyond the individuals with ID to their parents, siblings, peers, and teachers (Amsted

& Muller, 2020; Hastings & Brown, 2002). Teachers of special education who work in such an environment must manage a greater number of challenging behaviors (Amstad & Mullar, 2020).

Teachers of students with ID report workload and lack of student improvement as sources of stress (Antonion et al., 2000) and burnout (Chani et al., 2014). Teachers furthermore indicated that student misbehaviors prevent them from achieving instructional objectives, necessitating time and effort to manage challenging situations (Chang, 2013). Teachers believe they are accountable for the ID safety and security of their students, so there is a great deal of pressure to keep students' emotions and behaviors at safe and appropriate levels (Amstad & Mullar, 2020).

The purpose of this study is to add to the literature by examining teachers' perspectives on the prevalence and interventions of challenging behaviors among students with ID in order to gain a better understanding of these behaviors within their complex context. This research was guided by two research questions. First, based on teachers' experiences, what are the most common types of challenging behaviors among students with ID? Second, how should educators respond to disruptive behaviors?

Method

The qualitative case study approach guided the design of this study. The researcher adopted the qualitative method because it allows him to study the phenomena under investigation in a natural setting with direct data collection and provides rich descriptions of participants' perceptions (Mcmillan, 2012). Case study methodology yields a valuable approach for

investigating the phenomenon within its complex contexts (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The case lays on the constructivism paradigm that believes truth can be extracted from one's perspective (Yin, 2003; Stake, 2008). According to Merriam (2009), qualitative approaches are ideal when investigating "(1) how people interpret their experiences, (2) how they construct their world, and (3) what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (p.23). Case study research in education results in the formation of knowledge and comprehension, as well as the establishment of standards for appropriate teaching techniques (Mills et al., 2010). Using a case study technique allows for greater freedom in the line of questions, allowing for more depth of detail. Using a case study technique also allowed for the discovery of new patterns that were not obvious in the first interviews (Mills et al., 2010).

Participants

To recognize the prevalence of the challenging behaviors and implement effective interventions, the researcher identified seven special education teachers who teach students   in elementary, middle, and high schools in Taif, Saudi Arabia. Teachers were recruited through purposeful sampling. Purposive sampling strategies rely on participants' ability to provide rich data in the phenomena under investigation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). They were chosen from different contexts and had experience in different grade levels and adopted different classroom strategies. The teachers also had students with ID from different disability levels: mild, moderate, and severe ID. As a result, they had the potential to provide various perspectives on dealing with students exhibiting ID-challenging

behaviors. Table 1 summarizes the demographic information regarding participants. Teachers who qualified to participate in this study met the following criteria:

1- Hold a bachelor degree, at least, in special education
2- Had five or more years of teaching students with ID
3- Was a current special education teacher at the time of the study

Table 1. *Participant Demographics*

Names	Years of experiences	Certification	School level	Grades	Subjects' Taught
Ahmed	9	Master	Elementary	5-6	Arabic language, Islamic studies, life skills
Sami	13	Master	Elementary	6	Math, Arabic language, and life skills
Yaser	15	Bachelor	Middle	7-8	Math, social studies, and Islamic studies
Adam	6	Master	High	10-12	Arabic language, social studies, and life skills
Faisal	12	Bachelor	Middle	3-4	Math and Arabic Language
Rami	10	Bachelor	Elementary	4-6	Social studies, Islamic studies, and life skills
Omar	8	Bachelor	High	10-12	Arabic language, Math, and social studies

Data collection

The study's main sources of data were individual face-to-face semi-instructional interviewing and focus group discussions. These provided a flexible approach to promote genuine conversations and allow for follow up questions to explore participant perspectives (McMillan, 2012). Focus groups, in particular, provides information about a variety of views and feelings that people have regarding specific issues, as well as shed light on the differences amongst participants (Rabiee, 2004). The justification for using focus groups is that group interactions give a platform for members to share and compare their experiences and ideas, as well as bring to light how people negotiate and contest the meanings of their events (Morgan, 1996; Halkier, 2010; Kitzinger, 1994).

