

Exploration of Attitude of Mainstream Teachers in the Provision of Special Education: A Case Study of Chibote Girls Secondary School in Kitwe District, Zambia

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Abstract: In this study, we explored attitudes of mainstream teachers in the provision of special education at Chibote girls' special unit Kitwe district, Zambia. A qualitative research methodology with a case study design were applied to elicit evidence among teachers and learners with Hearing Impairments (HI). Emergent findings indicated that mainstream teachers at Chibote Girls secondary school have a negative attitude towards the provision of special education. Factors responsible for this negative attitude included lack adequate classroom space, lack of sign language interpreters, HI learners do not pass examinations among others. The research has also established that HI learners attending mainstream classes are free to interact with some mainstream teachers while they find it difficult to interact with other unfriendly teachers. Thus, it was recommended that District Education Board Secretary to ensure that all schools embrace mainstream education in the district, School administration to ensure that they provide spacious rooms to adequately cater for both normal and SEN learners in mainstream classes.

Key Words: Attitudes; Mainstream; Teachers; Special Education; Kitwe, Zambia

I. CONTEXT

This is an extract from the Dissertation of the Principal researcher on the Exploration of Attitude of Mainstream Teachers in the Provision of Special Education: A Case Study of Chibote Girls Secondary School in Kitwe District, Zambia. As a requirement for the award of a Master of Education Special Education at the University of Zambia, students are required to conduct a research study that culminates into a Dissertation (Simui, Kasonde-Ngandu, Cheyeka and Kakana, 2018). The University of Zambia is configured in a dual mode (regular and distance education modes), (Simui, Namangala, Tambulukani and Ndhlovu, 2018, Simui, Thompson, Mwewa, Mundende, Kakana, Chishiba and Namangala, 2017 and Mundende, Simui, Chishiba, Mwewa and Namangala, 2016).

Attitudes of mainstream teachers towards the provision of special education are mixed. Some have positive attitudes while others have negative attitudes UNESCO (2015). Schools in which teachers have positive attitudes towards the provision of Special Education depends greatly on their experiences with learners with Special Educational Needs

(SEN), availability of support, class size and workload. Not only that, teachers who are trained to teach learners with special needs or not work in cooperation in schools to make sure that Special Education service provision is practiced according to the best standards.

The attitudes of teachers towards the provision of special education vary and depend on several factors. However, with experience, the attitudes of mainstream teachers change for the better. This view has been supported by Christye (2007) who contends that a teacher who has taught in mainstream classes for years is more willing to accept children with disabilities now than they did several years ago. Perhaps this suggests that experience might have contributed towards the change of attitudes.

Larrive (2015) discovered five factors related to mainstream teachers' attitudes towards special education. The first is that the teacher's general philosophy about Special education and its impact on the effective and emotional development might affect the teacher. The second factor was the classroom behavior of the learners with disabilities. The third is the perception of teachers of their own ability to teach the disabled children, the fourth is the impact the disabled child has on the classroom management and the fifth on one is the impact integration has on the academic and social growth of the disabled child.

Mainstream teachers' attitudes have serious influence on the success of mainstreaming of learners with special needs. Research indicates that there is overwhelming evidence that teachers have negative attitudes towards the provision of education and teaching children with special educational needs. Furthermore, teachers do not fully agree and believe that Special education in mainstream can be provided. The findings of Kalabula (2017) in his study on the Mainstreaming of the visually impaired children into Zambian schools revealed that teachers have no training in dealing with the visually impaired children and teachers claimed that they have no resources and support to teach effectively.

Mainstream based education refers to an arrangement in which children with and without disabilities receive classroom

instructions within a regular class setting. It is used to apply to an education setting that is ordinary or usually familiar to most learners, general public and easily available to the general public Mandyata, (2015). Mainstreaming education refers to a type of education where children with learning disability, are mixed into class with children with and without disabilities to help them learn better and to become comfortable with mainstream practice (Kauffman & Crockett, 2013). The mainstream classroom may not be the better learning environment for every child with a disability. It is however, highly desirable for all who can benefit from their presence in mainstream classroom to learn from such a learning environment. It provides contact with age peers and prepares all learners for diversity of the world beyond the classroom. With regards to who should learn from a mainstream class set up, it is clear that children and adolescents with disabilities have the right to be part of regular classroom programme to have reasonable accommodations made for them and have effective individuals support measures.

