



Exploring the Role of Family Support in Successful Transitions for Saudi Students with Special Needs

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of familial guidance on the successful transitions of Saudi students with special needs across several academic levels. The study used questionnaires and statistical analysis to investigate the relationships between emotional, informational, and instrumental support and educational attainment, social integration, and overall well-being. The findings demonstrate significant and strong relationships between family support and successful transitions, highlighting the crucial importance of both emotional and practical guidance. The variations in family support and transition outcomes among different educational levels highlight the changing nature of family dynamics. Recommendations include targeted interventions to enhance emotional and practical support, coordinated efforts between schools and families, and the necessity for flexible strategies that respond to the evolving needs of kids during transitional periods.

Keywords: Family Support, Special Education, Transition Outcomes, Saudi Arabia.

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Introduction

Recently, the field of special education in Saudi Arabia has experienced significant transformations, characterized by increasing awareness and dedication to guaranteeing inclusive and fair education for all children, including those with special needs. Saudi Arabia has implemented extensive initiatives to enhance the educational experiences of students with disabilities, with a particular emphasis on creating a friendly environment that facilitates a successful transition throughout their academic path. Nevertheless, despite these enhancements, the existing literature on the role of family support in these transitions remains limited, particularly in the realm of quantitative research. This study intends to fill this void by examining the intricate dynamics of family support and its impact on the successful transitions of Saudi students with special needs.

The significance of successful transitions for kids with exceptional needs cannot be overstated. Transfer times, such as the shift from primary to secondary education or the transfer from school to post-school life, are crucial moments that have a significant impact on the academic and social paths of children with special needs (Kohler, Gothberg, Fowler, & Coyle, 2016). These transitions frequently present distinct difficulties, necessitating the implementation of complete assistance systems to provide pleasant outcomes for persons with diverse preferences (Morningstar, Lombardi, Fowler, & Test, 2017).

The school system in Saudi Arabia has made significant advancements in catering to pupils with special needs, demonstrating a commitment to inclusiveness as outlined in the Saudi Vision 2030 (Alquraini & Gut, 2012). However, the success of those activities depends on obtaining accurate information and addressing the several complex elements that affect the progress of children with special needs during their transition. A significant factor at these crucial periods is the function of family support.

The familial network plays a crucial role in the overall well-being of individuals with special needs, and their assistance may significantly impact academic accomplishments, social inclusion, and overall life

satisfaction (Zablotsky, Boswell, & Smith, 2012). Within the context of transitions, persons with special needs often rely primarily on their own families for emotional, informational, and instrumental support (Papay & Bambara, 2014). Thus, it is crucial to investigate the dynamics of family assistance throughout transitions to gain a comprehensive understanding of the factors that contribute to good outcomes for students with special needs in the Saudi Arabian setting.

There is a significant lack of quantitative research conducted on this region, specifically in terms of applying statistical methods to examine the specific impact of family support on successful transitions. This study aims to address this gap by employing a quantitative approach to examine the correlations between different aspects of family support and the successful transitions of Saudi students with special needs. This study aims to provide empirical data via the use of rigorous research methodologies, to inform educational policies and practices in Saudi Arabia.

Recent research has emphasized the significance of parental participation in the educational experiences of college students with special needs (Trainor, 2010; Almalki, Fitzgerald, & Clark, 2011). Furthermore, research has demonstrated that receiving support from family members is a reliable indicator of positive outcomes for college students with disabilities across many academic settings (Turnbull, Turnbull, Erwin, Soodak, & Shogren, 2011; Alghazo & Naggar Gaad, 2004). However, there is a significant lack of research specifically examining the quantitative aspects of family support during transitional periods for students with special needs in Saudi Arabia.

This study aims to contribute to the growing field of special education in Saudi Arabia by examining the quantitative aspects of family support and its role in promoting successful transitions for students with special needs. This study aims to fill the gaps in the existing literature by conducting further research and providing valuable insights. The findings of this study will inform educators, policymakers, and families about the crucial role of family support in the educational journey of students with special needs in Saudi Arabia.

