

Society, culture and special education for differently abled children.

A case study of Skardu.



Syeda Sakina Mosvi

**Quaid-i-Azam University
Department of Anthropology
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Society, culture and special education for differently abled children

(A case study of Skardu)



Syeda Sakina Mosvi

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Quaid-i-Azam University
Department of Anthropology
Islamabad - Pakistan
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Ms. Syeda Sakina Mosvi


Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad

(Department of Anthropology)

Final Approval of Thesis

This is to certify that we have read the thesis submitted by Ms. Syeda Sakina Mosvi. It is our judgment that this thesis is of sufficient standard to warrant its acceptance by the Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad for the award of the Degree of M.sc in Anthropology.

Committee:


1. Dr. Iqbal Badshah
Supervisor



2. Dr. Rabia Ali
External Examiner



3. Dr. Aneela Sultana
In-charge
Department of Anthropology



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Abstract

The current research entitled “Society, culture and special education for differently abled children” undertakes the task of exploring various aspects of special education in Skardu. This research carried out three objectives. First objective of this research is to figure out the perception of people about special education. Second objective of this study deals with state of special education in Skardu, and third objective is meant to explore the hurdles and barriers faced by special education in Skardu.

Anthropological tools of data collection i.e., in-depth interviews, case studies, participant observation and jotting were used data acquisition. Purposive and convenience sampling were used during this research. Sample size of this study was 34. This study was conducted between October 2020 to January 2021 and the duration of this study was four months. Several techniques and tools like in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observations, jottings, and audio recordings were used for data acquisition.

People were very diverse when it came to figure out their perception regarding education of differently abled children. Female were less favoured, and special education for female was least preferable according to them. Children with down syndrome, and mental retardation also got least attention in terms of education while children with different physical abilities, hearing impairment and visual impaired were more on the preferable side. State of special education in Skardu was less than desired. Majority of the students were out the educational spheres. Special education complex developed various programs and plans in order to accommodate differently abled children in mainstream society and the results of these programs and plans were quite prolific. Although special education complex was providing facilities to the students to improve their life standards but there were some serious problems also which need to address. Lack of hostel facilities, library and budgetary issues were among main hurdle in special education.

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Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

Education is pre-eminent apparatus of social change and usually it institutes actions of advancements in the social structure. Education helps in bridging gaps between the various divisions of the society (Rajakumar, et al., 2006). As education provides children to undergo the confrontations of life so, it is right of every child whether she/he is differently abled or not. Education expands our knowledge about the environment we live in. It is an instrument of social change, and it is human right with enormous power to transform the ecosystem we live in. Every child regardless of her/his gender, race, ethnicity, colour, language, religion, and physical and psychological ability, must have access to education in order to make “education for all” a reality (Limaye, 2016).

In 1960, UNESCO¹ convention against discrimination in education, condemned deprivation of any person or group of persons in access to education of any type or education of inferior standards (UNESCO, 1960). In article 26 of Universal declaration of Human Rights (1948) it is written that everyone has right to education. Education shall be free at least in elementary and fundamental stages. Education is not privilege rather it is basic human right (UN General Assembly, 1948). Education of children is among the core rights of children and article 23 of convention of child right has laid stress on the removing of obstacles for children with different abilities in order to become self-sufficient and independent. Article 28 of that convention stated that primary education should be free while secondary and higher education should be available to each child. Children whether they are differently abled or not should be encouraged to go to school (UN General Assembly, 1989). UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (CRPD) shifted the worldview of masses toward person with different abilities. The main objective of that

¹ UNESCO stands for United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. UNESCO is an agency of United Nations which promotes security and peace across the world through education, the sciences and culture.

convention is to view persons with different abilities as ‘subjects’ with rights, capable of claiming their rights and making decision for their lives based on their informed consent rather than “objects” of charity, sympathy, and social protection (UN General Assembly, 2006). Pakistan has also ratified all these convention of United nations in order to address the issue of education children with different abilities. In addition to this, United Nations convention on the rights of person with disabilities was signed 2008 and Pakistan ratified it in 2011 (International Disability Alliance, 2011). Similarly, article 25A of Pakistan’s constitution mentions right to free and compulsory education for children between 5 to 16 years of age as basic right (UNICEF Pakistan, 2019).

Those conventions which are mentioned above prohibits the exclusion and seclusion education on the basis of gender, ethnicity, skin colour, socio-economic condition, and ability. Despite of these conventions, there are millions of children across the globe who do not have access to educational opportunities, and they continue to face exclusion and seclusion (Bhatti, 2020). Children of Different abilities are among those who face exclusion in educational domain. They are subject to seclusion and most of the time they excluded from mainstream education (Cologon, 2019). The education of differently abled is facing lots of trouble despite the fact that it has undergone major changes over the years due the efforts of government. Policies of Government of Pakistan regarding differently abled people intend to address the issues of accommodation and fulfil the needs of differently abled people, but the pre-existing stigma attached with different abilities collides with policies and thus, it become difficult to facilitate people with different abilities through viable support system (Ali, 2020).

In the last two decades, awareness regarding different abilities and emphasis on the rehabilitation has been increased. Federal Government, provincial Government and non-Government organizations have established large number of special education complexes and rehabilitation centres for children with different abilities. These special education complexes and rehabilitation centres provide education and vocational training to physically, especially deaf, and hard hearing, blind, dumb and multiple handicapped, and psychologically different children (Naz & Sulman, 2012).

Education of differently abled children is very vital and matter of prime significance for Government and country in this context but despite of this, education of differently abled still face cultural, strategic, and financial hurdles. There is weak administrative structure of special education in Pakistan due to constantly changing policies (Hafeez, 2020). Lodhi (2020) argued that the education budget of Pakistan especially regarding the education of differently abled is insufficient which results in untrained teaching staff, poor infrastructure, and lack of accessibility to children who belong to poor families.

Through this study, I intended to figure various aspects of education of differently abled children in Skardu. The perception and attitudes of people regarding the education of differently abled is meant explored. The state of education of differently abled in Skardu is meant to figure and finally it is intended to find out the barriers and hurdles in education of differently abled.

The basic purpose of this study is to look into the role of society in acceptability of differently abled persons. How the cultural settings are creating hurdle in making them as the productive members of the society? Why educational institutions are not existing to bring the special potential of such students. How the society at general face the coping mechanism to address the agonies of relevant parents?

1.2 Statement of the problem

The world at the present is struggling for free, fair, and impartial, and quality education for all people starting primary education, secondary and higher education through education for all goals. Education for all is adopted by many countries including Pakistan. The Universal declaration of human rights (1948) declared education as basic human right for every person including person with different abilities. Education of differently abled children is of the major issues in world especially across developing countries. Although differently people comprise of one major proportion of the world population but their education, their social status and their involvement in decision making is almost negligible. Differently abled children are constrained by socio-cultural structures in various regions of the world.

Children with different abilities have not only disadvantaged in access to acquire material possessions like property and money but sometimes they are also excluded from human rights and social resources like education and knowledge (Wodon & Alasuutaari, 2018). Children with different abilities, across the globe are confined to institutions, social care centres, psychiatric hospitals, and informal traditional healing centres. Children are sometimes detained in these centres and hospitals on bases of their different abilities, and they are left with no care and thus, in these centres and hospitals they are deprived of their liberty (Barriga, Buchanan, Ćerimović, & Sharma, 2017).

Children with physical differences as clearly mentioned in United nation's "Convention for the rights of persons with disabilities" (2008) which is ratified by 182 countries including Pakistan, were given wide chances for acquiring a type of education which will be friendly to differently abled persons. This include the provision of ecosystem comprised of all necessary dispositions that are supportive to students with differently abilities. Such supports refer to things such as good and supportive classrooms, laboratories, libraries, dormitories, internet connectivity, washrooms, dining, as well as sports and games' spaces but this ecosystem is still not available for children in various regions and countries, and the implantation of these suggestions is under process.

The implantations of such recommendations differs from region to region, institution to institution and country to country. Developing countries suffers when it comes to implement these recommendations because they have struggling economies, and unfocused priorities and consideration, given to quality education among differently abled students. This results in low enrolment rates in developing countries (Kuper, et al., 2015).

Socio-cultural constraints like stigma related with education of children with differently abled, infrastructural issues like lacking facilities at special education centres and budget difficulties are predominant in Pakistan. These issues create a huge vacuum in education of differently abled children and that is why I was interested in investigating the state of education of differently abled children. The problems faced by children in special education centres, and the perception and social attitudes of people regarding the education of differently abled children is therefore needed to explore. As it is known that education

empowers individuals for social, political, and economic independence so, I tried to investigate all these aspects mentioned above.

1.4 Objectives

This study is specifically intended to find out following objectives.

- To explore perception and social attitudes towards special education.
- To explore the state of education of special education in Skardu.
- To figure out the issues and challenges towards special education.

1.3 Significance of the study

This research has lots of significance in socio-cultural and political domain. This would be the first Anthropological research conducted on education of differently abled children in Skardu district, Gilgit Baltistan. There are very few studies conducted on education of differently abled children and most of them are conducted while using quantitative methods, but this study has been conducted through qualitative method, the very first of its kind in Skardu on this topic.

Differently abled children are among the marginalized and neglected children of the society. Sometimes people relate stigma and discrimination regarding their education. so, this study has a potential to change the public view regarding the status and education of such children. This study would be helpful in order to address the issues in education of differently abled children also.

This study can be used as a basic source of information by other students who want to conduct study on this topic. Students can use the findings of this study as literature for their studies. This study can used as ground report for further studies conducted on this topic.

Various issues like infrastructural issues, budget constraints and other problems have been discussed in this study so, it would be useful for special education complex Gamba Skardu

in order to address those issues. In future Government might launch other projects for differently abled students where they could address those issues.

Lastly, this research was very helpful for me. It enhanced my worldview by expanding my knowledge about differently abled children. I hope this research will not only fulfil my degree requirements but will also inspire me to do something for differently abled children.

1.5 Justification of the locale

This study was conducted in Gamba tehsil of Skardu District. Gamba is 12 kilometres in the west of Skardu city. Most of respondents were interviewed in the special education complex Gamba but some of the respondents were interview via smartphone. I also visited to homes of some of the respondents in order to collect valid data.

I selected the Gamba as a locale because it was more convenient to me. In Skardu there is only one special education complex which is located in Gamba. It usually took me 20 minutes to reach special education complex. I and respondents were having no language barriers because we all spoke Balti as mother language. Apart from language barrier there were also no cultural barriers. I and the respondents shared all cultural values and morals so, there was no barriers in this regard also. These were the reason of selection of Gamba Skardu as a locale of this research.

1.7 Limitations of the study

I have tried to figure out various aspects of special education in this study and spend few months in order to achieve saturated data but as it is known that there are few short comings of every study so, this study has no exception.

The biggest limitation of this is that special education complex announced closure due to second wave of Covid-19. I spent two and half months in the field while in remaining time I conducted interviews and collected data via smartphone interviews. Due to closure, I was no more in the position to visit special education complex personally and investigate the respondent so, that is why I opted for smartphone interviews latterly.

Another limitation of this study is that sample size of parents is smaller. Small sample size does not ensure the validity of data that much.

1.8 Thesis outline

This thesis has been divided into seven chapters. In the first chapter of the thesis, I have introduced the topic. After the introduction I Stated the problem, then I have mentioned the significance of the study and objectives of this research. Justification of locale, and limitations of study has been discussed in detail in first chapter.

Second chapter of the thesis is about review of relevant literature. I have reviewed books; articles, reports and blogs in order to view this topic through holistic lenses. Review of relevant literature has been done thematically, for example first I have reviewed literature regarding the perception of different ability across the culture, then I reviewed literature related to education of differently and then types of education of differently abled and so on. I have also operationally defined key terms which have been frequently used in research.

In the third and fourth chapter of this thesis, I have written research methodology and area profile. Research methodology include methods, tools and techniques of sampling and data collection while area profile include the physical feature of the locale, demographic division of people of locale and social affairs of the people.

Fifth chapter of the thesis is about the finding of first objective of the research. What was the perception of people regarding the education of differently abled and what were social attitudes towards their education have mentioned in detail.

Sixth chapter of the thesis is about the second objective of the research. I have discussed the state of special education Skardu in detail. How many students have enrolled in special education complex and what kinds of programs have been initiated in order to increase the potential of differently abled children, have been discussed.

Seventh chapter of this study is regarding the third objective of the research. The hurdles and problems faced by the students in social domain have been mentioned. Apart for

problems in social domain, I have also discussed the infrastructural issues, budget constraints and other crisis faced by special education complex.

In last chapter I have summarized and concluded this thesis. In first part I have summarized the whole thesis and in second part concluding remarks have been written down.

Chapter 2

2.1 Review of relevant literature

Review of relevant literature is an important part of each study, and this study has no exception. Review of literature provides a holistic overview of the study. Through review of relevant literature, I was able to discover various dimension of different abilities, and the education of differently abled in time and space. The review of literature has been divided into various sections in order to avoid confusion. I started review of literature with the investigations and definitions of different ability by various Anthropologists across the globe.

2.2 The concept of different ability in various societies

Jane Hubert (2013) described that in different societies people who have mental, physical, or intellectual difference are excluded from mainstream society. This an intense example in which people tend to disassociate themselves from physically, mentally, and intellectually different people.

In all societies some people or set of people are secluded and it is assumed that by excluding of these individuals the main body of the society is in a better position to assign itself. Our social boundaries are defined on the basis of inclusion and exclusion. The new technologies are creating a new social category which is most likely to call as excluded category. For example, in British such technologies are used to improve hearing problems of children but on the contrary, they grow up as part of deaf culture and they never integrate with hearing society (Hubert, 2013).

Amin Hashwani (2012) conducted a study different ability (Disabilities) in various district of Gilgit Baltistan in order to explore community's attitude and perception about different abilities.

The causes of disability that participants described could be divided into two main groups: medical and non-medical. Medical reasons for disability included factors such as poor nutrition, lack of vaccinations, illness, poor hygiene etc., while non-medical reasons included topics such as punishment for sins, jadoo (magic), fate, and a test of patience for parents of disabled child etc. (Hashwani, 2012).

According to Hashwani the respondents were not using the group designated terms like Zehni Mazoori (Intellectual disability) and Jismani Mazoori (Physical disability). They were more likely to use terms such as “those who have weak bones”, those who cannot hear” and “those who cannot move their arms and legs”. The respondents were divided into two groups. Those respondents who were educated were more likely referring medical reason like genetic disorder, malnutrition, lack of vaccination and poor health care system for different abilities while other respondents were linking these differences to evil eyes, wrath of God, magic, vices, and other supernatural causes (Hashwani, 2012).

