UNIVERSITY OF
EXETER

Graduate School of Education

Where are the parents? An exploration and examination of parental involvement of mothers of girls with learning disabilities in primary mainstream schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Submitted by Sara Binammar to the University of Exeter

As a thesis for the degree of

Doctor of Education in Special Needs and Inclusive Education (SNIE)

May 2019

I certify that all material in this thesis which is not my own work has been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.

Signature: …………………………………………………..

Acknowledgments

This thesis represents the conclusion to my doctoral journey, which has been like climbing a high mountain, step by step, accompanied by encouragement, difficulties, and frustration.

Writing this acknowledgment is the moment of truth, when my journey ends and my dream comes true. Looking back on all my ups and downs, on all the happiness and pain I have been through, and on all the moments I have struggled, I know they are all moments that kept me going to pursue my dream. Proudly, I can say, "I did it". When I find myself experiencing this feeling of happiness, I appreciate that although it is my name that appears on the dissertation's cover, a great many people, including my family, friends, and colleagues have contributed to my accomplishing this huge task. These people deserve to be thanked.

First, I thank God, who has always given me the power and the will to keep going, no matter what I have faced. Many thanks to my amazing supervisors, Professor Hazel Lawson and Dr. Darren Moore, who have always provided me with many opportunities to grow and learn throughout my journey. I would like to extend my thanks to all of you, as you helped me be the person and researcher who I am now as well as you contributed to make my dream a truly unique experience throughout your endless support and encouragement. It has been a privilege to work under your expert guidance and truly it has been a pleasure to be your student.

An endless thank-you is due to my one and only, my greatest blessing in this world, my amazing mother. I want to say that only because of you being in my life, with your endless love, supplication, and prayerful care, I have achieved my dream. To my inspirational and wonderful sisters, Wafa, Amal, and Aida: you always believed in me and you encouraged me to take the first step towards achieving my dream. You knew what I was capable of before I was even aware of it. I will never forget your support, care, and love for me throughout this journey. To my amazing and supportive brothers, Abdullah and Yasser, you have been always there for me when I needed you, and you never let me down. I am blessed to have you in my life. Then, many thanks to my wonderful niece and nephews,

Dedication

To my mother, who has made me the woman I am today. Your absolute love, support, and supplication have made me patient in tough times. You have truly blessed me with unfailing love, hope, and belief each day. To the memory of my father, I miss you the most at this moment of achieving my dream. I wish that I could share this moment with you. Thank you for all the sacrifices you made to me and I hope I have made you proud. Finally, I dedicate this thesis to my lovely husband Khalid and children, Rakan, Abdulaziz, Jude, and Mishari. You have been and will be always my blessing.

Abstract

Parental involvement (PI) in education refers to how parents participate in home or school settings to support their children's learning. In recent years, the concept of PI in education has been widely explored and examined in many Western countries such as the USA and the UK. Research indicates the importance of PI in relation to children's behaviour and academic achievement. PI is thus considered to be a necessary component of effective education. The significance of PI in education is also evident in international policies and legislation. In Saudi Arabia, however, there is, to date, minimal research in this field and no direct legislation or national policy statements emphasise or discuss PI, yet it is an educational concern for parents and teachers. PI is considered to be particularly important for children with special educational needs and, in Saudi Arabia, little is known about PI from the perspectives of parents of children with special educational needs.

The main aim of this study was to explore the phenomenon of parental involvement from the perspectives of mothers of girls with learning disabilities (LD) in primary mainstream schools for girls in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Specifically, this study aimed to examine factors that influence mothers' involvement in in their daughters' education and to explore the extent to which they were involved. Furthermore, this study aimed to explore mothers' perspectives and experiences of their daughters' education and how they wished to be involved.

This study used a mixed-methods explanatory sequential design as methodology incorporating two phases. In the first phase, a 50-item questionnaire, yielding quantitative data, revealed mothers' attitudes towards PI, factors that may influence PI, and the extent to which mothers were involved in their daughters' education. Findings from this phase revealed statistically significant relationships between PI and family income, living area, mothers' educational level, various beliefs about PI and self-reported PI invitations received. Findings also revealed that mothers of girls with LD are not typically involved in decision making about their daughter's education. In the second phase, semi-structured interviews, yielding qualitative data, were carried out with 10 mothers of girls with LD, purposively selected, to explore in-depth their perspectives and experiences of PI and to determine how they wish to be involved.

Thematic analysis was used and findings indicated that most mothers had limited PI in their daughters' education. Mothers reported limitations in communication from schools and indicated that they felt marginalized, voiceless, and lost. Findings also highlighted mothers' needs, rights, and wishes regarding involvement, communication, and expression of their voice.

There are implications for the Saudi Ministry of Education, schools, and teachers in terms of the development of policies and practices around parental involvement. This study contributes to the existing methodological and theoretical knowledge regarding PI. It also helps address some gaps in the existing literature regarding PI in the field of LD.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This study examines the roles of parents in supporting their children with special educational needs (SENs), particularly the mothers of girls with learning disabilities (LDs) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. This chapter opens with an overview of the current state of parental involvement (PI) in the education of their children, and the nature of the problem is then identified. Next, the rationale for conducting this study and its key research objectives and research questions are outlined. The chapter concludes with a description of the structure of the thesis.

1.2 Overview

Today, most countries consider education a fundamental developmental issue that is central to human rights (United Nations [UN] General Assembly, 2008). As a result, all governments are responsible for ensuring that every individual has access to education. The right to quality education is no less pertinent to students with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities. Children with disabilities have the right to be provided special treatment, education, and care (UN General Assembly, 2007). The United Nation Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities asserted that persons with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as their able-bodied peers (UN General Assembly, 2007).

In the context of SEN, the educational policies focused on children with disabilities and their rights vary widely. One of the primary educational policy foci is 'inclusion', which was emphasised in the United Nations Salamanca statement (UNESCO, 1994). Inclusion frequently refers to "the placement of students with disabilities in a regular (general education) classroom, with all or most special services provided in that classroom" (Fiorello, 2001, p. 40). Norwich and Kelly (2004) described inclusion of children and young people with disabilities and difficulties into mainstream schools as one of the fundamental international policy issues in school education. Nonetheless, from my experience as a teacher for children with learning disabilities, implementing inclusion policy in practice does not seem to be straightforward and perhaps involves more than just placement, good services and qualified teachers. Villeneuve et al. (2013) noted that inclusion is a "complex and multidimensional concept" that "should not refer to a place but

should describe an active process that promotes child development" (p. 10). Indeed, this active process of inclusion demands good planning, continuous evaluation, and ongoing efforts from all parties involved. Inclusion in education, according to Kochhar, West, & Taymans (2000), demands shared responsibility and collaboration. It requires collective efforts from numerous parties, including authorities, teachers and parents. As the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) states, "the success for inclusive schools demands concerted effort, not only by teachers and school staff, but also by parents and families" (p. 11).

Parents of children with SEN are some of the most important individuals in this process, and the role they play should not be ignored. Parents have frequently been regarded as important members in the special education process (Myers, 2014), and their involvement is considered crucial (Turnbull & Turnbull, 2001). This is the case for several reasons. Children with SEN may arguably be in greater need of PI than other children. Their rights, including inclusion and quality services, often need PI. For example, one important service is the Individual Educational Plan (IEP; see 1.7). Involving parents in IEP meetings is considered fundamental since they can contribute their extensive knowledge regarding their children's difficulties and strengths, as well as discuss any goals and priorities for their future (Hornby, 1995).

Through parental involvement, better services and policies regarding SEN may be provided and developed. It could thus be argued that one important component in the success of inclusion is PI. As Todd (2007) noted, the "partnership between parents and professionals is clearly very important for the development of inclusion" (p. 5). PI will involve any practice or activity through which parents participate in the educational process. There are many different categories of PI in which parents could be involved. For instance, they may be involved through volunteering at their children's school and/or in their classes, participating in decision making, consulting with teachers (Epstein, 2010). However, these activities may require the prior establishment of a good relationship. It could be argued that PI entails a relationship between parents and teachers or other professionals regarding a child's educational and/or social goals. This relationship is characterised by "a shared sense of purpose, mutual respect and willingness to negotiate. This implies a sharing of information,

responsibility, skills, decision making, and accountability" (Wolfendale, 1989, p. 5).

Over many years, scholars have documented PI as an essential component of children's success (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). There are various potential benefits of PI, such as higher grades and test scores, positive attitudes and improved behaviour, more successful programmes, and more successful schools (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001; Epstein, 2011; Henderson, 1987; Henley, Ramsey, & Algozzine, 2002). PI also has been shown to have a positive effect on parents. Fishman and Nickerson (2015) indicated that PI helped parents to communicate more with their children and to have more satisfying relationships with teachers.

PI has been considered in many international policies, research and legislation on educational planning (Blue-Banning, Summers, Frankland, Nelson, & Beegle, 2004; Gartner & Lipsky, 1987). The concept of parental partnerships has been promoted in most Western countries. In the US, for example, most general and special education legislation emphasises parental involvement (IDEA, 2004; U.S. Department of Education, 2003; 2004). According to the US Department of Education (2004), parental participation must be encouraged and facilitated in the planning and decision-making processes concerning provisions for special educational needs. Similarly, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) stated that parents of children with special needs should participate and evaluate special education services (Swanson, 2008). Similarly, Lutfi (2009) indicated that cross-cultural studies on parental involvement show that in European countries such as Britain, parents are formally involved in policymaking decisions. In the UK, the term *partnership with parents* has been widely used in educational policy since the Warnock Report in 1978 (Hodge & Cole, 2008). Since then, many policies have emphasised *partnership with parents*. For example, the Special Educational Need and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice (DFE & DOH, 2015) recognised PI as a necessary component of effective education of children with special needs. This Code emphasised that parents must be involved in "discussions and decisions about their individual support" (p. 20). Similarly, the Children and Families Act, part 3, stated that parents must participate "as fully as possible in decisions relating to the exercise of the function concerned … [and] must be provided with the information and

support necessary to enable participation in those decisions" (Legislation.gov.uk, 2014, p. 19). However, in Saudi Arabia, limitations in specific PI policy are evident. Further details appear below in Section Statement of the Problem.

Despite the importance of PI and policies that protect parents' rights to involvement, a growing body of international research has identified limitations in applying PI in practice. Based on a systematic review of the literature, Afolabi (2014), stated that, in reality, PI is not generally applied. Likewise, in a qualitative study, Idler (2015) stated that parents "consistently lack involvement in their child or children's special education programs and need to be more involved" (p. 39). The reasons behind this may vary from one context to another. Further explanations and discussion will be provided in the Literature review.

This study aims to examine PI in the Saudi context. More specifically, it aims to explore the factors that influence, and the perspectives of, mothers of girls with learning disabilities (LD) regarding their parental involvement in primary mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia (Riyadh). To avoid any contradiction, the term LD is used in this study because, as explained in the Context Chapter, the SEN educational system in Saudi Arabia is based on the US system (MOE, 2016), where the term LD is used. In the UK, LD is known by different terms, such as specific learning difficulties (SPLD) and dyslexia (Alnahim, 2015). Further details regarding these concepts (e.g. LD, SPLD) are presented in 2.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Despite the significance of PI in the international SEN domain and the international attention it has received in research and policies, PI has received little attention in Saudi Arabia. In the Saudi context, the problem lies in two areas: (a) the absence of clear PI policies and (b) the limitations of research considering the PI phenomena from parents' perspectives generally and the lack of research sampling mothers of girls with LD, (c) limitations in PI practices. Each are discussed below.

Regarding PI policies, as will be elucidated in the Context Chapter, there are noticeable efforts to reform special education in Saudi Arabia. Alanazi (2012) explained that Saudi Arabia has declared the rights of children with disabilities and considers education an obligation; therefore, many Saudi policies have been established (Aldabas, 2015; Alquarni, 2011). However, these policies, such as the Saudi Regulations of Special Education Programs and Institutes' (RSEPI)

policy (MOE, 2002) have failed to clarify and emphasise the role of parents in the education of children with SEN. The RSEPI policy has many drawbacks, which are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two (Section 2.3). Hence, it could be suggested that Saudi Arabia does not have a clear, accurate, and comprehensive policy regarding PI. This was also highlighted in Al-Ajmi's (2006) study, which showed that, at that time, PI was not mentioned in special education provision. Consequently, parents may not be fully involved. Dubis (2015) asserted that Saudi parents are not as significantly active in their children's education as they should be and, correspondingly, Aldabas (2015) argued that parents should be better informed of their rights and their responsibility to play an active role in their children's education.

Thus, it could be argued that parents' (in this study, mothers) extensive knowledge and deep perspectives regarding their children (daughters with LD) have not yet been recognised or invested in sufficiently in the Saudi context. In this light, one might wonder why parents' role, rights, and involvement is rarely detectable in Saudi special education policies. An implicit answer to this question is found in Alothman's (2014) study, which demonstrated that the creation of special education policy in Saudi Arabia has been a slow and demanding process. Hence, parents' role may be disregarded.

However, these shortcomings do not indicate that Saudi SEN policies may not be developed and improved. Although PI is still a relatively new concept in the Saudi context, and, until recently, all public schools have required only limited parental involvement, with many parents not actively involved in their children's education at school beyond two annual meetings (Dubis, 2015), the recent Saudi vision of 2030 emphasises the importance of PI (Vision 2030, 2016). Thus, it may be that PI needs more time and better planning to become established.

In the Saudi literature, some studies have emphasised the importance of considering parents' perspectives (Almoghyrah, 2015; Alnaim, 2016). Abed (2014) argued that Saudi parents of children with special needs need support to express their concerns and perspectives. However, Alanazi (2012) showed that, despite efforts made by the Saudi Ministry of Education (MOE) to develop educational provisions for children with SEN, there is little evidence that these changes have taken parents' voices into account. To clarify, in the LD field, most research studies seemed to consider teachers' perspectives rather than those of

parents as shown in Appendix 1. With regards PI, as indicated in the Literature Review Chapter, three studies regarding PI from the teachers' perspective could be found. The perspectives of Saudi parents of children with SEN (including mothers of girls with LD) seem to be missing from the Saudi SEN map. As far as I am aware, no Saudi study has explored PI from the viewpoint of mothers of girls with LD in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Saudi mothers of girls with LD may not, therefore, have been provided with opportunities to express their concerns, needs and opinions regarding their involvement, and Saudi studies centred on perspectives on parents of children with LD are still much needed. It is possible that mothers of girls with LD have not been asked about "what matters to them regarding their involvement in their children's education" (Jackson, 2010, p. 2). There is an absence of appropriate PI policy in the Saudi context and a gap in Saudi PI research and practices, in that parents' (mothers of girls with LD) perspectives have yet to be considered. To familiarise myself with limitations in practices, I met the principal of the Department of Special Education in Riyadh who also indicated that there was a lack of mothers' involvement in their children's education and that the topic needed to be investigated. The findings of this study may raise awareness and afford significant insights to policy makers regarding the importance of redeveloping PI-related policies.

1.4 Rationale and Significance of the Study

The rationale behind conducting this study includes two main elements: (1) my previous academic and professional experiences, and (2) limitations in Saudi research with mothers regarding PI from parents' (mothers') perspectives, as noted above.

Regarding the first aspect, I completed my Bachelor's Degree in Education at King Saud University in Riyadh, with an undergraduate qualification in "learning disabilities". This specialisation is the main reason why I have chosen to study mothers of girls with LD. I have worked as a teacher for girls with LD and as the associate manager of the Inclusion Department of the Saudi Handicap Association, which includes girls with LD. During my professional career, I saw that some mothers of girls with LD attempted to become involved in their daughter's education, yet their involvement was often limited because of teachers' attitudes; some teachers would avoid contacting the mothers when it seemed to be appropriate to do so. Furthermore, some mothers expressed to me

that they felt voiceless and had little input in the decisions made about their daughter's education. This experience was crucial in my development, as it was the first evidence I had seen regarding the current situation of mothers of girls with learning disabilities. I realised that there may be a problem that needed to be explored deeply. I understood that these mothers have a great need for opportunities to express their concerns and viewpoints regarding their involvement in their daughter's education.

My understanding grew when I began my doctoral degree at the University of Exeter. At this stage, in a module about practices and policies in general, I took an influential session regarding the importance of involving the parents of children with special needs in their children's education and the reasons behind the lack of such involvement. This module enhanced my passion for improving parental involvement. Hence, I boosted my knowledge by doing extensive reading regarding parental involvement. I also carried out a small-scale research project that explored parental involvement with two Saudi mothers of children with special needs. The findings indicated that these parents were not satisfied with their involvement in mainstream schools in the city of Riyadh. Although the findings of this small-scale study could not be generalised, I considered them further indicators of a problem. This triggered me to explore the PI phenomena in more depth.

With regard to the second aspect, few studies in the Saudi literature have examined PI. Of those that have, most studies have examined the teachers' perspectives rather than the parents' perspectives, and, as far as I know, no study has considered the perspectives of mothers of girls with LD. Appendix 2 lists the existing Saudi literature regarding PI from the teachers' perspectives (3 items) while Appendix 3 lists the only two studies about PI that have been written from the perspective of parents of children with SEN. A review of these studies will highlight the limitations of exploring this phenomenon from the perspectives of parents of children with LD (e.g., mothers of girls with LD). More details regarding these studies can be found in Section Parental Involvement (PI) in Saudi Arabia.

As a professional educator, I aim to help children (especially girls) with LD to obtain better educational services. Yet, helping girls with LD may require considering their mothers' voices and addressing their needs. I believe in the effectiveness of PI in children's lives, noting that parents who collaborate,

volunteer and participate in making decisions can positively impact on their children's development. Accordingly, Saudi mothers of girls with LD should have the same right as other parents to express their views, and they should be heard as clearly as other stakeholders, including professionals, teachers and administrators.

Therefore, the current study attempted to explore PI from the perspectives of mothers of girls with LD. This mixed methods study, using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, aimed to examine factors influencing mothers' involvement and explore their experiences. This study may enable mothers of girls with LD to voice their perspectives and concerns. It may provide a more in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, offering insights to educators and authorities regarding PI in the Saudi context.

1.5 Purpose & Research Questions

The main aim of this study was to explore the phenomenon of parental involvement from the perspectives of mothers of girls with LD learning disabilities (LD) in primary mainstream schools for girls in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Specifically, this study aimed to examine factors that influence mothers' involvement in their daughters' education and explore the extent to which they were involved. Furthermore, this study aimed to explore mothers' perspectives and experiences of their daughters' education and how they wished to be involved.

The main research questions used to guide this study were:

1. What factors influence parental involvement in mainstream schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia from the perspective of mothers of girls with LD?
2. To what extent do mothers of girls with LD report involvement in their daughters' education in mainstream primary schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia?
3. What are mothers of girls with LD experiences of, and perspectives on, their involvement in primary mainstream schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia?
4. How do mothers of girls with LD wish to be involved in their daughters' education?

1.6 Thesis structure

This thesis is divided into eight chapters. Chapter One is an introduction to the research which includes an overview of the topic under investigation, the nature of the problem, the rationale for the study and the research questions. Chapter Two introduces the context of the study, including the development of special education provision in Saudi Arabia, policies regarding children with special needs and their parents, and the current Saudi Learning Disability Programme (SLDP) provision for children with LD in the Saudi context. Following this chapter is the Literature Review, which presents the conceptual framework used in the current study. The Literature Review discusses the significance of PI for children with SEN and disabilities, and it suggests factors that may influence the PI phenomenon. Chapter Four sets out the methodological assumptions and elucidates the two-phase design of the study in addition to detailing the methods of data collection. The first phase used a survey to collect quantitative data, while the second phase used semi-structured interviews to collect qualitative data. The chapter also explains the method for data analysis and addresses ethical considerations. Chapter Five presents the quantitative findings of the study, while Chapter Six presents the qualitative findings and describes the main themes that emerged from the results. The Discussion Chapter relates this study's findings to other research in the field. The final chapter is the Conclusion, which offers insight into how this research contributes to current knowledge and gives some recommendations as well as describing the strengths and limitations of the study.

Chapter Two: Context of the Study

2.1 Introduction

This chapter sets the context of special education in Saudi Arabia by explaining the current SEN system in terms of policies, services and common practices. This brief explanation demonstrates how mothers, as parents, may be viewed in this system. This chapter begins by outlining the development of Special Education in Saudi Arabia followed by a brief overview of the definition of LD in the Saudi context in contrast to similar concepts (e.g. SPLD, dyslexia) in the UK. The next section provides a description of SEN policies in the Saudi context. The chapter ends with a description of the Saudi Learning Disability Programme (SLDP).

2.2 Concepts and Definitions

As indicated earlier, in this doctoral study the term LD is used as it is applied in the Saudi context. Although LD is not the main focus of this study, it could be considered an essential part of it to some extent. This study is about PI of girls with LD in the Saudi context; hence, a brief clarification of this term is needed. It is also important to shed light on related UK terms such as SPLD and/or dyslexia. This clarification provides initial information regarding similarities and differences between both the terms SPLD and LD in definitions as well as in the diagnosis process. This section presents two main definitions (i.e. SPLD, dyslexia) in the UK context as well as definitions of LD in the Saudi and the US contexts.

As a starting point, it is important to note that the UK term SPLD encompasses different sub-categories, such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) (Turner, 1997; Wedell, 2001). In addition, although LD is the term used in this study, both the British Psychological Society (BPS) and the British Dyslexia Association (BDA) prefer to use the term dyslexia. Table 1 presents an overview of the definitions of dyslexia and LD in the UK, US and Saudi contexts.

Table 1: Summary of SPLD and LD definitions

Context	Source	Phenomenon	Definition
UK	British Psychological Society (BPS, 1999)	*Dyslexia*	*"Dyslexia is evident when accurate and fluent word reading and/or spelling develops very incompletely or with great difficulty. This focuses on literacy learning at the 'word level' and implies that the problem is severe and persistent despite appropriate learning opportunities. It provides the basis for a staged process of assessment through teaching" (BPS, 1999, p. 8).*
UK	British Dyslexia Association (BDA, 2007)	*Dyslexia*	*"Dyslexia is a specific learning difficulty that mainly affects the development of literacy and language related skills. It is likely to be present at birth and to be life-long in its effects. It is characterised by difficulties with phonological processing, rapid naming, working memory, processing speed, and the automatic development of skills that may not match up to an individual's other cognitive abilities. It tends to be resistant to conventional teaching methods, but its effect can be mitigated by appropriately specific intervention, including the application of information technology and supportive counselling" (BDA, 2007, online).*
US	U. S. Office of Education (1977)	LD	*"A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include children who have learning disabilities which are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor handicaps, or mental retardation, or emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage" (U. S. Office of Education, 1977, p. 65083)*
Saudi Arabia	MOE (2002)	LD	*"Disorders in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using spoken and written language which is manifested in disorders in listening, thinking, talking, reading, writing, spelling, or arithmetic and it is not due to factors related to mental retardation, visual or hearing impairments, or educational, social, and familial factors" (MOE, 2002, p. 9).*

Having presented key definitions of LD, an exploration of significant themes is essential. These definitions are similar in clarifying that reading and writing difficulties are not problems in themselves; instead, they are signs of other complex issues. Additionally, all these definitions clarify the phenomenon (i.e. specific learning difficulties and/or LD) followed by an investigation of the underpinning problems (i.e. phonological processing). Accordingly, Table 2 highlights the clear differences that exist between these definitions. For instance, the BPS definition indicates that dyslexia is evident when there are reading or spelling difficulties. This definition includes only the common features of LD. Additionally, the BDA definition clarifies that development of literacy is affected by problems such as phonological processing, working memory, and automatic development of skills. Finally, the US and Saudi definitions underline that numerous learning difficulties indicate a disorder in one of the basic psychological processes.

Table 2: Summary of Selected SPLD and LD Definitions

Source	Phenomenon	Underpinning problems
BPS	Reading or spelling difficulties	None.
BDA	Lack of literacy development	Working memory, automatic development of skills , and Phonological processing.
US & Saudi Arabia	Many learning difficulties, i.e. reading, writing, spelling, or arithmetic	Disorder in one of the basic psychological processes.

In terms of the SPLD identification processes in the UK, several tools are suggested by researchers such as the Bangor Dyslexia Test (Miles, 1997), Dyslexia Screening Test (DST), the Dyslexia Early Screening Test (DEST) (Nicolson & Fawcett, 1996) and Response to Intervention (RTI) (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2001). In contrast, an academic test is used in Saudi Arabia. More details regarding identification process in the Saudi context are provided in Section 2.4.

2.3   Development of Special Education provision in Saudi Arabia

To better understand when children (girls) with LD and their parents (mothers) were first acknowledged, it is helpful to examine the development of SEN in the Saudi context. Unofficial services began in 1953 with individual initiatives taken by three people (Alhusain, Almufda and Alswaid), all of whom were blind. They learned the Arabic Braille alphabet in order to teach reading and writing to other blind citizens (Alothman, 2014; Alshahrani, 2014). However, there were still no formal services for children with SEN. Rather, parents of children with SEN were responsible for meeting their needs (Al-Ajmi, 2006). In 1958, SEN services began to emerge, and the first special education programme for blind students was established (Alquraini, 2011). This programme was funded by a private organisation and was offered in the evening (Aldabas, 2015). In 1960, the Ministry of Education (MOE) established the Al-Noor Educational Institute to educate males with poor vision, blindness or visual impairment (Aldabas, 2015; Almousa, 2010). In 1962, the MOE established the Special Education Division, which aimed to provide vocational education and academic skills for individuals with visual impairment, hearing impairment and intellectual disability (Aldabas, 2015; Almousa, 2010; Alshahrani, 2014).

In 1974, the MOE established the General Secretariat of Special Education (GSSE) (Aldosari, 2013). Since its establishment, many departments have been established in the GSSE, each of which has focused on a particular category of SEN. The departments served students with intellectual disabilities; hearing and speech impairments, including difficulty hearing; visual impairments, including those with low vision ability; learning disabilities; physical and health impairments; autism; attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and multiple disabilities (MOE, 2018). Since then, educating individuals with SEN has continued. In 1990, students with SEN started to be educated in mainstream settings on a very limited scale (Almousa, 2010; Aldosari, 2013). The limitations of this arrangement were evident in the situation of students with LD who were now educated in mainstream schools but without appropriate provision being made for them. In other words, these students lacked special IEP and the services of the resource room. That approach continued until 1996, when the Saudi Learning Disabilities Programme (SLDP) was established in 12 primary schools supervised by 12 teachers specialising in LD (MOE, 2016). The SLDP is a specialist provision

provided by specialist teachers for groups of children with LD to work on their reading and writing for a certain number of hours per week. Further details regarding this program are provided later in this chapter (see SectionSaudi Learning Disability Programme (SLDP) .

2.4   SEN Policy in Saudi Arabia

In recent years, central reforms in terms of educating students with SEN, including their placement, educational equipment and resource rooms have been established. In this light, three laws or legislations regarding children and adults with SEN have been created by the MOE (Aldabas, 2015). In 1987, the first legislation regarding people with disabilities in Saudi Arabia was the Legislation of Disability (Alquraini, 2011). This law included important provisions that assured equality between individuals with SEN and other members of society, and it encompassed several articles that defined different types of impairments. This law also included guidelines regarding the programmes for prevention, intervention, assessment and diagnosis that were to be used to determine eligibility for special education services. Moreover, Legislation of Disability indicated that public agencies must provide rehabilitation services for individuals with SEN that supported their independent living (Alquraini, 2011).

However, it has been argued that this law was too broad and ambiguous. For instance, there were no clear, detailed explanations of the mechanisms of assessment and interventions that schools should follow. The Legislation of Disability may have failed to clarify how these processes should be established in practice and by whom. Additionally, what "eligibility for special education services" means in the Legislation of Disability law is unclear. It seems that the Legislation of Disability failed to provide clear definitions regarding the definition and type of inclusion intended in the Saudi context. Rather, this law referred only to "rehabilitation services" (Alquraini, 2011, p. 150).

In 2000, the Saudi government established a second law, the Disability Code (Alquraini, 2011). This Code emphasised that every person with a disability should have free access to appropriate rehabilitation, educational and mental health services via public agencies (Aldabas, 2015; Alquraini 2011). Conversely, the Disability Code seems vaguer in its use of terminology than was the previous law. In this light, many critical questions are raised: What does the term "appropriate" refer to? Does it refer to providing educational and rehabilitation

services in mainstream schools or special schools? Moreover, how will the "appropriate services" will be determined, and by whom? Will these services by decided individually or by teams? Who decides what constitutes "appropriate services"? Are they parents, teachers, or both? Finally, how are these decisions made and documented? Indeed, it seems that the Disability Code failed to provide clear criteria for how these services would be provided and by whom. In this sense, in this law, as for the Legislation of Disability, parents seem to be invisible.

The third Saudi law is the Regulations of Special Education Programmes and Institutes (RSEPI; MOE, 2002). This law was based on a review of special education policies, including IDEA, in the United States (Alquraini, 2011, 2013). RSEPI is a top-down policy since the preliminary points are the authoritative decisions (Girdwood, 2013). In other words, RSEPI was implemented because people in authority (MOE) introduced the policy for seemingly political reasons rather than establishing the policy to serve target groups (i.e. children with special needs and their parents). RSEPI is a general policy (i.e. regulation, guidance) that encompasses all issues regarding special education (i.e. identification, assessments, definitions) in the Saudi context. It includes 11 articles that present important issues regarding students with SEN. While discussing these articles is outside the scope of this study, it is important to clarify some points in this policy of relevance to this study. For example, Article 9 of RSEPI describes the IEP that should be provided for each student who is eligible for special education services and explains that the IEP should be developed by a multidisciplinary. RSEPI mentions parents as important members of the IEP process, including attending meetings. Therefore, RSEPI may be the first Saudi policy to mention the role that parents of children with special needs play in their education.

Nonetheless, this policy seems to have some limitations. The RSEPI may not clarify other parents' involvement in their children's education. Parents may have more knowledge and skills which they could provide and therefore they may need more opportunities to volunteer, participate in decision-making, communicate with the community, develop their parenting skills, and learn more effective ways of communications with teachers. Additionally, it does not clarify how and the extent to which parents should be involved in IEP preparation and implementation. Parents, like other members in the IEP team, are not sure what

their role is. Al-Kahtani (2015) showed that IEP team members were unsure of their individual roles as required by the RSEPI document.

Moreover, in this article, it is indicated that, "In some cases, the right for parents to refuse recommendations and actions is granted"(RSEPI, 2002, P.73). The words "in some cases" may indicate that parents may not always be allowed to refuse or to express their opinions in these meetings. Finally, RSEPI (2002) seemed to restricted and limited parents' role to that invited by schools. In Table 3:, it can be seen that parents' role is limited to either responding to or obeying what schools demand, rather than playing an active role. Perhaps, the wording in the RSEPI regarding the role of parents does suggest that the power is held by the schools. It could be interpreted that, although the RSEPI mentions PI in relation to IEP, it does not seem to encourage or value two-way communication in relation to PI. This raises several questions: What if schools do not invite parents to participate? What are the consequences if schools do not invite them? Will they be able to participate? Is there a process to ensure that schools do invite parents to involve in these meetings?

Table 3: Roles of Parents in the IEP According to the RSEPI 2002

1. Responding to the schools' invitation to participate in the preparation and implementation of the IEPs and to inform the assessment underpinning individual plans, individual intervention or follow-up of student progress.
2. Cooperating with the school by approving the preparation and implementation of the IEP and the referral of the student to another specialised institution if needed; in some cases, the right of parents to refuse recommendations and actions is granted. Carrying out tasks as requested by the school or IEP team, such as assisting students with their homework and helping them to maintain a certain type of behaviour.
3. Abiding by what the school asks them to do at home, especially in terms of assisting students with performing certain tasks.
4. Respecting all people involved in the schooling of their child when communicating with them.
5. Informing the school of any change in the circumstances of the family or the student from which the student may have benefitted (MOE, 2002).

Al-Nahdi (2007) pointed out that many schools fail to fully comply with the rules and guidelines on assessment and diagnosis set forth in the RSEPI policy. Hence, it could be argued that there may be a gap between the policy and the way it is implemented in practice. Indeed, Al-Kahtani (2015) noted disconnect

between academic practice and the policy guidelines stipulated in the RSEPI document. Since then, not any new policy or legalisation has been established.

Given this situation, certain critical questions could be raised: Where are parents? Why have Saudi policies failed to provide clear provisions regarding children with SEN and their parents? Why there is no clear policy (guidance) regarding PI in these policies? Not surprisingly, there is a little known about what should be added or amended in these policies, including language regarding parents' roles and rights. Alqurani (2011) suggested that policy makers should evaluate existing legislation for students with disabilities and services provided to them.

2.5   Saudi Learning Disability Programme (SLDP)

This section discusses the development of the Saudi Learning Disability Programme (SLDP) and the process of classifying children with LD in the Saudi context. The SLDP was originally established in 12 primary schools and was supervised by 12 teachers specialising in LD (Almousa, 2008; Ministry of Education, 2016). Specialist teachers must work in a school that offers the programme. By 2006, SLDPs had been established in 728 and 498 primary boys' and girls' schools, respectively, serving 15,038 students in total (Alhabib, 2006, as cited in Alnaim, 2016). According to MOE (2016), the Department of Learning Disability's 2016 annual report shows 1,631 SLDPs for boys, and 826 SLDPs for girls, serving 24,951 students (girls and boys). This growth of SLDPs in mainstream schools shows how much attention has been paid to learning disability. As shown in Appendix 4, total number of SLDPs in girls' primary mainstream schools in the city of Riyadh is 178, serving 4,465 girls with LD.

SLDPs have the following aims: (a) identifying students with LD in the mainstream setting, (b) determining their LD educational provision including diagnoses, designing an IEP, and teaching (Alnaim, 2016). The identification process starts with screening and referral, steps initiated only by the LD teacher. In this process, the LD teacher uses two different approaches. First, the teacher reviews a list of all the students who are retaking courses. Second, the LD teacher asks the mainstream teachers for a list of students who have LD (Alnaim, 2016). Once a list of names has been compiled, LD teachers employ specific techniques, such as interviewing students, evaluating students' work and reviewing students' portfolios, to prioritise students.

Afterward, two different kinds of diagnostic test may be used (Alnaim, 2016): an academic test, which is used by all LD teachers since it is the main and compulsory test in SLDPs, and a development test. Once these diagnostic tests have been applied, parents are asked to accept the referral of their children to the SLDP by signing a formal document (Almoady et al., 2013). The students are then registered in the SLDP so that they may be provided with LD resources such as IEPs and receiving education in a resources room (Alnaim, 2016). The resource room is directed by trained LD teachers, where students with LD can access it for a period not to exceed 50% of their normal school day. Since students with LD typically spend half their time in the resource room for academic skills, mainstream classrooms help them develop their social and communication skills (Almoady et al., 2013; Alnaim, 2016).

Accomplishing SLDP goals demands a multidisciplinary team (Alnaim, 2016). This team should include the school leaders, a general teacher, the LD teacher, the parents, and a psychologist (Almoady et al., 2013). This could suggest that parents of students with LD should be a part of the diagnostic process. Unfortunately, this may not be the case. The diagnostic process of students with LD suffers from the lack of multidisciplinary teams (Aldabas, 2015; Alnaim, 2016; Alquraini, 2011), which suggests the absence of parents (i.e. mothers) in this process, despite the importance of their input (Almoady et al., 2013). Abdullah (2003) indicated that in Saudi Arabia, a lack of communication between parents and schools is one of the greatest challenges in the implementation of IEPs. Similarly, Hanafi and Alraies (2008) emphasised that parents need to be given more attention in IEP regulations, given their current lack of involvement. Perhaps, the absence of a written document through which parents can express their awareness, acceptance, and desired involvement in the SLDP may be just one of many reasons for this lack of involvement. According to (Almoady et al, 2013), there is no such document available for parents when SEN services are provided for children. It is possible that if parents were asked to sign such a document, many schools and teachers would pay more attention to PI, as it would then be imposed and protected by law. In turn, hesitation to involve parents may decrease.

The growth in SLDPs does not necessarily reflect the quality of these programmes or how they work. There are no clear guidelines regarding the

mechanism of SLDP operation in schools in terms of the roles and rights of each individual, including parents. Alnaim (2015, p. 1040) argued that "the growing practice should be consistent with a number of pieces of research in order to ensure success, create development based on a scientific basis, take advantage of recent theories, and discover and reform underlying problems". In addition to evaluating the SLDPs, It may be worth exploring the perspectives of the stakeholders, such as the parents (mothers).

2.6 Summary

This chapter briefly clarified the development of the special education provision in the Saudi context and discussed three main Saudi SEN policies: Legislation of Disability, Disability Code, and RSEPI (Alquraini, 2011). This chapter clarified relevant limitations to the RSEPI policy and explained that, despite current provisions and policies, it seems that parents' roles in their children's education have not been clarified well in these policies. Finally, this chapter explored the SLDP and examined the population it serves and its aims.

Chapter Three: Literature review

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into six main sections. It starts with a description of the conceptual framework applied in the current study followed by definitions regarding involvement as a general concept. The third section provides more details regarding parental involvement (PI) and its elements, benefits, and types. The fourth section explores the significance of PI in the SEN field, while the fifth section is a discussion of factors influencing PI. This chapter concludes with a summary.

3.1.1 Literature search process

An exploration of literature for the current study began with an examination of scholarly books, electronic databases, and peer-reviewed journal articles through Exeter University Library, Internet search engines (i.e., EBSCOhost, ProQuest, and ERIC, Saudi Digital Library and British Education Index). I used bibliographies of peer-reviewed articles to search for additional literature. I limited each search to peer-reviewed, full text results with available references. The keywords used during the search were: "parental involvement AND special education", "parent involvement AND students with learning disabilities and/or difficulties", "Saudi studies regarding parent involvement", "parental participation", "family involvement", "special education", "learning disabilities", and "laws in special education". Literature specifically addressing the perceptions of parents (i.e., mothers of girls with LD) regarding their involvement experiences were limited internationally and nationally. During the exploration process, I searched for general studies regarding PI as well as specific studies regarding the SEN population and, more specifically, the LD population. This type of research seemed helpful in identifying general results regarding the phenomenon under exploration (PI) as well as recognising specific results about PI in the SEN field. Additionally, this exploration was helpful in identifying some gaps in the literature regarding PI in the field of SEN.

3.2 Conceptual Framework

This section presents detailed information regarding the conceptual framework used in the current study including its theoretical foundations. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1976, 1979), Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005), and Epstein's (2011) PI model served as the conceptual framework for the study. The section concludes with the justifications for choosing these models and theories as well as an exploration of the connections between them and the topic under investigation (PI).

3.2.1 Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory

Bronfenbrenner (1976) illustrated that individuals are surrounded by a complex system of relationships which impact and change their attitudes and beliefs about certain situations. Bronfenbrenner (1976) described the human environment as a nested structure made up of systems. Each system is contained within the next one and has a great influence on the other.

Figure 1 Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory
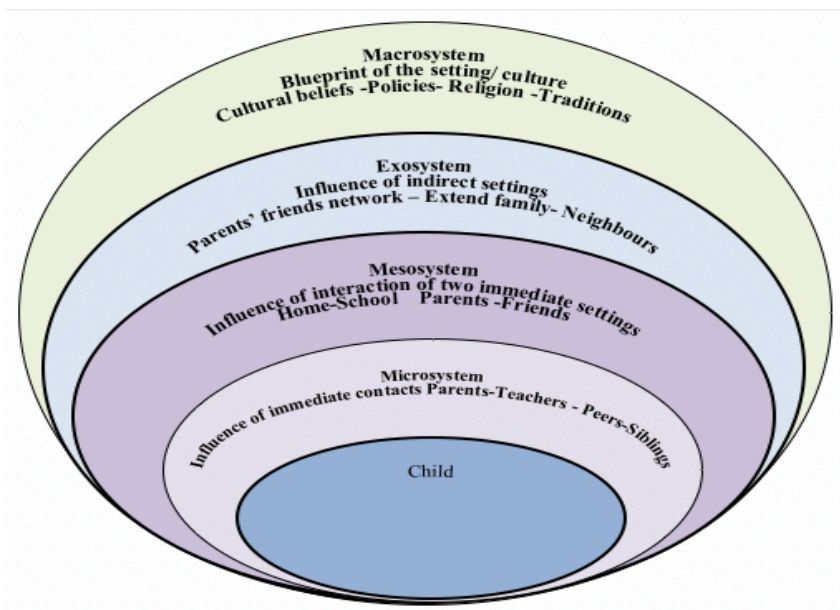
As shown in Figure 1, the child (in this study, a daughter with LD) is at the centre of this model and is influenced by all other systems. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory includes micro-, meso-, exo-, and macrosystems. The *microsystem* includes patterns of roles and activities as well as interpersonal relations experienced by children in different settings and marked by distinct physical or social features. Some of the main settings and institutions comprising

this system include families, schools, peers, and teachers (Bronfenbrenner, 1976, 1994). These institutions are intercommunicative and mutually influential, and the ways in which they communicate consequently impact a child's development. For example, home is one fundamental microsystem which may have great influence on the child's development. Later, a child enters school and communicates with teachers and peers. These relationships have a vital influence on the child's development as well.

The second layer, referred to as the *mesosystem*, involves interrelations between multiple settings (e.g., between the school and home), where children are considered active participants (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). That is, a child's development is enhanced when strong links exist between components of this system. *Exosystem is the third layer in this theory and refers* to "one or more settings that do not involve the developing person as an active participant, but in which events occur that affect, or are affected by what happens in the setting containing the developing person" (Bronfenbrenner, 1976, p. 25). In other words, the exosystem includes environments that have an indirect impact on the child's social development (e.g., the parents' workplace, older siblings' schools, or parents' network of friends).

The fourth layer, the *macrosystem*, can be defined as the "blueprint" of a certain culture or a subculture because it describes cultural characteristics, including the socioeconomics, ethnicities, religious beliefs, traditions, and even the policies in a certain place. Based on the above discussion, this theory suggests that a child's school experience is defined not only by communication with the school or teachers but also by a broader system involving the child's parents, family, and community. Children's development may be influenced by internal factors as well as by families and the surrounding environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1976). Parents and teachers are among the most important people in children's lives. Accordingly, they have a significant influence over children's social and educational upbringing. As a result, partnerships between parents and teachers may positively influence the overall development of children.

3.2.2 Revised Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model

In 1995 and 1997, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler provided their original theoretical PI model, which includes five levels of identified factors that influence parents' decisions to become involved in their children's education (for more details, see Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). Later on, Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler, and Hoover-Dempsey (2005) revised the original PI model, and this revised PI model is the one used in the current study. This PI model provide a psychological lens to develop a better understanding about parents' motivational beliefs and perspectives that inform their involvement.

As shown in Figure 2, the first level includes three main sources that contribute to PI: (a) parents' motivational beliefs, which includes parental role construction and parental self-efficacy; (b) parents' perceptions of others' invitations for involvement, which include general schools', teachers', and children's invitations; and (c) parents' life-context aspects, which include skills, knowledge (e.g., parent education level), time, and energy. All three of these sources influence and shape the second level, which includes different parents' forms of involvement at home or in schools (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). The next section explains the components of the model. More empirical details regarding these three sources appear in section (Influential Factors on Parental Involvement (PI).

3.2.2.1 *Parents' Motivational Beliefs*

The first source that contributes to PI is parents' motivational beliefs, which includes parents' role construction and parental self-efficacy. Parents' *role construction* refers to "parents' beliefs regarding what they would do in relation to their children's education and ways of parental behaviour accorded to those belief (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). In other words, parents' role construction may be related with what parents can do to rear their children effectively and what they do at home to support their children at school and enhance their success.

It could be suggested that parents' role construction may not occur in the absence of interactions with other individuals (e.g., teachers) as it seems to be socially constructed, to grow from parents' experiences with groups or individuals in social settings including schools, and to be shaped by parents' expectations over time (Green, Walker, Hoover-Dempsey, & Sandler, 2007; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Given this understanding, parents make different decisions regarding their involvement based on their beliefs about their roles.

Figure 2 Revised Theoretical Model of the PI Process by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler, & Hoover-Dempsey, 2005)
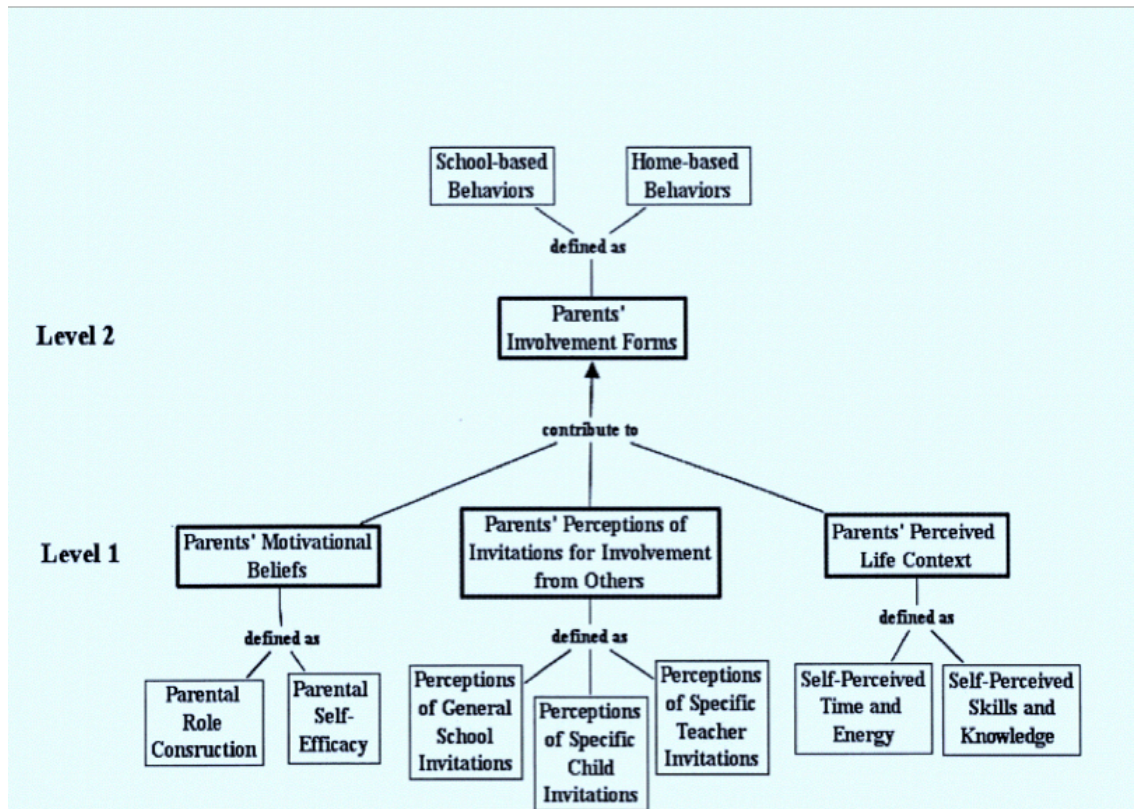
Additionally, parents' self-efficacy is another element of parents' motivational beliefs. *Self-efficacy refers* to a "person's belief that she or he can act in a way that will produce desired outcomes" (Green et al., 2007, p. 533). Parental self-efficacy involves parents' beliefs about their abilities to achieve desirable goals and overcome any obstacles they may encounter. Parental self-efficacy implies that parents make decisions regarding their involvement based on their thinking about the outcomes that will follow their involvement activities (Hoover-Dempsey & Jones, 1997; Walker et al., 2005). Like parents' role construction, parents' self-efficacy is socially constructed by parents' experiences and impacted by their relationships with others. As indicated by Bandura (1977) personal self-efficacy is shaped by three main domains: (a) mastery experiences such as success in achieving goals, (b) vicarious experiences such as observing others' successes in achieving goals in the area, and (c) verbal persuasions such as encouragement from others that one is capable of successful performances. It could be suggested that these experiences may develop more through the mesosystem layer as mentioned in the Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, where relationships between parents and teachers exist.

With this understanding, it is reasonable to assume that parents' positive experiences may enhance their positive beliefs regarding their abilities; as a result, parents may be willing to be more involved in their children's education. Conversely, parents' negative experiences may increase their negative beliefs regarding their abilities, resulting in parents avoiding involvement in their children's education.

3.2.2.2 Parents' Perceptions of Invitations

Invitations (from schools, teachers, and the child) may be key motivators of parents' decisions because they indicate that the parents' participation is welcome and valuable (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). General invitations from the schools should include broad descriptions of the school's attributes and activities and convey to the parents that their involvement is welcome, and that their role is vital in supporting the students' learning and success (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). These general invitations could provide information regarding school events that require parental participation, establish a positive and receptive atmosphere, and engage in other practices which ensure parents are informed about their children's progress (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

Similarly, invitations from teachers may help parents feel more welcome to express their opinions and concerns, and such invitations may enhance their sense of belonging to the school. Teachers' invitations underline that they are valuing parents' contributions to and impact on their children' success (Green et al., 2007; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Both schools' and teachers' invitations help parents to be more willing to offer their knowledge, skills, and efforts as well as to be more involved because they perceive that their roles and efforts are crucially important and appreciated. Furthermore, invitations from the child could be important motivators for parents to be involved in their children's education. These invitations could be implicit, emerging as the child expressing difficulties with homework or learning (e.g., child with LD), or they may be explicit invitations or requests from the child to help in learning and participate in school events (Green et al., 2007; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

3.2.2.3 Parents' Perceptions Regarding Life Contexts

Parents' perceptions regarding their life contexts include two aspects which are: (a) skills and knowledge and (b) their time and energy. Each of these aspects contributes to parents' involvement decisions. Parents' perceptions of their personal skills and knowledge could influence their involvement in their children's education. That is, parents may be motivated to engage in involvement activities if they believe that they have skills and knowledge needed to be helpful in specific domains (Green et al., 2007).

With regard to time and energy, Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, and Burow (1995) suggested that these factors are related to their family responsibilities or work responsibilities. Family responsibilities may include having many children, which may require more effort and may lead to limits on parents' time. Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005) illustrated that parents who have multiple children may be less involved in their children's education, particularly in events which require the parents' physical presence at school. It could be suggested that having a child with a disability be an additional responsibility as well. Perhaps, all these additional obligations may hinder parents' involvement in their children's education in comparison to other parents who have fewer children or who do not have these responsibilities.

Beyond family obligations, working responsibilities (e.g., job restrictions) may influence parents' involvement decisions. Some jobs may have higher demands which limit parents from being actively involved in school events and activities. Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2005) illustrated that parents who have inflexible schedules, work in more than one job, or have jobs that require long hours tend to be less involved than parents who have flexible schedules, only one job, or work fewer hours.

3.2.3 Epstein's PI model (1995, 2011)

Epstein (1995, 2011) provided a PI model that encompasses six detailed types of PI that can help to improve and encourage home–school interaction. These types of involvement include (a) general parenting practices; (b) regular, two-way, and meaningful communication between school and home; (c) volunteering; (d) in-home learning; (e) involvement in school decision-making; and (f) collaborating with the community. Table 4 presents more details regarding each type. This

model has informed the interpretation of PI for a wide range for research (i.e. Al habeeb, 2016; Almoghyrah, 2015; Morrise, 2009).

Table 4 Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Involvement for Comprehensive Programmes of Partnership with Sample Practices (adopted from Epstein, 2011)

Type	Definition	Sample practices
Parenting	Help families establish a home environment to support their children	• Workshops • Training courses
Communication	Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communication about schools' programmes and child's progress	• Conferences with parents at least once a year • Weekly or monthly folders of student work sent home for review and comment • Parent–student pickup report
Volunteering	Recruit and organise parent help and support	• School and classroom volunteer • Family centre for volunteering • Annual postcard survey to identify all available times, talents, and locations of volunteers
Learning at home	Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students with their homework and other curricula	• Information on how to monitor and discuss homework at home • Information on how to assist students to improve skills in many classes and on school assessments
Decision-making	Establish a process of partnership of shared views and actions toward shared goals	• Active Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or other parent organisations for parent leadership and participation • District-level councils and committees for teachers and students to discuss and interact with families • Calendars with activities for parents and students to do at home or in the community
Collaboration with the community	Identify and integrate resources and services from community to strengthen school programmes, family practises and student learning and development	• Information for students and families on community health, cultural, and social support and other programmes

3.2.4 Justifications and related issues (connection between PI models and theories)

I chose the conceptual framework applied in this study for two main reasons. The first justification is the clear link to the research questions provided in section (Purpose & Research Questions). I provide further details on this matter in the next section. The second justification is related to the nature of the topic under investigation. PI as a phenomenon is complex, and it seems to involve several interactions between individuals (e.g., mother, teacher, and child) in different environments (e.g., school, home). Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory may provide an understanding of this complexity. This theory suggests that individuals are surrounded by a complex system of relationships that are affected by five environmental levels (i.e., individual, microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem) which need to be considered when discussing PI. Furthermore, within these complex interactions, different factors influence parents' willingness to be involved in their daughter's education. These factors may include their perspectives and beliefs regarding their roles, abilities, self-efficacy, and invitations from others. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005) may help in explaining these factors. In addition, cultural beliefs may influence parents' willingness to participate. Further explanation can be found in the Discussion Chapter. Finally, Epstein's PI model addresses different types of PI. Exploring what types of PI may occur in the Saudi context may provide a better understanding of PI in the Saudi context.

Moving on, links between the theories and PI models used in this conceptual framework could be made. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model illustrates and explains how parents' beliefs, perceptions, and interactions, which are considered essential factors that impact parents' involvement decisions, seem to be constructed based on their experiences in the micro-, meso-, exo-, and macro- levels in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. Specifically, parents' motivational beliefs fit within the microsystem, parents' perceptions of invitations for participation fit within the mesosystem, and their perceived life context fits within the exosystem. Both Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model may indicate the importance and influence of individuals' environment on their attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions. People tend to act and behave based on what they have

formerly experienced in real situations. Similarly, Epstein's (2011) PI model includes different types of PI which also fit into the micro- (i.e. parenting), meso- (i.e. communication), exo- (i.e. collaboration), and macro-systems. In other words, the different PI types presented in Epstein's PI model occur because of individuals' interactions (e.g., mothers, teachers) in different environments (e.g., home, school).

3.3 Involvement Concept

In this section, I briefly define two main concepts: involvement and engagement. Acknowledging differences between the terms may be necessary to determine which concept may be relevant to the current study.

Laevers (1993) defined *involvement* as:

> *"A quality of human activity, characterised by concentration and persistence, a high level of motivation, intense perceptions and experiencing of meaning, a strong flow of energy, a high degree of satisfaction" (p. 61).*

Based on this definition, involvement as a concept contains several elements. Firstly, it suggests that motivation is an important key to be involved in a certain activity. As indicated above, parental motivational beliefs are an important source for parents' involvement in their children's education. This will discussed further in the discussion chapter. Secondly, determination may be another important element of involvement. To some extent, determination may be related explicitly to individuals' willingness. Individuals' willingness may increase their determination to do something (e.g., be involved in a certain activity). Another definition of *involvement* is "the act of taking part in an activity or event, or situation" (Macmillan Dictionary, 2019). Willingness may be the first step to taking part in certain activities. More details regarding willingness are provided in this chapter

Johnson and Eagly (1990) clarified two types of involvement. The first type is outcome-relevant involvement (ORI), which indicates that an attitude is activated when it is concerned with essential outcomes. The other type of involvement value-relevant involvement (VRI) implies that an attitude is stimulated when it is concerned with important values. Based on this understanding, it could be suggested that having specific concerns, needs, or values, or seeking specific outcomes may be important elements for parents to be involved. People are

involved if they consider an issue to be personally important (Maio & Olson, 1995).

In contrast, *engagement* is defined as "*the feeling* of being involved in an activity" or "a formal arrangement to meet someone or to do something, especially as part of your public duties" (Macmillan Dictionary, 2019). In these definitions, the usage of words such as "feeling of being involved" and "duties" may imply more than just being motivated or willing to participate in certain activities, as involvement was defined earlier. In other words, engagement may indicate that an individual explicitly feels an activity is important or is committed to participating in that activity. Goodall and Montgomery (2014) indicated that

> *"Engagement would seem to encompass more than just activity – there is some feeling of ownership of that activity which is greater than is present with simple involvement. This means that parental engagement will involve a greater commitment, a greater ownership of action, than will parental involvement with schools" (p. 400).*

Based on the definitions provided above, it is possible to identify similarities, differences, and linkages between the concepts of parental involvement and parental engagement. With regard to similarities, both concepts relate to a certain activity in which individuals are involved and/or engaged. An activity does not occur in a vacuum but arises from interactions between individuals and/or groups in one or more contexts (i.e. home and/or school). Based on this understanding, it could be argued that both PI and parental engagement demand interactions between individuals in several activities and in different contexts.

Despite these similarities, the two concepts have some differences and should arguably not be used as synonyms. Specifically, as noted earlier, engagement is considered to be a more comprehensive concept than involvement. On the one hand, engaging in a certain activity – as a result of being committed and/or feelings of ownership – indicates being involved in the first place. In other words, individuals will not feel committed to an activity if they are not motivated to participate in it. On the other hand, being involved in an activity based only on motivation or persistence does not imply being fully engaged, committed and/or experiencing feelings of ownership. Thus, it could be assumed that engagement implies involvement but not the other way around. Applying this understanding to the topic under investigation in this study, parental engagement is more comprehensive than parental involvement.

parental engagement can include the idea of parental involvement and indeed the terms engagement and involvement are often used interchangeably even though they mean different things. Parents can be involved in schools' activities without being engaged in their children's learning. (Harris, Andrew-Power and Goodall, 2009, p. 12)

Despite these differences, involvement and engagement are not incompatible concepts. Instead, a complex continuum would seem to exist between the concepts with involvement at one end and engagement at the other (Goodall and Montgomery, 2014). As a primary step, individuals may be involved in a certain activity because of their motivations and willingness. Because of many influential factors (i.e. communication with others, increasing and/or appreciating their roles and efforts, showing respect), individuals may or may not be able to take further steps to be engaged and feel committed to a particular activity.

Being able to move from the involvement end to the engagement end requires several steps and interactions between individuals and/or groups. Applying this understanding to the topic under investigation (i.e. PI), Goodall and Montgomery (2014) indicated that moving from PI to parental engagement is a continuum process that involves "a web of interactions" (p. 400) that should not be underestimated or considered as a simple line.

"The continuum …. is not a straight pathway, nor is it meant to be seen as such. Rather, it is an attempt to describe a messy web of interactions, so that schools in particular can gauge their own work, and discern where they can move forward to the benefit of their students." (p.400)

To sum, involvement and engagement as concepts may be used in some research studies as synonyms, despite some potential differences. As such, it is better for researchers to use the concept that suits their aims and clarify those aims for the reader to avoid any misunderstanding. Thus, based on the purpose of this study as well as its research questions indicated in the first chapter, I have chosen to use involvement as a concept in the current study. To clarify, involvement as a concept may be viewed as first step for further engagement. In this sense, it is worth a while to explore the extent to which parents are involved in their children education as first step before exploring their engagement.

3.4 Parental involvement (PI)

This section is divided into three main subsections. The first section clarifies how PI as a concept has been defined differently in international literature as well as other related issues such as PI elements and benefits for all parties involved (e.g., children, teachers, parents). This section is followed by a brief clarification regarding PI types.

