

## Suggestions for the Development of Special Education Specialization plans at Al-Balqa Applied University

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### Abstract

The study aimed at evaluating the bachelor and diploma plans of special education specialization at Al-Balqa Applied University. The descriptive survey approach was used through the instrument of collecting data and information (standardized) interview. The study sample consisted of (41) specialists in special education. Its result concluded (7) suggestions in the bachelor plan and (5) in the diploma plan. The most important of which were the inclusion of two special courses in standardized measures and diagnosis in special education, with a percentage of (95); the inclusion of two special courses about behavioral problems and way of treatment, with a percentage of (88) and the inclusion of a course relating to the design of programs for talented students, with a percentage of (85), for the bachelor plan, and in regard to the diploma plan, the most important were the inclusion of the following courses (autism, behavioral and emotion impairment with a percentage of (93), inclusion of the following courses prevention from disabilities, early interventional with a percentage of (90), furthering genuine field supervision by specialized supervisors with a person tage of (86). The researcher recommended the necessity for taking the suggestion of this in ot study consideration in order to develop the special education plans of diploma and bachelor stages.

**Keywords:** special education, plans, Al-balqa Applied University.

### Introduction

Caring about handicapped people with special needs is considered as one of the important problems which face societies as a result of the existence of a considerable ratio of individuals who face life with a certain kind of disability that hinders them from performing their roles in society as they should in comparison with normal people. The existence of such category has been treated differently according to the philosophy of each society. Treatment has varied between disdain, cruelty, trying to get rid of them and sympathizing with them. Organized care about disabled people started in the beginning of the eighteenth century. The issue of teaching disabled people has been of a great concern at local and international lwels. There have been increasing attimdes calling for taking these children into account in order to get the best appropriate methods of dealing with them and the mecessity for their variety in regard to the type of disabilities and individual differences. Based on this , caring about disabled people has increased, in a way that schools have been established and legislations have been passed which can guaranlee some advantages and rights for their comfort. Scholars efforts have combired in order habilitate and promote their remaining abilities (Al-Hami, 1999; Bagyoumi, 2008).

### The concept of special education:

Special education is defined as a pattern of educational services and programs which include specific modifications in curricula, aids or teaching methods in response to the special needs of the whole students who cannot cope with the requirements of normal educational programs. Consequently, the services of special education are offered to all categories of students who face difficulties which negatively affect their capulibilities of learning. They also include students with distinguished eapabilities and talents (Al-Khateeb, 2011; Al-Zari, 2010).

### Categories of special education:

Al-Zureikat (2004); Al-Sheikh (2004), and Al-Beelawi (2011) stated that the categories of special education include (9) ones as follows:

1. Talent and Giftedness.
2. Mental retardation.
3. Hearing impairment.
4. Visual impairment.
5. Physical disability.
6. Emotional impairment.
7. Autism.
8. Learning disabilities.
9. Speech and language disorder.

After reviewing educational literature and previous studies, the researcher has found nothing relating to the

development of special education plans at the level of universities. Amongst the studies which investigated the evaluation of plans other than (special education) is the study of Al-mahasnah, (2014) which aimed at the evaluation of the program plan of the bachelor of vocational education, based on the elements of the preparation of the vocational teacher from the point of view of experienced people and their suggestions for development. To the researchers knowledge, this is the only study which dealt with the development of the plans of special education at the level of universities.

#### **Study problem and questions:**

Special education is one of the specializations needed by jordanian job market as a result of the increasing number of individuals within the categories of special education. Therefore, universities have to graduate qualified people equipped with necessary competencies which enable them to practice their jobs in a perfect way, in a way that is reflected on the people with special needs in particular, and society in general. So, the study tried to answer the two following questions:

**First question:** what are your suggestions for the development of bachelor plan in (special education)?

**The other question:** what are your suggestions for the development of diploma plan in (special education)?

#### **Study Importance:**

This study gains its significance from the importance of special education specialization which serves the categories of people with special needs in society, and the importance of graduating people equipped with the necessary competencies of special education specialization, in a way that contributes to the achievement of individual and societal benefits at both economic and social levels. The study provides important information and data for a lot of concerned people of education in order to prepare and develop study plans at both diploma and bachelor levels. This study comes as an attempt in this field which has not been investigated by researchers.

#### **Procedural definitions:**

**Special education:** It is the group of specialized educational programs presented to people with special needs for the sake of helping them to further their abilities to the greatest possible limit, achieve their hopes, help them to cope with individual differences and needs. Common special needs include learning difficulties, disabilities, emotional and behavioral impairment, physical disability and growth impairment.

**Plans:** they are the instructional courses studied by the specialized student in special education. They are divided into special courses for diploma students, the number of which is (72) credit hours and special courses for bachelor students, the number of which is (132) credit hours.

**Al – Balqa Applied universities:** it is a Jordanian public university situated in al Salt city, which was established on August, 22, 1996. It started its instruction in the academic year 1997/1998 Thirteen colleges in all governorates belong to it.

#### **Study limits**

**Time limits:** the study was conducted in the academic year 2015 (2016).

**Place limits:** the instrument was conducted on the sample of people specialized in the field of special education at Jordanian universities.

**Study limitations:** the results of the study are determined by the validity and reliability of the study instrument used.

#### **Research methodology and instruments**

This study used the descriptive analytical approach for achieving its aims. The researcher used the instrument of standardized interview as a main source of data: The critical literature and previous studies were reviewed for constructing the instrument. Validity and reliability were verified by presenting it to many judges carving the doctoral degree and the application reliability coefficient after a period of time.

