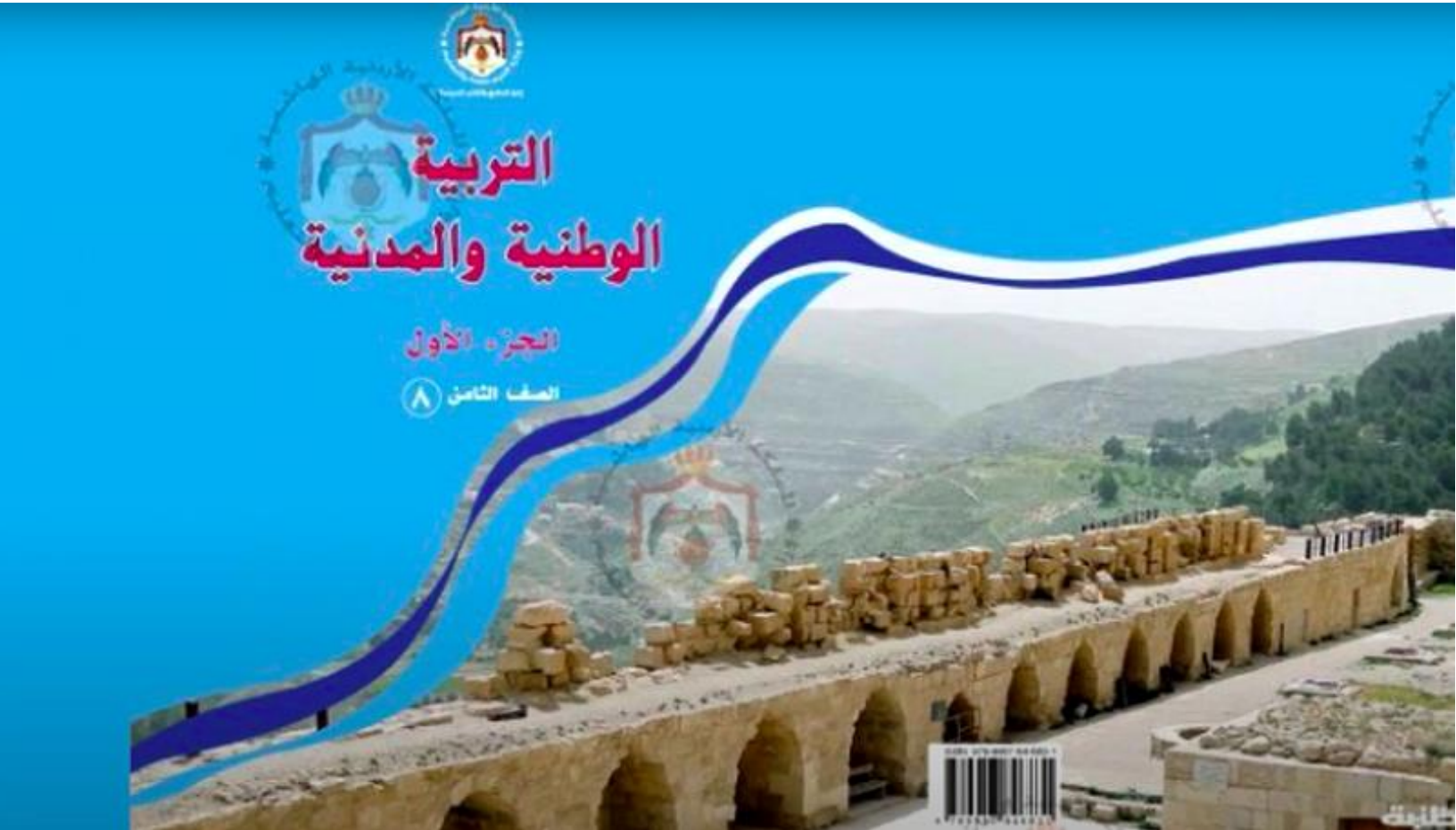