Faye Ginsburg and Rayna (2002) reported that different abilities were not included in mainstream anthropological work in 18th and 19th century. There were almost negligible mentions of different abilities in the realm of medical anthropology because the focus of medical anthropology was based on folk medicines and orthodox ways of treatment. In first half of twentieth century applied anthropologist intervened mental, psychological, and social health in cultural context but they also rarely encountered different abilities.

Historically, anthropological studies of disability were relatively rare until the late twentieth century, often intellectually segregated into the realm of medical and applied anthropology. Yet, the international spread and uneven impact of the disability rights movement from the 1960s forward, as well as cross-cultural work in anthropology, show that what counts as a disability in different cultural settings is not obvious (Ginsburg & Rapp, 2002).

Studies on different abilities in mainstream anthropological domain is still less than what it needs to be. The founder of Culture and personality school of thought, “Ruth Benedict” was the pioneer who conducted a study on epilepsy. She studied the cross-cultural

conception of conception of epilepsy. Her study is considered the first major anthropological study of different ability (Benedict, 1934).

Margaret Mead Another influential figure of culture and personality school of thought commented on differently abled people, and she included them in the domain of “Normal” American culture. She was of the view that it is necessary to include all people of America regardless of their physical abilities in order to study American National character (Mead, 1953).

Mead only included people with physical differences while people with mental differences were neglected in mainstream anthropological domain. Robert Edgerton, Professor at University of California was the first anthropologist who explore mental differences in anthropological perspective. Anthropologist Robert Edgerton (1967) was the first to explore mental retardation from an anthropological perspective. Edgerton argued that in popular psychology “Intelligent Quotient” score has been used to determine the mental ability of a person but in fact the experiences of mentally different persons indicate that they act intelligently for certain purpose in some settings (Edgerton , 1984).

Cross cultural concepts of different abilities are various, and dynamic. Traditional societies have different approaches towards different abilities than their industrial counterparts. Maasai of Kenya has their own distinct interpretation of different ability. There is a saying “even if you are clever, God does not give you anything at the same time”, it means that nothing can be achieved by human by itself unless it is granted to them by God. Prosperity and misery are just like the head and tail of coin. Fortune and misfortune are randomly distributed. The definition of disability in the context of Maasai is very different that of European one. Those people who are physically restricted to help themselves are regarded as disables and it is duty of other people of society to help them. So, it means a deaf person who is able to help him/herself is not disable in Maasai’s interpretation of disability (Talle, 1995).

Reid-Cunningham (2009) conducted a study “Anthropological Theories of Disability”. She argued that anthropological interpretation of so-called disability features the perception of otherness, stigma and deviance and it expands our interpretation of human behaviour in social environment.

The debate about the definition of a “disabled culture” or “culture of people with disabilities” continues to rage, with researchers, theorists, and people with disabilities making contributions to the evolving definitions of culture and identity (Reid-Cunningham, 2009).

Anthropologist Nora Ellen Groce (1999) hold a view that the concept of different ability exists only in communities which share western notions of medicalization. Yet there is some sort of physical and behaviour differences which all societies are agreed upon. These differences are recognized by societies and there are social consequences of this recognition. Another Anthropologist Mary Douglas (1966) used a notion of “Anomaly” matter out of place for different abilities. The concept of Anomaly has been used by many anthropologists as starting point for the beginning of understanding of difference in cultural contexts. Anomaly or matter out of place is different than liminality and it regard as culturally constituted perception of differences. Anomaly means something that does not fit within recognized cultural categories.

Benedict Ingstad conducted studies on disability in various societies in Southern African region. Ingstad (1999) argued that in many societies the physical and mental impairment is not essential for determining the status and inclusion of a person. The most important determinants of inclusion in those societies are family ties and kinship. Apart from family ties and Kinship, the ability of a person to behave in appropriate manner and competence in doing useful tasks for the good of family determine inclusion (Ingstad, 1999).

2.3 Different abilities and education

Education of differently abled persons is matter of vital importance. In 1975 an act was passed by the congress of United states of America in order to secure the right to education of children who have physical and mental differences. Federal funds were granted to all public school in this regard. Aside from education, schools were supposed to provide one time meal also to those children (Boyer, 1979).

The 20th century produced too many scientific knowledge at unparalleled scale. These include manufacturing, agricultural revolutions, means of transportation, communication

technologies, rapid increase in economics and urbanization. Aside from these drastic changes, 20th century was also responsible for overcoming complex political and cultural difference and complex barriers of time and space. Contemporary education system was a product of 20th century. Education of female and special education merged in 20th century especially in the second half of 20th century. These changes in education were at unprecedented level (Kauffman, Hallahan, & Pullen, 2017).

Education is important for all human beings regardless of their physical and mental differences. Before 1970s, there was no major federal law for the protection of rights of people with different abilities in United states of America. The civil rights movement which was led by Martin Luther King Junior led to major shift in “disability rights movement”. After federal legislation, a system was initiated which allowed eligible children with different abilities to get free education in least hostile setting, but children of different abilities still lag behind their non-disabled fellows. Children with different abilities are less likely to achieve their academic goal and they are more likely to drop out of schools (Aron & Loprest, 2012).

In developing countries, Children with different abilities are usually not enrolled in primary education. After some serious efforts of non-government organization across the world, the education of children with different abilities are receiving some sort of attention and educational exclusion is losing its ground in various countries.

Advancing the educational inclusion of disabled children requires consideration of issues of definitions, data, policies, service delivery, finance, capacity development. Two-way learning between the global south and north can help to promote inclusive education in developed and developing country contexts (Bines & Lei, 2011).

In developing countries there are lots of issues regarding the education differently abled students. Hasan, Ding, Fu, and Pan (2017) argued that in developing countries like China students with different abilities have insufficient curriculum resources and school administration is usually not able make adjustments in order to address the needs of differently abled children. Most of the schools lack individualized programs for children and infrastructure is barely available to accommodate these children.so, there is a need of

time to build a specialized and accountable management network that extends from district level to school level, responsible for all guidance and training related to inclusive education. (Hasan, Ding, Pan, & Fu, 2017).

Develop more resources to support individualized education so that each student with specific educational needs is taught according to an individualized learning plan developed by resource teachers and a team comprised of discipline teachers, parents, and rehabilitation professionals. Construct resources rooms and build accessible infrastructure to support the learning of students with disabilities (Hasan, Ding, Pan, & Fu, 2017).

2.4 Education of differently abled children and people's perception

Children are often marginalized on the basis of their different abilities. This marginalization is more visible in educational institutes, especially schools. There are misperceptions about education of differently abled children. These misperceptions prevent school administrators, teachers, government officials and international development staff from accomplishing desirable results (Hayes & Bulat, 2017).

Children with different abilities sometimes face dual standards of society. Shahbaz and Batool (Batool & Shahbaz, 2008) argued that Pakistani society has a common view that deaf people are incapable to perform their max potential and they have limited cognitive abilities. Miles and Hossain (1999) also claimed that children with different abilities in Pakistan and Bangladesh are treated differently than others.

In general, there is lack of awareness about the nature of disability among the Pakistani people. Individuals with disabilities are regarded as unfortunate ones who cannot perform their roles correctly or effectively. Usually, the parents and relatives viewed their children with disabilities as an economic burden and the result of family sins (Miles & Hossain, 1999).

The perception of children about their peers with learning difficulties were on the negative side. Fifth graders children saw learning difficulty as limited cognitive capacity and character deficit. Apart from children's perception, parents of those children who were having learning problems were also responsible for their undesired situation. Most of the parents were denying that their child has difficulties with learning. They simply argued that they will catch up, there are just late bloomers. This prevented the attention which they need in order to integrate (Arezzo & Thomas, 2010).

Torrie Dunlap (2016) holds a view that children with different abilities are the world's most marginalized and excluded children. We have not embraced children with different abilities as full participant in our schools and communities, and it shows the limitations of our own mental models. We have moved from hiding and institutionalizing kids to a world where children of different abilities are seen as special and placed in special settings and given special services with special care (Dunlap, 2016).

Jack Trammel (2009) took few instruments into account to measure the degree of stigma among students who have different abilities at college and university level. He has conducted his study while applying quantitative method. So, his study lacks the details and a broad view of stigma.

The degree of stigmatization, and the aspects of the college experience. There is evidence, for example, that college students with disabilities may be hesitant to disclose to the college or University that they have a disability, in part because of the anticipated negative consequences of that action; that college students with disabilities may worry that accommodations will give them an unfair advantage (Trammel, 2009).

Luke Staniland (2009) conducted a survey on people's perception regarding differently abled person across United Kingdom. People with different abilities were regarded as less capable as people over the age of 70. Most of the people viewed people with different abilities with condolence and affection. Similarly, survey was conducted by Dominic Abrams and Diane Houston in 2006. They claimed that a huge proportion of population of United Kingdom regards people with different abilities as incompetence and 35% people

felt that they receive much more from national economy than they put in (Abrams & Houston, 2006).

Arrah and Swain (2014) conducted a study on perceptions of students with special education needs in West African country Cameroon. They were of the view that there was big difference in perception of hurdles of mentoring students with different abilities between males and female.

This indicates that male teachers perceive that they face more challenges working with students with special education needs. Female teachers have a more positive attitude towards including students with special education needs in a general education classroom. Cultural differences between males and females may play a role in the challenges of teaching students with SEN (Arrah & Swain, 2014).

There was a view that students with psychiatric differences can handle their condition as compared to students with cognitive differences. Students with psychiatric difference have some sort of control over their situation. There is a consensus that they are less deserving to any kind of accommodation and academic accommodations given to them are unfair. This perception eventually leads a student with psychiatric differences to prevent seeking helps for their condition. Another reason of their prevention of help was that people will label them as lazy (Akin & Huang, 2019).

People with different abilities need a framework for utilization of their assessment. There should be a classification of support. This framework can be understanding as triangle, as there are three corners of triangle same is the case with this framework. First corner of this triangle is of society, second corner is of culture and third one is of individual persons (Reiter, 2000).

The society-person axis is comprised of area that include social assembly, social approaches towards health and prosperity, freedom and liberty, and personal capacity to assess situation for accomplishment. This axis starts from social norms and end with moral values. In the realm of different abilities, this axis is the alteration from the roles of imposition of standards to the pursuit of health, comfort, and happiness. Second axis of

triangle is comprised of comprehension, expertise, craft, and science. It starts from personal outlook of life and ends on individual's potential. This axis leads from information and public relations to ideology, ontology, and logic. It contributes to utilize general skills into individual capabilities like art, literature, and sciences. Finally, there as an axis of support system in the middle of triangle. The guardian well-being path can be found in the roles of social welfare. This axis is the humanistic approach and the principle of respect for each person (Reiter, 2000).

As it is known that different abilities are an umbrella term which covers many differences. It includes physical, differences, cognitive differences, psychiatric differences, learning difficulties, hearing and visual problems and so, on. Rick Frost (2018) stated that most of the students' different abilities do not lack cognitive capabilities and if someone assume that they are less intelligent it will be a great mistake.

Indeed, some people with very severe cerebral palsy, who cannot speak or control their body movement very much at all, are very intelligent and very aware of the world around them. For example, Stephen Hawking, one of the world's leading Lecturer Support Material physicists, has very severe cerebral palsy and uses an electric wheelchair for mobility, and a special electronic speaking device for speech (Frost, 2018).

Larry Ershawn was trainer responsible for training of teachers and instructors in special education center in Papua New Guinea. He described how current system education of differently abled students is and how it needs to be. He stated that teaching and learning strategies are more important than process. Teachers ought to be positive while teaching and instructing students with different abilities. He argued that a good teacher will never blame his/her student for their lack of learning rather they will bring changes in her/his ways of teaching and instruction. Compassion should be number priority of teacher in this regard (Ershawn, 2013).

A positive learning and social environment are important for all children and deaf children should benefit both socially and emotionally from their education. Deafness itself does not create behaviour problems, but deaf pupils may become frustrated if they are unable to communicate clearly

with others or when they do not understand what is happening around them (Ershawn, 2013).

2.5 Inclusive education vs special education

Researchers, scholars, intellectuals, and expert of education have shared their views on education of differently abled students. Their opinions are diverse when it comes to choose best suited education for differently abled person. Some experts believe that special education is paramount criteria of improving life standards of persons with different abilities while others are favouring inclusive education as it provides more opportunities of integration into society. It is widely believed that inclusion is very helpful in order to assimilate student with different abilities into realm of academics. School children ought to have full participation, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or other needs, as mentioned in UNESCO's conference took place in Spain (UNESCO, 1994).

Regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society, and achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system (UNESCO, 1994).

Different European countries have adopted the suggestion made by UNESCO in order accumulate children in different abilities into mainstream society. There are eight different types of education for children with different abilities on primary level in Flanders, Belgium. Four training forms have been set on the secondary level. The trainings forms are based on students' capabilities and interest. In Germany there are ten different education types for differently abled children while in Netherland there are even more types than Germany, fifteen to be precise. Other countries of Europe Like France, Denmark, and Luxemburg have also a wide variety of schools and centres to enlighten the future of differently abled children (Groof & Lauwers, 2003).

Imania and Fitria (2018) argued that inclusive education system is key to success of the motive of education for all. As it known that education is not a privilege rather is basic human right so, education practices and policies ought to follow inclusive education system. A world conference on Education: quality and access, was held Salamanca Spain in 1994 for the promotion of inclusive education system across the globe. 25 international organizations and 92 governments pledge to shift the policies into inclusive education system. Inclusive education is designed to help individuals with different abilities to fully integrated into the academic world and help them lead more independent lives. Inclusion should be promoted in Higher education (Hosche, 2021).

In order to avoid the feelings of deprivation, children with different abilities be admitted into regular school. Children are more likely to integrate in mainstream education because they face hurdles in learning and integration in exclusive education system. Regular educational institutes have more diverse students so, this diversity will turn helpful for them as they can develop their social skills over there. Apart from social skill inclusive education is beneficial for friendship, personal principles, and comfort with other people (Singh, 2016).

Sakina Gulzar and Uneeza Saeed Qureshi (2016) has conducted a study to find out the challenges which were perceived by the parents of children with different abilities.

Parents listed the perceived challenges such as emotional problems, academic performance, and support at school from Teachers and Peer and current areas of needs as a source of concern regarding their children with special needs (Gulzar & Qureshi, 2016).

On a quarry about child's emotional problems parents reported child's emotional dependence on their family, lack of peer group company at home, need for freedom and independence to do daily house chores and activities, and favouritism in toys.

Torrie Dunlap (2015) has criticized special education system. She holds a view that by educating children with different abilities in special education institutes we are giving them a message that you are not like us that is why you are secluded.