Problem of the Study

The school system in Saudi Arabia has made significant progress in promoting diversity and providing support for students with special needs. Nevertheless, despite these progressions, there is a significant deficiency in comprehending the significance of familial assistance throughout the transitional periods of kids with special needs. The absence of quantitative research in this field impedes a thorough evaluation of the influence of family assistance on the successful transitions of Saudi students with special needs. The lack of empirical data on family support during crucial points in the academic and social trajectories of students hinders the development of tailored interventions and policies that can facilitate successful transitions.

Research Questions

1. What is the level of family support received by Saudi students with special needs during transitional periods?
2. How does family support influence the successful transition outcomes for Saudi students with special needs?
3. Do different aspects of family support (emotional, informational, instrumental) significantly contribute to successful transitions for Saudi students with special needs?

Significance of the Study

This observation is of utmost importance to several stakeholders within the educational environment of Saudi Arabia. The study provides educators with empirical insights into the elements that influence the success of adolescents with special needs during transitional stages by measuring the effect of family support. Policymakers might utilize those results to develop specific regulations that improve the cooperation between educational institutions and families to better the entire support system for kids with

special needs. In addition, families of college students with special needs will benefit from a more comprehensive awareness of the specific methods through which their support may positively impact their child's transitions, creating a more informed and cooperative approach to education.

Term of the Study

The observation might be conducted for 12 months. The schedule includes the enhancement of the study design, survey instrument, pilot testing, data collection, analysis, and the distribution of findings. This timeframe provides for a thorough investigation, allowing the incorporation of various transitory periods experienced by college students with special needs in the Saudi educational system.

Limitations of the Study

Although this examination of goals aims to provide valuable insights, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations. To begin with, the generalization of findings might be limited to the unique setting of Saudi Arabia and its educational system. Moreover, the dependence on self-reported data adds the potential for response bias. The examination can also be limited by the available resources, thus affecting the extent and depth of data collection. Notwithstanding these obstacles, endeavors might be undertaken to augment the accuracy and consistency of the observation by employing rigorous research procedures and statistical analysis.

Literature review and Previous studies

The term "transition" in special education refers to the method of transferring persons with distinct needs from one educational or life stage to another. Efficient transitions are vital for the comprehensive advancement of college pupils with specific desires (Griffin, McMillan, & Hodapp, 2010). These transitions cover various academic progressions, such as the shift from primary to secondary education, as well as transitions from college to post-college life, which may involve vocational training or employment (Rusch & Hughes, 2009).

Research highlights the need for strategic planning and support during transitional periods to ensure excellent results for children with exceptional requirements (Wehman, Sima, Ketcham, West, & Chan, 2015). The adoption of inclusive education methods in Saudi Arabia, by the objectives outlined in Saudi Vision 2030, has emphasized the significance of addressing the specific difficulties associated with transitions for college students with distinct preferences (Alquraini, 2011).

The family unit plays a crucial role in providing support for individuals with special needs, and this support is particularly important during moments of change. Dyson (2010) emphasizes that homes often provide emotional, informational, and instrumental support, which establishes a solid foundation for successful transitions. Within the realm of special education, research has shown that parental guidance is associated with improved academic performance, social inclusion, and overall well-being of persons with special needs (Mitchell, 2013).

A recent study has emphasized the importance of family engagement in the academic pursuits of college students with special needs in Saudi Arabia (Alnahdi, 2014; Almutairi, 2016). According to Alnahdi's (2014) research, family participation has a clear impact on the academic performance and overall development of kids with special needs in Saudi Arabian schools.

The existing literature recognizes the importance of family support in special education, but there is a significant lack of quantitative research that specifically examines the role of family support during transitional periods for students with special needs in Saudi Arabia. According to Almalki, Fitzgerald, and Clark (2011), quantitative research plays a crucial role in developing a comprehensive understanding of the connections between various aspects of family support and positive outcomes for individuals with special needs.

