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Effects of Demographic Characteristics on Facilitators' Attitude and Engagement in Advocacy towards Inclusion of Adults with Disabilities in the Literacy Training Program in Gedeo Zone, Ethiopia

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the Effects of Demographic Characteristics on the Facilitators' Attitudes and Engagement in Advocacy towards the Inclusion of Adults with Disabilities in the Literacy Training Program in the Gedeo Zone, Ethiopia. To this end, the explanatory sequential design of a mixed research method was used. The study involved 224 respondents and among these 214 facilitators were selected by stratifying sampling technique to fill the questionnaire and a total of 13 principals, supervisors, adults with disabilities, and literacy training program experts were selected by purposive sampling technique for interview. Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews. The quantitative data were analyzed through SPSS version 23 and presented by Step-wise regression while the qualitative data were analyzed by word-by-word narrative analysis. The results from both quantitative and qualitative data revealed that their educational qualifications had slight effects on the facilitators' attitudes and engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in the literacy training program; while the other demographic characteristics had no effects. Finally, the different challenging factors within the training centers that tend to shape the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy differently regarding patience, tolerance, and accommodation would be researched.

Keywords: Adults with Disabilities, Attitudes, Engagement in Advocacy, Facilitators', Inclusion, Literacy

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1. Introduction

The right to and need of education for all people with disabilities throughout the world has led to the inclusive education movement, crystallized by the Salamanca Statement for action (UNESCO, 1994) and united nations conventions on the rights of person with disabilities (UN, 2006). As a result, in many countries, a growing number of facilitators are receiving training on how to train adults with disabilities in general education training settings and many others are also receiving specialized training to train a specific group of adults with disabilities. While there are ongoing debates on whether people with certain types of disabilities learn best in specialized education training settings, or are better served in general training settings, there is a strong consensus that all people with disabilities can learn and are entitled to good education (Inclusion International, 2009).

Different studies tried to explain the diversity of facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards people with disabilities using different factors and classified them into three specific groups. These are explained as personal characteristics such as knowledge about disability and functioning of people with disabilities; and contextual factors (Bossaert, Colpin, Pijl, & Petry, 2011; Vignes, Godeau, Emmanuelle, Mariane, Nicola., et al., 2009). Gender and age are among the individual characteristics most frequently investigated. Attitudes of women toward people with disabilities are more positive than those of men (Bossaert et al., 2011; Siperstein, Parker, Bardon, & Widaman, 2007). Research findings showing the importance of training in inclusive settings for individuals' attitudes toward people with disabilities are unclear, although slightly more studies show a positive relationship between these two factors (De Boer et al., 2012; MacMillan, Tarrant, Abraham, & Morris, 2014).

The passion and eminence of collaboration better explain attitudes than does the type of training centers (Keith, Benetto, & Rogge, 2015; Schwab, 2017). Most of the adults quite often isolate their colleagues with disabilities, the meager presence of such adults in the training centers may not be sufficient to develop positive attitudes. At the same time, positive interactions with colleagues with disabilities create more occasions to develop knowledge about disability, and also increase empathy for and decrease fear of adults with disabilities, thus favoring a reduction of bias toward the whole group (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008). Knowledge about the importance of contextual factors that present in the training settings may affect the attitudes towards people with disabilities is relatively poor. It was shown that in the training settings grouping of people from lower socio-economic status and lower academic achievement developed better attitudes towards people with disabilities (Vignes et al., 2009). This result, however, has not been pretended and is difficult to explain theoretically. There are also some dimensions of the training settings, such as higher levels of support from facilitators and colleagues showed better relationships with facilitators or a stronger emphasis on developing intrinsic motivation for training and understanding the content than an academic achievement, which favors more positive attitudes towards people with disabilities (McDougall et al., 2004). The factors mentioned above, however, were not analyzed at the level of specific training settings, but only at the level of individual adults, which is not under contemporary standards of analyzing the situation of literacy training settings (Morin, Marsh, Nagengast, & Scalas, 2014).

