

ABSTRACT

Alrusaiyes, Reem F. *Perspectives Toward Transition Program for Females with Intellectual Disability in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*. Published Doctor of Philosophy dissertation, University of Northern Colorado, 2014.

A qualitative research design using phenomenological and case study methods was selected for this research in order to examine in depth a transition program in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for females with intellectual disabilities. Specifically, the aim of this research was to determine how the expected outcomes of the program from the perspectives of supervisors, students, their special education teachers, and their mothers matched with evidence-based transition outcomes. Further, the research described the implementation of evidence-based transition planning in the selected transition program. Data collected from interviews, observations, and review of documents indicated some successes of the program and some areas that needed development. Finally, participants in this research were asked to suggest ways to improve the transition program outcomes.

Transition outcomes including employment, postsecondary education, and independent living were discussed by all participants; as yet, these outcomes have not been achieved. However, participants agreed that the new transition program was a vast improvement from previous years when these young females with intellectual disabilities just remained in their homes. Participants provided perspectives toward barriers that blocked achievement of these outcomes. Evidence-based transition planning included student-focused planning, student development, family involvement, and interagency

collaboration, all of which could serve as important practices to focus on and improve as this program moves forward. Satisfaction with this program was high, and all participants expressed eagerness to improve this program in specific ways to better achieve program goals.

Improved financial allocation, provision of physical space, and assurance of support services were the suggestions from the participants to improve the transition program in order to achieve the transition outcomes. Findings included four emerging themes which were: understanding disabilities, lack of guidance, line of communication, and teacher preparation.

Keywords: transition program, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, intellectual disabilities, evidence-based transition planning, transition outcomes.