For this study, the researcher developed a series of guided questions and prompts to encourage participants to share their interpretations and thoughts. For instance, one prompt asked students to "tell me about your students challenging behaviors" or "how do you react to challenging behaviors". These questions and prompts were broad questions to allow participants to express their thoughts and formulate their ideas. The individual semi-structured interviews lasted between 35 and 45 minutes for each participant, and the focus group lasted 40 minutes. The study's procedure was as follow:

1- Initial interview

2- Demographic questionnaire

3- Interviews individuals

4- Focus group

Data analysis

This study aimed to examine the most prevalent challenging behaviors faced by special education teachers in their classrooms, the strategies they employed to deal with these challenging behaviors, and their discipline procedures. Qualitative data analysis techniques were utilized to evaluate the data. All interviews were first recorded and transcribed in order to conduct the analysis. To make sense out of the data, the data analysis was constructed by Merriam's (2009) approach, which involves constant comparison of the cases. The researcher coded the data manually and started analysis from the first interview with multiple reads for each transcript.

At this stage, the researcher involved open coding and inductive interpretation of the teachers' perceptions of dealing with the students with IDS' behavioral challenges. The inductive approach encourages the researcher to be open about new concepts and themes that emerge from the analysis process. Merriam considers several actions to make sense of the data: "consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people said and what the researcher has seen and read" (1998, p. 178). Obviously, the researcher considered the previous literature and occupational framework.

Credibility

To ensure credibility, the researcher used member checking, asking participants to confirm the accuracy of the findings (Creswell, 2015). Each of the seven teachers' responses were represented in the emerging themes. The researcher revised coding to compare, connect, and categorize codes into themes. Then, the researcher presented themes in the form of storytelling, as Merriam (2009) suggested. Finally, the researcher

developed that data description with evidence in each theme from the teachers' words about challenging behaviors in students with ID. As Patton (1999) stated, "the researcher is the instrument in qualitative inquiry." The researcher was conscious from the beginning of the study regarding his experience and perspective related to the study's topic to ensure credibility and trustworthiness of research findings.

The process of data gathering, data analysis, and data reporting must reflect plausible and accurate, meaningful findings (McMillan, 2012). Several steps were taken to verify the study's credibility and trustworthiness. Miles et al. (2014) recommend that researchers include significant time at the site, include individuals with varied perspectives and experiences, check emergent patterns with participants, and triangulate data (McMillan and Schumacher 2006; Stake 2010). The researcher of this study devoted extensive time in schools to the cases under investigation. The findings were discussed with participants individually and in the focus group setting. In addition, a colleague (not involved in the study) were provided the findings and data transcriptions to challenge and/or confirm the researcher's interpretation.

Findings

The findings are divided into three broad categories: (1) the most typical disruptive behaviors, (2) pre-occurrence procedures for behaviors, and (3) effective intervention techniques.

Theme 1: The most typical disruptive behaviors

According to teachers' observations, four problematic behaviors were prevalent among students with ID. These four difficult behaviors were comprised of sexuality, egression, stubbornness, and attention deficit.

Teachers were concerned for the safety of pupils in classrooms due to the actions of some students. Some students approached other classmates or schoolmates for sexual pleasure. Teachers reported that sexual misconduct in the classroom begins in fifth grade and increases in both verbal and physical manifestations. This includes removing one's pants, gestures, and physical contact. Adam and Yaser advised against leaving students alone, even for brief periods, or allowing two or more students to use the restroom together.

Not surprisingly, all the teachers reported that aggressive behaviors were problematic for both students and teachers. Teachers report that students with ID exhibit aggressive verbal and physical behaviors, such as hitting or verbally attacking others. Adam stated that a student had *"punched a teacher in the face."* However, the aggression was predominantly directed at other students and was not excessive in intensity. Teachers stated that some of the aggressive behaviors are to be expected given the limited intellectual capabilities of the students.

Teachers identified stubbornness as the third most frequent challenging behavior. Some students with ID may not develop the necessary skills and communication abilities to argue their position. Students with ID may disobey teachers' instructions. Omar and Adam stated that some students refused to listen and sit down. Teachers exhibited emotional exhaustion due to their lack of *"control over the students."* Teachers believe that managing this type of behavior requires time and patience. Some teachers argue that students with disabilities are not *"deliberately noncompliant,"* but Fiasla believes that the nature and effects of their disabilities limit their comprehension of following instructions. In

addition, teachers associate noncompliance with hyperactivity in students with ID.

The final problematic behavior was inattention. Attention deficit disorder is a common characteristic of students with intellectual disability. Attention deficit is an intellectual function, but it can manifest in a variety of ways behaviorally. According to Ahmed, teachers have observed that even *"low sounds outside the classrooms"* can cause students with ID to lose focus on the objectives of the lesson. According to Rami, *"attention deficit is normal for those children, and you must constantly redirect them."* According to teachers, students with ID demonstrate "focus" for less than one minute. Teachers suggested controlling the entire classroom environment to regain students' attention for a longer period of time. Hyperactivity is typically associated with attention deficit; however, teachers did not mention hyperactivity as a measure of difficulty.

