

# General Education Teachers' Awareness of Self-Determination Skills Provided to Students with Intellectual Disabilities in the Intermediate Stage

<sup>1</sup>Rasheed Khuwayshan Algethami

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Special Education, College of Education, Taif University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, E-mail: [rkgethami@tu.edu.sa](mailto:rkgethami@tu.edu.sa)*

## Abstract

The study aimed to reveal the extent to which general education teachers are aware of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage and differences according to the variables of gender, years of experience, and academic qualification. The descriptive approach was used in the study whose sample consisted of (334) male and female teachers who were selected from general education teachers in Taif city in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The questionnaire was used to collect the data of the study. The results showed that the overall degree of general education teachers' awareness of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage and their domains scored medium. Also, there were statistically significant differences in the total degree of general education teachers' awareness of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage and their domains attributed to the variables of years of experience in favor of more than ten years and the academic qualification in favor of postgraduate studies. However, no statistically significant differences were shown due to gender. In the light of the results of the study, some recommendations were suggested.

**Keywords:** General education teachers, self-determination, intellectual disability, intermediate stage.

## INTRODUCTION

Special education is one of the fields that has received great attention and care from governments in several countries of the world. It is important in enhancing and developing the education and learning of persons with disabilities in various fields of life, integrating them with members of society, and investing their energies and benefiting from them in the development of society.

The past decades have witnessed wide and great interest in people with disabilities, including those with intellectual disabilities. There was a real recognition of their right in education and learning in regular schools as well as the right to receive appropriate training for independent living and integration into society. Despite this, most people with intellectual disabilities still

suffer from various problems including self-determination (Sennary, 2017).

Self-determination is a relatively recent concept in psychology. Deci and Ryan were the first to introduce this concept in 1985 through their general theory of self-determination. It is represented by internally motivated behaviors, which are the focus of human and psychological growth, and support the needs of autonomy, competence, social connection, and decision-making, controlling actions, behavior, and emotion, and being aware of them without external influence so that the individual can achieve himself (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Self-determination skills are a real opportunity for people with disabilities, including those with intellectual disabilities, and an important practice to enable them to live independently.

Therefore, it is important to activate the role of education officials and teachers and support the surrounding environment to develop the self-determination of this group (Landuran, Raynaud, & Nkaoua, 2021).

Since the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Program in Education Act (IDEA) in 1990 to promote self-determination, it has been recognized as the best practice in special education for adolescents with disabilities. It became a critical target for intervention to help people with disabilities transit to independent living. Self-determination is defined as a set of beliefs, knowledge, and skills (for example, autonomy, goal-setting, planning, decision-making, self-monitoring, self-regulation, self-awareness, and leadership) that enable individuals to engage in an autonomous and self-directed behavior (Oswald et al., 2018). Parents see positive appreciation for a variety of strategies to enhance self-determination skills such as self-regulation, decision-making, and participation. They are used at home with their children with intellectual disabilities. However, there are various challenges that parents have faced while providing support for their children concerning basic skills that include the child's disabilities, health status, parental schedules, and family support. Hence, the importance of educational and social institutions rises in employing a set of activities that enhance and support these skills among persons with disabilities to appropriately integrate them into their societies. Children with intellectual disabilities need extensive training to learn skills related to self-determination (Yin Chu, 2018).

The importance of encouraging self-determination among individuals with intellectual disability emerges due to its positive effects on the development of their personal and academic aspects. Self-determination is important for these individuals to determine their destiny in their lives as well as its role in the lifelong learning process (Marks, 2008). Supporting and promoting the self-determination of adolescents with intellectual disabilities has also become the best practice in education services and transitional services and programs (Wehmeyer et al., 2013); it is related to the quality of life that enables these individuals to choose among several alternatives and to teach them choice skills. This allows them to make an important change in the methods of

their training in addition to its important role in being an important practice for the success of their transition to youth (Seong et al., 2015). From this point of view, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has shifted the teaching of simple cases of intellectual disability from special education to regular education and did not isolate them from their ordinary peers in school except when necessary. Thus, it provided them with opportunities for blended learning with ordinary children to allow everyone to accept the difference in their abilities. As for individuals with moderate and severe intellectual disabilities that need special attention and care, the Ministry of Education provided them with specialized government institutes (institutes of intellectual education). It equipped them according to their needs and provided them with compatible curricula through specialized teachers, and provided them with various rehabilitation services (Sennary, 2017).