Though the government of Zambia through the Ministry of General Education has continued to support and provide special education to SEN learners, teachers from the mainstream do not seem to support this move. It is for this reason that there is need to conduct a study so as to examine the Attitudes of Mainstream Teachers towards the provision of Special Education at Chibote girls secondary school.

Mainstreaming the children with special needs in a healthy way in regular classrooms requires a long and planned process for the staff and administrators of the school and the parents. For successful mainstreaming practices the circumstances should be examined in detail. To this effect, Blair (2015) posits that the sources and the content should be prepared in accordance with the children with special need. The main objective of the mainstreaming education is to educate the students with special needs in the least restricting environment (LRE) in line with their disability status. It is determined that neither before nor during the mainstreaming education given in Zambia, teachers, of these children are not subjected to any education program.

Just as normal individuals, the individuals with special needs also have the right to educational equality opportunity. These individuals can maintain their lives only if they become a part of the society. There two ways to realize the education for the individuals with special needs, the first of these is the self-contained education is realized by the special education staff and programs prepared according to the disability status of the children. However, combined education is the education given to the normal individuals and individuals with the special needs at the same time by regular education teachers Batu et. al.; (2015).

Positive attitudes in the provision of special education by mainstream teachers play an important role in the sense that teachers create an accommodative environment in their classes for the learners with disabilities to access the

curriculum together with normal learners (Muzata 2020). In this atmosphere, teachers understand inclusiveness by practicing inclusive skills such as accommodation, modification and adaptation as well as individualized teaching. Adaptation strategies are of significant importance because they bring diverse learning to the learners with disabilities in the main stream classes.

Research objectives

The following specific objectives guided this study:

- i. To explore ways in which attitudes are manifested among the mainstream teachers towards the provision of Special Education at Chibote Girls Secondary school in Kitwe district.
- ii. To describe factors influencing the attitudes of mainstream teachers towards provision of Special Education.
- iii. To explore the challenges faced by mainstream teachers on the provision of Special Education at Chibote Girls Secondary School in Kitwe district.

Theoretical framework

This study adopted a Hierarchical model of attitude coined by Ice Ajzen. An attitude is an individual's disposition to react with a certain degree of favourableness and unfavourableness to an object, behavior, person, institution or event or any other discriminable aspect of the individual's world Aijzen (1993). According to the model, attitudes develop reasonably from the belief of the people hold about the object of the attitude. Basing on the espousing of Hierarchical model of attitudes, this study had adopted this model to explore the influence of the attitudes of mainstream teachers towards the provision of Special Education at Chibote Girls secondary school.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Mainstream Education in Zambia

According to Ministry of Education Statistical Bulletin (2009) currently, the educational needs of students with disabilities are provided in four types of settings: special education schools where only students with disabilities are educated with no opportunities to interact with typically developing peers. Secondly, inclusive education is offered in special education units attached to general education schools where students with disabilities are educated separately but have opportunities to interact with peers during and after school. Inclusive education is also offered in special education classrooms within general education schools where students with disabilities are educated separately but have prospects to interact peers in school with and without disabilities. The fourth way in which inclusive education is offered in Zambia is through inclusive classrooms. This is where children with and without disabilities are educated in the same classrooms.

Despite mainstream education being offered in Zambia in the four ways elaborated by Ministry of Education Statistical Bulletin, (2009), Muwana (2009) contends that In Zambia,

inconsistencies in achieving inclusive education may exist because of the structure of teacher preparation programs, insufficient supports provided to facilitate the inclusion of children with disabilities, and teachers' attitudes toward students with disabilities.

