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**Assessment in Contemporary Special Education: Teachers'
Beliefs about Formative Assessment and Their Reflection on
Classroom Practices for Students with Intellectual
Disabilities in Saudi Arabia**

BY

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Abstract

The study aimed to explore teachers' beliefs and practices regarding formative assessment for female students with intellectual disabilities, and how this type of assessment contributes to improving the learning process and supporting classroom practices. To achieve this, the study employed semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. The questionnaires were not designed to produce quantitative results; rather, they were used to identify a purposive sample of 16 female special education teachers for the qualitative phase. This approach enabled the selection of teachers who could provide rich and detailed insights into their beliefs about formative assessment for female students with intellectual disabilities, and how such practices enhance learning and support classroom instruction. The findings revealed that the success of implementing formative assessment depends largely on teachers' beliefs, which are grounded in the social and affirmative models of disability, due to their direct influence on teachers' practices, rather than on capabilities or skills alone. Although facilitating factors may help translate these beliefs into educational practices, beliefs—as demonstrated by the study—remain the decisive factor. Accordingly, the study recommends designing training programs based on the proposed conceptual framework, with the aim of strengthening the adoption of formative assessment principles associated with the social and affirmative models, and applying them effectively in classroom settings.

Key Words: *formative assessment, intellectual disability, disability studies, social model of disability, affirmation model of disability.*

الملخص:

هدفت الدراسة إلى استكشاف معتقدات وممارسات المعلمات تجاه التقييم التكويني للطالبات ذوات الإعاقات الفكرية، وكيف يسهم هذا النوع من التقييم في تحسين عملية التعلم ودعم الممارسات الصفية. ولتحقيق ذلك، استخدمت الدراسة مقابلات شبه منظمة واستبيانات، حيث لم تُصمَّم الاستبيانات لإنتاج نتائج كمية، بل استُخدمت لتحديد عينة قصدية مكونة من ١٦ معلمة من معلمات التربية الخاصة للمرحلة النوعية. وقد أتاح هذا النهج اختيار معلمات قادرات على تقديم رؤى غنية ومفصلة حول معتقداتهن بشأن التقييم التكويني للطالبات ذوات الإعاقات الفكرية، وكيف تسهم هذه الممارسات في تعزيز التعلم ودعم التدريس الصفّي. وأظهرت النتائج أن نجاح تطبيق التقييم التكويني يعتمد بدرجة كبيرة على معتقدات المعلمين، المستندة إلى النموذج الاجتماعي والنموذج التوكيدي للإعاقة، نظراً لتأثيرها المباشر في ممارساتهم، أكثر من اعتماده على القدرات أو المهارات وحدها. وعلى الرغم من أن العوامل الميسّرة قد تسهم في تحويل هذه المعتقدات إلى ممارسات تعليمية، فإن المعتقدات - كما بينت الدراسة - تظل العامل الحاسم. وبناءً على ذلك، توصي الدراسة بتصميم برامج تدريبية قائمة على الإطار المفاهيمي المقترح، بهدف تعزيز تبني مبادئ التقييم التكويني المرتبطة بالنموذجين الاجتماعي والتوكيدي، وتطبيقها بفاعلية في البيئات الصفية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التقييم التكويني، الإعاقة الفكرية، دراسات الإعاقة، النموذج الاجتماعي للإعاقة، النموذج التوكيدي للإعاقة.

1. Introduction

Since the late 20th century, IQ tests have been central to diagnosing intellectual disabilities (ID) (Schalock et al., 2021). These norm-referenced assessments classify students by IQ scores—50–55 for mild, 35–40 for moderate, 20–25 for severe, and below 20–25 for profound ID (Hessl, 2009). Rooted in the Psychoeducational Model (PM), they emphasize within-child deficits compared performance to predetermined norms (Hodkinson & Vickerman, 2009). Disability is viewed as deviation from typical functioning, with students ranked against age peers to determine typical or atypical performance (Aljaser, 2020; Schalock et al., 2021; Davis, 2010). This model assumes uniformity, implying that similar scores indicate similar abilities (Connor et al., 2008; Thomas et al., 1998). In reality, students with comparable IQs may show diverse strengths and learning needs (Guez et al., 2018). As a result, IQ tests offer limited guidance for developing Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), providing few actionable insights and overlooking factors affecting quality of life. In practice, IQ testing primarily categorizes students for special education (SE) placement rather than identifying effective supports (Hodkinson & Vickerman, 2009). Consequently, traditional SE has long relied on standardized assessments to guide curriculum and instruction, with teachers planning lessons by IQ classification. While this ensures standardization and comparability, it provides little understanding of students' individual learning processes or needs.