Engagement in advocacy on the other hand is essential to the ongoing efforts at making education more inclusive for all (Kaplan, Lewis, and Pinnock, 2015). Kern (2006) affirms that

facilitators' who are engaged in advocacy services and have faith in the concept of inclusion can provide adults with disabilities with confidence and a comfortable training environment. According to different scholars, inclusive education is not just a process through which awareness is raised, but also it is about changing practices. Advocacy for inclusion can be applied where learning is being discussed, designed, and practiced: within the family, community meetings, literacy training centers, educators training programs, Ministerial level of the state, civil society, NGOs and IGOs offices, national and international conferences as well as many other forums (Kaplan et al., 2015). It also involves all the concerned bodies of an education and training delivery system to move towards a more inclusive education system and ultimately a more inclusive society.

According to National Adult Literacy Agent (2008), adult literacy training is most successful when the adults are actively involved in the process and are encouraged to express their ideas and draw on their experiences. Adults should also be enabled to explore the methods and materials which help them to be trained more effectively and to take an active part in defining their goals and planning the training program. This has implications for the training of tutors, teaching and learning approaches, choosing materials, and the assessment of learning by the facilitators who engaged in advocacy for the inclusion of adults with disabilities (National Adult Literacy Agency, 2008).

According to the Citizens Information Board (2008),

> "Advocacy is a means of empowering people by supporting them to assert their views and claim their entitlements and where necessary representing and negotiating on their behalf. Advocacy can often be undertaken by people themselves, by their friends and relations, or by persons who have had similar experiences. Delivering a professional advocacy service means providing a trained person who, based on an understanding of a client's needs and wishes, will advise and support that client to make a decision or claim entitlement and who will, if appropriate, go on to negotiate or make a case for him/her in (P-5)."

The concept and foundations of advocacy are well established and its potential role for individuals who lack capacity, independence, self-determination, and self-realization (Jonathan and Jill, 2019) is acknowledged; but its uptake, legal foundation, and acceptance by wider society are less clear. Hence, the researchers argue that the facilitators' engagement in advocacy is important to improve the involvement of adults with disabilities in the functional adult literacy training program in the current study area.

The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (2012) recognizes that the adult literacy training programs in Ethiopia must be considered the specific needs of adults with disabilities. This assumes that the facilitators' who are involved in adult literacy training should be considered the specific needs of adults with disabilities in the literacy training programs. The Ethiopian government has conceded the recent laws that require the inclusion of adults with disabilities in decision-making policies and employment (Lewis, 2014). The government is also trying to put in place systems and policies to promote the rights of persons with disabilities. Despite the efforts made by the government to enact and adopt laws and policies, enforcing and putting them into practice is still a challenge. Hence, what is needed is a strong and vibrant voice for persons with disabilities, not just advocacy groups. Ensuring a disability perspective in all

aspects of policy and labor legislation, effective implementation and enforcement of existing disability laws and policies, providing equal employment and training opportunities are among the factors that contribute to the reduction of poverty and the social and economic inclusion of people with disabilities in Ethiopia (ILO & Irish Aid, 2013).

As per Abo (2020), in Eastern parts of Ethiopia, especially in two Harerge Zones of Oromiya Regional State facilitators are deficient in the andragogical and pedagogical knowledge and skills that are required to facilitate adult trainees, which are mainly attributed to the fact that the majority of them (90.8%) were grade 10, certificate holders. According to Ibid adults with disabilities were not sorted out and special supports were not given (96.40); instructional contents were not supplemented by audio-visual instructional materials (68.7). Accordingly, facilitators were unable to deliver their responsibilities effectively. For example, adults with different sorts of disabilities like visual, hearing, and physical disabilities in the adult literacy training centers were not identified, and accessible training environments were not made to help them to train effectively (Abo, 2020). This is an incongruity with what is avowed in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia MoE (2016) master plan for Special Needs and Inclusive Education in Ethiopia 2016-2025. This master plan bravely states that the state government will provide quality, relevant, and equitable adult literacy training opportunities to all adults with disabilities or those with special educational needs and ultimately enable them to fully participate in the socio-economic development of the country. The other is that facilitators were not able to demonstrate various instructional media and audio-visual materials as well as practical sessions and visits to support adult trainees in the literacy training program.