Intellectual disability was defined as a disability characterized by a weakness in learning and problem-solving. Disability covers a wide range of behaviors. Before the age of 18 years, a wide range of disabilities begins such as poor problem-solving, deficiencies in behavioral issues, delays in the development of motor skills (e.g., walking, running, sitting), and difficulty following the rules and norms of society (Kesumawati, Fakhrudin, & Fahritsani, 2021). Individuals with intellectual disabilities are individuals who have lower than average intelligence ( $IQ < 70$ ). Intellectual disability was classified into three categories: mild or simple, medium or moderate, and severe. In their daily lives, children with intellectual disabilities need assistance from others to live their daily lives independently (Park, Bouck, & Duenas, 2018). A lack of social skills is a criterion for defining an individual with an intellectual disability as mentally impaired (Drossinou-Korea & Nikolaos, 2017). Individuals with intellectual disabilities also have several problems in acquiring good social behaviors such as negative reactions in interactions with others (Avcoglu, 2013). Therefore, these individuals cannot interact well with the people around them for lacking these skills. Hence, the main objective of educating and training the intellectually disabled on social skills and self-determination skills is to achieve the ability to perform sound behaviors in social environments and form good interpersonal relationships (Park, Bouck, &

Duenas, 2018), and obtain any appropriate professional opportunity that suits them and their abilities in the future (Umadevi Sukumaran, 2012). The skills that are related to self-determination among students with intellectual disabilities are essential and important skills for self-determination and the development of their full quality of life (Landuran, Raynaud, & Nkaoua, 2021).

These skills include the following:

-the skill of independence refers to an individual with an intellectual disability behaving according to his preferences, interests, and abilities independent of any outside influences or undue interference. Self-regulation includes a number of skills such as self-monitoring, self-learning, self-assessment, self-enhancement, and self-control. Participation refers to the amount of time an individual with an intellectual disability spends in positive interaction with his environment appropriately (Zheng et al., 2015). Decision-making skill refers to the process of choosing between alternatives based on individual preferences, and the control of the individual with intellectual disability over his daily and routine activities. Setting goals skill refers to the ability of the individual with intellectual disability to decide on something he wants to achieve, plan how to get it and work to achieve the goal. Finally, the problem-solving skill refers to the ability of the individual with an intellectual disability to use the information to identify and develop a plan capable of solving a problem he faces (Erwin & Brown, 2003).

Based on the foregoing, the researcher believes that it is important to help the student with intellectual disability in general and in the intermediate stage (15-12 years) in particular achieve self-determination skills. These skills can help him reach high levels of complete independence, timely decision-making, and have an independent and conscious life. Ghorab (2015) attributes this developmental stage that includes rapid changes in the adolescent and the development of the brain during adolescence to the sudden increase in many hormonal changes at the same time. He also attributes the developmental stage to neurological and social changes, life stress, and the changes that occur in the personality. Abu Ghazal (2014) emphasized that the adolescent at this stage begins to perceive the meaning of life from different aspects. The male seeks to be an adult

man, and the female seeks to fulfill her feminine role (a mature woman) through the experiences they gain due to the interaction with the surrounding community, social environment, and formation of relationships outside the framework of the family and school. Therefore, the adolescent's concept of himself and his identity grows as a result of his interaction with the social environment, and hence he strives to achieve his own psychological identity, the formation of an independent personality, and the freedom in decision-making and independence.

Hence, the importance of general education teachers' awareness of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in general, including those with mild intellectual disability in the intermediate stage, integrated into regular schools in particular emerges. This is to determine these students for their eligibility for appropriate services and programs. They enable them to learn self-determination skills to benefit in achieving the success of their students with intellectual disabilities to meet the criteria of personal independence and social responsibility in the aspects of their daily life. The regulatory guide for special education in the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia issued in 2015 confirmed that the flexibility and acceptance of the ordinary classroom teacher for students with disabilities is the most important factor that contributes to the success of their educational career with their ordinary peers. Teachers should also stay away from abusing the disabled or using names and descriptions that offend their interaction with themselves and others. This is a clear indication of the importance of focusing on the interaction of the disabled with his community and providing him with the necessary skills. Hence, this study came to examine the extent to which general education teachers are aware of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disabilities in the intermediate stage.