Attitudes of Mainstream Teachers

An "attitude" according to Kochhar (2008), is a point of view, substantiated or not, true or false, which one holds towards a person, object, task or idea. Kochhar (2008) also sees an individual's attitude as a set of categories for evaluating or judging various social stimuli persons, objects, events. Psychologists define attitude as a learned tendency to evaluate things in a certain way. This can include evaluations of people, issues, objects, or events. Such evaluations are often positive or negative, but they can also be uncertain at times. For example, one might have mixed feelings about a particular person or issue (Kendra, 2011). Attitudes are also formed due the process of differentiation, thus from several attitudes are formed special attitudes. Attitudes are adopted also meaning that they are some form of social inheritance which an individual obtains for the first time by following the example of the family. So as he /she grows, the attitudes of his/her friends becomes his/her own (Kochhar, 2008)

Some teachers however, may have negative attitudes due to inadequate training Mullick, Deppeler and Sharma (2012). These teachers may perceive themselves as unprepared because they lack appropriate training in that area. So, teachers who may not have undertaken training in special education may exhibit negative attitudes towards learners with special education. It should also be stated that teachers' attitudes may be shaped by the type and degree of the disability of the student concerned (Tremblay and Montenegro 2007).

There are several components that makes up attitudes and these are: an emotional component: how the object, person, issue or event makes you feel, a Cognitive component: your thoughts and beliefs about the subject and a behavioural component: how the attitudes influences your behaviour. Attitudes can also be explicit and implicit. Explicit attitudes are these that we are consciously aware of and clearly influence our behaviour and beliefs. Implicit attitudes are unconscious but still have an effect on our beliefs and behaviours (Kochhar, 2008). Attitudes towards special education reflect beliefs about people with special needs and as such guide behaviour and acceptance towards these individuals (Kochhar, 2008). The attitude of teachers does not just affect the academic performance but also their social life and future potential. Attitudes are of prime concern as they can influence the success or failure of teaching learners with learning disabilities. This is supported by Mash and Wolfe (2002) who pointed out that teachers' attitudes can facilitate or

hinder the learning of children with special needs in ordinary classes.

A study by Frymier and Wanzer (2015) in Netherlands showed that instructors frequently reported feeling sorry for learners with disabilities and perceived them as not only more difficult to teach but also less intelligent, thus having low expectations towards these learners. This is similar to the study that was done by Muwana (2012) on the Zambian student teachers' attitudes towards including students with disabilities in general education classrooms, in Zambia. The findings showed that teachers looked at learners with special needs as being slow learners and time wasters especially those learners who had problems in mathematics. Other studies by Mash and Wolfe (2014) on the five attitudes of effective teachers in Netherlands have also shown negative attitudes by teachers and professors in their judgment that those with disabilities were lazy or not trying hard enough. The findings showed that some professors held the beliefs that students with special needs used learning disabilities as an excuse to get out of work.

Heiman (2015) and Kuester (2011) state that a teacher's level of education qualification did not significantly influence that teacher's attitudes the education of learners with disabilities in regular classes. Studies by Stoler (2018) indicate that teachers with high levels of education qualifications have less positive attitudes towards learners with special education than those who did not achieve master's degree status. Monsen and Frederickson (2003) also observes that low self-esteem was the most devastating effect of teachers' attitude towards these learners in school as it made learners with disabilities to feel like they were failures in class compared to the ordinary learners. Furthermore, the findings showed that these learners became destructive and ended up having behavioural problems.

Furthermore, Konza (2010) did a study in Australia on the Inclusion of students with special needs in new times. He found that teachers had few interactions with special needs students. There was poor teacher-pupil interaction and they received fewer reading turns. Similarly, Mash and Wolfe (2013) also found that the amount and quality of interaction in learning and the teacher- pupil relationship is very important as they affect the quality of learning. They observed that teachers frequently failed to give learners with special needs feedback in response to incorrect answers and were more likely to be criticized by their teachers compared to their classmates.

Anastasiou and Keller, (2011) notes that studies suggest, "a strong national education system may be a necessary but not automatically sufficient prerequisite for the implementation of effective policies towards students with disabilities". So a robust education system coupled with other enabling conditions should be in position to translate policy into action. Firstly, the government should show political or commitment to the implementation of the pronouncements or suggestions made in the 1996 Education policy on special education and

now supported by the 2011 Education Act. To do so, it would be necessary to do the following things: Translate policy pronouncements into law so that their concerns such as rights to education and privileges to education for children with disabilities, are preserved. There is a need to create a directorate of special education in the Ministry of General Education in order to improve quality of delivery of services and to have access to sufficient funding and provide timely implementation of decisions on special education delivery. Further, it is necessary that effort be made to promote and strengthen collaboration among other stakeholders in the MoGE, MoH and Community Development and Social Services in order to have a holistic approach to education provided to the disabled child, in order to establish and strengthen early childhood assessment and intervention services in schools in order to establish clearly real need so the children receive targeted learning interventions.