When young impressionable children learn that their needs are too great that they are too different and that they do not need our very narrow definition of what normal is. This has a lifelong effect on their abilities to contribute positively to the society (Dunlap, 2015).

Schwab, Gebhardt, and Gasteiger-Klicpera (2012) drawn a comparison between inclusive education and special education. People were mostly in favour of inclusive education because they argued that inclusive education was well suited in term of integration but on the other hand, parents of those children who were having intellectual difference were of the view that inclusive education is not well suited to their children. It will be better accommodated in special schools (Schwab, Gebhardt, & Klicpera, 2012).

Hasan, Ding, Pan and Fu (2017) argued that inclusive education has many advantages so, the governments of developing counties need start the education from regular classes to inclusive classes. Attending regular schools is basic right of children with different abilities and inclusive education is the only way to secure their right of education.

Inclusive education policies should be incorporated into all educational planning. Expand the coverage of students with specific educational needs from the three categories traditionally covered in the counties (visual impairment, hearing impairment, and intellectual disabilities) to the full eight categories specified in the People with Disabilities Act of the People's Republic of China (Hasan, Ding, Pan, & Fu, 2017).

Mitchell (2004) argued that the field of special education is not only crucial to education as whole but also a significant ground for discourse. Inclusive education is meant to overcome hurdles, remove bigotry, and to boost its outcomes in academic's achievements. The main advantage of inclusive education is to change to pre-existing conceptualization of special needs. So, there is need of assessment which would measure the needs of students with different abilities, and it will also take steps for feasible action in regular schools regarding the education differently abled students.

The relative weight given to central versus local control of education Pedagogical issues. In all of these paradigm clashes, countries are at

different stages in reaching settlements. These difficulties reflect a range of factors, including intellectual traditions, cultural values, economic circumstances, and demography (Mitchell, 2004).

Special education cannot be defined in a single line and there is various definition of special education. According to Heward (2003) special education is that kind of education in which students with different abilities are taught in individually planned, systemically implanted programs. Students are carefully evaluated instructed in order to peruse their self-sufficiency and success in present and future.

Gregorio also appreciates special education by arguing that Special education is a helpful intervention, it can eliminate the hurdles an obstacle which keep students with different abilities from learning, and from active participation in schools. It also provides them with an opportunity in engaging in social and leisure activities (Gregorio, 2007).

Marty (2010) wrote a document with the cooperation Florida department of Education. She preferred special education over inclusive one. She argued that inclusive education cannot fulfil the requirements of differently abled students as a whole. She stated that there are different kinds of abilities among the students so, it is not possible to accommodate all students in a single pattern of system of education.

There are students with specific learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities, emotional/behavioural disabilities, deaf or hard of hearing, visually impaired, dual sensory impaired, orthopaedic impairment, traumatic brain injury, speech impairment, language impairment, autism spectrum disorder, and developmentally delayed. Students of each of these categories needs separated kind of education (Beech, 2010).

2.6 State of special education in Pakistan

Hameed (2003) analysed national policies in Pakistan regarding special education. He claimed that societal attitude towards children with different abilities and roles of non-

government organizations are very crucial in determining the status of special education in the country.

In Pakistan 66% of children are enrolled in school at the primary level, leaving 34% without education. Children with disabilities constitute a major part of this marginalized group. It is estimated that six million children have been left out from schools (Hameed, 2003).

In first 13 years, the government was able to establish only five institutes as special schools. In next 20 years, the government established another five institutions of special education. 1980 was celebrated as international year of disabled persons in Pakistan. Students with physical and mental differences were facilitated with improved service in that year. Despite of those facilities, students with different abilities still suffered very much in these institution as these institutions lacked basic infrastructure. In 2002 the government of Pakistan took some serious steps in order to secure the right of education differently abled students and proposed a policy for special education. The purpose of this policy was to provide education in a promotive environment to person with different abilities regardless of their social, status, race, colour of their skins, beliefs, and religion (Saeed, 2016).

The government of Pakistan initiated a strategic plan in response to national policy for persons with disabilities in 2002. This was called “National Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities 2002”. This plan was conducted with the collaboration world bank. This plan was based on the findings which were previously conducted, and further steps were taken to eliminate the problems faced by persons with different abilities. The postulates of this plans were access, inclusion and to provide equal opportunities to people of different abilities. It was viewed that exclusive intervention cannot achieve those demands so, therefore full inclusion of integrated manner was designed (Khan, 2019).

In the year of 2008, the government of Pakistan provide the accessibility to differently abled persons at public places. This included reserved berths in public transport, facilities for wheelchairs on the footpaths etc. People with different abilities should give priorities while crossing the roads. Under this act, all authorities were bound to make provision of facilities for wheelchairs before the construction a public or private sectors buildings. Banks, educational institutes, hospitals, shopping malls, police stations, airport, railways

stations, Bus Stops, Hotels, and every other public place were obliged to provide the access to wheelchairs (Ahmed & Khan, 2010).

Another act was passed in 2009 by the government of Pakistan in order to provide facilities to differently abled people. This act was called special Citizens (right to concessions in Movement) Act. In this act, all public and private transport was bound to provide transportation to differently abled people on concessional rates. Railways and other transport authorities was bound to charge half fair from differently abled persons (Ahmad, Khan, & Nasem, 2011).

In 2017, the supreme court of Pakistan in order to realize the equal participation of people with differently abilities directed federal and provincial governments to take serious steps. This decision was taken after an elementary school in the city of Multan refused the job application of a person with different ability. There is two percent quota for differently abled persons in employment in Pakistan. There is an estimate that 3.3 million to 27 million of total population of Pakistan are differently abled. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was ratified by Pakistan in 2011 (Ijaz, 2020).

Pakistan is one of those countries who spend very little on the education of differently abled persons. The Government of Punjab granted 210 million of funds building 11 new institutes for the education children with different abilities. Only 1.3 billion rupees were allocated for differently abled person in 2019-2020 budget. The budget allocation for differently abled person in Sindh was even lesser. In 2019-20 budget, the government of Sindh only allocated 200 million rupees for differently abled persons. Federal government distributed only 28 million rupees among differently abled people in 2018-19 (Hafeez, 2020).

Government of Pakistan's policies have not proved impactful, because in 2013, only four percent of children with different abilities were having access to schools. Special education centers in Pakistan are far from accessible and almost all of these centers are in urban areas while the majority of differently abled children are from rural areas. 34% of differently abled children belong to urban areas in Pakistan but on the contrary the percentage of differently abled children in rural areas is almost double, 66% percent to be specific (Naqvi, 2013).

According to 1998 census the figure of differently abled people in Pakistan was 3,32,86,630 while total population of Pakistan was 132,352,000 back then. 1998 census indicated that 2.42% of people have some sort of disability (Shah, 2015).

The Government of Pakistan conducted population census in 2017. According to 2017 census, there were one million people with different abilities. Kamran and Bari (2019) criticized this census because there were more than three million people with different abilities in 1998 census so, how can it be possible that number of these population decreased so, drastically. They argued:

The 2017 census number is clearly a gross understatement. The 1998 census had put the percentage of people with disability at 2.4 percent. How is it possible that this percentage has dropped to 0.48 percent over the last 20-odd years? (Kamran & Bari, 2019).

Most of the international survey showed that 10 to 15% of global population face some kind of physical, cognitive, and other challenges but according to the census only half percent of Pakistanis have such problems. How can Pakistan be so different from global average?

National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) has issued 325694 computerized national identity cards, 25,611 child registration certificate, 16,148 Juvenile cards, 4,380 National Identity cards for overseas Pakistanis to persons with disabilities in 28th of February, 2021. According to Nadra total registered persons with different abilities were 371,833 before March, 2021 (NADRA, 2021).

According to NADRA total number of person with different abilities in Gilgit Baltistan is 7,886. Among these, 17 were overseas, 6,147 adult, 1,216 children, and 506 under eighteen years of age (NADRA, 2021).

The social educational centers in Pakistan have too many problems to accommodate with. Kawish Tassar and Fouzia Khurshid (2019) conducted study by collecting data of parent and children in 30 special education centers. They reported that almost all special education centers were facing acute shortage of teachers and other staff. Many posts were yet to fill and some of these posts were filled by untrained teachers. Aside from these issues the

environment of special centers was also not suitable according to children with different abilities and their parents (Tassawar & Khurshid, 2019).

Parents and special children replied that there is a lack of facilities in the centers, for example, many centers working in hired building therefore, class sizes are not adequate, and ramps washrooms were not in good condition moreover, furniture fixture available is neither sufficient nor disabled friendly (Tassawar & Khurshid, 2019).

The limitations of education of different abled students have been highlighted in various studies. Khatoon (2003) highlighted that 72% of people with hearing impairments claimed that teachers cannot taught them all subjects through the use of Pakistan Sign Language while 57% of their parents also complained that teachers are not capable enough to teach them properly.

88% of the teachers never used finger spelling and 90% of the teachers never used cued speech in the classrooms. These teachers are teaching in Special Schools for deaf children. They revealed that they never received any training for using these approaches (Khatoon,2003).

According to Khatoon the teachers claimed that the parents of the children with hearing impairments are not cooperating according to the needs. 53% teachers reported that around ten percent of the children wear ear trumpets and transistor hearing aids in spite of their repeated instruction. Khatoon further stated that these ear trumpets and transistor hearing aids were expensive and most of the parents were economically poor so, this might be the reason of lack of these devices (Khatoon, 2003).

Another biggest issue in countering problems of education of differently abled children is the number of special educational institutes. Children with different abilities are most of the time limited to Special education institutes which are not sufficient, and these institutes are of sub-par quality. There are merely 330 special education schools in Sindh, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Islamabad combined. Most of these schools are in urban areas,

and for children with different abilities in rural areas it is indeed a big challenge to get access to education (Ismail, 2019).

Various NGOs have developed programs for overcoming the prevailing hurdles in special education in Pakistan. Association for Rehabilitation of the Physically disabled initiated various programs in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province (particularly in Peshawar) of Pakistan in order to accommodate children with different abilities and to make them efficient member of the society. The most important projects of ARPD is community-based rehabilitation.

Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) is strategy within community development for the rehabilitation, equalization, and social integration of all people with disabilities. CBR is being implemented through the combined efforts of disabled people themselves, their families and communities, and the appropriate health, education, vocational and social services (Ismail, 2019).

The Government of Pakistan is unable to provide special education to the whole population of differently abled children. Federal and provincial Governments are trembling in implanting National plans for person with different abilities.

The Government of Gilgit Baltistan is facing challenges in accommodating children with different abilities completely. Overwhelming majority of differently abled children are getting education in regular primary school in Gilgit District. In most cases the teachers and school's management find difficulties in addressing the issues of differently abled children. Teachers' lack of knowledge enhances the difficulties of differently abled children furthermore. In Sub-division Gilgit, Sub-division Danyore and Sub-division Jaglot total number of 96 children are getting education in regular primary schools because they lack the facility of special education. These children face lots of troubles in regular primary schools (Anwer, Ali, Jaffar, & Ali, 2015).

Muhammad, et al (2015) investigated the affairs of critical conditions and the distinctive needs of differently abled children in Skardu district of Gilgit Baltistan. Their research was based on the identification of children with different abilities in age bracket of 3 to 15 years.

According to their research there were 572 children of different abilities in Skardu. 230 out of 572 were physically differently abled, it comprised 40 percent of total target population. 164 children were mentally differently abled, which comprised 28 percent, 130 out of 572 were having hearing difficulties which comprised 22.6 percent while remaining 48 children were having visual impairments which comprised 8.3% of target population. There is only one special education complex in Gamba Union council of Skardu District which is unable to accommodate all differently abled children (Muhammad, et al., 2015).

The relevant books, articles, reports, interviews, and documentary films were reviewed for sake of getting clear picture of education of differently abled children. The literature was review using funnel method means the literature was reviewed from holistic to particularistic domain. First of all, the literature regarding different abilities and cultural interpretation of different abilities was reviewed. Then I shifted my focus on education of differently abled, and social attitudes and perception regarding their education. I further investigated inclusive education and special education designed for differently abled children. The narratives and counter narratives of both education systems were studied, and relevant literature was reviewed.

Finally, I reviewed those articles and report which were conducted in Pakistan and state of education of differently abled children in Pakistan was studied in detail in that literature. I also reviewed literature using general to specific technique. First, I reviewed articles and reports regarding the policies of Government of Pakistan regarding education of differently abled children, then I moved toward the population of differently abled and finally I reviewed articles which showed the status of education differently abled children in Gilgit Baltistan.

2.6 Research gaps

The articles, books, interviews, reports, and documents enlisted were mostly targeting specific regions and communities. The anthropologist who investigated cultural interpretation of different abilities conducted studies in African and American continent. Interpretations of different abilities in South Asian societies were not discovered by them.

Another research gap was there were lots of arguments and counter arguments in favour of inclusive and special education but prolong studies in which the actual output of these systems was meant to explore, was lacking.

Lastly, there were studies conducted on education of children with different abilities but almost all of them conducted using quantitative methods and none of the studies were conducted while using qualitative methodology These are in my opinion the shortcomings of this review of literature.

1.6 Operational definition of key term

Several key terms have been used in this text whose meaning need clarifications in order to make it reader friendly. Some of these terms are related and can only be understand in contrast like equality and privileges etc.

Different abilities

To begin with the term different abilities, it has been used more frequently than any other term. “Different abilities” is an ambiguous term, and it can carry various meanings but here it used to define those children who have some sort of differences in physical health, organs development, cognitive development, or organ malfunction.

Privileges

The term “Privileges” has been used at multiple occasion and it need clarification due to its obscure essence. Privilege in this text means the advantages given to differently abled children and exemption given to them from certain responsibilities due to their condition.

Equality

The term equality has also been used at several places in this study. By equality I mean the sense of adequation and impartiality to differently abled students. Equality has been used as opposite to privileges and equality carries the concept of removing the notion of incompetence and feebleness given to differently abled students by society.

Barriers

Barrier is a hazy term and here it means those social, psychological, and systemic problems which creates hurdles and problem in education of differently abled students.

Stigma

Stigma means the disfavoured the education of differently abled children. People due to public opinion and fatalism associated stigma with education of differently abled children.

Fatalism

Although Fatalism was closely linked with stigma as both retain disfavoured the education of differently abled, but fatalism was more on the religious side. Fatalism is the view that different ability is due to will of Allah, and no one can change the will of Allah so, that is why children with different abilities should be left to will of Allah and therefore education is not necessary.

Physical development

The term physical development means using malfunctioned organ for work or develop other organ to do the jobs of malfunctioned organ.

Infrastructural issues

Infrastructural issues mean the problems special education complex in transportation, building, and lack of equipment etc.