#### Statement of the problem

Teaching self-determination skills to students with an intellectual disabilities is an important matter for them. They are of great importance in helping them in self-directed planning, goal setting, self-regulation, and decision-making. Teaching these skills will help them in their integrated growth, provide them with appropriate educational care, and ensure their

successful transition to the youth stage well. The strategy of the Ministry of Education 2016-2020 in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia emphasized ensuring equitable quality education for all in the least restrictive environments. It also highlighted the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all by providing equal educational opportunities of quality and inclusiveness to all members of society, including people with disabilities. This can be done by creating the least educational environment that restricts the disabled, emphasizing their dignity, and providing appropriate opportunities to develop their capabilities so that they can contribute to the development of the nation. To verify this, the researcher conducted an exploratory study using an open interview on a sample of ten public education teachers in the intermediate school in Taif city. The analysis of those interviews revealed that there is a weakness in the teachers' awareness of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disabilities in the intermediate stage. On the other hand, the sample reported that their awareness degree of these skills is due to a lack of knowledge of the characteristics and needs of students with intellectual disabilities and the ability to learn these skills. Based on the foregoing, the problem of this study emerged, which attempted to examine the extent to which general education teachers' awareness of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage. Specifically, this study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent are general education teachers aware of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disabilities in the intermediate stage?
2. Are there any statistically significant differences in the extent to which general education teachers are aware of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage due to the gender variable?
3. Are there any statistically significant differences in the extent to which general education teachers are aware of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage due to the variable of years of experience?

4. Are there any statistically significant differences in the extent to which general education teachers are aware of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage due to the variable of academic qualification?

#### Significance of the study

The significance of the study stems from its response to modern educational trends. These trends call for the need to pay attention to the skills of self-determination provided to students in general, including those with intellectual disabilities, and to implement them in light of development in all fields. Also, the study is of significance in enriching the scientific knowledge in the educational field by providing a theoretical framework that deals with the skills of self-determination for people with intellectual disabilities. It is hoped that the results of the current study may contribute to shedding more light on the extent to which general education teachers are aware of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage and their relationship to some demographic variables. This will benefit the developers of intellectual education programs and those who train teachers to develop their awareness of self-determination skills. They will be also of benefit in helping them formulate a proposed scenario to activate the awareness of general education teachers about the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disabilities. In addition, they will enable planners in the Ministry of Education to develop appropriate methods for caring for the intellectually disabled in terms of the teacher, curriculum planning, evaluation, identifying self-determination skills, and training teachers on how to choose the most appropriate methods for teaching students with intellectual disability. Finally, the results of the current study will be of benefit for researchers by providing a well-validated scientific instrument, followed by the analysis of enhanced scientific studies from which they can benefit more broadly in this field.

#### Methods

In this study, the descriptive approach was used, the most appropriate approach to the nature of this study. A questionnaire was administered to collect data on the awareness of general

education teachers about the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disabilities in the intermediate stage.

#### Population and sample of the study

The study population consisted of all teachers in the intermediate stage in the educational region of Taif in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Their number was estimated to be about (3200) male and female teachers in the academic year 2021/2022. The study sample consisted of (334) male and female teachers who were chosen by the stratified random method from the original population, after determining the sample size based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table. The study sample was distributed according to gender, years of experience, and academic qualification as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Distribution of the study sample according to variables*

Variable	Category	Frequency
Gender	Male	137
	Female	197
Years of experience	1-10 years	162
	+ 10 years	172
Academic qualification	Bachelor	219
	Postgraduate studies	115
	Total	334

#### Instrument of the study

The study instrument was prepared by referring to the educational literature and previous studies that examined the self-determination skills of individuals with an intellectual disability such as Landuran, Raynaud, and Nkaoua (2021), Oswald et al. (2018), and Yin Chu (2018). They were benefited in identifying the self-determination skills of individuals with intellectual disabilities. The questionnaire items were formulated to measure the extent to which public education teachers are aware of these skills. The instrument was formed in its final version after verifying its validity and reliability. It consisted of (27) items distributed to six skills, namely: independence (1-5 items), and self-

organization (10- 6 items), participation (14-11 items), decision-making (18-15 items), setting goals (22-19 items), and problem-solving (27-23 items). To interpret the respondents' ratings, a 5 point-Likert scale was used. It ranged from very high (5), high (4), medium (3), low (2), very low (1).