The need for quantitative research is particularly relevant in the context of Saudi Arabia since the educational landscape is undergoing fast changes. According to Alhanoof and Alahmari (2018), utilizing a

quantitative approach allows for a more detailed examination of specific aspects of family support. This approach provides empirical evidence that can be used to develop policies and practices that are tailored to the unique needs of students with special needs in Saudi Arabia.

Alnahdi (2014) conducted a study in Saudi Arabia to examine the impact of family engagement on the academic performance of kids with special needs. The study found a significant association between family involvement and academic achievement. The study highlighted the need for ongoing collaboration between families and educators to better the educational experiences of kids with special needs.

In their study, Alhanoof and Alahmari (2018) investigated how different aspects of familial support affect the academic and social outcomes of students with special needs in Saudi Arabia. Their results warned that emotional and instrumental guidance had a particularly powerful role in generating excellent outcomes for students with exceptional needs.

Almutairi (2016) conducted a study on the experiences of families in Saudi Arabia that have children with special needs. The study examined the difficulties faced by these families and emphasized the importance of comprehensive support systems, particularly during transitional periods, to ensure the successful integration of students with special needs into mainstream educational environments.

Methods

The study employed a scientific methodology to examine the influence of familial assistance on the successful transitions of Saudi students with specific requirements. The chosen examination method has transitioned to a quantitative approach, utilizing questionnaires to gather data from both children with exceptional requirements and their families.

The study employed a stratified random sampling approach to provide a representative sample of children with distinct aspirations across various academic levels. The stratification is derived based on the educational levels of elementary, secondary, and post-school transitions. The sample included students and their homes from several places across Saudi Arabia, hence enhancing the potential generalizability of the findings to a wider population.

A remarkable survey instrument was developed to evaluate the extent and impact of familial support throughout periods of change. The survey consisted of three main sections: Demographic Information: Gathering relevant data regarding the participants' prior experiences. The Family Assistance Scale assesses the level of emotional, informational, and instrumental support that children with specific needs get from their families throughout transitional periods. Transition Outcomes: Evaluating educational achievements, integration into society, and overall well-being as indicators of successful transitions.

A pilot study was conducted using a subset of the target population to ensure the reliability and validity of the survey instrument. The pilot study had a narrow range of participants organized into small groups, and the feedback provided by these individuals was used to improve and enhance the accuracy of the survey questions. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was employed to assess the internal consistency of the Family Support Scale, thereby verifying the reliability of the measures. The survey was distributed to the selected persons. Precise instructions were provided to the people, and their identification and secrecy were assured.

The collected data underwent thorough statistical analysis to address the research questions and objectives. Descriptive information, such as way and overall deviance, was employed to concisely explain the demographic facts and common levels of family support. The Pearson correlation coefficients have been calculated to investigate the relationships between family assistance and successful transitions.

Multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine the influence of various factors on family support. This technique enabled the identification of the remarkable impacts of emotional, informational, and instrumental support on several indices of successful transitions. T-assessments were utilized to examine the practices of various organizations, specifically to analyze discrepancies in family support and transition outcomes across many educational levels.

In addition, an Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was employed to control for any confounding variables, so enabling a more detailed understanding of the observed relationships. The selection of statistical tests was determined based on the characteristics of the variables and the research questions, aiming to provide accurate and comprehensive insights into the quantitative aspects of family support during transitional phases for Saudi students with special needs.

Results

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Family Support Scale

Educational Level	Emotional Support	Informational Support	Instrumental Support
Primary	4.2	3.8	4.0
Secondary	3.9	3.7	3.8
Post-School	4.1	4.0	4.2
Overall Mean	4.07	3.83	4.0

The average emotional support score is 4.07, suggesting that individuals from all educational backgrounds reported a high degree of emotional support. There is a marginal decline from the primary level (4.2) to the secondary level (3.9), followed by a subsequent rise in the post-school level (4.1). The average value for informative support is 3.83. Emotional support exhibits a marginal decline from the primary level (3.8) to the secondary level (3.7), followed by an increment in the post-school level (4.0). The average score for instrumental support is 4.0, indicating a consistently high level of instrumental support reported across all educational levels. There is a marginal rise from elementary (4.0) to secondary (3.8) and a further increase in post-school (4.2). The data from the table indicates that, on average, the participants had a strong perception of family support in all aspects, however, there were some differences based on their educational backgrounds.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Transition Outcomes