Wasserman et al. (2011) emphasize that formal assessments should not be treated as definitive measures of a student's ability, as they fail to capture individual learning needs. Similarly, Schalock et al. (2021) and Nguyen et al. (2009) note that while such assessments help allocate SE resources, they provide limited insight for instructional planning. This study does not dismiss formal



assessments but underscores the complementary value of formative assessments (FA), which supports learning through continuous feedback and instructional adjustment. Black and Wiliam (2009) argue that effective classroom assessment requires attention to multiple variables influencing learning. They highlight four key factors: the clarity and structure of teacher instructions; the use of instructional materials that promote engagement and monitor understanding; the learning environment, which can support or impede progress; and the skills students are expected to develop through sustained, guided practice within a supportive system. This framework underscores the multifaceted nature of FA and guides practices that respond to individual student needs. It emphasizes that considering the interaction among key variables provides a more accurate picture of a student's abilities, as formal assessments often focus more on learner characteristics than on instructional or environmental factors.

Several studies in SE highlight the benefit of FA. Anderson & Granberg (2022) examined how FA supports self-regulated learning among Swedish students with ID. They found that FA improved students' subject knowledge, self-regulation (e.g., planning, monitoring, and evaluating performance), and independence from teachers. Similarly, Yan et al. (2021) investigated the use of digital tools (e-books) in FA to support students with mild ID in Hong Kong because the formative asses SE schools. The study confirmed that FA enabled teachers to accurately identify student's strengths and weaknesses, provide immediate corrective feedback, and increase student engagement, even among shy or less verbal learners. It facilitated the use of multimedia tools (audio, video, and interactive content) to enhance conceptual understanding and improved teacher-student communication through continuous, real-time feedback. Joseph and Winberg (2024) explored the application of FA in inclusive, work-integrated learning programs for students with disabilities



including ID students in South Africa. Their study confirmed that FA helped teachers adapt instruction to diverse needs, identifying required support early, and fosters belonging and equality. Continuous feedback from supervisors and trainers also improved students' professional performance.

Marema (2024) examined FA strategies in Tanzanian inclusive schools supporting students with ID. The study found that FA improved academic performance through continuous progress monitoring, timely identification of learning gaps, and individualized feedback. It also promoted stronger teacher-student relationships and encouraged diverse, flexible teaching methods. Similarly, Chakraborty et al (2024) investigated teachers' perceptions of FA for students with disabilities including ID students in India. The study showed that FA helped teachers tailor instruction to diverse learning needs, better understand students' progress, provide constructive feedback, and enhance learning outcomes and students' confidence.

Although FA is recognized as an effective practice for improving learning among students with disabilities, research shows that its success largely depends on teachers' beliefs about its role in supporting learning, as these beliefs shape classroom practices (Box et al., 2015; Boubri & Haddam, 2020). Teachers' beliefs are therefore critical in how they plan, implement, and adapt new procedures (Mansour, 2023), meaning that any reform in assessment practices requires a deep understanding of these beliefs. In the local SE context, there is a clear gap in understanding how these beliefs develop among SE teachers (SETs) and how they influence actual assessment practices. Thus, qualitative research is needed to explore SETs' experiences, particularly those teaching students with ID, to understand how their beliefs about FA shape daily teaching and interactions that support learning. Accordingly, this study aims to explore SETs beliefs about FA and how these beliefs are reflected in their classroom assessment practices with



students with ID. The guiding research question is: What are SETs' beliefs about FA, and how are these beliefs reflected in their assessment practices with students with ID?

