

# Challenges Faced by Administrators in the Implementation of Inclusive Education in Selected Primary Schools in Kitwe District

Fred Chibwe and Dr. Rosemary Muma Mulenga (PhD)

*Kwame Nkrumah University, Zambia*

**Abstract:** The purpose of the study was to investigate the challenges faced by administrators in the implementation of inclusive education in selected primary schools in Kitwe district. In this study, the researcher used a mixed method research design which involved the collection and mixing of both quantitative and qualitative data. Semi-structured questionnaire were used to collect data. This study revealed that, teachers are not properly trained and consequently experience serious challenges when teaching learners with special needs in an inclusive classroom. Secondly, that inclusive education is not properly implemented because the results show that most school buildings do not accommodate children with physical disabilities. The recommendation made in this study was that Head teachers need to be trained with regard to special education in order for them to properly implement inclusive education.

**Keywords:** Special needs, Inclusive education, Effective implementation, Education policy, Physical disabilities

## I. INTRODUCTION

The right to receive an education exists for children and youth in many countries across the world; this right is affirmed in the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) position statement, originating in 1948 and updated in 2015. From Canada, to Colombia, Comoros to Croatia, children have the opportunity to receive a public education with their peers. Yet, millions of children are deprived of this right as a result of social, cultural, and economic factors (UNESCO, 2018).

One factor impacting equitable access to education is the presence of a disability. Children and youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities are often systematically excluded from schools altogether, and general education classrooms in particular (Aruna, 2016; Peters, 2003). A 2018 World Bank World Development report indicates, “even in countries with high overall primary school enrollments, children with disabilities are still significantly less likely to attend school” (p. 63). Children and youth with disabilities are much less likely to attend school than children without disabilities, particularly at higher grade levels (Kuper et al., 2014).

Administrators as leaders need clear knowledge, skills and direction in leading an organization including an inclusive education program in an administered school. The Head

Teacher is in charge of curriculum and instruction (Hoyle, 2006, pg 14-22). In pupil personnel management, the head teacher is in charge of admission and attendance services, organizing classes, maintaining pupils’ records, reporting pupils’ progress, guidance and counseling, maintaining pupils’ discipline and supervising pupils’ activities among other duties. The Head Teacher has the role of overseeing the operation and maintenance of facilities, providing supporting services and materials. The school head teacher must ensure that all the physical facilities in the school are available and well maintained.

The Head is the mediator and co-coordinator of school community relationship. He/she has the responsibility of coordinating administrative tasks including those to do with inclusive education. Practicing inclusive schooling promotes access to education in schools by all learners regardless of their disabilities. Despite the efforts of the Ministry of Education through the Inclusive Schooling Programme (INSPRO) to make schools conducive for inclusive education, studies on inclusive education in Zambia by Ng’andu (2001:50-52) and Mandyata (2002: 20-21) indicate that most schools do not have facilities or resources conducive for inclusive education thereby excluding a lot of children with disabilities from accessing education in schools.

According to Ndhlovu (2008), in Zambia the situation shows that a large number of persons with disabilities are also excluded from schools. For instance, the Central Statistics Office (2003) reported that there were 256,690 persons with disabilities in Zambia. The challenge of inadequate teaching and learning resources in schools was noted by Mandyata (2002), who found out that, inadequate provision of specialized training and resources to equip teachers in handling children with special educational needs in ordinary classes was a hindrance to the implementation of inclusive education. Overcrowding of classes is what Mandyata (2002) also reported to have caused some teachers to refuse accepting children with special educational needs in their classes. Lack of space makes it unconducive for pupils with disabilities. The lack of a legal framework on inclusive education has also been identified as one of the barriers to inclusive education in Zambia. For instance, Kasonde-Ng’andu (2001) sighted lack of laws and policies to give direction to all educationists in the

education system in relation to inclusive education. These and other issues have been noted to pose a challenge to administrators in the implementation of inclusive education.

II. METHODOLOGY

Survey method of research was adopted for the study (Garrett and Woodworth, 1969).

Population and Sample for the Study

Awoniyi et al., (2011) defines population as a group of individuals, persons, objects or items from which samples were taken for measurement, for example, a population of pupils, teachers, parents, Guidance Teachers, and or Head Teachers. However, this research targets the head teachers, teachers, and pupils from government schools in Kitwe Districts. The sample size for this study consisted of 30 Teachers, 5 children with special learning needs, 5 children without special learning needs and 10 parents /guardians to the children giving us a total sample of fifty (50).

