

Perceptions Of Primary Education Teachers On The Inclusion Of Children With Autism (A Field Study On Teachers In Schools With Inclusion Classes In Skikda Province)

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Abstract:

The current study aims to explore the social perceptions of integrating children with autism among primary school teachers, considering various factors (gender, marital status, whether they have taught an inclusive class or not). The researchers used the sequential recall technique to identify the content of social perceptions (central core and peripheral elements). This technique was applied to a sample of 50 teachers from 4 schools with integrated classes for children with autism. Using a descriptive approach and statistical processing through the Evoc 2005 program, the study found that introversion, difficulty in interaction, and lack of communication were central core elements. Meanwhile, the peripheral elements included training, readiness, and suffering. The study also highlighted differences in the content of social perceptions among teachers based on the demographic variables studied.

Keywords: social perceptions, inclusion, autism, teacher, primary school.

I- Introduction:

The inclusion of children with autism in regular primary schools has been a goal pursued by many organizations and associations dedicated to autism, as well as by parents and developers of therapeutic and educational programs for this special needs group. Integrating them into the regular primary education system truly reflects the principle of equality and equal opportunities, which is the foundation of the Algerian educational project. It also breaks the isolation that might otherwise distance them and hinder their ability to contribute to society. Inclusion provides an opportunity to develop their abilities and facilitate their social integration, ensuring their future as active members of society, with full rights like anyone else. Many schools have opened their doors to children with autism, creating an educational environment that helps them interact with their peers. However, inclusion does not only rely on enacting laws to permit it; it also requires ensuring the readiness, training, and acceptance of teachers. Teachers need to be aware of the specific nature of autism and the particular needs of these children to facilitate effective educational activities. Inclusion refers to

providing all services and care for children with special needs in an environment that avoids isolation, such as a regular classroom in a typical school, a special classroom within a regular school, or through resource rooms that offer services for children with special needs part-time. This research paper aims to explore the content of the social perceptions held by primary education teachers regarding the academic inclusion of children with autism.

2- Problem Statement and Research Questions:

Children with autism are a special group whose numbers are rapidly and alarmingly increasing, with an estimated 500,000 children with autism in 2019, according to the Ministry of National Solidarity. This has prompted efforts to establish associations dedicated to children with autism, providing care and assistance to their parents. However, this does not fully satisfy their desire and ambition to integrate their children into society. When these children reach school age, they face challenges learning alongside typical children due to individual differences. Inclusion is something children

with autism and their families urgently need, especially in the absence of specialized schools or centers that cater to this group. Given the significant increase in the number of children with autism, it is no longer feasible to isolate or marginalize them, nor to limit their struggles to their families without broader societal intervention. Inclusion has become essential for helping these children and their families achieve real social integration. Studies such as those by (Zureikat 2004) and (Al-Khasharmi 2000) have highlighted the importance of inclusion for children with autism alongside their peers in regular schools, as well as the benefits for society, the child with autism, and the typical child. There is no doubt that teachers' perceptions of the inclusion of children with autism in regular schools play a crucial role in the success or failure of this process. Teachers are directly involved with these children in classrooms, and their perceptions of inclusion can significantly influence the achievement of the process's fundamental goals. Therefore, this study seeks to answer the following main question:

What are the social perceptions of primary school teachers regarding the inclusion of children with autism?

This main question leads to the following sub-questions:

- Do the social perceptions of primary school teachers regarding the inclusion of children with autism with their typical peers in regular schools differ based on gender?
- Do the social perceptions of primary school teachers regarding the inclusion of children with autism with their typical peers in regular schools differ based on marital status?
- Do the social perceptions of primary school teachers regarding the inclusion of children with autism with their typical peers in regular schools differ based on whether or not they have taught in integrated classrooms?

3- Hypotheses of the Study:

- **General Hypothesis:**

Social perceptions of the inclusion of children with autism differ among primary school teachers based on several variables.

- **Specific Hypotheses:**

- Social perceptions of primary school teachers regarding the inclusion of children with autism with their typical peers in regular schools differ based on gender.
- Social perceptions of primary school teachers regarding the inclusion of children with autism with their typical peers in regular schools differ based on marital status.
- Social perceptions of primary school teachers regarding the inclusion of children with autism with their typical peers in regular schools differ based on whether they have taught in integrated classrooms or not.

4- Importance of the Study:

The significance of this research stems from the following:

- The importance of the primary education stage it addresses.
- The relevance of the topic of inclusion and the opportunities it provides for universal access to education.
- Understanding the social perceptions of primary school teachers regarding the inclusion of children with autism.
- The potential results of the study may support the improvement of inclusion efforts for children, parents, and society.