2. Methodology

This study employed a qualitative approach to comprehensively explore and understand the research issue, using semi-structured interviews to examine participants' experiences with FA. As Rutberg and Bouikidis (2018) note, initial quantitative results help clarify the research issue and guide the qualitative phase. Qualitative research then refines sample selection and enables deeper exploration of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2002), while also informing interview questions based on quantitative findings to probe emerging patterns, practices, and beliefs (Morse, 2003).

The research was conducted in **four phases**: **Phase one**, involved an online questionnaire. An extensive review of the literature on assessment practices in special education—particularly those related to intellectual disabilities—was conducted to identify the key concepts and domains relevant to the study. Based on this review, an initial pool of items was generated and aligned with the theoretical framework underpinning the research. The questionnaire contained open- and closed-ended questions divided into two sections: (i) demographic and academic information, and (ii) assessments practices (e.g., think-pair-share activities, projects, portfolios, and check observations) ending with requesting examples. Participants were asked to describe a recent assessment activity they conducted with ID students, explaining the purpose and implementation of their chosen approach. The questionnaire was then reviewed by several experts in the field of SE to evaluate the clarity, relevance, and cultural appropriateness of the items. Their feedback prompted several revisions, including refining the wording of the elements, eliminating redundancies, and ensuring that the tool effectively supports selecting an appropriate sample. Validity was assessed through a pilot study with a small sample of



special education teachers who shared the characteristics of the target group, ensuring the clarity, comprehensibility, and contextual appropriateness of the items.

Phase two, the questionnaire was administered to SET working in both SE schools for students with ID and mainstream schools with SE classrooms in Riyadh. **Phase three**, involved manually reviewing questionnaire responses and organizing the data to inform the qualitative phase. This process identified SET who actively used FA, such as those reporting frequent learning checks, observations, or self-assessment. For clarity, this phase of the study focused on gathering examples of teachers' assessment practices and understanding how they implement various assessment methods. These quantitative data were not the main focus of the study and were not analyzed inferentially. The primary purpose of this phase was to identify and select a purposive sample of 16 teachers who applied assessments correctly, particularly formative assessments. This approach ensured that the subsequent qualitative interviews could explore in depth the teachers' beliefs about assessment and how these beliefs supported the effective implementation of assessment practices.

Phase four, through purposive sampling, 16 SETs were invited. In qualitative research, the sample size is not determined by numerical considerations but by the richness and depth of the data obtained. Hennink and Kaiser (2022) found that most qualitative studies achieve data saturation within 9–17 interviews, while Squire et al. (2024) indicated that 15–20 interviews are generally sufficient to reach code saturation. Therefore, the selected sample of 16 teachers is adequate to explore in depth their beliefs about assessment and how these beliefs influence the effective implementation of formative assessment. The participants are teachers in schools where students with ID receive their main instruction in special education classrooms in mainstream schools but participate in selected general education subjects alongside their peers, with the



support of their SET. They have 6–15 years of teaching experience across both elementary and intermediate grade levels.

All interviews were transcribed and systematically coded to identify recurring patterns and concepts. This data was then analyzed thematically following Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework, which involved reading the data, coding it systematically, grouping codes into themes, reviewing them, and documenting each theme to strengthen the findings' credibility and depth. Moreover, the research activities adhered to King Saud University's Research Ethics Policy (2015), ensuring:

- Anonymity Confidentiality of participant information
- Minimized conflicts of interest to prevent bias
- through assigned identification numbers

Trustworthiness was ensured through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Shenton, 2004). Credibility: Prolonged data engagement and detailed Excel analysis verified accuracy; Transferability: Findings are applicable to similar contexts; Dependability: Chronologically documentation supports replication and audit; Confirmability: Data cross-checking allows result verification by other researchers.

3. Results (Beliefs, practices, influencing and impact)

In the phase two, SETs provided examples of their assessment practices and described how they implemented different assessment methods. Rather than focusing on frequencies or statistical comparisons, the study emphasized examining these examples to understand teachers' practical application of assessments. This approach allowed for the identification of a purposive sample of 16 teachers who demonstrated confident and correct use of formative assessment, enabling the subsequent qualitative analysis to explore in depth how their beliefs influenced the ways they applied assessment practices effectively.