3.4.1 PI Definitions and related issues (elements, benefits)

Beyond the difference acknowledged between parental involvement and engagement, several terms and concepts in international literature have been used to refer to involvement between parents (e.g., mothers) and schools (e.g., teachers). These terms and concepts include *parental involvement*, *parental participation*, *school–family relations*, *educational partnerships*, and so forth (Driessen, Smit, & Sleegers, 2005). It is worth mentioning that researchers seem to have found PI to be a complex concept to define (Wilder, 2014), and they have noted that it could mean several things to different people (Ascher, 1988; Long, 1986). This complexity may be because this type of involvement is construed with reference to parents, schools, and teachers where each have different perspectives. Additionally, each context varies in the way PI is perceived based upon the individuals' or organisations' goals and needs in that context. However, the complexity of PI has not stopped researchers from suggesting definitions for it.

As a concept, researchers have defined PI differently in international literature (Barton, Drake, Perez, St. Louis, & George, 2004; Cooper; Wolfendale, 1989; Wong, 2008). PI in education refers to participation at school and at home (Christenson, Rounds, & Gorney, 1992). Based on that understanding, it could be assumed that PI binds the two key contexts in children's development, (El Nokali, Bachman, & Votruba-Drzal, 2010). This bond may imply interactions and communication between individuals (e.g., parents and teachers) in these two contexts. This communication is encouraged in the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law, which defined PI as "participation of parents in regular, *two-way*, and meaningful communication involving student academic learning and other school activities". It emphasised that parents:

> a- Play an important role in supporting their child's learning;
> b- Are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education

at school.

c- Are full partners in their child's education and are included, as appropriate, in decision-making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child. (U.S. Department of Education, 2004)

In this definition, communication seemed to be the core of PI. What should be considered about communication in the NCLB definition is the usage of the term "two-way". This term may imply interaction between two individuals (e.g., teachers and parents) in parallel ways rather than one informing the other and/or restricting communication to a single individual; with two-way communication, all parties have the same opportunities to express their concerns and opinions regarding the child's goals and needs. Additionally, two-way communication may explicitly suggest an ongoing process between parents and teachers. It could be suggested that communication plays an important role in PI. Blue-Banning's et al (2004) study, both parents and professionals indicated that PI requires communication, trust, equality, respect, and commitment.

Similarly, Barton et al. (2004) defined PI as a dynamic and interactive process in which parents draw on multiple experiences and resources to define their interactions with schools and among school actors. Perhaps, an interactive process suggest constructive and changeable relationships between parents and teachers. This process may be influenced by each individual's experiences and attitudes. For example, Lombana (1983) noted that, "Because people differ in their backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints they will attach different meanings to words and other forms of communication" (p. 44). It seems that PI is a complex and reciprocal process in which each party should listen to understand the other's perspective. On one hand, if parents appreciate that their voices matter, then schools and teachers are empowering them. On the other hand, information from parents themselves help teachers develop successful strategies for working with all students.

As a dynamic, interactive, and complex process, PI may require collaborative work between all individuals who are in positions of responsibility (i.e. parents, teachers, school principals), all of whom need to understand each other's perspectives and needs. For example, Christenson (2004) stated that shared responsibility between schools and individuals in these schools (e.g., teachers) is required in family–school relationships. This understanding may imply

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everyone should work together to achieve success. Similarly, Dardig (2008) noted:

> *"Parent involvement doesn't just happen spontaneously. It takes a systematic and continuous effort on all parts of the educational team, including school administrators, teachers, specialists, and of course parents themselves. Parent involvement doesn't happen all at once, and teachers need to take into consideration the needs, desires, and possible challenges presented by each family"* (p. 2).

Furthermore, Wong (2008) defined PI as "the extent to which parents are interested in, knowledgeable about, and willing to take an active role in the day-to-day activities of the children" (p. 497). In this definition, PI seems to depend mostly on parents' characteristics and attitudes (i.e. knowledge, willingness, being interested) rather than emphasising others' (e.g., teachers') attitudes, which also seems to be important. Wolfendale (1989) offered another definition of PI by explaining that "parental involvement is usually associated with the concerns of parents to offer support to their children in school" (p. 91). This definition appears to link PI with parents' concerns regarding their children, which may be an important element (or motivator) in the involvement of parents in their children's education, particularly in a SEN context.

Despite variations in defining PI presented above, it could be suggested that ideally PI benefits all parties, including children (students), teachers, and parents. With regard to students, a considerable amount of research has indicated the influence of PI on students' achievement and behaviour. Children of involved parents often have better attendance, higher grades in math and reading, and fewer behaviour problems; in addition, PI may lead to more accurate placement decisions and higher degrees of satisfaction for parents and students (Hiatt-Michael, 2001). In a similar vein, Jeynes (2012) conducted a meta-analysis to examine how schools' programmes for PI positively influence prekindergarten through 12th-grade students. Jeynes's findings (2012) revealed relationships between parental involvement programmes for students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade and the academic success of those students.

Additionally, PI processes provide teachers the opportunities to communicate with parents where valuable information could be exchanged (Pelletier & Brent, 2002). This information give teachers clues and insights about their students' needs, strengths, and weaknesses, resulting in the development of better activities and goals (LaRocque, Kleiman, & Darling, 2011). Finally, parents may

gain greater understanding and knowledge of their children and the ability to help them (Bond, 1973); be more confident (Epstein, 1995); and have better self-efficacy and greater appreciation for their role (Davies, 1993; Hoover- Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). Involving parents may help them recognise that their role as a primary teacher to their children has not been diminished or decreased. Rather, their knowledge about their children is still appreciated and considered. Hence, parents may develop more positive views about teachers as professionals (Georgiou, 1996), which might help parents to have a better understanding about schools' programmes, policies, and activities (Epstein, 2011).

It is worth mentioning that, in order to achieve PI benefits, several elements are needed in this process. Researchers have widely discussed PI elements in the literature. An individual's willingness may be another important element in the PI process. Willingness may be the foundation to communicate, negotiate, respect others' views, and follow written policies Wolfendale (1989, p. 5) indicated the importance of willingness to negotiate and share information between parents and teachers. Additionally, Williams and Chavkin (1989) concluded that efficacious PI programmes should include seven common elements: (a) written policies, (b) administrative support, (c) training, (d) a partnership approach, (e) two-way communication, (f) networking, and (g) evaluation. It could be suggested that all indicated elements are important in the PI process, yet the elements identified by Williams and Chavkin (1989) seemed to be more comprehensive.

3.4.2 PI types

PI may involve different activities which could be divided into two main types: home-based PI and school-based PI (Pomerantz, Moorman, & Litwack, 2007). PI at school includes attending parent–teacher conferences, attending programmes featuring students, and engaging in volunteer activities. PI at home includes providing help with homework, discussing the child's schoolwork and experiences at school, and structuring home activities (Lee & Bowen, 2006). An important point that could be made is that different PI types are explicitly related to how parents are perceived by schools and/or teachers. On one hand, schools and/or teachers perceive parents as partners who could be involved in decision-making concerning their children's education. Perceiving parents as partners requires more involvement in school activities. On the other hand, schools might perceive parents as helpers in their children's homework, which may limit their

involvement to home only. In this regard, Hornby (2000) clarified that parents might be perceived as helpers, fundraisers, clients, consultants, governors, or recipients of information. In contrast, Henderson (1986) stated that parents can also be partners, collaborators, problem-solvers, supporters, advisers, and co-decision-makers. These different perceptions regarding parents could be linked to Epstein's PI types. For example, in the parenting type, parents may be perceived as helpers, while in the decision making type, they may be perceived as partners.

To sum, the sections above explore and discuss the presentation of PI in international literature in terms of definitions, benefits, elements, and types. The section below explores more details regarding PI in the Saudi context.

3.5 Parental Involvement (PI) in Saudi Arabia

PI is considered a new phenomenon in both general and special education in the Middle East (Dubis, 2015), including Saudi Arabia. As a starting point, it is important to present what PI means in both general and special education in the Saudi context. This section starts with information regarding parents' roles in general education as well as their communication with their children's schools. Later, I explore the limited information available regarding the roles of parents of children with SEN. Such information may explicitly suggest how parents are involved in their children's education.

A mixed methods study conducted by Alhabeeb (2016) with Saudi families in elementary schools in the United States offered some information regarding parents' roles in general education. Alhabeeb's findings showed that Saudi parents' educational roles and responsibilities centred on monitoring children's homework as well as teaching, directing, and tutoring in order to prepare them for exams. With regard to communication between parents and schools, conferences between them were held approximately twice a year for parents whose children were struggling academically. Outside of these meetings, parents were contacted—and immediate PI was required—only if their children were displaying unacceptable social or behavioural practices (Alhabeeb, 2016).

With regard to parents' roles in special education, Aldosari (2013) clarified that mothers of children with intellectual disabilities are typically the primary caregivers and accountable for their children's rearing and education. They are likely to be the ones who are most aware of their children's educational,

behavioural, and physical difficulties. Similarly, Alariefy (2017) conducted a qualitative study using individual interviews and focus groups with parents of children with special needs and disabilities. Findings indicated that mothers bore most responsibility for the care of children.

However, it is worth mentioning that detailed information regarding parents' roles in special education may be limited for two reasons. The first reason may be related to the absence of a clear and accurate PI policy in Saudi special education provisions, except the RESPI, which has its own limitations, as indicated earlier. As indicated by Al-Ajmi (2006), Saudi Arabian special education provisions have not mentioned PI in special education. This may not be surprising since "current special education laws in Arab countries give little attention to parents of children with special needs" (Hadidi & Al Khateeb, 2015, p. 526). Perhaps, this absence may suggest that parents' roles may not be identified or clarified sufficiently. Further details regarding policies are provided in section (Policies). The second reason may be related to what was indicated earlier in (Section Rationale and Significance of the Study) regarding limitations in research which explores the PI phenomenon generally and specifically from parents' perspectives (e.g., mothers of girls with LD) in comparison to studies from teachers' perspectives.

Additionally, to my knowledge, no study has examined or explored the perspectives of mothers of girls with LD in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. As shown in Appendix 3, only two Saudi studies have explored PI from the perspectives of parents of children with SEN. In the first, Fouzan (1986) conducted a survey design regarding the involvement of parents of children with mental retardation in their children's education. Findings showed that the total level of PI was very low. Another qualitative case study design conducted by Dubis (2015) investigated the perspectives of parents of children with autism and of special education teachers about the use of e-mail as a tool to improve PI. Findings indicated that both teachers and parents exhibited positive attitudes toward using e-mail to increase communication. However, the study also showed that parents were not actively involved in their children's education the way they should be (Dubis, 2015). The findings indicated that public schools required limited PI that involved meetings with all parents twice a year. Most parents' involvement was limited to receiving negative reports regarding their children's behaviours or education so that they would work to improve these problems at home. Based on

these findings, it could be suggested that parents have limited communication with their children's schools and teachers as well. Further details regarding communication can be found in section (Communication). Additionally, it is worth mentioning that even these two studies from parents' perspectives did not use mixed methods designs like the one applied in the current study. This discrepancy may not be surprising since most research on special education in Saudi Arabia has depended on questionnaires as a data collection method (Al-Wabli, 1996; Hanafi, 2005).

Recently, PI has gained some attention from authorities in Saudi as it seems to be one of the main goals in the Saudi Vision 2030 (2016). Hopefully, within this Saudi vision, parents may have clear and legal roles that assure their participations in their children's education. Saudi Vision 2030 established:

> *"We want to deepen the participation of parents in the education process, to help them develop their children's characters and talents so that they can contribute fully to society. Families will also be encouraged to adopt a planning culture, to plan carefully for their future and the futures of their children" (p. 28).*

3.6 Significance of PI in Special Education

Before discussing the significance of PI, it is worth indicating that, when I searched for studies regarding PI in the field of SEN in international literature, as shown in Appendix 5, I determined that some research studies – mostly quantitative in design – concerned the perspectives of parents with children with SEN (i.e. intellectual disability, autism) as a homogeneous group. Conversely, I found only limited international research studies concerning parents of children with LD.

This section starts with a brief introduction regarding the importance of parents in their children with SEN's life. Later, it provides several justifications (i.e., educational, psychological, and political) regarding the significance of PI for parents of children with SEN. As indicated earlier in the section on Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, home is one important and influential environment that should be considered when discussing a child's development. As Mittler (1987) noted, "Growth and learning in children can only be understood and fostered in relation to the various environments in which the child is living and learning. We can neither study nor teach the child in isolation"

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(p. 177). This importance may involve individuals who live in this environment (e.g., parents, siblings). Based on the aims of this study, the focus is parents.

Parents are present daily in their children's lives (Pelletier & Brent, 2002) and may play an important role in providing their children with necessary skills, values, and social and emotional support that prepare them to succeed educationally and socially (Comer & Haynes, 1991; Epstein, 2011; Henderson, 1986). Involving parent may not be limited only at home. That is, parents could play critical roles in children's success during the school years (Klein & Ballantine, 1999; LaRocque et al., 2011). Based on the importance of PI, it could be assumed that involving parents, including those of children with SEN, in their children's education is important as well. Researchers have widely discussed the significance of PI in the special education field. This significance may be related to several educational, physiological, and political aspects, which are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

3.6.1 Educational aspects

Children with SEN may be perceived as a homogeneous group, but each child may have unique educational needs that should be addressed and considered. However, addressing their needs requires advocating for their rights. These children, in particular, need more help than other children since they could be viewed (in some contexts) as vulnerable (LaRocque et al., 2011). In this case, those children need their parents to advocate for their rights (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Advocating and battling metaphors are common themes in research with mothers of children with disabilities (Rogers, 2011). Advocacy is an imperative tool that parents of children with disabilities usually develop so that their voices will be heard throughout the special education process (Bacon & Causton-Theoharis, 2013). Often, parents attempt to use advocacy when their children may not get the best special education services, may be ignored in a class, or may be facing any other educational or social problems that require their parents' support. It could be suggested that PI is needed to activate parents' roles and enable them to advocate for their children's needs and rights.

Additionally, involving parents of children with SEN and disabilities seems to be imperative because of their great influence in their children's development (Al-Shammari & Yawkey, 2008), resulting in academic and social benefits for students (Frew, Zhou, Duran, Kwok, & Benz, 2013). Parents could identify their

children's strengths, weaknesses, and needs that should be addressed and considered. This may not be surprising since parents hold key information and play fundamental roles in their children's education (Rogers, 2011). Teachers should therefore appreciate parents and understand that students' learning and behaviour can be made better and more fruitful only by getting their parents involved (Macbeth, 1989).

A mother of a child with special needs in Baker's (1997) study stated that:

> *"I think every special education teacher should sit down with the mother and get the history of the child and strengths and weaknesses. The parent has the very knowledge the teacher needs. That when shared with those teachers, can make their job easier and give the children a better chance at success". (p. 135)*

3.6.2 Psychological aspects

To some extent, parenting a child with a disability could be viewed as an upsetting experience for two reasons. Firstly, those parents may have lost their dream of having a healthy and typical child (Hornby, 2000); therefore, they experience enormous emotions such as shock, denial, anger, sadness, and stress. Reio and Forines (2011) stated that parents of children with SEN often experience a high degree of stress with regard to their children's futures. Similarly, Fitzpatrick and Dowling (2007) stated that parents of children with learning disabilities have higher stress levels than parents of nondisabled children because of many factors such as the visibility of the disability, the child's educational placement, and a lack of support and coping interventions. To some extent, parents' stress implicitly decreased through PI. Perhaps when parents are involved in their children's education (e.g., through communication, decision-making, volunteering), which they are concerned and stressed about the most, they feel their roles, knowledge, and opinions are being considered and appreciated. Therefore, parents' stress decrease. Reio and Forines (2011) indicated that, if parents are deeply involved in the education of their children with SEN, the parents' stress levels might be reduced and satisfaction might increase.

The second reason is that having a child with a disability could be perceived as a burden on parents because of the additional responsibilities and needs they might face. Hornby (2000) illustrated that having a child with a disability may be challenging to parents since they might need to understand their child's disabilities, to learn how to access relevant health and educational services, and

to be involved at every stage in the identification and assessment of their children (Russell, 2003). It could be suggested that one way to help those parents address their additional responsibilities is to involve them in their children's education. PI provides different activities that aid parents to have a better understanding of their children's special needs and disability, and thereby develop better educational strategies that their children need. Turnbull and Turnbull (1990) stated that establishing parent–professional partnerships may help parents to learn more about their children's disabilities, discover additional resources that they are unfamiliar with, and gain information about their rights. Likewise, Russell (2003) conducted a qualitative study where parents of children with special needs were interviewed and clarified that, through equal relationships, parents can gain a better understanding of their child's disability and its implications, which allow them to work effectively to face its challenges.

Additionally, PI helps addressing – to some extent – other needs expressed by parents of children with SEN (e.g., communicating, having a voice, being respected). These needs were identified in several studies. For example, in Chrispeels's (1996) study, parents of children with SEN emphasised their need for greater communication with teachers as well as more opportunities to meet them and to share in their knowledge and expertise. Similarly, Hodge and Runswick-Cole (2008) reported that parents of SEN suggested that they needed more communication with teachers and to be encouraged to express their opinions. Furthermore, in their study, Murray, Handyside, Straka, and Arton-Titus (2013) clarified that "parents want to be respected, understood, and valued in the educational decision-making process for their child with a disability" (p.166). Furthermore, parents of children with SEN need their voices to be heard, and some have asked to have "more say in school and classroom" (Chavkin & Williams, 1987). Additionally, Hornby (2000), parents want certain things from the teacher, namely more (a) communicating; (b) consulting; (c) listening to their point of views; and (d) discussing their children's progress.

3.6.3 Political aspects

PI is considered a keystone of special education policies and best practices (Frew et al., 2013); meaning parents have legal rights to be involved in their children's education. This concept has been promoted in most Western countries. For example, in the United States, most general and special education legislation emphasises PI (IDEA, 2004; U.S. Department of Education, 2003, 2004), and NCLB (U.S. Department of Education, 2003) ensures that parents of children with special needs and disabilities are vital members of their children's educational team; additionally, their participation is considered a priority. Similarly, as indicated earlier in Section 0, documents in the United Kingdom have emphasised the term "partnership with parents" (DFS & DoH, 2015; leglisation.gov.UK, 2014).

Despite these policies, limitations in PI seemed to be evident in international and national literature. From international perspectives, Spann, Kohler, and Soenksen (2003) conducted a study using telephone surveys with families of children with autism. Their findings showed that many parents explained that they had little or no involvement in their children's special education services. Furthermore, Bryan, Burstein, and Bryan (2001) reported that parents of students with learning disabilities are less involved in the supervision of their adolescents or any learning activities at home, in comparison to parents in general education. Likewise, Cavendish and Connor (2018) noted that parents of children with learning disabilities have passive roles in the IEP process.

From a national perspective, and in Saudi Arabia in particular, Alquraini (2011) indicated that special education teachers typically identify the strengths and weaknesses of children with disabilities and set up their goals in the IEP without parents' involvement. Likewise, Abed (2014) and Fouzan (1986) implied that Saudi parents rarely participate in meetings with teachers. Participants in these Saudi studies, however, included only parents of children with mental impairments and autism. Little is known regarding parents of children with learning disabilities and what obstacles they may face in their involvement.

Based on the above, despite the importance of PI in the education of children with SEN, international and national evidence has identified limitations in practice which may be related with many behavioural, social, educational, and political factors. The following sections present further discussion regarding these factors.

3.7 Influential Factors on Parental Involvement (PI)

3.7.1 Teachers' factors

3.7.1.1 Teachers' preparation

Teachers are "responsible for communicating and supporting parents who share a common goal of nurturing their children and helping them achieve to the highest degree possible" (Dardig, 2008, p. 3). Teachers should attempt to communicate effectively with parents regardless of parents' race, education, or other external factors (Epstein, 2011). However, communicating with parents may not be straightforward. Hornby (2000) indicated that teachers should have good interpersonal communication skills in order to work effectively with parents and improve levels of collaboration with them. Teachers, therefore, need to be provided opportunities to boost their communication skills through teacher preparation programmes.

It could be suggested that teacher preparation programmes could provide courses regarding communicating with parents of children with SEN. Such preparation courses could help teachers develop sufficient rapport with parents, communicate effectively with them, and make parents aware of different ways to enhance their involvement in their children's education. Murray and Curran (2008) report on the Intensive Extensive Collaborative Learning Program (IECLP), developed, in the United States at Bowling Green State University, to provide students with opportunities to interact with parents of children with disabilities in a college course to develop knowledge, abilities, and dispositions for parent partnerships. Findings showed that students who took this course felt more prepared and comfortable after attending a class with parents of children with special needs, recognised and valued the experiences of parents of children with disabilities, and attempted to use that knowledge in promoting effective parent–professional partnerships (Murray & Curran, 2008). Similarly, Lam (2005) conducted a study using responses to pre- and post-questionnaires and reflection papers. Lam (2005) found that the participating teachers reflected positively on the requested courses they attended and felt more confident to work with parents who have children with special needs.

Despite the benefits discussed above, limitations in teacher preparation programmes are evident in the literature (Hiatt-Michael, 2001; Staples & Diliberto, 2010). In a review of the literature, Hiatt-Michael (2001) indicated that standards

or courses on family involvement issues were not required in most states' teacher certifications in the United States. Based on these findings, it could be suggested that some teachers may lack the necessary knowledge to communicate with and involve parents of children with SEN and disabilities. Perhaps, teachers' knowledge limitations might make them feel anxious about encouraging parents to participate at school (LaRocque et al., 2011).

Likewise, in the Saudi context, Saudi teachers have made clear their dissatisfaction with the Saudi teachers' preparation programmes. In a study conducted by Althabet (2002), special education teachers indicated that they felt they were not well-prepared. Likewise, Alnahdi (2014) illustrated that teachers had negative impressions of their training programmes. Hussain (2009) also stated that Saudi special education teachers felt that many aspects of their teaching were not sufficiently addressed in the coursework provided by the Department of Special Education at King Saud University; additionally, these teachers expressed that they needed more information about developing IEPs and understanding the need for collaboration with school administrators and parents.

In this sense, it could be suggested that some Saudi special education teachers are not communicating and/or involving parents of children with SEN sufficiently. This suggestion is implicitly relevant considering Alquraini's (2011) confirmation that Saudi teachers in public schools may be particularly unprepared for inclusive education and may not know how to address the needs of students and parents with diverse characteristics. Alquraini (2011) emphasised that "colleges should educate special education teachers about the importance of their collaboration as the key to successful inclusion" (p. 153).

3.7.1.2 Teachers' beliefs and attitudes

Teachers are important individuals who communicate with parents (e.g., mothers of girls with LD) regarding their children. In this regard, it could be suggested that teachers' beliefs and attitudes is an important influential factor on PI and is an implicit signs of what roles parents may be allowed to play (Yoshida, Fenton, Kaufman, & Maxwell, 1978). Teachers' attitudes and beliefs is either positive or negative and, therefore, influence parents' involvement differently as well. On one hand, some teachers might consider the importance of parents' knowledge and believe parents can assist them as knowledgeable partners in their children's

education (Becker & Epstein, 1982; Epstein, 2011). Blue-Banning et al. (2004) clarified that Hispanic special education teachers emphasised the importance of empowering parents to participate equally in serious decisions for their children and stated that teachers need to share information with families.

However, this is not always the case. Some teachers might believe that involving parents is not part of their job description (Eccles & Harold, 1993) and is not a central aspect of their teaching job (Blok, Peetsma, & Roede, 2007). Teachers with such beliefs may consider involving parents to be an extra burden, as noted in a Hong Kong case study by Ng (2007), where some of the interviewed teachers indicated that the work of communicating or working with parents was part of an extra workload. Teachers are often heavily burdened with many teaching duties, as indicated in a qualitative study conducted by Pena (2000) on PI among Hispanic families. Perhaps, given teachers' many responsibilities, they might avoid communicating with and/or involving parents. Conversely, it could be argued that communicating with parents is one of their main responsibilities and that ignoring their roles and needs should not be an option. For example, a survey study conducted by Xu and Gulosino (2006) in U.S. kindergartens among children, parents, teachers, and school administrators showed that being a good teacher included a commitment and ability to establish different types of communication between family and school.

Additionally, some teachers believe they have superior knowledge compared to parents because teachers are the experts. Hodge and Runswick-Cole (2008) indicated that "professionals continue to adopt the exclusive position of expert and by doing so remain all powerful" (p. 643). Within such perceptions and beliefs, teachers might believe that the responsibility for teaching students or setting goals is not something that teachers should share with parents. This view might imply that teachers may value their knowledge and disregard parents' roles. Rogers (2011) argued that "professionals do not necessarily include the mother's important and relevant knowledge" (p. 574). Similarly, in a qualitative study conducted by Fylling and Sandvin (1999) on Norwegian elementary schools with parents, teachers, headteachers, professionals in special education, findings showed that teachers controlled all decisions with no obligation to heed parents' views of the child's needs. It is worth bearing in mind that this might have changed since that study was conducted.

Furthermore, some teachers might believe that involving parents could be problematic and threaten their professional status (Pena, 2000). In other words, they may feel that involving mothers might raise more questions and result in mothers making demands and sometimes even criticising teachers' performance. Parents may have disagreements about the assessment results for their children, they may ask for second opinions or even refuse their children's participation in educational programmes (Hornby, 2000). Therefore, teachers may avoid establishing relationships with parents and prefer to keep a professional distance from parents since they do not want to be questioned, blamed, or criticised. Similarly, in Blok et al.'s (2007) study in Northlands, the authors used a telephone survey and in-depth interviews with a sample of parents of children with special needs and found that parents perceived teachers to have diverse feelings regarding PI, mostly when such involvement led them to become a focus of criticism.

With regard to the Saudi context, Dubis (2015) asserted that teachers' beliefs about PI are important factors that may influence communication between parents and teachers. Interestingly, teachers' perceptions and attitudes regarding communication with parents seem to vary. On one hand, Almoghyrah (2015) conducted a study using a questionnaire to examine male teachers' perceptions regarding PI in the education of male children with mild cognitive disabilities in Saudi Arabia. Findings showed that, based on teachers' perceptions, parents were highly likely to collaborate with them, which may implicitly indicate positive teachers' beliefs toward communicating with parents. On the other hand, some teachers in Dubis's study (2015) were suspicious of parents' participation and did not trust their knowledge, which may imply negative beliefs regarding their involvement.

One possible reason behind teachers' perceptions and attitudes toward PI may be their self-efficacy. Teachers' self-efficacy refers to "teachers' beliefs in their own ability to plan, organize, and carry out activities that are required to attain given educational goals" (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010, p. 1059). It could be suggested that teachers' self-efficacy might influence the way they communicate with and/or involve parents. Perhaps, teachers who are confident about their abilities might be able to provide more opportunities to involve and communicate with parents in contrast to teachers with low perceptions regarding their abilities.

This might not be surprising since Bandura (1997) indicated that teachers who are secure in their self-perceived capabilities often attempt to invite and support parents' educational efforts. Several studies and articles have discussed relations between teachers' self-efficacy and invitations. For example, Garcia (2004) used questionnaires to examine the perceived self-efficacy of elementary school teachers in Florida. This study found that teachers who perceived themselves as more efficacious did more to involve parents in their children's education. Similarly, in their article entitled "Guidelines for Successful Parent Involvement, Working with Parents of Students with Disabilities", Staples and Diliberto (2010) confirmed that teachers' positive beliefs and high sense of efficacy are crucial since they may build effective partnerships between teachers and parents.

In the Saudi context, Alkhateeb (2014) conducted a mixed methods study using interviews and survey with schools' principals regarding teachers' knowledge. Findings showed that teachers' responses overall indicated a lack of self-efficacy and confidence in teaching students with learning disabilities. Low self-efficacy with students might implicitly suggest low abilities to work with, communicate with, and invite parents as well. Further details on this matter can be found in the Discussion chapter.

3.7.2 Parents' factors

3.7.2.1 Parents' beliefs

As indicated earlier in this chapter, parents' beliefs regarding themselves (e.g., role construction and self-efficacy) in Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model may play an important role in their involvement decisions. With regard to role construction, parents who believe in their roles and what they can provide in relation to their children's education may attempt to be more involved. A study conducted by Sheldon (2002) using a survey with mothers of students in elementary school showed that parental role construction can be considered a strong a predictor for PI. Conversely, parents who have low expectations regarding their roles may be less involved in their children's education.

With regard to parents' self-efficacy, in a longitudinal study, Levin et al. (1997) indicated that mothers who believed that their help would be beneficial attempted to provide more assistance to their children in contrast to mothers who did not believe in their abilities and did not think that their help would promote their children's learning. Based on this finding, parents' willingness to be involved in

their children's education may be influenced by their self-efficacy, and they might avoid becoming involved if they do not believe in their own ability to help. Parents with such beliefs may not view themselves as educators, recognise the importance of their role, or understand their influence on their children's development (Potter, 1989).

As far as I know, no Saudi study has focused on Saudi parents' self-efficacy. However, Dubis (2015) provided implicit findings that parents were less involved because they believed that their input and feedback about their children's progress had been ignored by teachers. This might result in low perceptions regarding their abilities.

3.7.2.2 Parents' perceptions of invitations

In Pena's (2000) study, some parents wanted to be involved, but they did not know how or what was required, which may indicate that some parents need others to take the first step. Perhaps, teachers' and schools' invitations might be considered one important step. Ng and Lee (2015) stated that teachers and schools might take an active role to communicate and invite parents to be partners in their children's education. Parents might perceive such invitations as a message welcoming parents' attendance at the school, knowledge and involvement.

Concerning teachers' invitations, Epstein (2011) found that, when teachers actively encouraged PI, parents were most efficiently involved. Similarly, Eccles and Harold (1993) found that teachers with positive attitudes toward involving parents encouraged more parents to become involved and increased the effectiveness of PI. However, this might not be always the case. Some teachers might not have such positive attitudes toward inviting parents. In a qualitative study conducted by Baker (1997) on parents of children with and without disabilities, findings indicated that some parents were not involved because they felt unwelcome in the classrooms. Interestingly, teachers' invitations might be implicitly related with teachers' attitudes, as discussed earlier. That is, if teachers have positive attitudes toward involving parents and communicating with them as partners, they may extend more invitations. Epstein and Dauber (1991) conducted a study with teachers in inner-city elementary and middle schools which aimed to examine connections between school programmes of PI, teachers' attitudes, and practices that teachers use to involve parents. Findings

showed that teachers with more positive attitudes placed more value on providing parents with feedback about their child and on communicating with them regarding school programmes (Epstein & Dauber, 1991). Importantly, teachers who demonstrated more positive attitudes were more likely to effectively include parents (Epstein & Dauber, 1991).

Aside from teachers' invitations, schools' invitations might have a significant influence on motivating parents to be involved in their children's education. Schools could provide many opportunities that enhance PI, such as expanding volunteering events (Blackman & Mahon, 2016), offering social events or regular invitations (Reynolds, 1992), and conducting workshops about parenting (Epstein, 2011). Despite the importance of schools' invitations on enhancing parents' motivation, the literature indicated limitations in schools' invitations. From an international perspective, one study conducted by Hodges (2013) using a survey on parents of children with SEN showed that most parents did not believe that teachers and administrators invited them to share their knowledge and experience with the school. In Saudi Arabia, Almoghyrah's (2015) findings revealed that parents may not participate simply because schools and teachers do not invite them to any activity.

One important factor that might influence schools' invitations is the school system. To some extent, in bureaucratic systems, invitations to parents may be limited. It could be suggested that bureaucratic schools may not be able to enhance collaboration between parents and teachers since parents' (i.e., mothers') importance might be ignored (Rogers, 2011). Ware (1994) indicated that "the traditional bureaucratic organization of schools, hierarchical authority and well-established power structures will further undermine the potential for meaningful collaboration" (p. 340).

Based on the above, it could be suggested that teachers' and schools' invitations may influence parents' involvement decisions. However, what seems more interesting is factors that might influence both teachers and parents. Perhaps, teachers' and parents' willingness might be an important factor which influence their communication. That is, teachers' willingness influences their invitations to parents, while parents' willingness might influence their perceptions of these invitations and eventually their decisions to be involved.

3.7.2.3 Parents' perceptions of life context

3.7.2.3.1 Skill and knowledge

In a sample of parents of early elementary (first and second grade), late elementary (fourth and fifth grade), and middle school (seventh and eighth grade) students from a public school district in the Midwestern United States, Campo (2011) found that parents who do not feel they have the knowledge and skills to help their child may be less involved in home activities than parents who feel they have skill and knowledge which allow them to be involved in their children's education. Parents' skills and knowledge may be related to parents' levels of education. Green et al. (2007) stated that parents' educational level may influence their beliefs as to whether they have appropriate skills and knowledge to participate in different PI activities. Parents who are more educated are generally more involved at school and at home in contrast with parents who are less educated (Eccles & Harold, 1993; Epstein, 2011; Epstein & Dauber, 1989; Stevenson & Baker, 1987). Stevenson and Baker (1987) clarified that:

> *"More highly educated mothers have better knowledge about their children's school performance, have more contact with their teachers, and are more likely to take action, when necessary, to manage their child's academic achievement" (p. 1349).*

In contrast, parents who are less educated may feel they lack the needed skills to be involved in their children's education and to communicate with teachers effectively. Greenwood and Hickman (1991) illustrated that some parents believe that they do not have the needed knowledge and skills to be involved in volunteer work in the classroom. Accordingly, some parents are reluctant to work closely with teachers and avoid getting involved. For example, LaRocque et al.'s (2011) findings revealed that parents were avoiding involvement because of their education levels.

3.7.2.3.2 Time and energy

Several studies have shown how time and energy could influence parents' involvement decisions. Green et al. (2007) tested parent perceived time and energy within a broader model of PI and found it significantly predicted PI both at home and at school. More precisely, parents who reported having more restrictions on their time and energy stated they were less involved in home and school activities.

As indicated earlier in this chapter, time and energy may be related to parents' job and family responsibilities. In this regard, research has indicated that parents with tough and inflexible work schedules and/or additional family responsibilities tend to be less involved in their child's education than parents with more flexible work schedules (Griffith, 1998; Weiss et al., 2003). Additionally, in a qualitative study of African American parents who had children in elementary school, Jackson (2010) examined PI from the parents' perspectives and found that working schedules were a main barrier to parents' physical presence in the school.

3.7.2.4 Parent's socioeconomic status (SES)

Many studies have examined the relationship between parents' socioeconomic status (SES) and their school involvement. However, findings were mixed. On one hand, some researchers found that PI and SES were positively related (Chen, 2001; Fan & Chen, 2001; Lareau, 1987; Stevenson & Baker, 1987). Lareau (1987) clarified that "working-class or low-income parents may be less able to visit the school for conferences, volunteering, or other activities" (p. 198). Similarly, a study conducted by O'Connor (2001) asserted that factors relating to the SES of the vast majority of parents limited the ability to get parents to be involved at school activities. On the other hand, some researchers have argued that the SES variable is not as important as other contextual variables (Epstein, 2011; Sheldon, 2003). In the Saudi context, no studies have clarified the impact of SES on the PI of Saudi parents of children with special needs and disabilities.

3.7.3 Parent–teacher-school factor

3.7.3.1 Different views and expectations

Despite teachers' and parents' agreement regarding the importance of PI (Eccles & Harold, 1993), it may be unrealistic to presume that both share common perspectives regarding PI and the way they communicate in this relationship (Barge & Loges, 2003). This finding may not be surprising since Morgan, Fraser, Dunn, and Cairns (1993) indicated that teachers and parents differ in understanding their roles and the ways they should collaborate. As such, it could be suggested that teachers and parents might have different expectations regarding their roles which eventually influence their communication with each other.

Perhaps, having different expectations regarding each other's roles might create tension between parents of children with SEN and teachers as well as other members at schools (e.g., schools' principals). On one hand, parents of children with SEN and disabilities may expect schools (including teachers) to help them become better advocates for their children by educating them regarding special education laws and their children's disabilities (Hughes, Valle-Riestra, & Arguelles, 2008; Zionts, Zionts, Harrison, & Bellinger, 2003). On the other hand, this parental expectation may not be met since schools' principals may have limited time and resources to educate parents about their children's disabilities and educational rights (Ruiz, 2012). Additionally, teachers and schools might expect that parents' roles means focusing on homework, raising money, attending school events and parent-teacher meetings (Rudney, 2005), or volunteering in the classroom or on a trip (Lawson, 2003).

Based on the above, it could be suggested that different expectations and tensions might have an implicit influence on teachers' and parents' willingness regarding communication and/or involvement with each other. Possibly, if both parties are provided opportunities to express their opinions and perspectives, differences between expectations might decrease. Neither parents nor teachers can expect the other to accomplish the task alone; it is a collaborative effort (Berger, 1991).

3.7.3.2 School administrators' perspectives

According to Epstein (2011), relationships between parents and schools (e.g., administration team) might be influenced by three different perspectives. The first perspective relies on separate responsibilities and stresses the incompatibility and conflict between homes and schools. It presumes that both school and home have different goals, roles, and responsibilities that will be best achieved if they work independently. This perspective could be linked to the expert model where professionals take control (Cunningham & Davis, 1985). In the expert model, teachers may view parents as adversaries and maintain their professional distance from parents (Epstein & Dauber, 1989; Hornby, 2000).

The second perspective is based on the notion of some shared responsibilities between home and school. This perspective presumes that parents and teachers share academic and social responsibilities for the child. In other words, both parties share some common goals for the child, and they believe that those goals

could be achieved more effectively if parents and educators work together. Thus, this perspective emphasises the importance of coordination, cooperation, and complementarity between teachers and parents. It also encourages collaboration and communication between the two institutions.

The third perspective is based on the sequential responsibilities of home and school. It emphasises the critical stages for both parents and teachers in a child's development. This perspective is based on the importance of the early life of a child and stresses the impact of early childhood development on later success. Both teachers and parents believe that parents take the initial responsibility to teach their children needed skills and prepare them for the next stage, where teachers assume the responsibility for the child's learning.

Based on the above discussion, it could be suggested that the differences in perspective might be related to the willingness of the school administration team to communicate with and involve the parents. Further details regarding willingness are discussed in the Discussion Chapter. Additionally, these different perspectives may also influence parents' willingness and involvement level. Some parents may be extremely involved in decision-making and school governance, while others may take a more passive position, limited to attending conferences or yearly meetings. Georgiou (1996) noted that "individual parents can be placed on a continuum ranging from very low (or non-existent) to very active involvement" (p. 190).

3.7.4 Child's factors

In terms of the child, two main aspects should be discussed: the child's age and the child's performance. With regard to the child's age, studies have indicated that PI increases at the primary level and decreases gradually at the secondary level as the children grow older (Eccles & Harold, 1993; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). In Dauber and Epstein's (1989) study, parents of children in the elementary levels were more involved than parents of children in middle grades. Additionally, Jeynes's findings (2012) showed that most PI programmes that have been assessed in published research were at the primary school level rather than the secondary school level. This discrepancy may arise because younger children are more likely positive about having their parents at schools in contrast with older children (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011). In addition, parents may believe that younger children are in greater need of PI compared to older children.

With regard to the child's performance, if the child is struggling while learning, the parents may be more motivated to be involved in PI activities (Eccles & Harold, 1993). Problems in a child's learning might be related to their disabilities, as children with learning disabilities are more likely to have problems in doing their homework than other children (Bryan et al., 2001). In this regard, it could be suggested that parents of children with SEN may be concerned about their children and be willing to help their children succeed at school; as a result, they may be motivated to be involved in their children's education. Bryan et al. (2001) indicated that decreasing problems with homework for students with learning disabilities might require their parents' involvement.

3.7.5 Societal factor (stigma)

Individuals' attitudes, behaviours, and perceptions regarding any issue (e.g., PI) might be influenced by many factors in their society. In this regard, stigma could be viewed as an important socially constructed factor. Shifrer (2013) articulates that ''stigma is a product of social relation rather than distinctive attributes or labels alone'' (p. 476). Stigma might influence parents' and teachers' attitudes and perceptions in relation to communication and/or invitations. Heatherton (2003) stated that stigma is socially constructed because "a characteristic may be stigmatising at one historical moment but not at another, or in one given situation but not in another with the same period" (p. 3). Stigma may be related to different aspects which could not be discussed because they are out of the scope of this study. Yet, stigma as a concept has been discussed in relation to disability, which is relevant to this study.

In some societies, parents of children with SEN and disabilities may be viewed as and/or feel they are vulnerable and stigmatised, as are their children. In McHatton and Correa's (2005) study, mothers reported that their experiences of discrimination were based on disability, culture, or a combination of the two. Likewise, Chang and McConkey (2007) revealed that Taiwanese families who had children with learning disabilities explained that one of obstacles they encountered was social stigma. This may not be surprising since Goffman (1963) argued that stigma:

> *"Not only affects the experiences of those in possession of the stigmatizing characteristic (the own); it also tends to spread to close family members and to others with whom the bearer of negative difference associates (the wise). The individual who is related through the social structure to a stigmatized individual—a relationship that leads the wider society to treat both individuals in some respect as one'' (p. 30).*

Stigma may influence teachers' willingness to communicate with parents. In Eccles and Harold's (1993) study, findings indicated that teachers were reluctant to involve parents as a consequence of stereotypes regarding parents' abilities to help their children. It could be suggested that some teachers may have deficit perspectives toward parents, and they may be labelled as "dysfunctional families" (Rogers, 2011). This "deficit model" may not promote parents as co-participants in their children's education, and it may ignore the rich information that only parents can add to their children's education (Jackson, 2010, p. 4).

Additionally, stigma may also influence parents' feelings as well as their willingness to be involved in their children's education. Parents of children with SEN and disabilities may have high levels of stress and depression because of this discrimination. Angermeyer, Schulze, and Dietrich (2003) indicated that family members who feel stigmatised often experience increased emotional distress and social isolation. Regarding the Saudi context, Abed (2014) indicated that parents in the Saudi community may feel embarrassed to have a child with disabilities and believe they are perceived "as a reflection with them" (p. 4). This may not be surprising since Saudi society discriminates against individuals with special needs and disabilities by ignoring them in public and preventing them from exercising their rights (Alquraini, 2011). As such, parents of those children may face discrimination as well. Al-Kahtani (2015) indicated that stigma and corresponding shame experienced by many Saudi parents regarding their children with special needs may limit their participation in the IEPs. In this sense, it could be argued that Saudi parents' involvement may be hindered and/or limited by social stigma.

3.7.6 Policies

Several policies discussed in the previous chapters (i.e. IDEA, NCLB) emphasised parents' participation in their children's education as one of their major rights. These policies appear to be established to assure parents' rights to be involved in their children's education, to enhance the development of better PI programmes in schools, and to maintain high levels of PI. However, some policies may not always promote what they have been established for (e.g., boosting PI). Some external factors (e.g., formalisation, evaluation) might hinder the sufficient implementation of these policies in practice. It might be worthy here to provide some explanations regarding the gap between RESPI as written policy and its implementation in practice by presenting some of these external factors. Identifying this gap is crucial since it might help explain why mothers of girls with LD in my study were marginalised in the IEP meetings. Analysing the policy cycle in the Saudi context might offer insight into this gap. Educational policy in Saudi Arabia passes through various stages before it is translated into action. These stages include policy formulation, policy implementation and policy evaluation (Mlafekh, 2011).

Problems may have arisen in the formulation stage, where RSEPI was written with ambiguous and broad terminologies, which could have resulted in one objective (i.e. mothers' roles) not being as clearly identified as intended. As a result, RSEPI may not be sufficiently implemented at the local level (by teachers and schools), resulting in the marginalisation of mothers of girls with LD in my study. This finding was in line with Mlafekh's (2011) assertion that efficacious implementation of educational policies depends on many aspects including clear articulation at the policy formulation stage. According to this suggestion, the blame cannot be placed solely on local-level authorities (i.e. department of special education, schools) since the central level MOE has not translated the policy into clear guidelines or procedures to help them in the implementation process. Based on these findings, more attention should be given to the use of clear and accurate terminologies during policy formulation.

Additionally, the policy's implementation stage may have given rise to problems. According to Al-Kahtani (2015), RSEPI may encounter problems in implementation because it was based on a top-down approach rather than a bottom-up approach. For effective policy implementation, these mothers' views

should be included and considered alongside those of other individuals (i.e. teachers, administers) at the local level.

The third point when problems may have occurred may be related to the evaluation and monitoring stage. Mothers of girls with LD may have been marginalised in the IEP as a result of the absence of monitoring and evaluating of the RSEPI and its application in mainstream schools. With ongoing monitoring and evaluating, mothers' absences from IEP meetings might be noticed so action could be taken. Yet, the Saudi organisations may not have a clear method to evaluate educational policies (Mlafekh, 2011). Specifically, Mlafekh (2011) found that "there are no procedures or methods to collect information about the extent to which education policy goals are being achieved" (p. 169). In light of these findings, Saudi authorities should develop a monitoring and evaluation policy process to check how objectives and aims are achieved in practice.

However, a critical point needs to be mentioned is that some policies may be hindered by internal factors. Some terminologies may be too vague or broad, fail to provide clear guidance about essential aspects and elements of the PI process and/or limit its sufficient application. For instance, Todd (2003) indicated that a code of practice included principles for working in partnership with parents and for communicating with them. Yet, Todd (2003) noted that a "need for parties to discuss the meaning of partnership or the definition of roles is absent from policy documents" (p. 294).

Another relevant limitation in policies is word choice as the usage of some words might have implicit influence on parents' roles and/or rights. These problems in word choice can be seen in several international and national policies. For example, although the Code of Practice (2015) states that parents hold key information regarding their children and have unique strengths to contribute to the shared view of a child's needs (DFE & DOH, 2015), parents seem to be positioned as "informants" (Hodge & Runswick-Cole, 2008, p. 638). Perceiving parents this way might imply that power of decision-making implicitly lies elsewhere. In other words, perceiving parents as informers might implicitly enhance the domain of experts' roles rather than enhancing the roles of parents as partners. Word choice seems to be a problem in Saudi policies as discussed in the Context Chapter, Section 2.3). Almoghyrah (2015) suggested reviewing the existing PI practices in the special and integrated schools in Saudi Arabia.

Based on the above, it could be suggested that both external and internal factors have a huge influence on how policies may be perceived and implemented. Ryndak, Orlando, Storch, Denney, and Huffman (2011) asserted that the federal mandate for PI in decision-making about their children's educational services needed to be reviewed since it is "broad and allows great variance with regard to how implementation procedures are followed" (p. 88). Similarly, in a study by Bacon and Causton-Theoharis (2013), one parent said that "it is hard to enforce the law … because I think the problem is, it is comes from the federal government, then each state, interprets them in their own way, and then each county, school" (p. 691).

In sum, PI seems to be influenced by different attitudinal, political, and social factors. From the lens of the Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, these factors may not exist on their own or in a vacuum. Rather, they might exist because of individuals' (e.g., parents, teachers) experiences and their interactions with each other in different environment (e.g., home, school) as well as their interaction with their society. Additionally, it could be suggested that each of these factors may or may not be viewed as a barrier to PI, depending on how individuals' experiences have shaped their attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions.

3.8 Summary

This chapter began with a detailed clarification and justification of the conceptual framework applied in this study, which includes the following: Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1976, 1979), Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005), and Epstein's (2011) PI model. The current study used Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model illustrates and explains how parents' beliefs, perceptions, and interactions, which are considered essential factors that impact parents' involvement decisions, seem to be constructed based on their experiences and interpreted according to Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. Both Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model may indicate the importance and influence of individuals' environment on their attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions.

Additionally, this chapter defined involvement as a general concept followed by several definitions of PI and its benefits and elements. The significance of PI in the field of SEN was emphasised under three aspects: educational, physiological,

and political. I also identified gaps in the international and national literature when relevant. This chapter concluded with a discussion of factors that may influence PI. More detailed information regarding how the current study explored and examined PI in terms of data collection and analysis are presented in the Methodology chapter.

Chapter Four: Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The main aim of this study was to explore the phenomenon of parental involvement from the perspectives of mothers of girls with learning disabilities (LD) in primary mainstream schools for girls in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Specifically, this study aimed to examine factors that influence mothers' involvement in their daughters' education and to explore the extent to which they were involved. Furthermore, this study aimed to explore mothers' perspectives and experiences of their daughters' education and how they wished to be involved.

The main research questions used to guide this study were:

1. What factors influence parental involvement in mainstream schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia from the perspective of mothers of girls with LD?
2. To what extent do mothers of girls with LD report involvement in their daughters' education in mainstream primary schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia?
3. What are mothers of girls with LD experiences of, and perspectives on, their involvement in primary mainstream schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia?
4. How do mothers of girls with LD wish to be involved in their daughters' education?

This study used a mixed methods sequential explanatory design involving two main phases (survey and exploratory interviews). This chapter begins by defining mixed methods research and presenting philosophical assumptions and justifications, followed by more detailed justifications and explanations of the chosen design applied in this study. Then, the chapter discusses data collection and the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data in each phase. This chapter ends with an explanation of the ethical issues considered in this study.

4.2 Mixed Methods Research

This section presents a clarification of how mixed methods research has been defined in the literature and offers philosophical assumptions and justifications for its use in this study. The adopted research design (i.e., the explanatory sequential design) belongs to mixed method research; hence, it would be insufficient to introduce this design and its justifications without clarifying the background and assumptions of mixed methods research, as well as what makes it different from other types of research.

In educational, social, and behavioural fields, researchers have viewed mixed methods research as methodological pluralism (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004) that represents a third research movement following the positivist and interpretivist movements. Mixed methods research has been defined as:

> *"a study [that] involves the collection or analysis of both quantitative and/or qualitative data in a single study in which data are collected concurrently or sequentially, are given a priority and involve the integration of the data at one or more stage in the process of research". (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p. 212).*

Creswell and Clark (2011) offered another definition of mixed methods research as:

> *"A research design with philosophical assumptions as well as methods of inquiry. As a methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the directions of the collection and analysis and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches. As a method, it focuses in collecting, analysing and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study". (p. 5)*

According to these definitions, adopting a mixed methods research approach requires the researcher to make decisions regarding priority and implementation (see Practical Considerations for Mixed Methods Sequential Explanatory Design). Additionally, in this doctoral study, mixed methods research was considered on both methodological and methods levels. At the methodological level, this study is built on clear philosophical assumptions (pragmatist) that are explained further below. According to these assumptions, I used quantitative (i.e. survey design) and qualitative (i.e. exploratory interviews) methodological approaches. I also was able to take different positions in each phase (see Section 4.3). At the methods level, this study integrated different quantitative and qualitative data collection methods (i.e. questionnaire and semi-structured

interviews). I also used different analysis methods which suit each type of data (see Chapters 5 and 6).

Furthermore, it is important to notice that a mixed methods study rejects adopting one position; rather, it allows the researcher to choose methods and methodologies that suit the research aims and sufficiently answer the research questions. On the one hand, quantitative methods can indicate why and how things occur (Bryman, 2012). On the other hand, qualitative methods can be used to develop a deeper understanding of the social phenomenon (Mertens, 2014). this is not to say that mixed methods research disregards other approaches; rather, "mixed research [attempts] to respect fully the wisdom of both of these viewpoints while also seeking a workable middle solution for many (research) problems of interest" (Onwuegbuzie, 2007, p. 113). Additionally, it is considered "inclusive, pluralistic, and complementary, and it suggests that researchers take an eclectic approach to method selection and the thinking about and conduct of research" (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 17).

Pragmatism is the philosophical partner for mixed methods research, as mentioned earlier. Pragmatism "advocates for the use of mixed methods in research and acknowledges that the values of the researcher play a large role in interpretation of results" (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p. 713). Synchronisation between mixed methods design and pragmatism is reasonable as pragmatism is based on a philosophical assumption that dismisses contradictions between paradigms (Klingner & Boardman, 2011). In other words, pragmatic researchers are more concerned with answering research questions as fully as possible, than with differentiating between approaches, methods, and the role of the researcher. Pragmatic researchers believe that research methodologies should be mixed in ways which provide the best opportunities for answering research questions (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Pragmatism gives the researcher more choices rather than forcing "either–or" decisions (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998) and embraces both points of view (Subedi, 2016), allowing the pragmatic researcher to take a moderate viewpoint among different research approaches. Goles and Hirschheim (2000) suggested that a pragmatic researcher may adopt a pluralist position. In addition, "'pragmatism' usually means something like 'practicality', doing what works" (Rorty, Putnam, Conant, & Helfrich, 2004, p. 71).

Based on the discussion above, it could be argued that the pragmatic worldview reflects a continuum between the positivist approach at one end and the interpretivist approach at the other. In other words, pragmatism is a flexible approach which releases researchers from being restricted to a particular approach and/or method while conducting their studies. In this doctoral study, the pragmatic approach enabled me to use a questionnaire with closed-ended questions in the first phase alongside semi-structured interviews in the second phase. Furthermore, it allowed me to take different roles and/or positions in both phases (see 4.34.3).

The pragmatism worldview reflects my beliefs as a researcher. I deem that the researcher should focus on the complexity of the phenomenon under investigation, the research questions, and the study's purposes rather than being concerned with contradictions between different methodologies and philosophical assumptions. This study reflected these beliefs during data collection and analysis. As a starting point, I drew on the literature and my professional experiences to identify many relevant facts, hypotheses, problems, and solutions regarding the PI phenomenon. I have also noticed the constructed nature of this phenomenon but acknowledge that external realities may be important in understanding and exploring the PI phenomenon.

4.2.1 Why mixed methods research

In this study, I chose to use mixed methods research for several reasons. First, from a conceptual view, parental involvement is a complex phenomenon (Pandit, 2008) involving many possible factors (social, political, cultural and educational) that may shape mothers' experiences, beliefs, and perspectives. To examine these factors and to explore the mothers' perspectives, the relationships between them and other individuals (teachers), how these relationships work, and what they mean in all their complexity, the researchers needed a methodology that could cover all these dimensions. Thus, adopting a mixed methods design seemed appropriate. Green (1997) suggested that complex social phenomena cannot be fully understood by using either purely qualitative or purely quantitative techniques. Variations in data sources and analysis techniques are important to completely understand complex realities. In a similar vein, Silverman (2013) illustrated that using mixed methods assists the researcher to reveal many

different aspects of a phenomenon. It also allows the research problem to be approached from different angles (Mcauley et al., 2006).

Second, from a pragmatist's perspective, providing sufficient and extensive answers for all research questions, regardless of the type of methods used, was essential. As mentioned in the previous chapter, it is not apparent that PI as a phenomenon has been examined and explored from the perspectives of mothers of girls with LD. In order to provide mothers' opportunities to express factors they perceived to impact on their PI and their experience of PI necessitated the development of several research questions and the consideration of different methods to investigate them. For instance, the first research question concerned factors that influence mothers' involvement, while the third research question concerned mothers' experiences. "Many research questions and combinations of questions are best and most fully answered through mixed research solutions" (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p.17). In this regard, it is important to note that, at the end of each analysis stage in both phases, the research questions in this study were answered by more than one method, although they were not designed with this possibility in mind.

Using these different methods led to different types of data. The first phase provided quantitative data, which enabled me to examine factors that influenced parental involvement and to explore how and the extent to which mothers of girls with LD were involved. Some statistical findings might need further exploration. In the current study, the first phase raised significant findings that needed to be explored in more depth during the second phase. In other words, I was interested in collecting qualitative data to add depth to quantitative findings. However, it could not be ignored that the quantitative findings helped to provide that focus for the qualitative exploration. Additionally, the second phase yielded rich qualitative data that enabled me to explore mothers' perspectives and experiences with PI as well as how they wished to be involved. Hence, a more complex understanding of PI was developed. Klassen (2012) indicated that quantitative and qualitative data could be merged to develop a more complete understanding of a problem; to develop a complementary picture. Similarly, Bryman (2012) clarified that:

> *"More complete answers to a research question or set of research questions can be achieved by including quantitative and qualitative methods. It implies that the gap left by one can be filled by the other".*
> *(p. 637)*

In sum, mixed methods research was adopted in this study on both methodological and methods levels. This section clarified the justification for adopting a mixed methods design, while the following section provides a more specific justification for adopting a sequential explanatory design.

4.3 Research Design

As mentioned earlier, a mixed methods sequential explanatory design was used in this study. According to Plano Clark (2011) this design in particular consists of first collecting quantitative data and then collecting qualitative data to help explain or elaborate on the quantitative findings. In the current study, the mixed methods sequential explanatory design comprised two separate phases: survey and interviews. Research questions were answered primarily in one phase or the other. Specifically, during the first phase, I collected and analysed quantitative data, which mainly answered the following two research questions:

1. What factors influence parental involvement in mainstream schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia from the perspective of mothers of girls with LD?
2. To what extent do mothers of girls with LD report involvement in their daughters' education in mainstream primary schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia?

During the second phase, I collected and analysed qualitative data which mainly answered the following research questions:

3. What are mothers of girls with LD experiences of, and perspectives on, their involvement in primary mainstream schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia?
4. How do mothers of girls with LD wish to be involved in their daughters' education?

Figure 3 Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design Figure
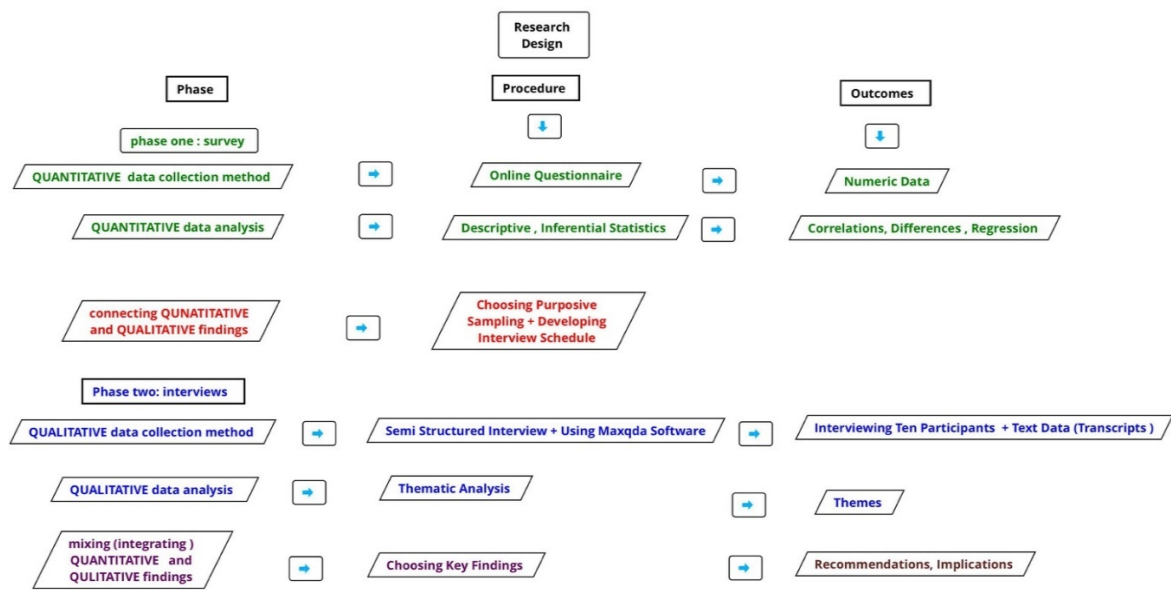
In line with the earlier discussion on philosophical assumptions, the explanatory sequential mixed methods design supposed an objectivist epistemology in the first phase (survey) and a subjective epistemology in the second phase (interviews). These different epistemological stances could be explained further by presenting both the aims and methods in each phase. On one hand, the aim of the first phase was to obtain a breadth of information from mothers regarding the PI phenomenon and examine factors that influenced it in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, as well as to understand the extent to which mothers reported their involvement in their daughters' education. Closed-ended questions were used in an online questionnaire to meet these aims. Thus, I played spectator in this stage since I only received participants' responses without any further interaction. On the other hand, the aim of the second phase was to obtain a depth of information regarding mothers' experiences and perspectives about PI. This phase also aimed to explore how these mothers wished to be involved in their daughters' education. Semi-structured interviews were used to meet these aims. Accordingly, in this stage, I played a participatory which allowed me to have direct interactions and/or conversations with participants to gain better understanding about PI from their experiences and perspectives. Based on these different epistemological stances, I was able to gain and/or develop different types of knowledge which moved along the continuum from more objective knowledge in the first phase to more (inter) subjective knowledge in the second one.