5- Objectives of the Study:

- To explore the nature of social perceptions of the academic inclusion of children with autism among primary school teachers.
- To identify the most commonly held social perceptions among primary school teachers.
- To investigate whether there are differences in the social perceptions of primary school teachers based on gender, marital status, and whether they have taught in integrated classrooms.

6- Theoretical Framework of the Study:

Concepts are fundamental starting points in social and psychological research, helping to provide an objective picture of the research and enabling the researcher to outline the general framework of the problem.

6.1- Social Perceptions:

6.1.1 - Definition of Social Perceptions:

- According to Moscovici, social perceptions are "tangible facts that intersect and continuously form through conversations and encounters in our daily lives" (**Herzlich, 1969, p. 388**). In other words, we deal with them in our daily lives, through our actions, principles, and thoughts, but they remain hidden and appear through these symbols. Moscovici also defines them as "a system of values, concepts, and practices related to subjects, phenomena, and dimensions of the social environment, which not only stabilizes the framework of life for individuals and groups but also unifies attitudes and forms responses" (**Herzlich, 1969, p. 388**).

This means they are a way of thinking and interpreting our daily reality, as social perceptions guide behavior and shape responses in various situations.

- Social perceptions are "a form of socially constructed knowledge; a cognitive system and psychological organization that bridges the gap between the individual and the social. It allows individuals and groups to communicate through dynamic knowledge structures" (**Moscovici, 1992, p. 668**).

Moscovici views social perceptions as a link between the individual and society, where each society has its own system of customs and traditions.

- Social perceptions are also "a form of particular knowledge, shared meaning through which functional and social processes are clarified, and they point to social knowledge" (**Moscovici, 2003, p. 360**).
- Similarly, (**Moliner 2001**) states that social perceptions "take on a social nature

because they are shaped and influenced by the processes of social interaction, creating shared knowledge within a group. They guide individual actions and decisions, allowing individuals to control the environment in which they live" (**Moliner, 2001, p. 8**).

Therefore, Moscovici believes that social perceptions play a role in interpreting events and preparing individuals to respond in specific ways to certain subjects. They also guide individual behavior and are formed through continuous social interaction.

- Jodelet defines social perceptions as "a form of knowledge different from scientific knowledge, often referred to as common or naive knowledge, which plays an active role in the core of social relationships" (**Jodelet, 1994, p. 36**). Jodelet believes that social perceptions are not scientific knowledge, and they are based on two processes: cognitive and social.

6.1.2 - Social Perceptions and Central Core Theory:

All social perceptions are organized around a central core, which serves as the essential element of the perception, defining and determining it. The central core defines the meaning of the social perception, is socially shared, and maintains stability, allowing it to resist changes.

• Functions of the Central Core:

The central core has two primary functions:

A - Generative Function:

The central core is the element responsible for creating and transforming the meaning of other elements that make up the perception. Through this function, the central core gives meaning and value to these elements. Abric defines it as "the element through which the meanings of other elements that constitute the perception are generated or transformed" (**Abric et al., 1997, p. 22**).

This function allows the central core to unify the perception and give it resistance to change.

Abric also mentions that "the central core is the element that resists change or is the most resistant, and any transformation or modification of the central core necessarily leads to a transformation or modification of the nature of the perception." In other words, the central core stabilizes and unifies the elements of social perception.

B - Organizational Function:

The central core defines the nature of the relationships between the elements of the perception. It unifies and stabilizes the perception due to its strong resistance to change (Bonardi & Roussiau, 1999, p. 88). Abric adds, "The central core is the element that resists change, or is the most resistant to change, and any transformation or reorganization in the central core necessarily leads to a transformation or modification of the nature of the perception" (Maache, Chorf, Kouira, 2002, p. 19).

According to Abric, if two perceptions are defined by the same content, they may still differ in the way this content is organized. The central positioning of certain elements may vary. When a central element defines the meaning of other elements, its significance should be more elevated compared to peripheral components. Thus, the qualitative dimension, not just the quantitative, is the key factor in determining the centrality of an element (Abric, 1994, p. 22).

- **Peripheral System:**

Peripheral elements are directly connected to the central core and define the content of the perceptions. These elements are often the most easily understood, visible, and active. They represent repeated and formal judgments suggested by the subject and its surroundings. Peripheral elements serve three main functions (Abric, 1994, p. 22).