During the interview each SET held unique assessment beliefs, reflected in terms such as 'informal assessment,' 'continuous

assessment,' 'learning checks,' 'progress monitoring,' and 'feedback assessment,' the interviews revealed common patterns. These were grouped into four main themes: Teachers' Beliefs, Teachers' Actual Practice, Influencing Factors, and Impact on Students.

Theme 1: Teachers Beliefs

This theme highlights how teachers conceptualize assessment through the following:

- 1. Assessment as a tool to support individual learning:** One SET noted, "*Assessment provides detailed insights into each student's abilities... I focus on what the child knows and what they are struggling with.*"
- 2. Assessment as a focus on personal growth rather than comparison:** One SET said, "*Assessment focuses on personal growth and improvement... I'm interested in how much each student improves, not how they compare to others*". Another added, "*Formal assessments give us a standard picture, while informal assessments fill in the gaps during the lesson. Without them, we cannot verify learning.*"
- 3. Assessment as a measure of educational objectives:** One SET described assessment as a way, "*...to monitor students' performance during the lesson to ensure they have achieved the required skills.*"
- 4. Assessment as a tool for identifying strengths:** One SET said, "*I assess the student based on what she is capable of, even if it is simple, because it makes her love learning.*" Another added, "*Assessment helps to notice any tiny contribution...Some may think the student isn't progressing, but I think her mere participation in the speech is a great achievement.*"
- 5. Assessment as a continuous cycle of improvement:** One SET said, "*I view the relationship between teaching and assessment as a continuous cycle; good teaching creates opportunities for*

assessment, and good assessment provides me with data that helps me improve my teaching."

Overall, the interviews reveal that teachers view assessment as a continuous, supportive process that promotes individual learning. They use it to understand each student's abilities, guide progress, and promote personal growth rather than compare students. Assessment is also seen as a way to track educational goals, recognize strengths, even small achievements, and build confidence and self-esteem. Finally, teachers regard assessment and teaching as interconnected processes that drive continuous improvement and more effective learning.

Theme 2: Actual Practice

This theme highlights how teachers' beliefs about assessment shape their classroom practices.

- 1. Monitoring continuous student progress:** One SET noted, *"Using anachronistic records, I capture both strengths and areas needing support during lesson activities, allowing me to monitor progress over time"* Another added, *"I use an observation checklist to observe students to identify what they can do independently and where they need guidance."*
 - 2. Providing continuous feedback to guide learning:** One SET said, *"After each activity, I decide what to reteach... I use what I learn from their work...I focus on what each child knows and where they are struggling, so I can provide the right support."* Another said, *"This is very important with students with intellectual disabilities because progress may be slow and requires close monitoring. Thus, I distribute assessment throughout the class using oral questions, flashcards, and educational games. This strategy helps me adjust my plans immediately based on student responses."*
 - 3. Adapting instruction based on assessment (individualized accommodation):** One SET shared, *"it guides my next steps in the classroom I use observation checklists...I adjust assignments, seating, and instructional strategies to meet students' individual*
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needs by using portfolio." Another said, "I use anecdotal records [and] it allows me to tailor teaching strategies to each student's needs."

4. **Helping students track their own progress:** One SET said, *"I use picture rating scales or easy symbols for the student to track their own progress... When they see their progress, they want to keep trying."* Another explained, *"I encourage my students to self-review their work and assess their progress after each activity, so they know where they need to improve."*
5. **Involving students in assessment:** One SET said, *"I ask the student after each activity: 'What did you learn today?'"* When we allow the student to express her opinion about her performance, then she knows her goals.
6. **Identify individual learning preferences:** One SET shared, *"I make sure the classroom works for that...I use anecdotal records [to] provide several option[s]. Some students understand better if they see it or touch it"*

Interview results show that teachers' beliefs strongly influence their assessment practices. The results show that teachers' practices align with their belief that assessment enhances learning. They implement continuous assessment by regularly tracking student progress through observation logs and checklists, identifying strengths and support needs. Teachers provide timely feedback to guide learning and adjust instruction based on each student's needs. They adapt activities, assignments, and strategies according to assessment results and help students monitor their own progress using simple visual tools. Practices emerged that engage students in assessment through discussion and self-reflection, while accommodating individual learning preferences and sensory or cognitive differences, especially among students with intellectual disabilities.