Muzata (2017) revealed that financial and human resources from local and abroad to supplement government efforts and support special education provision in Zambia. This may need establishment of strong links with institutions and organizations involved in special/inclusive education within and outside the country for expertise; financial, material and information exchange on special education provision. The current understanding of disability and special education provisions by the general public and stakeholders in Zambia is questionable and calls for a united and pragmatic effort by all stakeholders to explain issues surrounding education of the disabled (O'keefe, 2019). Echoing a UNESCO (2011) report, Anastasiou and Keller (2011) indicate that in Zambia, like in other sub-Saharan countries the inclusion of disabled children in any form of specialized schooling has been affected by the financial factor. Teaching expenses for these children are higher than for the less disadvantaged children due to the expense involved in mitigating the disadvantages they face (UNESCO 2014).

Lindsay (2007) conducted a study on the effectiveness of inclusive education in the US. She found that the educational success of learners with disabilities depended on many factors like the expertise and the willingness of the teacher to attend to the needs of these at-risk learners. She found that teachers varied in their attitudes towards the education of learners with disabilities and in their beliefs regarding these learners. These attitudes were very crucial as they did not just affect the learner's performance in class but also their life in general.

Hayes and Gunn (2015) have revealed that mainstream teachers do not hold positive attitudes towards Education of learners with special educational needs. The majority of mainstream teachers would prefer not to have to teach learners with special educational needs, and they associate the presence of such a learners in their class with trouble. In a comparative study conducted by Leyser and Keller (2014) on teachers' attitudes, it was found that teachers in most countries had a neutral attitude towards the provision of special Education, with the exception of teachers in the USA

and Germany who were mostly positive. In other studies, it has been reported that while teachers agree theoretically on the idea of Special Education, they hold a negative attitude towards its implementation.

Factors influencing attitudes of mainstream teachers on provision of Special Education

Dukmak (2013) indicated that teachers' years of experience is an important factor that affects teachers' attitudes toward the teaching of learners with disabilities. In essence, experience that is gained over time improves the skills, knowledge, and productivity of teachers. Al-Ahmadi (2009) found that teachers with more than five years teaching experience were more accepting of Special education than teachers with less teaching experience. Chitiyo, (2011) concluded that there was not relationship between the years of teaching experience and teachers toward the teaching of learners with disabilities. Based on the conflicting studies, it is not clear whether experience, as a single variable, can affect teachers' attitudes in the practice of special education.

Gender has been speculated to have an influence on the attitudes of mainstream teachers towards the practice of special Education. Nonetheless, Padeliadu and Lampropoulou (2015) suggested that the role of gender on teachers' attitudes towards education of learners with disabilities has yielded inconsistent outcomes. For instance, the study did by Alquraini (2012) revealed that male teachers had more positive attitudes of teaching learners with disabilities than female teachers. However, other studies (Abed & Alrawajfh (2017) found that female teachers had more positive attitudes towards inclusion than male teachers. Overall, these findings showed that female teachers had more positive attitudes toward Special Education than male teachers.

Abed and Alrawajfh (2017) examined that teachers with a high level of education commonly have more positive attitudes toward the teaching of the learners with disabilities. Nickels, (2010) found that the type of inclusion influence the attitudes of mainstream teachers in the provision of special education. Teachers preferred partial inclusion to full inclusion for learners with disabilities. The results indicated that teachers believed in the benefits of partial inclusion in general education settings. However, some teachers felt that not all students with disabilities needed to be accommodated, thus full inclusion can work for students with special needs. Teachers preferred partial inclusion to full inclusion.

Al-Zyoudi (2006) found that teachers' attitudes might be influenced by several factors such as the severity of the disabilities, teaching experience, level of education and gender. Ryan (2011) revealed that the severity of a disability could affect mainstream stream teachers' attitudes towards the teaching of learners with disabilities in public schools. Teachers were found to be more willing to teach learners with mild disabilities than those with severe disabilities. In addition, teachers had more positive attitudes towards the teaching of learners with physical or cognitive disabilities

than those who have severe disabilities. Teachers also reported that the severity of disabilities could determine their success while being included in the general education classroom.

