



Submission to the Human Rights Council the United Nations Universal Periodic Review of

Jordan (Fourth Cycle, Jan.–Feb. 2024) – 45th Session

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Submitted by: Faculty of Educational Sciences, Mutah University, Jordan and Research Center King Hussein Foundation (Joint Submission)

Organization website: https://education.mutah.edu.jo/Lists/AboutCollege/Disp_Form_1.aspx?ID=1 ,
<https://irckhf.org/>

Note: This UPR submission is based on a study entitled “The Representation of People with Disabilities in Jordanian Basic School Textbooks”¹ conducted by the following esteemed professors

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¹ Dirasat, Educational Sciences, Volume 46, No. 2, Supplement 2, 2019, pp 429-439.

1. Introduction:

1.1 Jordan signed and ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) through Law No.7/2008.

1.2 Law No. 20/2017 was enacted to ensure that persons with disabilities (PWDs) enjoy their full rights according to international standards, including accessibility and inclusion.

1.3 The Law of 2017 recognizes the right of PWDs to education without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunities and ensures an inclusive education system at all levels and throughout life. Also, the Ministry of Education must collaborate with the Higher Council of Persons with Disabilities to ensure that school curricula are amended to include issues that identify the rights of PWD and promote their acceptance as part of human variety.² Additionally, in conjunction with the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Church Councils, and Ministry of Education, examine religious curriculum and include exemplary issues and practices that promote a culture of diversity and respect for the rights and inherent dignity of people with disabilities³.

1.4 During the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review, Jordan approved a number of recommendations pertaining to the strengthening and promotion of the rights of PWDs by taking measures to improve their access to public facilities and educational institutions, promoting their inclusion, and ensuring the proper implementation of the 2017 Law.⁴

1.4 Several researchers in Jordan indicated that philosophies and practices of inclusion for students or PWDs, as an advanced phase of integration, have not been clearly understood and implemented within the framework of the Jordanian basic school textbooks (Abu-Hamour & Al Hmouz, 2014; Al Khateeb & Al Khateeb, 2008).

2. PWDs in Jordanian Basic School Textbooks

2.1 In 2019, members of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Mutah University, Jordan, published research entitled “The Representation of People with Disabilities in Jordanian Basic School Textbooks”⁵. The research aimed to examine how schools' textbooks that are published in Jordan approach subjects about PWDs. The researchers used the content analysis (texts and images) method in order to facilitate this investigation.

2.2 The textbooks that were analyzed were limited to grades 1- 10; and covered just two subjects (Arabic Language and Citizenship Education). The textbooks that were analyzed were limited to public schools' curricula that were taught up to 2018/2019 academic year, and the results of this study may not be

² Article 18/D, Law No. 20/2017.

³ Article 41/B, Law No. 20/2017.

⁴ Human Rights Council Fortieth session, Universal periodic, Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Jordan, A/HRC/40/10, 7 January 2019, paragraphs 153.117 – 135.28, 135.33, and 135.50.

⁵ Bashir Abu-Hamour, Hanan Al-Hmouz, Abdallah Azzam Aljarrah, The Representation of People with Disabilities in Jordanian Basic School Textbooks, Dirasat, Educational Sciences, Volume 46, No. 2, Supplement 2, 2019, pp 429-439.

generalized to other grades not targeted in this study or other textbooks that were taught in private schools.

3. Main findings

3.1 PWDs are rarely represented in school textbooks, and their subjects are not addressed. Of the 951 images that were analyzed, only two showed PWDs in grade 2 and grade 8; and of the 2913 pages that were analyzed, only nine texts addressed issues related to disability in grade 8.

3.2 Although Arabic and Social, Citizenship, and Civic education textbooks have so many lessons to include images and texts of PWDs, PWDs are rarely represented. For example, in the seventh grade of Civic and Citizenship Education, the first lesson is entitled accepting others, in this lesson in particular, there were no texts or images of PWDs, despite the fact that the curriculum designer can include images and texts about accepting PWDs.

3.3 Texts and images of female PWDs were not included.

3.4 PWDs are described as extraordinary rather than ordinary people with real-life experiences. Very few representations were documented for people with visual impairments in the textbooks (e.g., Taha Hussein, Al-Marri, Louis Braille, and Helen Keller), and these people were described as heroes who had tremendous achievements. There were no images of PWDs in educational contexts, nor were there images of PWDs in a natural environment (e.g., presenting a university professor with a visual impairment, presenting a person with a hearing impairment playing football with his friends, presenting a man on a wheelchair purchasing meat from a butcher's shop).

4. Observations:

4.1 Arabic and Social, Citizenship, and Civic education textbooks have so many lessons to include images and texts of PWDs that PWDs are rarely represented. For example, in the seventh grade of Civic and Citizenship Education, the first lesson is entitled accepting others, in this lesson in particular, there were no texts or images of PWDs, despite the fact that the curriculum designer can include images and texts about accepting PWDs.

4.2 In the fifth grade (first semester) textbook of Social and Citizenship Education, the first unit is about Citizenship Education Rights and Responsibilities, where the first lesson is entitled of citizenship, the second lesson is entitled rights and responsibilities, and the third lesson is entitled "Good Citizen". In this unit, the curriculum designer can and should add texts and images of PWDs.

4.3 Citizenship and Civic Education for eighth graders (first semester): The first unit is entitled Living Together, where there are three lessons, the first lesson is entitled "Respecting Diversity and Differences", the second lesson is entitled: "Abandon Austerity and Bias", and the third lesson is entitled: "Abandon Extremism and Violence". These topics are ideal for including texts and images of PWDs.

4.4 Texts and images of PWDs can also be included in Arabic language textbooks. For example, in the Arabic Language for ninth graders in the first semester: the first lesson is entitled “Good Morals”, where texts about PWDs can be included as well. The Arabic language seventh grade (first semester) has so many subjects to include texts and images of PWDs. The first unit is entitled “Cooperative Society” and the third unit is entitled Freedom and Tolerance, where texts and images of PWDs can also be included.

4.5 The results indicated that PWDs were underrepresented in the analyzed textbooks, which could disadvantage students with disabilities and perpetuate their invisibility.

4.6 The analyzed textbooks lack any content to foster respect for the rights and dignity of PWDs, and there is no effort to combat stereotypes, prejudices, and harmful practices relating to them.

5. Recommendations

5.1 Take immediate action for the full implementation of the 2017 law, including a review of current school textbooks and curricula to include issues that identify the rights of PWD and promote their acceptance as part of human variety, and include exemplary issues and practices that promote a culture of diversity and respect for the rights and inherent dignity of people with disabilities.

5.2 Ensuring the PWDs are represented in the process of reviewing school textbooks.

5.3 Ensure that inclusion of PWD and mainstreaming disability issues are integral parts of relevant education strategies.