Chapter 3

3.1 Research methodology

Seeking out information and knowledge on a particular topic or subject is called research. Shanti and Alok (2011) called research as an art of systematic investigation. Research is an integral part of almost all fields of education. Ranjit Kumar (2010) argues that research is not merely a set skill rather it is a way of thinking which helps in examining various aspects of our day-to day professional work critically.

Research methodology on the other hand is the approach in which research troubles are addressed. Research methodology is a science of systemic conduction of a study. The researcher explains her/himself with all those steps which were taken to examine research problem. The approach which is adopted for conducting research is scientific approach that is why it is called research methodology.

There are two types of methodology quantitative and qualitative methodology. This study was based on qualitative field research method because I was supposed to spend few months in field and with my respondents whom I was supposed to interview and observe. Interpretivist paradigm was followed during this study. Ontology was based on subjectivity and constructionism while epistemology was based on interpretations of the respondents.

This study was conducted while using anthropological lenses of research. In order to look at the problems via anthropological lenses the researcher used various methods, tools, and techniques.

The anthropological field work therefore must have a number of research tools in his or her tool kit unlike the situation in laboratory science research tools in anthropology involve relatively litter in the way of hardware and gadgetry but require great sensitivity and self-awareness on the part of investigator (Pelto & Pelto, 1978).

3.2 Sampling methods

Sampling is process of selecting respondents from the whole population. The researcher cannot collect data and interview the whole population that is why she/he takes sampling. Respondents are taken from the target population. Sampling is less labouring, time efficient and cost efficient. I, therefore opted for taking sampling because it was impossible to cover all the boys and staff members of special education complex Gamba in given time and sampling is a representative of a larger whole.

Two types of sampling have been used during this study. Purposive sampling and convenience sampling.

3.2.1 Purposive sampling

I used purposive sampling in this study. Purposive sampling is also called as judgemental sampling because the researcher choses her/his subjects according to her/his own judgement. I therefore selected those who according to my judgement were best suited for this study.

I guided all the respondents and I also acted as an investigator. I selected boys and girls who were studying at special education complex Gamba. All the boys and girls which I selected were having some sort of differences, either mentally or physically. Apart for boys and girls at complex, I also selected the instructors, trainers, and teachers. Finally, I picked few parents of students of special education complex. They were all selected on purpose, and they served the purpose of this researcher quite well.

3.2.2 Convenience sampling

Aside from purposive sampling I also opted for convenience sampling. According to McCombes (2019) a convenience sampling simply includes those individuals who happens to be most accessible to the researcher. First of all, I approached those differently abled children whom I knew personally. They were children of relatives of my friends.

Apart from this, key informants were also selected while using convince sampling.

3.2.3 Sample size

Sample size of this study is 34. Eighteen among them were students of special education complex. 7 girls and 11 boys with different abilities were chosen. 3 teachers, 1 trainer, 1 instructor and the principle of special education complex were then chosen. Finally, I took sample of ten parents whose children were having some sort of different abilities.

Respondents	Sample size
Female students	7
Male students	11
Staff	5
Parents	10
Total	34

3.3 Methods of data acquisition

A combination of techniques and tools were used for the collection of data during the conduction of this study. Researcher must approach her/his respondents with great care, so she/she should return information to her/himself. I, therefore, carefully approached the subjects and used various tools and techniques for the sake of data collection. These tools and techniques include Rapport building, observation, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, case studies, audio recording and photography etc.

3.3.1 Rapport building

Rapport building was important step which needed to be taken because it has long lasting effects and I was supposed to have good interaction with respondents in order to conduct this study with possible ease.

According to Bernard, 'Indeed the process of involvement is circular and cumulative the less anxious a field worker is the better he works and as he becomes aware that he is doing good work he become less anxious. Usually, the essential factor in this transformation is assistance and supports the reciprocal social response given to him by some of his host selected community (Bernard, 2006).

Rapport building was quite difficult for me because first I was not having any kind of experience of field, secondly most of the children of complex were having reluctance being interviewed. The vice principle of special education complex was friend of my father and my father talk to him about my research. He replied to my father that she can come any time and on the next day I went to the complex. The vice principal of the complex Manzoor Hussain introduced me to the staff members and then staff members introduced me to the students studying over there. Students did not show any positive response in the first week of my research. Most of them were too shy to be interviewed.

During the second week of my research some of the students showed tendency to cooperate and I was able to build my rapport with staff members so, the children also showed familiarity. I joined classes and vocational therapy programs at complex and thus, I built up my rapport.

3.3.2 Key informants

According to Bernard, key informants are those people who understand the information you need and who are glad to give it to you or get it for you (Bernard, 2006).

In present research two respondents helped me a lot. The vice principle of the complex Mr Manzoor Hussain and teacher Ghulam Hussain were the key informants of this research. MR Ghulam Hussain told me the complete history of complex that when tender was passed and when the construction of the complex was begun and in which year it was completed. He also told me the complete process of budget allocation for the complex.

Mr Manzoor Hussain told me about the academic and vocational programs. He provided me with enough information regarding developmental scenario at complex.

3.3.3 Participant Observation

Anthropological research contains field work and almost every field work include participant observation so, in this research there was no difference. I visited special education complex daily until it closed its activities due to second wave of Covid-19. Daily visit gave me a panoramic outlook about the education system over there.

I attended classes with children, and I made my position among them as a student in order to get better idea about their situations. I almost daily attend one class or vocational program till closure of the complex. I attended sign language classes, braille tactile classes and vocational programs where flower making, painting, and drawing were taught to the children. I also attended individualized program consecutively for a week in which a child who was having no hand were taught to utilize his feet. It was indeed fascinating.

This observation was very helpful for me, and it turned useful in achieving good amount of knowledge about education of differently abled children.

Just as Bernard hold a view about participant observation that it involves establishing rapport in a new community; learning to act so that people go about their business as usual when you show up; and removing yourself every day from cultural immersion so you can intellectualize what you have learned, put it into perspective, and write about it convincingly (Bernard, 2006).

3.3.4 In-depth Interviews

A type of interview in which researcher aims to find out detail information yonder the initial and surface level answers is called in-depth interview. This type of interviews is usually quite long and involves multiple answers from one respondent (Macfarlan, 2020).

I conducted in-depth interviews during this research. Before conducting in-depth interviews, I also conducted unstructured interviews. Unstructured interviews were conducted for the sake of rapport building and familiarity. For example, students were asked simple questions like in which class do you read, how is your studies going on, what will you became in future etc. These were done so they should be familiar with me. After this, I opted for in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews were conducted with help of interview guide.

During the research, the 2nd wave of covid-19 exacerbated the situation and Government of Gilgit Baltistan was compelled to close educational activities in the region in order to mitigate the situation. The special education complex of Gamba was also closed so, this closure limited my access to the respondents. I, then opted for smartphone interviews.

Although I have conducted majority of the interview prior to closure, but few interviews were conducted via smartphone.

Questions were added and omitted depending on respondents. For example, questions regarding the budget issues were only asked from the staff and principal of the complex while infrastructural and social issues were put forward to all the respondents.

I skipped various question in interview guide when I interviewed younger children at complex.

3.3.5 Focus group discussion

Focus group discussion is gathering of people from similar background or experiences together to discuss a specific topic of interest. In focus group discussion participant are free to discuss with group member (Baral, Uprety, & Lamichhane, 2016).

Focus group discussion was arranged by the vice principle of the complex for me. The vice principle, two of the teachers, one trainer and therapist were included in focus group discussion. Manzoor Hussain set up round table in his office where I along with those mentioned above, discussed different activities performed by students, budget issues and problems during covid-19. All of them shared their opinion regarding the special education. They compared the state of special education in Skardu to Gilgit district because both of the teachers and trainer were first providing their services in special education complex Gilgit district.

All of the members of groups shared their views upon the issues faced by complex and proposed plans for resolving the issues. Lastly, they discussed strategies for improving the result of programs in complex.

3.3.6 Case study

A case study is 'an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between, phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. Case-study research involves individual cases, and studies over an extended period of time.

In the present research few case studies were conducted and included in the process of report writing in relevant portions. The methods of including case studies are very productive because it made the whole document more native and helpful in giving strength to the research themes.

3.3.7 Jotting

Field Jotting also known as scratch jotting is the easiest technique used to collect data. It is researcher friendly technique in the sense that jotting saves time by writing keywords and sentences regarding what has been heard, talked, and seen.

In the beginning of the research i.e., while building rapport, I used to do it on the cell phone as using a notepad to write things that strike during conversations was frowned upon. It was only at the later stage after the elicitation technique that I started to use notepad to do so.

3.3.8 Photography and videography

Modern research tools are also helpful to enrich the collection of information with visualizing events and make them the part of research which focused more on aesthetics of the native community. Photography is a visual representation of reality. In the present research this tool is used during the research to keep the record of observation about the community. The visual images gave more clarity on research topics, about the people, area, and their way of living. It is said that a picture is more powerful than thousands of words.

A smartphone camera was used for visual representation of special education complex. I captured photos and recorded videos of different activities which were happening in the complex. I have collected lots of pictures because the present research needs to be clearer which is not an easy task without picturing events, classroom environment and programs at complex.

3.3.9 Audio recording

Audio recording was also an important technique to remember the conversation between the respondents and researcher. Through voice recorder data was saved. The researcher recorded most of the interviews of this study. For this purpose, the consent of respondent was necessary.

Most of the respondents were having no issues when I seek permission for audio recording and they granted me permission to record their voices, but few respondents told me that they do not want that their voice should be recorded so, I wrote their interviews.

3.3.10 Ethical consideration

Research ethic was paramount concern of this study. I followed all ethical consideration in conducting this study.

Consent was first and foremost in ethical consideration. Informants and respondents were informed about the purpose of the study. All interviews were done under consensual approval. Some respondent forbade me to record their interviews so, I wrote down their interviews. Privacy was also among main ethical considerations of this research. Privacy of respondents was ensured. The interviews and statement of the respondents were kept private. Respondents were asked if they want to withdraw or quit interview, whenever I felt that respondents were feeling uneasy, they were given a choice to withdraw.

Chapter 4 Area Profile

4.1 Research settings

Locale of this study was Skardu, a city in Gilgit Baltistan. Gilgit Baltistan is an administrative territory of Pakistan and it constitute the larger portion of Kashmir region. Kashmir region is under dispute between Pakistan and India. Gilgit Baltistan was known as northern areas prior to 2009. Gilgit Baltistan shares its borders with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan to the west, to the north there is autonomous region of China, Xinjiang and Wakhan corridor of Badakhshan province of Afghanistan. Gilgit Baltistan borders with Azad Kashmir to the south and Indian administrative union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh to the southeast.

Figure 1: Map of Skardu



(Source Google Map)

There are three divisions in Gilgit Baltistan, Gilgit division, Diamer division and Baltistan division. Skardu is part of Baltistan division. Skardu valley is 6 miles wide by 25 miles long, at the confluence of the Indus and Shigar river.

4.2 Physical feature of Skardu

Skardu is on bank of Indus River and Indus River separates Himalayas from Karakorum. Skardu is surrounded by the peaks of Karakorum and each year thousands of local and foreign tourists visit Skardu to explore its high peaks. World's second highest mountain peak after mount Everest is in Skardu. Godwin-Austen or K2 is at 8611 meters or 28251 feet above sea level is located here. Skardu is at an altitude of 8202 feet or 2500 meters. The latitude of Skardu is 35° 17' 60.00" North and longitude of Skardu is 75° 36' 59.99" east. Skardu is the biggest city of Gilgit Baltistan.

In Skardu there are some of the largest glaciers in the entire world namely Baltoro Glacier, Biafo Glacier, and Chogo Lungma Glacier. These glaciers are surrounded by some of the tallest mountains including K2, Gasherbrum, and Masherbrum. Gasherbrum is 8068 meters, or 26470 feet and Masherbrum is 7821 meters or 25659 feet above sea level.

Figure 2: Skardu Valley



(Source Facebook)

4.3 History of Skardu

Skardu is a historical region, and its history predates the arrival of Islam in sub-continent. The word Skardu is most likely to derived from Balti word which means a “a low land between two high places”. The Satpara lake and Shigar city is referred as two high places because Skardu is sandwiched among these two places (Dani, 2001).

Baltistan throughout the history was part of great empires. In 7th century CE Skardu was brought under rule of Tibetan Empire by the founder of Tibetan Emperor and 33rd Tibetan King Songsten Gampo. In 9th century the Tibetan empire began to dissolute and in 10th century it was complete dissolved. Skardu came under the rule of Maqpon dynasty who succeeded Tibetan empire.

Around the year of 1500 the Maqpon Bokha founded Skardu City as a capital of his empire. The famous Skardu fort was built by Maqpon Bokha during his reign. He brought craftsmen and architects from Kashmir and Chilas (Dani, 1998).

Figure 3:Kharpocho Fort, Skardu



(Source Facebook)

In early 1500s the Sultan of Timurid Yarkent Khanate Said Khan raided Skardu and Baltistan. This raid was threat to Mughal dominance in subcontinent who did not pay much

attention to Skardu and Baltistan prior to Sultan's raid but after the raid Emperor Akbar laid a conquest to Baltistan in 1586. The local Maqpon Ruler pledge allegiance to Mughals and after that a new era started in Baltistan. The ruler of Baltistan was appointed with consent of Mughal emperor afterwards (Adshead, 2016).

For few centuries Skardu was under the rulers appointed by Mughal emperors but 1839 Dogra commander Zorawar Singh defeated Balti forces in battles at Wanko Pass and Thanok plains, clearing his path for invasion of the Skardu valley. Dogra forces seized Skardu fort on the behalf of Dogra Kingdom based in Jammu and slaughtered large number of garrison defenders (Charak, 2019).

Gilgit Baltistan was under Dogra Rule till 1947. In 1947, the British left subcontinent and divided sub-continent into two countries Pakistan and India. On 22 October 1947, Pakistan launched an attack on Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan with help of tribal Pashtun (Nawaz, 2008). Major William Brown who was commanding Gilgit scouts, refused to obey the order Dogra Ruler and thus, on 1 November 1947 Gilgit agency came under Pakistan's control (Brown, 2014). After Brown's rebellion, Major Aslam Khan took the command of Gilgit scouts and launched an attack on the remaining parts of Gilgit agency under Dogra Raj's control (Dani, 2001).

4.4 Tehsils and union councils

Skardu district has three tehsils namely Gultari Tehsil, Skardu Tehsil and Gamba Tehsil. Shigar and Rondu were also tehsils of Skardu in past. Shigar was part of Skardu till 2015 but in 2015 Shigar was established as district, and Rondu in 2019 was promoted to district.