Figure 3 presents the sequence of the explanatory sequential mixed methods design. It indicates the priority of both phases through the capitalization of terms (i.e., QUANTITATIVE, QUALITATIVE). This figure clarifies the data collection method, analysis, procedure, and outcome of each phase. It also shows the connecting points between the quantitative and qualitative phases, the related products, and the place in the research process where the findings from both phases were integrated. In this figure, the green text refers to the first phase, while the blue colour refers to the second one. The red text shows how the two phases were connected, in other words, how I moved from the first phase to the second one. Finally, the purple text indicates the integration between the two phases. Further details about each phase will be given below in this chapter.

The mixed explanatory sequential design was selected for many reasons. First, this design is useful to a researcher who wants to explore a phenomenon but also wants to expand on the quantitative findings (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003). This design was applicable to the phenomenon under investigation. In the current study, examining and exploring PI from different angles sufficiently and profoundly may require gaining breadth of understanding as a first step. Little is known about the PI phenomenon from the perspectives of mothers of girls with LD. Further explorations may be insufficient without developing an overview. Adopting an explanatory sequential design and using quantitative data from a large number of participants enabled me to achieve these aims. Ivankova and Creswell (2006) explained that the rationale of the explanatory sequential design is that the quantitative data and their subsequent analysis afford a general understanding regarding the research problem. This design allowed for deeper exploration of the phenomenon in the next phase as well. According to Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) and Creswell (2003), qualitative data and their analysis can refine and explain statistical results by exploring participants' views in more depth. Similarly, Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) clarified that quantitative data precede qualitative data when the intent in the first phase is to explore with a large sample first and then to explore in more depth with fewer cases during the second interview phase. Using an explanatory sequential design thus allowed for the collection of quantitative data and for the identification, examination, and exploration of more factors influencing PI in the second phase.

Second, this design seemed to be under-utilised in special education research in Saudi Arabia. Alzahrani (2005) noted that special education research in Saudi Arabia has been based on scientific positivism (i.e., quantitative research). This type of approach, alone, does not explain and sufficiently clarify complex phenomena such as PI. In the Saudi context, only two studies of which I am aware have examined PI (Dubis, 2015; Fouzan, 1986) and neither of these used the mixed method approach nor involved the mothers of girls with LD.

> However, this design has some disadvantages as well. The problems include the considerable amount of time required to develop the quantitative instrument (Creswell & Clark, 2011). In the current study, to overcome this obstacle, the questionnaire was adapted from two well-known research studies in the PI area.

4.4 Practical Considerations for Mixed Methods Sequential Explanatory Design

According to Creswell et al. (2003), when conducting mixed methods studies, the researcher faces several important considerations, which are implementation, priority, and integration. In the following sections, I discuss each and link it with the current study.

First, implementation refers to the sequence in which the researcher collects quantitative and qualitative data. A decision to follow a quantitative–qualitative data collection and analysis sequence depends on the study purpose and the research questions (Green & Caracelli, 1997). Based on the current study's aims and research questions, I decided to collect quantitative data through a survey questionnaire in the first phase before collecting qualitative data through semi-structured interviews in the second phase. This sequence seemed to be applicable for several reasons. Using a questionnaire in the first phase helped me reach a large number of mother and enabled me to, purposively select participants for the second phase. It provided a general understanding of what factors contributed to PI and to identify which of these needed more investigation and exploration in the interviews. In the second phase, I conducted semi-structured interviews to gather qualitative data that helped explore mothers' perspectives and experiences regarding their involvement and how they wished to be involved. It also explains why certain external and internal factors identified

in the first phase were significant or not significant predictors of PI in the Saudi context.

Second, priority implies deciding which phase has more weight or attention throughout the data collection and analysis processes in the study (Morgan 1998; Creswell 2003). In the current study, both phases had equal weight and attention because they added different aspects that helped develop a better understanding of the PI phenomenon. To clarify, both phases had their own methodological approach and justifications. In the first phase, questionnaires were used to collect and analyse quantitative data. This phase aimed to gather broad information regarding PI; therefore, this phase was robust and focused mainly on exploring and examining factors influencing PI and the extent to which mothers of girls with LD were involved in their daughters' education. The data analysis employed two statistical techniques: descriptive and inferential analysis, which are detailed in Chapter Five. Conversely, the second phase was an interview study that used the semi-structured interview method to collect and analyse qualitative data. This phase aimed to gather deep information regarding this phenomenon and thus focused on exploring mothers' perspectives and experiences regarding their involvement and interpreting the statistical results obtained in the first phase. Combining both phases helped produce a different kind of knowledge that should not be underestimated.

Third, integration is concerned with combining quantitative and qualitative research into one study within a given stage of inquiry (Creswell, 2003). This can occur during research question design, data collection, and/or data analysis or discussion (interpretation). In this study, the findings of the first and second phases are integrated in the Discussion Chapter. Further details regarding how findings from both phases were integrated can be found in the Discussion chapter.

4.5 Research and Participant Context

4.5.1 Riyadh

The city of Riyadh was chosen as the research context for two main reasons. Riyadh is the largest city in Saudi Arabia (Saudi General Authority for Statistics, 2015) and it includes around 178 primary mainstream schools for girls with LD (see Appendix 4). Second, Riyadh is where I reside, and it was therefore a convenient place for me to conduct face-to-face interviews. My professional experiences have been largely developed in this city. I have worked in Riyadh for several years. First, as a teacher of students with LD, then as a lecturer in the university. Hence, I have many connections with administrators in the MOE, especially the Learning Disabilities Department, and many school principals. These connections facilitated my access to many mainstream primary schools for girls, which helped me conduct this study.

4.5.2 Primary schools

Mainstream primary schools were chosen because PI at the primary stage is important in children's lives and has a large impact on their academic performance and success. For example, Barnard's (2004) longitudinal study indicated that parent involvement in school is a vital element in early childhood education to help promote long-term effects. In addition, as indicated previously (in sectionChild's factors), PI increases at the primary level. This is in contrast to the secondary level where it starts to decrease gradually as the children grow older (Eccles & Harold, 1993; Hornby & Lafaele, 2011).

Riyadh is divided into five districts: southern, northern, middle, western, and eastern. It was indicated in the Literature review chapter that the socio-economic status and educational level of parents seem to be vital factors that influence PI and it may be the case that this varies across districts, hence all districts were sampled.

4.5.3 Mothers

Participants for both phases were mothers of girls with LD from mainstream primary schools in the five districts of Riyadh.

As indicated in the Literature review chapter, Saudi mothers are still typically the primary caregivers for children with SEN, and are mostly responsible for supervising children's schooling, while fathers have the authority in decisions and

are typically focused on financial matters (Aldosari, 2013; Chastenet de Gery, 1998). Thus, Saudi mothers were the best participants for this study as they are more likely to provide more knowledgeable and richer data than Saudi fathers.

Second, because Saudi culture is segregated by gender (Alhabeeb, 2016) and this study involved face-to-face interviews, it was more culturally appropriate for both participants and the researcher to be of the same gender. Thus, the participants and I could communicate effectively.

Third, mothers have easier access to the schools than fathers and can communicate with their daughters' female teachers. Due to the structure of the Saudi education system (e.g., Al-Ahmadi, 2009), female teachers contact mothers to attend parent conferences or any other school activity. Hence, fathers may not have the same access to their daughters' schools than they do to their sons' schools. As a result, fathers may not be able to provide rich data regarding their daughters.

In sum, this section offered brief justifications of the chosen research context and participants. In the section below, thorough explanations about each phase in the study will be provided.

4.6 Phase One: Survey

This phase was concerned with the first two research questions, which explored factors that influenced Saudi mothers' involvement in mainstream primary schools and examined the extent to which mothers were involved. This phase primarily aimed to address the first two research questions, informing my approach and sampling for phase two. It also assisted in the selection of information needing further investigation in the second phase.

4.6.1 Data collection method: questionnaire

4.6.1.1 Justification of method

This section offers a justification for the choice of questionnaire method and its online format. First, as indicated earlier, the first phase aimed to reach large number of mothers of girls with LD in mainstream primary schools to gain a breadth of understanding of the PI phenomenon. Those schools were in different districts in Riyadh, so the method helped reach a representative spread of participants. Bryman (2012) illustrated that questionnaires could be distributed in very large quantities to a large sample at once.

Second, questionnaires are low cost in contrast to interviews. Interviewing a large sample demands more time and money, so interviewing a large number of mothers would have been an ineffective choice. Bryman (2012) stated that "the cheapness of the self-completed questionnaire is especially advantageous if you have a sample that is geographically dispersed" (p. 233). Riyadh is a huge city, and therefore, using a questionnaire made it possible to reach mothers in a widely dispersed area.

Third, completing a questionnaire is not limited to a time or schedule. Thus, there may be a flexibility of choosing what time it should be returned. In this study, a three-month period was provided for mothers. This period of time was sufficient to achieve and adequate sample size. This approach offered convenience to participants as they could complete them whenever they chose (Bryman, 2012).

The use of closed questions is likewise beneficial. First, this type of questionnaire requires less physical and mental effort for participants. In the questionnaire applied in this study, mothers were asked to check a box that represented their beliefs about several aspects (see Appendix 6). In this sense, participants do not have to construct long answers (Peterson, 2000). Thus, closed-ended questionnaires may be easier and faster for respondents to complete (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011; Neuman, 2006; Peterson, 2000). Providing a variety of choices enables participants to respond more easily than if they were asked to write out their answers in an open-ended format. The second advantage of this approach is that the time and energy required to analyse the data from closed-ended questions is far less than would be required for open-ended questions (Peterson, 2000; Cohen et al., 2011).

Using closed questions may have some disadvantages. Participants may not have the opportunity to add any further explanations to some categories (Cohen et al., 2011). In this study, the second phase (interviews) enabled some participants to provide further details and explanations regarding any of these categories. Another disadvantage to using questionnaires in a study is the possibility of a poor response rate (Gillham, 2000). To overcome this drawback, school principals sent a link to the online questionnaire several times to mothers of girls with LD, and mothers were reminded to participate if they wished.

The questionnaire in this study was developed and distributed via Survey Monkey, which is a well-known site for online questionnaires. I chose an online

questionnaire for several reasons. First, an online questionnaire is convenient since the "survey software allows researchers to create the questionnaire, write the e-mail invitation, upload a distribution list, and send reminders directly from the software" (Sue & Ritter, 2012, p. 3). Using Survey Monkey in this study enabled me to send direct reminders to school leaders, asking them to remind mothers to complete the questionnaire. Further clarification about recruiting participants can be found in Section (Sampling). Second, the online questionnaire saves considerable time since it can be sent to hundreds of participants via email or smartphone tremendously quickly. Sue and Ritter (2012) noted that, in online questionnaires, "responses typically are received quickly, and data can be described and distributed via the software tool in real time" (p. 3). Third, online questionnaires allow researchers to have direct data entry (Sue & Ritter, 2012). To clarify, some online surveys (e.g., Survey Monkey) allow the researcher to link their participants' responses with analysis software. In this study, all mothers' responses were transferred and analysed immediately via the SPSS program which is described in more detail in Chapter Five.

4.6.2 Questionnaire adaption

The questionnaire for the current study is adapted from two scales, which are Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler and Hoover-Dempsey's (2005) PI scale, and the Epstein's and Sheldon (2007) Parent Survey of Family and Community Involvement (PSFCI).

I selected these two scales first, because both are related to the two research questions in this phase. Walker et al.'s (2005) PI scale focuses on what factors may influence (i.e., motivate or not motivate) parents to be involved, which is related to my first question. Conversely, Epstein and Sheldon's scale (2007) provides different PI types in which parents may be involved, which is related to my second question. Integrating both scales, therefore, was appropriate. Using these two scales enhanced the collection of data to provide a breadth understanding of mothers' perceptions regarding factors that influenced their involvement and provided initial information about the extent to which they were involved. Second, both scales include closed questions, which suited the type of questions determined for this study.

The original scales were written in English and they were then translated into Arabic. The questionnaire was then translated back to English and checked by

my supervisors to enhance the validity of the questionnaire. I discussed both adapted scales with my supervisors and also with Professor Epstein via a Skype interview (see Appendix 7) who approved the use of her scale (see Appendix 8). She assured me that any irrelevant statements to the Saudi context or research questions should be excluded from the scale. She also approved the addition of ten items under four sub-scales. These are, parents' roles construction, school invitations, and teachers' invitations. These items are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 (Items Created in the Questionnaire by Thesis' Writer)

Names of subscales	Total of added items	Items
Parents roles construction	4	- Be involved in my daughters' school decisions. - Be more involved in my daughters' education. - Know my legal rights as a mother of a girl with LD. - Participate in IEP meetings.
Schools' invitations	2	- Helped me to know my rights as a mother of a daughter with LD. - Showed me how I can be involved in my daughter's education.
Teachers' invitations	1	Invite me to attend IEP meetings.
Reported mothers' involvement	3	- Participate in IEP meetings. - Attend parents' conferences (meetings) - Communicate with your daughter's teacher.

Justification can be provided for the addition of these items. That is, although both adapted scales concerned PI, they were not concerned specifically with parents of children with SEN (e.g., mothers of girls with LD). Mothers of girls with LD may have more specific responsibilities as a result of their daughter's disability; thus, I felt a need to examine these statements. I also discussed both scales with my supervisors. Based on conversations with Professor Epstein and my supervisors, I made some modifications to the original scales. The first modification was excluding some repetitive statements and others that did not fit the Saudi context (e.g., attending PTA meetings; going to the school's open house; participating in drama classes). These changes result in this study's questionnaire being shortened. The second modification was changing some responses (e.g., 1 or 2 times, once a week) drawn from Walker, et.al (2005) and Epstein and Sheldon's

(2007) scales to more consistent choices (e.g., never, always, often, rarely). The third modification was to remove the open-ended questions from Epstein and Sheldon's (2007) scale. The last change was made because the original scales included in-depth questions covering mothers' perspectives, experiences, and other themes, which were addressed in the second phase (interviews) of this study. Hence, the duplication of questions here was not necessary.

4.6.3 Questionnaire layout

The modified questionnaire (see Appendix 6) began with an information sheet that clarified the purpose of the study, participants' rights to volunteer or withdraw, and the importance of their responses. This information sheet assured participants that confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained in order to encourage them to participate. The questionnaire included two main sections with clear instructions for completing each of them. The first section asked ten demographic questions, which collected data regarding (a) mother's age, (b) mother's education level, (c) mother's residential area, (d) daughter's school area, (e) whether the mother was currently in paid employment, (f) monthly household income level, (g) transportation problems, (h) number of children, (i) age of daughter with LD, (j) and school level of daughter with LD. This background information was important because it enabled me to understand, to some extent, the mothers' environment and how it may have shaped their experiences and influenced their perspectives and opinions regarding PI. Additionally, these demographic variables measure potential influential factors that were analysed in relation to PI.

The second section contained 50 items adapted and modified from Walker et al. (2005), Epstein and Sheldon's (2007) scales, and items added by me, as a researcher. Most subscales in the questionnaire concerned the participants' beliefs regarding involvement while the last subscale was about their self-reported involvement. This section was divided into the following subscales: parents' role constructions; parents' self-efficacy; parents' skills and knowledge; parents' time and energy; schools' invitations; teachers' invitations; daughters' invitations; and parents' self-reported involvement. Table 6 clarifies the number of items under each section and their source. Conversely, statements from Epstein's and Sheldon's scale (2007) mostly explored the extent to which these parents (i.e., mothers of girls with LD) were involved in their children's education.

These items concerned volunteering in the daughter's school and classroom, participating in (IEP) meetings, attending parents' meetings, communicating with teachers, helping the daughter at home, and participating in special events at school. At the end of the questionnaire, participants were asked to check a box if they were willing to be interviewed during the second phase.

As shown in Table 7, the questionnaire in this study used two types of response categories. To clarify, some statements measured mothers' perceptions (e.g., agreement and disagreement) on a 4-point Likert scale, the most frequently used measure in the social sciences for gathering data on attitudes, perceptions, values, and beliefs (Jamieson, 2004; Peterson, 2000).

Table 6 Types of Questionnaires Subscales

Questionnaire's sub scales	Nature	Number of items
Parents role construction	Adapted from Walker et al. (2005) and Epstein and Sheldon (2007) 4 items created by thesis's author	7 4 created Total =11
Parents self-efficacy	Adapted from Walker et al. (2005)	4
Skill and knowledge	Adapted from Walker et al. (2005)	5
Time and energy	Adapted from Walker et al. (2005)	4
Schools' invitation	Adapted from Walker et al. (2005)	2 2 created Total =4
Teachers' invitation	Adapted from Walker et al. (2005)	9 1 created Total =10
Daughters' invitation	Adapted from Walker et al. (2005)	3
Reported mothers' involvement	Adapted from Epstein and Sheldon (2007)	8 3 created Total=11

In contrast, other response categories (e.g., never, rarely, often, always) were used in different sections. This approach was justified because the differences between the two previous questionnaires in their responses categories. This study's questionnaire was self-completed by respondents (Robson, 2002) who indicated their degree of agreement by checking the appropriate box of four response categories. Furthermore, the questionnaire included two reversed

statements (see Appendix 6). Reversed statements were recorded in the analysis stage. Further details are given in Chapter Five.

Table 7 Scoring the Questionnaire

Questionnaire component	1	2	3	4
Parental role construction	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Parental self-efficacy+ skill and knowledge	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Time and energy	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Invitations from school	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Invitations from teachers	Never	Rarely	Often	Always
Invitations from daughter	Never	Rarely	Often	Always
How often were you involved?	Never	Rarely	Often	Always

4.6.4 Piloting the questionnaire

Piloting was needed since all aspects of the questionnaire, including question content, wording, sequence, form and layout, question difficulty, and instructions should be tested (Malhotra, 2006), to help ensure the questions are comprehensible to participants. Neuman (2006) and Cohen, et al (2011) noted that ambiguous and confusing questions, emotional language, multiple questions, and biased questions should be avoided in a questionnaire. The pilot sampling included four mothers of girls with LD from mainstream primary schools in Riyadh. The pilot data were not included in the main data set. Participants were asked to express their opinions regarding the clarity of the questionnaire and its statements, what needed to be excluded or added, and the time they needed to complete it. After piloting the questionnaire, I contacted each mother by phone individually and asked her to give her opinion. All mothers indicated that the questions were clear and included detailed items about their involvement. The mothers also confirmed the time required to complete the questionnaire, which was 11 minutes, and assured the researcher that it was appropriate. Based on this, no changes were made to the questionnaire subsequent to the piloting.

4.6.5 Sampling

To select mainstream primary schools to approach from the list provided by the MOE, I used systematic random sampling. Using systematic random sampling was appropriate for the applied data analysis in this phase (inferential statistics). This type of analysis demands a good enough sample. The best sample when working with statistics is a representative sample, which ensures the statistics are worth having.

In the first instance, I decided to approach half of the schools in each district. There were 178 girls schools with LD programmes in total. The list of 178 schools was divided by districts. There seemed to be no particular order to the list for each district. The full number of schools was too many to approach, and therefore, systematic random sampling was used. According to Cohen et al. (2011), the systematic sample technique involves choosing subjects from a population list in a systematic rather than a random way. Using systematic random sampling, every other school was chosen, resulting in 89 schools to be contacted.

I contacted each school by phone (calls and messages) to distribute the online questionnaire to mothers via a WhatsApp link. It was important to select schools from all districts to ensure a varied sample in terms of the mix of areas in Riyadh, which are very different as explained earlier and using systematic random sampling increased fairness in choice of schools. To increase the response rate, I sent all these 89 schools reminders via phone. Fifty-six schools responded and offered to send the questionnaire to mothers. Additionally, I re-contacted all 56 schools via phone, and I also sent text messages asking the principals to remind the mothers to complete the online questionnaire. Ultimately, 165 mothers of girls with LD completed the study's questionnaire.

4.6.6 Procedures

Ethical approval was obtained from the Graduate School of Education Ethics Committee at Exeter University (see Appendix 9). After that, I submitted a letter to the Saudi Cultural Bureau in London to ask permission from the Ministry of Education (MOE) to conduct my study. Once I received approval, I contacted the Department of Special Education at the MOE in Riyadh for a list of names and numbers of mainstream primary schools for girls with LD, which included all LD programmes in the different districts in Riyadh. According to systematic sampling

techniques, I contacted 89 schools via phone to ask them to distribute the link to the online questionnaire to the mothers of girls with LD. In response, school principals distributed the anonymous online questionnaire via phone. Online questionnaires were sent to mothers via phone through the 'WhatsApp' application because emails and school websites are not utilised for parent–teacher communication in mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia (Dubis, 2015). I determined that mothers' email addresses might not be available in the databases of mainstream primary schools in Saudi Arabia, Riyadh. This was confirmed by the Director of Learning Disabilities Administration at the Ministry of Education in Riyadh (see Appendix 10). She indicated that there is no information regarding mothers' email addresses at these schools. Additionally, the Director confirmed that mainstream primary schools in Riyadh do not have any other contact information (e.g., emails) except mothers' phone numbers.

4.6.7 Data analysis procedure

Quantitative data were statistically processed, prepared, coded, and analysed using the SPSS software. Descriptive statistics (percentages, frequencies) and inferential statistics (Spearman and Pearson correlation tests, T-test, one way ANOVA, and multiple regression) were used. Inferential statistics were used to clarify relationships between independent and dependent variables and to investigate functional relationships among variables (Pallent, 2013). Conversely, descriptive statistics were used to describe data collected and ensure that the assumptions behind each inferential test were not being violated. Section (Quantitative analysis for the first research question) presents further clarification about which tests were used to address research questions.

4.6.8 Reliability and validity

Validity can be defined as the degree to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure (Pallant, 2010). The reliability and validity of a questionnaire are very important because it establishes the dependability of data and may help the decision to use data collection tools in further research. In this study, internal reliability was determined by using Cronbach's alpha (Bryman & Cramer, 2001). In addition, I conducted a pilot study with mothers to check the clarity, the time to answer the questions, and the reliability of the questionnaire.

Furthermore, to measure face validity (Bryman, 2012; Neuman, 2006), my supervisors evaluated the questionnaire and assessed whether the questionnaire

items measured the construct under study. The reliability and validity were also enhanced by the adaptation of two existing questionnaires, both of which have been deemed reliable and valid. Shenton (2004) indicated, credibility may be gained through the adoption of well-established research methods. In this study, well-known questionnaires that have been used in many studies were adapted.

4.7 Second Phase: Interviews Design

This phase was concerned with the third and fourth research questions in this study, which explored the experiences of mothers of girls with LD and their perspectives regarding their involvement in mainstream primary schools in Riyadh. This phase was also concerned with exploring how these mothers wished to be involved in their daughters' education. The aim of this phase was to gather rich, in-depth data about PI from the points of view of mothers of girls with LD. This phase was based on findings from the first phase which needed further exploration as well as answering other research questions.

4.7.1 Data collection method: semi-structured interviews

4.7.2 Justification for semi-structured interviews

A semi-structured interview method is appropriate when little is known about the phenomenon under study and extensive details are needed (Gill et al., 2008). Prior to the current study, information about the involvement of Saudi mothers of girls with LD in mainstream primary schools was scarce. Using a semi-structured interview may enable the mothers of girls with LD to express themselves and to state their concerns and opinions in much greater depth and detail. Esterberg (2002) indicated that semi-structured interviews provide better access to interviewees' views and experiences, enabling them to express their opinions and ideas in their own words. Semi-structured interviews give a person or group a voice (Wellington, 2015) and are a particularly good way to study marginalized groups (DeVault, 1999). As mentioned in the literature chapter (section3.5), Saudi mothers of girls with LD have been overlooked by researchers; thus, this method might help their voices to be heard.

Another reason for choosing the semi-structured interview is that it consists of several key questions that define the area to be explored, and guide the interview discussion (Gill et al., 2008; smith, 2007). This type of interview is flexible and allows researchers to ask questions they judge to be appropriate as well as to

ask for clarification and to encourage respondents to elucidate their thoughts further (Kajornboon, 2005) in terms of making changes and amendments. Using this type of interviews allowed me to developed questions in a schedule or guide, which assured that broad themes that needed to be discussed were covered during the interview (Qu & Dumay, 2011). The use of an interview schedule enabled me as a researcher to have focus on the main questions that needed to be answered and allowed me to direct the conversation toward the issues that needed to be explored. Additionally, semi-structured interviews enable the researcher to clarify or rephrase the questions if respondents are unclear about the wording (Kajornboon, 2005).

One disadvantage of semi-structured interviews is that they depend on the researcher's skills (Kajornboon, 2005). This disadvantage was, however, partially addressed because of my professional experiences. I had previously conducted a small-scale qualitative research study where I used semi-structured interviews as a method and interviewed parents of children with special needs. This experience had developed my interview skills to some extent and made me aware of how to use prompting questions. It also allowed me to improve my listening skills, so that participants could express their responses without being interrupted.

4.7.3 Interview questions design

Developing a guiding schedule is essential in this type of interview, since it provides the researcher "with the means to draw out more complete narratives from the interviewees, drilling down a particular topic" (Qu & Dumay, 2011, p. 247). To address the two research questions guiding this phase, the interview schedule was based on two vital dimensions: (a) exploring mothers' perspectives and experiences regarding their PI and (b) expanding and elaborating upon results from phase 1, including the surprising findings. Exploring what was unknown was needed in this phase more than reiterating what was discovered in the first phase. Thus, within the dimensions of the interviews indicated above, the guiding schedule was built in two stages. In the first stage, after analysing and reviewing all the quantitative data in phase one, I developed questions about those aspects that needed further exploration (see Appendix 11). In the same stage, I also developed a table that included the questions for the interviews, the justification for each question, and its relevant phase (i.e. phase 1 and/or phase

2). In the second stage, before the schedule was finalised, it was discussed with my supervisors, revised and amended, to ensure that the questions were unambiguous and unbiased, all repetitive questions were deleted, others were added, and the main concepts that needed to be covered were determined clearly. Second, under each concept, several questions were written starting with a general one and moving toward more specific ones (see Appendix 12). The schedule was also amended to assure consistency and coherency.

4.7.4 Sampling

In this phase, participants were purposively selected. Teddlie, (2007) states that ''Purposive sampling techniques are primarily used in qualitative (QUAL) studies and may be defined as selecting units (e.g., individuals, groups of individuals, institutions) based on specific purposes associated with answering a research study's questions'' (P. 77). Using a purposive sampling technique in this study was based on several reasons.

First, this type of sample was appropriate given the phase's aim of conducting an in-depth exploration of PI from mothers' perspectives. This aim required me to be selective in recruiting mothers who could express and describe their experiences and perspectives regarding PI. Purposive sampling is appropriate to gain in-depth information about phenomena from representative individuals (Cohen et al., 2011). Second, purposive sampling allows the researcher to actively select the most productive sample to answer the research questions (Marchall, 1996).

In this study, 56 mothers of girls with LD agreed to be interviewed. This is too many to manage so I used purposive sampling to reduce the number whilst maintaining variation. I aimed to have different perspectives from mothers of girls with LD. I organized all 56 according to the districts as first step. Then, I applied 3 key criteria in choosing participants which are: employed/not employed, educational level, and high/low mothers' reported involvement score in Likert scale (see Appendix 13). I made sure at least one participant would cover each possible score. I selected the participants who meet these criteria and offer the most variation compared to the other participants. Finally, I approached ten mothers since I was limited by time. Having ten purposively selected interviews seemed to be an appropriate number for a qualitative approach (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005).

4.7.5 Pilot interviews

In this study, two pilot interviews with mothers of girls with LD were conducted to ensure the suitability of the different components of the interview such as clarity of interview questions, and interview length. At the end of those interviews, participants were asked about the clarity of questions and if there were questions they thought should be added. The two participants confirmed the clarity of interviews questions. Piloting identified the need to increase the intended time from 50 minutes to 1 hour or more, depending on the depth and richness of data provided by each participant. As a researcher, the pilot interviews enabled me to know whether the length of the interview was appropriate or not. Additionally, pilot interviews provided practice in following the guiding schedule and knowing when I should prompt questions, or ask for further information. Eventually, my skills as a researcher were adequately developed.

4.7.6 Procedures

The interviews were conducted in Arabic, the participants' native language, to allow them to clearly express themselves while avoiding confusion or misunderstandings that could occur by using English. Interviews started with friendly conversation in order to establish rapport with participants. Afterwards, I explained the nature of the study, plans for results, participant confidentiality, the interview recording process, and the participant's option to withdraw from the study at any time. Participants were then asked to sign consent forms (see Appendix 14). Interviews were digitally recorded via audio recordings. Interviews were conducted individually and face-to-face. Most interviews took about 1 hour to complete, although three interviews lasted longer (see Table 8). I conducted interviews in different places as determined by each participant at their convenience. Some interviews occurred at a coffee shop, others at the mother's workplace, and one was at a school. Table 6 describes each interview and where it was held and offers brief information about each participant. Each participant was given a pseudonym as shown in this table. Additionally, while collecting my qualitative data, one beneficial technique I used was reviewing participants' answers to the questionnaire before meeting with them. This step allowed me to expand upon some questions. Moreover, it enabled me to understand each mother's story according to her answers in the first phase. Reviewing participants' answers also allowed me to clarify some points by asking more questions when

they contradicted their answers in the interviews. In practice, this was a demanding and tricky task for several reasons. First, I had to ask for more clarification without offending the participants, so I had to make them feel as though they were providing two different answers. Second, I had to listen carefully to all that was said so I could make connections and know when I should ask prompting questions.

Furthermore, I wrote reflections after each interview. These reflections were about how interviews had gone, what I had done well or poorly and why, which questions should be reworded or omitted and how to improve the interview the next time. These reflections were also about each mother – her feelings, the way she expressed her feelings and perspectives, and what stood out to me as a researcher. These reflections enabled me to view and review my performance, evaluate it, understand my actions and hence improve with the next interview. These reflections also allowed me to record additional details about the participants. For additional details about participants, please see the mothers' profiles in Appendix 15.

Table 8 Participant Characteristics

Participant's pseudonym names	Brief information	Interview location	Interview duration
Nora	Age 41–45, employed, involved , master's degree, lived in east region, had 6 children	Coffee shop	1:15 m
Mona	Age 36–40, employed, involved doctoral degree, lived in middle region, had more than 6 children	her workplace/ university	1:18 m
Sara	Age 46–50, unemployed , not involved , bachelor's degree, lived in north region, had more than 6 children	coffee	1 hour
Hanan	Age 26–30, employed , not involved , bachelor's degree, lived in middle region, had 2 children	coffee	1 hour
Abrar	Age 36–40, unemployed , not involved , bachelor's degree, lived in west region, had 5 children	coffee	1:15 m
Gamila	Age 36–40, employed ,not involved , bachelor's degree, lived in west region, had more than 6 children	coffee	1 hour
Alhanouf	Age 36–40, unemployed , not involved ,bachelor's degree, lived in west region, had 4 children	coffee	1 hour
Roqya	Age 31–35, unemployed , not involved ,bachelor's degree, lived in north region, had 4 children	coffee	1 hour
May	Age 36–40, unemployed , not involved ,intermediate education, lived in south region, had 5 children	coffee	1 hour
Khadiga	Age less than 25, employed, not involved primary education, lived in north region, had 3 children	school	1 hour

4.7.7 Data analysis

Thematic analysis was carried out with the qualitative data. Thematic analysis is "a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.79). I followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) outline guide (see Table 9) because it provides clear steps regarding qualitative analysis and easy-to-follow instructions.

Table 9 Description of Thematic Analysis Phases

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarizing yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes:	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

Note. Reproduced from Braun and Clarke (2006, p87).

Interviews were transcribed from the audio recordings which was in the Arabic language. Each transcript was read several times to boost familiarity with the data. This step (familiarizing) is vital in thematic analysis and is the first step in Braun and Clarke's guide (2006). While reading each transcript, I re-played the audio recording. This strategy benefited me in two ways. First, it helped me to check words or sentences that may have been lost during the initial transcription. Second, it helped me read these transcripts through the mothers' lens, recognising their tones and feelings, which helped at the analysis stage.

After transcription, the data were entered into MAXQDA computer software, chosen because it allowed use of the Arabic language. This program helped me to visualise and organise numerous codes. It also helped me to build maps of themes, resulting in the development of more coherent themes.

Afterwards, I started the second step, which was generating initial codes. Coding, which is the result of familiarity with the data, involves extracting keywords from the text for later identification (Kvale, 2008). In this step, all codes were close to the mothers' words without any further interpretations. While generating the initial codes, it was vital to not go beyond what the data revealed. Codes were written in the English language. The MAXQDA program provided a summary of all codes,

which was helpful at this stage. I printed all codes and conducted several readings of initial codes while taking notes to identify overlapping and redundant codes. This step helped decrease the number of codes, link ideas together, and enabled me to begin to recognise similarities or differences between the codes. I deleted any redundant codes and created a new project in the MAXQDA program with revised initial codes. During the third step, I searched for themes by grouping similar codes to build overarching themes and subthemes. I used many mind maps to visualise the themes and subthemes at this stage. During the fourth step all coded extracts for each theme were revised. In the fifth step, themes were clarified . Finally, during the sixth stage, I wrote the report clearly. Further details about the analysis process can be found in Appendix 16.

The interview transcripts were translated into English after the analysis. I determined that most of the terminology and language used in the original data were more comprehensible if analysed before being translated into English. Vallance, Madang, and Lee (2005) noted that "working in the original language is methodologically advantageous and can increase the validity claims of the research outcomes" (p. 2).

During the analysis, one important technique I used was the bottom-up strategy. With this strategy, I began with thousands of codes (which required multiple readings of the data) until I reached the top, where themes and subthemes were developed. This strategy allowed the data to guide me rather than me guiding the data, preventing me from forcing the data into any special themes I might have in my mind. In other words, this strategy enabled many unexpected themes to arise and thus may have been more objective and less subjective than other methods. Yet this was a challenging task. Narrowing down the codes required further reading, thinking and justification (for myself as a researcher, before attempting to convince anyone else) regarding what should be deleted, what should be combined, and each code's relationship with my research questions. Additionally, another beneficial strategy I used at this stage was listening to the audio interviews. I considered this strategy a way to re-experience the interviews, gaining a better understanding of participants' feelings, their tone of voice, experiences and perspectives. Listening while reading gave life to the written words and improved my interpretations. Once again, I could feel the mothers' frustrations and understand the needs they expressed.

4.7.8 Trustworthiness

The term 'trustworthiness' was presented by Lincoln and Guba (1985), to replace the terms validity, reliability and generalisability in quantitative research (Loh, 2013). Trustworthiness is important if the researcher hopes to "how can an inquirer persuade his/her audience that findings are worth paying attention to?" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). This could be attained through confirming four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Hence, this study considered these criteria in order to ensure the quality and establish trustworthiness.

Regarding credibility, Lincoln and Guba (1985) indicated that credibility is an essential factor to establish trustworthiness. Credibility in qualitative research is parallel to internal validity in quantitative research (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003) and refers to "how congruent the findings are with reality" (Merriam, 1998). Many different procedures can be used to assure and increase credibility (Shenton, 2004). In this study, peer review was used to ensure credibility. All of the data analysis, findings, and interpretations were peer reviewed by academics (supervisors) .Additionally, two transcripts were reviewed by two PhD colleagues at the university. All feedback was considered and enabled me to develop the study, thereby increasing its credibility. Another procedure used to increase credibility was member checks. I sent the interview transcripts to the participants so they could confirm whether the written conversations in the transcripts contained what they really intended (Shenton, 2004). All participants confirmed that the transcripts reflected their opinions.

Just as credibility is similar to internal validity, transferability is parallel to external validity in quantitative research. Transferability "is concerned with the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations" (Merriam, 1998, p. 39). Some would argue that qualitative findings could not be generalized. For example, Shenton (2004) claimed that, "Since the findings of a qualitative project are specific to a small number of particular environments and individuals, it is impossible to demonstrate that the findings and conclusions are applicable to other situations and populations" (p. 69). Yet, it could be argued that this is not always the case. Qualitative data could be generalized to participants of the study level and, to some extent, to another context with similar norms and policies. In this case, all mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia fall under the umbrella of the

Ministry of Education; thus, they follow similar educational policies, so some findings could be transferred to other mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia. Specifically, other mothers of girls with LD in other mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia (not only in Riyadh) might have similar involvement experiences. According to Weis and Willems (2017):

> *"Generalizable conclusions from single cases are possible because it is assumed that general phenomena can also be found in single cases and that the single case is at the same time part of universal structures". (p.224)*

Despite these possible similarities, it is crucial to clarify that other factors influence mothers' involvement and shape their experiences as well.

Transferability can be gained by providing thick descriptions of the context and data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1998; Shenton, 2004). In the current study, thick and detailed descriptions of the context were provided, including information about Saudi special education policies and programs (SPLD) as well as mothers' roles in these policies and programs (see Chapter Two). Chapters 5 and 6 present extensive information regarding findings of the current study. Offering thick descriptions may enable the reader to make such transfers (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Finally, dependability in qualitative research is equivalent to reliability in quantitative research. According to Shenton (2004), "in addressing the issue of reliability, the positivist employs techniques to show that, if the work were repeated, in the same context, with the same methods and with the same participants, similar results would be obtained" (p. 71). In this study, dependability was preserved by reporting clear details regarding the study's process, allowing other researchers to repeat the work in different situations. Shenton (2004) stated that "such in-depth coverage also allows the reader to assess the extent to which proper research practices have been followed ... to enable readers of the research report to develop a thorough understanding of the methods and their effectiveness" (p. 71).

4.8 Ethical Issues

As should be the case in any study, I considered ethical issues in both phases of this study. Educational researchers must work and conduct their studies with respect for all persons involved in their research. The British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2018) asserted that *"individuals should be treated fairly, sensitively, with dignity within an ethic of respect and freedom from prejudice regardless of age, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, nationality"* (p. 6). Hence, it is the researcher's responsibility to assure participants' privacy and to maintain confidentiality and anonymity. The researcher must also uphold the participants' rights to withdraw and ensure that no harm occurs to participants during the whole research process (BERA, 2018; Bryman, 2012). In the current study, numerous ethical principles were considered, as discussed below.

As indicated earlier in this chapter, I obtained ethical approval from College of Social Sciences and International Studies (see Appendix 9). Afterwards, a letter was written to the Saudi Cultural Bureau in London, asking the Ministry of Education in Riyadh (Department of Special Education) to grant me permission to conduct a study with a group of mothers of girls with LD as participants in the study. The official letter clarified the aims of the study, the number of participants in the two phases, and the data collection processes. Permission was also obtained to begin distributing the questionnaires and conducting my interviews. I clearly informed participants of the study details and their anonymity and confidentiality. The consent form and information sheet were written in Arabic, the mothers' native language, to avoid misunderstandings. I offered them a choice to participate in both phases (questionnaire and interview) or to withdraw at any stage. I informed them that their interviews would be recorded and used for study purposes only. All participants' names were anonymised by replacing them with another name so that complete confidentiality was maintained. As a researcher, I acknowledge that if any participants have an emotional issue (i.e. they are upset or crying) I must stop the interview immediately, attempt to calm her down, and ask the participant regarding her willingness to continue or whether she wishes to postpone or withdraw from the interviews. When conducting this study, no ethical issues were faced or reported.

4.9 Summary

Research aims, questions, and philosophical assumptions were clarified at the beginning of the chapter. This chapter also presented a detailed description and justifications regarding mixed methods research and the adopted research design in this study (explanatory sequential mixed method design). Additionally, this chapter presented the methodology of the study including detailed description regarding each phase, including methods and their justifications, description of the sampling, the procedures of data collection and analysis validity and reliability, trustworthiness and ethical issues. The next chapter presents the findings of the first phase of the study.

Chapter Five: Quantitative Findings

5.1 Introduction

The goal of this chapter is to present the quantitative data analysis and findings to address the following two research questions:

1. What factors influence parental involvement in mainstream schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia from the perspective of mothers of girls with LD?
2. To what extent do mothers of girls with LD report involvement in their daughters' education in mainstream primary schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia?

This chapter begins by describing the data preparation and coding, testing the reliability and normality of distribution of dependent variables. Demographic information for the participants is presented, followed by presentation of all inferential statistics used to answer the first research question, as well as descriptive statistics used to address both research questions.

5.2 Data Preparation

The preparation of quantitative data for analysis began by uploading the survey data into SPSS (Version 24 for Mac). Second, each variable was labelled and coded. Third, each variable was defined according to its level of data (nominal, ordinal, or scale). Fourth, the total score for each subscale was calculated. Fifth, the distribution of each dependent variable that had data at least at the interval level was determined (see Appendix 17). A common rule of thumb is that, "when the value of the skewness or kurtosis statistic is higher than twice the value of its standard error" (Coolican, 2014, P. 237), the data is not normally distributed; in this case, a nonparametric test was used. These five steps allowed selection of the right statistical tests to use (i.e., parametric versus nonparametric). Table 10 provides details of the variables and the statistics used in relation to test of significance that used mothers' actual involvement as a dependent variable.

Table 10 Variables, Variables Types, and Statistics Used

Variable	Variable type	Descriptive statistics	Distribution of data	Inferential statistics
Age	Ordinal, dependent, continuous	Frequencies	Not applicable	Correlation, non-parametric: Spearman ,two tailed
Educational level	Ordinal, dependent, continuous	Frequencies, percentages	Not applicable	Correlation, non-parametric: Spearman ,one tailed
Living area	Nominal, independent, differences	Frequencies, percentages	Not applicable	Differences, parametric: ANOVA
Employed	Nominal, independent, differences	Frequencies, percentages	Not applicable	Differences, parametric: t-test
Income	Ordinal, dependent, continuous	Frequencies, percentages	Not applicable	Correlation, non-parametric: Spearman, two tailed
Transportation problem	Nominal, independent, differences	Frequencies, percentages	Not applicable	Differences, parametric: t-test
Number of children	Interval dependent, continuous	Frequencies, percentages	Not applicable	Correlation, non-parametric: Spearman, two tailed
Daughter's age	Interval ,dependent, continuous	Frequencies, percentages	Not applicable	Correlation, non-parametric: Spearman, one tailed
Parents' role construction	Interval subscale, dependent, continuous	Frequencies, percentages	Skewness and kurtosis do not meet parametric properties	Correlation, non-parametric: Spearman, one tailed
Self-efficacy	Interval subscale, dependent, continuous	Frequencies, percentages	Parametric properties met	Correlation, parametric: Pearson, one tailed
Skills and knowledge	Interval subscale, dependent, continuous	Frequencies, percentages	Parametric properties met	Correlation, parametric: Pearson, one tailed
Time and energy	Interval subscale, dependent, continuous	Frequencies, percentages	Parametric properties met	Correlation, parametric: Pearson, one tailed
School invitations	Interval subscale, dependent, continuous	Frequencies, percentages	Parametric properties met	Correlation, parametric: Pearson, one tailed
Teachers' invitations	Interval subscale, dependent, continuous	Frequencies, percentages	Skewness and kurtosis do not meet parametric properties	Correlation, non-parametric: Spearman, one tailed
Daughter's invitations	Subscale, dependent, continuous	Frequencies, percentages	Kurtosis does not meet parametric properties	Correlation, non-parametric: Spearman, one tailed
Mother's actual involvement	Subscale, dependent, continuous	Frequencies, percentages	Parametric properties met	Not applicable

5.3 Reliability

Running reliability tests at the beginning was important since such tests indicated whether subscale items were measuring constructs consistently. These tests were also used to identify inconsistent or unrelated items that should be excluded, resulting in a more reliable scale. Field (2013) stated that scales of measurement should be one-dimensional rather than combining two different constructs. In other words, each subscale should measure only one construct, thus allowing for clearer explanations. Based on the previous scales used to inform the questionnaire design, it was predicted that items on each subscale would be one-dimensional. However, it was necessary to test whether that would be the case in this study.

Reliability was determined separately for each subscale in the questionnaire as recommended by Field (2013). A high Cronbach's alpha value indicates correlation and consistency between each item in a given subscale. As shown in Table 11, seven subscales had high Cronbach's alpha values ($\alpha > 0.7$). Therefore, subscales were internally consistent, except Self-efficacy, where the Cronbach's alpha value was quite low (.542). This low value may indicate that the items in this subscale are not measuring the same thing (self-efficacy), which suggests that this subscale is not internally consistent (although it was taken verbatim from the Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler, Hoover-Dempsey PI scale).

For the parents' role constructions subscale, a reliability analysis was conducted based on the 11 items in this subscale; the Cronbach's alpha was $\alpha=.837$. The reliability analysis, shown in Table 12, revealed that the first item did not correlate with the total score of all items because the corrected item-total correlation was $r=.289$. Removing this item from the subscale increased Cronbach's alpha to $\alpha=.849$. Similarly, for the teachers' invitations subscale, a reliability analysis was conducted based on the ten items in this subscale, which gave a Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha=.894$. In this analysis, the corrected item total correlation for the first item was $r=.266$. Removing this item increased Cronbach's alpha to .906, so this item was removed. Finally, for daughter's invitations, based on three items under this subscale, the Cronbach's alpha was $\alpha=.748$. The reliability analysis gave a corrected item total correlation for the first item of $r=.466$. Removing this item increased Cronbach's alpha to $\alpha=.785$. As indicated items were removed from the analysed subscales to increase their reliability.

Table 11 Cronbach's Alpha for Each Subscale

Subscale Name	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Parents' role construction	10	.849
Self-efficacy	5	.542
Skills and knowledge	4	.796
Time and energy	3	.733
School invitations	4	.904
Teachers' invitations	9	.906
Daughter's invitations	2	.785
Mother's involvement	9	.812

Table 12 Cronbach's Alpha for Subscales that Required Item Exclusion

Subscale Name	Excluded Item(s)	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha Before Item Deletion	Cronbach's Alpha After Item Deletion
(Parents' role construction)	First (volunteering at daughter's school)	.289	.837	.849
(Invitations from teachers)	First (Asked me to help my daughter with homework)	.266	.894	.906
(Invitations from daughter)	First (Asked me to help explain something about homework)	.466	.748	.785

5.4 Factor Analysis

Because of the reported low reliability for the self-efficacy subscale, exploratory factor analysis was applied to examine the association between the self-efficacy items and why they did not correlate with each other even though they were taken from previous studies (Walker,et.al ,2005). Given the sample size in this study, exploratory factor analysis was appropriate, as Tabchnick and Fidell (2013) have stated a minimum average ratio of five cases per item is usually adequate for factor analysis. I have 165 cases, and there are only five items on the self-efficacy subscale, which exceeds the recommended ratio. To decide which factors should be retained, eigenvalues (Kaiser's) technique was used. In this technique, only

factors with an eigenvalue of (1.0) or more are retained for further investigation. Using this rule, two factors were given. Together, they explain 65.6% of the variance.

Findings suggest that the two factors measure different things in my participants. This would explain the low Cronbach's alpha in the first analysis. If all items were measuring self-efficacy, then all the items should have appeared under one factor, not two. One factor included the three positively worded items, and the other factor included the two negatively worded items. Apparently, items under this subscale (the recoded ones) correlated strongly with each other. This is because they were negatively worded. At the same time, the other three items correlated with each other. Again, although these items were taken from previous research in which they appeared to measure the same thing (self-efficacy), in my sample, at least, they were not perceived in this way. However, even though there is a lack of clarity about whether this subscale measures only self-efficacy, I have analysed it in line with its prior use and still refer to it as self-efficacy in the findings.

It was decided that all these items would be kept under one self-efficacy subscale, as it was unclear what the two identified factors were measuring (see Appendix 18). Although there is no clear evidence that can clarify this result, certain hypotheses can be made. For instance, the Cronbach's alpha was low here due to the negative statements, which were recoded. Mothers in my sample did not answer positive-worded questions (e.g., I know) in relation to how they did negative-worded questions (e.g., "I do not know"). Possible explanations is that participants did not understand the negative wording statements that they responded in a way that would please the researcher by agreeing with all items, or that they had mixed feelings about their self-efficacy in that they thought they could help their daughter in some ways but not in other ways. Further clarification regarding this point will be offered in the Discussion Chapter.

5.5 Demographic Information

This section begins with a description of the demographic characteristics of the mothers involved in the study. To provide a clear description of the participants descriptive statistics, including percentages and frequencies for nominal and ordinal variables, were used.

As shown in Table 13, a total of 165 mothers of girls with LD responded to the online questionnaire. Some participants did not have a total score for some subscales because of missing items. In total, 86% of mothers completed all Likert scale items. Approximately one-third of mothers were in the 36–40 age bracket. The majority (n = 55) had either a high school education or had attained a bachelor's degree (n = 53). Most mothers (n = 59) lived in the northern and eastern regions of Riyadh (n = 31). Furthermore, most mothers (n = 108) were not employed while a minority were currently employed (n = 57). When asked about their monthly household income, mothers reported a spread of incomes across the categories over 2000 Saudi Riyal. Table 13 presents more details about participants.

Table 13 Participants Demographic Information

Response	N	%
Mother's Age		
Under 25 years	6	3.6
26–30 years	19	11.5
31–35 years	31	18.8
36–40 years	56	33.9
41–45 years	32	19.4
46–50 years	20	12.1
50 years or over	1	.6
Total	165	100.0
Educational Level		
Primary	18	10.9
Intermediate	27	16.4
High school	53	32.1
Bachelor degree	55	33.3
Graduate study	12	7.3
Total	165	100.0
Mother's Living Area		
North Region	59	35.8
South Region	16	9.7
West Region	50	30.3
East Region	31	18.8
Central Region	9	5.5
Total	165	100.0

	Mother Employed	
Yes	57	34.5
No	108	65.5
Total	165	100.0

	Transportation Problem	
Yes	52	31.5
No	109	66.1
Total responses	161	97.6
Missing	4	2.4
Total	165	100.0

	Family Income	
2,000 SR or less	9	5.5
2,001–5,000 SR	25	15.2
5,001–7,000 SR	39	23.6
7,001–10,000 SR	31	18.8
10,001–15,000 SR	32	19.4
Over 15,000 SR	29	17.9
Total	165	100.0

	Number of Children in the Family	
1	7	4.2
2	21	12.7
3	30	18.2
4	45	27.3
5	19	11.5
6 or more	43	26.1
Total	165	100.0

	Daughter's Age	
7 years	17	10.3
8 years	37	22.4
9 years	50	30.3
10 years	35	21.2
11 years	26	15.8
Total	165	100.0

5.6   Quantitative Analysis

This section presents the descriptive and/or inferential statistics chosen to analyse the quantitative data for each research question.

5.6.1   Quantitative analysis for the first research question

To answer the research question regarding the factors that influence PI in Saudi Arabia from the perspective of mothers of girls with LD, inferential statistics were used. To clarify, I was interested in which factors were linked with parental involvement. Therefore, I wanted to statistically test to see which factors were significantly associated with PI as well as which factors indicated difference in

level of PI. Descriptive statistics assisted in clarifying and explaining the relationships between variables identified through the inferential statistical analyses. In other words, if significant differences are identified, it may be necessary to look at descriptive statistics (e.g., means) to compare between groups. Finally, descriptive statistical analysis also helped indicate areas of investigation for the second phase of the study.

5.6.2 Inferential statistics: correlations

As explained earlier, the most suitable test was determined according to the data distribution and variable type. Accordingly, as shown in Table 10, different parametric (i.e. Pearson) and non-parametric (i.e. Spearman) tests were used. Because some of the demographic variables were continuous, it was appropriate to test their association with mothers' actual involvement. Correlation tests were used to examine what type of associations (positive or negative) existed between the dependent variables tested, whether they were statistically significant, and the strengths of these relationships (Pallant, 2013). The decision regarding whether tests were one-tailed or two-tailed was based on the literature review. If previous studies indicated mixed results about the relationships between independent and dependent variables (e.g., some stated that educational level was important in PI, while others stated it was not), a two-tailed test was chosen. Conversely, a one-tailed test was chosen when most of the literature confirmed or stated similar results regarding these relationships. The statistical significance level used in this study (p = .05) is typical in social science (Fidell & Osterlind, 2013). To determine relationship strength, which refers to how the value of correlation coefficients (r) are interpreted, I followed Cohen's (1988, pp. 79–81) recommendations, shown in Table 14.

Table 14 Correlation Coefficients Cohen, 1988

Effect	r
Small	.10 to .29
Medium	.30 to .49
Large	.50 to 1.0

As seen in Table 15 below, a two-tailed Spearman correlation on the mothers' age and their scores for involvement in their daughter's education showed no statistically significant relationship, with r_s = −.103, n= 160 and p = .194. On the other hand, a one-tailed Spearman correlation on mothers' educational level and

their involvement scores shows a significant relationship, with r_s = .185, n = 160 and p = .010. This indicates a small positive correlation between these two variables, such that the higher mother's education, the more she is involved in her daughter's education.

Similarly, a two-tailed Spearman correlation on family income and mothers' involvement scores showed a statistically significant relationship, with r_s = .160, n = 160 and p = .043. There is a small positive correlation between these two variables, with higher family income corresponding to greater involvement among mothers.

A two-tailed Spearman correlation on the number of children and mothers' involvement scores showed no statistically significant relationship, with r_s = −.051, n = 160 and p = .523. Likewise, a one-tailed Spearman correlation on the relationship between daughters' age and mothers' involvement scores shows no statistically significant relationship, with r_s = .14, n = 165 and p = .429.

For the parent involvement beliefs subscales, a one-tailed Spearman correlation on parents' role construction and mothers' involvement scores shows a statistically significant relationship with r_s = .221, n = 160 and p = .002. These results exposed a small positive correlation. This is to say, the more mothers have positive beliefs regarding their roles, the more they are involved in their daughter's education. Likewise, a one-tailed Pearson correlation on self-efficacy PI beliefs and mothers' involvement scores shows a significant relationship, with r = .387, n = 160 and p < .001. This indicates a moderate positive correlation, such that mothers who have positive beliefs about their self-efficacy report being more involved. Finally, a one-tailed Pearson correlation on mothers' skills and knowledge and their involvement scores shows a statistically significant, moderate positive correlation, with r = .323, n = 155 and p <.001. This result reveals that the more skills and knowledge the mother believes she has, the more involved she tends to be.

With regards to the correlation between time and energy and mothers' involvement, a one-tailed Pearson correlation coefficient was used. The scores indicated a statistically significant moderate sized positive correlation between these two variables with r = .274, n = 159 and p < .001. This result reveals the more mothers report having time and energy the more they attempted to involve.

A one-tailed Pearson correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between schools' invitations and mothers' involvement. Results showed a statistically significant relationship, with r = .555, n = 155 and $p < .001$. There is a large positive correlation (above .50) between these two variables, meaning that the more school invited mothers to participate, the more they were actually involved.

Table 15 Correlations Tests

Correlation	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Sig. (p-value)
Age × Mother's actual involvement total score	-.103	.194*
Educational level× total score Mother's actual involvement	.185	.010*
Income × total score Mother's actual involvement	.160	.043*
Number of children × total score Mother's actual involvement	-.051	.523
Daughter's age × total score Mother's actual involvement	.014	.429
Total of parents' roles construction × total score Mother's actual involvement	.221	.002*
Total of self-efficacy × total score Mother's actual involvement	.387	<.001*
Total of skill and knowledge × total score Mother's actual involvement	.323	<.001*
Total of time and energy × total score Mother's actual involvement	.274	<.001*
Total of schools' invitations × total score Mother's actual involvement	.555	<.001*
Total of teachers' invitations × total score Mother's actual involvement	.653	<.001*
Total of Daughter's invitations × total score Mother's actual involvement	.529	<.001*

Note: the star means a significant correlation

Similarly, a one-tailed Pearson correlation on teachers' invitations and mothers' involvement scores shows a significant relationship, with r = .653, n = 157 and *p* <.001. This large positive correlation suggests that the more teachers invite mothers to participate, the more mothers are involved. Another significant and large positive relationship was found through a one-tailed Spearman correlation on daughter's invitations and mothers' involvement scores, with r_s = .529, n = 158 and *p* < .001. In summary, the overall findings show that there is a link between some of the demographic variables (i.e. educational level and income) and the mothers' reported involvement. Also, there is a moderate to large correlation in the expected direction between aspects of PI and self-reported involvement.

5.6.3   Inferential statistics: T-test

Independent sample t-tests were used for the following independent variables: (a) Mother's current employment, (b) transportation problem and (c) daughter's school level. An independent sample t-test is used to compare the mean scores of two different independent groups (Pallant, 2013, p. 247). As shown in the Appendix 6, under each of these variables, the mothers had only two options for answers – "yes" or "no" for the first two variables and "lower elementary grades (1-3)" or "upper elementary grades (4-6)" for the third. When applying the t-tests, I used Levene's tests to decide which t-values should be used. According to Pallant (2013), Levene's tests test the equality of variances and whether the variation in the two groups' scores are the same. The outcome of the test determined which t values that SPSS provides is appropriate to be used for a test.

Accordingly, as shown in Appendix 19, an independent sample t-test was performed to compare the scores between employed and not employed mothers. This revealed significant differences between the scores for employed mothers (M = 24.56, SD = 4.917) and unemployed mothers (M = 22.75, SD = 51.162: t (158) = 2.12, *p* = .036, two-tailed). Mothers, who are currently employed, are significantly more involved in their daughters' education than those who are not employed. This was the first surprising result, as other studies cited in the Literature review chapter had found that mothers who had jobs were less involved. Thus, further examination of this result was conducted.

To help explain this surprising result, descriptive statistics were used, mother's current employment was compared with other variables which had significant

correlations with mothers' involvement. Only three independent variables explain why mothers with a job showed significantly more actual involvement than mothers who did not have a job. These variables were: (a) mothers' educational level, (b) mothers' self-efficacy beliefs, and (c) schools' invitations. It may be argued that mothers who are employed are more involved because they have higher education, they have higher self-efficacy PI beliefs, and they are invited more, all of which are associated with involvement. Although these variables explain this result to some extent, further exploration in the second phase was needed, so an interview question was developed for this purpose.

Furthermore, an independent sample t-test was performed to compare the scores of mothers who reported transportation problems and those who did not. The latter produced slightly higher involvement scores (M = 23.71, SD = 5.006) than the former (M = 22.71, SD = 5.431), but the difference between means was not significant, t (154) = -1.123, p = .263, two-tailed), showing that mothers' involvement was not influenced by whether they had transportation problems.

A final independent sample t-test was performed to compare the scores of mothers who had girls in the lower elementary grades (1–3) with those with daughters in the upper elementary grades (4–6). The former produced slightly higher involvement scores (M = 23.46, SD = 5.27) than the latter (M = 23.25, SD= 5.289). The difference between means was not significant t (158) = .252, p = .802, two-tailed). This result shows that mothers' involvement in their daughter's education was not influenced by their daughter's school level.