Theme 2: Pre-occurrence procedures for behaviors

Teachers developed an alarm system in an effort to prevent the manifestation of the undesirable behavior. The experience of teaching students with intellectual disabilities improves the ability to manage a variety of classroom situations. For example, Rami stated that he could tell if a student is going to misbehave by *"just looking at him,"* whereas Ahmed observes the student from the start of the school day: *"If he arrives upset or unusually quiet, I predict something will occur."* Sami stated that a sufficient amount of time spent with a student permits the teacher to anticipate his behavior. Students with ID occasionally exhibit. As Adam explained, *"you see signs of discomfort that alert teachers to undesirable behaviors when they discover that the student behaved abnormally,*

especially for a sexual offender... he may have avoided eye contact or attempted to hide under the table."

In addition, teachers mentioned that ignoring students' requests could increase the likelihood of students exhibiting undesirable behavior, which requires teachers' undivided attention. Even though it is common for students with ID to exhibit challenging behaviors, teachers concur that they must understand the motivations and causes behind these behaviors in order to effectively address them. The undesirable or inappropriate behaviors exhibited by students with ID may be reactions to other behaviors. For example, Omar and Sami both cited, *"falling board from traditional teaching methods"* as a cause of student misbehavior. Teachers believe that adopting creative and "exciting" teaching methods would prevent students from misbehaving.

In addition, challenging behaviors, such as sexual behavior in the classroom, may emerge as a result of child development, as Fiasal suggested. Students with ID typically exhibit undesirable behaviors in response to stimuli, which must be managed beforehand. Yaser and Ahmed noted that students with ID may feel hungry due to a lack of breakfast, or that other students may attack them to attract the attention of the teachers. Although teachers emphasized the importance of considering the motivation of misbehaving students, they also emphasized the significance of establishing classroom rules and distinguishing between acceptable and unacceptable behavior. Omar, for example, emphasized the clarity of the classroom management, including the setting, classwork, and educational objectives. The behaviors of intensity, duration, and repetition appear to

also serve as a metric for teachers to determine whether or not students violate rules and boundaries. Teachers anticipate some behavioral difficulties from students with ID. However, Yaser and Adam reported that these behaviors should not compromise the safety of other students or become a pattern. As Fiasal mentioned, it is logical to improve students' subsequent institutions by devoting sufficient time at the beginning of the school year to non-academic activities and focusing on teaching rules through building report activities.

The majority of teachers mentioned redirecting students to reduce the likelihood of disruptive behavior. The instructor discussed crucial early responses to the earliest indications of challenging behavior. Yaser and Ahmed indicated that if students appear *"nervous"* or *"overactive,"* teachers must act swiftly to alter the students' mood or environment. Teachers suggested taking the students outside for fun activities or assigning them "busy work", such as drawing and cutting paper. In addition, teachers reported that students' dispositions could be altered by *"joking"* and altering *the "class routine,"* Ahmed said. Teachers found it useful to manipulate the situation in order to prevent disruptive behaviors from escalating into potentially dangerous situations for the class.

Theme 3: Effective intervention techniques

Teachers reported using various types of reinforcement not only to increase the occurrence of desirable behaviors but to also decrease challenging behaviors. They believed that students with ID reacted in positive ways after receiving reinforcement. "Verbal and reinforcement boards" are the two types of reinforcement mentioned by the instructors.

Fiasal and Omar believed that verbal encouragement and compliments were highly effective ways to motivate students to behave appropriately. However, verbal reinforcement is contingent on the age and mental capacity of the students and must be considered. According to teachers, reinforcement boards are also an essential technique for behavior management. Yaser stated, *"I always instructed my coworkers to utilize the reinforcement boards."* Based on the teachers experience, the reinforcement boards targeted the entire class without embarrassing any particular student. Teachers believe that this method creates a classroom environment that emphasizes competition between students for the highest point totals or number of stars.

Conversely, students with ID enjoy receiving candy as a reward for positive behavior. According to teachers, giving students *"something sweet to eat"* increases their discipline. However, as students get older, *"that won't work well,"* Adam said.