Research instruments

For the present study, the researcher used Questionnaires to collect information from teachers, head teachers and parents/guardians and an interview guide for the head teachers. Questionnaires were appropriate for this study because they enabled the researcher to collect a lot of information at once.

Data Analysis

Fisher et, al., (2009) defines data analysis as processing raw data into information for decision making. No decision can be made basing on raw data, raw data being the unprocessed information. Data collected was presented both quantitatively and qualitatively. However, the study used SPSS v23 as the tool for analysis, information from the questionnaires was coded and entered into the software.

III. FINDINGS

Challenges/issues concerning the implementation of inclusive education

The responses to the questions concerning the challenges in implementation of inclusive education by the Head teachers that was required for this study were displayed as follows:

Training in special education

The distribution of responses for the Head teachers when they were asked if they had received any training in special education were as presented below;

Table 1: Have you received any training in special education

Table 1: below shows the results of Head teachers who have/or not have received any training in special education:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Course work	2	66.7	66.7	66.7

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Workshop	1	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	3	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field work (2019)

Table 1 above shows that (2) 66.7% of the Head teachers received their training in special education through Course work (1) 33.3% stated that they had to attend Workshops to get training in special education. The findings indicated that the study was dominated by Head teachers who received their training in special education through Course work.

Number of physically challenged pupils

The distribution of responses when the Head teachers were asked the number of physically challenged children in their school is presented in Table 2

Table 2: Number of physically challenged children in your school

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	2	66.7	66.7	66.7
	3	1	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	3	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field work (2019)

Table 2 above shows that (2) 66.7% of the Head teachers stated that they had no physically challenged children in their schools and (1) 33.3% stated that they had three physically challenged children. The findings indicated that the majority of the schools did not have physically challenged children.

Funding for inclusive education

The distribution of responses when the Head teachers were asked if their schools receive any funding for the purpose of inclusive education training is presented in Table 3:

Table 3: Does your school receive enough funding for the purpose of inclusive education?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	3	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field work (2019)

Table 3 above shows that all the three Head teachers from the three schools under study stated that their schools do not receive any funding for the purposes of inclusive education.

Suitable infrastructure

The distribution of responses when the Head teachers were asked if their schools have suitable infrastructure for the physically challenged learners and is presented in Table 4:

Table 4: Is the school infrastructure suitable for the physically challenged learners?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	2	66.7	66.7	66.7
	No	1	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	3	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field work (2019)

Table 4 shows that (2) 66.7% agreed that their schools have suitable infrastructure for the physically challenged pupils and (1) 33.3% of the Head teachers disagreed that their school has infrastructure for the physically challenged pupils. The findings indicated that in this case the majority of the Head teachers had infrastructure for the physically challenged learners.

*Accommodate wheelchairs*

The distribution of responses when the Head teachers were asked if their schools are in a position to accommodate those that use wheelchairs and are presented in Table 5;

Table 5: Is your school in a position to accommodate those that use wheelchairs?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	2	66.7	66.7	66.7
	No	1	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	3	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field work (2019)

Table 5 above shows (2) 66.7% Head teachers agreed that their schools are in a position to accommodate those that use wheelchairs and (1) 33.3% disagreed that their schools are not in a position to accommodate those that use wheelchairs. The findings indicated that in this scenario the majority of schools were in a position to accommodate those that use wheelchairs.

*Trained manpower*

The distribution of responses when the Head teachers were asked if their schools receive any funding for the purpose of inclusive education training is presented in Table 6:

Table 6: Do you have enough trained manpower to teach in inclusive education classes?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	1	33.3	33.3	33.3
	No	2	66.7	66.7	100.0
	Total	3	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field work (2019)

Table 6 shows (1) 33.3% Head teachers agreed that their schools have enough trained manpower to teach in inclusive education and (2) 66.7% disagreed that their schools have enough manpower to teach in inclusive education classes. The findings indicated that in this scenario the majority of schools did not have enough trained manpower to teach in inclusive education.

*Sensitization on inclusive education*

The distribution of responses when the Head teachers were asked if they have done enough sensitization on inclusive education in their schools and is presented in Table 7:

Table 7: Have you done enough sensitization on inclusive education in your school?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	3	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Field work (2019)

Table 7 above shows all the Head teachers agreed that they have done enough sensitization on inclusive education in their schools. The findings indicated that in this scenario the majority of the head teachers have done enough sensitization on inclusive education in their schools.