5.6.4 One-way ANOVA

A one-way ANOVA between groups was conducted to explore the impact of mothers' living area on their involvement. Living areas were divided into five groups (Group 1: North; Group 2: South; Group 3: West; Group 4: East; and Group 5: Central). There were statistically significant differences in mothers' involvement scores for the five living groups: F (4, 155) = 4.3, *p* = .002). Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for those residing in the East (M = 26.00, SD = 4.738) was significantly different from that of the West (M = 21.56, SD = 3.818) (see Appendix 20). It also revealed that there were no statistical differences in the involvement of mothers in the central, southern and northern regions.

Uncovering some differences in mothers' involvement according to different living areas (east and west) was a surprising result. After further investigation, three independent variables may help explain why mothers in the east had significantly more actual involvement than mothers living in the west. These variables were: (a) mothers' educational level, (b) mothers' self-efficacy, and (c) schools' invitations. It appeared that mothers who lived in the east differed slightly from the mothers in the west in these three variables. The mothers in the east seemed to be better educated, have greater self- efficacy, and receive more invitations from the schools.

5.6.5 Regression

Multiple standard regression was used since it can "tell you how well a set of variables is able to predict a particular outcome" (Pallant, 2013, p. 154). This type of analysis is also related to the first research question. There were many different predictors that were thought to influence the outcome (mothers' actual involvement). However, examining correlations only, as indicated previously, does not show how all these factors together as a group may predict mothers' self-reported involvement .

To carry out multiple standard regression, several checks are needed. Regarding the sample size, Tabachnick, Fidell and Osterlind (2013) recommended that N > 50+8m (where m = number of independent variables). In this study, m = 14, so N must be greater than 50+8(14) = 162. In this study N = 165, so the sample size was appropriate.

Accordingly, multiple regression was performed using the enter method. To check multicollinearity, Pallant (2013) recommended, "Do not include two variables with a bivariate correlation of .7 or more in the same analysis" (p. 164). An inspection of the correlation tables revealed no correlations of this strength. Furthermore, on the normal P-P Plot all points lay in a reasonably straight diagonal line from bottom left to top right which "suggest[s] no major deviations from normality" (Pallant, 2013, p. 165) (See Appendix 21).

The multiple regression performed suggested that four factors out of the 14 independent variables tested contributed significantly to the prediction of the mothers' self-reported involvement in their daughters' education, with the following standardised beta coefficients: Teacher's invitations (.495), invitations from daughter (.167), self-efficacy (.148), and time and energy (.128).

In the model summary table, the value of R^2 was .665, which means that 66.5% of mother's involvement was predicted by the scores of all 14 independent variables. These results show that this is a useful model because it explains about two-thirds of the variance in mothers' actual involvement.

5.7 Quantitative Analysis for the Second Research Question

To answer the second research question, which examines the extent to which mothers of girls with LD are involved in their daughter's education in mainstream schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages were used. Mothers were asked how often (i.e., never, rarely, often, always) they were involved in the PI types which were described via the Epstein PI model; specifically, these PI types were parenting, communication, learning at home, decision-making, volunteering, and community. This was the dependent variable used in the analysis for the first research question. Descriptive statistics were used to identify the extent to which mothers were involved and to identify broader questions that should be explored further in the second phase.

Table 16 Descriptive Statistics for Actual Mothers' Involvement

Item	Response	N	%	Means
I ask my daughter how well she is doing in school	Never	1	.6	
	Rarely	17	10.3	
	Often	55	33.3	3.44
	Always	92	55.8	
	Total	165		
I help my daughter with homework	Never	6	3.6	
	Rarely	21	12.7	
	Often	46	27.9	3.36
	Always	92	55.8	
	Total	165		
I attend parent conferences	Never	9	5.5	
	Rarely	38	23.0	
	Often	59	35.8	3.02
	Always	59	35.8	
	Total	165		
I visit my daughter's school	Never	3	1.8	
	Rarely	41	24.8	
	Often	74	44.8	2.99
	Always	45	27.3	
	Total	163	98.8	
I talk (communicate) with my daughter's teacher	Never	5	3.0	
	Rarely	56	33.9	
	Often	56	33.9	2.89
	Always	48	29.1	
	Total	165		
I go to school events (i.e. assemblies or other meetings)	Never	44	26.7	
	Rarely	46	27.9	
	Often	33	20.0	2.44
	Always	42	25.5	
	Total	165		
I participate in IEP meetings	Never	78	47.3	
	Rarely	50	30.3	
	Often	23	13.9	1.84
	Always	14	8.5	
	Total	165		
I volunteer in my daughter's classroom	Never (1)	93	56.4	
	Rarely (2)	37	22.4	
	Often (3)	24	14.5	1.72
	Always (4)	11	6.7	
	Total	165		
I volunteer at the school	Never	92	55.8	
	Rarely	41	25.3	
	Often	18	11.1	1.68
	Always	11	6.8	
	Total	162		

As shown in Table 16, the majority of the 165 mothers had reported few opportunities to volunteer in their daughter's classroom or at their school. Regarding participation in IEP meetings, most mothers stated that they have never or rarely participated. These results correspond with the low rates of reported teacher invitations to participate in volunteering and IEP meetings.

Nonetheless, results also indicated that most mothers were attending parents' conferences. This is also related to the rate of teachers' invitations, discussed earlier. Likewise, the results showed that most mothers visited their daughter's school. Regarding communication with teachers, the majority of mothers fell into two main groups. In the first, 56 (33.9%) indicated that they rarely communicated with their daughter's teacher. A parallel percentage was found in the second group, where 56 (33.9%) stated that they often communicated with their daughter's teacher. Together, these results highlighted the importance of further investigation and exploration in the second phase of the study. Developing questions in the second phase enabled the mothers to elaborate on these findings.

Furthermore, I carried out detailed additional descriptive analysis of the Likert scales for the mothers' beliefs regarding PI (see Appendix 22). This was conducted to inform the questions for phase two of the study. These descriptive statistics exposed many mixed or similar findings that needed to be explored further. For example, items in the parents' role construction subscale with high percentages needed to be explored in more detail in the second phase. In addition to the analysis above that answered the two research questions in this phase, I conducted additional analysis that investigated the relationships between the constructs identified in Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model (see Appendix 23).

5.8 Summary

This chapter has presented how the quantitative data were analysed via inferential and descriptive statistics for both research questions in this phase. The first research question revealed statistically significant relationships between the dependent variable, mothers' reported involvement, and the following variables: educational level; family income; parents' role construction; self-efficacy; skill and knowledge; time and energy; schools', teachers', and daughters' invitations.

Analysis in relation to the second research question regarding mothers' self-reported involvement revealed half of the mothers had never been involved in volunteering in their daughter's mainstream school or classes or in attending their IEP meetings. Qualitative findings will be presented in the following chapter.

Chapter Six: Qualitative Data Findings

6.1   Introduction

The goal of this chapter is to present the results of the qualitative data analysis, which aimed to address the following two research questions:

1. What are the experiences and perspectives of mothers of girls with LD regarding their involvement in primary mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia?

2. How do mothers of girls with LD wish to be involved in their daughters' education?

To explore and respond to these questions, ten mothers were interviewed. Further details regarding these participants can be seen in (Sampling) and in each mother's profile (see Appendix 15).

This chapter presents responses to these two research questions through identified themes and subthemes. As mentioned earlier, in the Methodology Chapter, these were the result of thematic analysis of the qualitative data. Figure 4 presents the main themes and subthemes organized and numbered from 1 to 6 as they will be presented in this chapter. This figure also shows red text between themes briefly suggests how each theme connects and leads to others. In the following sections, I more fully describe these themes and the corresponding data that led to them.

Figure 4 Conceptual Thematic Analysis of the Qualitative Data in Phase 2
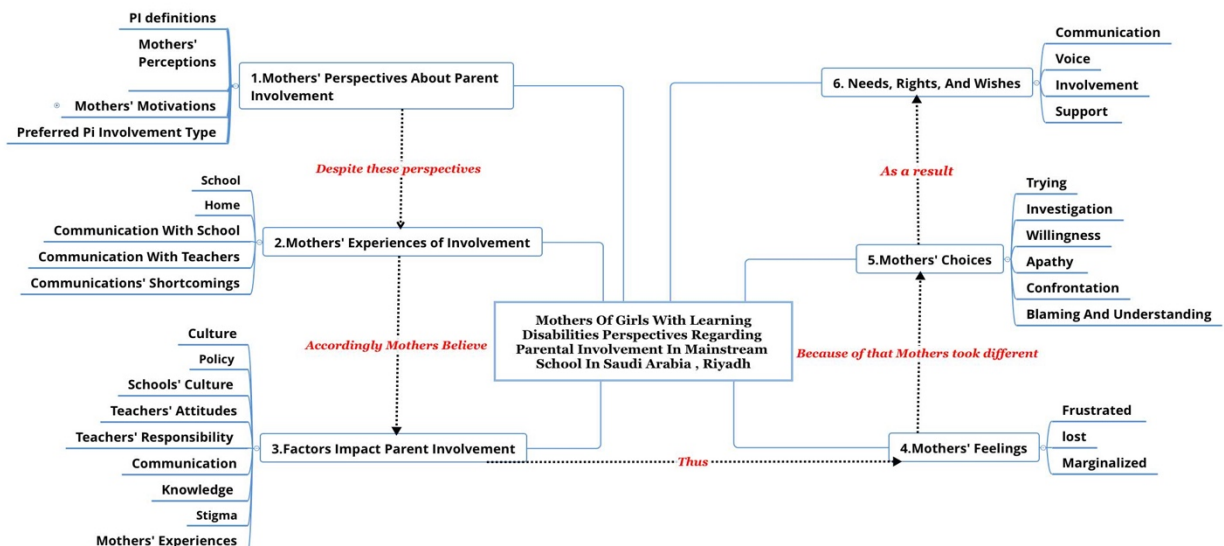
6.2 Mothers' Perspectives about Parental Involvement

This theme attempted to clarify the various ways mothers perceived parental involvement (PI). The participants were asked to express their views on PI, including how they defined it, and why and how they wished to be involved. This theme encompasses four subthemes (see Figure 5): the definition of PI and its benefits; mothers' perceptions (regarding relationship between school and home, skills and knowledge, time and energy, self-efficacy); mothers' motivations; and mothers' preferred PI type. Each subtheme will be discussed in detail in the sections that follow.

Figure 5 Mothers' Perspectives about Involvement Theme
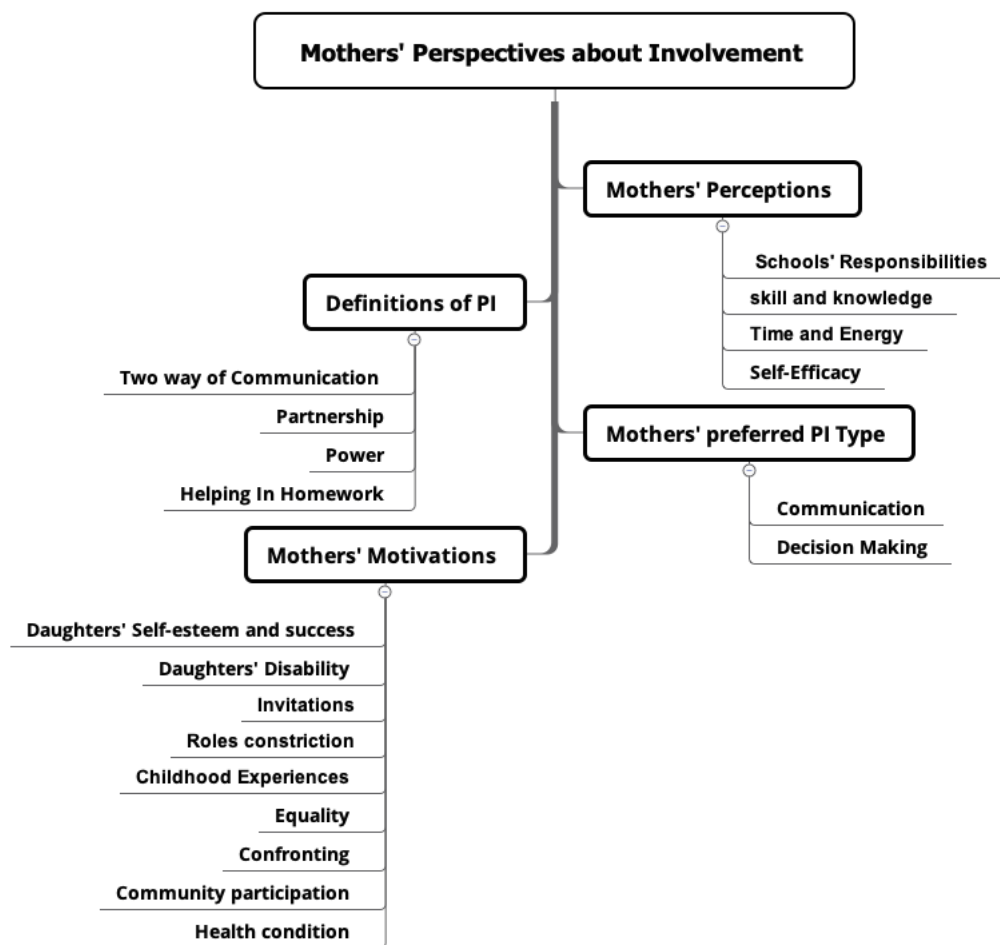
6.2.1 Definitions of PI

Most of the mothers viewed PI as a two-way communication between themselves and teachers, where both sides interact in a balanced way. This is similar to PI definitions in the literature (see Parental involvement (PI).

For example, Nora stated,

> *"PI is providing effort, continuous communication between mothers and teachers…. Being involved demands continuous communication, not just meeting once a year…. I can express my concerns just as they do…. This communication is essential."*

Interestingly, three mothers expressed more specific views regarding PI, which they considered as a kind of partnership. For example, Mona indicated,

> *"PI means partnership between me and the teachers regarding my daughter's interests…. This partnership starts with collaborating in setting up her plans and goals at the beginning of the year…., from the first week, deciding how these goals will be accomplished…. Teachers start these goals at school, and I follow up at home."*

It seems that communication is a key component of PI, which will become clear in many other themes discussed here.

Some mothers perceived PI as giving them power that enhanced their role and helped them to express concerns about their daughters' education. For example, Roqya reported, *"PI means having the power to have a say in my daughter's education, communicate more. It means I am there and not marginalised."*

One mother, Gamila, viewed PI in a very specific way where she defined it mainly as helping her daughter with homework.

Most mothers believed that PI benefitted all parties in the process (daughters, teachers and mothers). With regards to daughters, Hanan stated*, "If I am involved with the teachers in formulating my daughter's goals, she will improve and succeed more. If the teacher and I share the same goal, she will help me, and I will also work to accomplish this goal."* PI also helps provide teachers with vital information about their students from a rich primary resource which is mothers. For instance, Mona reported*,*

> *"When I collaborate with teachers and design my daughter's plans and goals, I can inform her about many aspects of my daughter that she doesn't know about. I'm her mom, and I know her situation. I'm her first teacher … you know".*

Furthermore, PI enhances mothers' enthusiasm. If they are participating in helping their daughters achieve their goals; they might feel that their role is not disregarded. Sara indicated,

> *"When I participate and collaborate with teachers in anything regarding my daughter's education, I am more enthusiastic about achieving the goals we agreed upon, and I feel that the teachers did not just ignore my opinions."*

Some mothers stated that trust, honesty and willingness were vital elements of PI. Other mothers indicated that, to them, understanding, and continuous communication were the vital elements in PI.

6.2.2 Mothers' perceptions

The educational levels of mothers seem to have some influence on their perceptions. On one hand, all mothers with a high education level (Sara, Mona, Nora, Hanan, Abrar, Roqya, and Gamila) suggested that school and home had shared responsibilities because students (their daughters) represented a common interest. Hence, both parties must work together to enhance students' success, interests and self-esteem. For example, Mona remarked that the

> *"Educational process depends not only on teachers or the school; the educational process involves participation between the home, the school and the teachers. The teacher and I are complementary to each other – we work as a team with a shared goal, which is my daughter."*

On the other hand, the three mothers with a lower education level (Kadiga, May and Alhanouf) stated that the school and/or teachers were more knowledgeable than they were about their daughters' interests. For instance, Alhanouf stated,

> *"My daughter's teachers set up her plans. It is up to them. I believe they know better than I do, since they are the experts…. No one could be a teacher unless she knew better than others."*

Regardless of the different views about how and/or what relationship between school and home should be, all mothers reported that the LD programme in the schools was not beneficial because it did not help their daughters in ways they expected. For example, Hanan indicated,

> *"Unfortunately, I don't believe the LD programme benefits my daughter at all…. They have only given her the alphabet, which she has already mastered…. I can't see any difference in her level."*

Possible reasons for the perception of the LD programme as not beneficial, as indicated by these findings, will be explored in the discussion of mothers' experiences of involvement theme (theme 2).

Mothers also vary in their perceptions regarding their own skills and knowledge, time and energy, and self-efficacy. Two mothers with a low educational level (May and Kadiga) related their skills and knowledge to their understanding of the teachers' instructions; in other words, their knowledge seems to be conditional. For instance, Kadiga stated, *"I can be involved to the extent that I understand. If they ask me to do anything that I understand I will do it…. If I don't, I will tell them that I can't."* It may be that these two mothers have low self-efficacy regarding their abilities because of their educational level and their beliefs about schools.

On the other hand, most educated mothers (both employed and unemployed) reported high confidence in their abilities and skill and knowledge when it came to helping their daughters. This indicates high self-efficacy. For example, Nora reported,

> *"I am strong enough and capable of helping my daughter…. I won't let her down. I won't let her go without…. I have always bought and used educational tools with her…. I like to give, and I'm capable and strong, and she will be like me".*

Nonetheless, despite these beliefs and high self-efficacy, some mothers still stated that helping their daughters at home was not an easy task. Four mothers (Roqya, Hana, Sara and Mona) reported spending a great deal of time and energy helping their daughters with LD with their homework and with exam preparations. Mona stated, *"Having a daughter with LD is really a hard experience since it takes a lot of time, effort and energy…. I have always thought about her, especially if she has tests."* These extensive efforts may be related to mothers' perceptions of a lack of help from teachers, which will be discussed under a future theme (factors impacting parental involvement).

With regards to time, some mothers reported that they did not have time to become involved in their daughter's education because of home responsibilities. For example, May explained*,*

> *"I can't be involved in my daughter's education at school because I have many other responsibilities to take care of…. I have other five children and my husband …. Home tasks …., you know what I mean…. Involvement requires someone who is not really busy like I am."*

Furthermore, three of the four employed mothers (Gamila, Mona and Hanan) also considered time to be an issue. They described how their jobs limited their time, and hence, their involvement in their daughters' education at school. Mothers also reported that their job's restrictions prevented them from attending their daughters' school events. Hanan said,

> *"Actually, my job really restricts my involvement in my daughter's school. My workplace is very strict in giving permission to go out during work hours unless a written invitation from my daughter's school is provided…. But this does not happen."*

Interestingly, one mother (Nora) expressed a different view regarding her time and job, noting, "My job doesn't restrict my involvement at my daughter's school at all. I can manage my time, as I did to meet you."

6.2.3 Mothers' preferred PI type

Three preferred PI types were mentioned. Most of the mothers indicated preferences for three PI types classified according to Epstein's model (see section Epstein's PI model (1995, 2011). The first type is communication. Many types of communication were mentioned. For example, most mothers stated that they preferred communicating via digital messaging (WhatsApp, text messages) or face-to-face. The second type is decision making. For example, Nora stated,

> *"I want to be involved in my daughter's decision making. I want to discuss things face-to-face with teachers and principals when it comes to their opinions and decisions made regarding my daughter's education, since some of their opinions are wrong, and certain strategies have been used in our educational system for ages…. No one is perfect, and there is nothing to be ashamed of if I confront them regarding their shortcomings or things I don't like."*

Two mothers (Nora and Hanan) gave volunteering as a type of PI. Hanan stated she would volunteer in her daughter's class *"for any activity if I was invited."*

6.2.4 Mothers' motivations

An essential motivator for PI suggested by all mothers was their daughters' interests, success and self-esteem. All mothers indicated that helping their daughters to succeed in their learning, enhance their self-esteem and confidence, and have a better future were their main goals. For example, Roqya stated, *"My involvement is important because of my daughter. I want to help her success at school and attain the best positions when she grows up…. I want her to be successful."* Another related motivator is their daughters' disability. Most mothers

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expressed concern about their daughter's future in comparison with other children. For instance, Sara explained,

> *"Having a daughter with LD makes me pity her…. I want to help my* daughter *as much as I can…. Because of her disabilities…., she is ignored in class…. I am worried about her future…. I want to communicate more with her teachers."*

A link between the two motivators discussed here could be made. That is, mothers are concerned about their daughters' success not only because they care as much as any other mother, but also because they feel anxious about their daughters' future because of how they are perceived in our society. Further discussion will be provided in Chapter Seven.

Furthermore, most mothers perceived invitations (from teachers, schools or their daughter) as vital motivators that enhanced their involvement. For example, Abrar reported*,*

> *"Communication between me and the teacher is truly important. But more important are invitations, which make me feel welcomed and feel that my opinion is important and appreciated."*

It is worth mentioning that such invitations seems to be related to the teachers' willingness, which will be presented later under the theme of factors that impact PI. Likewise, mothers' construction of their roles and responsibilities is another vital motivator (see sectionRevised Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model). Most mothers suggested that their roles and responsibilities toward their daughters required that they be a part of their education. For example, Abrar stated,

> *"What motivates me is my responsibility toward my daughter. I am her mom, and I'm responsible for her education… I'm the person who knows the most about her…. How could I not be involved?"*

Another influential motivator reported by some mothers was their own childhood experiences. For example, Roqya explained,

> *"I have always had this conviction that mothers must always communicate with teachers and be involved…. When I was a child, my mom used to communicate always with my teachers, so this is something I've been used to since I was a child…. So I have always tried not to miss mothers' meetings at my daughter's school."*

Given such explanations, it seems that individuals' experiences influence their beliefs and attitudes, as mentioned earlier in section (Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory), which will be also discussed in Chapter Seven.

Additionally, most mothers were motivated to be involved in their daughters' education for the sake of equality. That is, these mothers emphasised the need for their daughters to be treated just like other students, without discrimination. Nora stated,

> *"I want to be more involved so that I might be able to change teachers' and schools' perceptions of students with LD and their mothers…. Unfortunately, our society doesn't really understand that there is no difference between students with LD and others…. It is all about individual differences and how to deal with them…. Teachers must treat them just like other students and not make them feel different."*

Similarly, Abrar stated, "What motivates me to be involved is that I want my daughter to have an impact in her society. I don't want her to be less than other children her age." Interestingly, three mothers also indicated that the notion of equality included them as well: they wanted equal power -opportunities - with teachers when it came to decisions regarding their daughters' education. These mothers view involvement as an opportunity to be equal with teachers in terms of power and positions, as Roqya explained,

> *"If I were involved, I would feel that I could express my opinions without being afraid that the teacher would hold negative feelings toward me or my daughter. I would feel equal and could discuss things I don't like with her."*

Seeking equality is related with feeling marginalised and lost, or being stigmatised, which is discussed in future themes (mothers' feelings and factors that impact PI).

Another motivator apparent in the data is confronting people in authority (schools, teachers) with their shortcomings (lack of involvement, failure to honour their rights) as mothers of girls with LD. Most mothers indicated that their involvement allowed them to express their concerns and needs and to advocate for their daughters' rights. For example, Hanan said*,*

> *"I want to be more involved in my daughter's education…. I want to know more about my rights and how can I be involved so that I have an argument when I confront teachers and the school with their shortcomings … [like] when they don't invite me to participate in my daughter's education."*

This indicates that mothers felt limited in their involvement in their daughters' education, a topic that is revisited in the discussion of the mothers' feelings theme. Furthermore, some mothers mentioned community participation and sharing experiences with other mothers of girls with LD as another motivator. For example, Mona explained,

> *"Another motivator for my involvement in my daughter's education is being active in my community…. Community participation is really essential…. Everyone must be active in his or her community....Every community has its own drawbacks; if everyone were passive, our problems in education would never be solved….We should help students with LD and their mothers."*

Finally, one mother (Nora) described her health condition as a motivator, stating,

> *"Because I am sick with MS (Multiple Sclerosis), I am really worried about my daughter. I am afraid that I may not be able to take care of her one day. That's why I want to help her as much as I can now, until she can be more independent. I want to make sure that she is as successful in school as other students."*

In sum, while mothers share some perspectives regarding PI, including certain motivations and preferences, they differ in others. However, these views do not align with their actual PI experiences in mainstream schools, which will be presented in the next section.

6.3 Mothers' Experiences of Involvement

As shown in Figure 6, this theme investigates mothers' PI experiences. Participants were asked to describe their PI experiences at mainstream schools in terms of their actual communication and involvement with all parties (schools and teachers), what they communicated about, how they were involved, the feasibility of being involved, the communications' shortcomings, and the location where PI took place (school or home). This theme comprises three subthemes: communication with schools and teachers, communication's limitations, and parental involvement location (school and home).

Figure 6 Mothers' Experiences of Involvement Theme
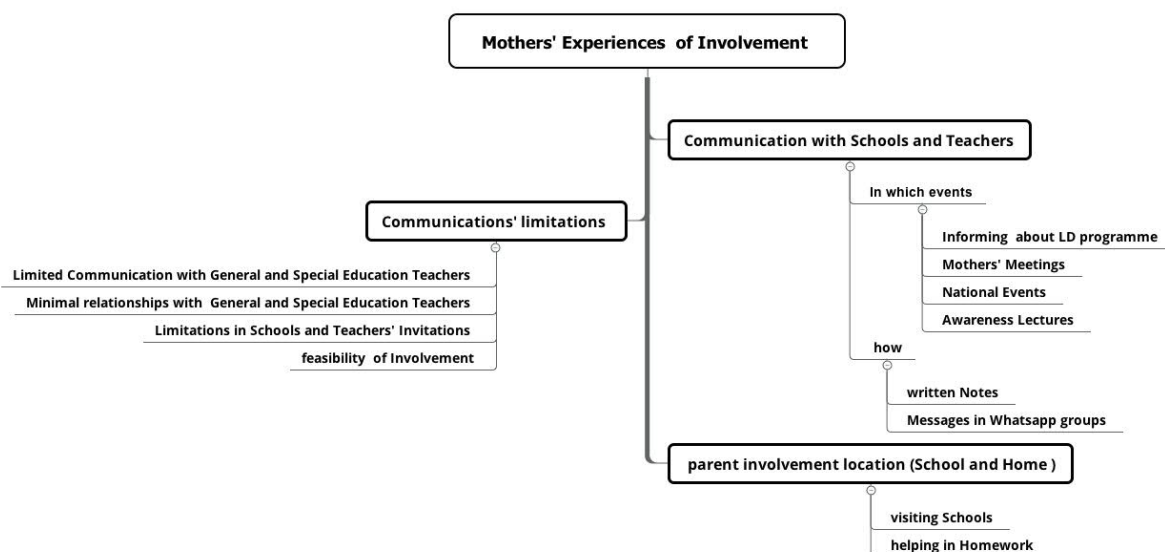
6.3.1 Communication with schools and teachers

Most of the mothers stated that the schools communicated in various ways for different events or situations. For instance, all mothers reported that the school informed them formally that their daughters were to attend the LD programme and asked for their signature. However, it is also worth mentioning that all mothers stated that they were never asked about their daughters' situation before they were referred to the programme. These findings indicate why mothers were not involved, which will be elaborated under the theme of mothers' feelings.

Most mothers indicated that they had been invited to mothers' meetings and some events (for instance, Gandria was invited to an open day). However, three mothers stated they had never been invited to mothers' meetings. Additionally, only two mothers (Alhanouf and Roqya) indicated that they had been invited to awareness lectures about LD. These invitations were sent by paper notes, via digital messaging through text messages or WhatsApp, or orally. Despite these invitations, the mothers were not satisfied with the way in which the invitations were given or with their role in these events. Further explanations can be found in the discussion of factors that impact parental involvement and mothers' feelings themes.

Most mothers indicated that teachers communicated with them about other things (i.e. homework) either through written notes in their daughter's dairy or messages in WhatsApp groups. The results revealed that this communication tended to be one-way (from the teacher), rather than reciprocal. The mothers noted that the

only purpose of communication was to inform them about their daughters' homework or when a problem arose. For example, Abrar stated,

> *"My daughter's teacher writes in her diary only to inform me about homework or when she has not memorised something…. She never says anything good or makes suggestions about what we should do to help her."*

Hence, communication with teachers is limited to informing, rather than the sharing or collaboration that the mothers felt it should be, as noted in the previous theme. Nonetheless, informing is also important; this is discussed again in the section on factors that impact PI.

It is important to note that there is a link between schools and teachers in terms of communication with mothers. Some teachers communicate with mothers because they were encouraged to do so or because it is the school policy or a requirement. It is also related to teachers' willingness, which is an important topic in the theme of factors that impact PI. In general, it seems that not all teachers and schools communicate in the same way or at the same level.

6.3.2 Communication's limitations

Most of the mothers reported limited communication with the teachers (both general and special education teachers). For instance, Hanan said,

> *"I wish I could communicate with my daughter's teachers to keep me on track regarding my daughters' needs…. Unfortunately, we don't have that kind of communication with teachers in mainstream schools in Saudi."* Similarly, Abrar indicated, *"Unfortunately, there is no communication between us…. As a result, our daughters are lost…. This is really chaotic."*

It could be argued that this lack of communication is due to the nature of the relationship between teachers and mothers. Most mothers reported a minimal relationship with teachers, describing it as superficial. For example, May indicated, *"My relationship with the LD teacher is really superficial; I only met her once, when I went by myself to ask about the LD programme."*

Interestingly, mothers viewed this lack of communication as a deterrent to their involvement. Abrar stated, "The less teachers communicate with me, the less I am involved…. If I ask anything, some teachers have responded after a week, while others may not respond at all." Only two mothers (Mona and Nora) claimed to have good relationships with teachers; they stated that they communicated

well and were eventually involved in their daughters' education. Given these results, it seems that there might be limits to relationship which may be due to a lack of communication, though, as mentioned above, it could be the other way around. In other words, because of the lack of communication, mothers were not able to form meaningful relationship with teachers. Either way, this leads to limitations in mothers' involvement.

The results also revealed shortcomings in schools' and teachers' invitations. Most mothers indicated they had not been involved in their daughters' education due to a lack of invitations. For instance, most mothers stated there were no invitations to volunteer and three mothers indicated an absence of invitations to mothers' meetings. For example, Hanan revealed, *"Unfortunately, neither our mainstream school nor teachers give us a chance to be involved; they don't invite us to anything…. They don't give us a chance."* This is not be surprising, given the lack of communication between both parties, which is vital for any further involvement. It is also related to the tendency to inform, resistance, or a lack of policy, all of which are important factors that impact PI (see Chapter Seven). More evidence of lack of invitations is provided by the absence of mothers at IEP meetings, though attendance is considered essential, as mentioned earlier (see Chapter Two). All the mothers reiterated that they had never been invited to these meetings and some mothers had not heard about the existence of these meetings.

Because of all the issues discussed above, most mothers indicated that it was not easy or feasible for them to be involved in their daughter's school. Roqya stated, *"In my experience, I don't think I am involved in my daughter's mainstream school in any way. It is not easy at all; actually, it is difficult."* Two mothers (Mona and Nora), however, reported that it was easy-to some extent- to be involved in their daughter's mainstream school. This result is not surprising, since their daughters' school and teachers seemed to differ from other schools in terms of communication, invitations and respecting others' opinions, sharing, rather than informing. For example, Mona explained,

> *"It is easy to be involved in my daughter's school since there they are accepting of others' opinions. I have very good relationships with all my daughter's general teachers…. There are invitations for mothers. The use of social media has facilitated a lot of communication between the school and mothers."*

Hence, it could be suggested that if other schools work to do these things, mothers' involvement will increase. Interestingly, Mona indicated how the voice of mothers as a group may empower them to convince school leaders to accept their opinions.

6.3.3 School and home

It appears that, despite the lack of invitations, most mothers still visited the schools. One reason for these visits might be to follow up about their daughter's progress. For instance, Sara stated, *"I have always visited my daughter's school without being invited to ask about her…. I always like to remind teachers about her doctors' recommendations."* Additionally, the purpose of visits is to confront teachers and/or schools with their shortcomings and/or to attempt to communicate. These different choices are discussed further in the section on mothers' choices. Most mothers, however, indicated that their primary involvement in their daughter's education was at home (helping with homework).

In sum, to some extent, communication between schools, teachers and mothers does exist. However, mothers were generally not satisfied regarding how this communication took place and indicated various shortcomings. It is unclear, however, why this is the case, or which factors impact PI in mainstream schools in Riyadh. This is explored in the next section.

6.4 Factors Impacting Parental Involvement

As shown in Figure 7, this theme explores the factors that impact PI .Participants were asked to clarify which factors impact on their involvement in their daughters' education according to their experiences and perspectives. Nine subthemes are included: mothers' experiences, mothers' knowledge, communication, school's ethos, teachers' attitudes, teachers' responsibilities, educational culture, stigma, and policy. These subthemes are organised according to ecological theory (see Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory), starting with the system nearest to the child, the microsystem (mothers' experiences and knowledge), moving gradually to the mesosystem (communication, schools' ethos, teachers' attitude and responsibilities) and ending with the macrosystem (stigma and policy).

Figure 7 Factors impacting PI Theme

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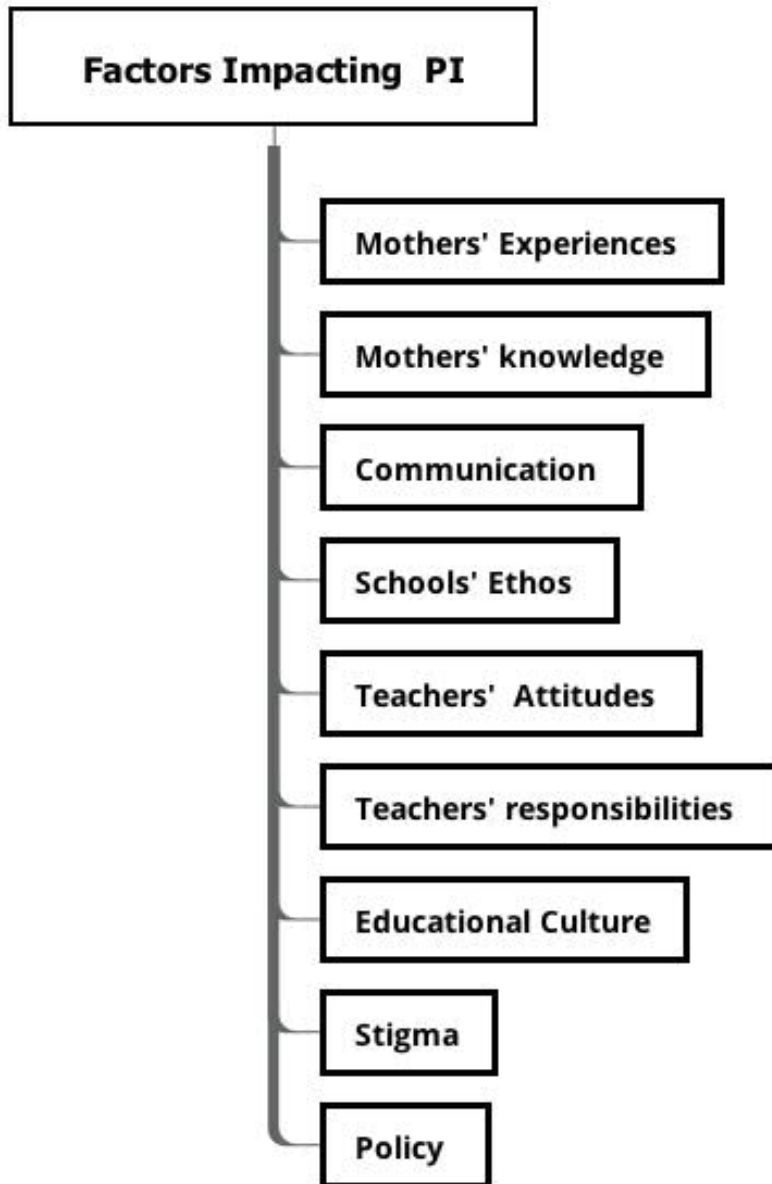
6.4.1 Mothers' experiences

The results show that mothers' experiences impacted on their involvement in positive or negative ways. On one hand, most mothers who had negative experiences with teachers reported that they no longer wished to communicate. For example, Sara stated, *"Due to my bad experiences with teachers … because they ignored me, I don't want to communicate anymore."* Similarly, Alhanouf indicated, *"The only time I communicated with the teacher, I got depressed because of her attitudes, so I don't want to communicate anymore."* On the other hand, mothers' positive experiences, with good communication, encouraged them to become more involved. For example, Nora stated, *"This year, teachers are interacting very well with me…. My daughter improved a lot and so I'm excited*

to work harder and help my daughter succeed more." It appears that such mothers have always had positive experiences, but this is not the case. They also described some negative experiences with their daughters' teachers. Nonetheless, their choices regarding how to respond varied. (Mothers' choices are an important theme, and these will be discussed below.) Some mothers who had positive experiences with only a few teachers remembered these experiences, but these experiences had not encouraged them to take any further steps toward involvement when these teachers left the schools. Some mothers who described teachers' communication and caring also suggested that such cases were rare. For example, Roqya stated,

> *"There was a teacher who left the school [in a sad tone].... She was amazing and always communicated with me via WhatsApp.... I have always remembered and can't forget her.... But the other teacher acts as if they (teachers) didn't exist.... It is rare to find such a good teacher."*

6.4.2 Mothers' knowledge

This subtheme consists of two parts: knowledge regarding their daughters' abilities (strengths and weakness) and knowledge about their roles and rights. Most mothers stated that they had extensive knowledge regarding their daughters' skills, which provides teachers with vital information. For example, Mona said, *"We mothers can know our daughters' interests. We are more knowledgeable and can provide and offer them information that they may not know without us".* The mothers indicated, however, that teachers did not seek and often did not consider this knowledge. Sara stated,

> *"I know my daughter better than her teacher does.... If teachers listen to me, it can benefit them and provide them with information about my daughter.... Unfortunately, this has never happened."*

Notwithstanding, mothers' knowledge is not all-inclusive. It may have gaps, particularly regarding their roles, involvement, and rights. The results show that all the mothers lacked knowledge about their rights as mothers of girls with LD. Importantly, most mothers indicated their eagerness to know their rights which allow them to be part of their daughter's education. For instance, Hanan reported, *"I don't know my rights as a mother of a girl with LD. I truly want to know what they are.... But how can I know them if neither the school nor the teacher told us about it?"*

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Thus, mothers were not able to make demands on schools or teachers regarding their involvement. Hence, lack of knowledge is viewed as a barrier to PI. This is not only the mothers' fault. In other words, mothers' lack of knowledge regarding their rights is because others fail to provide help, a theme which is discussed further below.

6.4.3 Communication

All mothers indicated that regular and ongoing communication enhanced their PI and considered it a crucial element in this process. For example, Roqya indicated,

> *"Communication between mothers and teachers is vital…. It increases my role and helps me be more involved in anything regarding my daughter…. Teachers should always communicate with me… not only once or twice a year…, not only when there is a problem."*

However, as mentioned earlier, communication between mothers and teachers often appeared to be restricted to informing rather than collaborating and sharing. This could be viewed as a PI barrier. Communication also appears as a need in the theme of mothers' wishes, rights and needs.

6.4.4 Schools' ethos

Most mothers indicated a sense of disconnection between the school and home due to the infrequency of LD meetings and the absence of organised collaborative efforts in school's events. For example, Abrar reported, *"It is chaos, actually. Everyone is working in different directions…. [There are] no organised efforts between mothers and schools."* Moreover, most mothers reported that schools restricted their participation in school's events. They said that the schools clearly refused their attendance. For instance, May indicated, *"My daughter's school prevents mothers from participating in events …. They told my daughter that mothers are not allowed to come."* Other schools limited and/or restricted mothers' role to preparing what is needed for *events at home, without attending at school. For example, Hanan stated, "Mothers have no role in school's events …. All we have to do is prepare what our daughters take to school, and that's all."*

In this regard, it seems that schools' restrictions to mothers' participation in some events are related to the school's resistance to change. Most mothers reported that the schools followed traditional patterns in communication and preferred to follow old routines rather than changing. For example, Abrar indicated,

> *"Our mainstream schools resist changing their systems or the strategies they have been using for years, and this is a problem that prevents our participation and prevent teachers' development in terms of their communication with us."*

All mothers described a lack of attention from schools regarding their participation. They reported an absence of written reports (that require their signature) that would necessitate or ensure their involvement in their daughter's educational goals in some way (e.g., IEP meetings). For example, Hana indicated,

> *"Unfortunately, our schools don't care about mothers or their participation…. Actually, I don't sign any papers regarding my participation…. The only one I have signed is a paper about enrolling her in the LD programme."*

This is related to an absence of policies and evaluations, discussed further below.

Additionally, most mothers indicated that their daughters' schools were unwelcoming. Sara reported,

> *"When the school invites us to mother's meetings, they leave us by the door…. Can you believe that they don't even say hi or ask what my concerns are…? I am a mother. I came to communicate with you about my daughter and her wants. There is no respect…. I felt really insulted there."* Mothers' feelings are a vital theme below.

6.4.5 Teachers' attitudes

All mothers felt that teachers' willingness was an essential element of PI that played a vital role in developing a relationship between them and the teachers. For instance, Abrar stated*, "The teacher must be willing to communicate with me regarding my daughter…. She must initiate communication and consider my opinions…. This really will enhance our relationship."* However, despite these perspectives, most mothers described limits in teachers' willingness, which in this case is considered a barrier to PI. Hanan stated,

> *"Unfortunately, teachers are unwilling to communicate with mothers. They don't have the passion to do this…. There are a lot of ways they can communicate with us; social media makes everything easier now."*

Similarly, mothers reported that teachers were unwilling to listen to their opinions and resisted understanding their points of view. For example, Mona indicated, *"When I asked my daughter's math teacher for a divided timetable, she refused….*

She did not accept my point of view and insisted that the timetable wouldn't be divided."

With regards to teachers' willingness, three mothers (Hana, Sara and Roqya) referred to teachers' lack of time. For example, Hanan stated, *"With the many tasks that teachers must carry out, they may not have time to communicate with or invite mothers…. I am not blaming them, but I'm not excusing it, either."* (Blame and understanding are again important topics under the theme of mothers' choices.) Teachers' lack of willingness is also relevant to other factors, such as lack of policy or training, which are discussed further later in this section.

Most mothers stated that teachers had more power than they did, and thus had control over the decisions regarding their daughters' goals. For example, Mona indicated that teachers often expressed sentiments like, *"I am the teacher; you don't tell me how to teach…. I know your daughter's interests. I have been teaching for 15 years, and you can't come and tell me what should I do."* This suggests that teachers tend to inform mothers rather than collaborate with them, as noted by all mothers. For example, Sara stated, *"In mother's meetings, teachers only tell us what they want to say. I don't have chance to say what I want to say."* Hence, it appears that the power relation between mothers and teachers is unequal. Many mothers reported that this unequal relationship with teachers led them to seek help from other professionals or schools' administrators. For example, Roqya stated*,*

> *"When I tried to explain my point of view to my daughter's teacher, she was very offensive and refused to listen…. Because of that, I went to someone higher up…. I took my daughter to the school's principal and she re-evaluated her…. She passed."*

Seeking help from others is also mentioned under the theme of mothers' feelings. The above discussion suggests that the domain of expert model (see the section on Teachers' beliefs and attitudes) is dominant in these schools. This idea will be further discussed in the Discussion Chapter. Most mothers felt that teachers did not respect them and did not appreciate their efforts. Roqya stated,

> *"Sometimes I would leave the school crying because the teachers did not appreciate me; there is no respect…. I come to ask about my daughter. At least tell me one good thing about her…. Appreciate my efforts."*

Moreover, mothers described teachers as unwelcoming and sometimes offensive. Gamila indicated, *"The teacher was really tough…. Her facial expressions and the way she talked to me made me feel unwelcome."* Hence, there may be a link between teachers' and schools' unwelcoming behaviour. That is, if schools asked teachers to communicate effectively with mothers and to work it out, the conditions might be better. It could be also the other way around: if teachers felt that schools appreciated mothers' visits and their attempts to communicate, things might be different as well. Further discussion is provided in the Discussion chapter.

6.4.6 Teachers' responsibilities

Mothers reported limits in teachers' understanding of their responsibilities toward them and their daughters. For example, Roqya indicated,

> *"My daughter's teacher told me: 'You mothers are so sensitive, want us to take care of every child in the class, and we don't have much time for that.' … I was shocked. How can she be a teacher? … I don't know how to say it…, but this teacher lacked morality and reason…. She is not trained enough to be a teacher and deal with mothers."*

Another evidence of teachers' lack of responsibility is their frequent absenteeism. Four mothers reported that some teachers were absent most of the time when they visited their daughters' schools. For example, Sara stated,

> *"Many times I visited my daughter's school and I was told that the teacher was absent…. The teacher is absent, there is no responsibility at all. It's a matter of sincerity. If teachers cared about what they were doing, things would be different…. Unfortunately, I am not seeing this in our mainstream schools."*

This suggests that if teachers were more responsible in their job (including communicating with mothers), mothers' involvement might be higher.

Additionally, a number of mothers indicated that general as well as special education teachers failed to help them know how to be involved in their daughters' education, to know how they could help their daughter and to know their rights. For instance, Abrar reported, *"I want to learn and teach my daughter…. I'm willing to communicate with teachers to do anything for her…. Unfortunately, I did not find anyone to guide me or to tell me where to start."* It could be that teachers' apparent lack of responsibility and failure to provide help is due to their limitation in their training which does not seem to include working with parents. It may be also due to many other reasons (e.g., not being sufficiently remunerated, job

status, not being valued). However, these reasons will not be elaborated since they are outside the scope of this study.

6.4.7 Educational cultures

Most mothers compared their PI situations to what they had heard about and what other mothers had experienced in other schools. For example, Kadiga stated

> *"I am really depressed and upset when I hear from my cousin about how she communicates with her daughter's teacher via the WhatsApp group … and she shows me what they wrote about her daughter. Why don't I have such a thing at my daughter's school?"*

Interestingly, the perspectives of three mothers (Sara, Roqya and Hanan) were informed by their experiences in the UK and the USA. They mentioned many aspects, such as mothers' rights, communication, invitations, teachers' passion and teaching strategies, and described how these influenced them and their daughters. For example, Sara stated*,*

> *"When I was in the USA, I had my rights as a mother of a girl with LD to participate in her education…. They cared about my opinions regarding everything about her…. Why do I have my rights as a mother of a girl with LD in the USA and not in Saudi?"*

Similarly, Roqya stated,

> *"Public schools in the UK are totally different. It was amazing in terms of invitations and involving mothers…. I used to participate in every assembly with my daughter and communicate consistently with her teachers…. In my experience, teachers in the UK have the passion necessary to do what they are doing with students and their mothers…. The way they communicated and welcomed us showed that it was not just a job for them. They just loved it."*

6.4.8 Stigma

As indicated earlier (Societal factor (stigma), mothers' involvement is influenced by their beliefs about themselves, their experiences and the society in which they live. In this regard, most mothers reported that society perceived students with LD and their families as deficient and stigmatised them. For example, Sara indicated,

> *"I refused to re-diagnose my daughter at the Ministry of Education…. It will be in her educational file, and I don't want that. You know how labelled people, as well as their families, are viewed in our society…. They think they are stupid or idiot…. They think it's genetic, so all her siblings will be stigmatised as well."*

As a result of these perceptions, most mothers reported having concerns about their daughters' future and how teachers perceived and communicated with both of them. Nora stated,

> *"The way society perceives student with LD and their families is frustrating…. Some teachers have these beliefs as well…. They are perceived as deficient…. This hurts students and their families, oppressed me as a mother…. It also influences the way teachers deal with me and my daughter."*

She also noted,

> *"Apparently, some teachers have these negative perceptions, as happened with my daughter when she was called: (mongoloid) Teachers with these perceptions may be unwilling to communicate with me and my daughter…. But I won't let her do that…. I have always insisted on communicating."*

These perceptions influenced mothers' attitudes, feelings and beliefs, and therefore their involvement. For example, Alhanouf refused to enrol her daughter in the LD programme or to tell her family about her daughter's disability. She felt embarrassed and avoided comments from teachers, stating,

> *"I am embarrassed to communicate with teachers…. I'm afraid that they will not hear my point of view because I am the mother of a girl with LD and they will think that the mother is like the daughter."*

Hence, it seems that being stigmatised is a barrier to PI. This further suggests that, if the society's culture changes, mothers' involvement would be easier. Yet this does not always seem to be necessary. One mother (Nora) stated that she overcame the influence of stigma and had positive feelings and beliefs regarding her daughter's disability and abilities. She reported,

> *"I don't feel shame because my daughter has LD. I never deny it. Instead, I always mention it and I feel proud. I always insist on communicating with teachers regarding her progress, and she is developing really well."*

6.4.9 Policy

Most mothers reported that establishing a clear PI policy (at school and national level) that would clarify their rights, roles and responsibilities would enhance and protect their involvement in their daughters' education. For example, Mona stated,

> *"Although I am involved in my daughter's school, I still believe that establishing a policy would enhance my involvement as a mother…. It would make me feel protected, and I could confront schools and teachers. I also believe that it may be hard to implement in the Saudi context…. Changing the educational process may take time, but it is worth it."*

There is no clear PI policy in the Saudi context, as previously stated in Chapter Two. This lack of policy is an important element in the discussion of other themes, including mothers' feelings and mothers' needs, wishes and rights.

In sum, mothers mentioned many factors that influenced their PI in the Saudi context, enhancing or decreasing their PI. By viewing these factors through the lens of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, it can be seen how each system is influenced by the others. For instance, mothers' experiences as a factor might be a result of the influence of other factors', such as culture, teachers' attitudes or policy. All these factors might influence mothers' feelings as well. This important theme is presented below.

6.5 Mothers' Feelings

As shown in Figure 8, this theme explores mothers' feelings regarding their involvement experiences and their role in their daughters' education, which participants were asked to clarify. It was found that a mixture of negative feelings was often experienced by the same mother and even appeared within the same quote. This may be because, in the real world, feelings cannot be divided or easily grouped. Nonetheless, mothers may experience one particular feeling more than others and this may depend on their experiences and their response to them. This theme comprises three subthemes: feeling frustrated, feeling lost, and feeling marginalised.

Figure 8 Mothers' Feelings Theme
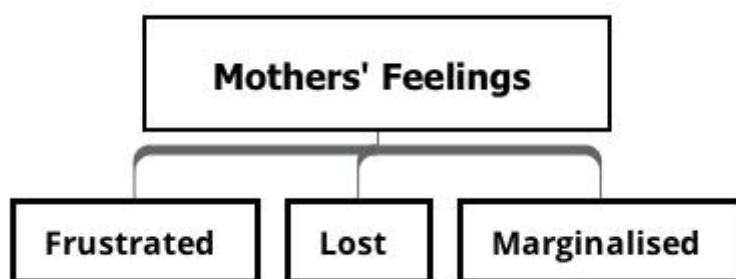
6.5.1 Frustration

Most mothers reported feeling tired of being frustrated because of limited communication and invitations from teachers. For example, Abrar indicated,

> *"Education here is chaos. Teachers don't bother to communicate. I don't know anything about my daughter…. All I see is her file at the end of the year…. Can you imagine a mom not knowing about her daughter's goals or plans? … I am really frustrated, frustrated"*

It seems that most mothers felt disappointed and shocked. For example, Sara reported,

> *"I am really shocked and disappointed by my daughter's teachers…. It doesn't matter how much I try to communicate … to the extent that I am begging them. They just don't care…. Once I was asked by a student guide teacher why I wasn't coming like before, I replied, 'It doesn't matter whether I come or not…. I don't feel like it makes any difference or that I was offered any help."*

Similarly, Sara said,

> *"Unfortunately, my daughter's teachers are not aware of the importance of communication and helping families of students with LD…. They don't care. I am really disappointed that in my country teachers are not aware the importance of involving mothers and how they must do it…. It is really disappointing."*

Also, Abrar indicated that she felt upset about her daughter's teacher and was shocked by her attitudes as well:

> *"Once I tried to show my daughter's teacher my work with her at home. She mocked at me and said, 'Are you going to show me how to do my job?' … I was really shocked and really upset…. She doesn't want to understand…. I am showing you so you will know what I am doing with her at home… to share…. I feel that everyone is working on their own and we are not sharing anything about my daughter."*

Some mothers felt hopeless because of teachers' lack of willingness to communicate. For example, Abrar stated, "I don't communicate with my

daughter's teacher anymore. What more can I do beyond what I am doing? … I feel like there is nothing I can do. I lose hope that things can be better." This is also related to mothers' willingness, which will be discussed under Mothers' Choices.

6.5.2 Lost

Given the situation described above, many mothers feel lost. This may be related to the lack of help mentioned previously. For example, Sara reported, *"I need to know more about my daughter's situation and disability. I couldn't find anyone who could tell me more about LD and how to deal with it…. I felt lost."* Furthermore, most mothers reported that they had sought help from others in term of teaching or re-diagnosing their daughters. This suggests that mothers were not provided with the help, guidance and support they felt they needed (from the school and teachers) regarding their daughters' disability or educational situation. For instance, Abrar reported, *"Because I didn't find any help from my daughter's teacher or her schools, I asked university students who were training there to help her and to show me how I could help as well."*

6.5.3 Marginalised

Most mothers reported feeling marginalised and they felt voiceless regarding their daughter's education. For example, Hanan stated*,*

> *"We have never been asked about problems we may face at our daughter's schools or with teachers…. To whom should we complain or talk? Is there anyone listening? … Mothers have no voice or say about their daughters' education…. We are totally marginalised."*

Mothers are not the only ones who felt marginalised by the teachers; their daughters were also impacted by this. Some mothers indicated that their daughters did not receive much attention in class. For example, Nora stated, *"Students with LD don't get attention, as they are nothing, and neither are their mothers. All what schools care about is having resource rooms in the school for them and that is it."* Ignoring students with LD may influence their self-esteem and academic life, which will eventually influence mothers' feelings as well. For example, Abrar reported*, "my daughter was not chosen to participate in the school's broadcasting because of her disability. She is totally marginalised because of that. That's really hurt her and me as well".*

Another element that enhanced the mothers' feeling of marginalisation was the absence of a clear PI policy that emphasised mothers' role in their daughters' education. Most mothers cited the absence of such a policy as a main barrier to their involvement in their daughters' education. For example, Roqya stated, *"Sadly, there is no Saudi policy that emphasises and clarifies my rights as a mom of an LD student…. No policy forces schools and teachers to honour my role as a mom in my daughter's education."* Similarly, Sara indicated, *"A policy would obligate mothers to be involved in their daughter's education. If there were a policy, mothers would do it."*

In sum, mothers vary in their feelings regarding their lack of PI. While some felt that they had tried and suffered, others felt voiceless and marginalised. Yet most mothers felt a combination of all these feelings. However, their choices regarding how to respond to this lack vary; this is discussed in more detail in the next section.

6.6 Mothers' Choices

As shown in Figure 9, this section reveals mothers' choices regarding their involvement, experiences and roles in their daughters' education. Participants were asked to indicate how they chose to act. Under this theme, mothers made different choices and responded differently to the lack of PI presented earlier. These different choices may be a result of a mixture of mothers' beliefs about themselves, their feelings and experiences. This theme includes six subthemes: trying, investigation, willingness, apathy, confrontation, and blaming and understanding.

Figure 9 Mothers' Choices Theme
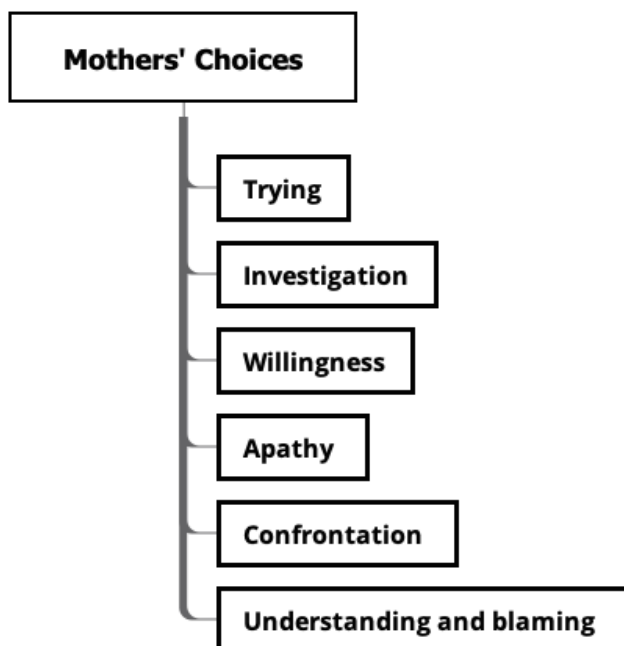
6.6.1 Trying

Despite mothers' negative experiences, most attempted to be involved in their daughters' education and to communicate either with teachers or with schools. For example, Sara stated*,*

> *"I have always visited my daughter's school and tried to communicate with her teachers…. I advise them to let her sit in the front…. I have also asked them to tell me the main skills she has learned in class so I can follow up with her at home."*

This may be related to what was mentioned earlier regarding mothers' visits without an invitation. Mothers may make such attempts because of the shortcomings mentioned earlier; they are trying to communicate with teachers by themselves.

6.6.2 Investigation

Some mothers indicated that they had sought out and investigated strategies to use with their daughters at home. This investigation was based on the desire to have a better understanding of their daughters' situation so they could provide the help they needed. For example, Roqya reported*, "I attempted to search on YouTube, LD websites, so I could learn teaching strategies I could apply with my daughter at home."* This investigation may be another way that mothers attempt to create their own path and help their daughters by themselves without asking for teachers' help. This investigation may also be related to the lack of help the

teachers have provided regarding their daughters' situation. They try to figure it out on their own. All of the mothers' choices may be related to their willingness.

6.6.3 Willingness

Despite the variability in mothers' feelings and experiences, nearly all mothers echoed a willingness to be involved in their daughters' education. They seemed eager to take part in their daughters' education and to be more involved. For example, Hanan stated,

> *"I am very willing to collaborate with my daughter's teacher and to be involved to the greatest* extent *imaginable…. I just need the chance. I am willing to do anything they want me to do…. At least let them get to know my daughter and let me participate with her."*

Nonetheless, some mothers linked their willingness to teachers' and schools' invitations and the help they provided. For example, Kadiga stated, *"If they invite me and show me how I can be involved in my daughter's' education, I will do it."* Hence, this kind of willingness seems conditional.

Interestingly, one mother, May, made a different choice. She chose not to be involved in her daughter's education and indicated clearly her unwillingness to do so: *"I don't want to be involved in her education. Why should I be? … Everything is going fine with her. Why should I ask the teacher to show me her goals or change them?"* It is worth mentioning that mother's choice in this example may be related to her beliefs regarding the relationship between schools and home, described earlier (mothers' perspectives about PI theme). Yet choices may not always reflect mothers' beliefs. This is to say mothers' choices may take different directions. For instance, one mother, Sara, who believed in the importance of her involvement and who had asked for more communication, eventually, after several attempts, gave up and did not want to be involved or communicate with teachers anymore.