In the Gedeo Zone, Ethiopia there were no prior research findings that investigated the effects of demographic characteristics on facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in the literacy training program. Based on the above notions, the researchers initiated to conduct this study on the topic "Effects of Demographic Characteristics on Facilitators' attitudes and their Engagement in Advocacy towards the Inclusion of Adults with Disabilities in Literacy Training Program in Gedeo Zone, Ethiopia". Accordingly, the following research questions were addressed in the current study.

1. What are the effects of gender, training in special needs and inclusive education, the levels of adults' trained, educational qualifications and experience in training adults with disabilities on the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in the functional adult literacy training program?

2. Research methodology

Design of the Study

research was conducted by using an explanatory sequential design of both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

Sources of Data

The main sources of data for this study were adult literacy program facilitators in the integrated functional adult education program in the 2020-2021 academic years in Gedeo Zone, Ethiopia. In addition to facilitators; three adults with disabilities, three principals, three cluster

supervisors, and four literacy program experts from Town Administrations, Districts, and Zonal levels of Gedeo Zone have participated.

Sampling

The 214 facilitators were selected by simple random sampling technique through Yemane, 1967 survey sample size formula from the total of 457 facilitators in the study area and a total of 13 adults with disabilities, principals, cluster supervisors, and literacy program experts were selected by purposive sampling technique for interview based on their active participation in the program.

$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$ Where N=Total population n= sample size e= error

Instruments

The survey instrument for this study was a Likert scale type questionnaire that is adapted from the Meadows (2012) dissertation with the permission of the institution from which the dissertation was published and it has been translated to Amharic to avoid the ambiguity that the respondents may face. However, the instrument in Meadows (2012) dissertation focuses on teachers' attitudes towards the use of accommodations in the classroom and on standardized tests. Therefore, the researchers used the attitudes scale with slight modifications and accommodations scales in the classroom and on standardized tests with major modifications to test the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy. Then, a sample of 30 (Thirty) adult literacy training program facilitators (male-18 and female-12) were selected randomly for the pilot study from Chuko Town Administration of Sidama Regional state, Ethiopia which is located at the border of the Gedeo zone and the Cronbach alpha for facilitators' engagement in advocacy was calculated at 0.87. An interview guide was developed by researchers and interviewed facilitators, principals, supervisors, adults with disabilities, and literacy training program experts to support the quantitative data.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed through inferential statistics such as Step-wise regression to see the effects of different demographic characteristics on the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in the literacy training program and word-by-word narrative description for the interview data. The demographic characteristics that were tested are gender, training in special needs and inclusive education, the level of adults trained, educational qualification, and the experience in training adults with disabilities. The findings of quantified data were depicted in the tables and strengthened by the qualitative data.

3. Results and discussion

Results

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of demographic variables of the facilitators'

Categories	Distributed	Returned	%
Gender			
M	173	171	79.91
F	41	40	18.69
T	214	211	98.6
Training in SNIE			
Have training	104	102	47.66
Did not have training	110	109	50.94
T	214	211	98.6
Level of adults trained			
Level I or Level II	66	66	30.84
Both Level	148	145	67.76
T	214	211	98.6
Educational qualification			
Grade 10	108	107	50
Summer in-Service			
Diploma trainee and above	106	104	48.6
T	214	211	98.6
Experience in training AWDs			
Have Experience	177	174	81.3
No experience at all	37	37	17.3
T	214	211	99.61

Table 1 consists of demographic data for the facilitators' in the study area. The sample represented for this research was 173 (80.64%) male, 41 (19.36%) female, and 214 (100%) a total of facilitators' in public integrated functional adult education programs in the Gedeo Zone, Ethiopia. The demographic data for gender, training in special needs and inclusive education, the level of adults trained, the educational qualification, and the experience in training adults with disabilities were collected. 171 male facilitators comprised 79.91%; 40 female facilitators comprised 18.69 and 211 (98.6%) of the total population filled the questionnaire and returned. 47.66% (n= 102) of the facilitators have training in special needs and inclusive education and 50.94% (n=109) did not have training in special needs and inclusive education. 14.02% (n=30) trained adults in level-I; 16.82 (n=36) trained adults in level-II; and 67.76% (n=145) trained adults in both level. 48.6% (n=104) of the facilitators' are grade 10 certificate holders; 26.16% (n=56) of the facilitators' are the summer in-service diploma trainee; 23.83% (n=51) had diploma certificate and above. 81.31% (n=174) of facilitators' have experience in training adults

with disabilities in the literacy training program and 17.3% (n=37) have no experience in training adults with disabilities in the literacy training program.