Teachers reported employing differentiated reinforcement techniques to reduce undesirable behaviors. This method allowed them to manage the behavior of the students. Teachers cited and utilized multiple types of differentiated reinforcement. Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a well-known method that emphasizes replacing undesirable behaviors with desirable ones. Incompatible behavior reinforcement was the most commonly employed type of differentiated reinforcement. Adam stated, *"I verbally commended the student in front of the class if he went to the restroom without permission, but now asks."*

Teachers also mentioned the approach of differentiated reinforcement of other behaviors, which prevents students from engaging in the undesirable behavior while engaging in the desired behavior. Strategies based on differentiated reinforcement appeared to be effective for both sides, as they eradicate undesirable behaviors while rewarding desirable ones the student's actions affect other students, the student himself, or the teachers' ability to teach effectively. Punishment was referred to as "punishment" or by other terms, such as deprivation or examples. Clearly, teachers use type 2 punishment, which consists primarily of removing enjoyable activities, if students exhibit challenging behaviors. Teachers of physical education reported that they exclude students who do not respond well from physical education class or from spending time in open fields. Occasionally, teachers require students to stand up in the classroom, which is a common practice. However, teachers did not report any physical punishments that are illegal in Saudi Arabia, such as corporal punishment, physical punishment, or flogging.

The study's results revealed that teachers' perceptions of challenging behavior of students with ID consisted of (a) identifying the common disruptive behaviors, (b) pre-behavior occurrence procedures, and (c) effective behavioral interventions. It is very critical to note that not all students with ID exhibit all challenging behaviors, whether it's at the same intensity, duration, and/or repetition. Students with or without disabilities are subject to the mentioned behaviors and other behaviors. Also, effective behavioral intervention is not limited to the listed interventions mentioned in the study.

Discussion

The purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive understanding of challenging behaviors exhibited by students with ID from the perspective of their teachers. To support positive teaching and learning experiences for both students and teachers, it is necessary to investigate the students' frequent challenging behaviors and to implement appropriate and effective interventions. An analysis of interviews and focus groups utilizing Merriam's (2009) constant comparative of cases was presented. The most disruptive behaviors in students with ID were inappropriate sexual behaviors, aggression, stubbornness, and attention deficit, as determined by evaluating the perceptions of special education teachers regarding the phenomenon under study.

Inappropriate sexual behavior in the classroom was the first challenging behavior observed frequently by teachers. Even though there are clear cultural differences in how girls and boys are expected to express their sexual identity and how they do so, there is a relatively widespread understanding of what constitutes sexually inappropriate behavior. Lockhart et al. (2009) conducted a qualitative study with the objective of defining inappropriate sexual behavior as follow:

> "Sexualized challenging behaviors are those that are deemed inappropriate due to the nature of the behavior (including touch or contact, exposure or display, masturbation, language, communication or images, invasion of personal space or boundaries, fetishism, or aggression related to sexual arousal) or the context in which they occur i.e., a public or observed place. These behaviors may be self-directed or directed at others, such as targeting or fixating on specific individuals. When involving others, the contact may be unwanted or nonconsensual".

In addition to interfering with regular functioning or causing harm or pain to oneself or others, these behaviors span a spectrum from minor actions to sexual assault.

Being human by definition includes sexuality, and it influences how individuals think, feel, act, and interact, which can have a negative impact on their mental and physical health. It encompasses the biological, psychological, social, emotional, cultural, and ethical aspects of sex and gender. (Taylor, 2012). Individuals with intellectual disabilities experience sexual desire through a range of factors, including an interest in exploring their bodies and interacting with others. (Badilla et al., 2018). Research shows sexual assaults against people with intellectual disabilities are significantly more prevalent and less likely to be reported than assaults against students with non-disabilities (Willott et al., 2020). Despite the fact that people with intellectual disabilities have the same sexual desires as those without disabilities, their demands are frequently ignored (Gil-Llario et al., 2018; Leutar & Mihokovic,2007).

The research also suggests that aggression is a highly challenging behavior among students with ID. These results suggest that a checklist like the ABC should be used to routinely assess the challenging behaviors of individuals with ID. Also, future suggestions could connect the challenging behaviors to the appropriate intervention techniques. According to previous studies (e.g. Benderix & Sivberg, 2007; Benson & Brooks, 2008; Davis & Oliver, 2014), More than 50% of people with intellectual disabilities engage in some form of aggressive behavior, according to research. Some

people solely participate in verbal hostility, while others engage in numerous sorts of aggression. It is worth reiterating that aggression can manifest itself in a variety of ways, including toward oneself, others, and objects. Current studies confirm aggression as a challenge among students with ID. However, the severity and frequency require a different approach to investigate.