Gultari Tehsil has two union council, namely Gultari and Shingo Shigar. Skardu Tehsil also has two union councils Gole /Gole Sermik and Skardu MC/UC-1 while Gamba has four union councils Chunda, Kachura, Kowardu and Shigri Kalan.

4.5 Population

According to census conducted by government of Pakistan the population of Skardu was 122078. The population of female was 62,402 while male population was 59,676. 51.1 percent of population was comprised of female while 48.9 percent were consisted of male.

The population of Skardu is predominantly Shia. Aside from Shia, people of other sects also live in Skardu. Sunni and Noorbakshi² comprised a small portion of Population of Skardu District, although their population in Baltistan division is more than 35 percent.

People of Skardu belong to various castes. Syed is the most dominant caste. Apart from Syed, there are people of other castes like Raja, Khan, and Wazir.

4.6 Education and literacy rate

There are various public and private educational institutes in Skardu. There are two Universities in Skardu, University of Baltistan and Karakorum University Skardu Campus. University of Baltistan was established in 2017 while Campus of Karakorum University was established in 2010.

² Noorbakhshia is a Sufi tradition founded by Iranian Sufi Mystic Muhammad Noorbaksh Qahistani in 15th century. Noorbakhshia Sufi order emphasizes on unity and cooperation among Muslims regardless of their sects. Al-Fiqh al-Ahwat and Kitab al-Aitiqadia are the main books of Noorbakhshia order, and both are written by its founder Mohammad Noorbaksh. Aside from these another book Dawoot-E-Sufia (written by Ameer Kabir Syed Ali Hamdani) is also one of the major books.

Figure 4:University of Baltistan



(Source University of Baltistan’s official website)

There are seven colleges also in Skardu which provide a wide variety of education to the students. Cadet college Skardu is most famous college among all these. There are around thirty schools which provide education to girls and boys. These are Al Mustafa Higher Secondary School, Skardu, Al-Qalam Public School Hargesa Skardu, Govt. Boys High School No. 1, Skardu, Govt. Boys High School No. 2, Skardu etc.

The rate of literacy of Skardu is lower than Gilgit and Hunza especially when it comes to adult literacy. 43.4 percent. of adult male and 19.4 percent of adult women are literate. Enrollment of students in Skardu is 76.66%. in Skardu, the number of out of school children is quite high. According to the survey conducted in 2017 there were 5366 boys of school going ages while 5339 girls of school going ages were out of schools. The percentage of out of school children was 23.34 (Directorate of Education Baltistan, 2017).

4.7 Climate

Skardu is one of the coldest regions of Pakistan. It features a semi cold arid climate. Skardu is surrounded by mountains so, the intense heat of lowland does not reach it thus, the

climate of Skardu in summer is quite moderate. The rainfall in summer is also quite low because the mountains block out summer monsoon.

The temperature during the April to October is moderate with average high temperature of 29° C while average low drops to 8° C. During the winter, especially in December and January the temperature can drop to -10° C. In January 1995, a lowest temperature of -24° C was recorded.

Average rainfall in Skardu is less than 15 milli meters. November is the driest month with average rainfall of 5.6 milli meters while March is the wittiest months with an average rainfall of 37 milli meters.

4.8 Places of Tourist attraction

Skardu is one of the most visited places in Pakistan. Hundreds of thousands of local and foreign tourists pay visit to Skardu to enjoys the natural scenery of lakes, mountains peaks, national parks, and forts.

Deosai National Park is the most famous place, and it is the main tourist attraction place in Skardu. The Deosai National Park was established to secure the lives of several endangered animal and bird species such as Snow Leopard, Red Fox, Himalayan Brown Bear, Wolf, Golden eagle, Sparrow Hawk, and snow Cock.

Figure 5: Deosai National Park, Skardu



(Source Researcher)

Apart from this, there are other places like Upper Kachura Lake, Satpara Lake, Basho Valley, Katpana Lake and Cold Desert, Lower Kachura Lake Shangrila, Manthal Budha Rock, Shigar Fort, Kharphocho Fort, Nansoq Organic Village, to whom people pay visit. Tourist enjoys Sightseeing, Boat riding, Hiking, Fishing, Climbing, Cold Desert Safari, and Shopping over there.

Skardu is visit by tourist mostly during spring season. The stunning views of cherry blossom and apricot present a view of paradise.

4.9 Transportation

As it is known that Skardu is the biggest city of Gilgit Baltistan so, Skardu has also quite good transportation system. Skardu has two types of transportations. The normal road route

into Skardu is via Karakorum Highway and a Skardu Road into the Skardu Valley from it. Roads once linked Skardu to Srinagar and Leh, though none are open for cross-LoC³ travel.

Skardu's weather can have adverse effects on transport in and out of the region, as Skardu is often snowbound during the winter months. Roads in and out of Skardu can be blocked for extended periods of time, sometimes leaving air travel as the only feasible alternative.

Skardu has also an airport for sake of aviation. Skardu airport is served by Almost daily a direct flight from Islamabad. The government has decided to upgrade Skardu Airport to International level because during winter lots of tourist came to Skardu and they pay visit to Islamabad first.

4.10 Special education complex Gamba

Gamba is Tehsil of Skardu, and special education complex is located in Gamba Tehsil. Complex is 12 kilometres in the west of Skardu City. Airport road leads from Skardu city to Gamba while another road named CMH (Combined Military hospital) road led to special education complex.



Figure 6: Special education Complex, Gamba Skardu

³ LOC stands for Line of control. LOC is a military control line between the Pakistani and Indian controlled parts of Jammu and Kashmir.

The area of special education complex is 30 kanals⁴ or 3.75 acres. There are twenty-four classrooms, and two playgrounds. Each classroom has basic academic facilities like chair, desk, table, and white board. Each classroom has also heater facility in order to avoid the severity of winter and fans which are used during summer. Students play sports like cricket, badminton, and other sports in the playground. Special education complex has specific building where books and journals are available for students.

There is also one multipurpose hall in the complex. Multipurpose hall is used for extracurricular activities. Music and cultural programs were arranged in that hall. Functions like prize distribution function at day of result announcement are also held in multipurpose hall. Apart from this, yearly programs at different days for example, Pakistan day on 23rd of March, world disability day, parent day were also arranged in the multipurpose hall. Children presents recitation of Holy Quran, national songs, tableau, and speeches.

⁴ 1 kanal is equal to 505.8 square meters. Special education complex is 15175.7 square meters.

Chapter 5

5.1 Perception of people about education of differently abled children

Perception of people regarding the education of differently abled children varied depending on the nature of difference and gender of child. Some of the respondents were strongly emphasizing on education of differently abled students while others conceived it oppositely. Perception was not the same rather it was interlinked within each specific criterion of different ability. The perception of people related to the education of different physically abled children were contrary to that of cognitively different and so on.

5.2 Local understanding of different physical abilities

People of the Skardu were strongly in favor of education of those children who have physical differences. Most of the respondents were of the view that in order to maintain proper life it is essential to provide education to physically different children.

People classified physical differences in into various categories. Those children who were having problems in walking, those who have impaired hands and others for example hunch backs. The education of children of these categories was highly appreciated and high amount of stress was laid upon education of them. Parents as well as other people were of the view that physically different children should be kept in normal schools because their differences did not damage their cognitive abilities. Apart from this view, some respondents argued that there are high chances of socialization of children in normal schools. They exploration and exposure to various events in normal schools provide them far more opportunities than special education schools.

Aside from this, some parents argued that in normal schools the children will consider themselves as normal ones and the sense of otherness can be eliminated through this. Asking about the education of physically different children one respondent argued that I

personally know many of high qualified people who have physical difference they are known doctors, engineers, and teachers. When I was studying in college my English teacher was physically different. His left leg was damaged in accident, and it was difficult for him to stand and walk but he was a good teacher and he never let his leg to create troubles in his teaching.

Just as mentioned in the early paragraph that some parents were favoring normal schools over special education for their children with different physical abilities but just like village in midst of volcanic eruption ready to meet its ultimate fate in form of catastrophe, students were in complete dismay upon their entering into normal schools because the infrastructure of normal schools were not built to accommodate the needs of physically different students. Asking about the troubles and issues of students with physical differences at normal schools one student argued that there were lots of stairs in the school and for most of the classrooms there were no alternative ways to enter rather they were compelled to enter through stairs and that created lots of troubles for them.

5.3 Perception about children with hearing problems

Just like physical differences, the perception of people regarding the education of hearing-impaired children were also favorable. Almost all the respondents were strongly agreeing to a concept that education can improve the quality of their lives.

People viewed children with hearing impairment somehow less capable than normal ones, but they were in favor of their education. Asking about the education of hearing-impaired children one respondent replied, *sna la mikokhan kun la sa sanq xhaba zarori in ni fru la sna la mikoin lakin na si kho la sabq zer chuk sy kho si matric baisat dusay ni sning yod kho la agy sa sabaq zer chuk pi. Yang sabaq po computer science si zer cuk pin ta k kho agy khuri mustaqabiling nu chi da nuk.*

Translation: Those children must be educated who have hearing problems. It is very beneficial for them. I have a son who cannot hear and speak but I continued his education. Now he has passed his matric. I want to continue his studies further in computer science so, he could achieve self-sufficiency and become financially independent person.

5.4 Perception regarding children with difficulties in visions

People were divided over the admission of visually impaired children in educational centers. There were majority of people who were in favor of their education but Unlike children with physical differences people were opposing to admit children with difficulties visions in normal schools. They conceived normal schools useless for them. Asking about the best suited place for the education of children with difficulties in vision, one respondent replied that they should be admitted into special schools because there is nothing for them in normal schools. They need special care and process of learning which normal school did not provide but on the contrary special education centers are outnumbered. There is only one special education center in Skardu, and it cannot uphold the needs of differently abled children because the number of the children are far more than the accommodation capacity of the complex. He further argued that at least there should be one special education complex in each tehsil of Skardu. Children face lots of troubles in access to special education centers.

On the other hand, there were people who opposed the education of visually impaired students. They conceived their education as unnecessary and useless. Three of the respondents claimed that in our society there is a stigma related with visually impaired person. There is not proper system which can promote their good future. There are schools and vocational centers, but they barely learn basic stuff over there. They cannot make a career in special fields.

5.5 Different cognitive abilities and perception of people

Cognitive difference covered a list of differences including epilepsy, down syndrome, dyslexia, autism and completely mentally impaired. The behaviors and perception of people regarding each type of different cognitive ability was investigated and people were divided over the education of each cognitive difference. People's perceptions on some differences were obscure while some differences were precepted unanimously.

5.5.1 Perception regarding Epileptic children

Epilepsy⁵ was not considered as major problem. Two of the epileptic children were getting education in special education complex. Education of epileptic children was strongly recommended by all of the respondents. Asking about the perception regarding the education of epileptic children one respondent said that epileptic children should not be treat as mentally imbalance because there are high chances of children of epilepsy to spend normal lives after proper medication. He further narrated that there are children with epilepsy in regular schools of Skardu. Epilepsy is a curable disease, and his cousin was having epilepsy in his teen age. He was getting education but sometimes he was under the siege of epilepsy during school time. Once another relative told his father to quit his education but we opposed his views. His cousin was constantly using medicines and after two years his seizures got vanished Now, he is getting his master's degree in Pakistan studies, and he is never faced seizure again. So, the education of children with epilepsy was strongly emphasized.

As it is known that epilepsy is controllable through medicine so, the children who were having epilepsy were constantly using medicine and they rarely faced epilepsy seizure.

5.5.2 Perception regarding education of children with down syndrome

The education of children Down syndrome⁶ was less preferable as compared to epilepsy. Parents who were having offspring with down syndrome were very anxious regarding the future of their children. Down syndrome was perceived as mental impotence so, the education of children with down syndrome was less desired. Children have down syndrome were most likely to found at home rather than education institutes. Fatalism and will of Allah was most of time associated with down syndrome as it was incurable disorder the destiny and fate played huge role in the perception.

⁵ Epilepsy is a neurological disorder, and it is the fourth most common central nervous system disorder. In Epilepsy, brain activity become abnormal and usually causes glitches and unusual behavior in patient

⁶ Down syndrome is genetic disorder caused by abnormal cell division. abnormal cell division result creating extra copy of chromosome 21. Down syndrome causes intellectual disabilities and developmental delay among humans.

Although there were parents who admitted their children in special education complex but still, they were viewing it useless by arguing that although we have enrolled them, but we do not have any hope of their better future, just because the disease is incurable, and it is divinely ordained.

Case study

Ali Raza was 9 years' boy. He was first born of his parents. He was having down syndrome. His 7 years' sister and 5-year brother were admitted to school while Ali was not attending school. Ali Raza's Father told me that after 2 years of his marriage Ali was born. Initially he seemed normal but when he turned 9 months of age, we noticed some difference in him. We took him to the doctor and the doctor diagnosed Ali with down syndrome. We were very sad and tried our best to provide cure to him.

Ali Raza's father argued that he and his wife took Ali Raza to Gilgit city for the sake of cure, but the doctor referred Ali to Islamabad. Then they took Ali Raza to Islamabad and consulted with various neurologist, but neurologists told them that this is incurable so, they went back to Skardu Dishearten.

Ali Raza's father argued that they thought to admit Ali Raza in school but due to Ali Raza's problems they repelled their decisions. According to Ali Raza's father, Ali used to defecate and pee in paint which we thought will be subject to fun and it might further galvanize his agony. Other reason lacking understanding and unable to speak properly that is why they decided not to admit Ali Raza to school.

Ali Raza's case revealed that parents of children who have down syndrome were less likely to admit their children to school due the fear that they might face discrimination over there.

5.5.3 Perception regarding children with dyslexia

Another cognitive difference among the students of special education complex Gamba was dyslexia⁷. Dyslexia was generally categorized as intellectual developmental difference by

⁷ Dyslexia is learning disorder in which the capacity of spelling, reading, and writing of child is affected. Among some children it has mild symptoms while other have long lasting troubles due to dyslexia.

the complex's administration, but doctor's report mentioned specifically that they have dyslexia.

Dyslexia was perceived as problem of learning and there was a strong view of providing them with proper education. There were 6 children in Special education complex who were having dyslexia. Asking about perception regarding their education one respondents told "that they are quite smart children in some ways". For example, they can understand lesson quickly although their writing and reading are not on par with other children, but they need education and the best suited place for them is special education because in regular school the teachers will not address their issue because they have to deal other children also. Here in special education complex, we have special programs for them thus, they should be enrolled here.

5.5.4 Perception of people regarding education autistic children

Autism⁸ also received positive views when it came to education. Autistic children were not perceived as mentally ill. Parents as well as teachers were of the view that autism is not a learning difference rather it is just difference based on social interaction so, the children who have autism should not be labeled as mentally imbalance. Respondents laid stress upon the education of autistic children.