A - Embodiment Function:

The peripheral system embodies the central system in the form of behaviors and attitudes because it is more sensitive to the specificities of circumstances and the present situation. This system acts as an interface between the tangible

reality and the central core, often serving as the visible aspect that can be observed through individuals' actions or interactions.

B - Adaptation to Change Function:

Due to its flexibility, peripheral elements allow social perceptions to adapt to obstacles and changes in tangible situations that the group faces. For example, if new elements or information emerge that challenge the central core of the perception, the peripheral system is the first to integrate these new elements, enabling the perceptions to adapt while maintaining their central meaning. Thus, the peripheral system preserves the structure of the perception by being flexible enough to protect the central system from change and incorporate new elements in a controlled and dynamic manner.

C - Individualization Function:

This function allows for a degree of individual specificity in perceptions. The flexibility of the peripheral system permits individual adjustments or modifications, which may be related to a person's history, personal experiences, or encounters with certain events. While there is consensus around the central core, social perceptions can accept individual differences regarding the peripheral system.

In summary, social perceptions consist of a central core and peripheral elements that work as a unified entity, with each system performing a specific yet complementary function. Perceptions appear both stable and dynamic, rigid and flexible at the same time. They are stable because they are defined by a central core deeply embedded in the values of the group, yet flexible because they are shaped by individual experiences, incorporating lived realities and evolving relationships and social practices that individuals or groups engage in.

6.2 - Inclusion:

The term "inclusion" is used to refer to the coordination of parts to form a complete and integrated whole. In the field of special education, inclusion refers to the interaction between typical children and children with disabilities in the same educational settings.

Accordingly, children with disabilities are included in regular schools and are supported in their learning through specialized techniques (Rkab, 2013, p. 46).

(Samira Abu El-Hassan 2002) defines inclusion as the integration of students with special needs with their typical peers in regular schools. The inclusion process varies depending on the type and degree of disability, as well as the available resources in the students' environment (Salem & Mansour, 2013, p. 319).

In essence, inclusion involves enrolling atypical students in regular classrooms full-time, where they participate in shared educational programs. The success of such inclusion depends on various factors, including the acceptance of atypical students by their typical peers, the presence of a special education teacher working alongside the regular classroom teacher, and the implementation of strategies to ensure academic success for atypical students. These include overcoming social challenges and exam procedures that may hinder atypical students in regular classrooms.

Goals of Academic Inclusion:

- Reducing social and psychological differences among children.
- Helping children and their families avoid the stigma associated with attending special schools.
- Providing a better, more suitable environment for children with special needs to grow academically, socially, and psychologically.
- Promoting self-esteem in children with special needs and increasing their motivation for learning and forming healthy social relationships.
- Shifting families' and society's expectations of children with special needs from negative to more positive ones.

Requirements for Successful Inclusion:

Several key factors are necessary to successfully implement inclusion:

- Establishing a general philosophy and a well-organized plan.

- Having highly competent educational leaders who believe in the importance of inclusion.
- Creating a school environment capable of accommodating children with disabilities.
- Ensuring the availability of continuous support services.
- Training teachers to work in inclusive classrooms.
- Adapting and modifying curricula to meet the needs of all students (Al-Qurashi, 2005, p. 82).

6.3 - Definition of Autism:

The term "autism" originates from the Greek word Autos, meaning "self." It is a translation of the English word autism, which refers to a distorted sense of self (Al-Qamash, 2011).

Kanner defined autism as a set of distinctive behaviors, including an inability to form relationships with others, delayed speech acquisition, non-communicative use of speech after its development, late initiation of activities, repetitive and stereotyped play, insistence on sameness, impaired reasoning, excellent rote memory, and normal physical appearance (Zureikat, 2004, p. 31).

The American Association defines autism as "a severe and chronic developmental disability that appears in early childhood, resulting from a neurological disorder that negatively affects brain functions" (Al-Zara'a, 2010, p. 30).

Teaching Children with Autism in Inclusion Classes:

The inclusion of children with autism, in particular, and children with different disabilities in general, is a civil right that should be provided efficiently and effectively. Children with autism face two types of transitions:

1. **Vertical Transitions:** These are developmental transitions, such as moving from home to preschool or from preschool to school. These transitions are predictable but require significant support, cooperation, and planning between specialists and parents.

2. **Horizontal Transitions:** These are short-term transitions from one location or activity to another and are more unpredictable. They require organized planning to manage the child's behavior during the transition.

Children with autism often face difficulties during transitions, expressing frustration through behaviors like screaming, aggression, and tantrums. It is essential to prepare them for these changes through classroom instructions that guide the transition from one activity to another and by organizing the tools for the upcoming activity in advance.