*Qualifications of teachers at the schools where the study was undertaken*

The distribution of the qualifications of teachers at the schools where the study was undertaken was presented in Table 8:

Table 8: Qualifications of teachers

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Primary Teachers Certificate	5	16.7	16.7	16.7
	Primary Teachers Diploma	25	83.3	83.3	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field work (2019)

Table 8 above shows that five (5) teachers had primary teachers certificate as their qualifications and this represented sixteen point seven percent (16.7%) while those teachers who had primary teachers' diploma were twenty five (25) representing eighty three point three percent (83.3%) of the total respondents who took part in the study.

*Qualified teachers for disabled children*

The distribution of responses when the teachers were asked if there were qualified teachers to teach disabled learners the response was as presented below:

Table 9: Qualified to teach disabled children

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	None	12	40.0	40.0	40.0
	Still in training	18	60.0	60.0	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field work (2019)

Table 9 above shows that twelve (12) teachers said that none of the teachers were qualified to teach disabled children and this represented forty percent (40%) of the total numbers of teachers who took part in the study while eighteen (18) teachers were doing distance education with a specialty in special education and this group of teachers represented sixty percent (60%) of the numbers of teachers who took part in the study.

#### General challenges

The distribution of responses when the teachers were asked the challenges associated with education and is presented in Table 10:

Table 10: Teacher's response when asked to mention the challenges

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Distances	6	20.0	20.7	20.7
	Inadequate reading and learning materials	9	30.0	31.0	51.7
	Stigmatization	3	10.0	10.3	62.1
	Teachers lack of affection to physically challenged pupils	4	13.3	13.8	75.9
	Crowded classes	5	16.7	17.2	93.1
	Inability for parents to pay school fees	2	6.7	6.9	100.0
	Total	29	96.7	100.0	
Missing	99.00	1	3.3		
Total		30	100.0		

Source: Field work (2019)

Table 10 above shows that (6) 20% of the respondents stated 'distances', (9) 30% of the respondents stated 'Inadequate reading and learning materials', (3) 10% of the respondents stated 'Stigmatization', (4) 13.3% of the respondents stated 'Teachers lack of affection to physically challenged pupils', (5) 16.7% of the respondents stated 'Crowded classes', (2) 6.7% of the respondents stated 'Inability for parents to pay school fees' and (1) 3.3% did not indicate any answer. The findings indicated that majority of the teachers pointed out 'Inadequate reading and learning materials' as one of the challenges to inclusive education.

## IV. DISCUSSION

### *The challenges faced by administrators in implementing inclusive education in Kitwe District*

The study findings reveal that the responses from teachers and parents indicated that the challenges in the implementation of inclusive education policy are 'Lack of infrastructure', 'Lack of Financial resources' and 'Lack of teaching and learning materials' in the three schools under study in Kitwe district. The study considered more challenges than these that have been brought forward in the findings but as according to the responses from the participants under study these were the three main challenges that were thought to be of concern.

The findings of this study agree with the theoretical framework where according to this theory, educational systems should be designed with a view to removing barriers of any nature for example, barriers based on socio-economic factors, socio-cultural factors, geographical factors, school-based factors which prevent learners who have a learning disability to take advantage of their inborn talents since disability is not inability (Burbules et al., 1982).

These findings were similar to the views from the interview where one Head Teacher said;

*"Most of the times, it becomes difficult for us to implement inclusive education at our school because certain disabilities can only be managed by female teachers using their motherly instincts"*

It was also established that, the challenges faced by administrators in implementing inclusive education in Kitwe District included obstructions based on socio-economic factors, socio-cultural factors, geographical factors, school-based factors which prevent learners who have a learning disability to take advantage of their inborn talents since disability is not inability agreeing to the theoretical framework used in this study.

The head teachers here stressed that, their schools lack of access to sanitary and ablution facilities are another major barrier to inclusive education particularly in rural areas. Even facilities such as libraries are not easily accessible to many children with disabilities. These structural barriers complicated the process of implementing inclusive education and the situation is made worse where cultural barriers and negative attitudes toward disability still dominated the education environment and the findings here are in line with Mafa (2012) who found that inclusion classrooms are a wonderful concept but they require a lot of training, patience and compassion on the part of these teachers. He further stressed that, the case of inclusion challenges differs from one school to another as the schools lack basic facilities such as access to sanitary and ablution facilities that is another major barrier to inclusive education particularly in rural areas

Mafa (2012) also established that, fully inclusive classrooms have students across the educational and developmental

spectrum, ranging from typically developing students to severe and profoundly disabled students. For this reason, it becomes a challenge for the teacher to find enough of a balance to serve all the students. The top challenges teacher's faces in a special needs inclusive classroom are inter alia;

It was also found from this study that, the majority of schools did not have enough trained manpower to teach in inclusive education. It was also found that the study was dominated by teachers who stated they are not qualified to teach the physically disabled children. These findings are also consistent with Sibanda, (2018), who observed that Educational resources are scarce and those required in special educations are in some instances exceedingly rare. This scarcity at any given time is in part a function that the society is committed to provide in order to meet special educational needs. The fact remains that economic constrains persist and loom larger.

