

The provision of specialized materials and resources in schools for the implementation of inclusive education: a case of selected schools in Livingstone District of Southern Province of Zambia

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed at investigating the availability of specialized resources to be used by learners with disabilities for the purpose of inclusive implementation in schools. The study was guided by the theory of John Rawls of 1971. The study employed a convergent mixed method research design. Purposive sampling was employed to officers from DEBS office and head teachers while simple random probability sampling technique was used to sample teachers. Data collection was based on the questionnaires, interview guide and observation schedule. The results from the findings revealed that there were inadequate resources and learning materials in schools in Livingstone. The study revealed that inclusive schooling policy in Livingstone District was not effectively implemented by schools as it did not meet the needs of learners with special education needs adequately.. Most teachers do not have basic skills and knowledge to teach in an inclusive class room. It was also found that learners with special education needs received very little support from school management. The study recommends that adequate resources and learning materials should be provided by government to ensure effective implementation of inclusive education for all learners in schools. Deploy adequate qualified teachers to handle inclusive education if quality is to be enhanced.

Keywords: Public schools, inclusive education, and learning materials, special education and disability

INTRODUCTION

There is a paradigm shift from exclusive schools to a more inclusive schooling system globally in the last few years (UNESCO, 2015). This is the reason why most countries and states have assented to inclusive education. In practical terms, establishing more segregated schools is not realistic for most countries in the world. It is also undesirable, from an educational viewpoint. The UNESCO (1994), have pointed out that

all children have equal rights to quality educational opportunities and maintained that inclusion is the preferred approach to providing schooling for learners with special needs. Ainsow (2010) revealed that most African governments subscribed to commit to inclusive education. Most western countries have advanced the implementation of inclusive education while most African countries are still struggling and Zambia is not an exception. Ndeezi (2000) observed that, the issue of special educational needs has remained rhetoric among most African states as they formulate policies in line with

the United Nations Sustainable goal on inclusive quality and equitable education provision.

Therefore, the unsuccessful progression to full inclusion in many African countries has caused demand for a more practical approach towards inclusive education. Eklinth and Balescut (2006) study revealed that children with disabilities perform better in inclusive settings. In fact, inclusive education entails 'increasing student participation in all curricular activities without exclusion and segregation. This is also the only realistic opportunity they will have to receive education in an inclusive setting. UNESCO (2004) has acknowledged Zambia's efforts to incorporate children with disabilities in schools. The Education For All campaign by the United Nation noted the disparities that exist between children with disabilities and those without disabilities on the access to education and participation of all children in the education curricular activities. This could be as a result of societal stereotypes and cultural norms within society.

Limited access to quality inclusive education and training, reduces their opportunities to access the employment market is the root cause of poverty among most disadvantaged homes. Actually, poverty among the disabled is closely linked to exclusion and marginalization in the school system and society. Thus, exclusion from quality inclusive education leads to exclusion from labor markets and this in turn leads to greater poverty and dependency on others for income and support.

In fact, access to education is supported by international legal documents such as the 1990 Education for All and also the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities 2006.

Therefore, the Zambian government in response to the United Nations 2030 agenda on sustainable development goals (SDGs)

campaigns appears to be working towards increased access for all children in primary schools. Some of the policy measures adopted by the government include; the scrapping off of examination fees at grade seven levels, re-introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE), the re-entry policy on female pupils who might have fallen pregnant during their course of study. Moreover the New dawn government also recognizes that all Zambian children including Children with Disabilities (CWD) have a right to a free, compulsory, quality education. The government recognizes the paramount responsibility to provide this education, in collaboration with parents, communities and other cooperating partners to provide quality education to all children. However, the widely accepted notion is that conditions required to allow for successful inclusion are those that contribute to overall school improvement and high levels of achievement for all children. Despite the formulation of sound inclusive policies by the Ministry of Education in Zambia, it seems that there are still some implementation problems in some schools of Livingstone district of Southern Province.