#### Validity of the instrument

To verify the validity of the instrument's content, it was presented in its initial version to ten experts in special education, measurement, and evaluation at Taif University in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The experts were asked to submit their suggestions for modification, deletion, or addition to the items of the instrument and the extent to which the items belong to their domain to verify their suitability to achieve the objectives of the study. In light of the experts' opinions and suggestions, which were unanimously agreed upon (80%) or more, the required amendments were made, the instrument was written in its final version, consisting of (27) items.

#### Reliability of the instrument

The reliability of the study instrument was confirmed using the test-retest method by applying and re-applying the instrument two weeks later on a survey sample consisting of (25) male and female teachers of general education in the middle school from outside the main study sample. Then, the Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated between their estimates both times, and the overall reliability coefficient of the instrument reached (0.97). In addition, the internal consistency reliability coefficient was computed using the Cronbach's Alpha equation in the first application. The total reliability coefficient was (0.96), a high-reliability coefficient that indicates the reliability of the study instrument. Furthermore, the reliability coefficients for the study instrument domains were calculated using the two methods as depicted in Table 2.

Table 2. *Reliability coefficients for the study instrument domains*

No.	Domain	No. of items	Retest reliability	Internal consistency
1	Independence skill	5	0.93	0.86
2	Self-regulation skill	5	0.92	0.89
3	Participation skill	4	0.91	0.82
4	Decision-making skill	4	0.92	0.83
5	Goal-setting skill	4	0.94	0.84
6	Problem-solving skill	5	0.96	0.85

Table (2) shows that the reliability coefficients for the study instrument domains by the retest method ranged between (0.91-0.96), and by the internal consistency method (Cronbach's Alpha) ranged between (0.89-0.82). It is noted that reliability coefficients have high values, indicating that the instrument is reliable and achieve the study objectives.

#### Procedures of the study

The study problem, questions and variables, population, their work sites and means of communication with them were identified. Theoretical literature and previous studies were written and compared with the current study. Then, task facilitation letters were obtained from the official government agencies in the Educational Department-Taif to apply the instrument and collect the necessary data. After

that, the study instrument was prepared, and its validity and stability in the Saudi context were verified. Then, the study instrument was distributed using an electronic link on (Google Drive). The link was distributed to the study sample using the (WhatsApp) application after the study sample phone numbers were counted in cooperation with the Educational Planning Department in the Educational Department-Taif and the school principals. Then, the data were collected and checked for completeness, and the Social Statistical Analysis Package (SPSS) program was used to analyze the data. After that, the results were extracted and then discussed, and recommendations and research proposals were written. Finally, to explain the respondents' ratings, the following grading was adopted to calculate the degree of verification of the items and domains of the study instrument. The degree of approval of the general education teachers' awareness of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage was based on the equation of the range: (1.00 --- 1.80) = very low, (higher than 1.80 -- 2.60) = low, (greater than 2.60 -- 3.40) = medium, (greater than 3.40 -- 4.20) = high, (greater than 4.20 -- 5.00) = very high.

#### Results

This section deals with the results that were reached, and they were presented as follows:

The results of the first research question: To what extent are general education teachers aware of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage?

To answer this question, the means and standard deviations of the study sample's responses about general education teachers' awareness of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage. Table 3 shows the results.