1. **What are the effects of different demographic characteristics on the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in the functional adult literacy training program?**

Table 2 Summary of stepwise regression results of facilitators' attitude and their Engagement in Advocacy (N=211)

Steps	Coefficients	Sta. error	R	R^2	%	t-value	Sig.
Constant (Y1)	49.94	2.18	.246	.061	6.1	22.90	.000
1		4.99	.009	.000	0.00	-0.089	.929
2		4.42	.059	.003	0.03	-.050	.960
3		4.98	.056	.003	0.03	-.005	.996
4		4.83	.246	.061	6.1	3.45	.001
5		4.97	.015	.000	0	-.009	.993
Constant (Y2)	53.3	1.94	.228	.052	5.2	27.4	.000
1		4.42	.059	.003	0.03	-1.1	.292
2		4.42	.034	.001	0.01	0.1	.964
3		4.42	.050	.002	0.02	-1.3	.206
4		4.35	.189	.036	3.6	2.96	.003
5		4.42	.065	.004	0.04	-.71	.347

Y1= Facilitators' Attitude; Y2= Engagement in advocacy

Based on the results in Table 2 above the effects of different demographic characteristics on the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in the functional adult literacy training in the Gedeo Zone, Ethiopia were summarized as follows;

1. Effects of gender

The results in Table 3 depicted the facilitators' attitude by gender (R^2 (0) = 0%, t (211) = -.089, p>.05); while the facilitators' engagement in advocacy by gender (R^2 (.003) = .03%, t (211) = -.089, p>.05). These indicate that gender did not affect the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy in IFAEP. Accordingly, different respondents interviewed and forwarded their practical experience in strengthening the quantitative data as presented below.

One of the respondent principals stated that,

> Male and female facilitators' had no difference in their attitudes and engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in our IFAEP training centers; this revealed that gender did not affect the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in our IFAEP training centers, Pr3 interviewee, September 2020.

By opposing the above ideas one of the respondent experts stated that inclusion is a guarantee for adults with disabilities for leading a successful life in the long run; thus, all of the facilitators' in IFAEP training centers are expected to promote the social as well as mental

wellbeing of these peoples; while in our District IFAEP training centers female facilitators' are demonstrated positive attitudes and the highest engagement in advocacy than the male facilitators'. As a result, I assume that gender had some effects on the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in the functional adult literacy training, Ex1 interviewee, September 2020.

Generally, both the Step-wise regression and interview results of this study revealed that gender had no effects on the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in IFAEP. As to the effects of gender, most of the studies haven't found a significant difference in the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in service provisions (Chhabra, Srivastava, & Srivastava, 2010; Meadows, 2012). Some of the studies have shown that female trainers feel more positively towards the inclusion of people with disabilities than male trainers (Alquraini, 2012). The two studies, both conducted with high school teachers, found that males felt more positively towards inclusion than female ones (Bhatnagar & Das, 2014; Ernst & Rogers, 2009).

2. Effects of the training received in special needs and inclusive education

Table 3 depicted the facilitators' attitude by the training they received or did not received in special needs and inclusive education (R^2 (.003) = .03%, t (211) = -.050, p>.05); while their engagement in advocacy (R^2 (.001) = .01%, t (211) = -1.1, p>.05). This indicates that the training facilitators received in special needs and inclusive education not did affect their attitudes and engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in IFAEP. The interview results also strengthened the quantitative data as presented below.

One of the respondent adults with disabilities explained that,

> "In the IFAEP training center in which I am currently attending the functional adult literacy training, the facilitators' who have training in special needs and inclusive education and those who did not have training in special needs and inclusive education had positive attitudes and demonstrated the engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities; thus, for me, training in special needs and inclusive education had no effects on the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in IFAEP," AWDs2 interviewee, September 2020.