It is clear from these findings that the financial constrains the nature and the extent of educational provision in many ways have done what?. The results also agree with the work of Njeru and Orodho (2003), who in their research found out that in most schools many instructional materials are in a sorry state. Because most schools are faced with constrains in financing and supplying learning resources. The study established a number of practices that schools should perform and in line with the conceptual framework, it was found to be effective implementation of inclusive education in public schools , head teachers play a key role in facilitating issues concerning funding towards inclusive education, creating a friendly environment, staff training and policies on inclusive education.

It was also established that, one of the best ways of teachers to address the needs of students with learning disabilities is to adapt instruction and materials used although the way a textbook or worksheet looks may seem relatively inconsequential, these students face many unnecessary obstacles because of the way materials are presented in terms of both the content and format (Hoyle, 2006).

#### V. SUMMARY

From the findings of the study, on the challenges faced by Administrators in the Implementation of Inclusive Education in Selected Primary Schools in Kitwe District, the study established that, the responses from teachers and parents indicated that the challenges in the implementation of inclusive education policy are 'Lack of infrastructure', 'Lack of Financial resources' and 'Lack of teaching and learning materials' in the three schools under study in Kitwe district. The study established that, the teachers who were sampled in the schools with special units were trained but had inadequate experience and confidence to handle the pupils with special needs effectively. They therefore, were for the policy of the idea of frequent in-service training by the Government. The key barriers to effective implementation of Inclusive

education process in public primary schools are mainly; socio-cultural factors leading to stigmatization, and delayed disbursement of funds to the education office dealing with the inclusive education. In all the studied schools, the main respondents were female teachers and this depicts that most of the special needs education trained teachers were mainly females.

#### VI. CONCLUSIONS

This research investigated the challenges faced by administrators in the implementation of inclusive education in selected primary schools in Kitwe district. Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that, there are inclusive schools in Kitwe district and the education is not as effective as it should be due to the reasons as lack of proper funding, inclusive environment and the nature of pupils found in the selected primary schools in Kitwe District. From the study, it can be concluded that some of the challenges faced by administrators in the implementation of inclusive education are inter alia; inadequate knowledge, skills and training of teachers; limited resources in the form of human, financial, infrastructural and material resources. The top challenges teachers face in a special needs inclusive classroom are inter alia; lack of experience in an inclusion setting; lack of experience dealing with severe and profound disabilities, including all students in all activities; educating students with less severe disabilities and coordinating therapies.

#### VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the study undertaken, this study recommends the following:-

- i. As observed from the results in the study there need to train Head teachers and other school administrators in inclusive education, as they are the chief policy implementers within schools and thus if the training programs are added as part of the activities they have to participate in during the course of their employment. This would ensure that there is proper implementation of inclusive education in schools.
- ii. The school administration should make all the possible efforts to improve and modify the existing physical facilities to make sure they are barrier-free and therefore easily accessible to all learners and especially to the special needs pupils. Provision of play facilities and other items to enhance the special pupils learning.
- iii. Teacher training should be enhanced especially through in-service training of the classroom teacher and more colleges established for those willing to undertake training to offer quality teacher training.
- iv. Creation of mass awareness among all the stake holders on the plight of learners with special needs and especially establish collaboration between the teachers and parents.

- v. The Government should come up with feasible education policies for both the regular pupils and for those with learning difficulties. For the policies that are already in existence, there is the need to improve upon them bearing in mind the plight of SNE learners. Such policies should be implemented at the grass root levels where most of the special needs cases are found.

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#### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Mr. Fred Chibwe is a research scholar, student of Masters of Education Administration and Leadership from Kwame Nkrumah University. He is a School Head teacher of a Primary school in Mufulira, Zambia.

Dr. Rosemary Muma Mulenga (PhD) is a research scholar and Dean School of Education Kwame Nkrumah University with a rich academic background in Education Management and Administration. She is a PhD graduate from the University of Zambia.