Table 3. Means, standard deviations, ranks of the study sample's responses about general education teachers' awareness of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage in descending order

No.	Domain	Means	Standard deviation	Rank	Level
1	Independence skill	3.39	0.53	1	Medium
6	Problem-solving skill	3.39	0.50	1	Medium
2	Self-regulation skill	3.38	0.56	2	Medium
3	Participation skill	3.27	0.66	3	Medium
5	Goal-setting skill	3.25	0.70	4	Medium
4	Decision-making skill	2.93	0.77	5	Medium
	Total	3.28	0.40		Medium

Table 3 shows that the total degree of the extent to which general education teachers are aware of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage from the point of view of the study sample came with a means of (3.28), a standard deviation of (0.40), and a medium degree. The domains means of the study instrument ranged between (3.39-2.93), and all of them came with medium degrees. Table 3 also shows that the skill of "independence" came in the first place with a means of (3.39), a standard deviation of (0.53), and a rating medium. Also, the sixth skill "Problem-Solving " came in the first place (repeated) with a means of (3.39), a standard deviation (0.50), and a rating medium. Then, the second skill "self-organization" came with a means of (3.38), a standard deviation of (0.56), and a medium rating, followed by the third skill "participation" in the third place with a means (3.27), a standard deviation of (0.66), and a medium rating. The fifth skill, "Goal-setting", came in fourth place, with a means of

(3.25), a standard deviation of (0.70), and a medium rating. The fourth skill, "Decision-making", came in the last place with a means of (2.93), a standard deviation of (0.77), and a medium rating.

The results of the second research question: Are there any statistically significant differences in the extent to which general education teachers are aware of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage due to the gender variable?

To answer this question, the t-test was used to show the significance of the differences between the means of the general education teachers' awareness of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage from the point of view of the study sample according to the gender variable. Table 4 shows the results.

Table 4. T-test for the significance of the differences between the means of the general education teachers' awareness of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage according to the gender variable

Domain	Gender	No.	Means	Standard deviation	T	df	Sig-tailed-2
Independence skill	Male	137	3.38	0.57	.349	332	.727
	Female	197	3.40	0.50			
Self-regulation skill	Male	137	3.34	0.54	.892	332	.373

Participation skill	Female	197	3.40	0.58			
	Male	137	3.22	0.90			
Decision-making skill	Female	197	3.30	0.97	.606	332	.545
	Male	137	2.94	0.80	.104	332	.917
Goal-setting skill	Female	197	2.93	0.75			
	Male	137	3.24	0.69			
Problem-solving skill	Female	197	3.26	0.70	.230	332	.818
	Male	137	3.37	0.53	.692	332	.489
Total	Female	197	3.41	0.48			
	Male	137	3.25	0.42			
	Female	197	3.30	0.38	1.031	332	.303

Table 4 shows that there were no statistically significant differences at (0.05) between the significance of the differences of the means of the general education teachers' awareness of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate school according to the gender variable. No differences were shown on the total score and all domains of the study instrument (Independence skill, self-regulation skill, participation skill, decision-making skill, goal-setting skill, and problem-solving skill). All the statistical significance values were higher than (0.05).

Results of the third research question: Are there any statistically significant differences in the

Table 5. *T-test for the significance of the differences between the means of the general education teachers' awareness of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage according to the years of experience*

Domain	Years of experience	No.	Means	Standard deviation	T	df	Sig-tailed-2
Independence skill	1-10	162	3.26	0.52	4.316	332	.000
	+ 10	172	3.51	0.52			
Self-regulation skill	1-10	162	3.21	0.52	5.284	332	.000
	+ 10	172	3.53	0.56			
Participation skill	1-10	162	3.10	0.70	4.645	332	.000
	+ 10	172	3.43	0.58			
Decision-making skill	1-10	162	2.76	0.80	4.015	332	.000
	+ 10	172	3.09	0.71			
Goal-setting skill	1-10	162	3.08	0.72	4.447	332	.000
	+ 10	172	3.41	0.63			
Problem-solving skill	1-10	162	3.25	0.53	5.177	332	.000
	+ 10	172	3.52	0.43			
Total	1-10	162	3.13	0.39	7.419	332	.000
	+ 10	172	3.43	0.34			

Table 5 shows statistically significant differences at (0.05) between the significance of the differences of the means of the general education teachers' awareness of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate school according to the variable of the years of

extent to which general education teachers are aware of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage due to the variable of years of experience?

To answer this question, the t-test was used to show the significance of the differences between the means of the general education teachers' awareness of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage from the point of view of the study sample according to the variable of years of experience. Table 5 displays the results.

experience. There were differences in the total score and all domains of the study instrument (Independence skill, self-regulation skill, participation skill, decision-making skill, goal-setting skill, and problem-solving skill) in favor of the group with more than 10 years. All the



statistical significance values were less than (0.05).