One respondent whose son was autistic stated that Azhar was not on par with his other age fellows in learning and he was facing difficulties in speaking. He was somehow able to speak when turned six, he was diagnosed with autism by a doctor, but I admitted him special education complex where he was taught how to write, read, and speak. Now he is third grade and his teacher told me that Azhar is a brilliant student. He usually does not need revision of lesson and he complete his tasks at first attempt. So, it means that education should be provided to them.

⁸ Autism spectrum disorder or in short autism is a developmental disorder in which child faces difficulties in interaction with others. Social interaction and communication of autistic child is very usually very limited.

5.5.5 Mentally retarded children

Lastly there was category which people regarded as abnormal. People were viewing the education of abnormal (abnormal seems inappropriate but people used this term for those children) children useless. Children who were having serious cognitive problems were placed in this category. There were few children who were not attending any school or other type of education.

Teachers at special education complex were of the view that there is no chance for abnormal children to enlighten their future through education. They have certain limitations, and these limitations forbade them from getting desirable results in the realm of education. There was one child who was regarded as abnormal, and the parent of that child argued that they have no hope for the betterment of their child because of his mental condition.

There was a view of teachers as well as parents that cognitively different or abnormal children should be looked upon with mercy. They have nothing to do professional life or education career.

5.6 Perception regarding education of differently abled children based on gender

Perceptions of people were dispersed on education of differently abled children based on gender. Male were more likely to be admitted in special education while female's education was regarded as of minor importance.

A common argument regarding female's education was that females have to dependent on their family members so, the education of female children with differences does not matters a lot. Secondly there was a great concern of safety and security of female children. Although there were female students who were studying in the complex but there was huge gulf between the ratio of male and female children with physical, mental, and sensual differences.

The education of boys on the contrary were more acceptable. The education of physically different children was highly appreciated, second was of that sensually different and perception about mentally different was disperse based on each specific difference.

Case study

Fatima was a ten-year-old girl with physical difference. She was having congenital Muscular dystrophy⁹ and she was having difficulties in walking and standing. She was usually in her wheelchair.

Fatima's father argued that it is his utmost desire to educate Fatima, but her condition is not suitable for education. She has lots of problems and one of the main problems is that she is not able to get in to bus. Therefore, he is trying to educate her in home.

He further narrated "*Ni sambi nu ni bono fari complex liahmo min cha zer bana thaghring sa yod yang mo la dron ma sa nain main busi nu ong ma gua nain main. Doh fari na nang nu shoqbu khury ong sy xhra bin na nanu xhra ba la thadad.* **Translation:** she cannot go to complex to attend quality education because complex is far from our home, and she cannot climb and get off from the bus. I have started to educate her in home but as it known that I will provide her basic education only and she won't receive any degree.

Apart from education, for girls like Fatima it is suitable to not send them to complex because they have lots of difficulties and they might face furthermore difficulties in complex. If a girl has mild problems, then she should be admitted in the complex.

5.7 Privileges

Different abilities were associated with privileges. Majority of the respondents argued that differently abled children should granted with some special privileges. They also need privileges and incentives in education system. People viewed the different abilities as downgrade as compared to others so, in order for differently abled children to survive and

⁹ Congenital muscular dystrophy is group of very rare muscular disease that present in infancy and young children. They present with muscle weakness which causes delay in the child achieving developmental milestone. Fatima was diagnosed with congenital muscular disorder by a doctor in her infancy.

secure their future they are meant to treat with some privileges. People argued that differently abled children should be exonerated from some responsibilities, formalities, and duties. For example, if there are no bus services of educational center or the bus does not operate in the area of any particular child they should not be paid for local transport. There should be free education and payment should be given in order to secure other accommodation.

4.8 Equality

Contrary to privileges there was a perception of equality. Few respondents claimed that excessive privileges encourage differently abled children to commit misconducts. If they are exonerated from things like quarrels, misbehaving and other stuff. They are more likely to take advantages of their privileges. Apart from these, privileges also embolden them to view themselves as different. They tend to think that they are different than others, and it further creates stereotypes. So, in order to integrate them properly it is necessary to treat them equally. Privileges should be provided where it needs to be provided, for example special quota in education, jobs, and transport facilities but they should not be exonerated of responsibilities.

Case study

Azan was born on 20th April 2002. He was a normal child during his early age. After a few months he was struck by fever during winter. Azan's parent took him to the doctor. The doctor told them that it was just a fever but after a few days his fever went on increasing so, his parent took him to Islamabad, where he was diagnosed with meningitis fever. Meningitis affects one or two parts of the body and it affected Azan's ear canals.

Azan's family shifted to Karachi due to his father's transfer. Azan was admitted in a deaf school over there, but it was very expensive, and it was very difficult for his father to pay his dues. After a few years, they came back to Skardu. At that time, the special education center of Gamba was built, and Azan's parents admitted him into the special education complex.

His parents argued that privilege is harmful for the socialization of the children. They argued that first they treated Azan differently and they give some privileges to Azan over their other children but after some time they realized that privileges are not good for him, and it was spoiling his behavior. After that they treated him as normal child and they did not give him privileges. Thus, Azan started normal life.

Chapter 6 Educational facilities

6.1 Status of education of differently abled students in Skardu

Literacy rate of differently abled children in Skardu was very low. There was only one special education complex in Baltistan division. The education complex was situated in union council Gamba. It was meant to accommodate 200 children but there were only 74 students enrolled over there.

Special education complex of Gamba was providing education, training and rehabilitation to children categorized into four different abilities. These different abilities were intellectual and developmental differences, physically handicapped children, visually handicapped children, and hearing-impaired children. There were different programs and therapies for each specific category of difference in order to educate and improve the life standards of differently abled children.

6.2 History of Special education complex Skardu union council Gamba

The history of special education complex was not very long, and special education complex was barely five years old. The process of approving application and granted budget took more than half of decade. The application for special education complex was submitted in 2009. One year later, Federal planning development approved this application and granted fund to education authority for the construction of the complex. A budget of 4.3 million Pakistani rupees was granted to the authority. After the 18th amendment of Pakistan's constitution, the budget was raised to 11 million, but construction of complex was postponed because planning and development department was shifted to Gilgit.

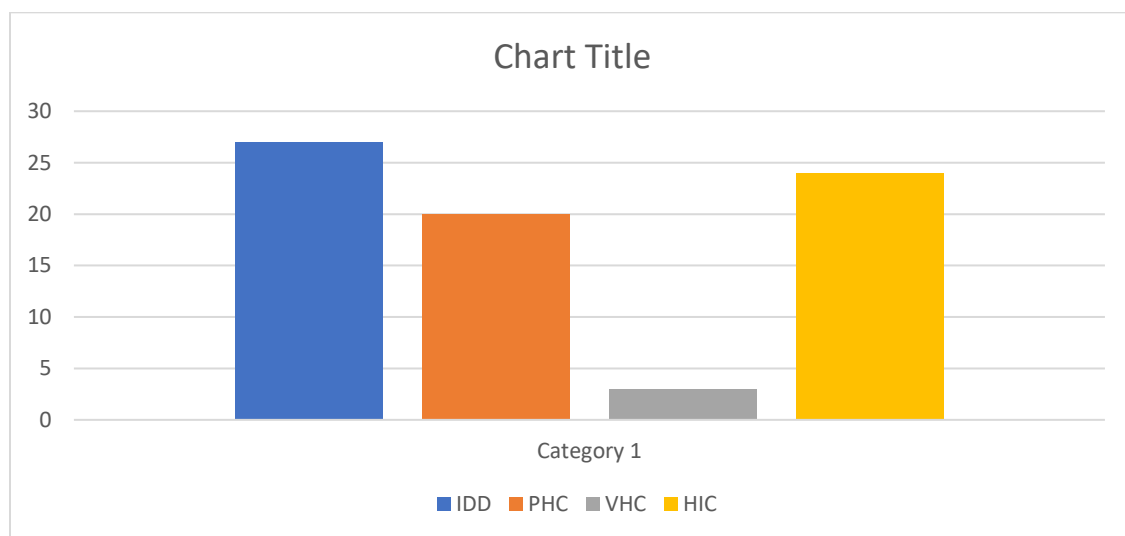
The construction work started in July 2010 but in 2011 work stopped due to relocation of planning and development department. The project was transferred from public sector development program to Gilgit Baltistan annual development program. So, the project transferred from Federal government to Gilgit Baltistan government.

For five years the project was stopped, then in 2016 the budget of the project was again approved, and it received 13.642 million of Pakistani Rupees. Thus, it was started in 2016 again and 2nd of May 2016 it was open.

6.3 Student of different abilities in Gamba

As I mentioned earlier there were 74 four students enrolled in Gamba special education complex. These students were divided on the nature of their different abilities for the sake of providing them proper education.

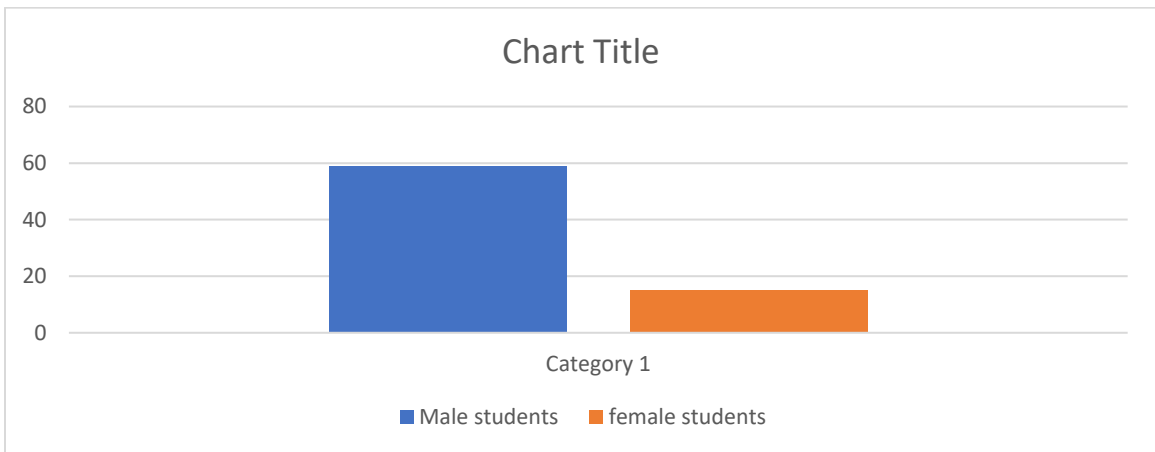
27 students were having intellectual development differences, 24 students were having hearing impairment, 20 were physically handicapped and 3 students were visually handicapped.



6.3.1 Literacy rate of differently abled children

According to a study conducted by Muhammad Anwar and Najabat Ali (2017) there are 572 children with different abilities. Among these, 374 are male children while 198 are female children. As it was mentioned that there were 74 students in the complex so, literacy rate of differently abled children was very low and around 14.6% percent of differently abled children were getting education.

The numbers of female students were less as compared to male students. There were 59 male students while the number of female students was only 15. Literacy rate of male children was 15.7% while 7.5 percent of female children of total differently abled population were enrolled over there.



6.4 Programs at special education complex

There were various programs in special education complex Gamba in order to educate and train differently abled students. These programs were specific for each specific difference. Children with hearing difference were taught how to communicate with other through sign language and visual techniques were followed to learn them other things.

Braille tactile technique was used in order to tough to children with visual differences and psychological therapies were used for intellectually different students and so on.

6.4.1 Programs for children with hearing differences

Children with hearing differences were classified into two groups by complex's management. Children with complete and profound hearing loss were classified as deaf while children with less degree of impairment were classified as hard of hearing.

Children of first group, were born deaf, and they were unable to speak also while children of second group were somehow able to speak but they were having difficulties in hearing

and speaking. Special education complex provided ear aids¹⁰ to hard hearing children in order to assist them in hearing.

Different programs were initiated for children with hearing differences. Sign language and visual techniques were used mostly for them in order to enable them to learn and to communicate with others.

6.4.1.1 Sign language

Sign language was used as communication and learning techniques for the children with hearing impairment. Pakistan sign language was taught in special education complex Gamba. Sign language was taught with the movement of body especially of fingers, hands, and arms. These gestures were associated with facial behavior for better understanding, efficiency, and accuracy of signs. This was exclusive to those children who were deaf or having some sort of problems in speaking.



Figure 7: Girl communicating through Pakistan Sign Language

¹⁰ Hearing aids were small devices which helped hard hearing children in hearing. These devices were provided by Gilgit Baltistan special education department.

6.4.1.2 Visual technique

Aside from sign language, video techniques were also used as learning process of hearing-impaired children. There was projector and screen in a class specified for children with hearing differences. The teacher showed various stuff related to reading, writing, and communicating on the screen. This included visuals, animations, and graphics. These visuals, animations and graphic were displayed on a screen for thirty minutes. The teacher was also explaining various things going on the screen and the children were supposed to focus on it for the sake of learning.

The visual technique helped in improving learning skills of the children. Sign language combined with visual technique was improving the communicating skills of children over there.

6.4.1.3 Speech therapy

Speech therapy was also provided to children with hard hearing and those who having dyslexia (a type of intellectual differences). Speech therapy was used for improving articulation and overcoming communication problems. Few exercises and activities were done on daily basis for improving speaking, reading, and spelling of the children. Teacher arranged a class of thirty-five minutes for speech therapy in which first twenty minutes were for group discussion and then 2 to 3 minutes were given to each child to speak with teacher one on one.

The vice principle of Complex narrated *“Naya di kha balbis kun la su la zer ba makain na speech therapy xhra bin lakin gama pa chogho masla yo in k speech therapy expert chi mat. teacher chik la speech therapy chon chi ongat do si xhra bin.* **Translation:** Here we have speech therapy session for those children who have difficulties in articulation and speaking. The biggest problem we have is that we do not have an expert speech therapist in our complex. Speech therapy session are arranged by the teacher who knows little about speech therapy.

Speech therapy was provided over there but as mentioned by the vice principle that they do not person who have expertise in speech therapy so, effectiveness of this program was under question mark.

6.4.2 Braille tactile for children with differences in vision

Braille tactile¹¹ was used for visually impaired children. Braille tactile was system of reading and writing. For this purpose, special boards, slates, and papers were used. On these boards, slates, and papers, there were alphabetic humps through which children were taught how to read and write. This technique was only used for visually impaired children.