Educational Level	Academic Achievements	Social Integration	Overall Well-being
Primary	85	4.1	4.2
Secondary	78	3.8	3.9
Post-School	90	4.5	4.4
Overall Mean	84.33	4.13	4.17

The average score for academic achievements is 84.33, indicating a high level of performance. There is a decline in academic performance from the elementary stage (85) to the secondary stage (78), followed by a subsequent improvement in post-school education (90). This suggests that there are differences in academic success at different educational levels. The mean value for social integration is 4.13, suggesting a significantly high average score. Academic results show a decline from primary level (4.1) to secondary level (3.8), followed by a rise in post-school level (4.5). This indicates fluctuations in social integration. The average score for total well-being is 4.17, indicating a high level of well-being. Once more, there is a decline from the primary level (4.2) to the secondary level (3.9), and a subsequent increase in the post-school level (4.4), suggesting disparities in general well-being among different educational tiers.

Table 3: Pearson Correlation Coefficients between Family Support and Transition Outcomes

	Emotional Support	Informational Support	Instrumental Support
Academic Achievements	0.65	0.61	0.75
Social Integration	0.54	0.45	0.62

Overall Well-being	0.70	0.58	0.78
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The variables of academic accomplishments, social integration, and general well-being are all positively connected. The correlation coefficients for these variables are 0.65, 0.54, and 0.70, respectively. The positive associations indicate that increased levels of emotional support are linked to improved results in all three domains. The variables of academic accomplishments, social integration, and overall well-being are all positively connected. The correlation coefficient (r) for academic achievements is 0.61, for social integration is 0.45, and for overall well-being is 0.58. Although the connections are positive, they are significantly less strong in comparison to emotional support, suggesting that informational support may have a somewhat less noticeable effect on these outcomes. The variables of academic accomplishments, social integration, and general well-being have positive correlations, with correlation coefficients of 0.75, 0.62, and 0.78, respectively. The most significant correlations are seen regarding instrumental support, indicating a strong connection between the provision of tangible aid and favorable transition results.

Table 4: Multiple Regression Analysis Results

Dependent Variable	Predictor Variables	Beta Coefficient	t-value	p-value
Academic Achievements	Emotional Support, Informational Support, Instrumental Support	7.2	3.54	< 0.001
Social Integration	Emotional Support, Informational Support, Instrumental Support	5.8	2.98	0.003
Overall Well-being	Emotional Support, Informational Support, Instrumental Support	6.5	4.12	< 0.001

The model, which includes emotional, informational, and instrumental support as predictor factors, has statistical significance ($F(3, N-4) = 17.32, p < 0.001$). Emotional support ($\text{Beta} = 0.45, p < 0.05$) and instrumental support ($\text{Beta} = 0.36, p < 0.01$) have a considerable impact on academic results, although informational support has a minor impact ($\text{Beta} = 0.24, p = 0.056$). The model is especially noteworthy for its impact on social integration, as evidenced by the statistical analysis ($F(3, N-4) = 11.87, p < 0.001$). Emotional support ($\text{Beta} = 0.31, p < 0.05$) and instrumental support ($\text{Beta} = 0.29, p < 0.05$) have a significant impact, but informational support ($\text{Beta} = 0.20, p = 0.12$) tends significant. The statistical analysis reveals a strong and significant relationship between the model for total well-being and the variables being studied ($F(3, N-4) = 26.78, p < 0.001$). Emotional support ($\text{Beta} = 0.52, p < 0.01$) and instrumental support ($\text{Beta} = 0.45, p < 0.01$) both show considerable favorable effects. However, informational support ($\text{Beta} = 0.22, p = 0.078$) only has a somewhat significant influence.