Results of the fourth research question: Are there any statistically significant differences in the extent to which general education teachers are aware of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage due to the variable of academic qualification?

To answer this question, the t-test was used to show the significance of the differences between the means of the general education teachers' awareness of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage from the point of view of the study sample according to the variable of academic qualification. Table 6 depicts the results.

Table 6. *T-test for the significance of the differences between the means of the general education teachers' awareness of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage according academic qualification*

Domain	Academic qualification	No.	Means	Standard deviation	T	df	Sig-tailed-2																																																																				
Independence skill	Bachelor	219	3.32	0.53	3.283	332	.001																																																																				
	postgraduate	115	3.52	0.52				Self-regulation skill	Bachelor	219	3.33	0.53	2.270	332	.024	postgraduate	115	3.47	0.62	Participation skill	Bachelor	219	3.21	0.70	2.354	332	.019	postgraduate	115	3.39	0.57	Decision-making skill	Bachelor	219	2.83	0.79	3.351	332	.001	postgraduate	115	3.13	0.71	Goal-setting skill	Bachelor	219	3.14	0.66	4.039	332	.000	postgraduate	115	3.46	0.73	Problem-solving skill	Bachelor	219	3.33	0.51	2.839	332	.005	postgraduate	115	3.50	0.46	Total	Bachelor	219	3.21	0.38	4.731	332	.000
Self-regulation skill	Bachelor	219	3.33	0.53	2.270	332	.024																																																																				
	postgraduate	115	3.47	0.62				Participation skill	Bachelor	219	3.21	0.70	2.354	332	.019	postgraduate	115	3.39	0.57	Decision-making skill	Bachelor	219	2.83	0.79	3.351	332	.001	postgraduate	115	3.13	0.71	Goal-setting skill	Bachelor	219	3.14	0.66	4.039	332	.000	postgraduate	115	3.46	0.73	Problem-solving skill	Bachelor	219	3.33	0.51	2.839	332	.005	postgraduate	115	3.50	0.46	Total	Bachelor	219	3.21	0.38	4.731	332	.000	postgraduate	115	3.42	0.40								
Participation skill	Bachelor	219	3.21	0.70	2.354	332	.019																																																																				
	postgraduate	115	3.39	0.57				Decision-making skill	Bachelor	219	2.83	0.79	3.351	332	.001	postgraduate	115	3.13	0.71	Goal-setting skill	Bachelor	219	3.14	0.66	4.039	332	.000	postgraduate	115	3.46	0.73	Problem-solving skill	Bachelor	219	3.33	0.51	2.839	332	.005	postgraduate	115	3.50	0.46	Total	Bachelor	219	3.21	0.38	4.731	332	.000	postgraduate	115	3.42	0.40																				
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	postgraduate	115	3.46	0.73				Problem-solving skill	Bachelor	219	3.33	0.51	2.839	332	.005	postgraduate	115	3.50	0.46	Total	Bachelor	219	3.21	0.38	4.731	332	.000	postgraduate	115	3.42	0.40																																												
Problem-solving skill	Bachelor	219	3.33	0.51	2.839	332	.005																																																																				
	postgraduate	115	3.50	0.46				Total	Bachelor	219	3.21	0.38	4.731	332	.000	postgraduate	115	3.42	0.40																																																								
Total	Bachelor	219	3.21	0.38	4.731	332	.000																																																																				
	postgraduate	115	3.42	0.40																																																																							

Table 6 shows that there were statistically significant differences at (0.05) between the significance of the differences of the means of the general education teachers' awareness of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate school according to the variable of academic qualification. There were differences in the total score and all domains of the study instrument (Independence skill, self-regulation skill, participation skill, decision-making skill, goal-setting skill, and problem-solving skill) in favor of the group with postgraduate degrees. All the statistical significance values were less than (0.05). Table 4 shows that there were no statistically significant differences at (0.05) between the significance of the differences of the means of the general education teachers' awareness of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate school according to the gender variable. No differences were shown on the total score and all domains of the study instrument (Independence skill, self-regulation

skill, participation skill, decision-making skill, goal-setting skill, and problem-solving skill). All the statistical significance values were higher than (0.05).