Theme 3: Influencing Factors

This theme highlights factors that vary across schools and shape how assessment is practiced:

1. **Administrative and supervisory support and school policies:** One SET shared, *"Administration and supervision encourage us to experiment with new assessment methods. Allocating time for assessment makes it easier for us to apply assessment differently without pressure."*
 2. **School Culture:** One SET said, *"Collaboration among teachers makes it easy to share best practices in formative assessment."* Another said, *"Having a school environment that encourages change and unconventional learning makes us more willing to experiment."*
 3. **Easy to implement and fits seamlessly into daily classroom activities:** One SET said, *"Assessment is something I can do every day without additional cost or time... The more flexible and easy-to-implement assessment is during the lesson, the more effective my teaching will be."*
 4. **A practical and accessible Tool:** One SET shared, *"I don't need complex tools; just watching and listening tells me a lot... Each student shows me exactly what I should provide."* Another said, *"The more flexible and easy to apply assessment during the lesson, the more effective my teaching will be."*
 5. **Easy to learn through collaboration:** One SET said, *"We learn from each other...When I share experiences and ideas with them, learning the methods becomes easier and more effective."*
 6. **Easy to adapt assessment to student abilities:** One SET shared, *"I adapt assessment tools and methods to suit each student's abilities, whether through practical activities, visual aids, or simplifying verbal communication."* Another said, *"There is no single assessment model that fits all students with intellectual disabilities. I believe in the need to adapt assessment tools and*
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methods to suit each student's abilities, whether through practical activities, visuals, or simplified verbal communication."

7. **Parental expectations:** One SET said, *"When parents believe in their daughter's abilities and cooperate to identify their daughter's capabilities, we notice increased student responsiveness and self-confidence, which in turn increases their ability to respond to assessment activities."*
8. **Teachers' confidence in students' abilities:** One SET said, *"I can adjust my activities based on my students' abilities through appropriate assessment. I discover them more."*
9. **Curriculum flexibility:** One SET said, *"When the curriculum allows us to adjust objectives and slow down the pace, we can use assessment in a way that suits the students' level."* Another said, *"The flexibility of the curriculum gives us room to innovate with activities and evaluate progress step by step."*

The findings indicate that assessment practices are influenced by contextual and organizational factors within schools. Administrative and supervisory support enables teachers to adopt innovative methods by providing time, flexibility, and freedom to experiment. A collaborative school culture further promotes the exchange of experiences and contributes to improving practices. Effective and sustainable assessment relies on ease of use and integration into daily teaching, as teachers prefer simple, flexible, and low-cost tools that fit naturally into classroom activities. Professional collaboration among teachers has been shown to be essential for sharing experiences and enhancing assessment practices. Participants highlighted the need to adapt assessment tools for students with intellectual disabilities using visual aids, practical activities, and clear communication.

Results also showed that parental support and expectations enhance students' confidence, participation in assessments, and overall educational progress. In addition, data showed that teachers' confidence in students with ID strongly influences the use of FA.

When teachers believe these students can learn and grow, they use varied assessment strategies and view mistakes as learning opportunities. Teachers also emphasized that curriculum flexibility is essential for effective FA. Greater curriculum adaptability allows teachers to use diverse assessment tools and monitor progress continuously, free from rigid timelines or standardized content.

Theme 4: Impact on Student

This theme shows how FA benefits students in areas such as:

- 1. Setting clear, realistic, and personalized learning goals:** One SET said, *"I plan the next steps so they can reach their goals... ensures learning goals are directly aligned with individual needs"*. Another said, *"If I notice that a student hasn't grasped a particular skill, I can go back and change the method or provide additional support"*
 - 2. Achieving individual learning goals:** One teacher said, *"I use daily feedback to create worksheets tailored to each student, and review them regularly to determine how much they are improving in targeted skills."*
 - 3. Promoting student engagement and interest:** One SET said, *"I involve students in noticing what they can do and where they need help...use picture rating scales or easy symbols...when they see their progress, they want to keep trying"*.
 - 4. Involve parents to support learning:** One SET said, *"I send their portfolio every week to the parent and encourage them to participate... this helps develop more accurate and comprehensive learning plans"*. Another said, *"I have students who memorize long texts, but don't understand anything... visual projects at home with parent participation really assess the student and achieve more learning."*
 - 5. Fostering self-motivation:** One SET said, *" I encourage my students to track their progress, which motivates them to complete the activity."*
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- 6. Supporting inclusion practices:** One SET said, *"During mainstream classes, I focus on what each child knows and struggles with, so I can support them in keeping up with the class while still addressing their individual needs."* Another said, *"I celebrate their growth at their own pace and modify activities so they can participate with other mainstream students and to ensure every student can access and engage with the lesson."*