#### **Research Population:**

The study population consisted of (400) specialists in the field of special education, who taught special education courses at universities.

#### **Research sample**

The available sample was used which consisted of (41) specialists in the field of special education.

#### **Study instrument**

A pilot study was conducted through an open question answered by (5) specialists in the field of special education in the semester which preceded the application of the study about the availability extent of necessary graduate's computer cries in the plans of special education. Following the review of theoretical literature and

previous studies the research instrument was constructed.

It consisted in its final form of an upended question after verifying the validity and reliability of the instrument. The instrument after was fixed on the same question linguistix adjustments.

### Study instrument validity

The study instrument was judged by (9) specialists in the field of special education who had doctoral and master degrees, and necessary adjustments were made.

### Study instrument reliability

The reliability of the instrument was verified by re- interviewing (4) specialists who have been already interviewed. By comparing the results of the first interview with those of the other, consistency and reliability were found.

### Statistical processing

For answering the questions, the study sample were interviewed and the responses of each specialist were recorded, then the responses were classified in main points in the form of a frequency list for the point.

Frequencies and percentages were calculated the researcher depended on the hypothetical mean for judging the acceptance degree of the view about the inclusion of plans competencies.

If the percentage of the suggestion was 75% and more it was accepted, but if it was 74% and less, it was rejected.

## Results and Discussion

### The following are the results of the study:

First question: what are your suggestions for the development of the bachelor plan in special education? For answering this question, the study instrument was conducted on the research sample which consisted of (41) specialists to get their views. The researcher depended on the research sample which consisted of (41) specialists to get their views. The researcher depended on the percentage of the hypothesis of view acceptance by accepting the suggestion if its percentage was 75% and more. Table (1) shows suggestions with their frequencies and percentages.

**Table (1): suggestions of specialists in special education for the development of the bachelor plan with their frequencies and percentages.**

No	Suggestion	Frequency	Percent
1	Inclusion of two special courses of standardized measures of diagnosis in special education	39	95%
2	Inclusion of two special courses about behavioral problems and was of treatment	37	90%
3	Inclusion of a course (practical) under the name: current behavioral and educational problems and way of treatment	37	90%
4	Inclusion of a course relating to the design of programs for talented students	36	88%
5	Increasing the number of the courses of field training and variety of training in different centers	35	85%
6	Innovation of references for study courses and reconsideration of detailed description	33	80%
7	Bleeding some similar courses such as the courses of growth psychology and the course of general psychology to become development psychology	33	80%

It is revealed from Table (1) that the suggestions which were accepted according to the hypothetical mean stated by the researcher were (7) with a percentage of (80% - 95%). The suggestion of the inclusion of two courses relating to standardized measures for measurement and diagnosis in special education had the highest percentage of (95%), followed by the suggestion of the inclusion two courses.

About behavioral problems and way of treatment with a percentage of (90%) and last the suggestion of bleeding some similar courses, such as the bleeding of the course of growth psychology and the course of general psychology to become development psychology had the least percentage of (80%). The researcher believes that there are some weak points, in the academic departments at universities, which should regularly levies study plans and make necessary modifications as instructors and experienced people suggest.

The other question: what are your suggestions for the development of the diploma plan of special education? For answering this question, the instrument of the study was conducted on the research sample which consisted of (41) specialists in order to get their views. The researcher depended on the percentage of the hypothesis of view acceptance, by a accepting the suggestion if its percentage was 75% and more.

**Table (2): suggestions of specialists in special education for the development of the diploma plan with their frequencies and percentages.**

No	Suggestion	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Inclusion of the courses for the following categories (autism, behavioral and emotional impairment).	38	93%
2	Inclusion of the following courses (prevention from disabilities, early intervention).	37	90%
3	Furthering geaune field supervision by specialized supervisors	35	86%
4	Increasing the number of field training courses and variety of training in different caters	32	78%
5	Emphasis on the practical functioning of information	31	76%

Table (2) shows that the (2) suggestions which were accepted according to the hypothetical mean by the researcher with a percentage (76% - 93%).

The suggestion of the inclusion of courses for the following categories (autism, behavioral and emotional impairment) had the highest percentage (93%), followed by the suggestion of the inclusion of the following courses (Prevention from disabilities, early intervention) with a percentage of (90%), and last the suggestion of the practical functioning of information had the least percentage (76%).

The researcher believes that there are some weak points in the academic department at universities which should regularly revise study plans and make necessary modifications as instructors and experienced people suggest

### Conclusions

The research concluded a group of suggestions for the development of bachelor and diploma plans in special education, the most important of which are the increase of the number of specialized courses to include all categories of special education, as well as the increase of the hours of practical training in specialized centres for the people with special needs.

### Recommendations:

The necessity for the adoption of the suggestions revealed by the study results in order to develop bachelor and diploma plans in special education

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**Appendixes**  
**Standardized Interview instrument**

**Dear colleague,**  
**With my best regards**

The researcher is conducting a study titled:

An evaluation of the plans of the specialization of special education at Al – Balqa Applied university. Based on your experience in this field, you are kindly requested to answer the questions, informing you that the information will only be used for the purises of scientific research.

Thank you for your co-operation

First question: what are your suggestion for the development of bachelor plan in special education!

The other question: what are your plans for the development of diploma plan in special educations?