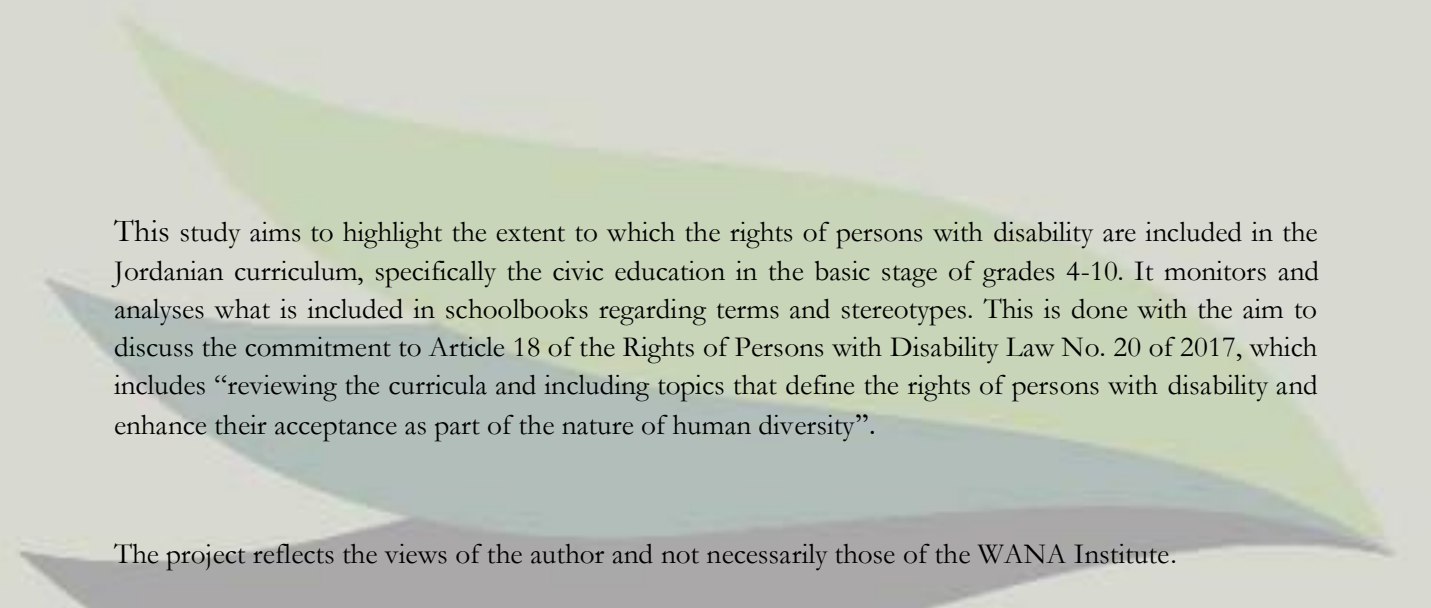