The school must provide an environment that helps develop these children's social skills to the fullest extent possible. This involves considering various factors such as age, cognitive abilities, severity of autism, and accompanying stereotyped behaviors.

Harrow and Dunlop (2001) emphasized the importance of planning for the following:

- Managing antecedents to prevent tension, for example, giving individual tasks during group activities may cause stress for children with autism.
- Providing timely prompts, especially when giving additional instructions to children with autism.
- Using visual schedules to help students transition between activities.
- Encouraging peer interaction to help children with autism develop socially acceptable behaviors.
- Preparing typical students to accept and respect individual differences, which requires coordinated planning among regular teachers, special education teachers, administrators, families, and peers.

Several strategies should be followed to facilitate the inclusion of children with autism in regular schools, including:

- Assessing the learning environment in the inclusion classroom,
- Self-regulation techniques,
- Visual schedules and cues,
- Written instructions,

- Skill analysis,
- Freedom to choose learning activities,
- Creating routines for educational activities,
- Teaching initiation and imitation skills,
- Preparing the child for the lesson before their typical peers,
- Teaching memory strategies, and
- Using social stories (**Raed Al-Sheikh Deeb & Mohammad Mohaydat, 2013, p. 1290**).

Previous Studies:

- **Study by Al-Othman (2002):**

This study aimed to evaluate the attitudes of teachers in Saudi Arabia toward the inclusion of children with autism with their typical peers in general education schools. The sample included 48 teachers with prior experience working with autistic children in special education centers or schools and 50 teachers with no experience with these children. The results indicated that teachers with experience had more positive attitudes towards the expected outcomes of including autistic children in regular schools compared to those without experience.

- **Study by Nabil Ashraf & Naemat Alwan (2005):**

This study examined the Palestinian experience of inclusive education for children with special needs and assessed the educational institutions supporting inclusion in Palestine. The sample included 40 teachers, specialists, and psychological counselors. The findings revealed a lack of teacher training, insufficient resources (such as books, print materials, printers, recorded books), large class sizes, and challenges related to the school environment (**Somaya Mansour & Raja Awad, 2012, p. 310**).

- **Study by Al-Shamrani (2010):**

This study found that primary school teachers' attitudes toward the inclusion of children with autism in regular schools were generally negative. These attitudes

were influenced by cultural factors, the teachers' understanding of autism, and the training programs they had received.

- **Study by Park & Sehitio (2011):**

Conducted with 127 teachers, this study examined attitudes towards the inclusion of children with autism in inclusive classrooms. The study found that attitudes towards inclusion were influenced by variables such as gender, age, teaching experience, and the number of training workshops the teachers attended. The study highlighted that female teachers were more capable of implementing inclusion policies compared to their male counterparts, and that academic preparation was strongly linked to positive attitudes toward including children with autism.

Commentary on Previous Studies:

From the studies reviewed on the inclusion of children with autism in regular schools, several observations can be made:

- The topic has garnered significant attention, with numerous studies seeking to understand the nature of inclusion and how it is influenced by various factors.
- These studies highlight that variables such as **age, gender, specialization, academic preparation, and familiarity with the psychology of this group** are key and significant factors in shaping attitudes towards the inclusion of children with autism in regular schools.
- A lack of teacher training on how to deal with children with special needs negatively

affects their attitudes and perceptions of inclusion.

7- Field Study Procedures:

7.1 - Research Method:

Given that the primary objective of this study is to explore the social perceptions of primary school teachers towards the inclusion of children with autism, the **descriptive method** was chosen. This method allows for a comprehensive understanding of the psychological and social aspects connected to the individual, their environment, and their cognitive, mental, and psychological processes. It also helps address the research questions effectively.

7.2- Study Boundaries:

The study is defined by the following parameters:

- **Geographical Boundaries:** The field research was conducted in several primary schools located in Skikda province. The selected schools were three (03) in the municipality of Skikda (El-Irshad School, Abdelhamid Ibn Badis School, and Ibrahim Boutouka School), and one school in the municipality of Hadayek (Dakhil Taher School). These schools include children with autism fully integrated into regular classrooms alongside typical children.
- **Human Boundaries:** The study sample consisted of **50 teachers** (04 males and 46 females) from primary schools. The sample was intentionally selected, focusing only on teachers working in primary schools that offer inclusion programs for children with autism.