6.6.4 Apathy

Choosing to try and being willing does not mean not making other choices. That is, some willing mothers who did try were still apathetic. Some mothers reported feeling apathetic regarding communicating with their daughters' teachers or school. For instance, Abrar reported, *"Actually, I don't care about communicating with my daughter's teacher anymore…. I have become apathetic since I could not find anyone who would listen or who wanted to communicate."* This could be

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linked, then, to negative experiences they had with teachers or schools, which may have eventually influenced their willingness to become involved. They chose to not care anymore. One mother, Hanan, however, chose to persevere in communicating with teachers despite her negative experiences. This caring was not limited to her role at school but applied at home as well. For example, Hanan stated,

> *"My perspective did not change after my daughter was diagnosed with LD…. I have always cared about communicating with her teachers, cared about her education…. I have always talked with her about her school day, checking her homework and following up with the teacher she has at home."*

6.6.5 Confrontation

Some mothers chose to confront teachers or schools. The mode of confrontation varied among the mothers and their approaches can be divided into three types. The first type, which included two mothers (Mona and Nora), felt confident about their resistance and confrontation, and followed through without any hesitation or fear. These mothers may be seen as demanding, insisting on communication and advocating for their daughters. For example, Nora stated,

> *"When my daughter's teacher told her, 'you are mongoloid, I went immediately to the school and confronted her…. I said, 'How dare you call a child such a word and pull her out of class? There are many behavioural strategies you can use, but not offending or threatening…. You don't have the right to treat her this way…. I can also behave the same way and threaten you…. I can write a letter to the Ministry of Education about what happened…. I will not let anyone offend my daughter."*

This example suggests that mothers in this group may feel able to use some power with the teachers since they confront teachers, express their feelings and take clear action. Although the way mothers 'threaten' teachers may seem offensive from the mothers' perspective, they stated that this is how they advocate and express their love for their daughters. Further explanations are provided in the Discussion Chapter. Additionally, it seems that mothers in this group had high self-efficacy regarding their beliefs and abilities, as they tended to followed up on their confrontations.

The second type includes mothers who were willing to confront and resist, but who may not follow through or try again. Mothers in this group did not take their confrontation a step further, which would allow them to be more demanding or

advocate clearly for their daughters' rights. For example, Roqya indicated, *"I went to school and asked my daughter's teacher:*

> *'Why didn't you help my daughter when she asked for it?' … I was told: 'It was my break time. If the excellent students finish, I don't care about the rest…. I told her, 'you should care more about other students … that's all.''*

Mothers in this group chose to complain, but they went no further in their actions and this may be for a range of reasons. For example, Alhanouf reported*, "Many times I avoided facing the teacher because I didn't want her to pick on my daughter."*

The third type were mothers who avoided confrontation, but for other reasons, such as being passive or admitting their weaknesses. For example, Hanan stated, *"Frankly, we mothers are responsible for the lack of PI…. We mothers are passive. We don't talk or ask for our rights and involvement in our daughters' education."* This indicates that some mothers who are willing to participate and who believe in shared responsibility between the school and home do not translate their beliefs into reality in their choices. This is due not only to teachers' attitudes or other teacher-related factors, and some of these mothers acknowledged and admitted their shortcomings rather than only blaming others.

6.6.6 Understanding and blaming

Some mothers express an understanding of teachers' lack of invitations and communication with them. For example, Gamila stated,

> *"I cannot blame teachers. They may be so frustrated with the number of students in their classes and the many tasks they have to finish that they don't have time to communicate with mothers."*

However, mothers' understanding does not mean they excused teachers for not attempting to communicate with them in some way. For example, one mother (Hanan) reported, *"I was a teacher, and I know how teachers have many overlapping responsibilities…. I understand teachers' situation, but I do not excuse them…. They can communicate with us in many ways if they really want to."*

However, not all mothers were so understanding. Most blamed teachers for the lack of invitations and communication. The blaming might be taken further, where it fell on authorities. Most mothers also blamed the Ministry of Education for

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shortcomings in teachers' preparation courses and for limiting teachers' time to communicate with mothers. For example, Hanan stated,

> *"I blame our curriculum, the Ministry of Education and our education system in general. They burden teachers with a lot of paperwork, to the extent they don't have time for us…. And they don't provide them with courses or with time to deal with mothers."*

In sum, mothers made different choices regarding their involvement. Most of their choices overlapped (e.g., caring but not confronting, being willing and also apathetic) and sometimes appeared contradictory. However, there may always be a mixture of human feelings and choices in the same situation. These choices reveal the mothers' needs, wishes and need to be heard, which will be explained in the final section below.

6.7   Needs, Rights and Wishes

As shown in Figure 10, this final theme explores mothers' perspectives regarding their needs, rights and wishes as they reflected their experiences and feelings. Hence, this theme could be viewed as a conclusion to all that the mothers faced. Three main elements (communication, involvement and voice) emerged from three different angles (wishes, needs and rights). Moreover, this theme also illuminated the supports mothers felt should be provided from authorities. Accordingly, this theme includes four subthemes: communication, involvement, voice and support.

Figure 10 Needs, Rights and Wishes Theme
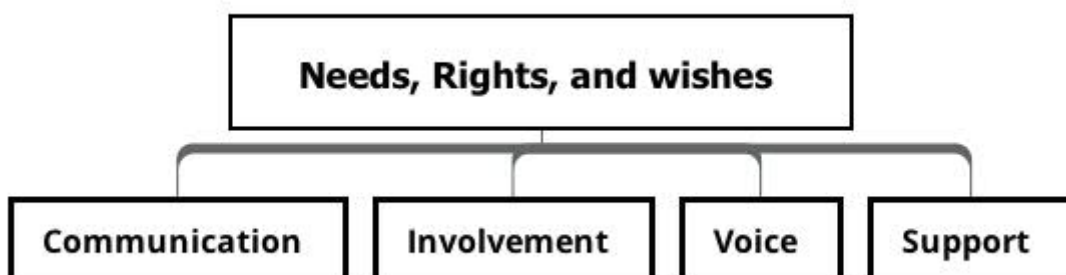
6.7.1 Communication

All mothers expressed a need for more communication with teachers regarding their daughters' education and emphasised that having this opportunity would eventually increase their involvement as well. For example, Abrar stated,

> *"Many questions in my mind needed to be answered by teachers…. I need more communication with them regarding my daughter's needs, goals…. It is my right to understand her situation and know how to follow up at home."*

On the other hand, some mothers viewed having more communication more as a wish than as a need. For example, Hanan indicated,

> *"I wish we had more ongoing and regular meetings with teachers so our relationship with teachers … so we could have more communication and our involvement in our daughters' education would increase."*

6.7.2 Involvement

Most mothers reported a need for more involvement in their daughters' education. The mothers felt that they needed to play a bigger role in their daughters' education and to feel that their involvement was wanted and appreciated. For example, Roqya stated,

> *"I have always known the importance of the mother's role, but after having my daughter with LD, I felt that my role should be bigger than that…. I need to be more involved so that I know everything she learned in the LD programme…. I have to be with her step by step, you understand?"*

All the mothers saw involvement as a right that must be implemented. For example, Mona stated, "Of course I have the right to be involved in my daughter's education since I am part of the educational process…. The educational process should involve all parties, and mothers are an important part that must not be disregarded." To implement this right for these mothers, a policy-based obligation may be needed, as mentioned in another section under this theme.

Additionally, some mothers viewed involvement as a wish that they were looking forward to realising. For example, Sara said, "If the school and teachers invite me in any way, I will do it because of my daughter…. I wish, I wish to be more involved. I wish." It may be that mothers who only wish to become involved may have faced more negative experiences, to the point where they feel that

involvement is impossible. Likewise, it may be that they have given up on the current educational situation, so they just wish, instead of asking for it as a need.

Despite mothers' different perspectives about communication and involvement, both are relevant. This is to say, more communication between mothers and teachers eventually may lead to more involvement. In turn, more involvement means mothers may communicate more often with teachers.

6.7.3 Voice

The results revealed that the mothers felt a need to have the chance to express their opinions, concerns and feelings regarding their involvement experiences in mainstream schools. Most of the mothers expressed the need to understand their rights and to have a voice in their daughter's education. For example, Sara stated,

> *"My voice as a mother is important and needs to be heard…. I have the right to understand my rights as a mother of girl with LD ….I have the right to discuss openly what I face at the school and what I dislike about the teachers in terms their shortcomings…. I need to express my opinions about the problems in our educational system. This is my right."*

Such views suggest that mothers' needs to be heard because they have truly suffered and felt marginalised, and thus they need to express all that they have been through. Nonetheless, some other mothers described having a voice as a wish, rather than considering it a need or a right.

With regards to mothers' needs and wishes, needs may take priority over wishes, and individuals may attempt to attain the former more than the latter. Yet it could also be that needs and wishes are interrelated and cannot be divided. Again, it is not either–or; human experiences and beliefs are not fixed. In other words, you wish for things to happen because you want your needs to be satisfied. When you need, you wish to make it a reality. Although needs and wishes emerge through individuals' experiences and other external factors, their expression also depends on how individuals fight to attain their wishes and to satisfy their needs; in the end, they make a choice. Moreover, as seen, one mother may regard involvement and communication as needs, while she views voice as a wish. All mothers' perspectives reflect what they have been through, reflecting a combination of experiences, beliefs and feelings that are not easily compartmentalised.

6.7.4 Support

Perhaps due to the desire or need for voice, communication, and involvement many mothers asked for support, provided by authorities or through the schools. Firstly, all the mothers stated that it was the authorities' responsibility to create an obligatory PI policy that would emphasise their role in their daughter's education. This is not surprising, given the lack of clear PI policy mentioned earlier, along with the mothers' sense of being marginalised. For example, Abrar indicated,

> *"We need a policy that protects my rights as a mother of a girl with LD and our role…. Assure the importance of my involvement in my daughter's education…. Give me a voice and allow me to be heard."*

Interestingly, another mother (Hanan) mentioned the importance not only of implementing a policy, but of continuing to evaluate it after implementation:

> *"We don't want a policy on paper…. We need a PI policy that is implemented and evaluated, not like inclusion…. It is not applied effectively because it's not evaluated correctly…. I believe the problem is in the upper level of the Ministry."*

This suggests that mothers do not feel protected by other Saudi policies and do not feel that their rights are assured in the way that they need. In this light, evaluation may mean considering all parties in the process, including mothers' opinions and perspectives. This will be elaborated on in the Discussion chapter.

Additionally, with regards evaluation, mothers also felt that it was the authorities' responsibility to evaluate teacher preparation programmes in terms of their effectiveness in teaching teachers to communicate with mothers of girls with LD. For example, Roqya stated,

> *"I believe that the teachers' preparation programme is not sufficient…. It needs to be evaluated and reconsidered by the Ministry of Education…. There should be course about dealing with parents of students with LD; they must be trained how to deal with us, invite us and communicate with us."*

In terms of schools' responsibilities, most mothers felt that schools should train teachers and raise awareness amongst the teachers regarding communicating with and understanding mothers of girls with LD and their daughters. For example, Sara stated, *"I just want teachers to be aware, aware about how to communicate with LD students and their mothers as well…. Schools should have training courses about communicating with and understanding children and their*

families." Interestingly, some mothers stressed the importance of teachers' morality, passion and ethics, noting that these influenced how the teachers dealt with mothers. For example, Roqya indicated,

> *"Teachers must have ethics before having a certificate…. A certificate isn't everything when you're a teacher, especially when communicating with mothers who have daughters with LD. They have extra responsibility…. They have to consider what we have been through."*

Similarly, Nora stated, "Teaching is not just a job. It is about loving what you do … having a passion for it."

With regards to raising awareness, most of the mothers reported that it was the schools' responsibility to raise awareness among mothers regarding their role and how they can help their daughters with LD. For example, Kadiga stated,

> *"I don't know how to help my daughter. I am really interested to know more about my daughter in the LD programme and what she is being provided with…. The school should help mothers to know these things."*

Moreover, most mothers reported that it was the school's responsibility to provide teachers with enough time to communicate with them. For example, Hanan stated,

> *"Schools must pay attention to mothers' roles and consider how we affect our daughters' personality…. Allow us to be involved and allow teachers the opportunity to communicate with us as well…. Give them time to do that and organise their schedules…. Don't overloaded them with too many tasks…. Communicating with us is an important task, and they should have time to do it."*

In sum, mothers state that they have many needs, wishes and rights that need to be satisfied and considered. They also propose that there are many types of support that should be provided by the authorities and the schools. There seems to be a link between schools' and authorities' responsibilities. At the national level, the educational system in the schools is managed by the Ministry of Education (authorities) and they have the power to impose national policies which schools are expected to adhere to. This will be further discussed in Chapter Seven.

In this chapter, the results revealed mothers' perspectives and experiences regarding their PI in mainstream schools in Riyadh city in Saudi Arabia. Mothers were provided with an opportunity to express and share their feelings, needs and

wishes, and to describe the support they needed. A variety of beliefs, feelings, choices, needs and wishes were presented.

The findings presented in this chapter and in Chapter 5 are extensively discussed in light of relevant literature and theories in the following chapter.

Chapter Seven: Discussion

7.1 Introduction

The study produced numerous findings, as presented in Chapters Five and Six. Key findings have been chosen to integrate and discuss in this chapter. It is worth noting that because certain research questions were relevant to either the quantitative or the qualitative phase, the findings discussed in this chapter were often evidenced by one phase more than the other.

The process of choosing and integrating findings included several steps. First, I created a table that portrayed quantitative and qualitative findings. Second, I identified explicit and implicit threads and links between findings in both phases. Third, I established a mind map that portrayed these links and identified overarching concepts that captured key findings. Based on that, two main concepts emerged from the synthesised findings. The first concept is power, with further discussion about marginalisation and mothers' educational rights. I identified power as a concept because of implicit and explicit findings regarding mothers' marginalisation in both phases, which are discussed in detail later in this chapter. The second concept is willingness, with further discussion about communication. Willingness as a concept was a subtheme in the Qualitative Data Findings and it could be linked with several findings in both phases (e.g., limited communication and invitations). These concepts were defined from the dictionary, so the interpretations won't be linked with a specific discipline (i.e. education or politics). Further details are discussed underneath each section.

In this chapter, I re-present the conceptual framework used in this study as a starting point. Figure 11 presents a summary of theories and PI models used in this study, providing a reminder of the main concepts within each theory and PI models before I discuss and link key findings from this study. The Literature Review Chapter provides more details about this conceptual framework. This chapter discusses the main concepts of power and willingness based on how they address the research questions, theories and PI models presented in this study. This chapter concludes with a summary of the main findings of the study.

Figure 11 Summary of Conceptual Framework

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1. PI MODELS

Epstein PI MODLE
- Parenting
- Communication
- Volunteering
- Learning at Home
- Decision Making
- Community Participation

Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler, Hoover-Dempsey PI model
- Parents' Motivational Beliefs
  - Parental Roles Construction
  - Parental Self-Efficacy — Person beliefs that she or he can act in a way that produce desired outcomes .
- Parents' Perceptions of Invitations for Involvement from Others
  - Perceptions of General School Invitations
  - Perceptions of Specific Child Invitations
  - Perceptions of Specific Teacher Invitations
- parents' perceived life context
  - Self-Perceived Time and Energy
  - Self-Perceived Skill and Knowledge

2. THEORIES

BRONFENBRENNER'S ECOLOGICAL SYSTEM THEORY
- Macro System — Nested Cultural, Political, Religious, And Educational Factors Shape And Construct Similar Types Of Power In Society
- Exo System — One or two Settings in which the developing person is not actively participated . Yet, these settings have vital impact on the developing person
- Meso System — Relationships between two settings in the micro systems (Home and School)
- Micro System — Pattern of activities , roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in their immediate Environments (Home and School)

Note :after analysis, developing person could be Mothers and Daughters as well (see Contributions Section).

Note : some systems (exo, meso, and micro) are relevant to Walker.et.al PI Model

7.2 Power

The term *power* has various meanings in different disciplines. While discussing this concept in detail is beyond the scope of this study, I discuss power in light of the study's findings. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, power refers to "the capacity or ability to direct or influence the behaviour of others" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2019). This capacity could be in individuals (i.e. mothers), in authority (i.e. teachers as individuals, schools as institutions), or in culture (i.e. social norms and values). This study's findings identified power in all of these sources.

As seen in Phase 2, power is located in individuals such as two of the mothers who insisted on communication regardless of any obstacles they faced. This finding aligns with Rogers' (2011) determination that advocating and battling metaphors are common themes in research with mothers of children with disabilities. Later in this chapter, the mothers' role construction section and time and energy section provide more details.

Power is also located with teachers who seem to ignore mothers and inform rather than share or collaborate. As seen in Phase 2, teachers frequently did not seem to consider mothers' knowledge or seek their input, and these educators often seemed to have had control over the decisions regarding the students' goals. Similarly, Fylling and Sandvin (1999) found that teachers in Norway control

all decisions with no obligation to heed parents' views of the child's needs. Further details are discussed later in the sections on teachers' deficit perspectives and teachers' beliefs.

Institutions such as schools hold power as well. Fine (1993) indicated that "parents enter […] public education typically with neither resources nor power" (p. 682), and Phase 2 revealed that schools' administrations hold the power in terms of how they invite mothers to some events (mothers' meetings) while limiting mothers' roles in those events or in their daughters' education in general. This finding is similar to that of Ng and Yuen (2015) who conducted an ethnographic study with parents and teachers in China and determined that, "even though parents are included, they are within the control of the teaching professionals so their participation in the school management is considered pseudo" (p. 268). Further discussion of how the schools' power limit mothers' roles in events and communication's opportunities is provided within the section on schools' assumptions.

By viewing the findings through the lens of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, it could be argued that nested and overlapping factors influence and shape the power of culture, individuals, and authorities. In the following section, I discuss the connection between these different aspects of power, marginalisation, and lack of mothers' knowledge regarding their educational rights in the light of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and specifically macro- and meso- systems.

7.2.1 Marginalisation

Findings from both phases showed that mothers of girls with LD were involved (to some extent) in their daughters' education at home (i.e. helping with homework). This discovery is not surprising as it corresponds to Alhabeeb's (2016) findings, that parents' educational roles and responsibilities in the Saudi context focus on monitoring children's homework and preparing them for their exams. However, the mothers interviewed in Phase 2 were struggling with helping their daughters at home because they lacked sufficient support from teachers and schools. This finding implicitly links with a qualitative study conducted by Alariefy (2016) on parents of children with special needs in Saudi Arabia which explored the impact of having a child with disability and implication of family supported services. Alariefy's findings have shown that parents felt

alone in facing the challenge and consequences of having a child with a disability. In the current study, mothers' struggling implied that they feel alone and left behind when schools and teachers do not help them face challenges (i.e. helping their daughter in homework). Additionally, findings in Phase 2 show that mothers had limited involvement opportunities in their daughters' schools. This finding aligned with Dubis' (2015) report that parents of children with special needs are not involved in their children's schools.

Based on the above discussion, several points could be made. First, this study determined that mothers do not feel they have sufficient support to help their daughters at home. This finding suggests that "learning at home" in the Epstein PI model is not a common type of parental involvement for girls' primary mainstream schools in Riyadh. Epstein (2011) suggests that teachers should provide parents with a variety of information about helping their children at home with their homework, other related curricula, and other activities. However, findings of this study revealed that homework is set, and then the Saudi mothers in this study are expected to do it at home without any help being provided (i.e. links). Second, the absence of sufficient support as well as mothers' limited involvement opportunities at their daughters' schools highlight how mothers in this study were considered, at least to some extent, voiceless and marginalised. For example, Kurniawati (2012) noted that "To be marginalised is to be placed in the margins, and thus excluded from the privilege and power found at the centre" (Kurniawati, 2012, p. 479). Perhaps, people in the margins might be limited from having opportunities to use their voices. Findings from Phase 2 highlighted how mothers were voiceless regarding expressing their concerns or needs in their daughters' education. Similarly, in a study with a similar population, Jackson (2010) found that parents in the United States in urban/suburban school districts had not been asked about their concerns and what mattered to them regarding their involvement in their children's education.

Mothers' lack of voice could also be seen implicitly in their perception and definition of PI. In Phase 2, mothers perceived PI as giving them power that enhanced their role and helped them to express concerns about their daughters' education. This perception indicates that mothers have limited, if any, voice that would enable them to express their interests.

Additionally, it implies that mothers' involvement is a route to power that allows their voice to be heard. During Phase 2, mothers expressed that one of their primary rights and needs was to have a voice in their daughters' education. This demand is in line with a finding by Chavkin and Williams (1987) that "parents need their voices to be heard; they asked to have 'more say in school and classroom'" (p. 298).

Based on these findings, it is worth exploring why those mothers were apparently marginalised and what factors might exacerbate their marginalisation. This study indicates that power is an essential factor. In other words, it could be claimed that mothers were marginalised because power lies elsewhere, such as in other individuals, institutions, and the culture rather than in mothers.

7.2.2 *Macrosystem*

7.2.2.1 *Norms and values in the Saudi context*

An important cultural factor influences mothers' marginalisation are norms and values in the Saudi context. According to Becker (1963), each culture has a group of people who have the power to set norms and values and impose them on others. Eventually, people who are outside a society's circle of norms may be considered as outsiders or deviants (Becker, 1963). With regard to the Saudi context, it could be argued that mothers of girls with LD are considered outsiders who do not fit norms because of their daughters' disabilities. Perhaps, in Saudi culture, being perceived as outsiders may be related to disabilities rather than other aspects (e.g., parents' gender). Alquraini (2011) revealed that Saudi society discriminates against individuals with disabilities by ignoring them in public and preventing them from exercising their rights. In accordance, discrimination may lead to parents (e.g., mothers) of these individuals (e.g., daughters with LD) being perceived as outsiders and being prevented from exercising their rights (e.g., being involved in their daughter's education). In this sense, discrimination and identification as outsiders have increased the possibility of mothers' concerns and needs being marginalised.

This discrimination is relevant to stigmatising parents (e.g., mothers of girls with LD). That is, if the dominant norms in the Saudi context marginalise mothers of girls with LD because of their daughter's disability, it may not be surprising that the same norms and power exacerbate their stigmatisation as well. Findings in Phase 2 showed that mothers of girls with LD were concerned about the influence

of stigmatisation on them and their daughters due to Saudi norms and values about people with disabilities and their families. According to Al-Kahtani (2015), cultural stigma is often associated with children with special needs and their families in the Saudi context. Viewing these findings from a wider lens, such stigmatisation is common in Middle Eastern countries and impacts upon the disabled child and the mother (Crabtree, 2007). This is not surprising since Goffman (1963) argued that stigma not only affects the experiences of those in possession of the stigmatising characteristic, but it also tends to spread to close family members and to others. Stigma will influence family members (here, mothers) and may also manifest directly on the mesosystem. This will be discussed further in the deficit perspectives section below.

7.2.2.2 Absence of clear PI policy in SEN

One main political factor that increase mothers' marginalisation is the absence of clear PI policy for parents of children with SEN. In Phase 2, most mothers cited the absence of such a policy as a main barrier to their involvement in their daughters' education. Similarly, Al-Ajmi (2006) found that Saudi Arabian special education provisions did not mention parental involvement in special education. This absence from Saudi provision suggests that no well-defined PI policy has been emphasised, which might hinder mothers' involvement. In this sense, it could be suggested that parents of children with SEN (i.e. mothers of girls with LD) lack political power while institutions and other individuals (e.g., the schools, teachers) have implicit power. Thus, failing to communicate with and/or involve the mothers is an option for the teachers and/or the schools.

To my knowledge, there is no direct, clear, and recent PI policy that assures and emphasises parents' rights in their children's education in the Saudi context. The only Saudi policy that mentions parents' roles is RSEPI as mentioned in section SEN Policy in Saudi Arabia. In this study, both phases found that mothers were often absent from IEP meetings, though attendance is stated as essential in RSEPI. In Phase 1, the percentage of mothers participating in IEP meetings was very low, and Phase 2 revealed a similar lack of participation by mothers in IEP meetings. From an international perspective, these findings correspond with a mixed methods study conducted by Myers (2014) on parents of children with special needs in the United States. Myers (2014) identified a lack of parental voice and value at IEP meetings. From a national perspective, these findings

linked with those of Al-Kahtani (2015), who noted shortcomings regarding PI in IEP meetings. Saudi parents lacked involvement in the IEP team and often had no contact or relationship with any IEP team members (Al-Kahtani, 2015). This is not surprising since RSEPI policy seems to emphasise schools' and teachers' roles more explicitly than parents. In this sense, it could be argued that parents (i.e. mothers) are recipients in the IEP process rather than partners who have the right to express their opinions and share their views and needs. Further discussion regarding IEP can be found later in the Invitations section.

One possible explanation for shortcomings in attending IEP meetings is the gap between RSEPI policy and its application in practice. In a qualitative study on parents of children with LD, Poon-McBrayer (2012) stated that people with special needs (and their families) might not be able to exercise their rights when there is a gap between policies and practice (see the mothers' educational rights section for more details). This gap may have occurred because of problems in policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. Discussing these possibilities in great detail falls outside the scope of this study. However, these possibilities were explained earlier in the literature review. Another possibility is difficulties in accessing the current RSEPI policy. As a researcher, it was difficult to access an actual copy of this policy, in hard copy or online, and it could be assumed that mothers, schools and teachers may face this difficulty as well. Perhaps, if mothers could access this policy, their involvement in the IEP meetings may increase.

Based on the above discussion, the absence of formal legislation that emphasises mothers' involvement, their right to have a say in their daughters' education, and the limitations of the policy (RSEPI) are explanatory factors in mothers' marginalisation in the Saudi context.

However, education in the Saudi context has shown tremendous development and change in recent years. One of the main instigators seems to be Saudi Vision 2030 (Vision, 2018), which emphasises the importance of parents' roles in their children's education and has resulted in considerable attention on PI as a concept. This vision may help Saudi authorities develop clearer policies that develop and protect mothers' rights and avoid the shortcomings indicated above. Reaching this goal may require ongoing efforts during the planning, monitoring, and evaluation stages as well as considering the perspectives of all parties (i.e. mothers, teachers).

In sum, in this study, mothers of daughters with LD appeared to be marginalised because of cultural and political factors in the macrosystem, which will eventually influence the mesosystem, as discussed in the following section.

7.2.3 Mesosystem

7.2.3.1 Teachers' deficit perspectives

As seen in Phase 2, mothers were concerned about how teachers perceived them and their daughters. One possible reason behind mothers' concerns is teachers' deficit perspectives, in which they situate children's failures with the children themselves and their parents. Discussing teachers' deficit perspectives is important because they relate to teachers' opinions and attitudes toward mothers of girls with LD; in turn, these attitudes may eventually influence their communication and relationships in this system.

Schools and/or teachers perceive mothers of girls with LD as individuals who could not help with their daughter's education. A number of studies have shown that parents of children with SEN might be perceived this way. Cooper (2009, p.379) conducted a qualitative study on African American mothers and found that mothers are "steeped in deficit-based ideologies and stereotypic images" where educators perceive them as uninvolved or uncaring. Similarly, Rogers' (2011) study also offered more support for this idea, indicating that some teachers may have deficit perspectives toward parents, and they may be labelled as "dysfunctional families" (p. 575). With regard to the Saudi context, Almoghyrah's (2015) findings showed teachers might perceive parents of students with mild cognitive disabilities as being unmotivated to be involved in their children's education.

Based on the above, from a deficit lens, it could be suggested that mothers in this study were not been viewed as partners who could be invited to participate and/or communicate, since the "deficit model does not promote parents as co-participants in their children's education and ignores the rich information that only parents can add to their children's education" (Jackson, 2010, p. 4). In this case, teachers stigmatise and marginalise mothers, maintain power, control decisions, and fail to communicate with and/or invite mothers. With such deficit perspectives, mothers' willingness to communicate with teachers and become involved in their daughters' education is influenced as well. Phase 2 showed how some mothers felt embarrassed to be involved in their daughters' education

because of the disability and what teachers might think of them; as a result, they avoided communicating with teachers. Similarly, Good's (2001) study on parents of children with learning disabilities revealed that parents might avoid involvement with school or teacher activities because they might bear the same stigma as their children or be viewed as the cause of their children's learning problems. Saudi parents experience similar trepidation. Abed (2014) highlighted that parents in the Saudi community feel embarrassed to have a child with disabilities and believe they are perceived "as a reflection with them" (p. 4). Likewise, Alanazi's (2012) findings revealed that some parents refused to engage with the school because they feared being stigmatised.

Many possible reasons could explain teachers' deficit perspectives. Relationships between mothers and teachers in the mesosystem are influenced by social and political power in the macrosystem. In other words, teachers' power is derived from the larger society, which seems to marginalise and stigmatise mothers of girls with LD without clarifying or considering their roles in their daughters' education. Power in the mesosystem is translated into beliefs, assumptions, and actions practised by individuals (i.e. teachers), which may be unsurprising since relationships among parents and schools "mirror the contexts and inequitable power arrangements of the larger society" (Abrams et al., 2002, p. 385). Another possible explanation for teachers' deficit perspectives is perceiving themselves as experts. This point is discussed in more detail under the (Teachers' perceptions). Additionally, teachers' deficit perspectives are related to limitations in teachers' training programmes which is discussed further in this chapter.

7.2.3.2 Mothers' educational rights

Findings of both phases showed mothers' eagerness to know their educational rights regarding involvement in their daughters' education. This eagerness supported Alariefy's (2016) findings that parents have the desire for better awareness regarding their rights. However, despite this eagerness, more in-depth findings in Phase 2 indicated that mothers lack knowledge regarding their rights. Similarly, Alariefy (2016) identified a scarcity of awareness among parents about educational and medical issues, as well as their general rights. Alquraini (2013) confirmed that parents of students with disabilities in the Saudi context

lack awareness regarding their rights which would enable them to disagree and/or argue with the school and any decisions that might be made by them.

It could be argued that lack in mothers' knowledge regarding their rights implicitly increases their marginalisation and explicitly influences their communication; as a result, it is considered as a barrier to their involvement. A study conducted by Thompson (2015) with African American parents of children with special needs in San Diego showed that one of the main obstacles that limited parental involvement was knowledge of special education law, parental rights, and roles in the process. Without information (i.e. on mothers' educational rights), mothers are not be able to participate in their daughters' education. Roit and Pfohl (1984) and Turnbull and Tumbull (1990) also indicated that limitations in understanding the school system and parents' rights may be seen in low levels of parental participation. Mothers in Phase 2 expressed understanding and knowledge of their rights as one of their main needs. This discovery aligns with the findings of Stevenson and Baker (1987), more than thirty years ago, who affirmed that parents need to have knowledge regarding their child's schooling and access to resources (i.e. their rights) to help their child. It may be questioned why mothers' knowledge regarding their rights may be absent. It could be claimed that educational and cultural power is on the side of authorities (i.e. teachers, schools) rather than that of mothers. Further discussion is presented below.

7.2.4 Macrosystem

7.2.4.1 Saudi educational system

One possible barrier to mothers being aware of and acknowledging their rights is the Saudi education system. Mathis (2010) indicated that the Saudi education system is highly bureaucratic with decision-making power structured from the top down. A top-down approach sees policy designers (MOE) as the "central actors" with diminished roles and perspectives of target groups (i.e. mothers) and service deliverers (i.e. teachers; Matland, 1995). It could be assumed that informing mothers regarding their rights may is not considered a priority in such a bureaucratic system. As Myers (2000) noted:

> *"A bureaucratic system that does not adequately inform parents of their rights or responsibilities, limits information about potential programs or services for children with special needs, does not teach families the skills necessary to collaborate effectively". (p. 72)*

Since the school system structure is bureaucratic in Saudi Arabia and does not include parents or provide them with decision-making opportunities (Alhabeeb, 2016), and given the limited information regarding their rights, mothers were not able to be involved in decision-making about their daughters' education. As such, it could be suggested that decision-making as one type of the Epstein PI model (Section 3.6.b) does not exist in primary mainstream schools for girls in Riyadh, at least for mothers in this study. Absence of this type of PI could also be seen in the lack of mothers' participation in IEP meetings indicated earlier.

7.2.4.2 Conflict between religion and traditions

Phase 2 showed that some mothers were passive and did not ask about their educational rights despite their desire to be involved. This finding is not surprising since people in the Saudi culture are expected to obey and not to question (House, 2013). It would be interesting to explore what might influence mothers' choice to be passive and hinder their willingness to be involved in their daughter's' education. To answer this, light needs to be shed on the Saudi religion, traditions, and conflicts. Religion and tradition are inseparable since Saudi society is a unique mix between religion and culture (Al Alhareth et al., 2015). Therefore, to provide sufficient explanation for this finding, discussing both is necessary.

On the one hand, from a wider religious perspective, Islam granted women full participation in all aspects of life (i.e. their daughters' education) and gave them the right to make their own decisions regarding things are suitable for them in Islamic societies (AlMunajjed, 1997; Yamani, 1996). From a narrow religious perspective, Islam assured the duty of other members in Saudi society to help and support parents of children with special needs (Al Rubiyea, 2010). Based on this understanding, it could be suggested that mothers' exercising their voices in their daughters' education as well as understanding their rights are important aspects of women's full participation in Saudi society. Additionally, it could be suggested that helping those parents (i.e. mothers) includes providing information by authorities (i.e. MOE) regarding their rights, thereby allowing them to be more involved in their daughters' education.

On the other hand, one Saudi tradition is supporting schools' decisions without questioning. Alhabeeb (2016) explained:

> *"Families in Saudi Arabia are accustomed to giving schools full authority in decision-making without any interference. Saudi cultural heritage encourages families to give full support to the decisions schools make, whatever those decisions may take". (p. 46)*

Based on the above discussion, there are several explanations for the finding regard passivity. First, in the Saudi context, the conflict between religion and this particular tradition seems to be evident. This conflict exists because of contradictions between religion, which emphasises women's (i.e. mothers') full participation, and tradition, which is based on supporting schools' decisions without question. Second, because of this conflict, some mothers in the current study were passive and did not question schools regarding their rights, even if they wanted to. Third, when following schools' decisions without questioning, mothers implicitly enhance schools' power. If mothers are silent, schools assume there are no specific needs or concerns to be met; as a result, they maintain the power to control decisions without addressing mothers' needs and concerns.

7.2.5 Mesosystem

7.2.5.1 Teachers' responsibility

LD special education teachers in the Saudi context are responsible for raising awareness amongst LD parents, school members, and the society as a whole. LD teachers must provide rich information regarding the LD programme by sending a copy of the IEP to parents (to acknowledge their rights), offering brochures regarding the programme, providing parents with activities that develop the child's performance, and reporting the child's progress to parents (Almoady et al., 2015).

Despite these teachers' responsibilities, limitations in carrying these responsibilities are evident. The lack of mothers' knowledge regarding their rights indicated earlier (Section 7.3.2.1) offers indirect evidence of such limitations. An explicit example occurred during Phase 2 when mothers revealed that both LD special education teachers and general education teachers failed to help them learn their rights (i.e. participating in IEP meetings). Perhaps, because teachers do not carry out their responsibilities, this implies they exercise a certain amount of power in choosing not to inform the mothers about important information such

as their rights (i.e. IEP meetings). This power limits mothers' involvement opportunities in their daughters' education.

Several reasons explain why teachers do not carry out their responsibilities. Perhaps schools and teachers fear mothers' demands. That is, if teachers inform mothers regarding their educational rights, schools may see an increase in mothers making demands and complaints about schools' and teachers' shortcomings. Myers (2000) affirmed that some educational principals are hesitant to educate family members about their rights since that may increase the demands on their educational system. Another reason is the absence of teacher's performance evaluation. Dubis (2015) stated that the Saudi annual increment, or pay increase, is awarded to all public employees regardless of that employee's performance. In this sense, some teachers choose not to involve mothers and/or fail to inform them of their rights, since the school's evaluation does not affect their annual increment (Dubis, 2015). Likewise, the absence of teacher responsibility may be related to Limitations in teachers' training programmes which is discussed later in this chapter.

7.2.6 Power: Conclusion

Two main aspects in relation to power have been discussed, namely, marginalisation and mothers' educational rights. Figure 12 summarises the way cultural, political, and educational power can be seen to be nested in macrosystems and mesosystems in the Saudi Arabian context. It is suggested that these different types of power and their distribution influence mothers' knowledge regarding their rights, their degree of participation or marginalisation, and hence their involvement in their daughters' education. More details about nested factors are provided further in the conclusion chapter.

Figure 12 Aspects of Power in Relation to the Macro and Meso Systems
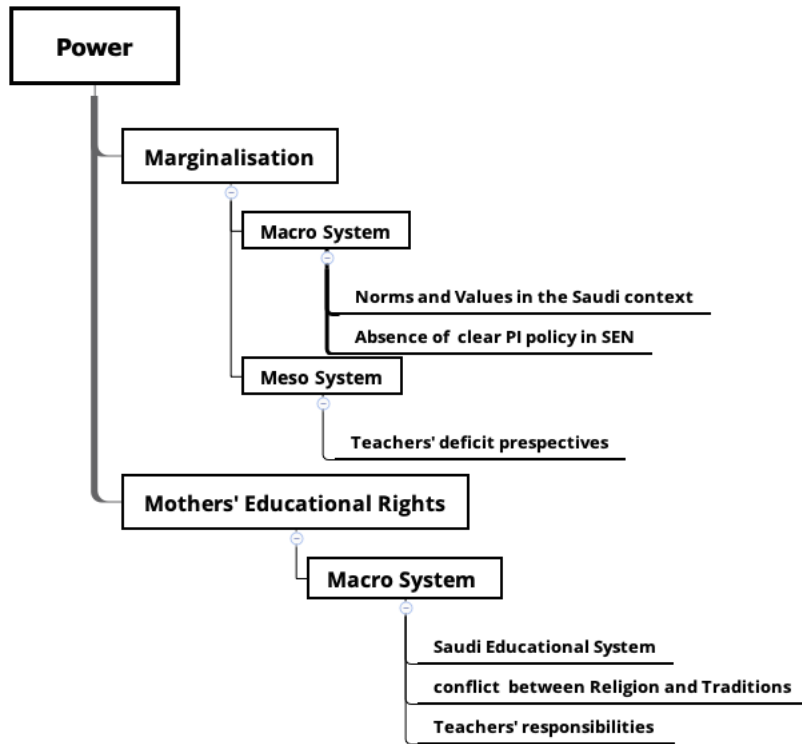
7.3 Willingness

The term *willingness* describes a substantial concept that also seems to be related to other concepts (i.e. desire, choice, motivation). This section will discuss how willingness is related to these other concepts, how it emerged from the findings, and its relations with Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model, and previous literature. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, willingness refers to "the quality or state of being prepared to do something; readiness" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2019) while desire means "a strong feeling of wanting to have something or wishing for something to happen" Oxford English Dictionary, 2019). Additionally, motivation refers to a "desire or willingness to do something; enthusiasm" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2019) whereas choice indicates "an act of choosing between two or more possibilities" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2019). Based on these definitions, a thread can be found between these concepts along with communication.

Figure **13** presents a suggested cyclical process relating these concepts. This suggestion acknowledges the complexity of some aspects (e.g., motivations), yet the motivation concept emerged from my study and will be elaborated in relation

to its findings. Based on my findings, I consider two aspects of motivation, which are feelings and readiness.

Figure 13 Cyclical Process between Desire, Willingness, Motivation, and Choice
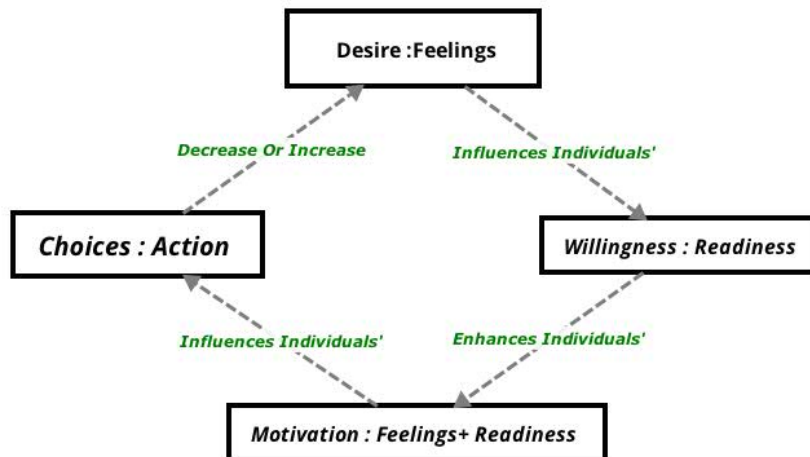
On one hand, if individuals (i.e. mothers) have the desire to do a certain thing (i.e. be involved, communicate), their willingness (i.e. readiness) will increase. Thus, mothers' desire and willingness together will motivate them to act. Despite obstacles they may face, mothers will act by making different choices (i.e. becoming involved, communicating). However, their choices will vary according to their feelings and level of readiness. This understanding also applies to other individuals (i.e. teachers) and institutions (i.e. schools). That is, if teachers and schools have the desire to do certain things (i.e. communicate and invite parents), their willingness will increase; as a result, they become motivated to invite and communicate with mothers. On the other hand, if individuals (i.e. teachers, mothers) do not have the desire to do certain things (i.e. communicate), their willingness will decrease. Thus, they lack motivation and take different choices, which could result in teachers ignoring, controlling, or not inviting parents. Based on the current study's findings, I discuss mothers' and teachers' willingness and unwillingness, communication, and invitations in the sections below.

7.3.1 Mothers' willingness

Both phases of the current study produced implicit and explicit findings regarding mothers' willingness to participate in various aspects of their daughters' education. Phase 1 revealed most mothers were communicating with teachers and visiting their daughters' schools. These findings suggest mothers' willingness to know more about their daughters' education. In Phase 2, more explicit findings

regarding mothers' willingness indicated that mothers were eager to be more involved in their daughters' education. Most mothers echoed a willingness to take part in their daughters' education.

Additionally, Phase 2 illustrated that most mothers were communicating with teachers and visiting their daughters' school mostly without invitations, which suggests their willingness despite being uninvited. This discovery aligns with the findings of a survey study of male teachers of students with cognitive disabilities in Saudi Arabia (Almoghyrah, 2015) which found that 92% of the 200 respondents agreed that visiting the school without invitation suggested higher willingness on the parents' part to be involved in their child's education. Interestingly, in Phase 2 there were two specific mothers who showed a higher willingness to communicate and be involved in their daughters' education compared to other mothers. This will be discussed further under mothers' role construction section.

7.3.2 Unwillingness

7.3.2.1 Mothers

There are two types of unwillingness arising from internal or external reasons. Phase 2 identified one mother who chose not to be involved or communicate with her daughter's teachers or school. Her unwillingness is related to internal factors, such as her own beliefs regarding her role and others' roles (e.g., teachers and schools). It could also be linked with external factors, like not fully knowing her rights and/or not being aware of her rights. This support Dubis' (2015) findings that some parents were not willing to be involved in their children's education. Similarly, in their study of PI in Baltimore, Dauber and Epstein (1993) found that some parents were unwilling to become involved, and Brownlea (1987) noted that:

> *"Some people are not even interested in participating, simply want to get on with living […] and are much more accepting of things as they are and feel that they have already delegated the decision-making role to others and are quite happy to leave it to them". (p. 607)*

Additionally, mothers' unwillingness is related to external reasons (to some extent). This is related to their previous experiences with their daughter's teachers and schools. Phase 2 revealed that most educated mothers who had negative experiences with teachers reported that they no longer wished to communicate and became apathetic. Similarly, O'Connor (2001) found that

parents' negative experiences in their children's school may result in low involvement because they feel uncomfortable. Bryan et al. (2001) likewise determined that parents who have been through negative school experiences might have less participation in school events and may feel uncomfortable talking to teachers.

7.3.2.2 Teachers

In Phase 2, most mothers stated that teachers' willingness was an essential element of PI that played a vital role in developing a relationship between them. Despite this perceived importance, most mothers in Phase 2 described limits in teachers' willingness to communicate and listen to their point of view. This finding aligned with Pruitt et al.'s (1998) study where 73 parents of children with special needs were interviewed and stated that educators often were unwilling to listen to their ideas.

Based on the above discussion, it could be argued that mothers' and teachers' willingness and unwillingness are influential factors that determine the types of communication and relationships between both parties. Further discussion is provided below.

7.3.3 Communication

In the current study, both phases produced findings regarding communication. As stated earlier in the mothers' willingness section, Phase 1 revealed that 74 mothers out of 165 visited their daughters' school 'often' and 'always'. Additionally, a total of 56 out of 165 of mothers said they often communicate with teachers. On a similar note, Alhabeeb (2016) found that parents visited their children's school, had a dialogue with teachers or principals, and attended parent meetings. In Phase 2 of this study, communication appeared as a main concept when discussing and defining PI. Many mothers defined PI as two–way communication between mothers and teachers, where both sides interact in a balanced way. In this phase, mothers also expressed their belief that communication was a vital element in the PI process, in line with Bridgemohan et al.'s (2005) affirmation that communication is a critical component of parental involvement programmes. Additionally, Jeynes's findings (2012) emphasised the significant influence of parents' and teachers' communication as one PI type and explored how such communication has a strong relationship with students' academic outcomes.

However, findings in phase 2 exposed limitations in communication between mothers, their daughters' teachers, and the schools. On a similar note, Hess et al. (2006) conducted a qualitative study using a focus group of parents of children with disabilities. Their findings showed that parents felt there was not enough communication between themselves and teachers (Hess et al., 2006). Likewise, Al-Kahtani (2015) identified a lack of parents' communication with the special education teachers regarding the IEP process.

These limitations could be seen in the absence of two way of communication. In phase 2, mothers viewed communication as being one-way (i.e. from teachers), rather than reciprocal. Mothers noted the only purpose of communication was to inform them about their daughters' homework or when a problem arose. This response aligned with Spann et al.'s (2003) findings that many parents were called by teachers to discuss how their child was having difficulty with a school routine.

It is worth clarifying that, although exchanging information about homework and/or problems seemed to be important aspects of mother–teacher communication, it is not enough. This is because when teachers simply focus on students' problems and inform mothers without helping, guiding, discussing, and expressing ideas as partners, the result is one-way rather than two-way communication. Harris, Andrew-Power and Goodall (2009) explained that communication should not simply highlight the difficulties students experience. Rather, it should also address students' successes and guide families in assisting their children to become more effective learners. It could be argued that treating communication only as an opportunity to inform mothers indicates a failure to involve them in their daughter's education. Doing so will eventually limit their willingness to communicate.

Gerstein (2004) stated:

> *"Given that increases in communication were not related to increases in parent involvement, it may be speculated that communications were negative in nature. For example, if teacher contact was made mainly to report child problems, it is reasonable to suspect that parents would not want to increase contact with teachers." (p. 34)*

Another example of the one-way nature of communication could be seen in restricting mothers' roles in mothers' meetings. Specifically, mothers in Phase 2 indicated they did not have the chance to express their concerns in these

meetings. This finding aligns with Alhabeeb's (2016) study, which determined that parents were invited to join meetings as guests rather than as effective, decision-making members. Similarly, Hibbitts (2009) reported that some parents indicated that "schools did do a lot of talking to me and I did little talking back. Most often, I did as I was told" (p. 273). Likewise, a parent in a study by Olivos (2006) stated that:

> *"They would give us parent meetings but only to inform us about what she (the principal) wanted to tell us. She would give us the meetings, but she would be the only one allowed to speak. When we had questions, [she would say], I'm sorry but I have to leave [….] the meeting would end. We'd be left with all our unanswered questions". (p. 96)*

Furthermore, another example of one-way communication was evident in Phase 2 where mothers were only formally informed of their daughters' enrolment in the LD programme without being perceived as partners who should be involved in diagnosing and making decisions about their daughters' situation. Ironically, Almoady et al. (2015) noted that parents are considered vital members of the diagnosis process and should be involved by providing important information about their child (i.e. strength, weakness, and concerns) before referring these students to the programme.

It should be acknowledged that other factors (e.g., relationships) play a part in limited communication. In Phase 2, most mothers reported a minimal relationship with teachers, describing it as superficial. This finding was consistent with Hornby and Lafaele (2011), who found that parents may believe that teachers are looking for superficial relationships and are only concerned about informing mothers regarding problems rather than communicating with them about solutions.

In accordance with the above, some mothers felt hopeless and frustrated because of the lack of teachers' invitations and communication in phase 2. Similarly, Hess et al. (2006) stated that a lack of communication might sometimes lead to feelings of frustration and the perception that the teacher does not understand the child's or the family's needs. Findings of the current study are not surprising since, without professional support (which occurs through communication), parents can be frustrated (Lindsay & Dockrell, 2004). Phase 2 revealed also how mothers felt disappointed regarding communication limitations. In a similar vein, Schraeder (2015) reported that parents expressed disappointment in the lack of opportunities that encourage parental involvement.

This finding suggests that communication opportunities between parents and teachers are limited.

Interestingly, in phase 2, communication was highlighted as another major need for mothers. This finding is consistent with Nichols-Rice (2011), who determined that parents of children with learning disabilities preferred more communication from their children's teachers than was provided. Likewise, a case study conducted by Stoner et al. (2005) concluded that parents of children with autism highlighted their need for numerous open communications between school and home. Similarly, Myers (2014) discovered that communication and collaboration were considered priorities and main concerns for parents. Mothers in Phase 2 preferred many communication methods, including communicating via digital messaging (i.e. WhatsApp, text messages) as well as face to face. This finding supported Alariefy's (2016) determination that most parents preferred meeting specialists face to face and through social media applications such as WhatsApp.

In sum, simply informing parents (mothers) does not imply collaborative, two-way communication and this one-way nature of communication is not sufficient since mothers' needs and concerns have not been discussed or heard. Additionally, communication as a type of Epstein's PI model (see Table 4) does not to exist in Saudi primary mainstream schools for girls in Riyadh, at least for those in this study. This finding was not surprising, since this model suggest the planning of effective approaches to two-way communication between parents and teachers (Epstein, 2011). Finally, findings discussed above are extremely related to teachers' and schools' unwillingness to communicate with mothers, listen to their concerns, and involve them in their daughters' education. These findings imply that teachers have a certain amount of power due to the status/role of teachers as authority figures, which was discussed earlier in this chapter, and have the power not to communicate with the mothers as partners. However, teachers' decisions to communicate with the mothers and/or to invite them are influenced by the wider system, which is discussed in the next section.

7.3.4 Macro system

7.3.4.1 Educational system in Saudi schools

Earlier in this chapter, it was indicated that the bureaucratic Saudi educational system has the power to reduce mothers' acknowledgment of their rights. Interestingly, this system also influences schools' and teachers' willingness to communicate with mothers or offer them invitations. In other words, within this system, other people (e.g., teachers) may be powerless as well as the mothers. It could be suggested that communication opportunities and collaboration between parents and teachers are limited. Ware (1994) noted that the "traditional bureaucratic organization of schools, hierarchical authority and well-established power structures will undermine the potential for meaningful collaboration" (p. 340). Similarly, Addi-Raccah and Ainhoren (2009) showed that, in bureaucratic schools, teachers often do not have opportunities to collaborate with parents.

In this sense, it could be assumed that the absence of a bureaucratic system might increase communication between mothers and teachers. Still, this is not always the case. When teachers and parents are empowered, they might make different choices. Perhaps, empowering teachers will influence their willingness and make them more or less likely to involve the mothers. The bureaucratic nature of the system plays a vital role in the school's climate. Further discussion about this subject is presented later in section Schools' climate.

7.3.4.2 Limitations in teachers' training programmes

Teacher training programmes have a great influence on developing teachers' communication skills, which is essential for them to work effectively with parents (Hornby, 2000) and improve levels of collaboration with them. Interestingly, as reported by mothers, findings in Phase 2 revealed limitations in teachers' understanding of their responsibilities toward mothers in terms of communication and collaboration. This finding indicates that teachers need more training. This is not surprising in light of the Literature Review Chapter (see Teachers' preparation) indicating that Saudi teachers have made clear their dissatisfaction with the Saudi training programme. A study conducted by Althabet (2002) implied that special education teachers felt they were not well-prepared. Likewise, Larocque et al. (2011) noted that teachers have confessed they do not know how to include parents to efficiently facilitate the education of their children.

Because of limitations in teachers' understanding, mothers in Phase 2 emphasised that schools should train teachers and raise awareness amongst them regarding communicating with and understanding girls with LD and their mothers. In a study using a survey and focus groups with teachers, Flanigan (2007) identified similar results. Flanigan's (2007) findings showed that more emphasis on PI in teacher education courses may help all teachers to be aware of the wide range of activities necessary to encourage parental involvement with schools. Mothers in this phase also stressed the importance of teachers' ethics (which could be taught in teacher training programmes), noting how it may influence their communication and relationships. This assertion aligns with a qualitative study by Liu and Meng (2009) that determined that both parents and teacher considered teachers' ethics to be an important characteristic of a good teacher.

Additionally, in Phase 2, the mothers stated that it is the authorities' responsibility to evaluate teacher preparation programmes in terms of their effectiveness in teaching teachers to communicate with mothers of girls with LD. Similarly, Hussain (2009) recommended continuous evaluation and ongoing assessment of teacher preparation programmes in Saudi universities to maintain high-quality programmes.

7.3.4.3 *Perceived lack of teachers' motivation*

Teachers' motivation influences their performance at school and can determine the nature of their relationships with parents (Dubis, 2015). Noting this prominence, mothers' views in Phase 2 stressed the importance of teachers' passion, therefore, it could be argued that lack of teachers' motivations influences teacher–mother relationships. Many factors, including school climate, could influence teachers' motivation. Dubis (2015) determined that a poor school climate may influence teachers' motivation to perform adequately (i.e. affecting their willingness to communicate and invite mothers) in schools. Likewise, Moos (1979) argued that a poor school climate influences teachers' motivation and might be translated into their job performance, attitudes, and beliefs towards parental involvement. Further details regarding schools' climate are discussed in the mesosystem section below.

7.3.5 Mesosystem

7.3.5.1 Schools' administrations' assumptions

Phase 2 uncovered a sense of disconnection between the school and home which might be due to the infrequency of meetings about LD students, the absence of organised collaborative efforts, and the restriction of mothers' involvement in parents' meetings. This disconnect supported Dubis' (2015) findings that parents have experienced intentional separation between home and schools and that schools neither welcome parents nor encourage their involvement.

One possible reason for this disconnect is the assumptions of schools' administrators, such as principals and leadership teams. Some schools' administrators' assumptions rely on separate responsibilities between home and schools, presuming that both organisations have different goals, roles, and responsibilities that will be best achieved if they work independently (Epstein, 2011). However, Myers (2000) stated that conflict and disconnection may occur when differences exist in the values, beliefs, expectations, and messages between the child's home environment and classroom. In accordance with separate responsibilities, it could be suggested that communication opportunities between mothers, schools, and teachers are missing. As a result, each have different expectations of how communication should be.

On one hand, perhaps girls' primary schools in Riyadh expect that involving mothers of girls with LD may require them simply to obtain mothers' formal permission to involve their daughters in the LD programme, as stated earlier. Perhaps girls' primary schools in Riyadh expect that involving mother's means inviting them twice a year to mothers' meetings to inform them of their daughters' conditions, as indicated earlier in this chapter. They might suppose that these efforts are sufficient, and mothers do not and should not expect more than that. On the other hand, mothers of girls with LD seem to have expect additional communication and invitations because of their daughters' disability (see New motivations for mothers).

7.3.5.2 Schools' climate

To start, the school climate is in the parents' mesosystem because of interaction between mothers at home and individuals (e.g., teachers) in their daughters' schools. The school climate could also be located in the microsystem because of mothers' immediate environment (e.g., schools) and people (e.g., teachers) who work in that environment. The role of the school's principal should be highlighted while discussing school climate. Further discussion is presented below.

A schools' climate refers to "the quality and character of school life […]. It is based on patterns of people's experiences of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships…. and organizational structures" (Cohen et al., 2009, p. 182). Based on this definition, differences in a school's norms, goals, and structures construct a positive or negative school climate that will influence individuals' (i.e. teachers' and mothers') willingness to communicate and, thus, type of relationships between them. That is, if parents (in their daughter's' school) feel welcomed at school and perceive their involvement as important, expected, and supported, those feelings may influence their decision to become involved (Myers, 2014). Likewise, Batt (2011) conducted a study on parents of children with special needs and used surveys, journals, questionnaires, and pre-/post-tests to determine that, if parents feel they are welcomed and valued from the classroom teacher, they will be willing to participate in school activities.

Despite the importance of a positive school climate, findings in Phase 2 showed that a negative school climate is evident for some mothers. In this phase, most mothers felt unwelcomed in their daughters' schools. Similarly, mothers in this phase described teachers as unwelcoming and sometimes offensive. This finding corresponded with Rogers' (2008) conclusion that parents of children with Attention-Deflcit /Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) felt not welcomed and supported by their children's schools and teachers. These findings reveal a connection between teachers' and schools' unwelcoming behaviour. Specifically, teachers' attitudes and beliefs might be influenced by their place of work. As Addi-Raccah and Ainhoren (2009) found, teachers' attitudes regarding parental involvement and their tendency to cooperate with parents seemed to be attributed to the characteristics of their school.

On one hand, if the education system is bureaucratic, as indicated earlier, the school climate may be negative, which may decrease teachers' willingness to

communication with mothers. However, it should be acknowledged that this is not always the case. That is, a bureaucratic educational system is not always negative. On the other hand, schools with positive climates could provide opportunities for teachers to communicate effectively with mothers, promote communication, and increase invitations. In this case, if teachers feel that schools appreciate mothers' visits and their attempts to communicate, their willingness may increase as well. Bauch and Goldring (2000) stated that, if teachers perceive their school has a caring atmosphere, parents are more likely to be involved.

Finally, schools' principal plays a vital role in constructing either a positive or a negative school climate. Dubis (2015) noted that a principal's beliefs regarding the communication process has a great influence on teachers' motivation, which will be mirrored in parent–teacher relationships. That is, if principals have positive beliefs regarding inviting and communicating with mothers, they will encourage teachers to provide opportunities for parents' collaboration.

In sum, the school climate plays a vital role in enhancing teachers' willingness to invite and communicate with mothers as well as enhancing mothers' willingness to be involved in their daughters' education.

7.3.5.3 Invitations

In the current study, both phases produced critical findings regarding invitations. As reported by mothers, in Phase 1, one-tailed Pearson correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between schools' invitations and mothers' involvement. Results showed a statistically significant relationship, with r = .555, N = 155 and $p < .001$. There is a large positive correlation (above .50) between these two variables. Similarly, a one-tailed Pearson correlation on teachers' invitations and mothers' involvement scores also shows a significant relationship, with r = .653, N = 157 and $p < .001$. This large positive correlation suggests that the more teachers invite mothers to participate, the more mothers are involved. This finding supported Campo's (2011) study, which found that parents' perceived invitations (from teachers and schools) significantly contributed to parents' decisions to become involved in home, school, and academic socialisation activities. Likewise, this finding corresponded with Anderson's and Minke's (2007) quantitative study, which surveyed parents of elementary students from an urban district. Anderson's and Minke's study determined that teachers' invitations had the strongest relationship with parents' involvement

behaviour. In Phase 2, most mothers perceived invitations as vital motivators that enhanced their involvement. Similarly, Green et al. (2007) stated that invitations were considered a crucial motivator for parental involvement in all school years. If parents perceive that schools (including teachers) are doing many things to involve them, they are more involved in their children's education at school and at home (Epstein & Dauber, 1989).