The Zambian government has been influenced by the strong stance of the international organizations on inclusive education, particularly the Jomtein Conference on Education for All and the Samalanca World Conference on Special Needs Education Statement. As a follow up of this noble stance, the government of the republic of Zambia through the ministry of education has promised to promote inclusive education by integrating children with mild to moderate learning disabilities in the mainstream schools (MoE, 1996). Despite both the stance and commitment by the international community and the Zambian government respectively to provide education opportunities of particularly good quality to all Learners with SENs through the provision of inclusive education, the implementation part has however seemed to be on a slower side in schools (Mtonga and Simui,2012). This investigation was to ascertain the

availability of specialized equipment and material in schools meant for inclusive education in Livingstone District of Zambia. Scholars have defined inclusive education in different way. Rieser (2008) define inclusive education as the education meant for all learners. UNESCO (2010) defines inclusive education as the approach to teaching all children and increase access to education and participation of all learners. Inclusion therefore, emphasizes on equity in the education provision and social integration in school and communities for all children without discrimination and segregation based on disability or social status of a child. Inclusive education guidelines of 2000 had operational challenges, inaccessible infrastructure, inadequate equipment, training and support for teaching staff for an effective and efficient inclusive classroom environment furniture and other Learning and Teaching Aids (LTA) not relevant to learners with disabilities, no adequate assessment centers to diagnose and place learners appropriately (MoE, 2016). Lack of specialized materials such as infrastructure, ICT skilled human resource remains a challenge to developing countries and Zambia is not an exception (Muzata, 2021).

Major local and international legal documents are in supported of the move towards inclusive education. The UN's convention (1989) reinforced the human rights perspective and called for the child to be fully enabled through education to achieve fullest possible social development. In the same spirit to enhance the rights of children, the UN special session of General Assembly in (2000), invited young people from around the world in New York, who called for fundamental Educational Reforms that would guarantee equal opportunities and access to quality education that is free and compulsory. It is in this vain this that mainstreaming became an essential element in calling for equality of educational opportunities.

The Salamanca framework of action on Inclusive Education held in Spain in (1994) reinforced the human rights perspective in relation to education of children who are differently abled. It is in view of this trajectory that Zambia being part of the international community, has welcomed this change in the education system to restructure the education system and adopt inclusion. The changes made were to allow the participation of all learners, including those with special educational needs participate and achieve within appropriate and accommodated learning systems and structures. However, these structural changes only applied to new structures being built by the ministry to the already existing structures in most schools around the country there has been no rehabilitation to conform to the new emphasis on accessibility and accommodation to learning facilities.

Zambia domesticated these international Rights frameworks in documents such as Educational Act 23 of 2011, Education policy 1996, although the conceptualization of inclusive education in this policy still shows element of segregation where it states that conditions and yet inclusion should not have conditions attached as enshrined in the Disability Act of 2012, disabilities Act, the revised 6th development plan of 2011-2015 and the current 8th National Development Plan to embrace the emphasized quality and inclusive education to all as presented in the UN sustainable development goal number four (4) on education.

Guidelines

The Ministry of General Education (2016) came up with policy guidelines, practices and procedures on how inclusive education should be implemented in schools in Zambia. The guidelines spelt out the following services and facilities to be in place in schools; the institution shall have special rooms such as sick bay, multipurpose gymnasium, resource room, assessment and observation room and mult-sensory room. An inclusive Education institution should have a

special education trained person, it should have a qualified special teacher and there shall be a Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO). The environment of education institutions should have a well outlined required condition prescribed to meet the learning needs of all learners. Teaching and learning materials should be provided to learners who might need specialized assistive materials and devices to aid learning. The guidelines resonate well with the provisions in the Education reform document of 1977, which primarily emphasized on the provision of services to learners with disabilities. This saw the graduation of 82 special education teachers from the Zambia Institute of Special Education (ZAMISE) (MoE, 1977). The revised Curriculum Framework (2013) spelt out the need for all teacher training institutions to provide specialized training in different categories of education in colleges of education and colleges will offer basic training in special education to students. Muzata (2021) argued that, one needs not to be an expert in order to teach an inclusive class. Mrs Hofmeyer sets a very good example to this effect. She was a medical doctor by profession and a wife to a missionary but passionately advanced the education of children with visual impairment in Eastern province at Magwero.