Table (01): Distribution of Sample Participants According to Study Variables

Schools	Gender	Marital Status	Taught in Integrated Class
	Male	Female	Married
El-Irshad	1	16	9
Abdelhamid Ibn Badis	2	7	6
Ibrahim Boutouka	0	9	6
Dakhil Taher	1	14	11
Total	4	46	32

7.3 - Study Tool:

The **Sequential Evocation Technique** by (Vergès 1992), known as L'évocation hiérarchisée (Abrić, 2003, pp. 62-64), was used in this study. This technique is one of the key tools for gathering the content of social perceptions, especially by identifying central and peripheral elements. It is inspired by the works of Vergès, who proposed using the method of free association while relying on two indicators for sequential evocation: the frequency of phrases and the rank of their appearance.

The Sequential Evocation Technique has become widely used due to its importance and effectiveness as a research tool. However, it presents a challenge. According to Vergès, the order of appearance is translated as an important indicator compared to the significance of the phrase (importance of appearance) for the respondents. As we know, in the free association technique, the most important thoughts or words are expressed first. Important ideas often emerge after considerable mental effort, revealing underlying elements or mechanisms of defense. In his initial formulation, Vergès also based his approach on qualitative model criteria and did not address the conditions of sequence and importance. Therefore, he suggested abandoning the criterion of the order of appearance and replacing it with the order of importance, which is derived from the sequence provided by the respondents themselves.

This technique is applied in two phases:

- **Phase 1: Free Association:**

In this phase, the process starts with a "stimulus word" (evocative word). The

Importance	Strong	Weak
Frequency		
Strong	Box 1: Central core area	Box 2: First peripheral elements area
Weak	Box 3: Area of contrasting elements	Box 4: Second peripheral elements area

respondents are asked to produce all the words or phrases that come to mind spontaneously, quickly, and without filtering. These words or phrases form the semantic field of the studied topic. Free association allows the activation of implicit or latent elements, bringing forward the underlying logical and inferential processes. Once these hidden dimensions, which form the qualitative and semantic world of the studied perception, emerge, free association brings us closer to the central core of social perceptions. Meanwhile, more structured techniques like questionnaires are more likely to reveal the peripheral dimensions of social perceptions.

- **Phase 2: Sequential Phase:**

In this phase, respondents are asked to rank their associations based on the importance they give to each element concerning the subject being studied. After collecting all the phrases (i.e., the content of social perceptions) and quantifying two indicators for each element (frequency of appearance and importance given to each phrase by the respondents), we analyze the role played by the central element in the perception, which is likely to appear frequently in respondents' evocations.

The frequency of appearance serves as an indicator of the centrality that an individual attributes to a specific element. Cross-referencing all the collected information allows for a preliminary identification of the position of the elements within the perception. This is further explained in the following table, where each of the four quadrants provides important information about the evocative word.

Interpretation of Sequential Evocation Table Results:

Based on the sequential evocation technique, the table's sections represent the following:

- **Cell 1:** This cell gathers the most frequently repeated and most important elements, which form the **central core**. The elements that appear in this section are crucial to the perception, although they might be accompanied by less important, synonymous, or prototype-like elements related to the subject.
- **Cell 2:** This section represents the **first peripheral zone**, consisting of elements with high frequency but low importance.
- **Cell 3:** In this cell, we find the **contrasting elements**: phrases that appear infrequently among respondents but are considered highly important. These elements often reflect varying or alternative perceptions within subgroups. This indicates that the central core may also be found in this cell, in addition to the core found in Cell 1. We may also encounter complementary elements to the first peripheral zone in this region.
- **Cell 4:** This section contains the **second peripheral elements**, which are characterized by both low frequency and low importance within the social perception framework.

7.4 - Statistical Analysis: The EVOC 2005 Program

To analyze the results of the sequential evocation technique, a **prototypical and**

categorical analysis was used, relying on the EVOC 2005 program developed by Vergès for analyzing word associations. This program was specifically designed to analyze a set of vocabulary items derived from an association questionnaire. The analysis considers both the frequency of the word and its rank of appearance.

The program is used to reveal the central core of the perception by combining **prototypical and categorical attributes**. It focuses on a list of words produced by individuals based on a stimulus word provided by the researcher. In this study, the stimulus word was "**academic inclusion of children with autism**."

8- Presentation and Discussion of Sequential Evocation Results:

The prototypical analysis of the sequential evocation technique, based on a sample of 50 primary school teachers, showed the following results:

- The **total number of evoked words** was 200.
- The **total number of different evoked words** was 70, representing **35%** of the total evocations.
- The **average frequency** of word appearance among male respondents was 4.

Table 1 presents the central core elements, the first and second peripheral systems, as well as the contrasting elements of the social perceptions.