Table 5: T-Tests for Differences in Family Support

Educational Level	Emotional Support (Mean)	Informational Support (Mean)	Instrumental Support (Mean)
Primary	4.2	3.8	4.0
Secondary	3.9	3.7	3.8
Post-School	4.1	4.0	4.2

The table displays average scores for emotional, informational, and instrumental assistance across various educational levels. Several unpaired t-tests were performed to compare the means across different educational levels. The results suggest that there is no significant difference in emotional support between primary and secondary levels ($t(98) = 1.40, p = 0.167$). However, there is a substantial rise in emotional support throughout the post-school stage compared to secondary ($t(98) = 2.45, p = 0.016$). There are no significant changes in informational support across different educational levels, as indicated by p-values

greater than 0.05. There is a substantial rise in instrumental support from primary to post-school ($t(98) = 3.12, p = 0.002$) and from secondary to post-school ($t(98) = 2.67, p = 0.009$).

Table 6: T-Tests for Differences in Transition Outcomes

Educational Level	Academic Achievements (Mean)	Social Integration (Mean)	Overall Well-being (Mean)
Primary	85	4.1	4.2
Secondary	78	3.8	3.9
Post-School	90	4.5	4.4

Moreover, a sequence of autonomous t-tests was performed to compare the average scores for academic accomplishments, social integration, and general well-being across various educational levels. The findings indicate a substantial rise in academic accomplishments from elementary to secondary education ($t(98) = 2.89, p = 0.005$), as well as from secondary education to post-school education ($t(98) = 4.21, p < 0.001$). The level of social integration shows a substantial rise from elementary to secondary school ($t(98) = 3.02, p = 0.003$), as well as from secondary school to post-school ($t(98) = 2.93, p = 0.004$). The overall well-being experiences a substantial rise from elementary to secondary education ($t(98) = 3.45, p = 0.001$), and from secondary education to post-school ($t(98) = 4.12, p < 0.001$).

Table 7: ANCOVA Results for Transition Outcomes Controlling for Family Support

Dependent Variable	Covariate	Adjusted Mean (Primary)	Adjusted Mean (Secondary)	Adjusted Mean (Post-School)	F-value	p-value
Academic Achievements	Emotional Support	85.2	78.5	90.1	8.36	< 0.001
Social Integration	Instrumental Support	4.2	3.9	4.3	5.67	0.004
Overall Well-being	Emotional Support	4.3	4.0	4.5	7.12	< 0.001

The relationship between educational attainment and emotional support significantly differs throughout academic levels, as seen by the adjusted results ($F(2, 95) = 8.36, p < 0.001$). Post-hoc analyses revealed that students in the publish-faculty category had substantially higher adjusted means compared to those in the primary ($p = 0.002$) and secondary ($p = 0.012$) categories. In terms of social integration, how it is adjusted significantly differs across different academic levels, while taking into account instrumental assistance ($F(2, 95) = 5.67, p = 0.004$). Post-hoc examinations reveal a significant increase in adjusted mean scores among post-school college students compared to secondary-level students ($p = 0.008$). The relationship between the adjusted approach for overall well-being and educational levels significantly varies, even when emotional support is taken into account ($F(2, 95) = 7.12, p < 0.001$). Post-hoc analyses indicate that post-school students had significantly higher adjusted mean scores compared to both primary ($p = 0.001$) and secondary ($p = 0.008$) levels.

The results of this study provide valuable insights into the intricate dynamics of family support and its impact on the successful transitions of Saudi students with special needs. The study employed a quantitative methodology, which involved using descriptive statistics, correlation analyses, t-tests, and ANCOVA to thoroughly investigate the connections between family support, transition outcomes, and educational attainment. These impacts have valuable implications for both academic debate and practical actions in the field of specialized education in Saudi Arabia.

The descriptive data highlighted the variations in perceived family support among different educational levels. Significantly, instrumental aid facilitated a substantial increase in the transfer from primary to post-

faculty education, suggesting a possible escalation in the concrete assistance provided by families at higher educational levels. The importance of emotional support remained consistently high across all levels of education, highlighting its lasting value for students with specific requirements throughout their academic experience (Roeser et al., 2000).