However, despite reported correlations and mothers' perceptions regarding invitations, limitations in schools' and teachers' invitations were manifest in Phase 2. For example, most mothers stated they had received no invitations to volunteer. This corresponds with Alhabeeb's (2016) findings that Saudi parents were less likely to volunteer in schools than to be involved in other ways. This may be explained by a case study conducted by Kojah (2013), which showed that parental volunteering is not a culturally approved or welcomed practice in the Saudi context. Based on the above, although volunteering considered a type of the Epstein PI model, yet, it does not exist in primary mainstream schools in Riyadh, at least . In the Epstein PI model, volunteering indicates that the school is accountable for providing different volunteering opportunities for parents which are not provided in the Saudi context. A further lack of invitations is evident in the absence of mothers at IEP meetings. All the mothers stated that they had never been invited to these meetings although they should, and some mothers had not heard about the existence of these meetings.

7.3.5.4 Teachers' perceptions

In Phase 2, most mothers stated that teachers had more power than they did, often expressed sentiments that made them feel this way, and thus had control over decisions regarding their daughters' goals. This finding aligned with Olivos (2006) study on Latino parents regarding their involvement in American public schools. Olivos (2006) findings showed that many educators still consider themselves to be owners and purveyors of knowledge while their students, and often their parents, are empty shells; as a result, this view is noticeably reflected in their relationships with them (p. 96).

Additionally, Hodge and Cole (2008) indicated that "professionals continue to adopt the exclusive position of expert and by doing so remain all powerful" (p. 643). In other words, teachers may value their knowledge and disregard others' (i.e. mothers') knowledge. They may believe that teaching students or setting

their goals is not something that teachers should share with mothers. Drawing on these findings, I offer two observations. First, teachers' perceptions regarding themselves as experts of knowledge mirror their power and deficit perspectives indicated earlier in this chapter. Second, teachers' perceptions of themselves as experts decrease their willingness and, in turn, reduce their communication and invitations to mothers. A relevant point to note is that being an expert requires more than having knowledge (see Cohen, 2007). Cohen (2007) stated that professionalism is a way of acting. It could be suggested that an expert's proficiency is demonstrated in how they act toward other individuals in terms of communicating, collaborating, and respecting their roles and needs. Furthermore, teachers do not exert much effort because they acknowledge that it will not influence their job, as indicated earlier (see Perceived lack of teachers' motivation). Thus, they choose to not initiate communicating with mothers.

7.3.5.5 Lack of teachers' time

In Phase 2, three mothers noticed that teachers' unwillingness may be linked to a lack of time. Likewise, Becker and Epstein (1982) found that teachers might hesitate to involve parents because of the time required for beneficial parent participation. It should be acknowledged that teachers are heavily overload with many teaching duties (Pena, 2000) and other related responsibilities. Notwithstanding, it could be argued that communicating with parents (i.e. mothers) considered as one of their main responsibilities and ignoring their roles and needs should not be an option. A survey study conducted by Xu and Gulosino (2006) in U.S. kindergartens showed that being a good teacher included a commitment and ability to establish different types of communication between family and school. This finding may not be surprising since the child's development is a common goal between teachers and parents. Makgopa and Mokhele (2013) stated that a main goal between teachers and parents is ensuring that learners perform well in their daily activities in the classroom.

In the same phase, most mothers reported that it was the school's responsibility to provide teachers with enough time to communicate with them. This finding aligned with a survey study conducted by Feuerstein (2000) on students, parents or guardians, teachers, and school principals. Feuerstein (2000) found that schools should give teachers additional time and rewards to contact parents. However, this goal may not be easy to achieve. In the same study, Feuerstein

(2000) stated that, although better communication is needed between parents and teachers, principals and teachers have restricted amounts of time.

7.3.6 Exosystem

As indicated earlier in the literature, the exosysytem is related to mothers' perceptions of their life context (e.g., time and energy) in Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model. In this section, I consider and discuss some elements (e.g., mothers' job) that would be part of the exosystem if the child (i.e., the daughter with LD) were at the centre of the Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory.

7.3.6.1 Time and energy

In Phase 1, a one-tailed Pearson correlation coefficient was used. The scores indicated a statistically significant moderate sized positive correlation between time and energy and mothers' involvement. This aligned with Green et al.'s (2007) finding that time and energy significantly predicted parental involvement both at home and at school. However, Phase 2 exposed different perceptions regarding time and energy, especially concerning mothers' jobs and family responsibilities.

With regard to mothers' jobs, three of four employed mothers in Phase 2 reported that they wanted to be involved, but they could not because their jobs limited their time, restricted their communication with teachers, and eventually, hindered their involvement. This finding coincides with those of Pena's (2000) study, which highlighted work demands and determined that parents' work schedules were the greatest obstacle to their involvement. Similarly, Harris, Andrew-Power and Goodall (2009) determined that work commitments are noteworthy barriers that should not be underestimated when it comes to PI. They argued that working parents – particularly those who work full time – do not have much time to attend school events.

Interestingly, Phase 2 also identified two highly educated and employed mothers who reported that they could mostly manage their time, communicate with their daughters' teachers, and help their daughters at home. This finding aligns with a questionnaire study conducted by Campo (2011) on parents with elementary school-aged children. Campo (2011) reported that parents who believe they should be involved in their children's education may not let their work demands

restrict their ability to assist their children at home (and in school as well); rather, they might find ways to be involved that work around their schedule.

With regard to family responsibilities, in Phase 2, some mothers indicated that their family responsibilities (i.e. home, children) limit their time and, thus, their involvement in their daughter's school. This finding corresponded with Hoover-Dempsey et al.'s (1995) note that family responsibilities, such as having many children, might influence parental involvement.

7.3.7 Microsystem

Under this section, I discuss two main aspects: mothers' motivational beliefs (i.e. role construction, self-efficacy) as part of the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model and *new* motivations for mothers (i.e. daughter's disability, facing authority, community participation). These newly identified motivations are included as part of the microsystem since they were related to mothers' experiences in one of their immediate environments, namely schools.

Here the term *new* does not indicate that these motivations have not been discussed before in the literature, nor are they original. Rather, these motivations are original and new in relation to the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model, which mainly explains why parents want to be involved. New motivations exposed in the current study add another dimension that clarifies why specific parents (i.e. mothers of girls with LD as parents of children with special needs) want to be involved in their daughters' education. This dimension does not neglect earlier explanations provided by this model; instead, it clarifies more specific motivations for this group, which could be aligned in the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model. Further details are provided in section (Theoretical contributions).

7.3.7.1 *Mothers' role construction*

As indicated earlier in the section on parental motivation beliefs, role construction refers *to* "parents' beliefs what they would do in relation to their children's education" (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005, p. 107). Mothers' roles seemed to be constructed because of individuals' experiences (i.e. mothers) in their environments. In Phase 1, a one-tailed Spearman correlation on parents' role construction and mothers' involvement scores shows a statistically exposed a small yet significant positive correlation. This corresponded with a survey study

conducted by Nichols-Rice (2011) on parents of children with LD identified a strong positive relationship between parents' responsibility and parent involvement. Additionally, most mothers in Phase 2 stated that their roles and responsibilities toward their daughters required that they be a part of their education. This assertion supports Nichols-Rice's (2011) findings that parents strongly agreed that it was their responsibility to be involved in their children's education. Similarly, this finding aligns with Walker et al.'s (2005) determination that parents' role construction is a strong motivator for parental involvement. Interestingly, Phase 2 offered considerable insight into how mothers' beliefs regarding their roles influence their choices and, thus, their involvement. In the following sections, I discuss both negative and positive beliefs.

With regard to negative beliefs, Phase 2 revealed that some mothers (those with less education) perceived schools' and the teachers' roles about their daughters' interests better than they were. This perception indicates the mothers' negative beliefs regarding their role in their daughters' education and thus avoid involving. Similarly, as discussed in the literature review, Pena (2000) reported that mothers believed it was not their role to be involved in their children's education.

Based on the above, it could be argued that some mothers' beliefs were school-focused; in other words, these mothers felt that the school was primarily responsible for the children's educational outcomes (Reed et al., 2000). Furthermore, viewing schools and teachers as the only possessors of knowledge increases and strengthens the power of teachers and silences the voices of mothers. Finally, these negative beliefs cause mothers to avoid becoming involved in their daughters' education. This choice exacerbates mothers' marginalisation, negatively influences parent–teacher relationships, and decreases communication opportunities with teachers.

With regard to positive beliefs, Phase 2 revealed that most educated mothers had positive beliefs regarding their roles in their daughters' education. This finding aligns with Alhabeeb's (2016) study, which determined that most Saudi parents believe in their responsibility since they are concerned about their children's academic achievements. Interestingly, all mothers with a high educational level suggested that school and home had shared responsibilities because of their common interest in the students (their daughters). Based on these findings, mothers' beliefs regarding their roles and responsibilities in the current study fall

into one of two categories: parent-focused, where they consider that they have the main responsibility for their children's educational outcome, and partnership-focused, in which parents believe that the teacher and the parent working together are responsible (Reed et al., 2000).

Examining the differences between negative and positive beliefs regarding mothers' role construction highlighted two factors, namely, the mothers' educational level and their skills and knowledge. Both factors explain the differences in mothers' beliefs regarding their roles, as discussed below.

7.3.7.2 Connection between mothers' educational level and skills and knowledge

The importance of mothers' educational level was an interesting finding of the current study. Phase 1 revealed a positive correlation between educational level and mothers' involvement that supported findings by Stevenson and Baker (1987) of a significant positive correlation between a mother's education and her degree of parental involvement in school activities. Similarly, another important finding was the influence of mothers' skills and knowledge on mothers' involvement. In Phase 1, one-tailed Pearson correlation on mothers' skills and knowledge and their involvement scores shows a statistically significant moderate size positive correlation.

Interestingly, Phase 2 exposed more details regarding mothers' educational level and skills and knowledge than Phase 1. As indicated earlier in section (Mothers' perceptions) mothers' knowledge encompassed two elements: parental knowledge regarding their daughters and knowledge regarding the school/educational system.

With regard to knowledge about their daughters, most mothers stated that they had extensive knowledge regarding their daughters' abilities, which provided teachers with vital information. Likewise, as previously discussed, Rogers (2011) determined that parents hold key information and play fundamental roles in their children's education. Nevertheless, as indicated in the marginalisation section, mothers' knowledge has been marginalised. With regard to knowledge about the school/educational system, mothers lack knowledge regarding their rights, as indicated earlier.

Moreover, Phase 2 revealed how mothers with a low educational level had low perceptions of their possession of the necessary skills and knowledge to be involved in their daughters' education. This finding corresponded with the results of a study by LaRocque et al. (2011), who found that parents were avoiding involvement because of their educational levels, as previously described in the literature review. Similarly, these findings aligned with Green et al. (2007), who determined that parental assistance may decrease and parents may seek support from others if they do not believe they have the required knowledge. A lower mothers' educational level and negative perceptions about their skills and knowledge are two central factors that influence their negative beliefs regarding their roles, as indicated above in the section on mothers' role construction.

Conversely, Phase 2 showed how educated mothers reported that they attempted to be more involved in their daughters' education. This finding is not surprising since most educated mothers in this phase (both employed and unemployed) had high confidence regarding their skills and knowledge when it came to helping their daughters at home. Stevenson and Baker (1987) likewise determined that parents who are more educated are generally more involved at school and home than parents who are less educated. Likewise, these findings supported Hoover-Dempsey et al.'s (2005) conclusion that parents are motivated to engage in involvement activities if they believe that they have skills and knowledge needed to be helpful in specific domains. Mothers' high educational level and positive perceptions regarding their skills and knowledge explain their positive beliefs regarding their roles, as indicated above in the Section on mothers' role construction.

Additionally, it is important to discuss two highly educated mothers in this study, who were more willing to be involved in their daughters' education. It could be assumed that a higher level of education will lead to more positive beliefs regarding their roles and knowledge. Thus, despite obstacles or bad experiences these mothers might face, they insist on communicating with their daughters' teachers and advocating for their rights. This finding aligned with findings by Wang et al. (2016), who stated that highly-educated mothers function better than low-educated mothers in facing stressful environments and effectively coping with stress and barriers, which in turn may predict their higher involvement in their children's education. Similarly, Stevenson and Baker (1987) indicated that more

educated mothers realised more about their children's school performance, had more communication with teachers, and were more likely to have taken action when necessary to support their child's academic achievement.

Another possible reason that highly educated mothers were more involved is that these mothers were able to develop better and stronger social networks with others (i.e. teachers and principals). Hence, they were able to be more involved than mothers with lower educational levels. Sheldon's (2002) findings showed that parents' social networks anticipated the degree to which parents were involved at home or at school. Additionally, mothers with higher educational levels might be perceived differently by teachers and schools than those with lower educational levels. This finding corresponded with Aslan's (2016) qualitative study since teachers emphasised that parents' social and educational levels had an effect on their behaviour with them.

7.3.7.3 *Mothers' self-efficacy*

In Phase 1, one-tailed Pearson correlation on self-efficacy and mothers' involvement scores shows a significant relationship (moderate positive correlation. This aligned with previous findings that self-efficacy significantly predicted PI (Solish & Perry, 2008). Phase 2 suggests mix of high and low self-efficacy reported by mothers. With regard to negative beliefs, Phase 2 showed how two mothers with lower educational levels associate what they could provide for their daughters merely with teachers' help. This finding gave rise to two interpretations. First, when mothers rely solely on teachers, they hold negative beliefs regarding their self-efficacy and their input in their daughters' education. As Heslin (2006) stated, "low self-efficacy can readily lead to a sense of helplessness and hopelessness about one's capability to learn how to cope more effectively" (p. 706). Second, with such negative beliefs, mothers' willingness to communicate with their daughters' teachers will decrease. Eccles and Harold (1993) reported that parents with low self-efficacy might believe they do not have the skills and knowledge necessary to help their children and, hence, have little reason to be involved.

With regard to positive beliefs, Phase 2 showed that most educated mothers reported high levels of self-efficacy regarding their abilities when it came to helping their daughters. This finding corresponded to a longitudinal study conducted by Levin et al. (1997) with mothers in Israel. Levin et al. (1997) found

that mothers who believed that their helping would be beneficial attempted to provide more assistance to their children.

Additionally, the two highly educated, employed mothers expressed higher self-efficacy regarding their abilities. They felt more confident about their resistance and confrontation, and they followed through without any hesitation or fear despite any previous negative experiences. Likewise, Grenfell and James (2003) reported that working-class mothers regarded education as important for their children despite their own negative experiences and difficulties with the educational system. Similarly, Heslin (2006, p.705) stated that, in "complex tasks, high self-efficacy causes people to strive to improve their assumptions and strategies, rather than look for excuses such as not being interested in the task".

7.3.7.4 New motivations for mothers

7.3.7.4.1 Daughters' disability

In Phase 2, most mothers expressed that their daughters' disability was a vital motivator for their involvement and communication with teachers. Most mothers expressed more concern about their daughters' future (because of their disability) in comparison with their other children; as a result, they felt they needed to have more communication with their daughters' teachers. Blok et al. (2007) similarly found that parents of children with special needs were more concerned about their children's development, leading to closer involvement.

When a daughter's disability is considered a motivator for involvement, several points could be made. First, mothers in this study have concerns regarding their daughters (because of disability) that need to be exposed and discussed. These concerns motivate them to play more active roles in their daughters' education and to be more involved. However, according to the mothers, their concerns have not been addressed or heard by schools, which have largely ignored them. This lack of attention was previously discussed in the marginalisation Section and the Section on deficit perspectives. Second, when a daughter's disability serves as a motivator, it implies that mothers are willing to advocate for their daughters' rights as well as their rights and confront authorities (i.e. schools and teachers) regarding communication limitations and suggests that mothers are seeking equality, as discussed below.

7.3.7.4.2 Confronting authority

In Phase 2, some mothers stated that confronting people in authority (i.e. schools, teachers) was a vital motivator potentially arising from the authority's failure to acknowledge their rights, engage in communication, and extend invitations, as discussed earlier in this chapter. In this phase, most mothers indicated that their involvement would allow them to express their concerns and needs as well as advocate for their daughters' rights and their own rights as well. This finding supported those by Howard and Reynolds (2008), who reported how one mother expressed her form of involvement as an advocate for her son with special needs:

> *"I have to be very involved, because my son has high functioning autism. I am constantly at the school talking with the special resource teacher, meeting with he speech pathologist, discussing arrangements with my son's regular teacher…. so, part of it (parent involvement) is resources the school has, and the other part is you demanding that you child have certain services that the school and district are required to provide". (p. 89)*

7.3.7.4.3 Seeking equality

In Phase 2, most mothers were motivated to be involved in their daughters' education for the sake of equality. That is, these mothers emphasised the need for their daughters to be treated just like other students, without discrimination. Additionally, in the same phase, three mothers also indicated that the notion of equality included them as well: they wanted opportunities equal to those enjoyed by teachers when it came to decisions regarding their daughters' education. These mothers viewed involvement as an opportunity to be equal with teachers in terms of power and positions. Seeking equality implies that inequality in power exists between mothers and teachers. In regard to this particular point, both mothers and teachers should acknowledge that power inequalities will always be present between them and can never be ended in practice. However, this acknowledgment does not mean that mothers and teachers should make no attempt to decrease and/or limit inequalities. This may be possible by having and/or finding different ways of communication which are based on mutual respect rather than on equal power.

Also, seeking equality as a motivator reveals mothers' frustration (see mothers' feelings section) with their current situation that needs to be changed. Interestingly, most research addressing inequalities in parental involvement has been from a feminist perspective, and these studies have provided evidence of

women suffering injustices (Reay, 2005) (see section Implications and Recommendations).

7.3.7.4.4 Community participation

In Phase 2, some mothers mentioned community participation and sharing experiences with other mothers of girls with LD as another motivator for parental involvement. This finding suggests that PI is now thought of broadly so that it includes communication with those in similar positions. This finding aligns with Martinez Sanchez's (2003) determination that parents of children with disabilities like to meet other parents who also have children with disabilities so they can share their experiences and learn from other parents. Similarly, parents in Alariefy's (2016) study were inspired to help others.

Many factors affect this motivator. One possibility is that mothers in this study like helping other mothers learn how to cope with their situation. By sharing their experiences, they help other mothers learn how to face obstacles by insisting, advocating, and being involved in their daughters' education. One mother in Phase 2 mentioned that our problems in education would never be solved if everyone were passive. It could be suggested that this kind of community would help all mothers. Perhaps when mothers share their experiences, they help both others parents and themselves.

Another possible reason is that mothers of girls with LD do not feel they belong to their community. In a study using focus groups with parents of children with disabilities in the United States, Resch et al. (2010) showed that many parents of children with disabilities often felt separated and disconnected from their surrounding communities. This finding supports what was discussed earlier in section (Marginalisation).

7.3.8 Willingness Conclusion

Willingness has been discussed in relation to the study's findings and conceptual framework, with a focus on the main aspect of communication. Figure 14 summarises some cultural and educational factors that are nested in the macro-, meso-, exo- and microsystem. These factors have considerable influence on teachers' willingness to communicate and/or invite mothers to participate in their daughters' education. Similarly, these nested factors influence and shape mothers' motivational beliefs and perceptions and, thus, determine their

involvement in their daughters' education. Additionally, I discussed 'new' motivations for mothers and mothers' feelings to help illuminate factors affecting their willingness to participate in their daughters' education.

Figure 14 Willingness Conclusion
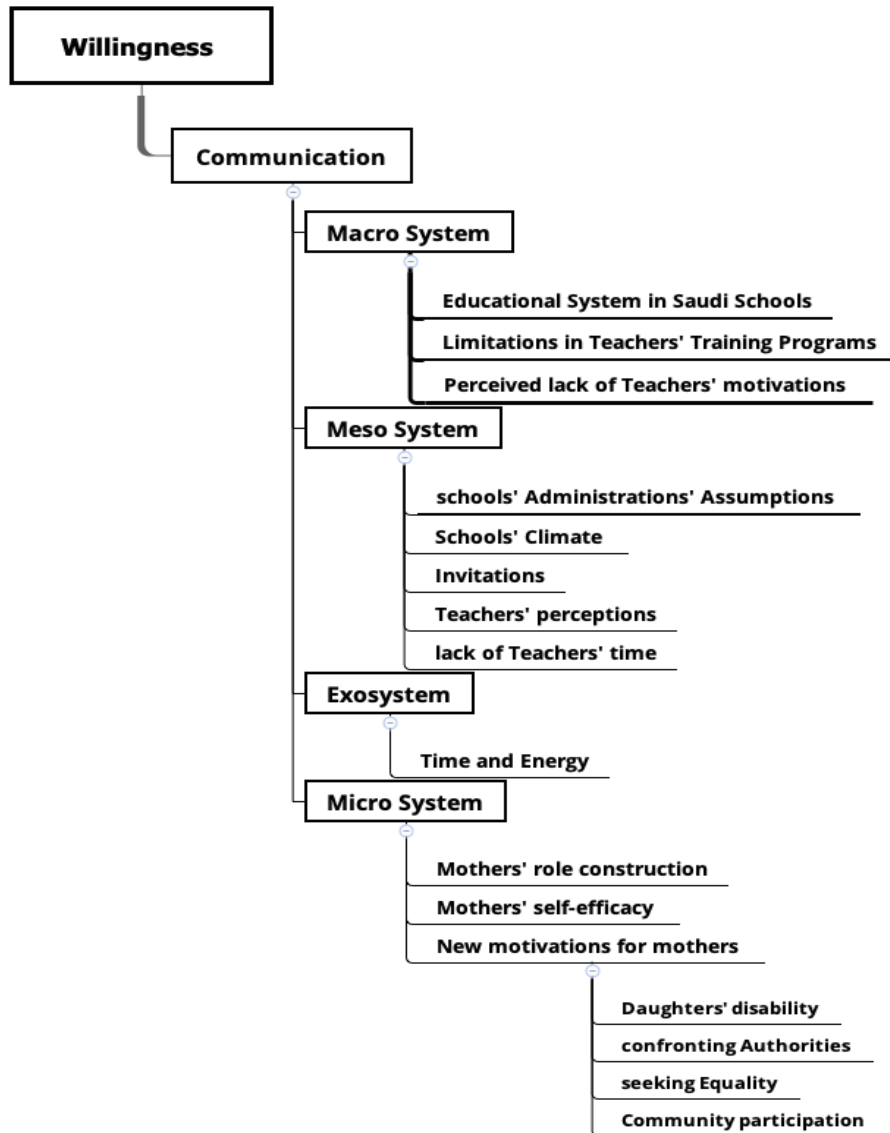
7.4 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I discussed two main concepts: power and willingness. Power involved two main interpretations: marginalisation and mothers' educational rights; willingness particularly concerned communication between parents, teachers and schools. For both concepts, I discussed findings in the light of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and self-efficacy theories as well as PI models.

Based on the discussion in this chapter, mothers of girls with LD in this study were marginalised and lack knowledge regarding their rights, which is because of political and cultural power nested in the macrosystems and mesosystems. It could be argued that power lies primarily on the authorities' side rather than on the mothers', suggesting that different types of political and cultural power decrease mothers' involvement in their daughters' education. Additionally, this chapter discussed mothers' and teachers' willingness to communicate, noting the influence of environmental factors in the macro-, meso, microsystems in the Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory in relation to parents' (i.e. mothers') perceptions in the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model. Together, all these factors and perceptions potentially limit mothers' involvement. It is worth to mention that interpretations and factors discussed in this chapter were separated into two main sections, this separation may be impossible in reality. On one hand, the power that marginalises mothers and their acknowledgment of their rights is the same power that influences their (and teachers') willingness to communicate and become involved. On the other hand, others' willingness give individuals (i.e. mothers, teachers) the power to ignore, invite, communicate, and involve.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model will be returned to in the conclusion chapter when talking about contributions. Further details are shown in the next chapter.

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the study's findings followed by a section addressing the contributions to knowledge. In addition, implications and recommendations for policymakers, schools, teachers, and future researchers are presented. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the strengths and limitations of this study.

8.2 Summary of the Study's Findings

This study used a mixed-methods explanatory sequential design incorporating two phases. The first phase addressed two questions:

1. What factors influence parental involvement in mainstream schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia from the perspective of mothers of girls with LD?
2. To what extent do mothers of girls with LD report involvement in their daughters' education in mainstream primary schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia?

A total of 165 mothers of girls with LD completed a 60-items questionnaire. Analysis using inferential statistics to analyse the first research question revealed statistically significant relationships indicating higher PI when there was higher family income, mothers' educational level, stronger beliefs about PI and self-reported PI invitations received. Also, mothers in the east were more involved than mothers in the west. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the second research question. Findings revealed that mothers typically reported little volunteering at their daughters' mainstream schools or in their classes. Findings also indicated that mothers of girls with LD were not typically involved in decision-making about their daughters' education, such as in IEP meetings.

The second phase of the study addressed two questions:

1. What are mothers of girls with LD experiences of, and perspectives on, their involvement in primary mainstream schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia?
2. How do mothers of girls with LD wish to be involved in their daughters' education?

Semi-structured interviews that yielded qualitative data were completed with 10 mothers of girls with LD purposively selected for an in-depth exploration of their perspectives and experiences of PI and how they wish to be involved. I used thematic analysis which suggested reported limitations in schools' and teachers' invitations as well as limitations in communication with teachers. Most mothers reported their belief that communication with the teachers was one-way rather than reciprocal. Phase 2 highlighted many factors that may be related to the limitations discussed above such as mothers' negative experiences, mothers' knowledge, communication, schools' ethos, teachers' attitudes, teachers' responsibilities, educational culture, stigma, and policy. Most mothers appear they felt marginalised, voiceless, frustrated and lost. Finally, findings highlighted mothers' needs, rights and wishes regarding involvement, communication and expression of their voice. All findings of the current study were discussed in relation to Bronfenbrenner ecological theory, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, and Epstein PI models. Power and willingness appeared to be main concepts that may explain findings of this study. Underneath each concept, nested reasons behind mothers' marginalisation, lack of knowledge regarding their rights, and factors that may hindered their willingness as well as teachers' willingness, which ultimately influenced their communication and involvement in their daughters'' education were discussed.

8.3 Contributions to Knowledge

This section outlines some of this study's contributions to existing methodological and theoretical knowledge regarding PI. The present study helps address four main gaps in the existing literature regarding PI in the field of LD, as identified in Chapter Three as follows.

First, both international and national research studies have tended to focus on the perspectives of teachers; as a result, few studies have examined or explored PI from the perspectives of parents of children with LD. The current study helped fill this gap with parents of children with LD (i.e., mothers of girls with LD) expressing their perspectives regarding PI. Second, some research has considered parents of children with SEN as a homogenous group when investigating their PI (Appendix 5). The present study extends this by exploring PI from the perspectives of mothers of a particular group - girls with LD, examined influential factors for their involvement, explored their perceptions and

experiences, and identified their needs. Third, to my knowledge, no study has examined this phenomenon from the perspectives of mothers of girls with LD in primary mainstream schools in the Saudi context. This study has added to the body of international and national literature in the field of special education regarding the PI phenomenon in a rarely addressed context (Riyadh, Saudi Arabia).

Fourth, internationally, much research regarding PI in special education has often used quantitative methods (i.e. survey), but relatively few studies have utilised the strengths of mixed methods research. In addition to the limitations in research regarding PI indicated above, most research on special education in Saudi Arabia has depended on questionnaires as a data collection method (Al-Wabli, 1996; Alzahrani, 2005). The current study has contributed to knowledge through its design and methods. This study, with its clear mixed methods approach provides extensive details including quantitative and qualitative data about current PI in girls' primary mainstream schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. To my knowledge, this study was the first explanatory mixed-methods research utilising a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews to examine and explore PI in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

8.3.1 Methodological contributions

Amendments to the original scales (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, Epstein) could be a specific methodological contribution. The original scales lacked specific items regarding PI for parents of children with special needs (i.e. mothers of girls with LD). It was important to examine some factors (i.e. participating in IEP meetings); therefore, I added some relevant items (see sectionQuestionnaire layout). The questionnaire in this study might be useful to future researchers as it provides a PI questionnaire that has specific items regarding special educational needs. Additional studies using this questionnaire, or variations of it, would add to the body of knowledge regarding PI in SEN. However, even though my supervisors checked the adapted questionnaire for validity, Epstein approved the questions, and I have addressed reliability measures, further research is warranted concerning the questionnaire's validity and reliability.

8.3.2 Theoretical contributions

8.3.2.1 Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler's Theoretical PI model

As indicated in the literature chapter, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model provides some explanations regarding why parents might want to be involved in their children's education. However, this model does not fully apply to the involvement of mothers of girls with LD in the Saudi context.

In the context of this study's findings, changes to this model would be needed; thus an elaborated version of Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model has been developed (see Figure 15). The main concepts in Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model (green colour) are presented and the figure shows how these were elaborated through this study's findings (orange colour). Together, the elaborated PI model may explain why mothers' of girls with LD in the Saudi context (Riyadh) want to be involved in their daughters' education and what may hinder their involvement.

Figure 15 Elaboration on Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler's PI model
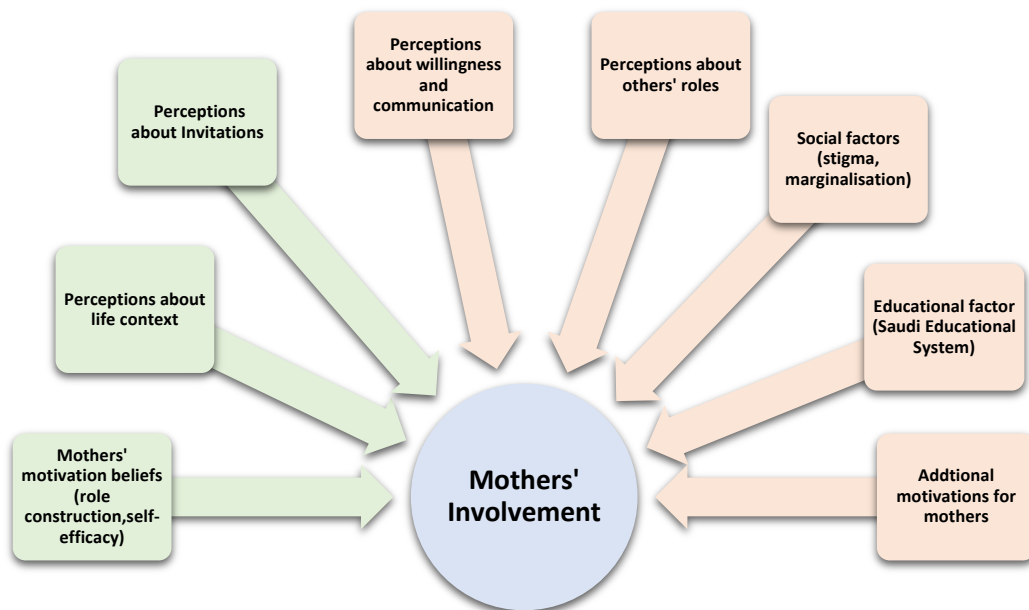
Colour in figure	Refers to
green	main concepts in Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model
Orange	Elaboration on main concepts in Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler PI from this study

Findings of the current study showed that mothers of girls with LD had motivations that matched those identified in Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model. Yet, it is interesting that this study exposed additional motivations (i.e. daughter's disability, community participation, seeking equality) for mothers of girls with LD, as indicated in the Discussion Chapter. This could suggest that mothers of girls with LD have different motivations that should be considered when it comes to their involvement in their daughters' education. In addition, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model highlights the importance of parents' beliefs regarding their role construction, self-efficacy and perceptions about their skills and knowledge on their involvement decisions. My study's findings emphasised and elaborated on the influence of these beliefs and revealed mothers' perceptions regarding others' roles (i.e. schools and teachers). Mothers' educational level seemed to be influential in both the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model and my study. Moreover, Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model explains the importance of invitations from teachers and schools to parents; my study's findings elaborated this point by suggesting the significance of teachers' and schools' willingness in extending invitations for mothers of girls with LD and communication between mothers, schools and teachers as well.

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model may be insufficient to fully understand PI from the perspective of mothers of girls with LD in the Saudi context. Some aspects that could be developed further in this PI model include other important cultural and educational factors (i.e. stigma, marginalisation, educational system) that seemed to influence the involvement of mothers of girls with LD in the current study.

8.3.2.2 Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory

As indicated earlier, the ecological systems theory illustrates that individuals are surrounded by a complex system of relationships that affect their attitudes and beliefs about certain situations. Bronfenbrenner described the human environment as a nested structure made up of systems; each system is contained within the next one and has a great influence on the other. In a previous discussion of this theory (see Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory), I positioned the child (daughter with LD) as the central individual whose development was influenced by all surrounding systems. However, based on the

discussion of this study in the previous chapter, I made some changes to the way this theory may be applied and elaborated on, which is concerned with PI of mothers of girls with LD to help explain the study findings. Figure 16 presents a visualisation of these amendments in each system. The amendments are presented in different colours to clarify the developing person in each system.

Figure 16 Elaboration on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory
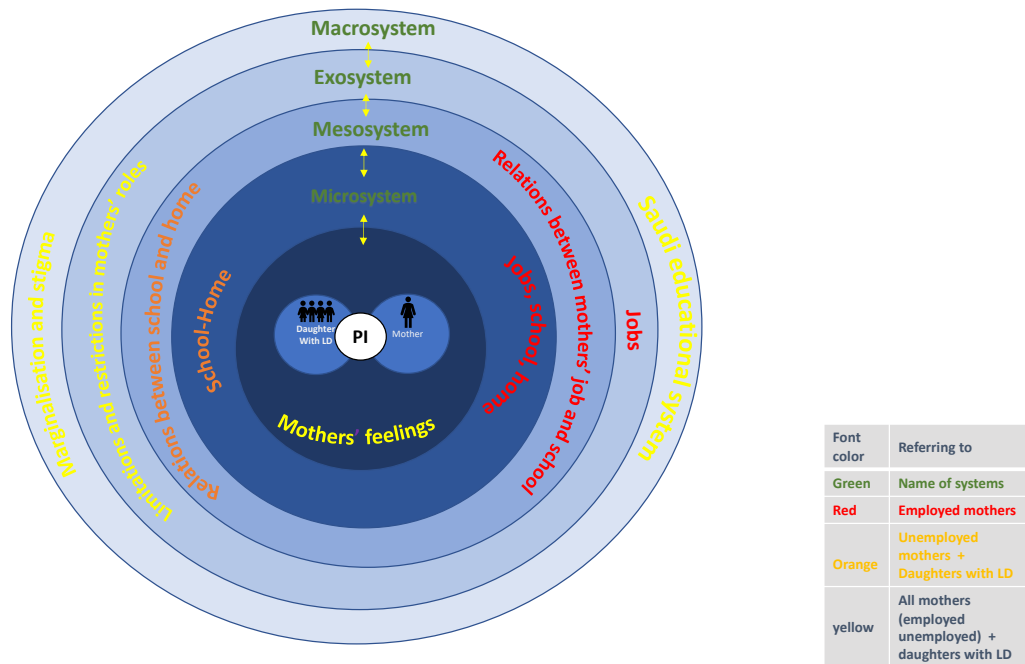
It seems important to have mothers and their daughters at the centre of this application of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory because both the daughters with LD and their mothers seemed to be influenced by different experiences and interactions in all systems mentioned in this theory.

Based on the study's findings, it could be suggested that unemployed mothers and their daughters have two similar microsystems. The daughters' microsystem included their immediate environments (i.e. home, school) and direct interaction with mothers and teachers. Likewise, the unemployed mothers' microsystem involved similar environments as well as interactions with individuals (i.e. daughters, teachers) in these environments. With regard to the daughters, it could be suggested that their direct interaction with their mothers was influenced by their mothers' direct interaction with schools and teachers. Thus, mothers' involvement in their daughters' education might be explicitly influenced (i.e. whether teachers were supportive or not supportive, communicating or not communicating). Eventually, the nature of the mothers' involvement might influence their daughters' development. Based on the findings phase 2, an

additional microsystem for employed mothers (i.e. jobs place of employment) exists. Its restrictions might influence their involvement in their daughters' education. Furthermore, the positioning of mothers of girls with LD within their microsystems seemed to affect their feelings and motivations. These internal feelings and motivations might not exist without mothers' interaction with their direct environments (i.e. schools and teachers).

Beyond the microsystems, the study's findings identified two mesosystems. The mesosystem for unemployed mothers and daughters might involve relationships between two microsystems, namely home and school. In other words, mothers and their daughters seemed to have similar interactions with teachers and schools, and what occurred in these settings might influence both of them. Based on these interactions and communication between mothers, schools and teachers, mothers might make different decisions regarding their involvement in their daughters' education. Conversely, the mesosystem for employed mothers and their daughters included relationships between two microsystems (mother's job and school). Although phase 1 indicates that employed mothers are more involved, phase 2 mothers' job restrictions might have caused them to have limited roles in their daughters' schools.

Based on the study's findings, two exosystems appeared. On one hand, in this system, daughters with LD as the developing persons did not participate in their mothers' jobs, yet the restrictions of those jobs implicitly influenced the daughters as they might limit mothers' involvement in their daughters' education and communication opportunities with teachers as well. Therefore, mothers' jobs appear in the daughter's exosystem where relevant. On the other hand, the exosystems for all mothers (unemployed or employed) included restrictions (not just from schools based) on mothers' roles in events in their daughters' schools. Mothers as the developing persons were not participating sufficiently in these events. However, the schools' restrictions explicitly influenced them, which might limit their involvement.

Finally, the macrosystem for all mothers and daughters with LD in this study involved cultural issues of marginalisation and stigma as well as the Saudi educational system. In this study, mothers of girls with LD seemed to be marginalised and stigmatised in the Saudi culture. Additionally, the Saudi educational system might not emphasise mothers' roles and rights in their

daughters' education and might not have sufficient teachers' preparation programmes in terms of communicating and involving mothers. Thus, mothers might have limited opportunities to be involved in their daughters' education.

8.4 Linking Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler's Theoretical PI model

The study's findings indicate a link between the Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model. On one hand, mothers' experiences did not occur in a vacuum; rather, they occurred in mothers' environment including macro-, exo-, meso- and microsystems. Mothers' experiences in all systems may be influenced by factors indicated in the elaborated Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model (Figure 17). Specifically, these factors are mothers' motivational beliefs and perceptions about invitations, their willingness, others' roles (i.e. school and teachers) and their life context. On the other hand, all mothers' motivational beliefs and perceptions in the elaborated Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler's theoretical PI model might be constructed because of mothers' experiences in macro-, exo- and mesosystems. In the macrosystem, mothers' beliefs and perceptions may be influenced by their experiences in their bigger environment (culture), including all political, social, educational and religious factors. If the mothers' culture emphasised their political, educational and social roles as well as appreciated their knowledge, mothers might feel appreciated. As a result, mothers might have positive beliefs regarding their roles and abilities and positive perceptions of invitations and, thus, might be more involved in their daughters' education. However, if the mothers' culture viewed them from a deficit lens and stigmatised them and their daughters, the mothers' beliefs regarding their roles and abilities as well as their perceptions about invitations might be low; thus, they might avoid becoming involved in their daughters' education.

In the exosystem, mothers' beliefs and perceptions might be influenced by their jobs. If mothers perceived that they had time and energy, perhaps because of fewer job restrictions, they might have better beliefs regarding their role and abilities, and they might attend more events at their daughters' school.

In the mesosystem, mothers' beliefs about their roles and abilities might be influenced by their perceptions about invitations, communication and willingness from others in their smaller environments (i.e. schools) and people who work in

theses environment (i.e. teachers). If mothers perceived their daughters' school and teachers as being willing to communicate and invite them, they might feel more welcome and appreciated; as a result, their involvement in their daughters' education might increase.

Based on the above, it could be suggested that connections between mothers' experiences, beliefs and perceptions may eventually influence mothers' involvement in their daughters' education. Figure 17 represents this connection.

Figure 17 Linking Ecological System Theory with Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler's PI Model
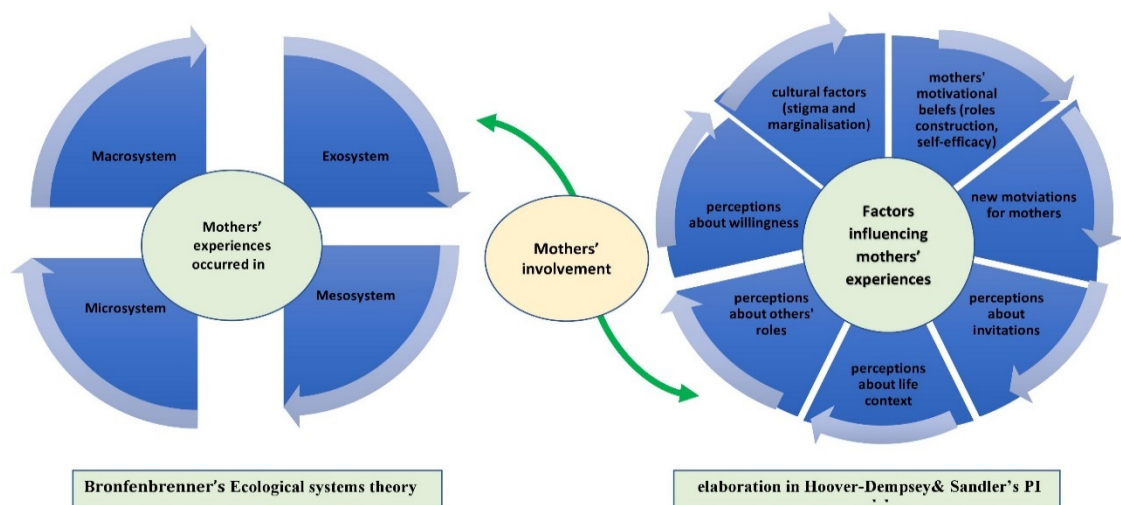
8.5 Implications and Recommendations

This study has implications and recommendations for several stakeholders, who are summarised under four main headings: teachers, schools, policies and research. Considering these implications and recommendations may allow stakeholders to design initiatives, tools and actions based on what mothers have experienced and to develop PI in mainstream schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

8.5.1 Government (policymakers)

Findings of this study suggest areas of improvement the Saudi government (MOE) could make to enhance mothers' involvement in the Saudi context. First,

both phases revealed that mothers lack knowledge regarding their rights in their daughters' education; it thus seems important that MOE consider increasing mothers' knowledge regarding their rights. Mroczkowska (2017) noted that "parents who perceive themselves as knowledgeable about their rights, duties and educational school system in general, on average are more positive about the school" (p. 55). Therefore, MOE could advise schools to provide awareness lectures to educate mothers (and fathers as well) about their rights as well as about the roles and expected responsibilities of mothers and teachers in their daughters' education.

MOE should consider developing a clear and specific PI policy. Such policy would help emphasise mothers' involvement and their roles as partners rather than informers, allowing mothers to express their concerns and needs regarding their daughters' education when it is needed. In addition, both phases revealed that mothers had limited attendance at IEP meetings. It would seem crucial that MOE shed light on how RSEPI policy is being carried out in mainstream schools. In this regard, it is recommended that MOE require mainstream schools to have mothers' signature when attending these meetings and follow up with schools regarding this issue. Having a signature might mean that schools are encouraged to do more in term of involving mothers in IEP. More importantly, the IEP evaluations should consider the mother's voice. Affording mothers this opportunity may provide important insights about the current PI situation in the mainstream Saudi context and what mothers may face in terms of marginalisation, thus identifying what needs to be changed or developed. In addition, it is also important that MOE facilitates mothers' accessibility of the RSEPI policy so they can acknowledge their rights as parents of children with SEN.

Furthermore, Phase 2 suggested limitations in communication opportunities between mothers, schools and teachers. It is recommended that the MOE should examine what may hinder and/or increase teachers' time to communicate and /or invite mothers. Additionally, the MOE should examine the effectiveness of teacher preparation programmes in relation to communication with mothers, with a view to encouraging two-way communication. These programmes should emphasise the importance of PI in children's education; this could include theoretical and practical courses regarding the importance of parental (i.e.

mothers) communication and involvement and how to consider their extensive knowledge, view them as partners and address their concerns and needs. These courses should be evaluated by MOE as well; importantly, teachers' perspectives should be considered in these evaluations to develop courses that meet teachers' needs.

8.5.2 Schools

As stated in the Chapter Three, a person's self- efficacy is shaped by four sources of information. The most influential source is personal experience. It could be suggested that having successful experiences helping their daughters when dealing with their daughters' schools and teachers might make mothers feel more effective. In other words, mothers will be more willing to communicate and establish relationships when they perceive their efforts to become involved with schools make positive differences in their daughters' education.

In regard to mothers' self-efficacy, findings of both phases showed the influence of self-efficacy on mothers' involvement in their daughters' education. These findings suggested that schools should consider the importance of providing mothers with necessary information and sources that enable them to help their daughter. Providing such information and sources will increase mothers' positive experiences and eventually their sense of efficacy.

In addition, Phase 2 exposed a sense of disconnection between school and home, due to the infrequency of meetings about LD students, the absence of organised collaborative efforts and the restriction of mothers' involvement in parent meetings. Decreasing this disconnection between school and home and providing mothers services they need is extremely important. Mothers of girls with LD should be provided with services that help them understand their daughters' situation and address their concerns. Thus, a more collaborative relationship between school and home (i.e. mothers) appears needed. It is recommended that schools offer more meetings about LD that help mothers understand the nature and purpose of the LD programme as well as their daughters' academic and social performance and needs. Another recommendation is that schools hold more organised parent meetings that allow mothers and teachers to have equal opportunities to communicate. Both parties should have enough time to discuss and express their points of view. This goal could be met by sending a timetable that clarifies the amount of time mothers should spend with each teacher at

parents' meetings. Schools also should facilitate the attendance of employed mothers to parent meetings as well. For example, schools could follow the practice seen in the UK and send a parent meeting schedule with checkboxes for different times during the day. Employed mothers should be asked to choose which time seems appropriate depending on their work schedule.

Furthermore, mothers in the second phase reported feeling unwelcome in their daughters' schools. Mothers need to feel that they are welcome in school because their contributions in their children's education is important. Thus, school principals should examine their current relationships with mothers and examine the school's climate to see if it is a comfortable one where mothers feel that they are welcome. School principals should care about and show concern for mothers of girls with LD. If principals do not show concern for these mothers, teachers may be unlikely to care for them as well. School principals should increase teachers' knowledge regarding the importance of involving and communicating with mothers. Additionally, schools could provide mothers opportunities to share their experiences with other mothers. Enabling mothers to share their experiences in their daughters' schools signals that schools appreciate mothers and allow their voices to be shared and heard as well. Such efforts help mothers feel welcome and appreciated.

Finally, mothers exposed a lack of schools' invitations in Phase 2. Schools' invitations seemed to be important in encouraging mothers to feel more welcome and appreciated in the school community. Schools should investigate the effect of their invitations and consider sending more to mothers for different school events. Thus, it is recommended that schools offer mothers handbook outlining all upcoming events during the school year. Schools could also send WhatsApp invitations or digital texts. More importantly, schools' invitations should allow mothers to be more involved in their daughters' education rather than restricting their roles. Thus, when sending invitations, schools should seek and consider mothers' opinions regarding their roles in school events (i.e. mothers' meetings, opening day) and activate their roles in these events. To do so, schools could distribute surveys asking mothers about their preferences regarding participation in school events.

8.5.3 Teachers

Findings in both phases revealed perceived shortcomings in teachers' invitations to mothers to attend IEP meetings. Teachers should appreciate the importance of inviting mothers to these meetings, as stated in the RSEPI policy.

In addition, Phase 2 uncovered limited communication between mothers and teachers. This phase also showed that communication between teachers and mothers appeared to be one-way. Teachers frequently did not seem to consider mothers' knowledge or seek their input, and these teachers were reported to have had control over the decisions regarding the students' goals. In this regard, teachers should consider that mothers of girls with LD might have additional concerns to express regarding their daughters. Ongoing communication with mothers helps teachers addressing their concerns and needs sufficiently. Teachers also should perceive mothers as partners rather than informers, appreciating and emphasising their knowledge and roles in their daughters' education. Perceiving mothers as partners implies that mothers would have the chance to have a say in their daughters' education. It also indicates that mothers' views are respected and considered, which results in a more positive relationship between mothers and teachers. Additionally, perceiving mothers as collaborative partners helps teachers acknowledge their students' strengths and weaknesses, which eventually helps them addressing students' needs more sufficiently. Thus, it is recommended that teachers arrange a regular meeting with mothers throughout the school year to address their concerns. In these meetings, teachers should allow mothers to negotiate and express their ideas clearly rather than rather than simply being informed of what they plan to do with regard to their daughters' education. Teachers should also develop their communication skills and take advantage of any appropriate available courses, workshops or networks regarding communication and involving mothers.

Furthermore, Phase 2 revealed different mothers' preferred communication methods as well as preferred PI type. It is important that teachers consider mothers' preferences in communication and PI type in order to develop better strategies that could increase mothers' involvement. It is recommended that teachers should examine mothers' perspectives regarding preferred communication methods and types of PI. Providing mothers this opportunity

enables them to choose what seems suitable and appropriate to their situations (i.e. job restrictions, home responsibilities).

In addition, findings from both phases suggested the importance of teachers' invitations in enhancing mothers' involvement. Invitations helped mothers feel welcome and appreciated, and they allowed mothers to follow up their daughters' academic progress more often. Therefore, teachers should understand the importance of their invitations in getting mothers of girls with LD to be more involved in school activities. Teachers could examine the influence of their invitations and consider inviting mothers to more meetings and events. It is recommended that teachers benefit from the use of new technology and social media (i.e. WhatsApp) more frequently to develop better invitations. Using WhatsApp, for example, may be a free and easy way for mothers and teachers to send text and voice messages.

8.5.4 Scholars (further research)

This study sets the foundation for further research into PI especially concerning mothers of girls with LD in primary mainstream schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Findings of this study suggested the need to complete investigations and explorations to increase understanding of numerous factors that influence the involvement of these mothers in the Saudi context. Many further studies are recommended below.

Firstly, this study emphasised limitations in applying RESPI policy in primary mainstream schools for girls in Riyadh in terms of IEP meetings. Future studies should investigate what factors might hinder the application of this policy. The findings could lead to better legislation to promote PI. Secondly, this study exposed the influence of mothers' educational level on their involvement. This finding is be related to socioeconomic status for mothers, which could be explained from the social capital theory lens. Further study is recommended to consider this theory when investigating PI in the Saudi context.

Thirdly, findings of this study showed limitations regarding communication between mothers, teachers and schools. More research is needed to observe and explore how schools and teachers involve mothers. In accordance to that, further research is recommended to conduct a comparative study of the involvement of mothers of girls with LD in two different settings: mainstream and private primary and secondary schools. The currents study focused on the

primary mainstream schools. It would be of interest to see if PI practices differ in other settings. Such a study might expose different perspectives regarding PI, willingness and communication. Any differences appearing between the two sample groups could lead to important insights into how to endorse PI.

Fourthly, this study exposed stigma as an influential factor on mothers' involvement. Full exploration was outside the scope of this study, so this may be a valuable area to research as well. Additionally, seeking equality was one of mothers' reported motivations in the second phase. As some of the research addressing inequalities in PI has come from a feminist perspective, studies in the Saudi context could consider discussing PI from this perspective.

Fifthly, this study involved only Saudi mothers of girls with LD in Riyadh city. It is recommended that further research consider a more representative sample (i.e. sample of mothers of girls with LD in other Saudi cities). Such studies might yield interesting findings regarding similarities and differences in mothers' perspectives and experiences of PI and other influential factors such as power and willingness. These studies may help identify other mothers' needs in the Saudi context, which should be considered by Saudi authorities. However, further research especially who are concerned with the PI of mothers of girls with LD should bear in mind that they are a heterogonous group with noticeable variety within the group. This differentiation should be taken into account in the field of PI. Additionally, this study focused on the perspectives and experiences of mothers of girls with LD regarding PI phenomena. Exploring one side (i.e. mothers of girls with LD) of the story may not be sufficient. Therefore, a future study should investigate and explore the perspectives of other stakeholders (i.e. general and special education teachers, fathers, daughters with LD). It is important to consider their perspectives and address their needs and concerns as well. In this regard, it is worth to mention that the current study did not include specific questions to differentiate between mothers' communicating with general and special education teachers. Further studies should explore any differences.

Sixthly, an interesting surprising result in this doctoral study was that employed mothers were more involved than unemployed ones which may be associated with educational level, self-efficacy beliefs, and schools' invitations. Further work would be needed to test this hypothesis. Seventhly, different responses regarding items under the self-efficacy subscale were evident in the first phase of the study.

Future research should explore these items further. Finally, little information regarding the role of school principals has been provided in this study, and further investigation is needed.

8.6 Strengths and Limitations

This study has several notable strengths. The present study was based in theoretical work previously published by Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, as well as Epstein in relation to PI as well as in Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory. In addition, the sample obtained in the present study was diverse in regard to educational background, family income and employment. Furthermore, as described earlier in this chapter, this study filled a number of gaps in the literature and provided important contributions in the field of special education in relation to PI. Lastly, the use of a mixed method approach is considered another strength of this study. However, this research has encountered a number of limitations.

The first limitation concerns the sample in the study. As stated in section (Sampling), the only way to reach mothers of girls with LD was through the schools' principals. These principals may have failed to send the online questionnaire to some mothers of girls with LD or may have been unable to reach them for unknown reasons. Recruiting of participants relied on a form of PI. To explain, principals from schools provided an Invitations to parents to participate. Therefore, if a school did not involve parents, they likely would not have invited them to participate. Some mothers may not have had the opportunity to participate in this study. In addition, most mothers who participated in the study seemed to have limited involvement and communication with teachers and/or schools. It is possible that mothers who were more involved and communicated more often with teachers and schools did not participate in either phase of this study. In this regard, the results may have been simply what one group of mothers wanted to present. There may be other perspectives not addressed in this study.

The limitation above leads to the second limitation faced this study, which is the inability to generalise this study's findings. This study aimed to gain deeper insight into perspectives of the research phenomenon under investigation. However, this study did not aim for generalisation for two reasons. On one hand, pragmatic research focuses on what works in practice, which is often changeable through time. That is, what may work to involve mothers of girls with LD now may not be applicable in the future. Furthermore, qualitative findings may not be

generalised due to the small number of participants in the second phase. Yet, as indicated earlier in the Methodology Chapter, qualitative data could be generalised to participants at the study level and, to some extent, to another context with similar norms and policies. In this case, all mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia fall under the umbrella of the Ministry of Education and follow similar educational policies, so some findings could be transferred to other mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia. Specifically, other mothers in other mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia outside Riyadh might face some involvement limitations. Despite these similarities, it is crucial to clarify that other factors influence mothers' involvement and shape their experiences.

In addition, the study was based only on the perspectives of mothers of girls with LD in primary mainstream schools for girls in Riyadh city. This issue could be another limitation as it would be valuable if other stakeholders (i.e. teachers, fathers) were involved. Involving more stakeholders would probably provide greater understanding and authenticity by seeing the PI phenomenon from their perspectives. However, limited time and resources made the involvement of more stakeholders difficult to achieve. Also, the educational system in Saudi Arabia separates schools by gender; thus, I was unable to extend this study to boys' primary mainstream schools in Riyadh.

The third limitation encountered in this study is related to methodological issues. With regard to the first phase, despite the benefits of online questionnaires, reaching the obtained number of responses was not easy and required me to send reminders to school principals to encourage mothers to participate. Furthermore, as indicated in section (Factor Analysis), mothers seemed not to understand the self-efficacy subscale clearly; therefore, responses to this subscale varied. One possible explanation for this variation is that the negative (reversed) items in this subscale led to mothers' confusion. Colosi (2005) noted, "Reversing the logic of the question to make 'disagreement' the more socially acceptable answer may cause confusion for some respondents" (p. 2896). Not surprisingly, participants may respond inconsistently to reverse items, as their answers do not match the logic shown in other questions (Colosi, 2005). This confusion results from inattention or because participants cannot cognitively establish the difference from items worded positively (Roszkowski & Soven, 2010; Van Sonderen et al., 2013).

Another explanation is social desirability, which is the tendency to "agree" without regard to content and "fake good" to conform to socially acceptable values, avoid criticism or gain social approval (King & Bruner, 2000, p. 81). Mothers may have responded in a way that they considered would please the researcher and/or allow them to avoid being criticised by agreeing with all items. The final explanation is that mothers had mixed feelings regarding their self-efficacy. Mothers felt that they had the ability to perform a specific task (i.e. help their daughters to learn) but not others (i.e. help their daughters to have high marks at school). Not surprisingly, "because self-efficacy pertains to specific tasks, people may simultaneously have high self-efficacy for some tasks and low self-efficacy for others" (Heslin & Klehe, 2006, p. 705).

With regard to methodological limitations in the second phase, arranging an appropriate time that suited the interviewed mothers within the limited time that I had as a researcher was challenging. Additionally, I conducted and analysed the semi-structured interviews in Arabic before translating them into English. This could cause a certain degree of loss of meaning in some areas, such as the participants' quotations.

A final limitation of this study is not exploring and/or examining students' disabilities. This examination or exploration would have provided a further area of analysis.

8.7 Conclusion

Findings suggest that some aspects of PI (i.e. communicating with the teacher, some invitations from schools) exist in mainstream schools. Yet, these examples of PI do not achieve what they are intended to. For example, although schools extended some invitations, the mothers were not happy regarding their role in these invitations. Similarly, although communication existed between mothers and teachers, it seemed to be one-way, which did not result in increasing mothers' involvement in their daughters' education. While some mothers communicated with teachers to follow up or advocate for their daughters, others communicated because of the lack of invitations.

Based on these findings, it could be argued that PI is not an either–or, black-or-white situation; in fact, it has many grey areas. I cannot say PI does not exist in mainstream schools because I found evidence of some schools' invitations (despite dissatisfaction) and communication (regardless of the reasons behind

it). But it seems PI does not exist as it could according to what is discussed in literature, given all of the problems discussed earlier in this thesis. Each participant's experiences included both positive and negative aspects. Thus, each experience has many dimensions that should be captured, analysed and considered. However, the findings of this study revealed more negative aspects than positive ones. According to my participants, PI is clearly lacking in primary mainstream schools in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia specifically for girls with LD.

8.8 Concluding Reflections

Throughout this journey, I was particularly influenced by my supervisors, who have taught me a lot about how to conduct a research. I learned several things, and various elements influenced me as a researcher. Below, I present a brief reflection regarding my research process.

As a researcher, I have learned the importance of writing clear and accurate research questions that clarify the aim of the study, and also the importance of revisiting these research question during the research journey. A researcher may lose their path, repeat ideas and questions, or go too far, discovering things beyond their aims. Hence, research questions were always the guide that kept me within my research zone and were a great reminder of what needed to be addressed.

In addition, I have learned that developing a questionnaire is not just a matter of combining questions and sending them to participants. Rather, it requires much attention, accuracy, and clarity about what you, as a researcher, want to examine. I have learned that numbers (quantitative data) give you one part of the story. The other part may still need further exploration. In other words, many stories, feelings, experiences and perspectives are hidden behind these numbers. Similarly, I have learned that developing a guiding interview schedule is not an easy process, as some (including me) might think. It is an iterative process, demands a lot of work, effort, patience and integrity. It also demands critical thinking and writing, exploring the unknown in your study, rather than what is known from a previous research phase, another method or the literature. I deem that preparing interviews takes more than just paper, a pen and several written questions that need to be answered. Rather, interviewing is thoughtful and critical process that reflects what you want to know as a researcher, what you want to explore and what participants want to express; it's a balance between all of these.