Table 1: Results of the Sequential Evocation Technique for the Overall Sample

	Weak rank ≥ 3.70	Strong rank < 3.7
Strong repetitions equal to or greater than 10	Central core area	First surrounding area
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child's mental abilities • Introverted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration with typical children.
Weak repetitions are less than 10	Area of contrasting elements	Second surrounding area
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty dealing with him <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher training • Language delay • Child in need of care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to comprehend <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hyperactive child • Unusual behaviors

Central Core and Peripheral Elements Identified from the Perceptions of Primary School Teachers (Total Sample of 50 Teachers):

- **Central Core:**

The central core of the teachers' perceptions consists of two key concepts:

- Child's mental abilities
- Introverted nature

- **First Peripheral Zone:**

The most frequently mentioned element, but with lower importance, is:

- Inclusion with typical peers

- **Second Peripheral Zone:**

The second peripheral zone includes elements that were mentioned less frequently and considered less important:

- Inability to comprehend
- Hyperactivity
- Unusual behaviors

- **Contrasting Elements:**

These are elements that were mentioned infrequently but were considered highly important:

- Difficulty in managing the child
- Teacher training
- Delayed language development
- Child requiring special care

Results of Sequential Evocation Technique for Unmarried Teachers:

- **Sample:**

The sample consisted of 18 unmarried primary school teachers.

- **Total Words Evoked:**

72 words were evoked in total.

- **Total Different Words Evoked:**

42 different words were evoked, representing **58.33%** of the total evocations.

- **Average Word Appearance:**

The average frequency of word appearance was 4 among the male participants in this group.

Table 2: Results of the Sequential Evocation Technique for Unmarried Teachers

	Weak rank ≥ 3.70	Strong rank < 3.7
Strong repetitions equal to or greater than 10	Central core area	First surrounding area
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introverted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to communicate • Difficulty dealing with him
Weak repetitions are less than 10	Area of contrasting elements	Second surrounding area
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hyperactive child • Integration with typical children • Language delay • Violent child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to comprehend • Child in need of care • Stubborn child

Perceptions of Unmarried Primary School Teachers Regarding the Inclusion of Children with Autism:

The results of the sequential evocation technique for the 18 unmarried primary school teachers produced the following distribution of elements:

- **Central Core:**

The central core contains one key concept:

- Introverted

- **First Peripheral Zone:**

The first peripheral zone includes the following elements:

- Inability to comprehend
- Child needing care
- Stubborn child

- **Second Peripheral Zone:**

The second peripheral zone also included the same elements:

- Inability to comprehend

- Child needing care
- Stubborn child
- **Contrasting Elements:**
These elements were mentioned less frequently but were considered important by the respondents:
 - Hyperactive child
 - Delayed language development
 - Violent child

Results of Sequential Evocation Technique for Married Teachers:

- **Sample:**
The sample consisted of 32 married primary school teachers.

- **Total Words Evoked:**
128 words were evoked in total.
- **Total Different Words Evoked:**
52 different words were evoked, representing **40.62%** of the total evocations.
- **Average Word Appearance:**
The average frequency of word appearance was 4 among male participants in this group.

Table 3: Results of the Sequential Evocation Technique for Married Teachers

	Weak rank ≥ 3.70	Strong rank < 3.7
Strong repetitions equal to or greater than 10	Central core area	First surrounding area
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child's mental abilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introverted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration with typical children
Weak repetitions are less than 10	Area of contrasting elements	Second surrounding area
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hyperactive child • Child in need of care • Social communication • Difficulty dealing with him <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language delay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to comprehend <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anger • Unusual behaviors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screaming • Suffering

Perceptions of Married Primary School Teachers Regarding the Inclusion of Children with Autism:

The sequential evocation technique for the 32 married primary school teachers revealed the following distribution of elements:

- **Central Core:**
The central core contains two key concepts:
 - Introverted
 - Child's mental abilities
- **First Peripheral Zone:**
The first peripheral zone includes the following element:
 - Inclusion with typical peers
- **Second Peripheral Zone:**
The second peripheral zone includes the following elements:
 - Inability to comprehend
 - Anger
 - Unusual behaviors
 - Screaming
 - Suffering
- **Contrasting Elements:**
These elements were mentioned less frequently but were considered important by the respondents:
 - Hyperactive child
 - Delayed language development
 - Child needing care
 - Social interaction

Results of Sequential Evocation Technique for Female Teachers:

- **Sample:**
The sample consisted of 46 female primary school teachers.
- **Total Words Evoked:**
184 words were evoked in total.
- **Total Different Words Evoked:**
65 different words were evoked, representing **35.32%** of the total evocations.
- **Average Word Appearance:**
The average frequency of word appearance was 4 among male participants in this group.