The Rights of Persons with Disability in the Jordanian Civic Education Curriculum



West Asia- North Africa Institute, October 2021



This study aims to highlight the extent to which the rights of persons with disability are included in the Jordanian curriculum, specifically the civic education in the basic stage of grades 4-10. It monitors and analyses what is included in schoolbooks regarding terms and stereotypes. This is done with the aim to discuss the commitment to Article 18 of the Rights of Persons with Disability Law No. 20 of 2017, which includes “reviewing the curricula and including topics that define the rights of persons with disability and enhance their acceptance as part of the nature of human diversity”.

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Table of Contents

1	Key Terminology.....	4
2	Preface.....	4
3	Study Objectives.....	5
4	Executive Summary.....	6
5	Study Results.....	7
5.1	Analysis	7
6	Legal and Legislative Framework.....	9
7	Recommendations.....	11

1 Key Terminology

- **Persons with Disability:** According to Article 3, Clause A of the Persons with Disability Law, a person with a disability is defined as any person who has a long-term deficiency in physical, sensory, mental, psychological, or neurological functions¹.
- **Educational institutions:** any governmental and non-governmental educational institution that provides educational services or programmes for persons with disability, regardless of their licensing or operating entity².
- **Curriculum:** syllabuses for a set of lessons offered during the school year as syllabuses for a set of lessons presented during the school year for students, carrying a set of knowledge and information that the student must acquire at a certain age³.
- **Civic education:** is the education that helps to form a responsible citizen who has a participating and active role in social and political life in terms of rights and duties, and accordingly it leads to the strengthening of a set of behaviours that aim in the end result to draw the citizen's relationship with his country and others, and includes the individual's relationship with society and with the group and the group's relationship with the group⁴.
- **National education:** one of the targeted and intended operations to develop positive feelings and emotions towards the homeland so that the pride of the youth in their homeland increases, and then they seek to preserve it and its gains and contribute to its renaissance. National education is one of the means that educational institutions rely on to develop and stimulate the concept of loyalty and belonging among students⁵.

2 Preface

This study aims to identify the extent to which the rights of persons with disability are included in the Jordanian curriculum, specifically the curriculum of national and civic education in the basic stage of grades 4-10 based on the Law No. 20 of 2017 on the Rights of Persons with Disability, which includes “reviewing the curricula and including topics that define the rights of persons with disability and promote their acceptance as part of the nature of human diversity.”

¹ Law No. 20 of the Rights of Persons with Disability,” Pub. L. No. 37100 (2017).

² Law No. 20 of the Rights of Persons with Disability,” Pub. L. No. 3710 (2017).

³ Hayak, Ibrahim. (2016), Citizenship and human rights in school curricula in light of recent educational reforms in Algeria, published doctoral thesis, Mohamed Hadeer Group, Soukra.

⁴ Duwaikat Fakhri, Moroccan, Abdel Rahman. (2014), The extent to which the rights of persons with disability are included in the Palestinian civic education curriculum in the lower basic stage (the preparation stage from grade 1-4), Al-Quds Open University Journal for Educational and Psychological Research and Studies, Volume 2, p. 6..

⁵ Jabour, Aref Mohammed Mufleh. 2021)), National Education: Its Concept, Importance, Objectives, and Teaching Methods, The Arab Journal for Human and Social Sciences, Vol. 5, Jordan.

The results of the study, after analysing the curriculum, showed that there is a clear lack of inclusion of rights that pertain to persons with disability in the Jordanian national and civic education curriculum, and a disparity in the use of terms and concepts in the curriculum, which may lead to students being confused about terminology and rights and may lead to increased discrimination and exclusion and isolation against persons with disability.

The percentage of persons with disability aged 5 years and over in Jordan is 11.2% of the total population. According to a 2015 report by the Department of Statistics, 79% of children with disability in Jordan are of school age and do not receive any form of education. The Ministry of Education stated that public schools receive 21,756 male and female students with learning difficulties and persons with disability, that is 1.6% of the total number of students in public schools, estimated at 1.3 million. In Jordan, there are 4,000 public schools, of which only 1,000 contain resource rooms (learning difficulties), which are rooms for persons with disability and those with learning difficulties, in which intensive classes are taught outside the classroom at one to three lessons per day, and 150 rooms are adapted to receive people with mobility disability⁶.

The textbook is an essential component of the educational curriculum, because it is a basic pillar in any educational stage, and through its successful linguistic and cultural content, the desired goals of changing misconceptions are achieved, and concepts of acceptance of difference among students are created and strengthened. This paper is part of the project: “Towards Inclusive Participation of Marginalised Women and Persons with Disability in the Social and Economic life” implemented by the West Asia-North Africa Institute with the support of IM Swedish Development Partner in the Middle East. The paper aims to shed light on the topic of integrating the rights of persons with disability in the Jordanian curriculum.

3 Study Objectives

The study aimed to achieve the following:

1. To identify the extent to which the rights of persons with disability are included in the content of the national and civic education curriculum for the basic stage.
2. To identify the terminology used for indicating the rights of persons with disability in the content of the national and civic education curriculum for the basic stage.
3. To contribute to changing misconceptions, and promoting concepts of acceptance of difference among students by submitting evidence-based suggestions and recommendations to the policy-makers in light of the study results.