Challenges Faced by Mainstream Teachers in Provision of Special Education

There are numerous challenges faced by schools; teachers; parents and educational administrators in providing education to children with disabilities under the 1996 education policy. Unclear Education policy (1996) and inconsistency with Education Act of 2011 as well as Amendments of 2013, has made it difficult to provide meaningful education to children with special education.

Lack of coherent communication among teachers, parents and professionals on special needs education provisions, may have led to the current state of affairs in special education practice (Kelly, 1998). Parents, educators and relevant professionals are not able to work together in working towards improved special education practice in Zambia. Negative attitudes amongst special education teachers, pupils with and without disabilities; regular teachers; negative attitudes of children towards education have made implementation of special education difficulties (Mandyata, 2011; Mandyata and Kamukwamba, 2018; and Mwanangombe, *et al.*, 2020). Unwillingness of the school administration to support the education of the disabled in their schools has overtime contributed to the current weaknesses in current special education practices.

The study did by Mulunda (2017) revealed that Despite the government policy on the provision on special education, the results of the study indicated that there are a number of challenges to be worked on in these schools by the government, the parents and the main stream schools. One of the major challenges that came out in all the schools was lack of enough funding from the Government to support the Special Educational programs. This came to light when most head teachers revealed that there was lack and inconsistent funding in schools and this had created shortage of equipment needed to facilitate most of the activities such as teaching and learning activities. The study also revealed that funding main schools are getting from the government is not enough to cater for all the necessary activities done under Special Education programs. The other problem is that the same inadequate funding is not given consistent.

The findings of the study done by Kilbride and Kilbride (2013) revealed that financial constraints can lead to ineffective provision of Education to the learners with disabilities in mainstream schools. He further noted that to run this education adequate funds are needed to procure items needed and to maintain the environment safe for the children learners with disabilities. In addition, Alabi and Lijaiya (2014) also noted that in mainstream schools, adequate funding needs to be provided for the provision of many resources and activities which include stimulating materials for teaching and

learning, training and re-training of mainstream teachers, sensitization of programs through regular workshops, monitoring, feeding, immunization, supervision and inspection among others. This indicates that the importance of funding to successful provision of special education cannot be overemphasized.

Moberg and Kasonde- Ng'andu (2001) reported that 40% of school children with disabilities in Western and North-Western provinces of Zambia dropped out of school system because they could not afford transport to school, food and uniforms. Children that come very late to school miss a lot, as their teachers cannot manage to be repeating the lessons. School transport also lessens fatigue of walking in children and this makes them concentrate in their lessons.

In a study conducted by Aldzi (2014) it was revealed that lack of specialized teachers to facilitate the teaching and learning in mainstream is another challenge. Ten out of the twelve teachers seen were diploma holders with special education as just a college component of the courses studied. None of the teachers were fully trained in special education. It was discovered that some teachers were not qualified to handle children with special education needs (CSEN) and were facing a lot of challenges in terms of assessment and teaching CSEN. The study findings revealed that most of the teachers lacked special education knowledge because they were not trained in it as a full course in their respective teacher training colleges hence the poor management.

Angrist and Lavy (2011) revealed that poor training in special education obtained from various colleges was found to be among the challenges that affect the smooth running practicing of Special Education. Adequate and proper training received by teachers lead to a reduction in their pupils' test scores. Lack of proper special education training is reflected in the failure by teachers to handle both CSEN and the so called normal children in the same mainstream classroom. Education International (2010) further reported that low numbers of qualified teaching staff is a challenge in most developing countries and that it has negatively affected the provision of Special Education. This challenge affects the performance of CSEN who needs special attention from their respective teacher.

Inadequate teaching and learning materials such as textbooks, crayons, toys, building blocks to mention just a few. This implies that the inadequacy of these materials in mainstream schools made it hard for CSEN attach meaning to learning. CSEN learn well when they have their own books and even toys for play. Taneja (2015) asserts that, while in infancy, Froebel's theory emphasizes the sensory development in childhood, his emphasis is on play. Despite efforts by the Ministry of General Education to introduce inclusive education in Zambia, infrastructure is still a big challenge in almost all the schools, as it was not fully modified to accommodate all the learners. Furthermore, some homes of CSEN are hampered by poverty and unemployment. This is seen and considered to be a challenge because the parents lack

resources to provide food for their children on daily basis such financial problems at times makes it difficult for their CSEN to attend lessons. Despite some challenges has been come out by various scholars in the relevant literature, they haven't mentioned all the challenges mainstream teachers are faced in the provision of special education in Special Units.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted using a case of study research design under qualitative methodology. A case study enables a research to closely examine the data within a specific context. In this study, the researcher used interview guide and focus group to explore perceptions, attitudes, feelings and ideas of mainstream teachers in the provision of special education in Special Education at Chibote Girls Secondary school.