Statement of the problem

The international conventions on education such as the Salamanca framework of action 1994 and indeed our own Education Act of 2012 and the revised Curriculum Framework of 2013 have emphasized on the structural reform in the manner special education is provided in the country. This is to conform to the current trend in education provision anchored on quality provision of inclusive education to all learners. Zambia is implementing inclusive education as clearly outlined in the policy document of (1996). However, the availability of specialized materials and resources in schools for use by and teachers in Livingstone district is not certain and unclear despite governments

financial support to schools in form of grants. Therefore, this study was undertaken to establish whether schools are equipped with specialized materials and resources for use by learners with different educational needs for the purpose of effective implementation of inclusive education.

Objectives

1. To investigate the availability of specialized materials for use by learners with special education needs in inclusive classes
2. To establish challenges faced by teachers as they implement inclusive education
3. To ascertain the competences of teachers on the utilization of specialized gadgets and materials.

Questions

1. Do schools have the specialized materials and resources for use by children with disabilities?
2. What are the difficulties faced by teachers as they implement inclusive education in schools?
3. How competent are the teachers on the utilization of specialized materials to teach children with disabilities in inclusive classes?

Purpose of the Study

The study was aimed at finding out if schools in Livingstone District are equipped with specialized materials for use by children with disabilities, for the purpose of effectively implementing inclusive education. The study also wanted to find out the teachers competencies in the utilization of the specialized materials and also to establish some of the challenges they face.

Significance of the Study

The findings of the study might be of great significance to educationists, District Education Officers, School managers, teachers, standards officers and pupils with

and without disabilities in the education sector as it is expected to widen their understanding on the necessity of specialised learning materials for the implementation of inclusive education in schools. The results of the study have provided knowledge, experience and realities on how inclusive education is practiced in Livingstone. The findings shall further influence the review and development of plans and programmes pertaining to implementation of the national strategy on Inclusive Education in schools with the view to prepare quality facilities and learning materials to cater for the learning needs of Learners with disabilities in schools.

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on the Theory of Justice which has been pioneered by John Rawls in 1971. Rawls (1971) strongly argued that the concept of inclusion is an offshoot of the idea of a just and fair society. Rawls also had a belief that the notion of inclusive education evolves from human rights and social justice. This notion on inclusive education is also widely supported by international bodies.

Justice principles guide the distribution of facilities and learning materials in a given society in relation to goods available (Calabrese and Tan, 2020). Goods here are referred to learning materials that are distributed to learners. Learners then evaluate the 'fairness' of these provisions and as a result feel that they were justly or unjustly considered. The interconnection between social justice and teaching and learning materials in inclusion resonates well as both seek to ensure equity between learners of different abilities. Therefore, understanding social justice in inclusion is critical.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The United Nations agenda for 2030 on Sustainable Development (ASD) (2015) showed that there have been efforts

internationally to include all children in an inclusive education setting. Inclusive education is the key policy objective for education of all children with and without disabilities. UNESCO (2015) defined inclusive education as the way of 'increasing student participation in public schools and reducing their exclusion from, the cultures, curricula and communities of public schools. The Salamanca framework of action statement on Special Education (1994), adopted at the international conference in Spain, paved the way for inclusive education globally. The 2030 agenda for sustainable development (ASD) (2015) re emphasised the need for the provision of inclusive and equitable quality education at all levels of education. The inclusive education concept allows all children to access education that help them acquire the knowledge and skills needed to exploit opportunities and to participate fully in society. Member countries for 2030 ASD (2015) strive to provide children with disabilities with a nurturing environment for the full realization of their rights and capabilities through cohesive communities and families. Furthermore, the Universal Sustainable Development Goals (USDG) (2015) encouraged member countries to ensure that they support inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all by 2030 by making sure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes. In fact, the 2030 ASD (2015) recognizes the universal respect for human rights, justice, equality, non-discrimination, equitable, and socially inclusive world.