⁶ Illiteracy preys on children with disability, Al Ghad. 11-23-2019
[/illiteracy-preys-children-with-disabilities/https://alghad.com](https://alghad.com/illiteracy-preys-children-with-disabilities/)

4 Executive Summary

The study applied the content analysis methodology in order to reveal the extent to which the rights of persons with disability are included in the national and civic education curriculum for the basic stage. The following two criteria were used in the analysis:

1. Including the proper terms, concepts and issues.
2. The way they were included; terminology used in the “Say and Do Not Say” list⁷.

The results of the study showed a clear weakness in addressing the rights of persons with disability in the national and civic education curriculum for the basic school stage from the fourth grade to the tenth grade. The study concluded that the curriculum does not include a specialised unit or a lesson on the rights of persons with disability.

Despite the general interest of the educational content in human issues, rights and duties, the necessity of cooperation and acceptance of difference and others, and the ethics of a good citizen, yet the rights of persons with disability appeared in specific places and within a sub-scope of the lesson, often inappropriately from a rights perspective, and indirectly in pictures. Also, the school books do not provide a description of the pictures and figures that are appropriate to the visually impaired; the curriculum used written terms to describe the pictures such as: look at the figure/images, describe what you see in the figure/images ...etc

In this regard, there is a need to review the effectiveness of inclusion programmes for persons with disability in schools in light of curricula that does not emphasise the rights of persons with disability despite its importance in shaping the knowledge of students. It should be emphasised that the issue of disability is a **human rights issue in the first place and not a humanitarian issue**, and there is a need to consolidate a culture that is different from the stereotypical image of persons with disability from the perspective of compassion and kindness. The researcher hopes that the results of this study will be useful in achieving its main objective, which is **to prepare the school curricula in general and the curriculum for national and civic education in particular, in a way that takes into account the human rights conditions of persons with disability, both in terms of content and objectives, in order to ensure the promotion of cultural acceptance of persons with disability, and to facilitate the application of inclusion programmes within the classrooms.**

⁷ Al-Azza, Muhannad. (2018), The Higher Council for the Rights of People with Disability. <http://hcd.gov.jo/sites/default/files/Say%20and%20not%20to%20say.pdf>

5 Study Results

The results of the analysis of the national and civic education curriculum for basic grades showed the following:

5.1 Analysis

Grade Four:

- **The first part:** the academic content did not address any human rights term for persons with disability, with the exception of the second unit, the first lesson entitled: “My homeland is my home/Watani Bayti” in Figure No. (2) p. 31). After analysing the figure, the image indirectly contained one of the facilities for people with disability, which is the ramp.
- **The second part:** the academic content did not address any human rights term for persons with disability.

Grade Five:

- **The first part:** the academic content did not address any human rights term for persons with disability, except for the first unit, the first lesson entitled: “citizenship” in Figure No. (1) p. 12, and the second unit, the first lesson entitled: “Public facilities” Figure No. (1) p. 28. After analysing the shapes, the pictures indirectly contained a facility for persons with disability, which is the ramp.
- **The second part:** the academic content did not address any human rights term for persons with disability.

Grade Six:

- **The first part:** the academic content did not address of any human rights term for persons with disability.
- **The second part:** the academic content dealt with the rights of persons with disability in two lessons (1) a lesson on rights and freedoms in the Jordanian constitution from the first unit, the third section on the rights of people with disability, and the lesson questions included two questions about the rights of persons with disability. (2) and a lesson on volunteer work from the second unit section 3 about the fields of volunteer work. But the human rights terminology for persons with disability was not taken into account according to the list “Say and do not say” in the rights approach for persons with disability⁸.” Where

⁸ Al-Azza, Muhannad. (2018), Ibid.

the term “categories” was used instead of using the term “segment” that should be used, in addition to a clear disparity in the use of the term between “the rights of people with disability” and “disabled people” and “handicapped” and the legal term “persons with disability” that should be used.