There were two types of braille namely Urdu and English Braille. Both systems were based on six dot techniques. In Complex there were one class for both the types of Braille. Children were good at identifying, reading, and writing the alphabets of English whereas the identification, reading and writing of Urdu words were difficult for them as compared to English. As it is mentioned that there were 3 children with visual differences two of them were reading English words with an average of 6 words per minutes while one student's average speed was 8 per minute.

The average reading speed of Urdu braille was somehow slower than English with average of 5 to 6 words per minutes.

6.4.2.1 Audio

Aside from braille tactile techniques, children with visual impairment were also taught via audio recordings. A teacher was supposed to play a recording which was about the writing and reading. For example, different ways of write alphabets were in those recordings.

6.4.3 Psychological and behavioral

Psychological and behavioral therapies were used to boost the intellectual level of children. First and foremost, therapy was to get rid of shyness. Differently abled Children at the complex were somehow recessive in their expression. Due to harsh and discriminative

¹¹ Braille is a tactile technique used people with visual differences. In Special education complex Skardu word were written down on embossed Paper and slates.

behavior of the society, the students were shy, and they hesitated to express their talent and feelings. So, this therapy was meant to increase their participation in different programs.

Second psycho-therapy was to boost up their self-esteem level. This remedy was meant to eliminate the low self-esteem and inferiority complex. Children were encouraged to participate in programs and their talent was appreciated at this level.

Finally, there was last psychological remedy. It was for improving the intellectual capabilities of children by discouraging and condemning the recessive nature of children.

6.4.4 IEP Modification for IDD

Individualized Educational Plans were used for children with intellectual development differences. In these plans, techniques were proposed for IDD to improve their quality of lives. For each IDD student, there was different program. Usually, each program was carried for few weeks. Teacher were supposed to teach them lessons and work of daily life for example wearing socks, tying shoelaces etc. Each of these works were meant to be taught in those weeks and it was specific for each child of IDD.

Two teachers and one psychologist were Incharge of Individualized educational programs for children with intellectual difference.

Teacher 1 shared his views *“It is my duty to developed individualized educational plan for children with intellectual difference. Preparation of program, making a strategy and implanting that particular strategy is my Job”*.

Second teacher argued that his job is to act upon the strategy made by teacher 1. He was responsible for teaching them basic stuff and if the strategy was not good for someone or if a strategy need modification than he was supposed to inform teacher 1.

Last there was a psychologist who was there for identifying differences among children. He was supposed to suggest policy after studding the strengths and weaknesses of children.

6.4.5 Normal teaching methods for PHC

Normal teaching methods and classes were arranged for physically handicapped children. These methods and classes were supposed to teach them reading, speaking, and listening.

Those students whose hands were fully functional were also taught to write but separate session was held for those children who were having hand impotence in order to write. These classes and methods were just like classes in normal schools.

6.4.6 Vocational therapies

Different vocational therapies were used for overcoming the barriers of different abilities. These vocational therapies were based nature of difference. First psychologist and vocational therapist was supposed to identify the ability of the student. After identifying the capabilities of students, they were supposed to train those students in order to teach them some occupational and professional works. These vocational therapies included painting, making flowers, purses, baskets, and animals from paper etc.



Figure 8: Teacher showing a flower made by a child

6.4.7 Activities for physical development

Apart from educational activities various training for physical development were also conducted over there. These activities were mostly done for intellectually different children in order to maintain their standing posture and improving their walking skills.

Aside from walking and maintaining posture these activities were helpful in sustaining physical health of children.

6.4.8 IEP and lesson planning for physically Handicapped children

These individualized educational programs were specific for physically handicapped children. In these programs some organs of body were meant to be developed to a next level. For those children whose feet and legs were handicapped, hands were meant to perform some tasks of feet. If a child was having hand or arm differences, they were supposed to develop their feet in order to perform certain task.

Case study

Asad was seven years old child. He was born with congenital amputation¹². He was not having any hand. He was only having arms right to the elbows. Asad's parents were sorrowful when they saw that Asad was born without limbs. Asad's Father stated, "We were very sad, and we were feeling pity for Asad". We were afraid that Asad will be subject to people's fun. We took Asad to Karachi and developed artificial limbs for him, but he was very feeling uncomfortable after putting that artificial limb. So, we decided to keep Asad as it is.

When Asad Turned Five we admitted him in complex. The complex management arranged individualized programs for Asad, and others like him. In that individualized program, Asad was trained to do work while using his feet. Asad begin to improve by each passing month and after few months, Asad was able to do lots work with his feet. Through individualized education program he became able write, draw maps, and eating with spoon through his feet. Asad's Parent were hopeful for his bright future due these programs.

¹² Congenital amputation is a condition in which child is born without limb or a part of limb. Sometimes it also happens in absences of both limbs.



6.5 Extracurricular activities

Special education complex Gamba was not limited to educational facilities only. The complex officials were having lots of other activities for students in order ensure their mobility and make them connected with world around. The vice principle of the complex argued that one of the main reasons of the disconnection of differently abled children the restrictions upon their mobility and lack of their participation in extracurricular activities. We intend to increase their explorative potential through various activities and through these activities they can flex their muscles in the mainstream society.

As there were various academic and vocational programs, there were some extracurricular activities also for the students. Special education complex Gamba arranged three or four trips every year in which the staffs were letting them enjoy as well as teaching. Different activities were taught to them. They usually took children to the pond or loch where they taught children how to swim. Vice principle again argued that if are provided with enough infrastructure and budget we can assure that these children are capable of winning gold medal in para-Olympics¹³. Fascinating scenes and frequent movement were source of

¹³ Para-Olympics is a series of competitions for the athletes with different abilities. Para-Olympics are associated with and held following the summer and winter Olympics.

recreation as well education. Entertainment like music and movies were also played during those trips.



Figure 9: Trip for learning swimming

Aside from this, outing programs were arranged for the children. These programs were meant to teach them how to eat and drink with spoon and fork.

Chapter 7

7.1 Hurdles in education of differently abled students

Education of differently abled students have gone through various dilemmas. There were lots of barriers and hurdles countering the needs of education of differently abled students. These hurdles and barriers were most prominent in realm of social and economic structure of society. Aside from social and economic barriers, there were a wide variety of hurdles in other regards also. These includes geographic access, distrust of parents in special education, and security issues.

7.2 Social barriers

The most frequent barriers responsible for countering the education of differently abled people were in social sphere. These barriers most were likely to happen in education of children who were having mental differences. These include children with Down syndrome, dyslexia, and autism etc. Children having these mental differences were enrolled in school but there were lots of children who were not enrolled due to social barriers.

Social hurdles and barriers were most of the time exclusive to children with cognitive differences. Children with physical differences, eyesight impairment, earing problems, aphonic (Dumb) have some sort of exemption from hurdles and barriers.

7.2.1 At Family level

The root cause of lack of education of differently abled student happened within the family. Families especially parents of those children who have cognitive differences were not allowing their offspring to attend special education school. Some of the parents were having a view that if they did not enroll their child in a school, it will be better for concealing her/his identity and thus, there identity as different will not be disclosed. This

was more evident in the case of female children with mental differences. Asking a respondent about her daughter who was having mental differences he argued, I do not want to enroll in daughter in the complex because I do not want to uncover her identity as differently abled.

Apart from this, it was common view that children with mental difference do not need education. It is useless to give them education because they are unable to learn and interpret.

7.2.2 At societal level

Children with different abilities were more expose to discrimination at societal level. Social discrimination was one of the key factors responsible for preventing children from getting education. Societal discrimination was not completely avoiding children from getting education but somehow it was making troubles in getting education. This case was profound among those who have physically differences but there were admitted in normal schools. Fellows of those student use to make fun of them. the primal concern of those students was getting rid of bulling and verbal offenses. On the other hand, this was not found among those who were getting education special education school.

7.2.3 Public opinion

Public opinion was yet another barrier which to some extent prevented parents from enrolling their differently abled offspring in school. There was a widespread proposition that differently abled children cannot be integrated in schools with other children. So, it is useless to admit them in education center.

Public opinion was not that crucial when it came to physical disabilities because physical disabilities was conceived not as much of difference as its psychological counterparts. There was a good number of students with physical differences in special education complex as well as other schools, but public opinion was responsible for preventing education of differently in the realm of psychological differences especially in case of girl with psychological difference.

Case study

Faiza Raja was a 11-year-old girl having down syndrome. She was not diagnosed with down syndrome in her infancy but when she turned three her parent realized that she was having some kind of mental differences which was later confirmed by a psychiatrist. As her parents were aware that down syndrome is not curable, but they tried to cure her mental difference by visiting various psychiatrists and doctors.

Faiza was having difficulties in her speech, and no one was able understand her apart from her parents. Sometimes Faiza's Parents barely understood her talks. Faiza's parents admitted her in special education complex when Faiza was six-year-old. In special education complex there were special programs for mentally retarded children. These programs were helpful for Faiza in improving her speech and physical skills.

After two years of admission Faiza's parents tend to realize that people are not considering education of mentally retarded children as good thing especially mentally retard girls. There was a widespread assumption that girls are more expose to abuse over there. So, they decided to quit her education and stayed her at home.

Faiza's father narrated that although I do not have any distrust issues with faculty of special education complex, but public opinion galvanized my concerns about her safety so, I decided to let her out.

7.2.4 Stigma

Stigma was perhaps the most vital barrier which restricted the attitude of parent to forbid their children from being educated. After conducting in-depth study, I came across with various prejudices which were faced by differently abled children. Each and every respondent faced such social injustices. Children were bullied due to their physical differences, they encountered various verbal offenses due to their different cognitive abilities and so on.

Stigma was one of the major hurdles in education of differently abled students. Some of the parents were concerned about their children that they will be labeled insane, limp, or

mute over there. Stigma was prominent among those children who were getting education in normal schools. Asking a respondent about the injustices he faced due to his limpness, he replied that he often encounters harsh words from his fellows. They make fun of me and often call me by terms with negative connotations such as Thiamo (Balti word for limp person).

Case study

Ahmad was 10 years old boy. He was having vision problems. His parents claimed that he was born as a normal but when he got seven years he complained about difficulties in visions. His eyes were red, and he used to rub his eyes quite often. Initially Ahmad's parents did not take it seriously but after one week when Ahmad was constantly rubbing his eyes and complaining his poor vision, his parents decided to take him to an ophthalmologist. The ophthalmologist diagnosed him with Juvenile retinoschisis¹⁴. Juvenile retinoschisis is diseases which affects children and young adults. It causes the loss of central vision.

Ahmad claimed that there appears a dark circle when he looks at something. He cannot see the central object and his central vision is pitch black. He further claimed most of the time cannot recognize that faces of people and he has difficulties in focus.

Ahmad was enrolled in school in Skardu, but he was bullied most of the time by is fellows. Ahmad stated that *Khong hamesa nala mikjar zer bin pa*. They always called me a "blind". This harsh word was tormenting Ahmad and he start hating himself. Her parents eventually decide to take her out of school.

Ahmad's parent argued that in school Ahmad face stigma and discrimination so that is why we got him out. But we will enroll him in Government special education complex where he might find himself comfortable and we are pretty sure that he will not face injustices and bullying over there.

¹⁴ Juvenile retinoschisis is diseases which occurred in childhood, and it damages the eyesight of child. Eyes of those children are very sensitive to light.

7.3 Economic barriers

There were barriers in economic sphere which sometime prevented parents to admit their children's schools. This problem was more prevalent in rural areas of Skardu. Some of the Parents who lived in rural sphere were having bad economic conditions which make them unable to provide education to their differently abled children. Although special education complex was providing free education to the children, but it was insufficient for the parent because they were far from Gamba, and transport facility of complex was not going through their village.

Case study

Hassan Shabbir was 9-year-old. He was having hearing impairment and he was voiceless. He was living in village which was 23 kilometers away from Gamba special education complex. His father was farmer and he barely earned feed his family. Hassan Shabbir was attending school because of poor economic conditions.

Hassan's father argued that "*Naya shargo gwa na naya frufroni sabaq sa zer chuk pa nanmat. Mushkil kha nang poyai kharcha bain tofari frufong la sabaq xhaba nanma mt*".

Translation I barely earn to feed my family. I cannot afford the education of Hassan due to my subsistent amount of income.

Hassan was out of school and his father was not in position to educate him. Although his father held positive views regarding the education of differently abled children.

7.4 Problems faced by special education complex

As we mentioned, there were several barriers which were avoiding parents to enroll their offspring in education centers. Apart from those barriers, there were some problems faced by special education complex also. These problems were not as severe as socio-economic barriers, but these problems were faced by differently abled students.

7.4.1 Untrained teachers

There was not a single institute in Skardu in which teacher were trained before providing special education in the complex. Teachers who were supposed to teach in special education center obtained their training in other cities like Gilgit and Islamabad. They were somehow trained but some of them were lacking experience of teaching. This problem was more prominent when a teacher was replaced by another teacher.

At that time children were having difficulties in understanding. The unexperienced teacher also suffered in growing accustomed to teaching. Usually this created a vacuum in the learning process of children.

Asking about disturbing in learning process one student replied that usually it takes two weeks or sometimes a month of teacher, in order to getting use to the learning process at the complex. Thus, our learning is affected quite much during that time.

7.4.2 Temporary teachers

The teachers of Gamba special education complex were not permanent. They were temporary. There was process of teachers' appointment which involved various categories. Special education complex's official sent the project four completion report to the planning and development department Gilgit Baltistan but unfortunately it was not approved yet.

Project four completion report was project closure report which was mandatory to be submitted to planning and development department on completion of each project. In this project the permanence of teaching faculty and salary was to be approved but hence it was pending so, the complex was relying on the teaching staff which was either hired by special education department of Gilgit Baltistan or they were officials of the education department.

The temporary nature of teaching staff created a void in the education and learning process of students.

7.4.3 Insufficient budget

Special education complex was having budget issues. These budget issues were responsible for less numbers of students than its actual capacity. In Skardu division there was only one special education complex, and this complex was facing troubles in receiving budget for infrastructure, to pay teachers' salaries and other necessities. There was a complex procedure for approving budget of the complex.

This procedure was based on projects which were given to the complex's official to complete in order to get paid for the necessities. Totally there were four projects, first one was regarding the improvement of land and building of the complex

Project two was related to faculty and infrastructure. After the completion of project two planning and development department granted fund to the complex for other necessities and hiring staff. Other necessities included transport services, water, and electricity supply etc. One Bus and one Carry Dabba was granted for sake of transportation, water tank and toilets were built, and electricity was supplied to the complex.

Project three was quarterly progress report on the specified Performa. It was sent to the planning and development department of Gilgit Baltistan on the fulfilment of required performance.

Project four was regarding physical and financial progress to be submitted on monthly basis. The officials claimed that they have the submitted the completion of project four in 2019 but still they did not receive any sort of budget and financial assistance.