Target population

The target population in this study consisted of ten participants comprising of five selected mainstream teachers and five HI selected pupils at Chibote Girls in Kitwe.

Sampling procedure

This study used purposive sampling method because it is based on the judgement of the researcher regarding the characteristics of a representative sample. This is in view of the fact that in the purposive sampling, a researcher uses his or her own judgement or intelligence to handpick the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their specialty. In this respect, purposive sampling was used for the study because the researcher needed a sample that was rich with information pertaining to mainstream teacher's attitudes in the provision of special education at Chibote Girls in Kitwe District. When selecting the sample of this study, the researcher targeted teachers in mainstream classes because they are the ones who are in direct contact with the learners hence they were valuable in providing concrete and valid data to come up with the desired results.

Data Collection Procedure

Interview guide and focus group discussions were used to collect data for this study. The Data was recorded by the researcher in many forms such as audio recordings, note taking and video shoots. The researcher started by giving guidelines the focus group discussion and then recorded data by audio recording and note taking for the reliability of data. The researcher ensured that all group members equally contributed to the discussion and avoided one respondent being dominant over others. Further, the researcher created an environment of frank and open communication with respondents by ensuring that all the respondents were relaxed and free from any form of intimidation. During the focus group discussion, all the respondents were gathered in the same room on a mutually agreed upon date to avoid holding separate focus groups attended by different group members and consequently collecting distorted data. The researcher avoided forcing her ideas or views on to the respondents by desisting from giving leading comments. The researcher also

sought permission to from the group members to make an audio recording.

Data Analysis Method

In this study, data was qualitatively analysed thematically using tables and later interpreted as themes emerged.

IV. FINDINGS

When analysing data generated from this study, findings of the study reviewed that mainstream teachers at Chibote Girls Secondary School have negative attitudes towards the provision of special education. The following were the major emerging themes: HI learners don't pass examinations, mainstream teachers' pay less attention to us HI learners, Classroom space is in adequate for SEN learners to effectively learn, teaching learning aids do not meet learning needs of HI learners.

HI learners don't pass examinations

One emerging theme with regard to challenges faced by mainstream teachers in providing special education was that of HI learners failing examinations. This is largely attributed to HI learners failing to concentrate in class. This finding very well suits the research findings of Bekirogullari, Soy Turk and Gulsen (2010) about the Attitudes of Special Education Teachers and Mainstreaming Education Teachers Working in Cyprus and Special Education Teachers Working in the USA towards Mainstreaming Education. In this study, it was established that 31, 58% of female and 33, 33% of male mainstreaming education teachers said the disabled children have difficulty concentrating. Due to these reasons, mainstream teachers tend to be negative when it comes to the provision of special education. This is exemplified by the views of the following participants.

The views of TR2 concerning high failure rate among deaf learners were as follows

The purpose of combining the HI learners with the normal hearing is to help them improve their academic performance as well as socialisation but it is not encouraging to see that all the HI learners fail the examinations despite being taught the same content in the same class with the normal hearing learners (teacher 2, 26/09/21).

Another teacher (TR3) shared the same challenge by stating the following.

As a teacher, I have a challenge about the high failure rate among the HI learners. No matter how much effort you may put in to help this group of learners, they still fail the examinations. This is very discouraging (teacher 3, 25/09/21).

Classroom space is inadequate for SEN learners to effectively learn

This research has established that one of the factors that make mainstream teachers have negative attitude towards special education provision is that of inadequate classrooms. Finding show that classrooms are too small such that HI learners are disadvantaged greatly. This finding is similar to the one that was made by Mallick and Sheesh (2013) that the school environments are inaccessible by learners with special education needs. Their research established that most classroom doors are not large enough for wheelchairs to pass through. They further add that a lack of classroom adaptations hinders the movement of children having special physical needs, including the way that furniture is arranged in the classrooms. TR3 brought up this issue in the following manner.