Grade Seven:

- **The first part** touched upon the academic content of the rights of persons with disability in the lesson: "Social, economic and cultural rights and freedoms" from the second unit in the third section on social, economic and cultural rights and freedoms in the Jordanian constitution, specifically in Article No. (6 - 5) p. 45, but the rights' term for persons with disability according to the list “Say and do not say in the field of the rights of persons with disability” was not taken into account as “people with disability.” The second lesson of the second unit, entitled: “Civil and political rights and freedoms,” included Figure No. (2) p. 50. After analysing the images, the figure indirectly contained one of the facilities for persons with disability, which is the ramp.
- **The second part** touched on the academic content of the rights of persons with disability in one lesson: “Accepting the Other” from the first unit in the first activity p. 12, but it is noticeable that, according to the image entailed, the rights' term for persons with disability was not taken into account according to the list “Say and do not say in the field of the rights of persons with disability.” as “persons with a specific disability”.

Grade Eight:

- **The first part:** touched on the academic content of the rights of persons with disability in the lesson: “Rejecting intolerance and discrimination” from the first unit in the second activity on p. 36, but it is noticeable, according to the image, that the rights term for persons with disability as “partially blind” was not used, and the term "visually impaired" was used. The activity is followed by a question about how to help them, and according to the list “Say and do not say” in the field of the rights of persons with disability, it is necessary to adopt a human rights language based on achieving equality, neutralising disability and avoiding the caring approach.
- **The second part:** the academic content did not address of any human rights term for persons with disability.

Grade Nine:

- **The first part** the academic content did not address of any human rights term for persons with disability.
- **The second part** the academic content did not address of any human rights term for persons with disability.

Grade Ten:

- **The first part** touched on the academic content of the rights of persons with disability in the lesson: “Justice” from the third unit in the second activity on p. 52, but “persons with disability” was not used and only “handicapped” was used.
- **The second part** touched on the academic content of the rights of persons with disability in the lesson: Social initiatives from the second unit, the first section on health care initiatives, taking into account the term in some places and the use of the human rights term “persons with disability”, and in other places the human rights term was not taken into account as “people with disability”, and only the term "handicapped" and not "persons with disability" was used. The same lesson also included activity on p. 36 on the rights of persons with disability, taking into account the rights term for persons with disability.

6 Legal and Legislative Framework

International efforts calling for the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disability continued, and the issue of protecting these rights was subjected to deep institutional interventions; with the aim of ensuring the greatest possible degree of protection, and eradicating all forms of violations and negative practices that affect the rights of persons with disability. Where 1981 was considered the International Year of Persons with Disability, and the decade from 1982 - 1992 was called the International Decade of Persons with Disability, and the United Nations General Assembly declared in 2003 that December 3 of each year would be the anniversary of persons with disability in the world⁹.

International conventions emphasised the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disability, as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights emphasised the need for education that aims to achieve the full development of the human personality and to enhance respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It should also promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial or religious groups, and should support the United Nations peacekeeping activities¹⁰.

It must be emphasised that the issue of persons with disability has become a global human rights issue, and all international efforts stress the need to shift from a charity approach to a human rights approach in dealing with the rights of persons with disability, as estimates indicate more than 650

⁹ Dweikat, Fakhri and Abdel Rahman, Moroccan, Ibid.

¹⁰ According to the second paragraph of Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it was adopted and made public by a resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations 217 A (III) of December 10, 1948. The Declaration also affirmed that every human being is entitled to all the rights and freedoms mentioned in this Declaration, without discrimination of any kind, particularly on the grounds of race or colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, wealth, birth, or any other status.

million, or an estimated 10% of the population of the world's population are people with disability, and 80% of them live in developing countries¹¹.

The adoption by the United Nations of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability and its Optional Protocol in 2006 was the culmination of international efforts to ensure the greatest possible protection for persons with disability, and to emphasise the mandatory legal rules contained in the Convention. It included a treaty mechanism by submitting periodic reports from countries ratifying the convention reviewing the national reality and the ways taken to implement the rights guaranteed in the convention, which entered into force in 2008¹².