I have learned that interview questions should capture mothers' experiences and perspectives more than my own interests as a researcher. It is their chance to say what they want to say. I have learned that is my duty as a researcher to allow others to express what they want to say and not what I want to hear. In other words, as a researcher, I must respect the opportunity I provided my participants and allow them to reveal their needs and concerns. With regards to respect, I have learned to respect others' views, even if they aren't the ones I expect or want to hear. After all, it is their perspective, not mine, that is the focus of my study. Moreover, I have learned that listening involves more than simply taking notes; it means transmitting all your attention, will and care via body language. I have learned that listening is how interviewers make participants feel that they want to explore what they have been through, that they care about what they say.

Furthermore, I have learned that transcription is not the simple process that some may imagine, it is not just transferring audio data to written words. Instead, transcripts could be viewed as a summarising of others' experiences, of the perspectives that the participants chose to share with me. Hence, the participants no longer own these experiences, perspectives and feelings. Rather, they have allowed me to examine them for further interpretations. Yet interpreting others' ideas and feelings is not at all easy. It requires a great deal of attention to and consideration of what has been said, and the interpreter must not take what participants said further than what they meant to say or dissimulate what they meant to reveal. Analysing others' experiences taught me to respect the people who chose me to share their experiences and thus respect data they provided. This meant bearing in mind that behind each word, code and themes were many experiences and feelings. Interpretation of others' words demanded reading between the lines instead of simply reading what the words said.

At the end of this journey, I have learned that developing my skills as a researcher is a limitless process. Developing these skills will not terminate at the end of this particular journey. Rather, they will continue to be developed for as long as I am willing to be a better researcher. From my own perspective, this willingness is the realisation that allowed and will always allow me to act and to learn. Willingness can be viewed as the internal power that has enabled me to be determined, insistent, and to overcome all the obstacles I have faced.

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Appendix 1: Saudi Research Studies in the Field of LD

Author's name	Thesis name	year	Aim of the study	methods	sample
Ibrahim A. Al-Hano	representations of Learning Disabilities in Saudi Arabian Elementary Schools: A Grounded Theory Study	2006	To explore the recently introduced category of learning disabilities in Saudi Arabia.	grounded theory	LD teachers, regular classroom teachers, school counselors, school principals, and parents.
Nsreen A. Al-Ahmad	Teachers' Perspectives and Attitudes towards Integrating Students with Learning Disabilities in Regular Saudi Public Schools	2009	discovering Saudi teachers' perspectives on educating children with learning disabilities in public school settings	mixed-method	Saudi general and special education teachers
Abdullah Ali Alrubaian	General Education Teachers' Attitudes, knowledge, and Strategies related to teaching students with learning disabilities in Saudi Arabia	2014	examining attitudes, knowledge of evidence-based practices, and perceived skills among male general education teachers related to students with learning disabilities in Riyadh,	Mixed methods	Male general teachers.
Norah Abdullah Alkhateeb	Female General Education Teachers' Knowledge of And Perceived Skills Related to Learning Disabilities In The Qassim Region, Kingdom Of Saudi Arabia	2014	Investigating female general education teachers' knowledge of learning disabilities (LDs)	Mixed method	
Fhahad Alnaim	Identification Strategies in the Saudi Learning Disabilities Programme: Primary Teachers' Perspectives	2016	investigate the process of identification of students with learning disabilities (SWLD)	qualitative approach	male and female LD teachers

Appendix 2: Saudi Research Studies about PI from Teachers' Perceptions

Author's name	Thesis name	year	Aim of the study	methods	sample
Homoud Abdullah Almoghyrah	teachers' perceptions about parent involvement in the education of children with mild cognitive disabilities in Saudi Arabia	2015	examining male teachers' perceptions towards parent involvement in the education of male children with mild cognitive disabilities in Saudi Arabia. investigating the factors and activities that teachers identified to enhance parental involvement.	Questionnaire	male Teachers
Al-Baheth, Y. S	The relationship between teachers' attitudes towards parent involvement and parent participation level in Saudi Arabian elementary schools	1987	Investigating the differences in parental participation	Questionnaire	Parents and teachers
Chastenet de Gery	A survey of the attitudes and perceptions of teachers and parents about parent involvement in private schools in Saudi Arabia	1998	Investigating teachers and parents' attitudes towards parental involvement and the responsibilities.	survey	Teachers and parents (both gender)

Appendix 3: Saudi Research Studies about PI from Parents'

Perceptions

Author's name	Thesis name	year	Aim of the study	methods	sample
Snaa S. Dubis	an exploratory investigation of e-mail usage to improve communication between parents of children with special needs and special education teachers: a case study in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia	2015	understanding E-mail impact on parental Involvement.	Case study	special education teachers and parents of children with (autism)
Fouzan, Ebrahim Abdulaziz	the involvement of parents of educable mentally retarded in their children's' educational programs in Saudi Arabia	1986	Identifying the level of PI of parents of children with mental retardation.	Questionnaire	Parents of children with mental retardation.

Appendix 4: Numbers of Special Learning Disability Programs and Girls with LD in Mainstream Primary Schools in Riyadh

Appendix 5: International PI Studies from the Perspectives of parents of Children with SEN

Author's name	Thesis name	year	Aim of the study	methods	sample
Seema Mahdavi	The Influence of Early Parent Involvement and Depression on Academic Achievement, Psychosocial Behaviors, And Motivation in Children with Learning Disabilities Across Elementary School	2017	To Examine Parent Depression, A Risk Factor, And Parent School Involvement, A Protective Factor, Predicted Academic and Psychosocial Outcomes in Children With Subtypes Of Learning Disabilities.	Self-Administered Social Rating Scale (Srs)	Children with and Without LD (Elementary Level)
Catherine Mary Brown	Parent Home Involvement and Student Achievement of Mexican American And European American Students with Learning Disabilities	2005	Examined Specific, Academically Related Types of Parent Home Involvement Practices .	*Parent Home Involvement Survey*	20 Professional Educators Participants Were 52 Mexican-American Parents And 54 European American Parents
Gary Lee Simth	Parent Involvement and Satisfaction in The Education of Children with Specific Learning Disabilities	2000	Investigate 5 Specific Question to Degree Home-School Relationship in The Families of LD Children.	Survey	Parents Of Children With/Out SEN
Stephanie Gerstein	Benefits and Influence of Parent Involvement for Children with Learning Disability	2004	Examine the Effect and Influence of Parent Involvement	Questionnaire	Children with Learning Disability and their Parents , and Comparable Group of Children Without Disability. Not Define Which Level
Shelley Henthorne Bailey	Parent Involvement in Transition Planning for Students with Learning Disabilities	2009	1-examine the effects of training on knowledge about the process of transitioning to post-secondary education. 2-	Survey (A quasi-experimental research design)	students with learning disabilities from middle and high schools in Alabama, their parent(s), and special education teachers

			examinte parents', students', and teachers' perceptions of parent involvement.3- examine students', parents', and teachers' level of satisfaction with the intervention.		
Kelli rubin good	Parental self-efficacy and educational involvement of parent of children with learning disability.	2001	replication of study conducted by hoover-Dempsy, Bassler, Brissie 1992	Questionnaire	Parents of children with learning disability in the third through fifth grade in regular elementary schools' programs.
Nina Isabel Zuna	Examination of Family-Professional Partnerships, Parent- Teacher Communication, And Parent Involvement in Families Of Kindergarten Children With And Without Disabilities	2007	It examined the factor structure of the Family Professional Partnership Scale on families of kindergarten children without disabilities. It also examined the predictors of parent involvement and parent-teacher communication for families of kindergarten children with and without disabilities. Also, it examines the universal components of partnership, parent involvement, and parent-teacher communication across families of kindergarten children with and without disabilities.	Survey	parents or grandparents of children without and with disabilities(Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, developmental delay or learning disability, autism or emotional/ behavioural disorder, speech/language or hearing impairment, including deafness, visual impairment, with physical disabilities, health impairment,

Thompson, Thelma Lynnette	The Influence of African-American Parents' Educational Values On The Scholastic Adjustment Of Their Children With And Without Exceptional Learning Needs	2015	examine parents' perspectives to determine the influence of African American parents' attitudes	Parent Survey	parents of elementary school ,students and parents of middle school , and students who were enrolled in schools
Charles J. Idler	Exploring Parental Involvement in Special Education	2015	a-it explores how parents perceive their involvement in the process. b-it gives parents a voice based on their experiences and to provide feedback on more effective ways to meet the needs of parents.	case study	Parents of children with SEN.
Evvertt edwards	Factors influence the parent participation in the educational program of their children	2002	a- elicit the voice of African American parents whose children are enrolled in special education programs b- to examine the correlation between factors and parents' levels of participation c- determine participants' levels of satisfaction with school services	survey	African American parents of elementary special education students
María Isolina Ruiz	Factors that Influence the Participation of Immigrant Latino Parents in the Special Education Process of their Children with Disabilities	2012	investigate the experiences that parents that influence their participation in the special education process of their children with disabilities	survey	Parents of children with disabilities (speech and language impairment ,specific learning disabilities , developmental delay , other health impairments , intellectual disabilities , and autism.

HOLLY J. NICHOLS-RICE	Parent Perceptions of Parent Involvement of Elementary Aged Students with Learning Disabilities	2011	explore parent perceptions concerning their involvement in their children's education	Survey	parents of elementary-aged children, diagnosed with specific learning disabilities
Rebecca Burch Davis	Special Education Teachers' and Parents' Perceptions of Parent Involvement in Special Education	2008	The study focused on parents' and special education teachers' perceptions of parent involvement in special education. Also, the study assessed special education teachers' perceptions of parent involvement in various activities.	Questionnaire	Parents of the special education students who are orthopedically impaired, , students with severe and profound disabilities, , students with learning disabilities, and students who have educable mental disabilities.
Princess Briggs	Teachers as Facilitators or Barriers of Parent Involvement: Experiences of African American Mothers Of Children In Special Education Programs	2017	investigate African American parents' perceptions of special education programs, of teacher actions, and of school policies that influence parent involvement	A phenomenological study	African American mothers of children with special needs. Disabilities of children are: Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Other Health Impaired (ADHD) ,Intellectual Disability , Specific Learning ,Emotional / Behavioral Disability.

Appendix 6: Questionnaire English Version

Dear mother,

Thank you for your participation in this research by completing this questionnaire for mothers of daughters with learning disabilities. The study explores mothers' perspectives and factors that influence their involvement in their daughters' education. It also seeks to explore to what extent do you wish to be involved. As an EdD student in education at the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom, this questionnaire's data will be used in my study entitled: "Where are parents?: An exploration of parental involvement in primary mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia for mothers of daughters with learning disabilities."

It will be really helpful if you can fill this questionnaire as fully as you can. If you fell that you need to miss a question, please do so. Your responses and personal information will be kept completely CONFIDENTIAL. No names will ever be used in any report. All data from this questionnaire will be used for this study only and it will be deleted after the study is completed.

First Section

Please answer the following questions about yourself.

1. Age

- ○ under 25 years.

- ○ 26-30 years.

- ○ 31-35 years.

- ○ 36-40 years.

- ○ 41- 45years.

- ○ 46 - 50 years.

- ○ 50 and above

2. Educational Level

- ○ Intermediate school or less.

- ○ High school Diploma.

- ○ Bachelor's Degree.

- ○ Graduate study.

3. **Which area in Riyadh do you live?**

   ○ North

   ○ South

   ○ East

   ○ West

   ○ Middle

4. **Which area in Riyadh is your daughter's school?**

   ○ North

   ○ South

   ○ East

   ○ West

   ○ Middle

5. **Currently in paid employment?**

   Yes.

   No.

6. **Do you have a transportation's problem?**

   Yes.

   No.

7. **Monthly Household Income Level**

   ○ 2000 and less Riyal.

   ○ 2,001-5000 Riyal.

   ○ 5001-7,000 Riyal.

   ○ 7,001-10,000 Riyal.

   ○ 10001- 15000 Riyal.

   ○ more than 15,000 Riyal.

8. Number of children

- ○ 1
- ○ 2
- ○ 3
- ○ 4
- ○ 5
- ○ 6 and above

9. Age of your daughter with Learning disabilities

- ○ 7 years.
- ○ 8 years.
- ○ 9 years.
- ○ 10 years.
- ○ 11 years.

10. School level of your daughter with Learning disabilities

- ○ Lower elementary (grads 1- 3).
- ○ Upper elementary (grads 4- 6).

Second section

Please check the response that represent your knowledge, beliefs, views and perceptions of your involvement in your daughter's education. Please answer the following questions using the following scale:

1= strongly disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Agree
4 = strongly agree

	Strongly disagree	*disagree*	*Agree*	*Strongly agree*
11. I believe it is my responsibility to ...				
Volunteer in school.	○	○	○	○
Communicate with my daughter's teacher regularly.	○	○	○	○
Help my daughter with homework.	○	○	○	○
Support decisions made by teacher.	○	○	○	○

Contact the teachers as soon as academic problem arise.	○	○	○	○
Keep track of my daughter's progress in school.	○	○	○	○
Learn how to support my daughter's learning at home.	○	○	○	○
Be involved in my daughter's school decision	○	○	○	○
Be more involved in my daughter's education.	○	○	○	○
Know my legal rights as a parent (mother).	○	○	○	○
Participate in IEP meetings	○	○	○	○
12. I ….				
…know how to help my daughter do well in school	○	○	○	○
…do not know how to help my daughter make good grades in school.	○	○	○	○
…feel successful about my efforts to help my daughter learn.	○	○	○	○
…do not know how to help my daughter learn.	○	○	○	○
…make significant differences in my daughter's school performance.	○	○	○	○
…know about volunteering opportunities at my daughter's school.	○	○	○	○
…know about special events (art exhibition-awareness lectures) at my daughter's school.	○	○	○	○
…know how to explain things to my daughter about her homework.	○	○	○	○
…know how to communicate effectively with my daughter's teacher.	○	○	○	○
13. I have enough time and energy to...	○	○	○	○
Communicate effectively with my daughter's teacher.	○	○	○	○
Help my daughter with homework.	○	○	○	○
Attend special events at school.	○	○	○	○
Volunteer at my daughter's classroom.	○	○	○	○

Please answer the following questions thinking about the previous academic year (1437-1438).

	Strongly disagree	*disagree*	*Agree*	*Strongly agree*
14. My daughter's school ...				
…made me feel welcomed.	○	○	○	○
… let me know about meetings and special school events.	○	○	○	○
…helped me to Know my rights as a mother of a daughter with Learning Disability.	○	○	○	○
…showed me how I can be involved in my daughter's education.	○	○	○	○

Please answer the following questions thinking about the previous academic year (1437-1438) , using the following scale:

1= never

2= rarely

3 = often

4= Always

	never	Rarely	Often	Always
15. My daughter's teacher...				
Asked me to help my daughter with homework.	○	○	○	○
Asked me to attend a special event at school.	○	○	○	○
Contacted me (for example, sent a note, memos, phone call, newsletters, and other communications).	○	○	○	○
Kept me informed about my daughter's progress in school.	○	○	○	○
Asked me to volunteer at the school.	○	○	○	○
Explained how to check my daughter's homework.	○	○	○	○
Provided me information on community services that I may want to use with my family.	○	○	○	○
Invited me to attend IEP meetings.	○	○	○	○
Had a parent-teacher conference with me.	○	○	○	○
Provided information on community events that I may want to attend with my daughter.	○	○	○	○
16. My daughter...	○	○	○	○
…asked me to help explain something about her homework.				
…asked me to attend a special event at school.	○	○	○	○
…asked me to communicate with her teacher.	○	○	○	○
17. How often did you...	○	○	○	○

…volunteer in your daughter's classroom ?	○	○	○	○
…volunteer in the school ?	○	○	○	○
…participate in IEP meetings?	○	○	○	○
…attend parent's conferences?	○	○	○	○
…visit your daughter's school?	○	○	○	○
…talk (communicate) to your daughter's teacher?	○	○	○	○
…help your daughter in her homework?	○	○	○	○
…ask your daughter how well she is doing in school?	○	○	○	○
…go to a school event (e.g., assemblies, or other meetings)?	○	○	○	○

I will be conducting face to face interviews with mothers of daughters with learning disabilities to gain a deeper understanding about your experiences and perspectives regarding parent involvement. The interview will take short time and your participation will be appreciated and very important for my study. If you wish to participate, please write your name and phone number or email address below.

Name:

Phone number:

Email address:

Thank you for your participation.

The researcher: Sara Binammar
Phone number: UK 00447963427385 … Saudi 00966546647653
Email address: s.binammar@gmail.com or sb714@exeter.ac.uk

Alternative contacts:
First supervisor: Dr. Hazel Lawson
Email address: H.A.Lawson@exeter.ac.uk
Second supervisor: Dr. James Hall
Email address: J.Hall3@exeter.ac.uk

Appendix 7: Confirmation Letter Regarding Meeting with Epstein

Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships

Johns Hopkins University   2701 North Charles Street   Suite 300 Baltimore MD 21218
TEL: 410-516-8807   FAX: 410-516-8890   E-mail: jepstein@jhu.edu

(Also sent by e-mail.)

5-26-17

To: Sara Binammar

From: Joyce Epstein

Re: Record of Our Discussion, 5-25-17

It was a pleasure to talk with you yesterday via Skype about your ambitious study of parental involvement in the education of students with special needs in elementary schools in Saudi Arabia.

You have a good understanding of research on school, family, and community partnerships and have selected good research questions and questionnaire items for the two stages of your study—exploratory survey and intensive interview—of mothers of girls with learning disabilities.

We discussed your research design, sampling, expected return rate from parents, questionnaire items, and your general questions based on your readings. The only changes that I recommended were:

(1) Consider adapting some response categories for some items so that they are clear and will make sense to your respondents.
- For some items "more often" is not the "right" answer, as some activities are not meant to occur very often.
- Response categories should be continuous for sensible analyses, thus "more than once a week" follows "once a week."
- Also see gap between 1-2 times and 4-5 times, and need to identify time period (e.g., 1-2 times a week or a term or a year? and so forth).
- It is OK to adapt response categories and vocabulary from other questionnaires to make sure that your respondents understand the questions.

(2) If you have an ample response rate to the Stage 1/Survey, you should conduct analyses to learn whether or not parents with less formal education/less income report more engagement if they also say their child's school does more to encourage their involvement?

Another way to ask the same question: Is there greater similarity in the reports of parents with more/less formal education about their engagement and confidence if they report that their child's school encourages their involvement?

Although there are self-report problems with these questions and analyses, they are important in an exploratory study. They will provide a first step in whether or not schools need to be guided to develop more equitable outreach to all parents, instead of simply recognizing that—on their own—some parent are more involved than others.

You are on a good path to a strong and interesting study. I look forward to hearing about your results.

Appendix 8 :Confirmation Letter Regarding Using Epstein's

Questionnaire

Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships

Johns Hopkins University • 2701 North Charles Street, Suite 300 • Baltimore MD 21218
TEL: 410-516-2318 • FAX: 410-516-8890 • nnps@jhu.edu

July 11, 2018

To: Sara Binammar

From: Joyce L. Epstein & Steven B. Sheldon

Re: Permission to use:

1. Sheldon, S. B. & Epstein, J. L. (2007). Parent and Student Surveys of Family and Community Involvement in the Elementary and Middle Grades. Baltimore, MD: Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University.

2. Epstein, J. L. & Salinas, K. C. (1993). Surveys and Summaries: Questionnaires for Teachers and Parents in Elementary and Middle Grades. Baltimore, MD: Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University.

3. Epstein, J. L., Connors-Tadros, L., & Salinas, K. C. (1993). High School and Family Partnerships: Surveys for Teachers, Parents, and Students in High School. Baltimore, MD: Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University. This letter grants you permission to use, adapt, translate, or reprint the survey(s) noted above in your dissertation study. We ask only that you include appropriate references to the survey(s) and authors in the text and bibliography of your reports and publications. Best of luck with your project.

Appendix 9: Ethical form Gained from the University of Exeter

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

When completing this form please remember that the purpose of the document is to clearly explain the ethical considerations of the research being undertaken. As a generic form it has been constructed to cover a wide-range of different projects so some sections may not seem relevant to you. Please include the information which addresses any ethical considerations for your particular project which will be needed by the SSIS Ethics Committee to approve your proposal.

Guidance on all aspects of the SSIS Ethics application process can be found on the SSIS intranet:
Staff:
https://intranet.exeter.ac.uk/socialsciences/staff/research/researchenvironmentandpolicies/ethics/
Students:http://intranet.exeter.ac.uk/socialsciences/student/postgraduateresearch/ethicsapprovalforyourresearch/

All staff and students within SSIS should use this form to apply for ethical approval and then send it to one of the following email addresses:

ssis-ethics@exeter.ac.uk   This email should be used by staff and students in Egenis, the Institute for Arab and Islamic Studies, Law, Politics, the Strategy & Security Institute, and Sociology, Philosophy, Anthropology.

ssis-gseethics@exeter.ac.uk   This email should be used by staff and students in the Graduate School of Education.

Name	Sara Binammar
Department	Graduate School of Education
UoE email address	Sb714@exeter university

You should request approval for the entire period of your research activity. The start date should be at least one month from the date that you submit this form. Students should use the anticipated date of completion of their course as the end date of their work. Please note that retrospective ethical approval will never be given.

Start date:15/09/2017	End date:20/09/2019	Date submitted:25/05/2017

All students must discuss their research intentions with their supervisor/tutor prior to submitting an application for ethical approval. The discussion may be face to face or via email.

Prior to submitting your application in its final form to the SSIS Ethics Committee it should be approved by your first and second supervisor / dissertation supervisor/tutor. You should submit evidence of their approval with your application, e.g. a copy of their email approval.

Student number	**650032047**

Programme of study	**OtherOtherOtherOtherOtherOtherOtherOtherOther** Special Needs and Inclusive Education - Doctor of Education
Name of Supervisor(s)/tutors or Dissertation Tutor	**Dr. Hazel Lawson** **Dr. James Hall**
Have you attended any ethics training that is available to students?	Select from this dropdown list For example,: i) the Research Integrity Ethics and Governance workshop: http://as.exeter.ac.uk/rdp/postgraduateresearchers ii) Ethics training received on Masters courses If yes, please specify and give the date of the training: Click here to specify training Click here to enter a date.

<div style="background:black"> </div>

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given in this application and that I undertake in my research to respect the dignity and privacy of those participating in this research. I confirm that if my research should change radically I will complete a further ethics proposal form.

Sara Binammar

Double click this box to confirm certification ☒

Submission of this ethics proposal form confirms your acceptance of the above.

TITLE OF YOUR PROJECT

Where are parents? An exploration of parent involvement in primary mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia for parents of children with learning disabilities

ETHICAL REVIEW BY AN EXTERNAL COMMITTEE

No, my research is not funded by, or doesn't use data from, either the NHS or Ministry of Defence.No, my research is not funded by, or doesn't use data from, either the NHS or Ministry of Defence.No, my research is not funded by, or doesn't use data from, either the NHS or Ministry of Defence.either the NHS or Ministry of Defence.No, my research is not funded by, or doesn't use data from, either the NHS or Ministry of Defence.No, my research is not funded by, or doesn't use data from, either the NHS or Ministry of Defence.No, my research is not funded by, or doesn't use data from, either the NHS or Ministry of Defence.No, my research is not funded by, or doesn't use data from, either the NHS or Ministry of Defence.No, my research is not funded by, or doesn't use data from, either the NHS or Ministry of Defence.No, my research is not funded by, or doesn't use data from,

MENTAL CAPACITY ACT 2005

No, my project does not involve participants aged 16 or over who are unable to give informed consent (e.g. people with learning disabilitiesNo, my project does not involve participants aged 16 or over who are unable to give informed consent (e.g. people with learning disabilitiesth learning disabilitiesNo, my project does not involve participants aged 16 or over who are unable to give informed consent (e.g. people with learning disabilitiesth learning disabilitiesNo, my project does not involve participants aged 16 or over who are unable to give informed consent (e.g. people wiNo, my project does not involve participants aged 16 or over who are unable to give informed consent (e.g. people with learning disabilitiesNo, my project does not

involve participants aged 16 or over who are unable to give informed consent (e.g. people with learning disabilitiesth learning disabilitiesNo, my project does not involve participants aged 16 or over who are unable to give informed consent (e.g. people wiNo, my project does not involve participants aged 16 or over who are unable to give informed consent (e.g. people with learning disabilitiesNo, my project does not involve participants aged 16 or over who are unable to give informed consent (e.g. people wi.

SYNOPSIS OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT
Maximum of 750 words.

In the last few years, the concept of parent involvement in education has been widely explored and examined in many western countries such as USA an UK. Parent involvement refers to how parents behave or participate in home or school settings to support their children's educational progress. There is a considerable amount of research which indicates the importance of parent involvement and illustrates strong correlations between involving parents and their children's behaviour and academic achievement. Parent involvement is essential for all children, especially for children with special needs and disabilities.

The significance of parental partnerships in educational planning is evident in international policies, research, and legislation. In the UK, the term *partnership with parents* has been widespread in educational policy since the Warnock Report in 1978. According to this policy, involvement by parents in the education of special-needs children is a recognised and necessary component of effective education. The Warnock Report makes parental rights explicit and assures that "parents must be advised, encouraged, and supported so that they in turn effectively help their children"(DES, 1978; p.150).

The issue of parent involvement (parent partnership) in Saudi Arabia is one of the main educational concerns for parents as well as teachers. As far as I know, there is no legislation or statements that emphasizes or discusses Saudi parents' involvement. There is also a lack of research regarding parent partnership in the Saudi context, particularly parents of children with learning disabilities and more information regarding this phenomenon is needed. Saudi parents of children with learning disabilities have the right to express their perspectives about their involvement and need to be heard. To justify, those parents have been marginalized and their concerns, perspectives and needs have not been explored sufficiently yet. Parents of children with learning disabilities as other parents should be provided the opportunity which enable them to use their voice and have a say in their children's education. Hence, their needs and concerns should be explored and investigated. Addressing parents of children with learning disabilities' perspectives is essential since they play vital role in their children's education and are considered to be vital participants in the development of appropriate special education programs. Being aware about parents' experiences and their perspectives may enable authorities to reevaluate the current Saudi special education legalizations and develop better policies and services which assure

rights for those parents. Having in-depth information regarding this phenomenon in the Saudi context might help other stakeholders to be aware of parents' perspectives and may highlight the importance of their involvement in educational settings.

Therefore, the current study will explore perspectives of parents of children with learning disabilities about their involvement in their children's education in primary mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia and examine factors that influence their involvement. The study will be carried out through a mixed methods design (exploratory sequential design). In the primary phase, a questionnaire, yielding quantitative data, will be used to provide a broad and general picture about the parent involvement phenomena and factors which influence it. In the second phase, semi-structured interviews, yielding qualitative data, will be used to have a deeper understanding and gather more specific and in-depth data regarding the parent involvement phenomenon from parents' point of views.

The participants of the study will be parents of children with learning disabilities in mainstream schools in Riyadh. The questionnaire will be distributed to around 200 participants while the interview participants will involve around 6-10 participants. Both methods will seek to answer the following research questions:

What factors influence the parental involvement of parents of children with learning disabilities in Saudi Arabia?
What are parents' experiences of, and perspectives on, their involvement in primary mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia?
To what extent and how do parents of children with learning disabilities wish to be involved in their children's education in primary mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia?

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH

This study will be conducted in Saudi Arabia, specifically in primary mainstream schools in Riyadh. In order to conduct the study, I will be submitting a request to Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia. Once their approval to carry out the study is received, I will approach the principals of all mainstream schools in Riyadh informing them about the approval and asking them to facilitate the study. All ethical aspects applied at the University of Exeter will be considered carefully during the research stages.

The following sections require an assessment of possible ethical consideration in your research project. If particular sections do not seem relevant to your project please indicate this and clarify why.

RESEARCH METHODS

Mixed methods will be used to conduct this study.

Questionnaire: A questionnaire for parents designed for the purpose of this study will be used to collect quantitative data from the participants. This questionnaire will be adapted from Hoover and Dempsey's parent involvement questionnaire (2005), and Epstein's parent involvement questionnaire (2007); some items will be deleted to fit the purpose of the study and the Saudi context. The questionnaire aims to give a broad picture regarding factors that influence parent involvement in the Saudi context and all rise issues that need to be studied in more depth through the interviews. Collecting quantitative data from a large sample of the participants (around 200 parents of children with learning disabilities in mainstream schools in Riyadh) using parents' questionnaire as the first phase of the study could highlight the focus of the other instruments(interviews) and guide their process.

Interviews: Semi-structured interviews will be used in this study in order to obtain qualitative data (from a smaller number of the participants who will be chosen from those who indicate in the questionnaire that they would like to participate in the interviews) which will provide me with valuable information about the parents of children with learning disabilities' perspectives about their involvement in mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia. Adopting semi-structured interviews to collect qualitative data will enable me to probe for further detailed information and allow the participants to express their own views freely and in more in-depth. These interviews will be recorded via audio recording.

PARTICIPANTS

The participants of the study will be around 200 parents of children with learning disabilities from primary mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia, who will be asked to complete the questionnaire. These children are most likely to be girls and the parents are most likely to be mothers, though fathers may participate.

From this sample, 6-10 parents will be chosen purposively from those who indicate in the questionnaire that they would like to participate in the interviews. These parents are most likely to be mothers.

THE VOLUNTARY NATURE OF PARTICIPATION

The participants will be parents of children with learning disabilities who will be informed clearly that their participation is optional. This will be mentioned in the first page of the questionnaire. The questionnaire will be send to all primary mainstream schools in Riyadh. This questionnaire will be sent online via the schools' principals to all parents of children with learning disabilities.

The interview sample will be chosen from the questionnaire participants who indicate that they would like to participate in the interviews and are thus indicating voluntary participation. The participation in the interviews also is completely optional and the participants' rights are considered carefully as shown earlier.

Through an information sheet and consent form and, they will be informed about the confidentiality and anonymity of their data and their rights to withdraw at any stage of the research without giving reasons.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

There is no need for any special arrangement in this study.

THE INFORMED NATURE OF PARTICIPATION

First, mainstream schools' principals will inform parents of children with learning disabilities regarding this study via letter stating the purpose of research and what participants are asked to do in this study. This letter will also explain the data collection methods and inform them clearly about their rights such as optional participation, refusing to answer any question, the confidentiality of their data, and right to withdraw at any stage of the study. It will clarify the importance of their participation and indicates that answering this questionnaire will be as an opportunity to raise their voice regarding their involvement in their children's education. Besides, this letter parents will be asked to provide their phone number (if they are willing to participate). After that, I will collect these letters from the school's principals and start communicating directly by myself with parents via their numbers in order sending them the link of electronic questionnaire via Survey monkey via what up App.

Besides, participants will be given an information sheet that states their role in the study. The information sheet will be first page of the electronic questionnaire and it will be translated into Arabic. Participation in the questionnaire is completely optional for the parents, there will be no harm or stress caused by the participation. At the end of the electronic questionnaire, participants will be asked about their willing to participate in the next stage of the study (interview phase). Consent forms will be given to parents who are willing to participate in the interviews.

ASSESSMENT OF POSSIBLE HARM

It is not anticipated that there will be harm or stress caused by participation for the participants or the researcher. Also, the rights of the participants such as confidentiality and anonymity of their data and their right to withdraw at any stage of the study without giving reasons will be explained to the participants.

DATA PROTECTION AND STORAGE

The online questionnaire will be sent to the participants through the Survey Monkey website and the account will be secured by an appropriate password. These questionnaires also will be deleted after the study finishes and the account will be removed.

The interview participants' names and all participants' information will be kept completely confidential. Interview participants will be given pseudonyms. Audio data will be downloaded from the recording device at the earliest possible opportunity and then deleted from the recording device. No unsecure devices will be used to save data from this study.

All the information and data collected from the participants such as completed questionnaires, interview transcripts, audio recording and all computer files will be kept on the university U drive (which is secure) and deleted 12 months after the completion of my thesis. Also, all completed questionnaires, interview transcripts, audio recording and all computer files will be kept in a flash memory which will be kept in my office at the University.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There are no interests to declare. This is an independent doctoral study with no funding from any specific parties.

USER ENGAGEMENT AND FEEDBACK

All interview transcripts will be sent back to the participants for confirmation before conducting the analysis. Interview participants will also be informed about the findings of the study later.

INFORMATION SHEET

The information sheet will be translated into Arabic, which is the participants' language. It will be included in the first page of the electronic questionnaire. This sheet inform the participants about all necessary aspects as follows:

Dear parents

My name is Sara Binammar. I am a doctoral student at the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom. I am conducting this study as part of my doctoral studies. The purpose of the study is to explore how do Saudi parents of children with learning disabilities perceive their involvement in primary mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia. Parents of students with learning disabilities are asked to voluntarily participate by taking part in questionnaires and interviews on perceptions of parent involvement. Your names will be kept confidential and all results will be anonymized. The results of the research may be published, but your names will not be used.

Your participation will involve filling out a questionnaire online. The purpose of this questionnaire is to gain knowledge about factors that influence parent involvement in Saudi Arabia and to what extent you wish to be involved in your children's education. The questionnaire will take about 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you wish to participate, please start filling the questionnaire below.

If you wish to participate in the interviews in the next stage of the study, please clarify that at the end of the questionnaire. I will ask for your permission to record the interview on an audio recording device. The approximate time of interviews will be 45 minutes. Interviews will be held in one of the private rooms at the mainstream school in Riyadh.

I very much appreciate your participation in this study. If you have any concerns about the study that you would like to discuss, please do not hesitate to contact me.

The researcher
Sara Binammar
Phone number: UK 00447963427385 … Saudi 00966546647653
Email address: s.binammar@gmail.com or sb714@exeter.ac.uk

Alternative contacts:
First supervisor: Dr. Hazel Lawson
Email address: H.A.Lawson@exeter.ac.uk

Second supervisor: Dr. James Hall
Email address: J.Hall3@exeter.ac.uk

CONSENT FORM

> Consent forms for the interviews will be obtained from the participants as attached with this application.

SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

Staff and students should follow the procedure below.

Post Graduate Taught Students (Graduate School of Education): Please submit your completed application to your first supervisor. Please see the submission flowchart for further information on the process.

All other students should discuss their application with their supervisor(s) / dissertation tutor / tutor and gain their approval prior to submission. Students should submit evidence of approval with their application, e.g. a copy of the supervisors email approval.

All staff should submit their application to the appropriate email address below.

This application form and examples of your consent form, information sheet and translations of any documents which are not written in English should be submitted by email to the SSIS Ethics Secretary via one of the following email addresses:

ssis-ethics@exeter.ac.uk   This email should be used by staff and students in Egenis, the Institute for Arab and Islamic Studies, Law, Politics, the Strategy & Security Institute, and Sociology, Philosophy, Anthropology.

Appendix 10: Confirmation about the Absent of Mothers'

Emails

المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التعــليم

Dear Sara

Regarding your enquiry as a researcher about using electronic questionnaires with parents, we would like to inform you that, emails and school websites are not yet utilized for parent-teacher communication in mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia, particularly in Riyadh city. Therefore, if wish to send an electronic questionnaire , you should contact parents and send questionnaires' link via phone only or you could interview them at schools.

The Director of Learning Disabilities Administration at the Ministry of Education in Riyadh

Najla. F. AL.Mushagheh

Page 1 of 1

Appendix 11: Interview Schedules, Stage 1

Summary of Flagged Questions

Topic of Question to Be Developed	Results Area	Justification of Need
Currently employed	D	Surprising results
Living area	D	Surprising results
Parents' role constructions	RQ1	High percentage (agree, strongly agree)
Self-efficacy	RQ1	Variability in mothers' responses on the same scale
Skill and knowledge	RQ1	High percentage (agree, strongly agree)
Time and energy	RQ1	High percentage (agree, strongly agree)
School invitations	RQ1	Mixed results
Teachers' invitations	RQ1	Mixed/similar results between two groups
Daughter's invitations	RQ1	Mixed results
Volunteering at school	RQ2	High percentage (never, rarely)
Participating in IEP meetings	RQ2	High percentage (never, rarely)
Visiting daughter's school	RQ2	Mixed results
Communicating with daughter's teacher	RQ2	Mixed results
Asking daughter about how well she is doing in school	RQ2	Mixed results
Attending school events (e.g. assemblies)	RQ2	Mixed results

Note. D = Demographic Information; RQ1 = First Research Question; RQ2 = Second Research Question.

Table 2: Justifications For Interview Questions (Details)

Interview questions	demographic /scale / none	Justifications
1.which region do you live in Riyadh? Promote: Is there a specific reason that you live in this region? Can you explain? Is there is any advantages for being living in this area regarding your daughter's education? How? Can you explain more and give me an example?	demographic	Surprising result
2.Do you have a job? promote: how does this impact your involvement in your daughter's education? how your job enhances or hinder your involvement? Can you explain more? Give me an example? promote: Can you manage between your job and involvement? Does your job allow you to involved in many activities? Can you give me an example? promote: As a result of your job, do you have the time and energy to be regularly involved in your daughter's education?	Demographic LS 13 Time and energy	Surprising result Related with the surprising result
3. Tell me more about your daughter's disability. Promote: How has she been classified? Prompt: By whom? How has this decision been made? Was it collective (team) or individual decision? Can you explain? Prompt: Have you been involved in her classification process? Prompt: Why do you think it happened this way (if involved or not)? Can you explain in more detail?	None	To know mothers' experiences with involvement.
4.Did you sign an agreement after classifying your daughter? Prompt: How did you express your agreement or disagreement about your daughter's classification? Can you explain in more detail?	none	To explore mothers' experiences with involvement.
5.Do you think you should be involved in the classification process? Prompt: Why do you think this way (yes/no)? Can you explain in more detail?	none	Explore mothers' experiences with involvement.
6. What is it like to have a daughter with LD? Can you describe your experiences and feelings? Why do you feel this way? Can you explain in more detail? Prompt: Do you think being a mother of a girl with LD gives you more responsibilities than other mothers? Prompt: Why? Can you give me an example and explain in more detail?	none	Explore mothers' experiences and perspectives about involvement.

7.As a mother of a daughter with LD, do you know what your legal rights are as a mother of a child with LD? Can you explain in more detail? Prompt: Do you believe it is your responsibility to know your rights?	none LS11	Further explorations about mothers' experiences and perspectives High percentages: needed further explorations.
8.Why do you believe it is your responsibility to participate in IEP meetings? Can you explain further? To what extent are you involved/not involved?	LS11	High percentages: needed further explorations.
9.Why do you think it is your responsibility to be more involved in your daughter's education and decisions made by the school? Can you explain in more detail? How do you want to be involved	LS11	High percentages: needed further explorations.
10.Why do you feel it is your responsibility to communicate with teachers regularly? Can you explain in more detail?	LS11	High percentages: needed further explorations.
11. Do you feel that you are capable of being involved in your daughter's education? Why do you feel this way? How can you help your daughter in her schooling? Can you give me an example? Prompt: Can you give me another example where you helped your daughter in getting good grades at school? What types of questions do you usually ask your daughter to ensure she is doing well at school? Why? Is there something you are concerned about? Can you explain in more detail and give me an example?	LS12.1 (self-efficacy) LS17 about asking my daughter how she did in school	Contradict responses. High percentage (what were mothers' concerns why did they ask?
12 From your perspective, do you think you have enough skill and knowledge regarding events in school? Why do you feel this way? Promote: What about helping your daughter in her homework? Do you believe you are capable of that or do you need further help? Can you explain	LS12.5 Skill and knowledge	High percentages: explore why/what reasons made them believe that
13Why do you usually visit your daughter's school? Can you give me an example? Explain more Prompt: does your daughter's school make you feel welcomed? How? Prompt: Can you give me an	LS17 about visiting school. LS14 school Invitations	Majority between always and often. explore reason behind visiting /what kind of visiting: thanking, involving, complaining

example? Can you explain in more detail why you feel (perceive it to be) that way?		Mixed results: explored mother's different perspectives
14. How does your daughter's school invite you to an event? Can you give me an example? What types of events does your daughter's school invite you to? Prompt: In these events, what were your roles? Were you just attending or are you participating in them? Can you give me an example? Prompt: How do you perceive this kind of school invitation (to an event)? Is it helpful or not?	LS14 School invitations (about school events). LS17 about going to schools' events	Mixed results: exploring what type of events mothers are involved in their role Mixed results: explore what may enhance or hinder their involvement in these events (reason related to school policy, attitudes
15. As a mother of a girl with LD, does your daughter's school help you to know your rights? Prompt: How (if yes or no)? Can you explain and give an example? From your point of view, why do you think this happens (if yes or no)? Prompt: What do you think may enhance or hinder schools from notifying you of your rights as a mother? Is it policies or other thing can you explain?	LS14 School invitations (regarding knowing my rights as a mother of a girl with LD)	Mixed results: two major categories (agree, disagree) therefore, exploring what may enhanced or decreased schools to help mother knowing their rights was vital.
16. Does your daughter's school help you to know more about how to be involved in your daughter's education? How? Can you explain in more detail? Prompt: How do you perceive the school's efforts for you as a mother of a girl with LD? Are they enough? Why do you perceive them this way? Can you explain?	LS14 School invitations regarding helping mothers to be involved in her daughter education	Similar percentages between groups who agreed and disagreed: need further explanations
17.From your experience, can you tell me about your relationship with your daughter's teacher? How do you perceive it? Why? Can you explain in more detail?	None	Further explorations about mother's experiences and perspectives

18. How often did your daughter's teacher invite you to a special event? Prompt: How does she invite you? Prompt: Usually, what types of events does your daughter's teacher invite you to? Prompt: what role did you play in these events? How do you perceive this kind of invitation? Can you explain in more detail?	LS15 Teachers' invitations about school events LS17 about schools' events	Mixed results: need further explorations (how did they invite mothers , their roles in these events) Explore what may hinder or enhance (reasons related to teachers' attitudes, preparation)
19. Do you think you know how to communicate with your daughter's teacher effectively? Can you explain? Why do you perceive it that way (negative/positive)? How do you usually communicate with you daughter's teacher? Can you give me an example? Do you think this way of communication is helpful and enough? Why do you perceive it this way? Can you explain in more detail? What do you prefer?	LS12 Skills and knowledge LS15 Teachers' invitation about communication (notes…) LS17 about communication with teacher.	High percentages needed further explorations. Mixed results, however two groups (rarely - always) had similar percentages (31.5%- 30%). Further explorations are needed. Similar results between groups who answered (rarely or always)
20.From your experience, how did your daughter's teacher keep you informed about your daughter's progress at school? Can you give me an example? Is it helpful? Why do you think that?	LS15 Teachers' invitation about informing mothers regarding their daughters' progress	Higher percentage (rarely, followed by always): explore more about this point form two different perspectives.
21.Has your daughter's teacher explained to you how you should help your daughter in her homework? Can you give me an example? How? Did she give you instructions or any guide? Can you explain in more detail? Prompt: Do you think this has something to do with teachers' preparation?	LS15 Teachers' invitation about explaining or checking my daughter's homework.	Explore how did teachers provided explanations: it may be related with their preparation

22. Has your daughter's teacher provided you with any information regarding community services that you may attend with your family or daughter? How? Can you give me an example? Why do you think your daughter's teacher (did/did not) provide you with this kind of information? Prompt: do you think this kind of invitation is important? Why ?	LS15 Teachers' invitation about providing community service (rarely high percentage)	High percentages: further exploring what type of information were provided.
23 From your experience, have your daughter's teachers invited you to attend IEP meetings? Prompt: How did she invite you? Can you explain? Can you give me an example? Prompt: How often do you meet the teachers to discuss your daughter's needs or goals? Can you give me an example of your role in these meetings? How do you perceive it ? Why do you think your daughter's teacher (invited/did not invite) you to the IEP meetings? Can you explain in more detail?	LS15 Teachers' invitation to IEP meetings LS17 about involved in IEP meetings.	(Rarely high percentage):needed further explorations. These results corresponded with the low teacher's invitation regarding participating in IEP meetings stated above
24. From your experience, how many times did your daughter's teacher invite you to attend a parent conferences? Prompt: Why do you think she (invited/did not invite) you? Prompt: What were your roles in these conferences? Were you allowed to present your daughter's needs or your opinions regarding any obstacles she or you may face? " How did you feel about this conference? Did you feel that teachers had more power than you? Can you give me an example?	LS15 Teachers' invitations (conferences with mothers) LS17 about attending conferences.	High percentages (often, rarely) explore how was the situation in these conferences for mothers from different groups. Mixed results with high percentages for (always, often): explore what happen in these conferences in term of their role and teachers' role, power for each of them

25.From your experience, has your daughter's teacher invited you to volunteer in your daughter's school? How? Can you give me an example? Why do you think she (invited/did not invite) you? Can you explain in more detail?	LS15 Teachers' invitation to volunteer	Rarely was high: needed further explorations.
Prompt: Do you think you have not had the chance to volunteer in your daughter's school or classroom? Why? Can you explain in more detail?	LS17 about volunteering.	Rarely was high: needed further explorations.
26. How often did your daughter ask you to attend a special event? Can you give me an example? Why do you think she (invited/did not invite) you? From your experience, did your daughter ask you to communicate with her teacher? Can you give me an example? Why do you think you were (invited/not invited) to communicate with her teacher? Prompt: Do you think it is because of her disability or other reason? can you explain? From your perspective, do you think that having a daughter with LD makes you want to be more involved? Can you explain?	LS16 Daughters' Invitations(attending school 's events) LS16 Daughters' Invitations (communicating with teacher) None	Mixed results: explore from mothers' perspectives why daughters invited them; is it because of their disability or other reasons (e. negative attitudes from their peers, teachers..etc) + explore why mothers were concerned or not about their daughter's invitations . Further explorations about mother's experiences and perspectives
27. After all we have discussed, I would like to know, from your perspective, to what extent do you think you are involved?[SEP]How do you perceive this kind of involvement? (as she names it) Prompt: Why do you perceive it this way? Do you think it is working?[SEP]Do you think it is worth it? Do you think your voice is important? Why?	None	Further explorations about mothers' perspectives
28. What do you think enhances or hinders your involvement? Challenging	None	Further explorations about mothers' perspectives

29. How do you wish to be involved? Prompt: how do you think your involvement can be improved?	None	Further explorations about mothers' perspectives
30. At the end, since you have already answered the questionnaire, why were you interested in participating in the interview? Is there anything you would like to clarify further? Why was the interview important to you? Did we cover everything of concern to you? Is there anything else you wish to speak about that we have not already covered? Is there anything you wish to ask me at this stage?	None	

Appendix 12: Refine Interview Schedule, Stage 2

Before I begin, I would like to thank you for participating in this interview, which will explore parental (mothers') involvement in mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia. I would like to discuss your experiences regarding your involvement in your daughter's (with learning disabilities) education in mainstream school in Riyadh, and the way you wish to be involved. I want to explore your perspectives and opinions regarding this experience, what are advantages and disadvantages, what were/are the challenges and how it can be improved.. Your interview will be recorded and used only for the purpose of the study. It will be deleted as soon as it will be transcribed. If you agree, I will provide you with the consent form to sign so it is clear that you agree about all what has been mentioned.

1.**Introductory question**s

-Can you tell me more about your daughter with Learning disabilities LD?

-Can you tell me more about your experience as a mother of girl with Learning disabilities ?

-Why do you perceive it this way? Can you explain? Prompt: does it make you different mother? In terms of what? Can you explain?

To build a rapport with my participants

2.**Experiences and perceptions (actual involvement)**

-Do you like to be involved in your daughter's education, why? Prompt: what motivated you about being involved in your daughter's education? Why? can you give an example? Prompt: What motive you the most?

- What is important about your involvement? Why, can you explain? Prompt: do you feel that you should (or not)? Why

From your perspectives, can you describe what is PI to you? What do you think is needed to have good involvement?
-- Can you give me an example of where you as a mother have been involved in your daughter's education, how did you perceive? why? Can you give me another example? (to get more aspect about her involvement) .

- Frome your experience, can you give me an example about a time you wish (wanted) to be involved? Why? can you give me an example? Prompt: do you think involvement make a difference in your daughters' education? How? Prompt: -According to you experiences, how do you wish to be involved? why? Prompt: how do you think your involvement could be improved?

- From your experience, can you tell me about a time when you could not be involved in your daughter'seducation? why do you think this happen? Can you explain?

Have your perceptions about the way you are involved in your daughter' education changed? why (if yes or no) can you explain? Can you give me an example?
I would like to know, from your perspectives, to what extent do you think you are involved? How do you perceive this kind of involvement (as she names it) Prompt: why do you perceive it this way? do you think it is working? Do you think it is worth it? what are advantages or disadvantages of your involvement (as she name it)?

- Is it easy to be involved in your daughter's mainstream schools why? can you explain ? give me an example?

3.**Challenges and barriers**

-From your experiences and perspectives, what do you think would enhance your involvement? Why ? can you give an example?

-From your perspectives, what are the barriers that hinder your PI? prompt: what do you think are the reason of these barriers? Can you explain?

4. **Personal information or living area**

- As far as I know you live in the (name of region), is there a specific reason that you live here? is there any advantages or disadvantages for living here regarding your daughter's education? How can you explain?

Does living in this region (as she name it)affects your involvement? How? in terms of what?

5.Self-efficacy

- Do you believe you are capable to be involved in your daughters' education? in term of what? can you explain? Can you give me an example?

6.Time and energy
 From your answers, you are (employed -not employed) how does this influence your involvement? Can you explain?

According to her answer, I may be able to ask her about time and energy, her job(if she has one).

7.Rights and voice

- From your perspectives, do you think you have the right to be involved in your daughter's education? Why? In term of what? Can you explain?

- Do you think your voice is important? why? can you explain more? From your experience, did you have a voice regarding your daughter's education? How? can you give me an example? Why do you perceive it this way(yes-no)? Prompt: as mothers of girl with LD, do you know what are your legal rights? Promot: do you wish to know these rights? Why?

8.Invitations from school

- From your experience, can you tell me more about your daughters' mainstream school? Prompt:? why do you usually visit your daughter's school? Can you give me an example?

 What does your daughters' school (afford or not) for you as a mother of girl with Learning disabilities (As her answer goes, I may be able to ask more about schools' events helping her to know her rights) .
9.Communications with teachers

From your experience, can you tell me more about your relationship with your daughter's teacher? Prompt: what

can enhance or decrease your relation with your daughter's teacher? Can you explain?

How do you usually communicate with your daughters' teacher? Can you give me an example? Can you give me

another example? (to get more aspect about her involvement).

Have your daughter's teacher invite you to be involved in your daughters' education? how can you give me an

example? How do you perceive this kind (as she names it) of involvement? why do you perceive it this way?

What do you think about this kind of involvement(as she name it)? What is difficult about it? Can you explain further?

- IEP is crucial for your daughter, from your experience, have you been a member on the IEP team? have you been participating in writing your daughter's educational goals? How? If yes, what were your roles in IEP meeting? Prompt: is there any an agreement that you sign or read? if not, why do you think you did not be involved? Can you explain further?
- At the end, since you have already answered the questionnaire, why were you interested in participating in the interview? Why was the interview important to you? Is there anything you would like to clarify further? Did we cover everything of concern to you? Is there anything else you wish to speak about that we have not already covered? Is there anything you wish to ask me at this stage?

Some additional questions might come up during the interview, and some questions will be asked according to participants' responses. For example, "tell me more or can you give an example?''

Appendix 13: choosing Interview Participants

LS	Highest	Lowest
Parent role construction	40	30
Self efficacy	18	9
Skill and knowledge	16	4
Time and energy	16	7
School's Invitations	16	4
Teacher Invitations	36	9
Daughter's Invitations	8	2
Actual mothers' Involvement	28	14

Summary of selected mothers and their scores

Region	Mother name	Number in SPSS	Educational level	Employed	Income	Parent role construction	Self–efficacy	Skill and knowledge	Time and energy	school's invitation	Teacher's invitations	Daughters' invitations	Reported mothers' involvement
North		33	Primary	YES	2000 and less	33	16	13	15	14	21	5	25
			Bachelor	YES	7001-10000	39	12	6	12	8	14	4	23
		11	Bachelor	no	15000 and above	33	16	8	12	9	11	5	21
		19	Bachelor	NO	10001-15000	37	15	10	16	6	12	2	23
South		6	Intermediate	NO	5001-7000	31	16	12	11	12	13	4	16
East		27	Graduate study	YES	5001-7000	38	14	11	12	8	22	6	27
West		38	Bachelor	YES	5001-7000	30	13	12	12	12	27	6	27
		47	High school	NO	5001-7000	38	13	13	12	6	20	4	19
		49	Bachelor	YES	5001-7000	37	15	12	10	4	16	6	14

	■											
Mi ddl e	■	37	Grad uate study	YES	Mo re tha n 15 00 0	35	17	10	13	9	18	4	26

Appendix 14: Consent Form

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Title of Research Project: where are parents? An exploration of parent Involvement in primary mainstream schools in Saudi Arabia for parents of children with learning disabilities

CONSENT FORM

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project. I understand that:

There is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation and may also request that my data be destroyed

I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me

Any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications or academic conference or seminar presentations. All information I give will be treated as confidential The researcher will make every effort to preserve my anonymity.

....

(Signature of participant)   (Date)

(Printed name of participant)

....

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher.

Contact phone number of researcher: 0096654646753
If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

Sb714@Exeter.ac.uk
OR s.binammar@gmail.com
First supervisor: Dr. Hazel Lawson. Email: H.A.Lawson@exeter.ac.uk
Second supervisor: Dr. James Hall .Email address: J.Hall3@exeter.ac.uk

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection. Legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form

Appendix 15: Mothers' Profiles

Mona's Profile

Mona falls in the category of employed, educated, and involved mothers. She is highly educated and worked as a doctor at the University. She is between 36-40 years of age, and her monthly income of the family is above 15,000 Riyal. By looking at her total scores for each scale in the questionnaire, I could tell Mona had really high self-efficacy and skill, and was knowledgeable regarding involvement in her daughter's education at home and school. She also had good involvement and communication with her daughter's general teachers and principal. A remarkable clarification that should be made here is that Mona was the only mother who viewed her involvement in her daughter's mainstream school as easy; the reasons will be explained herein.

In the interview, Mona clearly explained her points of view. I did not have to clarify any questions since she could express her feelings, perspectives, and needs smoothly and adequately. Mona's perspectives and definitions of Parent involvement (PI) were comprehensive and accurately reflected her knowledge and educational level. To explain, Mona defined it as a shared responsibility— partnerships between school and home—that complemented and enhanced her involvement and explained her attitudes. She truly believed the need to have a partnership between mothers, school, and home. These beliefs were obvious in her attitudes. To clarify, Mona's attitudes could be summarized by saying she is demanding, confronting, and forcing both school and teacher to respond to her needs and those of her daughter as well. Accordingly, it was not surprising that her voice is partly heard.

Although Mona had good relationships with both the general and special education teachers, she indicated that she has never been invited to Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings. Mona clarified her need to be more involved in her daughter's educational plan so her daughter would have better educational and social progress. Furthermore, Mona was really confident about her abilities to help her daughter at home; yet, she clarified that it is demanding and that she spends much time with her daughter at home. Her job did not restrict her involvement except when it sometimes prevented her from attending parents' meetings. Even so, she could manage her time to regularly visit her daughter's school early in the morning before her own lectures.

Through Mona's interview, it was clear how the power of group voice could make some changes in a school in terms of parents' involvement in their daughters' educations. This was evident when she provided an example where she and other mothers made demands of the school and teacher.

Nora's Profile

Nora falls in the categories of employed and educated, and she is an involved mother as well. She is in the 46-50 years of age category. She holds a master's degree and works as a lecturer at the University. Her family's monthly income is between 5,001-7,000 Riyal. Similarly, relative to the other mothers in this group, her total scores for each scale in the questionnaire (see appendix H) revealed very high self-efficacy, skill, and knowledge regarding involvement in her daughter's education at home and school.

Nora's perceptions, beliefs about her abilities, and her nature to help influence the way she acted with her daughter's teacher and with her daughter as well. To clarify, Nora has very high self-efficacy, she truly believes in her skills and abilities, and she believes that anyone could make a difference if they wanted to. She never gives up or feels frustrated because of her daughter's disabilities or when she is faced with bad attitudes. Instead, she is willing to do whatever it takes to ensure her daughter's success.

What is interesting about Nora is her willingness, which could be seen through her interview. What makes her willingness unique, however, is how it is translated into actions. In other words, the way she advocates, fights, demands, and insists on communicating with teachers and criticising whenever there are things she doesn't like—all of these actions are considered evidence of powerful attitudes, which explains why she is highly involved in her daughter's education.

At home, Nora has always encouraged her daughter and attempted to develop her cognitive and social skills. Similarly, at the school, Nora has never felt ashamed about her daughter's disabilities; instead, she feels proud of her daughter and has always advocated for her child's rights. For instance, she confronted the teacher when her daughter was insulted and pulled out of class. She has criticised the way her daughter's school held parents' meetings, she has insisted on having more communication with teachers and on having a larger role in these meetings; eventually, she did. Interestingly, Nora's insistence could be related to her passion for leaving a remarkable influence on anything she does; she has the passion to make a difference, as she always has, for her daughter. Nora seeks change and refuses to blindly obey school rules or routines. She knows and believes that she has made a difference with her daughter's school and teachers because her points of view were considered. Nora believes that she is involved at an average level and that her voice is heard relatively well.

Through her experience, Nora has encountered some teachers who resist changing and others who encourage her involvement. Currently, she has a good relationship with her child's teachers, apparently because of her attitudes. Yet, she also indicates that more communication and involvement is needed. Furthermore, although Nora is employed, she could better manage her time to be involved in her daughter's education. She has always visited her daughter's school and attended parents' meetings.

To summarize, after this interview, I believe Nora is involved because of positive teachers and the school that guides the teachers. Her involvement also

stems from her beliefs and powerful attitudes. She is not the type of person to give up easily. She has a goal where she wants to help her daughter overcome her disability, and she believes she can do that. It could be argued that her daughter's success is related to her beliefs and involvement at home and school as well.

Gamila's Profile

Gamila falls in the category of employed, educated, and uninvolved mothers. She is in the 36-40 years of age category and has a bachelor's degree. She lives in the west region of Riyadh city, and has a family income between 5,001-7,000 Riyal. Her total scores in the questionnaire as indicated in (appendix H), show low scores in school and teachers' invitations, and low actual involvement in the school as well (e.g. attending parents' meetings and visiting her daughter's school).

Gamila's perspectives about focus on helping her daughter on her homework. Thus, it could be assumed that Gamila likes to be involved more at home than at school. She also, however, indicates that PI also means communication between her and her child's teacher. Gamila clarified that teachers are not communicating or inviting her to participate in any manner; teachers are only informing her about her daughter's weakness. Hence, she wants to discuss her daughter's situation and needs, but this communication could be in another form (e.g. WhatsApp) rather than face-to-face.

To justify her position, Gamila states that she has special circumstances since her husband died; she has 6 children, including her daughter with learning disabilities. Also, her job prevents her attendance at her daughter's school. Accordingly, Gamila felt delinquent in her efforts towards her daughter since Gamila did not put forth much effort to help her. Gamila also indicates that she needs to communicate with teachers more, yet she cannot because of her circumstances. Gamila also indicates that she can come to school in urgent circumstances. Furthermore, although Gamila says that she can contribute to her daughter's education at home, she still believes that it is the school's responsibility to teach her daughter at school.