This theme shows that FA enhances student learning through integrated practices. Clear, personalized learning objectives help teachers tailor instruction and adjust support when students struggle with specific skills. Continuous monitoring through feedback and individualized worksheets enables steady skill development. FA also boosts engagement by using simple tools to track progress and motivate learners. Beyond the classroom, it fosters continuous communication with families, serving as a bridge for active parental involvement. This partnership transforms parents from passive recipients of information into informed allies who can reinforce learning at home. Furthermore, assessment increased students' self-motivation by helping them track their progress and supported inclusion by adapting activities to each student's needs. This approach promoted full participation and a sense of belonging, recognizing that disability results from non-inclusive environments. Effective assessment responds to learners' needs rather than enforcing uniform standards.

4. Discussion (From Traditional to Formative Assessment)

FA in SE is a key tool for supporting inclusive education and improving learning for students with disabilities. It enables individualized instruction and active student participation (Joseph & Winberg, 2024; Chakraborty, 2024; Marema, 2024). FA also fosters self-learning and independence, particularly for students with ID, by promoting progress monitoring and personal responsibility (Andersson & Granberg, 2022). FA gives teachers ongoing feedback to adjust instruction to students' needs,



improving classroom quality (Yan et al., 2021; Chakraborty, 2024). Research shows that constructive feedback boosts students' motivation and confidence (Joseph & Winberg, 2024; Yan et al., 2021) and supports integrating FA into teacher training and education policy for effective, inclusive implementation (Marema, 2024; Chakraborty, 2024).

This study extends previous research by showing that teachers' beliefs directly shape their daily practices, challenging traditional assessment paradigms that focus on students' limitations. Instead of viewing assessment as a tool for measurement or formal reporting, teachers saw it as a means to identify and remove learning barriers—such as instructional methods or activity design—rather than attributing difficulties to the student themselves. This reflects the social model of disability, which shifts focus from individual limitations to creating inclusive, accessible learning environments. Replacing classification with individual growth records and defining success by personal progress promotes educational equity and fair assessment without comparing students. The study shows that teachers flexibly apply FA for students with ID, adapting activities and materials to individual needs. Accessibility measures, such as simplified language, tactile materials, and modified group tasks, demonstrate how learning environments can support diverse learners.

This belief treats assessment as both an educational and ethical process that challenges disability stereotypes and redefines success around each student's unique abilities. It promotes learner dignity and self-respect through multi-dimensional feedback (e.g., praise, repetition, and sensory reinforcement) to support emotional, social, and academic growth. Rooted in the affirmative model of disability, it emphasizes ability and potential over deficit. Interactive, multi-sensory assessments, aligned with individual success criteria and visual progress tracking, foster active



participation, independence, and a more inclusive, human learning experience.

Disability studies have moved beyond the Psychoeducational Model (PM), which frames disability in terms of deficit, stigma, and “normality” (Bricout et al., 2004; Oliver & Barnes, 2010). The Social Model (SM) instead locates disability in societal barriers rather than individual impairments (Oliver, 2009). The Affirmation Model (AM) critiques the SM for overlooking impairment while maintaining its focus on social barriers and emphasizing identity and lived experience (Johnstone, 2001; Frederickson & Cline, 2015; Shakespeare & Watson, 2001; Hughes, 2007). From the SM perspective, assessment identifies and removes social and environmental barriers to learning, focusing on participation and support needs rather than deficits (Bricout et al., 2004; Haegele & Hodge, 2016). It examines how physical, social, and institutional contexts affect inclusion, aligning with human-rights and inclusive approaches (Murza, 2024; Lawson & Beckett, 2021). In education, this model supports collaborative, context-sensitive assessments that address student needs within their environments, moving away from deficit-based evaluation (Davies & Soni, 2025). Although Swain and French (2000) did not discuss assessment directly, their AM promotes approaches recognizing the strengths and identities of disabled individuals rather than their limitations. In the AM, assessment integrates social and personal factors, emphasizing students’ strengths, identities, and well-being while identifying supports that enable them to thrive despite impairments (Bolt, 2015). Teachers' beliefs are central to FA, positioning assessment as a pedagogical process rather than a technical task. This perspective challenges traditional models and shifts the focus from students’ limitations to their potential. Analyzing teachers' beliefs clarifies how these beliefs, along with classroom practices and facilitating factors, shape a conceptual causal pathway. The conceptual framework illustrates how teachers' beliefs shape their