Jordan ratified the agreement after completing the constitutional procedures without any reservation. Accordingly, the Higher Council for the Rights of People with Disability was established under the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disability No. 31 of 2007 under the name “Higher Council for the Rights of People with Disability” as a public institution headed by His Highness Prince Raad bin Zaid. And under the presidency of His Highness Prince Mired bin Raad, the Rights of Persons with Disability Law No. 20 of 2017 was issued, according to which the name of the Council was amended to become the “Higher Council for the Rights of People with Disability”; to form the institutional and legal umbrella for persons with disability in the Kingdom, and thus create a society in which persons with disability enjoy a decent, sustainable life that allows them to achieve effective participation based on equity and equality¹³.

The Convention included many principles on which it is based, ensuring respect for the inherent dignity and autonomy of persons, including the freedom to make their own choices and independence, non-discrimination, ensuring the full and effective involvement and participation of persons with disability in society, respecting differences and accepting persons with disability as part of human diversity, human nature, equal opportunities, accessibility, equality between men and women, respect for the evolving capabilities of children with disability, and respect for their right to preserve their identity¹⁴.

The agreement also affirmed the right of persons with disability to inclusive education in all its stages, and that educational facilities and the educational process in all its components consider the rights of persons with disability and raise awareness of their rights to an educational system based on justice, equal opportunities, non-discrimination and exclusion¹⁵.

The law included a clear commitment to developing and reviewing educational curricula to ensure the inclusion of the rights of persons with disability in educational curricula, policies and programmes at all stages, by including the educational requirements for persons with disability in public policies, strategies, plans and educational programmes, in order to achieve their full

¹¹ .Guide to Monitoring the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability, United Nations Publications, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Vocational Training Series No. 17, for the year 2009, published on the link: <http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/arabic/TR-OHCHR3.html>

¹² Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (General Assembly Resolution A/RES/61/106) is an international human rights treaty, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 13, 2006, opened for signature on March 30, 2007, and entered into force on May 3 May 2008 after ratification by the twentieth party state..

¹³ .The website of the Supreme Council for the Rights of People with Disability at the link: <http://hcd.gov.jo/>

¹⁴According to the text of Article 3 of the Convention on Persons with Disability.

¹⁵ According to Article 24 of the Convention on Persons with Disability.

enjoyment of their right to education and access to all programmes and services and educational facilities and institutions. Also, the following necessity was explicitly mentioned: “Reviewing the curricula and including topics that define the rights of persons with disability and promote their acceptance as part of the nature of human diversity.”¹⁶

Accordingly, among the duties of national institutions is to seek to spread awareness and education of the rights of persons with disability among all segments of the local community, and this needs clear national plans, policies and programmes that include lessons, curricula and targeted activities in order to raise awareness of the rights of persons with disability and to ensure avoiding any shortcomings, violations, or societal cultural contexts that lead to the violation of the rights of persons with disability.

7 Recommendations

1. **Develop a comprehensive strategy** for the process of developing and improving curricula. This requires the formation of a specialised council for curricula in a participatory and cooperative manner between the Higher Council for the Rights of People with Disability and the Ministry of Education.
2. Studying the current human rights status of persons with disability in the light of the set strategy, in order to determine the amount of work required to carry out the development.
3. In light of the strategy, plans must be drawn up for development and improvement. Each plan would seek to achieve one of the desired goals, and the plans must be flexible and subject to improvement.
4. The curricula development process should be carried out in a holistic manner, including the content of lessons, forms, activities and questions.
5. The curricula development process to be based on a scientific and comprehensive study of students with disability, the environment and society in order to identify the needs of students with disability to ensure their increased adaptation and integration with the school environment, and to look at the issues of persons with disability from a human rights perspective, and to adopt the principle of participation and equal opportunities.
6. The curriculum development process must be an ongoing process, and a trial period must be established, with the aim of further modification, development and construction.
7. Presenting the issues of persons with disability in a sequential and logical manner at each school stage, with the necessity of representing all categories of persons with disability in the educational curriculum.
8. Unifying the style and methodology of presenting the rights of persons with disability and unifying the presentation of the concept based on the human rights term “persons with disability”.

¹⁶ According to the text of Article 18 of the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disability.



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