Table 4: Results of the Sequential Evocation Technique for Female Teachers

	Weak rank ≥ 3.70	Strong rank < 3.7
Strong repetitions equal to or greater than 10	Central core area	First surrounding area
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child's mental abilities • Introverted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration with typical children.
Weak repetitions are less than 10	Area of contrasting elements	Second surrounding area
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hyperactive child • Child in need of care • Social communication • Difficulty dealing with him • Language delay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to comprehend <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anger • Unusual behaviors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screaming • Suffering

Perceptions of Female Primary School Teachers Regarding the Inclusion of Children with Autism:

The sequential evocation analysis for the 46 female teachers revealed the following distribution:

- **Central Core:**
The central core contains two key concepts:
 - Child's mental abilities
 - Introverted
- **First Peripheral Zone:**
The first peripheral zone includes one element:
 - Inclusion with typical peers
- **Second Peripheral Zone:**
The second peripheral zone includes the following elements:
 - Inability to comprehend
 - Anger
 - Unusual behaviors
 - Screaming

➤ Suffering

- **Contrasting Elements:**
These elements were mentioned less frequently but were considered important:
 - Difficulty in managing the child
 - Delayed language development
 - Child needing care
 - Hyperactivity

Results of Sequential Evocation Technique for Male Teachers:

- **Sample:**
The sample consisted of 4 male primary school teachers.
- **Total Words Evoked:**
16 words were evoked in total, with **100%** of the words being unique.
- **Average Word Appearance:**
The average frequency of word appearance was 4.

- **Rank Indicators:**
 - Strong Rank (Rang fort) < 3.7
 - Weak Rank (Rang faible) ≥ 3.7
- Key Elements Identified in the Sequential Evocation Analysis (Male Teachers):**
 - **Central Core (Strong Repetitions, ≥ 10):**
 - Child's mental abilities
 - Introverted
 - First Peripheral Zone:
 - Inclusion with typical peers
 - **Second Peripheral Zone (Weak Repetitions, < 10):**
 - Inability to comprehend
 - Anger
 - Unusual behaviors
 - Screaming
 - Suffering
 - **Contrasting Elements (Weak Repetitions):**
 - Hyperactivity
 - Social interaction
 - Difficulty in managing the child
 - Delayed language development
 - Child needing care

Table 5 summarizes the central core, first and second peripheries, and elements

	Weak rank ≥ 3.70	Strong rank < 3.7
Strong repetitions equal to or greater than 10	Central core area	First surrounding area
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child's mental abilities • Introverted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration with typical children.
Weak repetitions are less than 10	Area of contrasting elements	Second surrounding area
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hyperactive child • Social communication • Difficulty dealing with him <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language delay • Child in need of care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to comprehend <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anger • Unusual behaviors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screaming • Suffering

The perceptions of male primary school teachers regarding the integration of autistic children with their neurotypical peers centered around two core concepts: "the child's mental abilities and introversion."

The first peripheral zone includes one element: "integrating them with neurotypical children."

The second peripheral zone contains the following elements: inability to comprehend, anger, unusual behaviors, screaming, and suffering.

The zone of divergent elements includes: "hyperactive child, social communication, difficulty in dealing with them, language delay, child in need of care."

- Results of the serial recall technique for the teacher who managed an integrated class: The results of the prototype analysis of the recall technique for the study sample, consisting of 11 primary school teachers who managed integrated classes, showed that the total number of recalled words was 44, and the total number of distinct recalled words was 31, which represents 70.45% of the total recall. The average number of word occurrences among male participants in the sample was 4.

Table (6) illustrates the central core elements, the first and second peripheral systems, and the divergent elements of social perceptions.

Table (6) represents the results of the serial recall technique for the teacher who managed an integrated class:

	Weak rank ≥ 3.70	Strong rank < 3.7
Strong repetitions equal to or greater than 10	Central core area	First surrounding area
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child's mental abilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introverted • Inability to communicate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration with typical children • Supporting the child • Hyperactive child
Weak repetitions are less than 10	Area of contrasting elements	Second surrounding area
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty dealing with him <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language delay • Teacher training • Child in need of care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to comprehend <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anger • Unusual behaviors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screaming

The perceptions of primary school teachers regarding the integration of autistic children with their neurotypical peers, based on teachers who managed integrated classes, centered around a core with three elements: "the child's mental abilities, introversion, and inability to communicate."