Most classrooms that we have in school are small such that they do not have adequate space for teachers to effectively teach 'normal' and SEN learners in the same class. This is in view of the fact that SEN learners need a lot of space for them to learn properly. The current rooms are too small such that desks are so closely spaced for teachers to move around or even for a drama to be conducted where necessary (teacher 3, 26/09/21).

Mainstream teachers paying less attention to HI learners in mainstream classes

Another emerging theme was that of mainstream teachers paying less attention to HI learners in mainstream classes. These research results are correlating with the research findings of other scholars and researchers. This relates very well with the findings of Ross-Hill (2009) who indicates that traditionally, regular education teachers have been apprehensive towards mainstreaming practices, either because of their inability to accommodate children with special needs in their classrooms, because they feel inadequate, or because they simply do not favour inclusive practices in general. In a research that was conducted by Mallick and Sheesh (2013) proves this point when a parent disclosed that some teachers are too selective in choosing children to be in their class activities.

Teaching learning aids do not meet learning needs of HI learners

The other theme that emerged from the findings was that mainstream teachers have the challenge of teaching materials. The research has established that teaching materials currently in use in school do not supporting the learning of HI learners. This was expressed by TR4.

Teaching and learning materials do not adequately meet the needs owing to the fact that the teaching learning materials we have in school were specifically designed for the normal learners and not or persons with disabilities. To this effect, using such teaching aids in a mainstream class is just mere academic exercise which in the end does not yield any positive results for the HI learners (teacher 4, 26/09/21).

The other challenge that teachers at Chibote Girls Secondary School is that of inadequate classes rooms. This line of thought was shared by TR1 who indicated the following

The classrooms that we have in school are not suitable for mainstream education. There is no adequate space to move about or even do a role play for the benefit of the HI learners. If mainstream education is to be achieved, classrooms in school need to be modified so that HI learners can also benefit academically.

This finding is similar to the one that was made by study Mullick et al. (2012). In their research, they found that there was no funding for assistive devices or additional care for CSN and a general shortage of learning-teaching materials in schools. Negative attitudes to ICTs for teaching-learning purposes could be symptomatic to digital immigrants syndrome (Muleya, et al., 2019). Such a state of affairs could be a receipt for poor quality education as well as exclusive education (Simwatachela, et al., 2020; Eliadou, et al., 2007).

V. CONCLUSION

This research report aimed at exploring the attitudes of mainstream teachers in the provision of special education at Chibote Girls Secondary School in Kitwe District of Zambia. The objectives of the research were to explore the attitudes of mainstream teachers towards the provision of Special Education at Chibote Girls Secondary School, to describe factors influencing the attitudes of mainstream teachers towards provision of Special Education and to explore the challenges faced by mainstream teachers in the provision of Special Education at Chibote Girls.

This research was a case study whose data was collected using an interview guide and focus group collected data was analysed qualitatively. The research finding of this research were that mainstream teachers have a negative attitude towards the provision of special education. The factors that affect teachers' attitudes at Chibote girls include HI learners failing examinations every time, lack of sign language interpreters, prejudice about HI learners. This paper has also established that mainstream teachers face challenges in providing special education in mainstream classes such as lack of adequate classroom space, lack of skills in handling mainstream classes. From the data that has been collected, the generalization which has been made is that mainstream education teachers have a negative attitude towards the provision of special education.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper recommends the following action to be taken:

- i. DEBS should ensure that all schools embrace mainstream education in the district
- ii. DEBS should ensure that in every zone of the district there is a school to provide mainstream education to help SEN learners spend a lot on transport going to specific schools offering mainstream education in far off places.

- iii. Government to ensure that schools offering mainstream education have resource rooms where SEN learners should go to at specified times to supplement on what they have learnt in class with mainstream teachers.
- iv. Government to provide sign language interpreters if possible in all school but much attention to be given to special school and mainstream schools
- v. Training of mainstream teachers about teaching children with HI learners through seminars, Continuous Professional Development.
- vi. Modification of classrooms to meet the needs of both normal speaking and HI learners.

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