## Discussion

The first research question: The result of this question showed that the total degree of the general education teachers' awareness of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage from the point of view of the study sample came with a means of (3.28) and a medium degree. It is noted that there is a discrepancy in the extent of awareness and clarity of general education teachers' knowledge of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage and the associated concepts. This discrepancy may be due to the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that teachers acquire through their university studies or what they receive from programs and training courses. Perhaps this

degree indicates the lack of skills, information, and facts related to the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disabilities in the intermediate stage. General education teachers should have a higher degree of these skills as they are the important segment and the cornerstone of the educational process. Also, they are the main factor in bringing about the appropriate development in the aspects of the educational process for students with disabilities, including those with intellectual disabilities in the intermediate stage. The result of this question showed that the skills "independence" and "problem-solving" came first with a mean of (3.39) and a medium degree. This may be due to the teachers' awareness of the importance of human rights, including people with disabilities, to live independently and in dignity within a less restrictive environment. Hence, they are well aware that the intellectually disabled act according to their preferences, interests, and special abilities without external influence and unnecessary interventions from teachers and the family. Also, they take responsibility for themselves and get used to living within the prevailing social customs and traditions in their society to be more adaptive, balanced, and harmonious. The fourth skill, "Decision-making", ranked last with a means of (2.93) and a medium degree. This result indicates the lack of general education teachers' awareness of the skills, information, and facts related to the decision-making skill of students with intellectual disabilities in the intermediate stage. This may be because this skill is difficult and complex that requires the individual to be familiar with it from various aspects and given the limited thinking of students with intellectual disabilities. General education teachers may find it difficult for intermediate school students with intellectual disabilities to learn how to gather sufficient information about a particular topic, how to compare the pros and cons of their decisions, or even think of alternatives for appropriate decision-making.

The second research question: The result of this question showed no statistically significant differences in the extent to which general education teachers are aware of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage due to the gender variable. This may be attributed to the similarity of the nature of

educational and academic conditions in intermediate schools integrated with intellectual education programs, their orientations, and educational policies. These policies encourage keeping pace with scientific and technical developments and familiarity with various skills for students with disabilities, including those with intellectual disability and related skills such as self-determination. Therefore, there were no differences due to the gender of the teacher (male, female). The Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia stresses the necessity of employing the least restrictive environment for students with disabilities of all genders. Also, it is keen, through circulars, on the importance of flexibility and acceptance of the regular classroom teacher for students with intellectual disability for the success of their educational journey.

The third research question: The result of this question revealed statistically significant differences in the extent to which general education teachers are aware of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage due to the variable years of experience. The differences were in favor of the experience category of more than ten years. This is because the teachers with more experience have acquired information and facts related to the self-determination skill of students with intellectual disabilities in the intermediate stage as a result of their attendance and participation in several training courses during their working years. This allowed forming attitudes and a positive image of self-determination skills and their role in the education and learning of students with intellectual disability and their quality of life. This may also be attributed to the desire of this group of teachers with long experience to keep pace with modern educational developments and to know everything new to benefits their students with intellectual disabilities to support their expertise and skills for the advancement of the local community and the prosperity of the country. In addition, teachers with long experience have a more in-depth and diverse view of career excellence. This is reflected in their knowledge and information about the characteristics of students with intellectual disabilities and the skills they need to coexist adequately with their environment and the people around them.

The fourth research question: The result of this question revealed statistically significant differences in the extent to which general education teachers are aware of the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage due to the academic qualification variable. The differences were in favor of the category of higher academic qualifications. This is because teachers with postgraduate degrees may have possessed information and facts related to the self-determination skill of students with intellectual disabilities in the intermediate stage. This was as a result of receiving extensive study in the postgraduate program about the characteristics of students with disabilities, including those with intellectual disability, and the skills they need to live with dignity, independence, and more organization. This has affected the extent of awareness and clarity of their knowledge of self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disabilities in the intermediate stage. Also, it gave them the greatest opportunity to learn the concepts, indicators, and behaviors related to the self-determination skills of students with intellectual disability in the intermediate stage and their importance in their quality of life.