Despite commitments to inclusion at the international level, the situation for the vast majority of Zambian children with disabilities remains bleak. The three educational policies of Zambia make mention of SENs. However, the Third policy document, MoE (1996) reveals that the government will provide equal education to disabled children and that no forms of discrimination would be accepted

against such children. Indeed, this sets a tone for the realization of education for all children in Zambia. In fact, Mumba (1996) contended that the implementation of the education policy of inclusive education in rural schools of Zambia has tended to be a challenge.

Provision of Specialized Learning Materials in Schools and Challenges Faced by Teachers in the Implementation of Inclusive Education

Over time, there have been infrastructure problems and a shortage of permanent classrooms in schools, particularly in poor communities like rural schools for learners with SENs (UNESCO, 2015). Existing school infrastructure is generally in poor condition due to inadequate capital investment, poor construction standards and inadequate maintenance (Ainsow, 2010). In addition, most of the classrooms are not suitable to learners with SENs thereby denying them accessibility and equalization of opportunities in education provision and participation. This has made administrators and teachers to face difficulties to effectively implement inclusive education in most schools. Supporting the foregoing, Eleweke (2002) noted the inadequacy of relevant facilities and materials is a major obstacle to effective execution of inclusion faced by teachers.

The narrow entrances hinder student movements such as the Orthopedics. The teacher student ratio is another factor that hinders admission of students to schools. Over enrollment in schools negatively affects teachers to provide individualized attention especially to learners with SENs.

Furthermore, policy makers with little or not understand the concept of inclusive education seem to be a barrier to inclusive education implementation (Ogot, 2004). For example, lack of powerful policy to support the implementation of inclusive education programme in Kenya has been facing this problem in its education system. The policy

makers most at times play non-chalet attitudes to promote inclusive education. In fact, this has contributed to the slowing down of its implementation especially in most schools in developing countries and Zambia is no exception.

Teachers' Competencies to Teach Inclusive Classes

The study conducted by UNESCO (2005), revealed that the principals and teachers face great problems in the process of implementing inclusive education as some do not even understand the term "inclusive education but they implement it unknowingly when they admit learners with autism, partial blindness, physically impaired and intellectually impaired. Eleweke et al (2002) also stated that, administrators do not show an understanding of inclusive education and are uncertain of their roles, lack knowledge, have little or no concern of having special teachers. Further still, teachers have not been trained to handle inclusive classes (Ogot, 2004).

However, in Zambia the recent Education Bill (2011) stipulates that, the Minister shall ensure that educational institutions provide quality education in appropriately designed and well-resourced educational institutions, staffed by qualified and dedicated teachers. Furthermore, the 2030 ASD (2015) demands that by 2030 there must be substantially increase in the supply of qualified teachers of special education. Equally, ZECF (2012) suggests that teachers should have knowledge and skills to enable them identify, screen and assess pupils with SENs. With appropriate skills, they will be able to provide appropriate interventions to learners with SENs in learning institutions. The Zambian government through the Strategic Plan of MoE (2003 to 2007) promised that a number of inclusive schooling initiatives will be expanded including training of more teachers at ZAMISE, identification and assessment of SENs in pupils, and provision of specialist materials and equipment. Schools will be

given incentives in the form of additional grants and/or bursaries to enroll more children with disabilities from the local communities. Despite all these things put in place, a remarkable number of educators are still uncertain about inclusive education (ZECF: 2012).

Cohen, et al (2003) noted that, "if inclusive classrooms are to be successful, teachers must transform the traditional classroom arrangement or set up in order to conform to the inclusive standard, for the Learners with Special Education Needs (LSEN) to participate in the learning and teaching process". Ainsow (2010) insisted on "very good" inclusive teaching approaches, which will help every learner in the classroom to achieve the best of his or her ability. In their exploration of successful inclusive classroom, Cohen (2003) study solicited teachers perspectives on what they thought could be the ideal situation to enhance inclusivity in classes and teachers felt learners with disabilities could benefit from the classroom if two basic changes in classroom practice were made and these included modifying the curriculum and time to enhance relevance for each learner and modifying instructional techniques.