In supporting the above idea one of the cluster supervisors also mentioned that in the cluster that I am currently coordinating the IFAEP training, both of the facilitators' who have training in special needs and inclusive education and those who did not have training in special needs and inclusive education had positive attitudes and demonstrated engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities; therefore, it is important to note that the training in special needs and inclusive education had no effects on the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in IFAEP," Su3 interviewee, September 2020.

Both the quantitative and qualitative results of this study confirmed that the training they received in special needs and inclusive education did not affect the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in IFAEP. Different studies confirmed that facilitators' attitudes are strongly associated with the training they received in special needs and inclusive education has usually been the most positive group

(Engelbrecht, Savolainen, Nel, & Malinen, 2013; Hernandez, Hueck, & Charley, 2015). But, the current study has not proved that the effects of training in special needs and inclusive education on facilitators' attitudes and engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in IFAEP.

3. Effects of the level of adults trained

Table 3 is depicted the facilitators' attitude by the level of adults they trained (R^2 (.003) = .03%, t (211) = -.005, p>.05); while their engagement in advocacy (R^2 (.002) = .02%, t (211) = 0.1, p>.05). These show that the level of adults they trained did not affect the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in the functional adult literacy training programs. The interview results from different respondents were also strengthening the quantitative data as presented below.

An IFAEP expert from a Zonal level explained that

> In our Zone functional adult literacy training centers, I have tried to observe most of the facilitators' who have been trained adults with disabilities in different Districts and Town Administration and they had no significant difference in their attitudes and engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in IFAEP by the level of adults they trained; thus, I recognize that the level of adults trained did not affect the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in IFAEP, Ex4 interviewee, September 2020.

The respondent adults with disabilities also explained that the facilitators' in the current functional adult literacy training center had no significant difference in their attitudes and engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities by the level of adults they trained; this reveals that the level of adults trained did not affect the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in IFAEP," AWDs3 interviewee, September 2020.

Generally, the quantitative and qualitative results from different respondents confirmed that the levels of adults they trained did not affect the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in the functional adult literacy training. Trainers do have a more positive attitude and engagement in service provision for the individuals with a higher level of education than lower levels of educations in inclusive education and training settings (Meados, 2012; Kassie, 2012).

4. Effects of educational qualification

Table 3 is depicted the facilitators' attitude by their educational qualifications (R^2 (.061) = 6.1%, t (211) = 3.45, p<.05); while their engagement in advocacy (R^2 (.036) = 3.6%, t (211) = 2.96, p<.05). This shows that facilitators' educational qualifications had slight effects on their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in IFAEP. The interview results were also strengthening the quantitative data as presented below.

The respondent cluster supervisor stated that,

> Facilitators' in our cluster functional adult literacy training centers had a great difference in their attitudes and engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities by their educational qualifications; means those who have a diploma and above levels of educations had positive attitudes and better demonstrated the engagement in advocacy than those who are in-service summer diploma trainees and grade 10

> certificate holders; this revealed that educational qualifications had some effects on the facilitators' engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in the functional adult literacy training program,' Su3 interviewee, September 2020.

The respondent experts from Gedeo Zone Education Department also stated that most of the facilitators in our Zone were grade 10 certificate holders those without pedagogical knowledge and skills to train adults with disabilities in different functional adult literacy training centers that I have been assigned to coordinate and support the program. Thus, I can confirm that facilitators' educational qualifications have affected their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in IFAEP, Ex4 interviewee, September 2020.

Generally, the quantitative and qualitative results from different respondents in the current study revealed that educational qualifications had slight effects on the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in IFAEP. Mthembu (2009) believes that successful implementation of inclusive education requires facilitators' to have the necessary knowledge, skills, competencies, and engagement in advocacy to accommodate a wide range of diversity among trainee adults with disabilities in inclusive IFAEP training centers. If the educational level of the facilitators' competency is increased, then the inclusive education program could be successfully implemented (Ali, Mustapha & Jelas, 2006).

5. Effects of experience in training adults with disabilities

Table 3 is depicted the facilitators' attitude by their experience in training adults with disabilities in IFAEP (R^2 (.000) = 0%, t (211) = -.009, p>.05); while their engagement in advocacy (R^2 (.000) = 0%, t (211) = -.009, p>.05). This shows that facilitators' experience in training adults with disabilities had no effects on their attitudes and engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in IFAEP. The interview results were also strengthening the quantitative data as presented below.