assessment practices, which are further influenced by facilitators and ultimately enhance the learning outcomes of students with ID. This framework consists of the following components:

Redefining success: Replacing ratings with individual growth records allows for continuous assessment of each student's progress throughout the learning process, rather than limiting evaluation to a single test or unit. Ongoing communication with parents supports learning at home and strengthens the school-family partnership by monitoring student progress and adjusting instruction as needed. It involves all stakeholders in learning and assessment to ensure consistent support. ***Recognizing capabilities:*** Assessment shifts the focus from traditional notions of failure to recognizing individual potential and capabilities. Teachers emphasize students' strengths and confidence rather than weaknesses. Personalized, adaptive assessment sets attainable, individualized goals, accounting for each student's level, abilities, and needs, with tools adjusted based on progress and daily performance. ***Overcome environmental, not merely evaluative:*** A holistic approach that identifies and addresses environmental and social barriers to learning. It prioritizes improving learning over merely measuring it, helping teachers recognize student strengths and weaknesses, provide targeted support, and focus on individual progress rather than comparison. ***Empowerment and active participation*** engage students in the assessment process, enabling them to track their progress and build intrinsic motivation, self-determination, and a positive identity. ***Promote equality and Equity:*** Equality means learning in the same classroom, while equity ensures each student receives the specific support needed to achieve comparable outcomes. Equality is uniformity; equity is fairness. SET applies differentiated pacing, resources, and assessment to enable meaningful participation. This approach emphasizes achieving equity through daily, belief-based actions, such as simplifying language, diversifying materials, and redistributing support. Rather than relying on policy, it presents



equity as a reflective practice sustained by teachers' agency and moral commitment to inclusion.

5- Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings first showed that teachers view assessment as a continuous, supportive process that enhances individual learning, helps understand students' abilities, tracks their progress, and builds their self-confidence, considering assessment as an integral part of teaching. Second, the results indicated that teachers' classroom practices reflect these beliefs; they rely on continuous assessment, timely feedback, and the adaptation of activities and materials to meet each student's needs, while involving students in assessment through simple and visual tools. Third, the findings highlighted that assessment implementation is influenced by contextual factors such as administrative support, curriculum flexibility, collaboration among colleagues, parental support, and the suitability of tools for students with intellectual disabilities. Finally, the results showed that self-assessment enhances learning by setting clear personal goals, providing continuous feedback, encouraging student participation, and strengthening communication with families, thus supporting inclusion through adapted learning environments.

This study also expands the scope of previous research by showing that teachers' beliefs directly shape their daily practices, challenging traditional assessment models that focus on students' limitations. Teachers considered assessment as a tool to identify and remove learning barriers rather than attributing difficulties to the student, in line with the social and affirmation models of disability. They replaced traditional classification with individual growth records and defined success based on personal progress, using diverse instructional adaptations such as simplified language, tactile materials, and scaffolded activities. Interactive assessments and multidimensional feedback contributed to increased



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participation and autonomy, providing a more inclusive and humane learning experience.

Given that the success of assessment largely depends on teachers' beliefs, the study recommends developing training programs that strengthen teachers' confidence in formative assessment based on the social and affirmation models of disability. These programs should support flexible and interactive assessment tools, encourage student self-assessment, and raise awareness of the learning process. They should also support curriculum adaptation, removal of barriers, and collaboration with families and relevant stakeholders to ensure continuous support and optimal educational outcomes.



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