The modifications of instructional techniques are generally characterized as good teaching. For example, learners who are blind will make use of Braille machine and Braille paper to assist them during the learning and teaching process. However in Zambia, the new dawn government (UPND) through its 8th national development plan promised to provide appropriate support to institutions for the effective provision of quality education to all children under the theme "no one to be left behind". The Sixth National Development Plan (SNDP) (2011-2016) also indicated that it shall promote participation and improve facilities for LSEN and provide safe learning environment for all learners by re-introducing boarding facilities including weekly boarding facilities where needed. Therefore, UNESCO (2004) advises that when

planning a new building and in securing school facilities and equipment, the tendency should be making only minor changes from the arrangements of the past, on the assumption that the same equipment and instructional materials could serve equally well for the nurturance of all forms of abilities in all learners. The government stance on promoting inclusion in schools is very eminent on paper but the implementation and sustenance remains a challenge.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter is going to highlight on the plan on how this study was conducted in order to come up with authentic data that can be related to other provinces in Zambia. It is going to discuss the methodology, population, sampling procedure and sample size, data collection and analysis.

Methodology

Methodology can be defined as the study of research methods used in the study. This study employed convergent parallel research design methodology. The Convergent parallel research design is a form of mixed methods in which the researcher collects and analyses both qualitative and quantitative data and then relates them or interprets them to give a concrete understanding of the research problem..

Population

The population considered for this study was officers from the office of the District Education Board Secretary (DEBS), head teachers from the sampled schools, teachers teaching from grade one to six, Education Standards Officer for Special education (ESO) Special Education.

Sampling Procedure

Non-probability sampling procedures were employed to determine the study sample of 10 schools, 1 DEO's, 10 head teachers, 41 teachers, 1 ESO special education, making a total of 53 respondents. Purposive sampling was to come up with respondents. The

reason was to choose respondents with the characteristics and information that the researcher was looking for. Questionnaires were among other instruments used for data collection. Interview guides and observation guide. In order to obtain reliability for quantitative research instruments, Cronbach Alpha of 0.700 was calculated to justify reliability of data collected. Descriptive statistics with the aid of Excel and SPSS v25, were used to analyze quantitative data. Quantitative data was also coded and analyzed through frequencies and percentage scores for summarization and interpretation in relation to research questions. Qualitative data was analyzed by coding contents into themes, interpreting verbatims and presented in narrative form with emerging themes.

DISCUSSION

This research focused at finding out the availability of specialised learning materials and facilities for teachers to use in inclusive classrooms. Head teachers were provided with a check list containing some of the specialised materials necessary to facilitate learning of learners with special education needs. All the ten (10) head teachers affirmed that their schools did not have any of the stated materials and facilities. This finding resonates well with what Ndhlovu (2007) alludes to that despite the efforts to introduce inclusive education in Zambia, most schools lack resource to facilitate the learning of learners with special educational needs. Mtonga and Simui (2012) also noted that there is insufficiency of resources to facilitate quality provision of education to learners with disabilities. Learning environments are unbearable to most learners. On the provision of the specialised learning materials, the district Education Board Secretary (DEBS) confirmed that the DEBS office does not provide the specialised materials to schools but it is assumed that from the money schools receive, they should be able to purchase some of the necessary learning materials to facilitate learning of all

learners. Information to respond to this question was solicited from teachers, head teachers and District Education Officers. Table 1 shows the responses of head teachers and teachers on the availability of specialised materials for use by teachers and learners with special education needs (SEN) in schools.

Table 1: showing the responses on the availability of specialised materials in schools (53 respondents)

MATERIALS	NUMBER AVAILABLE
Perkins braille	0
Braille paper	0
Specialised classroom	0
Specialised teaching materials	0
Audiometer	0
Specialised sound proof room	0
Braille frame and stylus	0
Braille books	0
Customised computers for the VI	0

Source: Field data 2023 from the ten (10) sampled schools

The research findings are in consistent with what Chisangano (2018) study revealed that learners with disabilities are in inclusive settings, however despite inclusion some barriers to inclusion emerged. Most notable was that inclusion was narrowly understood as such, there is a discrepancy between policy and practice. The Ministry of education also discrepancies on the operational challenges to do with inclusive education in its infancy stage (Moe, 2016). Non availability of specialised materials for use by learners with disabilities is still a problem faced by most school and this negatively affects the provision of quality and equitable education in line with the United Nations agenda for 2030 on sustainable goal number 4 on education.