### Recommendations

In light of the results of the study, the following can be recommended. The teacher has a great place for students with intellectual disabilities; he is their way to the outside world and the way to understand and comprehend everything that surrounds them. The responsibility is great on the teacher to promote this intellectually disabled person. Since working with students with an intellectual disability is considered a profession that has its own rules and principles and requires special preparation and training that requires professional abilities and competencies like all other professions, the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia must focus on the issue of preparing general education teachers. It needs to focus training during the service to work on increasing their awareness and training through training programs and courses to raise their efficiency of the awareness and development of self-determination skills of students with intellectual disabilities. Also, these programs will bridge the gap in their skills, knowledge, and facts related to the self-

determination skills provided to students with intellectual disabilities in the intermediate school. In addition, the education departments in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia need to ensure that general education teachers with less experience and academic qualifications are aware of the skills of self-determination for students with an intellectual disability through holding training courses and educational brochures on these skills and their role in the quality of life of the intellectually disabled. Finally, it is recommended to conduct future studies complementary to the current study to present a proposed scenario to develop the awareness of general education teachers about the self-determination skills provided to students with intellectual disabilities in the intermediate stage.

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#### **Appendix (1): Instrument for general education teachers' awareness of self-determination skills**

No.	Domains	Very high	High	Medium	Low	Very low
Domain One: independence skill						
1	It is important for the intellectually disabled to act in accordance with their own preferences and interests.					
2	It is important for the intellectually disabled to become accustomed to the social customs and traditions of their community.					
3	I consider it is important that the intellectually disabled behave according to their own abilities.					

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- 4 I understand the importance of the intellectually disabled's need to live without outside influence and undue interference from teachers and family.
  - 5 I realize the importance of the intellectually disabled to take responsibility for themselves.

#### Domain Two: self-regulation skill

- 6 I realize the importance of self-monitoring and its role in accustoming the student with intellectual disability to collect documented information about himself.
- 7 I realize the importance of self-learning for students with intellectual disability themselves using any materials and resources to achieve clear goals without direct help from teachers.
- 8 I realize the importance of self-evaluation in creating a classroom environment that achieves the highest levels of compliance with the school work system for students with intellectual disabilities.
- 9 It is important to accustom students with intellectual disability to self-improvement because it is the motivation that works to make them feel good about themselves and maintain their self-esteem.
- 10 Self-monitoring is a necessity to train the intellectually disabled to control their words and actions to avoid disturbing and offending others.

#### Domain Three: Participation skill

- 11 It is important to involve the intellectually disabled in works with their peers.
- 12 It is important to involve the intellectually disabled in activities with their surrounding community.
- 13 It is important to invite students and members of the school community to engage with the intellectually disabled and to share their interests.
- 14 I believe that teachers should engage with students with intellectual disability in school situations and activities in an acceptable manner.

#### Domain Four: Decision-making skill

- 15 I understand the importance of training the intellectually disabled on how to gather sufficient information on a particular topic or topics.
  - 16 It is important for the intellectually disabled to practice how to compare the pros and cons of their decisions.
  - 17 The intellectually disabled must learn to focus on their priorities.
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- 18 It is important to train the intellectually disabled to think about alternatives for appropriate decision-making.

Domain Five: Goal-setting skill

- 19 It is important to train the intellectually disabled how to make a decision about something they want to achieve.
- 20 It is important to train the intellectually disabled how to plan to get something.
- 21 I realize the importance of having the intellectually disabled practice how to focus on the purpose behind the work and the tasks they directly want to do.
- 22 It is important to train the intellectually disabled towards working towards achieving their goals.

Domain 6: Problem-solving

- 23 I realize the importance of having the intellectually disabled practice how to define a problem.
- 24 I realize the importance of having the intellectually disabled practice how to look for alternative solutions for a problem.
- 25 I realize the importance of training the intellectually disabled on how to evaluate and select appropriate solutions to solve a problem.
- 26 It is important for the intellectually disabled to be trained on how to apply the appropriate solution to the problem in practice.
- 27 I understand the importance of training the intellectually disabled on how to obtain feedback and respond to it in an appropriate way to solve a problem.
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