Delay in budget and sometimes in insufficient budget was creating hurdles in safeguarding the rights of differently abled children to get.

7.4.4 Infrastructural issues

As mentioned earlier the literacy rate of differently abled in Skardu was 25 to 30 percent so, it 70 to 75% percent of children were not having education. Special education complex in Gamba was unable to accommodate total population of differently abled. The main reason of lower number of students was infrastructural issues.

Special education complex of Gamba was meant to accommodate 200 students but there were only 74 students enrolled. There were some infrastructural issues which prohibited the complex administration to enrolled 200 students. The building of special education complex was under construction, and it barely accommodate 74 students. The in-charge of complex argued that they have requested the planning and development department of Gilgit Baltistan to resolve the infrastructural issues, but it was still pending back then.

Another very important issue was regarding library. There was no library in Gamba special education complex, there were books and journals in the complex, but the building of library was not yet constructed and more likely to build after the eradication of Covid-19. so, Students were having troubles in utilizing their spare time.



Figure 10: Place where Library's Building was supposed to be constructed

7.4.5 Accessibility issues

Accessibility was yet another problem in securing the education of differently abled children. There was only one special education complex in Skardu. It was located in Gamba union council. Gamba was around 12 kilometers away from Skardu. It was indeed a problem. Special education center was having a transport system. They were

having one bus and one Carry Dabba, but it was not sufficient to facilitate the mass population of differently abled children Skardu.

Children of villages in Skardu were lacking this facility and their enrollment was far from desired.

7.4.6 Hostel issues

There was no hostel in special education complex Gamba. Lacking hostel facilities restricted the enrollment of children who were at distance from complex. Transport facility of complex was limited to nearby areas and they remaining areas of Baltistan division were lacking the transport facility of complex. For them, the hostel was the only solution but due to budget constraints it was yet to build.

7.5 Problems during covid-19's closure

Covid-19 has disturbed the education and learning process of the students across the world and education of differently abled students has no exception. Perhaps they were the effected the most. Most of learning process of differently abled students need physical interventions and during the closure of educational complex, these interventions were not possible.

7.5.1 Problems in education of visually impaired students

Distance education was almost useless when it comes to the learning process of visually impaired students. Due to the closure of the complex students was relying only on online education. The most important way of learning of visually impaired student's braille learning was not feasible in distance education. They were only restricted to audio recording.

Audio recordings were sent to the parents, and they were supposed to play those recording to the children, but this was ineffective, and the children responded that they have very little understanding of those stuff.

7.5.2 Problem faced by hearing impairment

Visually impaired students were learning to some extent but students with hearing impairments were having no such Partial learning. The learning process of them needed face to face instructions. Sign language and other programs were impossible in online education. So, they were paying a huge price due to the closure.

7.5.3 Other programs

Other programs like psychological therapies, vocational training, physical activities, and individualized educational planning were also damaged. There was no room for those programs in online education.

Apart from there was serious problems of internet connectivity. Instead of having online classes, teachers were opting for visuals and recordings. Videos and recording were sent to parents of the children and then the parent were supposed to play those videos and recording. As it is known that the education of differently abled needs special attention and physical presence so, the online education of differently abled children was almost useless.

8.1 Summary

This study has been carried to find out the role of society and culture in the provision of education to differently abled children in Skardu. This study was meant to figure out the perceptions of people regarding special education and their attitude towards special education. The state of special education in Skardu was also meant to explore as well as I also took account of hurdles and issues faced by the special education into consideration. Government of Pakistan initiated various programs in order to educate children with different abilities. Apart from government's endeavours, non-governmental organizations have also launched programs for the sake of education of differently abled so, they can live a self-sustaining life rather than depending on the society and family members. So, bearing these in mind I conducted this study.

This research was purely based on Anthropological method of social research while applying qualitative paradigm. I spend more than three months in the field in order to collect data through observations, in-depth interviews and focus group discussion etc. For first two and half months I regularly went to special education complex Gamba and conducted interviews as well as joined classes and other programs but after that, the complex was closed due to second wave of covid-19 and then I was having no choice but to rely on smartphone for data collection. Sample size of this study is 34.

This study has been conducted in Gamba Skardu. Gamba is a tehsil of Skardu district. Gamba is Tehsil of Skardu, and special education complex is situated in Gamba, it is 12 kilometres in the west of Skardu City. Airport road leads from Skardu city to Gamba while another road named CMH road led to special education complex. The area of special education complex is 30 kanals or 3.75 acres. There are twenty-four classrooms, and two playgrounds in the complex.

The perceptions of local population regarding the education of differently children were various. There were few crucial factors which determined the way of perceiving special education. These factors include the types of different abilities (psychological, physical differences etc.), the gender of child, and geographical constraints like distance from special education to home of child and, safety and security.

Perception of people regarding the education of children who have hearing problems were favourable. People were strongly indulging the education of children having such differences. Children with visual differences also got attention in the realm of education and majority of the respondent argued that their education should be kept as paramount priority.

Things got quite changed when I tried to figure out the perception of respondent regarding the education children who have cognitive differences. Some of differences like epilepsy was perceived as mild difference and children with epilepsy were viewed as almost normal ones but on the hand children with down syndrome, dyslexia and mental retardation received less preference in education. Dyslexia was somewhat perceived less problematic, and respondents argued that they need to be educated but on the contrary down syndrome and mental retarded children received negligible favour when it came to their education. Gender also played a key role in the perception regarding their education. Female were most likely to get less attention and their education considered as of mild importance by the respondent as compared to their male counterparts. Lastly, there were some respondents who argued that differently abled children should be provide some privileges due to their difference but other argued that this privilege will encourage furthermore social difference and it will create hurdles in integration so, they should be treated equally.

In special education complex Gamba, there were 74 students enrolled. 27 students were having intellectual development differences, 24 students were having hearing impairment, 20 were physically handicapped and 3 students were visually handicapped. There are more than five hundred differently abled children in Skardu according to one study so, the literacy rate of differently abled is very low over there.

Different educational and vocational programs were launched. Sign language and visual techniques programs were meant to accommodate children with hearing impairments.

speech therapy was developed for children with speaking difference. Braille tactile and audio programs were developed for children with visual difference. Individualized programs for those children who were having some sort of physical differences and these programs provided some fruitful results.

Aside from, these programs, there were individualized educational plans for some children and extracurricular activities were also launched in order to let them enjoy as well as teach them some basic stuff like eating with spoon and fork as well as swimming.

Special education in general and special education complex in specific faced lots of hurdles and barriers. Education of differently abled children faced troubles at family and societal level. Families of those children who were having cognitive differences were afraid that their children will be expose to prejudice in complex and they did not want to disclose their identity. Parents were sceptical about the safety and security of their children in special education complex. Differently abled also faced discrimination which forbade their children to enrol them in the complex. Poor economic conditions of the parents also restrained education of children with differently abilities.

Apart from this, complex was also having some serious issues. The biggest problems were regarding the allocation of budget and infrastructural issues. Most of the teacher in complex was temporary serving over there and their training was not according to needs of the children so, there was some sort of gap between the pace of children's learning and teacher's teaching.

One of the biggest problems was during the covid-19 closure because almost all of the educational, vocational, and individualized programs needed physical presence of children and it was not possible to deliver quality education to them via online sources so, this exacerbated the situation for differently abled children.

8.2 Conclusion

On the basis of this study, I was able to conclude that special education in Skardu faces lots of problems and hurdles. Perception of people was most of the time limiting the access of children with different abilities to educational spheres. As the number of enrolled

students suggested that only a minority of children with different abilities were attending school and overwhelming majority was out of school. The perception of people regarding special education matters a lot in this regard. Physical difference which got positive views regarding education were most likely to accept in schools and the majority of the students enrolled in the complex were having physical differences while others were in vulnerable positions, and they were more likely to stay at home. Most of respondent perceived education of cognitive differently abled as of minor importance. Another fact was that the number of female students was far less than boys and by investigating respondents I was able to draw a distinction between male and female education. The ratio of female ratio was lower than their male counterparts and most of respondents argued that girls with different abilities should not be educated because they are more vulnerable to depravity.

The findings of the study suggest that special education complex Gamba has lots of programs and plans for students in order to accommodate them in mainstream society. The academic, vocational, and extracurricular programs and plans were beneficial for the students and the results of these programs were more on the positive sides. Life standards of children were improved a lot due to these programs. Through sign language deaf students were able to communicate with each other's and staff members. Through braille tactile techniques children with visual impairment were able to read and communicate. Through individualized programs students were able to do stuff which they were restricted to do due to their physical difference prior to their enrolment.

As there were programs and plans for the improvement of standard of life of students, still there were lots of stuff required to be fixed. First and foremost, was that special education complex faced some infrastructural issues like lacking hostels, and library. Lacking hostel was main issues and that is why only nearby students were enrolled in the complex. Although there was bus used for transportation, but bus plied between the campus and Skardu city so, children of other areas were excluded. Libraries and requisite texts were not adequate to students specifically those with different abilities who were highly affected academically by being unable to access necessary learning materials which are not corresponding to number of students.

There were some barriers from families' side which prevented the education differently abled children. These barriers include concerns regarding safety and security of their offspring in the complex and their poor economic situation. Some parents were sceptical about the complex, and they were concerned that their children might face discrimination and prejudice in the complex and this concern forbade them to enrol their students.

Lastly but not the least was the financial problems of the parents which led them to rethink about their scarce resources and the education of their child. As bus service was not available everywhere so, the parents were not in a position to bear the expense of education of their children.

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Appendices

Glossary

Balbis:	School-age children (children who are between 6 to 12 years of age)
Bono:	School age girl
Chogho:	Huge, Big, something of vital importance
Frofuni sabaq:	Children's education
Fru:	School age boy
Ghoutghonmo:	A child who have an absence of speech while conserving or maintaining the ability to hear the speech of others
Indonok:	Self-sufficient person.
Mikokhan:	A person who lacks the power of hearing or having impaired hearing
Mikjar:	A person who is unable to see, having severely impaired or absolutely no sense of sight; sightless; blind.

Shargo: A person with poor economic background or lacking sufficient money to live at a standard considered comfortable

Thagharing: Far from home, away

Un mut khankuni faidoung: Privileges based on differently abilities.

Un Mat Poing: Discrimination based on different abilities

Xhaba: Gain or acquire knowledge of or skill in (something) by study

Interview guide

Name

Age

Gender

Education

Religious affiliation

Economic background

Q: How do you perceive differently abled people?

Q: Is there any differently abled people in your family?

Q: What is your opinion about differently abled people? What do think are best suited people in this category?

Q: Should they be allowed to participate in different social, economic, political, and educational activities?

Q: Should differently abled people be allowed to get education?

Q: What in your opinion is the best place for differently abled people in order to get education?

Q: Do you think differently abled people have potential to improve their life standards through education? plz elaborate.

Q: Do you think they are also important members of society? If yes, then how

Q: Do you think they can provide their services for the betterment of their family and society?

Q: What do you think about the future of differently abled people and how education impacts their future?

Q: How do you treat differently abled people?

Q: How society treat differently abled people?

Q: Did differently abled people enjoys some kind of privileges as others? if yes then please explain?

Q: Do differently abled people face social stigma (negative perception)?

Q: Do differently abled people face social isolation and avoidance?

Q: What kind of social avoidance and isolation are faced by differently abled people?

Q: Did you or anyone else ever cursed (used nicknames or other offensive words) differently abled people in front of you?

Q: Do you think differently abled people face stereotypes and social prejudice? If yes, then explain?

Q: do think there is any social discrimination against differently abled people? if then then plz explain.

Q: Do you think through education of differently abled people these stigmas and social prejudices can be eliminated?

Q: What are the numbers of schools of differently abled people?

Q: What are the numbers of other institutions which provide education to differently abled people?

Q: What are the number of students in each educational institution?

Q: What is ratio of male and female in these educational institutions?

Q: What is the rate of literacy of differently abled people?

Q: What are the factors which influence the rate of literacy among differently abled people?

Q: Would you like to enroll your differently abled child or sibling to school? If yes, then why if not then why not?

Q: What do you think can improve the literacy rate of differently abled people?

- Q: What are the numbers of students with physically differently abled?
- Q: What are numbers of each physical different student e.g., deaf, blinds, cripples?
- Q: What are the number of psychological differently abled students?
- Q: What are the number of each psychological different category e.g., autism, phobic, down syndrome and bipolar etc.?
- Q: Do these institutes have proper transport system?
- Q: What is rate of participation of differently abled people in extracurricular activities?
- Q: Are there any other organizations which organizes seminars and other programs for differently abed people and what are their motives?
- Q: What kind of problems and issues are faced by the people of differently abilities in these institutes?
- Q: What kind of social issues are related with education of differently abled people?
- Q: What are the economic issues which are faced by differently abled people?
- Q: Do you think people consider education of differently abled people of minor importance? If yes, then why?
- Q: What is the position of infrastructure of educational institutes of differently abled people?
- Q: Do you think current educational institutes provide enough learning to differently abled people?
- Q: Do these institutes have all required needs and facilities in order to maintain quality education for differently abled people? If not please mention what are lacking?
- Q: Does Government provides enough fund to the educational institutes for differently abled people?
- Q: What kind of problems are faced by the students?

Q: Does Government have any program for the training of teachers at educational institutes of differently abled people?

Q: Are teachers at these institutes well trained?

Q: Does lack of training of teachers creates issues in education of differently abled people? If yes, then plz elaborate.

Q: How much Budget are provided by the government to these institutes?

Q: Does this budget fulfils the needs of the differently abled people?

Q: Does Government have consistent policies regarding education of differently abled people?

Q: How does government's inconsistent policies impacts education of differently abled people?

Q: What are social barriers (stigma, pride, dignity, fatalism etc.) toward education of differently abled people?

Q: What are religious barriers towards education of differently abled people?

Q: What are the psychological barriers (dissatisfaction of mind while child is over there etc.) toward education of differently abled people?

Q: What are geographical (distance of institutes from home) and ecological barriers (severity of weather especially in winter) toward education of differently abled people?

Q: Do you trust the authorities of educational institutes of differently abled people?

Q: Do you have any trust issues regarding education of differently abled people?

Q: Do you think children of differently abled people (especially females) are safe over there?

Q: Do think education of differently abled people is culturally compatible?

Q: What are the social consequences of education of differently abled people?

Q: Do the educators have positive attitude towards differently abled people?

Q: Do you think these authorities demote negative attitude towards differently abled people? If yes then how, if not then why not?

Q: What do think about the learning process in these institutes?

Q: Do the authorities have any specific techniques in order to guide the students properly?

Q: What kind of changes would you recommend in learning process of differently abled people?