Other difficult and disruptive behavior was the most prevalent general form (reported by approximately two-thirds) and non-compliance was the most prevalent metric reported by over 80% of this population (Lowe et al., 2007). There is evidence from prior research that children with ID exhibit resistance to parental and caretaker directives, which may diminish their academic performance and social acceptance (Martinello, 2014). In response to inappropriate tasks, children with ID exhibited greater disobedience compared to both their mental and age-group peers. Additionally, teachers identified attention deficit as a problem. Although attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a well-known condition by itself or in conjunction with other disorders such as autism and learning disabilities, it has been suggested that ADHD does not occur in children with intellectual disability (ID). Instead it is stated that any inappropriate behavior observed in children with ID is due to low mental function (Ahuja et al., 2013). ADHD is one of the most prevalent forms of psychopathology among children with intellectual disabilities. Children with ID are generally underserved by the medical community, possibly due to their limited communication skills and social disadvantages (Lindsey, 2002). However, the findings supported only attention deficit from the perspective of teachers, which requires further investigation in future research.

Teachers cite disruptive behavior as a major concern in all educational contexts, as it undermines both classroom efficiency and job satisfaction (Ofsted, 2014, 2019). Upon evaluating the findings regarding pre-behavior emerging techniques, it can be concluded that teachers prepare the classroom environment to reduce the stimulus that triggers students' behaviors through the use of appropriate strategies and procedures (Rayos, 2019). Classroom management techniques of a teacher are regarded as an integral part of the teaching and learning process. This includes the methods, strategies, and abilities that teachers employ to create a conducive environment for student learning.

Teachers must be aware of potential classroom disruptions and be prepared to respond constructively, which is sometimes referred to as "witnessing" or "active supervision" (De Pry & Sugai, 2002; Kounin, 1970). These problems are exacerbated by deficiencies in classroom management skills (Department of Education, 2013; Derrington, 2008), highlighting the need for efficient and effective solutions that require minimal time and resources to learn and implement. According to Rytivaara (2012) and Villamero and Kamenopoulou (2018), a teacher's presence can prevent students from becoming obnoxious to one another. Consequently, the education community has widely acknowledged classroom management of rules and guidelines as a means of influencing student performance (Evertson & Emmer, 1982; Emmer et al., 1980; Lester et al., 2017; Malone & Tietjens, 2000). Teachers are responsible for establishing and enforcing rules and procedures that facilitate student learning in the classroom (Elias & Schwaab, 2006; Emmer & Gerwels, 2006; Evertson & Emmer, 2012; Little & Akin-Little, 2008; McGinnis et al., 1995).

In conclusion, it is hypothesized that preventive measures have a greater influence on extending learning time than reactive strategies (Oliver et al., 2011). Several types of reinforcement and differentiation were found to be effective in managing behavior following occurrences. Differential reinforcement of alternative behaviors refers to putting one behavior into extinction while reinforcing another (Vollmer & Iwata, 1992). The literature extensively documents the effect of positive reinforcement on the development of academic skills (Kumar & Ratnam, 2016; Gavin, Terry, Utley, and Arreaga-Mayer,2000). Home-based reinforcement of school conduct has been utilized effectively to increase a range of positive behaviors and decrease a range of undesirable ones (Atkeson & Forehand, 1979; Barth, 1979). In addition, a review of the literature on differential reinforcement reveals that these reinforcement techniques are effective when used in the classroom (Sulzer-Azaroff & Mayer, 1986).

Conclusion

To conclude, it is acknowledged that this research study did not aim to generalize findings to the entire population of special education teachers or students with ID in Saudi Arabia due to the methodology's philosophy and ontology. This provides an opportunity for other researchers to focus on larger and different populations and contexts. The major finding of this study is that special education teachers in Taif, Saudi Arabia are aware of challenging behaviors within the intellectual disability context. The conceptualizing of factors that increase the occurrence of challenging behaviors, preparing and rearranging environments, and implementing appropriate interventions are rooted in their everyday practices. This study provides insight into how special education teachers can expect and react to

challenging behaviors. It also emphasizes the role of classroom environments' regulation to prevent and to decrease the possibility of challenging behaviors.

In addition, these teachers' voices explained what, how, and where to apply interventions, which is essential for professionals who work with students with disabilities. It would be beneficial if future studies include an investigation of appropriate interventions for each challenging behavior and the possibility of adopting new interventions in the field of intellectual disabilities, such as cognitive behavioral techniques. Another need for investigation is the extended impact of challenging behaviors on educators' self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and emotional exhaustion, as it might uncover interesting perspectives that would benefit both individuals with ID and care providers.

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