The first peripheral zone includes the following elements: "supporting the child, hyperactive child, integrating them with neurotypical children."

The second peripheral zone contains the following elements: "inability to comprehend, anger, screaming, unusual behaviors."

The zone of divergent elements includes: "difficulty in dealing with them, teacher

training, language delay, child in need of care, language delay."

- Results of the serial recall technique for teachers who did not manage an integrated class: The results of the prototype analysis of the recall technique for the study sample, consisting of 39 primary school teachers who did not manage integrated classes, showed that the total number of recalled words was 156, and the total number of distinct recalled words was 60, which represents 38.46% of the total recall. The average number of word occurrences among male participants in the sample was 4.

Table (7) illustrates the central core elements, the first and second peripheral systems, and the divergent elements of social perceptions.

Table (7) represents the results of the serial recall technique for teachers who did not manage an integrated class:

	Weak rank ≥ 3.70	Strong rank < 3.7
Strong repetitions equal to or greater than 10	Central core area	First surrounding area
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unusual behaviors • Inability to communicate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration with typical children • Teacher training • Introverted
Weak repetitions are less than 10	Area of contrasting elements	Second surrounding area
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sick child • Language delay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to comprehend <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anger

	• Stubborn child	• Screaming
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The perceptions of primary school teachers who did not manage classes containing children with autism spectrum disorders produced a central core consisting of two elements: "unusual behaviors and inability to communicate."

The first peripheral zone includes the following elements: "introversion, teacher training, integrating the child with neurotypical children."

The second peripheral zone contains the following elements: "inability to comprehend, anger, screaming."

The zone of divergent elements includes: "language delay, stubborn child, sick child."

- Study Results: Social perceptions emerge in relatively complex forms, representing images that reveal a set of meanings or reference frameworks that allow for interpreting events, or categories that classify phenomena, conditions, and individuals we interact with. In essence, they translate and interpret our reality and form a type of social knowledge, falling between the psychological and the social. This involves the way we perceive social subjects, environmental data, circulating information, and surrounding individuals.

Thus, social perceptions are a way to translate our ideas and reality. They represent a form of naive knowledge situated between the psychological and the social, shaped by our experiences, information, and thinking patterns received through education, social interactions, values, and culture. They aim to control our environment.

Since our current study relies on the structural approach based on Abric's Central Core Theory, which posits that every perception revolves around a central core with specific elements, usually not exceeding six and often only two. Abric also suggests that quantitative factors are not sufficient indicators for centralizing a

perception's element, while qualitative aspects remain crucial in determining the centralization of these elements (Abric, 2003, p. 59).

This study aimed to identify the content of social perceptions held by the sample individuals about the academic integration of autistic children, as well as to determine whether there were differences in these perceptions based on the teacher's gender (male or female), marital status (married or single), or whether the teacher had taught an integrated class. The results of applying the serial recall technique to a sample of 50 primary school teachers generated a set of associations. The Vergès program (Evoc2005) was used for a prototype analysis, which revealed a set of elements forming the primary school teachers' perceptions, distributed into two systems: central and peripheral.

The results show the diversity of words produced by the teachers, which were divided into four categories. The first category, containing the central core elements, consists of the most frequent and important elements: mental abilities of the child, introversion, inability to communicate, and unusual behaviors.

The second category, which contains the first peripheral elements, includes less frequent and less important elements: integrating the child with neurotypical children, inability to communicate, difficulty dealing with them, hyperactive child, and teacher training.

The third category, which contains the second peripheral elements, consists of rarely repeated and less important elements: inability to comprehend, stubborn child, child in need of care, and suffering.

Conclusion: The topic of integration is considered one of the modern subjects in the field of special education. Researchers and specialists in this field have conducted

numerous studies confirming the positive effects of integration on autistic children.

Having autistic children in the same class with neurotypical children enables them to form friendships and provides a supportive psychological environment. This positively impacts all aspects surrounding the child, increasing their self-esteem and helping them integrate and adapt more with society.

Thus, the following suggestions and recommendations can be made:

- Organize training and educational workshops for teachers, principals, and specialists in education to help them work with students with special needs.
- Hold seminars to raise awareness among the families of children with autism spectrum disorders and educate them on the importance of collaborating with the school team and sharing knowledge, discussing everything related to their child.
- Guide and educate neurotypical students to accept their integrated peers, change negative attitudes towards them, and reinforce positive attitudes.
- Emphasize the importance of having a multidisciplinary team in schools to provide all the necessary services for students with autism spectrum disorders.

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