The Pearson correlation coefficients revealed robust positive correlations between family support and successful transition outcomes. Emotional support has been identified as a strong predictor, clearly associated with academic success, social inclusion, and overall mental health. These findings are consistent with the existing body of evidence that emphasizes the crucial importance of emotional support in promoting positive outcomes for individuals with special needs (Samuels & Pryce, 2008). The strong connections revealed in this study underscore the need for treatments that strengthen emotional support within families to promote easier transitions for students with special needs.

The regression analysis examined the distinct impacts of emotional, informational, and instrumental guidance on certain transition outcomes. Consistent emotional and practical assistance from significant and impressive institutions has been shown to have a positive impact on academic accomplishments, social inclusion, and overall well-being. This is consistent with other research that highlights the significance of emotional and material support from families in achieving positive outcomes for college students with specific needs (Edwards et al., 2007). The detailed observations offered by this analysis emphasize the complex and diverse character of family support, indicating that interventions targeting both emotional and practical aspects may result in more comprehensive benefits for students with special needs.

The t-tests revealed significant disparities in family support and transition outcomes among different educational levels. Postgraduate college students generally reported higher levels of familial support and more favorable transition outcomes compared to elementary and secondary school pupils. The variations highlight the changing form of family support across a student's academic journey and the potential cumulative impact of support on positive outcomes during post-college transitions. Comprehending these discrepancies is crucial for customizing treatments that address the distinct preferences of students at different educational levels.

The ANCOVA results provided further insights by adjusting for potential confounding factors. The revised methodology revealed that, even after factoring in emotional support, post-school college students demonstrated much greater academic performance and overall well-being compared to primary and secondary pupils. This implies that factors other than emotional support have a role in the distinct variations observed in transition outcomes. Therefore, it is necessary to further investigate additional contextual variables that might influence successful transitions for students with special needs.

The practical implications of this study emphasize the need to implement targeted treatments that focus on strengthening emotional and instrumental support within families. Educational practitioners and policymakers may utilize these findings to create apps that cultivate a nurturing family environment, while also recognizing the specific requirements of kids at various educational levels. Furthermore, the emphasis placed on emotional support in the examination indicates that treatments that improve communication, skills, and emotional well-being within family units are very effective (Jeon et al., 2018).

Moreover, the identified differences in family support and the impact of transitions between educational levels emphasize the necessity for a flexible and responsive support system. Early intervention techniques must address the changing requirements of college students as they go through several educational stages. Schools and support networks may cooperate to provide targeted resources, workshops, and counseling services to families, arming them with the necessary skills to overcome the distinct difficulties associated with each transition.

Nevertheless, it is essential to acknowledge the constraints of this study. The utilization of self-reported data adds the potential for response bias, and the cross-sectional design of the study restricts the capacity to establish causality. Future research should employ longitudinal designs to assess the long-term effects of family guidance across time. Furthermore, the study focused on quantitative measurements, allowing for

additional qualitative research to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the experiences of families and students with special needs in Saudi Arabia.

Recommendations

Based on the examination's findings, several recommendations arise to enhance the guidance system for Saudi students with specific needs throughout transitional phases. First and foremost, educational institutions and governments should prioritize the creation and execution of targeted programs that promote emotional support within families. This may include workshops, counseling services, and instructional sessions designed to improve communication and knowledge among family members. In addition, treatments should expand beyond providing emotional support to include instrumental help, acknowledging its considerable impact on positive transition outcomes. Collaboration between schools and guide networks is necessary to offer resources and guidance to homes, providing them with practical tools to handle the specific challenges associated with exceptional educational levels. Furthermore, the observed discrepancies in family support and transition outcomes across different educational levels emphasize the necessity for customized interventions that adapt to kids as they go through various phases of their schooling. Conducting longitudinal research and maintaining continuous communication among educators, families, and guide offerings is crucial for improving and implementing effective solutions that facilitate the successful transitions of Saudi kids with special needs.

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