

Abstract Title:-

Applying Best Practices in Inclusive Education: A Research–Practice Framework Grounded in Practice-Based Evidence from the Inclusive Education Unit at Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services

Keynote Speaker – Mrs. Duaa Dridi – Head of the Inclusive Education Unit

Abstract:



Inclusive education is a fundamental pillar for achieving educational equity and safeguarding the rights of students with disabilities and neurodivergent learners. It requires systematic alignment among educational policies, classroom practices, and neurodevelopmental and therapeutic interventions. The United Arab Emirates has adopted a national, rights-based framework grounded in the UAE Constitution, the National Policy for Empowering People of Determination (2017), and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006). This framework promotes inclusion within mainstream education through learning environments that are less restrictive and more responsive to individual needs.

This abstract presents a research–practice framework grounded in **Practice-Based Evidence**, documenting the experience of the Inclusive Education Unit at Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services. The model integrates theory and practice and illustrates the progressive development of inclusive educational practices within mainstream schools in real-world contexts.

The framework is informed by the **social model of disability**, core principles of inclusive education, and the integration of educational and neurodevelopmental interventions. The data presented are derived from a descriptive analysis of practice-based service data systematically collected from the Unit's service records over a five-year period (2020–2025). These data include implementation indicators related to school readiness programs, follow-up and monitoring visits, inclusive education quality assurance initiatives, and awareness-raising and professional development activities. These indicators function as real-world evaluative measures of applied effectiveness and service quality.

Key practices include multidisciplinary educational assessment, development and monitoring of Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), adaptation of inclusive learning environments, and capacity building for teachers and multidisciplinary support teams. The Unit also conducts supervisory school visits, provides educational and psychological consultation for families, supports school readiness and transition planning, and builds partnerships across educational, health, and social service sectors.

Analysis demonstrates progressive improvement in both the scope and quality of inclusive education services. The framework contributed to the successful inclusion of **more than 705 students with disabilities** in mainstream schools, strengthened professional capacity among educators and support teams, and enhanced family engagement. Findings highlight the importance of aligning neurodevelopmental therapeutic interventions with classroom-based strategies to improve learning outcomes for neurodivergent students.

This experience emphasizes that effective inclusive education requires a flexible, evidence-informed operational framework grounded in Practice-Based Evidence—bridging research and practice, strengthening integration between educational and health sectors, and supporting sustainable inclusive education across diverse learning environments.

Keywords:

Inclusive Education Systems, Practice-Based Evidence, Disability Rights, School Inclusion, Capacity Building

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Explain how UAE rights-based policy frameworks support inclusive education implementation.
- Identify key elements of an operational inclusive education model grounded in Practice-Based Evidence.
- Recognize effective real-world practices including IEP implementation, teacher capacity building, and multisector collaboration.
- Apply practical indicators for monitoring inclusive education quality and sustainability.

Short Professional Biography:

Mrs. Duaa Dridi is the Head of the Inclusive Education Unit at Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services (SCHS), with over 15 years of experience leading inclusive education policy and practice in Sharjah. She holds a Master's degree in Speech and Language Pathology and a Bachelor's degree in Special Education, specializing in system-level inclusive education design, quality assurance, and professional capacity building. Since 2017, she has led the development of Sharjah's Inclusive Education Policy in collaboration with key authorities and contributes actively to regional and international advocacy initiatives promoting inclusive education and disability rights.