One of the respondent school principals further stated that,

> Whether or not facilitators' have experiences in training adults with disabilities in the functional adult literacy training centers most of them in the current functional adult literacy training centers did not have a difference in their attitudes and engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities. This assumes that experience in training adults with disabilities has not affected the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in the functional adult literacy training program, Pr3 interviewee, September 2020.

By supporting the above idea one of the respondent experts from Yiregachefe District also explained that in our district functional adult literacy training centers, most of the facilitators' with experience in training adults with disabilities and those without experience in training adults with disabilities had no difference in their attitudes and engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in the functional adult literacy training. This recognizes that the experience in training adults with disabilities in the functional adult literacy training has not affected the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities, Ex1 interviewee, September 2020.

Both the quantitative and qualitative data indicate that the facilitators' experience in training adults with disabilities had no effects. But, this result is in disagreement with the findings of

(Boyle, Topping, & Jindal-Snape, 2013; Wilkerson, 2012) that the facilitators' experience in training adults with disabilities is associated with more positive attitudes towards inclusion.

Table 3 Model summary for regression analysis

Model	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Standard error of the estimate
Y1	.246	.061	.038	4.49
Y2	.228	.052	.029	4.35

Y1= Facilitators' Attitude; Y2= Facilitators' Engagement in Advocacy

The step-wise regression in Table 3 above was conducted for gender, training in special needs and inclusive education, the levels of adults trained, educational qualifications, and experience in training adults with disabilities were entered as predictors for facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy scores. The models in Table 2 achieved the value of R = .246 and R^2= .061, indicating that the model explained about 6.1% of the total variance of the demographic characteristics on facilitators' attitudes; while R = .228 and R^2= .052 shows that the model explained about 5.2% of the total variance of the demographic characteristics on facilitators' engagement in advocacy. Hence, the results in the models revealed that there is low multicollinearity of the demographic characteristics on the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in IFAEP. This agrees with Timo's (2020) model, which achieved the value of R = .314 and R^2 = .098, indicating that the model explained about 10% of the total variance of the demographic characteristics on facilitators' attitudes. As predictor variables, the researcher used gender, age, teacher category, and sense of efficacy. The report by European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2011), states that facilitators need a repertoire of skills, expertise, knowledge, pedagogical and andragogical approaches, adequate training methods and materials, as well as time if they need to address the diversity effectively within their inclusive adult literacy training centers. The facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy within the adult literacy training centers by themselves is a way of practicing inclusive education. It is not just about telling adults with disabilities what to do, it is about working with them to establish a common and practically grounded understanding of what inclusive education means. In this way, advocacy should support people in challenging stereotypes and addressing their barriers to inclusion (Kaplan, 2015). This means it is a process of supporting people to be reflective in making the connections between inclusive education concepts and practice in their own lives. Broderick, Mehta-Parekh, & Reid (2012) on the other side agree that the negative attitudes that emerge from facilitators' and lack of their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in the literacy training programs can affect the inclusion of adults with disabilities and their awareness to a great extent. Dealing with individual differences or diversity in the literacy training centers is still full of challenges. The literature also demonstrates that all of the facilitators are experiencing difficulties at different levels when trying to implement inclusive education (Spies, 2013).

4. Conclusions

The findings of the current study revealed that gender, the training in special needs and inclusive education, the levels of adults trained and experience in training adults with disabilities in IFAEP have not affected the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in the functional adult literacy training programs. The study revealed that facilitators' educational qualifications had slight effects on their attitudes and engagement in advocacy towards the inclusion of adults with disabilities in the functional adult literacy training program.

5. Recommendations

Facilitators' would be provided with an in-depth knowledge of the philosophy of inclusion and expected to develop their attitudes and engagement in advocacy that is required for accommodating adults with disabilities in the literacy training centers through the pre-service and in-service teacher training program. The different challenging factors within the community that tend to shape the facilitators' attitudes and their engagement in advocacy differently regarding patience, tolerance, and accommodation would be researched in the future.

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