Through the interview, I tried to simplify questions and give some examples so she could answer without any leading questions; however, her answers do not match her educational level. Somehow, she couldn't express her feelings directly. Gamila also hesitated for a while before answering some questions. For instance, she said, 'Can I say how I feel?' Furthermore, through this interview, I learned that things should not be judged as they appear on the surface. For instance, pi lack does not only refer to lack of invitations from teachers and school, as it appeared initially in the questionnaire. The interview helped me to explore other reasons for this lack of involvement that prevent mothers from participating in school.

Alhanouf's Profile

Alhanouf falls in the category of educated, not employed, not involved mothers. She is in the 36-40 years of age category and has a high school degree. She lives in the west region of Riyadh city, and her family income is between 5,001-7,000 Riyal. Her total scores in the questionnaire, as indicated in (appendix H), show low scores in school and teachers' invitations and low actual involvement in the school in terms of attending parents' meetings and visiting her daughter's school. Through this interview, I tried to simplify the questions to the mother and use easier terminology, providing examples so that mother could easily understand the main point of the question.

Alhanouf's perspectives about PI are focused on communication with teachers regarding her daughter's situation; yet, she clarified an interesting point about quality by stating that teachers must not isolate her daughter because of her disability. This view dominated all her answers throughout the interview, and it is justified because she is concerned about labelling. For instance, Alhanouf refused to enrol her daughter in the learning disabilities program because Alhanouf thought it was for people who are stupid. Alhanouf sought help from another teacher at home; however, it was not because she does not have time— it was because she refused to enrol her daughter in the program. It is interesting that Alhanouf conditionally accepted her daughter's enrolment after Alhanouf was convinced by her sister, who explained that the program was just considered a remedial class. Throughout the interview, Alhanouf indicated that she was not happy with the label at all, mentioning this several times directly and indirectly in her answers. For instance, Alhanouf's refusal to enrol her daughter is indirect evidence about how she feels about labelling. She also mentioned it explicitly: 'I'm upset because I don't like the name of the program,' and 'I don't like the name of the label, why don't they change it?'

Alhanouf is willing to be involved and do whatever she can for her daughter; however, teachers are not inviting her to participate. Alhanouf does not always attempt to communicate with teachers because of her bad experiences with them. When she attempted to communicate and ask about her daughter, she was told by one of general teachers that she does not understand at all; that really hurt her to the extent that she cried. Because of that experience and teachers' attitudes, Alhanouf has avoided communicating further. Yet, this is not the only reason preventing her from communicating. For instance, she is fearful that the teacher will become angry at her daughter, and she is afraid to express her point of view and risk being embarrassed by teachers because she is a mother of a girl with a disability. Another reason for Alhanouf's hesitancy to communicate with teachers is that she believes teachers are more qualified than she is. She also indicated similarities between her and teachers, but she emphasized that teachers are more powerful because of their positions.

Furthermore, Alhanouf clarified that she did not feel welcome because she assumed the teachers would not accept her point of view as the mother of a girl with learning disabilities. This is understandable because, deep inside, she felt that her daughter has shortcomings and that all teachers will treat her according to her daughter's disability. Interestingly, Alhanouf did not put all the blame on

teachers and schools regarding lack of invitations; she admitted that part of the problem may be because she did not attempt to communicate often with teachers. Additionally, the only reason that this mother wants to know her rights is to understand what learning disabilities are. Through this interview, it was clear that labelling dominates the mother's answers and, accordingly, her attitudes and her involvement. It reflect that labelling not only influences the students but also stigmatises their families.

Abrar Profile

Abrar falls in the category of educated, employed, and not involved mothers. She is in the 36-40 years of age category and has a bachelor's degree. Abrar lives in the west region of Riyadh city, and her family income is between 5,001-7,000 Riyal.

Abrar's perceptions about relate to two methods of communication. She indicates that mothers must be enrolled in their daughters' education and know about any problem their daughters may face from the beginning. She feels mothers need to be involved and understand what her daughters may face or need. This outlook may be due to Abrar's experiences where she was belatedly informed about her daughter's academic problems and her daughter was referred to the learning disabilities program. In terms of self-efficacy, skill and knowledge, Abrar believes in her abilities to help her daughter and clarifies that she has the skill and knowledge to do so.

Through the interview, I could feel Abrar's pain and how she is suffering. This emotion may be related to her other two children (sons) with learning disabilities who were not provided all educational services they needed. This suffering was clear in her tone and in the way she expresses her opinions and perspectives. Abrar sought many outsiders' help in order to understand her daughter's situation; she felt hopeless and lost as well. Although Abrar indicates her willingness to be involved and her need to communicate and have a voice, she is one of the mothers who became careless because of her bad experiences; however, her willingness is still there, deep within, waiting for the chance to be transferred to reality.

During the interview, no questions were clarified. Abrar could express her point of view clearly. I asked some questions in order to clarify some of her answers in the questionnaire, which were different than what she was presenting in the interview. In addition, I was challenged in some parts of the interview because Abrar talked on unrelated topics; this made me narrow our conversation to be more focused.

Furthermore, this interview was the longest. Abrar wanted to talk even when she was reminded at the beginning of the interview that it was only scheduled for an hour. This may be related to how Abrar sometimes went off the interview's path; yet, it also indicated her eagerness to talk and express her points of view. It may also indicate that Abrar needs someone who can listen and with whom she could share her perspectives and concerns. This is not to say that all other mothers did not have the willingness to talk; rather, it may be that Abrar

could not control her eagerness to talk. One vital point needs to be mentioned about Abrar: She was advised to not confront a leader in the ministry who had offended her daughter. This may indicate how schools do not support mothers and also may imply who has the power.

Sara Profile

Sara falls in the category of educated, not employed, not involved mother. She is in the 46-50 years of age category and has a bachelor's degree. Sara lives in the north region of Riyadh city, an her family income is above 15,000 Riyal. Her total scores on the questionnaire as indicated in (appendix H) show low scores in school and teachers' invitations, and low actual involvement in the school as well (e.g. attending parent meetings and visiting her daughter's school). Sara experienced living in the United States, and that influenced her beliefs as will be clarified later in this profile.

Sara perceived PI as two ways of communication between her and the teacher, sharing ideas and providing information so that she can help her daughter, which is her main concern. Sara is willing to help since it is her nature; in the United States, she participated in some activities. She is attempting to do more investigation regarding learning disabilities and related teaching strategies in order to help her daughter. Sara's biggest motivation to become involved is her daughter; yet, it is related not only to her role as a mother but also to her daughter's disability
.
Furthermore, Sara indicated a good experience with the LD teacher who has left. Yet, the rest of Sara's interview indicated much pain, suffering, lack of attention, lack of help, and lack of invitations from teacher and school. It also included mixed feelings between feeling ignored and lost, and having pity for her daughter.

Additionally, Sara is not happy about mainstream schools in term of teachers' communication with mothers and students as well. She believes that there is a lack in teacher preparation programs as well. Sara was influenced by bad experiences with teachers, which influenced her attitudes; she has become careless and does not want to communicate anymore. Furthermore, labelling's influence appears in Sara's interview several times. For instance, she hid the enrolment of her daughter in a learning disabilities program from her husband in the beginning because of the way people with disabilities are perceived in our society. Also, after she talked to her husband, he denied and refused to say that her daughter had any kind of disabilities. Sara also refused to reveal her daughter's diagnosis to the ministry of education so that it would not be in her educational file and stigmatise her all her life. As mentioned earlier, because of Sara's experience in the United States, she was comparing cultures in terms of a mother's relationship with teachers, mothers' rights and many other examples. Not surprisingly, because of this comparison, Sara truly felt the lack of her involvement and emphasized her needs in terms of having the right to be involved in her daughter's education and her need to be heard as well.

In this interview, no further clarifications or examples were needed to provide clarification. Sara provided sufficient and informative answers for each question I asked. Sara's answers reflect her need to be heard. This is not surprising as she mentioned it at the beginning of the interview.

Hanan's Profile

Hanan is an educated, employed and uninvolved mother. She has a bachelor's degree, she lives in the northern part of Riyadh city, and her family income is between 7,001 and 10,000 ryals. She is between 26 and 30 years old. Her total scores on the questionnaire, as shown in (appendix H), show slightly lower scores in school and teachers' invitations, as well as in her actual involvement in the school. Hana was one of the mothers who had lived in the USA for a period of time (with her sister); thus, comparisons between cultures(Saudi and USA) WAS made.

In terms of self-efficacy, skills and knowledge, Hanan seemed confident about her ability to help her daughter with her schoolwork. Hanan has a perspective similar to Mona regarding PI: she defines it as partnership between the school, the teacher and home. She truly believes that schools and teachers influence students' social and academic development. She is very willing to help her daughter in any way. Part of this willingness is related with her own past as a child. She believes that her daughter is ignored in class because she is calm and shy, just as she was at her age. Thus, she expects the school, the teacher, and herself to help her daughter to build her and increase her self-esteem. Despite her beliefs, she is quite clear regarding shortcomings in the school's invitations, as they have never carried out any parent's meetings or invited her to be involved in her daughter's education in any way. Moreover, she has never met with the LD teacher regarding her daughter's educational goals, nor has she ever been invited to any other event. However, she had a good experience with one teacher, who communicated with her via WhatsApp.

What is interesting about Hanan is that she does not blame the teacher for not inviting her. She totally understands that teachers are overwhelmed with multiple tasks during the day because of her own prior experience as a teacher. Yet this understanding does not mean that she excuses the teacher from attempting to involve mothers in some way. She emphasised the importance of using social media for communication between the school, teachers and mothers, so that the latter could be involved and updated. Furthermore, Hanan is the kind of mother who admits her own faults. For instance, she admitted that the lack of school invitations (mother's meetings, which were never held) was due in part to mothers' attitudes, which may be passive, such that the mothers never negotiate with teachers or ask the school to hold such a meeting. Yet she does also blame the authorities within the education system.

Hanan explained that her job prevented her from being involved in her daughter's education. She does not have much time to spend on her daughter's homework like before; that's why she has a teacher who helps her at home. However, this is not the only way her job restricts her PI. Hanan's job demands evidence regarding any school event that she may attend. Obviously, there are no invitations that she can provide. Furthermore, Hana's experience in the USA seemed to influence her attitudes and beliefs regarding the relationship between home and the school. For instance, throughout the interview, she made a lot of

comparisons between Saudi mainstream schools and US public schools in terms of mothers' roles and rights, schools' invitations and teachers' method of communication.

Roqya's Profile

Roqya is an educated, unemployed and uninvolved mother. She is between 31 and 35 years old and has a bachelor's degree. She lives in the northern part of Riyadh, and her family income is between 10,000 and 15,000. As shown in(appendix H), her total scores on the questionnaire were low for school and teachers' invitations, as well as for actual involvement in the school. Roqya has also lived in the UK, and this has influenced her beliefs.

Roqya views PI as two-way communication between her and her daughter's teachers, which she believes can be carried out in many ways (e.g., face-to-face, messages, meetings). Since she was a child, she has always believed in the importance of mothers' role in their daughter's education. Her own childhood experiences and the way she used to see her mom influenced her perspectives and attitudes. Interestingly, she also viewed PI as giving her access to power, thereby giving her a voice and helping her to not to feel marginalised. This view may have been influenced by her experiences in the UK, as she made many comparisons between her involvement in her daughter's education in the UK and in Saudi mainstream schools. Roqua made clear comparisons regarding teaching strategies, teachers' passion and professionalism. Furthermore, because of her comparative perspective, Roqya wants to change the educational environment in Saudi mainstream schools (in terms of the strategies used with students), developing more teacher preparation programmes that can help teachers learn to engage with mothers. Interestingly, she made it clear that not just any one can be a special education teacher in terms of dealing with students and their mothers.

Roqya had high self-efficacy, since she believes in her ability to help her daughter at home and is willing to do so. However, her abilities and willingness weren't utilised, appreciated or even requested by her daughter's schoolor by her daughter's teacher. This shows that she suffers because her daughter's teacher does not communicate with her in the way she wants or needs, which contrasts with her UK experience. Roqya has had many bad experiences with teachers in terms of their attitudes (e.g., informing, ignoring, resisting admitting problems or providing help). Roqya is the type of mother who will confront teachers about their shortcomings in their interactions with her daughter or with her. Yet she is not the type who follow up on her confrontations, which may due to fear of the teachers.

After interviewing three mothers who had had multiple cultural experiences (Saudi, global), I concluded that having the opportunity to live in two different cultures enhanced the mothers' ability to compare and made them less likely to just accept the things they were used to. This is not to say that comparisons don't occur within the same culture as well, yet comparisons may be stronger and more profound when individuals have experience with another place. That is, living in another culture allows individuals to be a part of the experience. All three mothers' comparisons were based on first-hand evidence, rather than on what they had heard from others.

May's profile

May is educated, unemployed and uninvolved as a mother. She is between 36 and 40 years old and holds an intermediate degree. She lives in the southern part of Riyadh city, and her family income is between 5001-7000 Riyal. Her total scores on the questionnaire, as indicated in(appendix H), show slightly low scores in school and teacher invitations, as well as in her actual involvement in the school.

May perceived PI as communication between her and the teachers. However, she indicated that this communication should be via WhatsApp. This may be understandable, as she is a busy mother with six children. May indicated that handling her responsibilities at home and with her children prevented her from being involved in her daughter's education. It requires a lot of time and energy, since the mother is the only one responsible for following up on her children's educational goals. She believes that involved mothers needed to be free from any other responsibilities. Moreover, May indicated a lack of invitations from the teacher and the school. Her daughter's school never held parents' meetings. To me, this was shocking. The only time she was invited to her daughter's school was to discuss her daughter's absences.

Despite the lack of invitations, May still believes that the school and the teacher do their jobs in terms of her daughter's education. Thus, she does not have to be involved. Furthermore, the lack of invitations, being a busy mother and her beliefs about school were not the only reasons for Mona's lack of involvement. Mona was the only mother who indicated clearly that she was not willing to be involved in her daughter's education in any way, even if she was invited, except for attending the graduation ceremony or for something urgent. These findings place Mona in contrast with all other mothers who were interviewed. Additionally, the influence of labelling was evident in Mona's interview as well. She indicated that she initially refused to enrol her daughter in the LD programme. Her eventual acceptance was conditional, since she was told that the LD classes were considered remedial classes only, and not a kind of special education, although they are. Similarly, in another part of the interview, May clearly criticised labelling and asked why students with LD should be considered to have special education needs.

Interestingly, May clarified that she wanted to know her rights as a mother of a girl with LD so that she could have better understanding. Through her answers in the interview, it could be seen that Mona was more concerned about her daughter being labelled with LD than about being involved in her education or enhancing her rights.

Because of May's educational level, some clarification was needed for some questions. I tried to simplify the questions so that she could understand them.

Khadiga's Profile
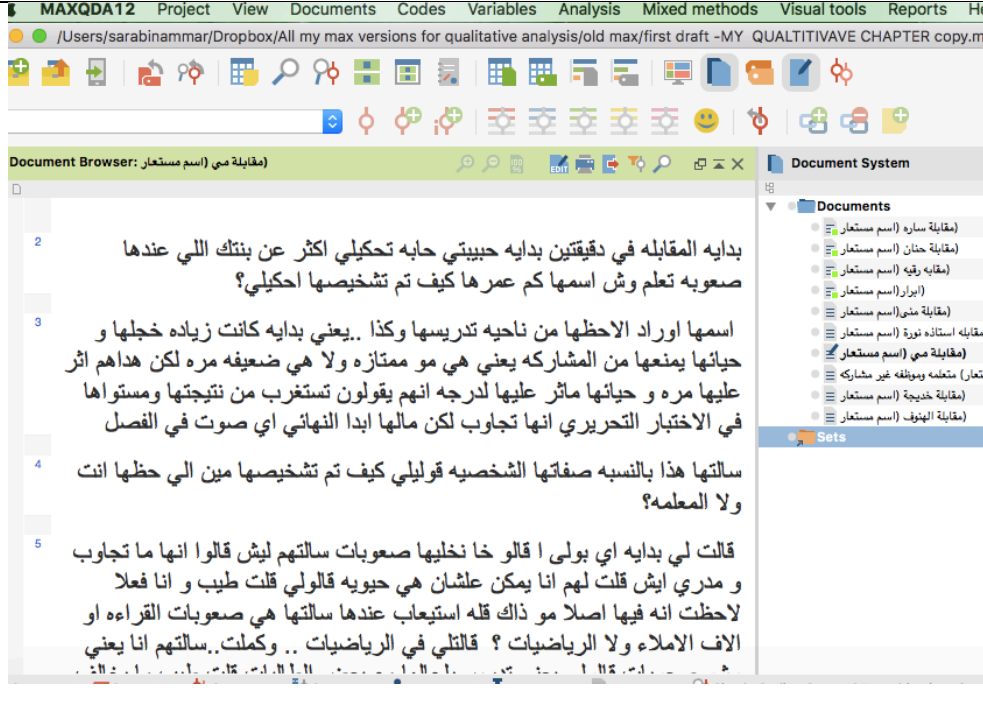
Khadiga lives in the northern area of Riyadh city. She is employed, educated and involved. However, her educational level is the lowest, as she has only her primary certificate; she has worked in schools as a helper and in the food centre. She is less than 25 years old, and her family income is less than 2,000 ryals. Her total scores on the questionnaire were high in terms of self-efficacy and involvement. Yet Khadiga's scores tell only part of the story. Her daughter was moved from one school to another, so she has had two different experiences. At the previous school, Khadiga had good communication and a good relationship with her daughter's teachers and felt welcomed. At the new school, in contrast, the communication problems with the teacher are so severe that she wants to go back to the other school. However, at neither school has she been involved in her daughter's educational plan or any IEP meetings.

Khadiga's view of PI was quite simple and direct. She explained that PI meant that two people would communicate regarding her daughter, thereby characterising it as two-way communication between the teacher and the mother. Although Khadiga indicated that more communication is needed with teachers, she still believes that the school and the teacher know more than her and are more skilled in terms of dealing with her daughter's education and goals. This belief appeared several times during her interview, and it also could be seen in her attitudes, such as her acceptance of what she had been told by teachers regarding her daughter and her unwillingness to ever confront them. She doesn't havestrong opinions like other mothers that would lead her to confront teachers or try to force them to change their practices. Furthermore, her daughter's disability influenced her social behaviour, as she chose to hide her disability from other members of her family to avoid discrimination against her daughter. Academically, Khadija was pushing her daughter harder to do her work perfectly in order avoid complaints from other teachers. All of these attitudes may be due to her low educational level or to her social surroundings, in which people with disabilities were viewed as deficient.

Regarding her self-efficacy, skills and knowledge, it seems that Khadiga provided a conditional but honest answer when she indicated that she could help her daughter and was willing to do so only with what she understood. She also clarified that she wanted to help her more in math, but her educational level as a mom prevented her from doing so.

During this interview, I had to clarify many questions, and I offered several examples to simplify some questions. I have always encouraged her to feel free to talk using her own words to express her opinions. Her answers were simple but accurate. However, there were some challenges regarding this interview, both during the interview itself and during analysis. For example, because it was conducted at school, there was a lot of distractions, including the kids' noises and bells ringing; this also influenced the transcript.

Appendix 16: Analysis Process Table

Stage name	Description of what I did	Sample of initial codes, memos, and mind maps used in the analysis process
First stage: Transcriptions + Familiarization with data	1. All Arabic interviews were transcribed in Arabic. Transcripts were essential to informing the early stages of analysis and developing a more thorough understanding of the data. 2. In the attached screenshot, the right side indicates all the participants' transcripts that were imported into the MAXQDA program. Each participant was given a pseudonym name. The left side of the screenshot presents a transcript.	

3. Arabic transcripts were read several times so I could become immersed in the data and become familiar with the "depth and breadth of the content" Braun &Clarke(2006, p. 87).

4. This step was crucial before coding, as it helped shape initial ideas and identify provisional patterns.
5. While reading, I listened to interviews in order to insert any missing words and to re-experience the interviews.
6. During this stage, as shown in the attached screenshot, I took notes. These notes helped me to provisionally "mark" the important ideas that would be coded in the next stage.

MAXQDA12   Project   View   Documents   Codes   Variables   Analysis   Mixed methods   Visual tools   Reports

Memo

Document: (مقابلة مني(اسم مستعار

Linked codes

Title   مقابلة مني اسم مستعار

Author   sarabinammar   Creation date 23/01/2018 9:18 AM

Type

Type label

Lucida Grande   24   B I U

1.mothers' answers are all clear to the point, no further clar

2. it may be that mothers' educational level influnced her in full answers as well
3.interstingly, this mother view pi as parentship .may add to
4. she belive in the power of the group voice.

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Second stage: Generating initial codes

1. As shown in the screenshot, during this stage, initial codes were made against each participant's transcript. Some codes were a short sentence, while others were only one word. These initial codes were very close to the data (often using the participants' own words) without adding any further or deeper interpretations. In other words, initial codes at this stage were data-driven (Braun & Clarke, 2006) since I was aiming "to code the content of the entire data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 89).

2. At this stage, in the MAXQDA program, each participant's transcript was given a colour (e.g., black, red, blue, etc. as shown in the next screenshot) in order to determine how many codes were made within each transcript.

3. The total number of initial codes at this stage was 1164.

4. The list of initial codes was printed as a hardcopy. This step helped me visualise all initial codes from all participants. Using the hard copy helped me to go back and forth between pages as I thought and wrote. As shown in the screenshot, I added comments beside each initial code (e.g., this is repetitive, this is similar to…).
   Repetitive codes were combined with other related codes. This led to a revised set of 977 codes.
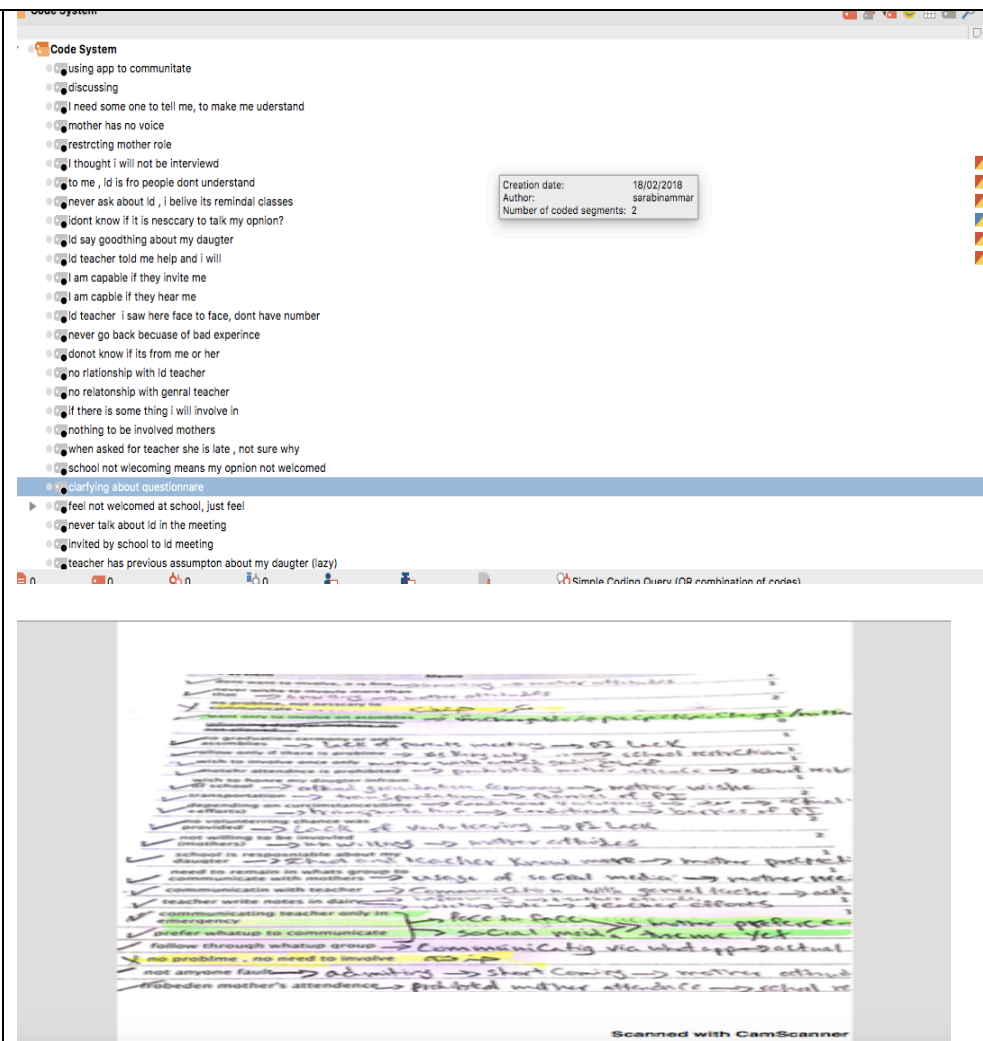
Second stage: Generating initial codes

5. Additionally, at this stage, each codes' extracts were read and revised. As shown in the next screenshot, the right column displays initial code names while the left side shows the codes' extracts. Extracts for each code (as entered into the MAXQDA program) were re-read and checked to ensure that they indicated what participants meant initially. Braun and Clarke (2006) stated that, when using software as I did, researchers should "code by tagging and naming selections of text within each data item"(p.89) . This step was important to assure that the names of initial codes were related to the codes' extracts.
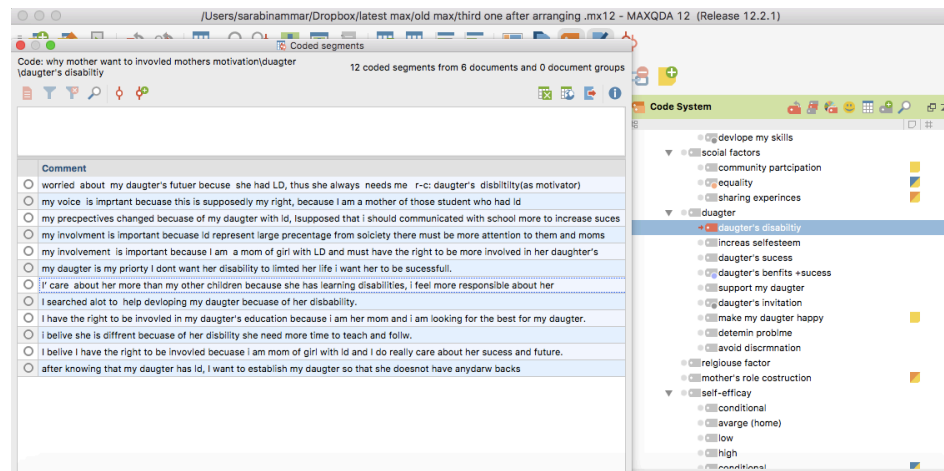
Third Stage: Searching for a theme

1. A new project was created within the MAXQDA program, including the revised versions of the initial codes.

2. Additional comments were added beside each code, as shown on the left side of the screenshot. These comments served as memos to each code (e.g., this could be linked with…, etc.).

3. At this stage, I started drawing manual mind maps to organise codes and initial themes, as shown in the next screenshots. Braun and Clarke (2006) stated that it "may be helpful at this phase to use visual representations to help you sort the different codes into themes. You might use tables, or mind-maps […] and play around with organizing them into theme piles" (p.89).
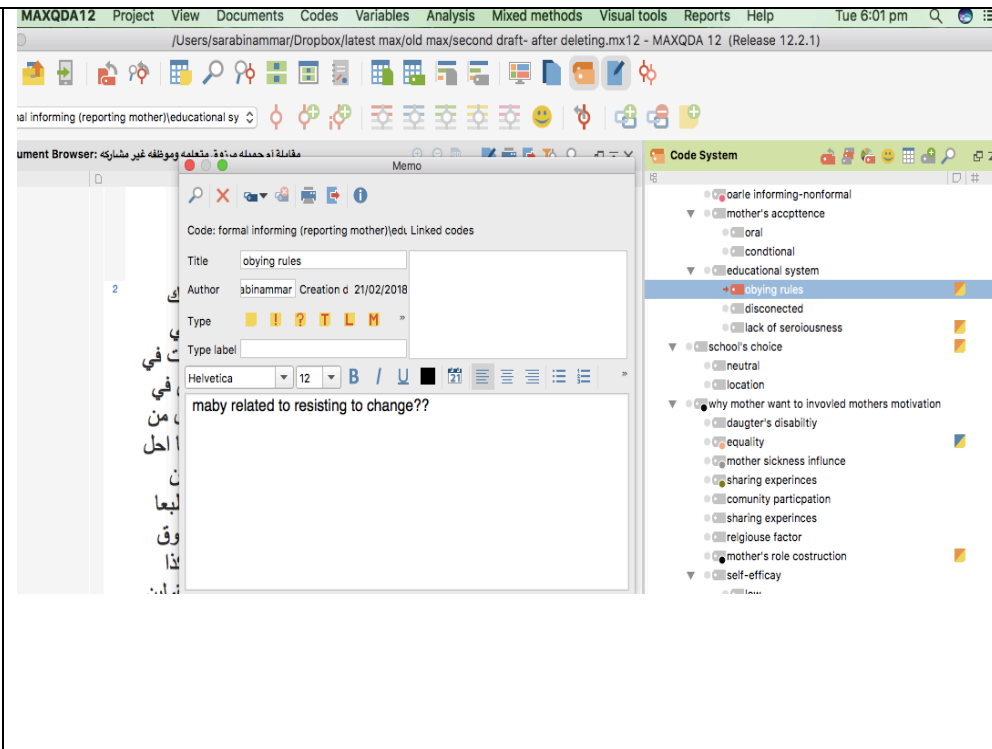
4. Additionally, as shown in the next screenshot, I started grouping codes (categorising) together under initial themes. For this step, I drew on my comments, re-reading of the codes' extracts, memos, and mind maps. The names of the themes at this stage were not the same as those I used at the end. Braun and Clarke(2006) stated that, at this stage, the researcher is "sorting the different codes into potential themes, and collating all the relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes" (p.89). During this stage, I started interpreting and analysing my data in more depth than during the first stage. In other words, I added my assumptions and interpretations as a researcher to the mothers' initial codes. For instance, as shown in the next screenshot, I added a theme I called "why mothers want to be involved," which included many initial codes stated by the mothers (e.g., sharing experience, daughter's' disabilities, etc.).
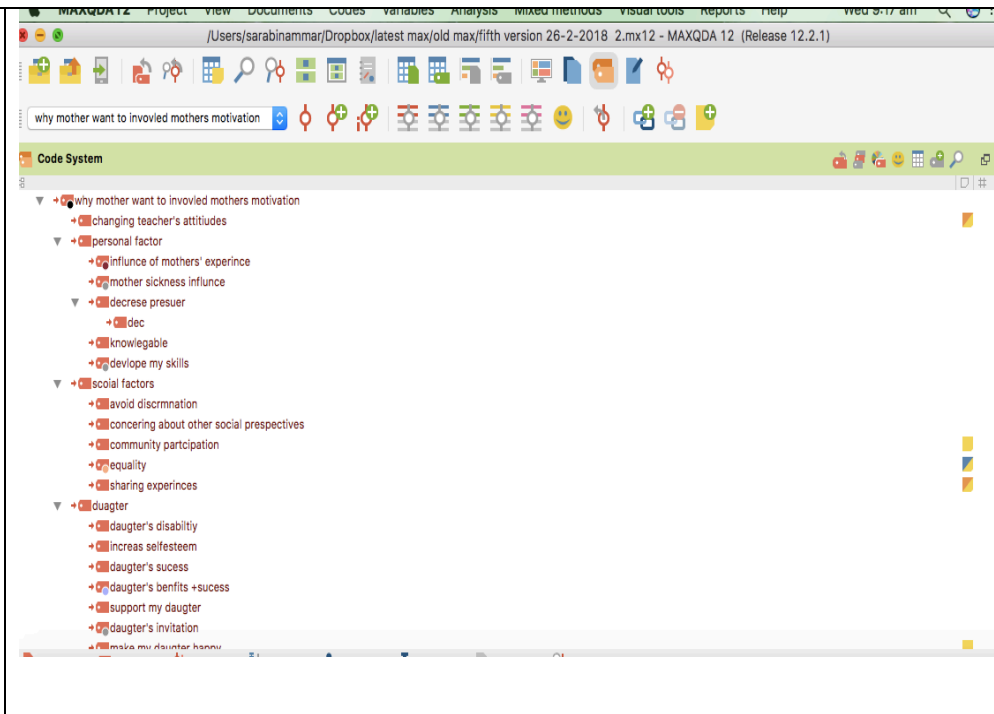
5. Additionally, at this stage, some codes remained alone, as seen in the left side of the screenshot. Beside these codes, I left a memo such as "no theme yet," indicating their isolated nature. As Braun and Clarke (2006) noted, "At this stage, you may also have a set of codes that do not seem to belong anywhere, and it is perfectly acceptable to create a 'theme' called 'miscellaneous' to house the codes – possibly temporarily – that do not seem to fit into your main themes" (p. 90).
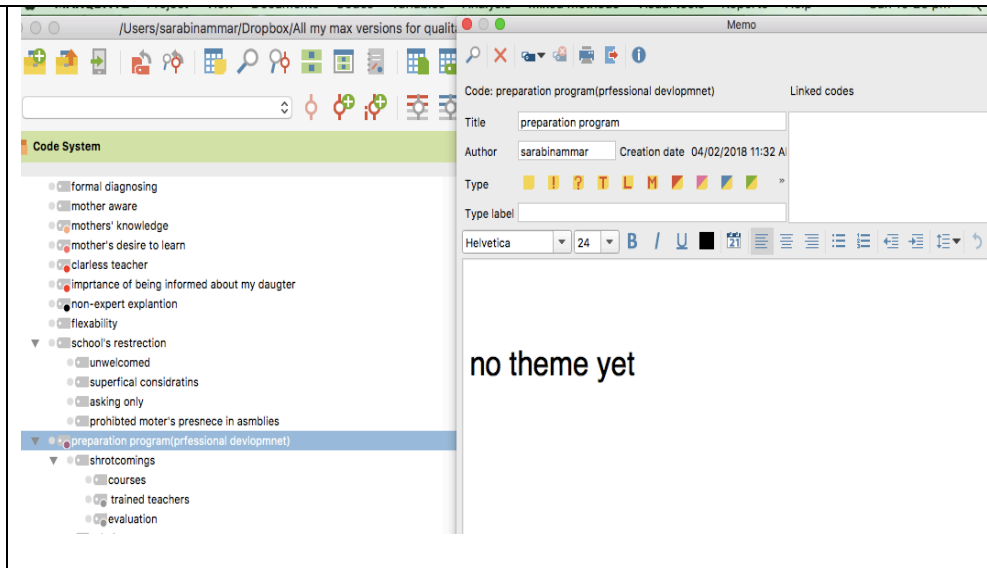
6. At the end of this stage, many themes and subthemes were organised as shown in the next screenshot. However, these were only initial themes and subthemes that could be changed, joined, or separated. To prepare for the refinement of the next stage, I followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) advice: "do not abandon anything at this stage, as without looking at all the extracts in detail (the next phase) it is uncertain whether the themes hold as they are, or whether some need to be combined, refined and separated, or discarded"(pp. 90–91).

Code System

▼ → pi defntions
  → two way of communication
  → PI as sharing ideas+collabration(two way of communication)
  → pi as partnership
  → Pi as a power(equaity)
  → Pi as giving a voice
  → pi as helping in homework
▼ → pi elements
  → willing
  → honset
  → everything
  → not resist to listen
  → understanding
  → passion
  → arranged time
  → experties
  → invitations
  → commen goal
  → evaluting results
  → trust my role and teacher role
  → recpect
  → sharing ideas
  → communicating via whats up

Fourth stage: Reviewing themes

1. At this stage, I re-read all identified themes, subthemes, and codes . I also re-read extracts for each code to ensure they were related. Braun and Clarke (2006) stated, "This phase involves two levels of reviewing and refining your themes. Level one involves reviewing at the level of the coded data extracts. This means you need to read all the collated extracts for each theme, and consider whether they appear to form a coherent pattern" (p. 91). Additionally, I re-read each theme individually to assure that individual themes was related to the whole data set. Braun and Clarke (2006) explained that "at this level, you consider the validity of individual themes in relation to the data set" (p. 91).

2. At this stage, MAXQDA mind maps were used to visualise each code, with its extracts as shown in the next screenshot.
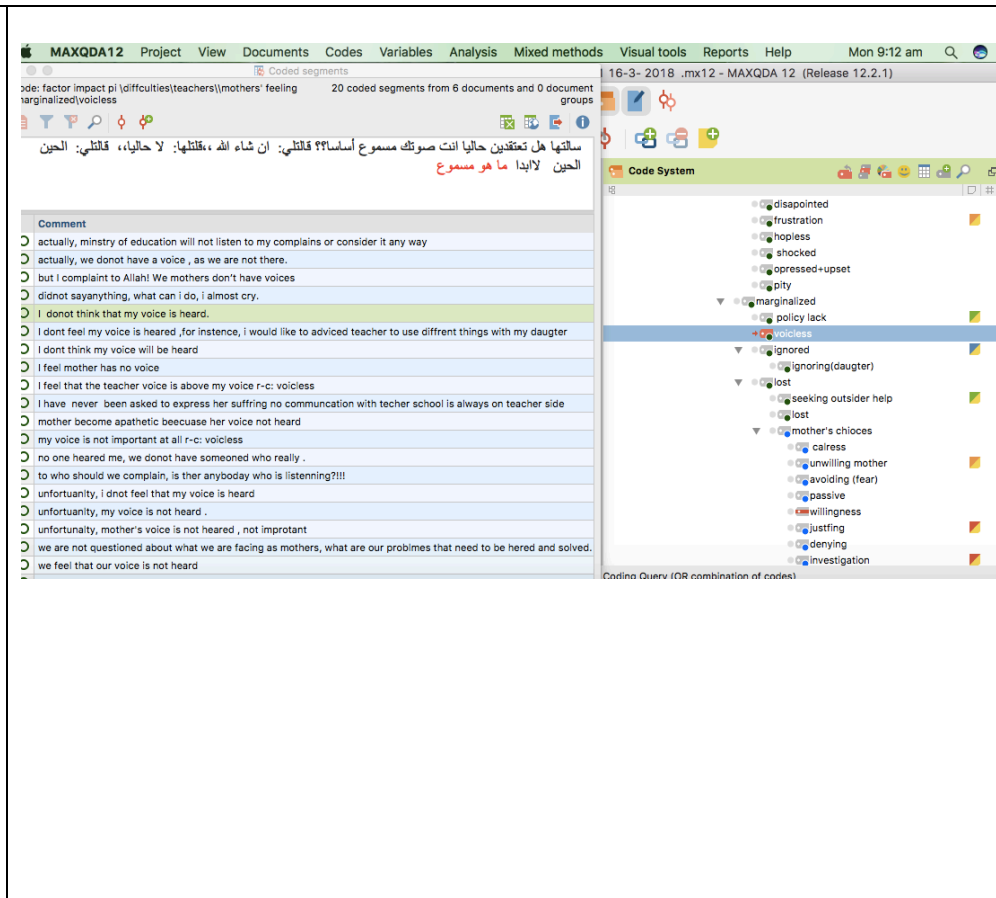
Fourth stage: Reviewing themes	3. While reviewing themes and subthemes, MAXQDA mind maps were used to visualise each theme with its subthemes to ensure they were relevant.	One-Code Model if there is a rule, mothers will apply it. there is no policy that assured my rights as mother of girl with id and gives me the rigt to invovie in her educationi — policy lack — and of courcuse the absence of policy that assure my role in my daugter's education is another reason which decrease my invovle sadly there is no saud policy clarfiy and empasize my rigts as mom of id stus , no poliy force teacher to activte my role in caring calress — willingness — confrontation blaming understanding — mother's chioces — admiting — shrtcomings attmpting — investigation

1. At this stage, names of each theme were identified. I ensured that the meaning of each theme was clear. Braun and Clarke (2006) indicated that by "'define and refine', we mean identifying the 'essence' of what each theme is about (as well as the themes overall), and determining what aspect of the data each theme captures" (p. 92).

2. A table to visualise all themes and subthemes was created as shown in the next screenshot. The green colour refers to theme, the blue colour to subthemes, and the grey colour to sub-subthemes.

mothers' wishes, needs , and rights
- involvment
  - wish
  - need
  - rights
- communication
  - invitations
  - need
  - wish
- voice
  - rights
  - wish
  - need
  - neutral

Mothers' perspectives regarding PI			
PI definitions			
	PI wo way of communication		
	PI as partnership		
	Pi as power		
	PI as helping daughter in doing homework		
Benefits of PI			
	PI benefits fro mothers		
	PI_benefits for teachers		
	PI benefits for daughter		
Relationship between school and home			
	school and teacher know better than me		
	sharing reasonability		
Mothers' Motivation			
	Invitations		
		Daughters' invitation	
		Teachers' invitations	
		Schools' invitations	
	Mothers' roles construction		
	Mothers' experience		
	Healthy issue		
	Daughters' disability		

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	3. Manual mind maps and mind maps software were used in this stage, as shown in the next screenshot. This screenshot clarified themes (green colour), subthemes (blue colour), and codes under each sub-theme (white colour).	
Sixth stage: Producing the report	1. At this stage, a clear story for all themes and subthemes was clarified as indicated in the qualitative findings chapter. I provided clear examples of each data extract, again on the advice of Braun and Clarke (2006). The authors explained, "Your write-up must provide sufficient evidence of the themes within the data, i.e., enough data extracts to demonstrate the prevalence of the theme. Choose particularly vivid examples, or extracts which capture the essence of the point you are demonstrating[…]. Extracts need to be embedded within an analytic narrative that compellingly illustrates the story you are telling about your data, and your analytic narrative needs to go beyond description of the data, and make an argument in relation to your research question" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 93).	

Appendix 17: Data Distribution

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Skewness			Kurtosis		
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	2x Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error	2x Std. Error
Total score of parent construction	165	**-0.446**	0.189	**0.378**	**-0.831**	0.376	**0.752**
Total score of self-effcaciy	157	**-0.032**	0.194	**0.387**	**0.133**	0.385	**0.770**
Total score of skill and knowledge	160	**-0.373**	0.192	**0.384**	**-0.003**	0.381	**0.763**
Total score of time and energy	164	**-0.366**	0.190	**0.379**	**0.679**	0.377	**0.754**
Total score of schools' invitations	160	**0.051**	0.192	**0.384**	**-0.623**	0.381	**0.763**
Total score of teachers' Invtations	162	**0.519**	0.191	**0.381**	**-0.826**	0.379	**0.758**
Total score of Daugter's Invitations	163	**-0.326**	0.190	**0.380**	**-0.967**	0.378	**0.756**
Total score of the actual involvment	160	**0.294**	0.192	**0.384**	**-0.190**	0.381	**0.763**
Valid N (listwise)	142						

Distributions

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Skewness			Kurtosis		
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	2x Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error	2x Std. Error
Total score of parent construction	165	**-0.446**	0.189	**0.378**	**-0.831**	0.376	**0.752**
Total score of self-effcaciy	157	**-0.032**	0.194	**0.387**	**0.133**	0.385	**0.770**
Total score of skill and knowledge	160	**-0.373**	0.192	**0.384**	**-0.003**	0.381	**0.763**

Total score of time and energy	164	**-0.366**	0.190	**0.379**	**0.679**	0.377	**0.754**
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Total score of the actual involvment	160	**0.294**	0.192	**0.384**	**-0.190**	0.381	**0.763**
Valid N (listwise)	142						

Appendix 18: Factor Matrix for Self-efficacy Subscale

	Factor	
	_1_	_2_
LS_12-1	.121	.509
R_LS-12.2	.503	.005
LS_12-3	-.26	.762
R_LS_12_4	.999	.000
LS_12_5	.116	.599

Total Variance Explained

Facto r	Total	Initial Eigenvalues % of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	Extraction Sums of Squared Loading % of Variance	Cumulative %
1	1.826	36.524	36.524	1.281	25.615	25.615
2	1.469	29.374	65.897	1.198	23.962	49.577
3	.687	13.743	79.640			
4	.564	11.290	90.930			
5	.454	9.070	100.000			

Note. Extraction method: maximum likelihood.

Appendix 19: T-test Output

T-TEST GROUPS=Employed (1 2)
 /MISSING=ANALYSIS
 /VARIABLES=LS17AI_Total
 /CRITERIA=CI(.95).

T-Test

Group Statistics

	Employed	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
LS17AI_Total	1	54	24.56	4.917	.669
	2	106	22.75	5.162	.501

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
LS17AI_Total	Equal variances assumed	.000	.996	2.120	158	.036	1.801	.849	.123	3.479
	Equal variances not assumed			2.154	111.481	.033	1.801	.836	.144	3.458

Appendix 20: ANOVA Output

Oneway   **Test of Homogeneity of Variances**

Total score of the actual involvement

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.786	4	155	.134

Descriptives

Total score of the actual involvement

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Lower Bound	95% Confidence Interval for Mean Upper Bound	Minimum	Maximum
North	58	24.12	5.481	.720	22.68	25.56	12	36
south	15	22.20	6.293	1.625	18.72	25.68	13	36
west	50	21.56	3.818	.540	20.47	22.65	14	30
east	28	26.00	4.738	.895	24.16	27.84	18	36
Middle	9	22.22	4.816	1.605	18.52	25.92	15	27
Total	160	23.36	5.136	.406	22.56	24.16	12	36

ANOVA

Total score of the actual involvement

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	422.544	4	105.636	4.340	.002
Within Groups	3772.431	155	24.338		
Total	4194.975	159			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means

Total score of the actual involvement

	Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	5.032	4	36.792	.002
Brown-Forsythe	4.006	4	64.268	.006

Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Total score of the actual involvement

Tukey HSD

(I) Mothers' Living area	(J) Mothers' Living area	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound	Upper Bound
North	south	1.921	1.429	.664	-2.02	5.87
	west	2.561	.952	.060	-.07	5.19
	east	-1.879	1.135	.465	-5.01	1.25
	Middle	1.898	1.767	.820	-2.98	6.78
south	North	-1.921	1.429	.664	-5.87	2.02
	west	.640	1.452	.992	-3.37	4.65
	east	-3.800	1.579	.119	-8.16	.56
	Middle	-.022	2.080	1.000	-5.76	5.72
west	North	-2.561	.952	.060	-5.19	.07
	south	-.640	1.452	.992	-4.65	3.37
	east	-4.440	1.164	.002	-7.65	-1.23
	Middle	-.662	1.786	.996	-5.59	4.27
east	North	1.879	1.135	.465	-1.25	5.01
	south	3.800	1.579	.119	-.56	8.16
	west	4.440	1.164	.002	1.23	7.65
	Middle	3.778	1.890	.272	-1.44	9.00
Middle	North	-1.898	1.767	.820	-6.78	2.98
	south	.022	2.080	1.000	-5.72	5.76
	west	.662	1.786	.996	-4.27	5.59
	east	-3.778	1.890	.272	-9.00	1.44

Homogeneous Subsets

Total score of the actual involvement

Tukey HSD

Mothers' Living area	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05 1	2
west	50	21.56	
south	15	22.20	22.20
Middle	9	22.22	22.22
North	58	24.12	24.12
east	28		26.00
Sig.		.475	.112

Means Plots
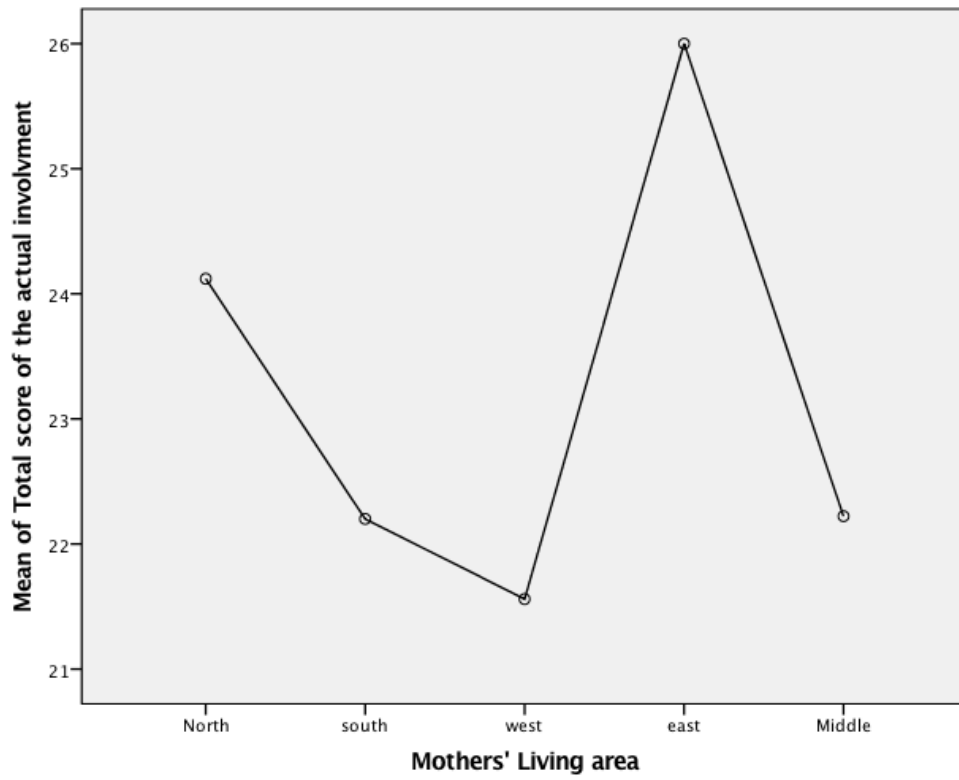
Appendix 21: Regression Output

			Adjusted R	Std. Error of the
Model	R	R Square	Square	Estimate
1	.815	.665	.627	3.196

Model Summary

Scatterplot
Dependent Variable: Total score of the actual involvment

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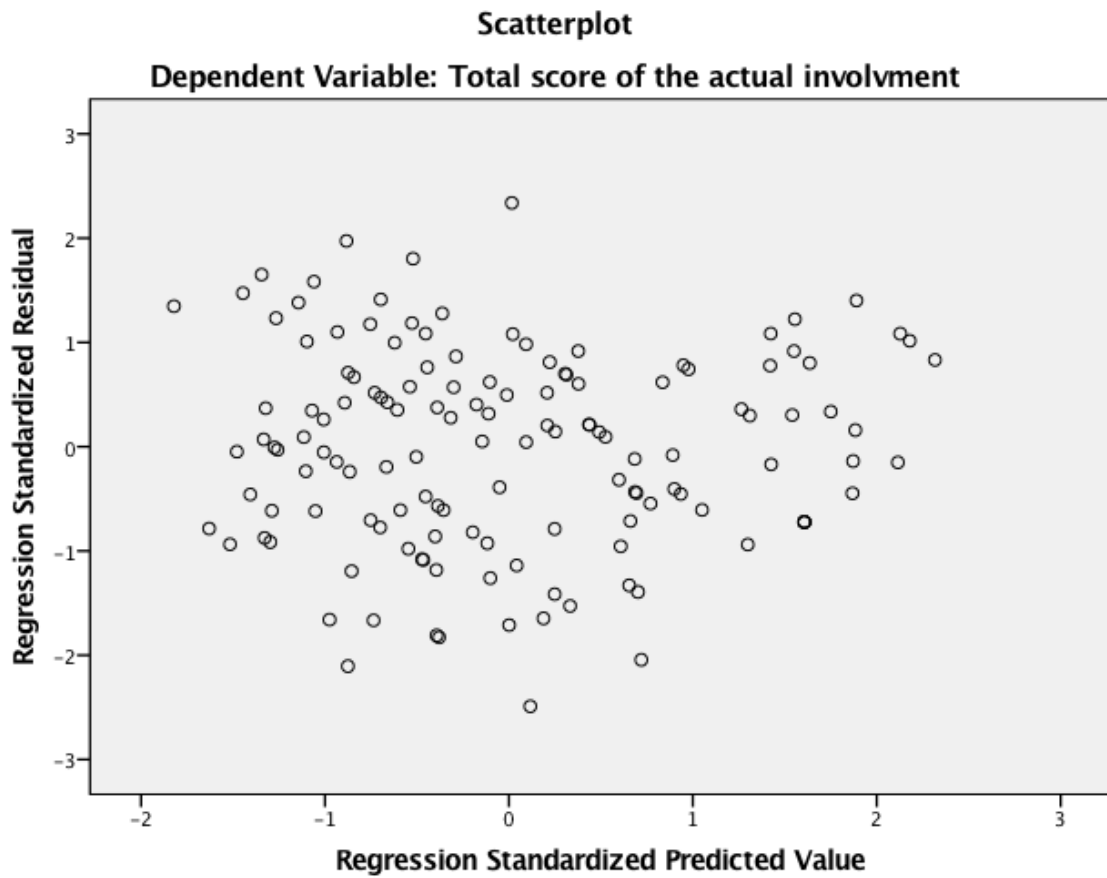
Appendix 22: Sample of Descriptive Additional Statistics for Individuals' Responses RQI

Parent construction (Volunteer in school)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	12	7.3	7.3	7.3
	Disagree	32	19.4	19.5	26.8
	Agree	85	51.5	51.8	78.7
	Strongly agree	35	21.2	21.3	100.0
	Total	164	99.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.6		
Total		165	100.0		

Parent construction(Communicate with my daughter's teacher regularly)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	2	1.2	1.2	1.2
	disagree	1	.6	.6	1.8
	agree	66	40.0	40.0	41.8
	Strongly agree	96	58.2	58.2	100.0
	Total	165	100.0	100.0	

Appendix 23*: Assessing the PI model used in the Questionnaire

Correlation	Coefficient (r$_s$)	Sig. (*p*-value)	N
Parents' role construction × self-efficacy	.120	.067	157
Parents' role construction × skill and knowledge	.280	.000	160
Parents' role construction × time and energy	.409	.000	164
Parents' role construction × daughter's invitations	.148	.029	163
Parents' role construction × teachers' invitations	.090	.127	162
Parents' role construction × school invitations	.045	.285	160
Teachers' invitations × self-efficacy	.314	.000	156
Teachers' invitations × skill and knowledge	.358	.000	158
Teachers' invitations × school invitations	.649	.000	157
Teachers' invitations × daughter's invitations	.540	.000	160
Daughter's invitations × self-efficacy	.291	.000	155
Daughter's invitations × skill and knowledge	.296	.000	158
Daughter's invitations × time and energy	.207	.004	162
Daughter's invitations × school invitations	.246	.001	157

Correlations

		Total score of the actual involvement	Mothers; age	Mothers' Educational Level	Do mother s have a job	Family's income	Do mother s have transportation problem	How many children	The age of Daughter with LD	Total score of parent construction	Total score of self-efficacy	Total score of skill and knowledge	Total score of time and energy	Total score of schools' invitations	Total score of teachers' Invitations	Total score of Daughter's Invitations
Pearson Correlation	Total score of the actual involvement	1.000	-.083	.153	-.142	.166	.089	-.018	.014	.206	.405	.338	.275	.578	.733	.543

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Mothers; age	-.083	1.000	-.056	-.085	.260	-.010	.374	.236	-.015	.065	-.012	.026	-.021	-.084	.050
Mothers' Educational Level	.153	-.056	1.000	-.493	.411	-.219	-.351	.095	-.101	.066	-.091	-.161	.154	.093	-.056
Do mothers have a job	-.142	-.085	-.493	1.000	-.250	.201	.257	.010	-.054	-.113	.158	.173	-.147	-.138	-.033
Family's income	.166	.260	.411	-.250	1.000	-.104	.007	-.045	-.109	.015	-.097	-.075	.154	.119	-.007
Do mothers have transportation problem	.089	-.010	-.219	.201	-.104	1.000	.137	.093	.116	.001	.102	.249	-.034	-.011	.035
How many children	-.018	.374	-.351	.257	.007	.137	1.000	.274	.113	.092	.134	.218	.009	-.004	.078
The age of Daughter with LD	.014	.236	-.095	.010	-.045	.093	.274	1.000	-.070	.237	.038	.056	.023	-.110	.027
Total score of parent construction	.206	-.015	-.101	-.054	-.109	.116	.113	-.070	1.000	.071	.187	.372	.038	.099	.110
Total score of self-efficacy	.405	.065	.066	-.113	.015	.001	.092	.237	.071	1.000	.390	.178	.368	.276	.343
Total score of skill and knowledge	.338	-.012	-.091	.158	-.097	.102	.134	.038	.187	.390	1.000	.284	.326	.393	.368

	Total score of time and energy	.275	.026	-.161	.173	-.075	.249	.218	.056	.372	.178	.284	1.000	.131	.122	.178
	Total score of schools' invitations	.578	-.021	.154	-.147	.154	-.034	.009	.023	.038	.368	.326	.131	1.000	.659	.273
	Total score of teachers' Invitations	.733	-.084	.093	-.138	.119	-.011	-.004	-.110	.099	.276	.393	.122	.659	1.000	.582
	Total score of Daughter's Invitations	.543	.050	-.056	-.033	-.007	.035	.078	.027	.110	.343	.368	.178	.273	.582	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Total score of the actual involvement	.	.166	.036	.048	.025	.149	.416	.434	.008	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000
	Mothers; age	.166	.	.256	.160	.001	.455	.000	.003	.429	.223	.445	.380	.403	.163	.281
	Mothers' Educational Level	.036	.256	.	.000	.000	.005	.000	.132	.119	.220	.143	.029	.035	.139	.256
	Do mothers have a job	.048	.160	.000	.	.001	.009	.001	.452	.262	.092	.032	.021	.042	.052	.351
	Family's income	.025	.001	.000	.001	.	.111	.466	.299	.101	.429	.128	.189	.035	.082	.468

Do mothers have transportation problem	.149	.455	.005	.009	.111	.	.053	.138	.088	.495	.115	.002	.346	.448	.342
How many children	.416	.000	.000	.001	.466	.053	.	.001	.092	.140	.057	.005	.458	.482	.182
The age of Daughter with LD	.434	.003	.132	.452	.299	.138	.001	.	.205	.002	.328	.255	.394	.098	.377
Total score of parent construction	.008	.429	.119	.262	.101	.088	.092	.205	.	.204	.014	.000	.330	.122	.098
Total score of self-efficacy	.000	.223	.220	.092	.429	.495	.140	.002	.204	.	.000	.018	.000	.001	.000
Total score of skill and knowledge	.000	.445	.143	.032	.128	.115	.057	.328	.014	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000
Total score of time and energy	.001	.380	.029	.021	.189	.002	.005	.255	.000	.018	.000	.	.062	.076	.018
Total score of schools' invitations	.000	.403	.035	.042	.035	.346	.458	.394	.330	.000	.000	.062	.	.000	.001

	Total score of teachers' Invitations	.000	.163	.139	.052	.082	.448	.482	.098	.122	.001	.000	.076	.000	.	.000
	Total score of Daughter's Invitations	.000	.281	.256	.351	.468	.342	.182	.377	.098	.000	.000	.018	.001	.000	.
N	Total score of the actual involvement	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139
	Mothers; age	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139
	Mothers' Educational Level	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139
	Do mothers have a job	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139
	Family's income	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139
	Do mothers have transportation problem	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139

How many children	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139
The age of Daughter with LD	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139
Total score of parent construction	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139
Total score of self-efficacy	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139
Total score of skill and knowledge	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139
Total score of time and energy	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139
Total score of schools' invitations	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139

Total score of teachers' Invitations	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139
Total score of Daughter's Invitations	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139