Table 2: Provision of Specialised Education Materials

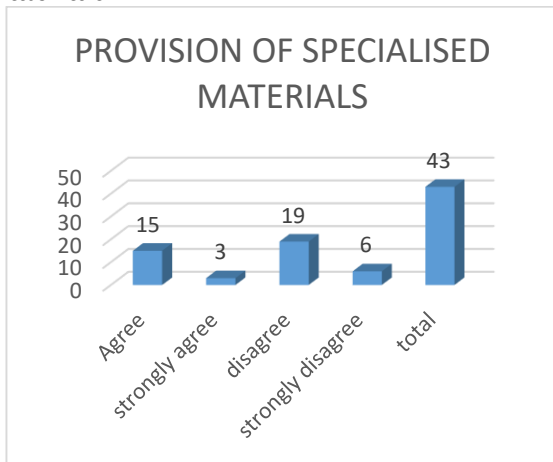


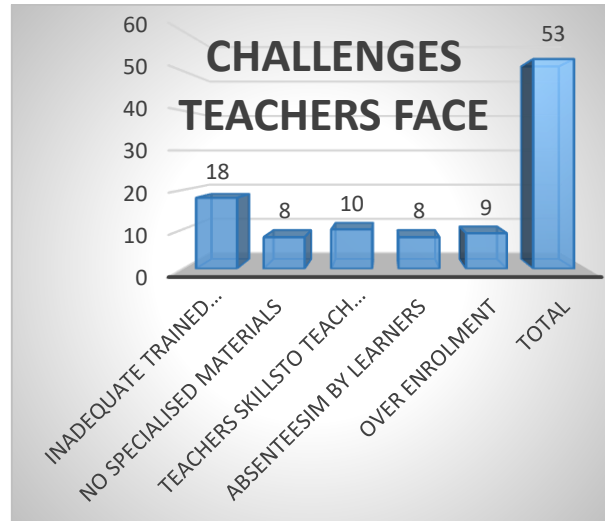
Table 2 shows that 36% of teachers disagreed that there are specialised materials in schools while 28% said the schools provide the specialised materials. Even if there is some inconsistency in the data however Table 1 still attests to the fact that there are no specialized materials in schools for use by SEN and also teachers. The triangulation of the data collection from interviews and the questionnaire provides in-depth information, which helps to come up with generalization of the findings and enhance reliability. This is what the Education Standards office special (ESO special said in an interview:

most schools do not have specialised materials and resources for use by learners with disabilities. Implementing inclusive education is still a problem in most schools as most teachers and communities need a lot of sensitization.

The discourse on inclusive education has remained problematic as it has different views regarding its precise thrust (Lawson etal 2006). This is evident from the responses in the questionnaire where most teachers acknowledged that they lacked knowledge

and skills in handling learners with disabilities in an inclusive class.

Table 3: Challenges Teachers Face as They Implement Inclusive Education



Source: Field data Kasebula Francis 2023

Table 3 shows the responses from teachers and also from the head teachers who were interviewed.19% of the respondents stated that lack of skills to teach inclusive classes more especially where there are learners with disabilities is the main challenge they face as they implement inclusive education.15% also acknowledged that lack of specialized teaching materials was another challenge to implement inclusive education effectively. Another 15% stated that absenteeism by the learners was also noted as one of the challenges as most learners lagged behind in their academic progression. Over enrolment at 17% was another impingement more especially with the government policy on free education, most classes are over enrolled causing serious shortages of space and other learning materials. These stated challenges were highlighted by teachers however they are in line with what most head teachers said during the interviews. One head teacher said;

... lack of specially trained teachers, inadequate learning material and non-availability of specialized materials to teach the learners with disabilities, for example here at my school we have learners with visual impairment and those with intellectual disabilities. Teachers face difficulties to teach effectively because of the inadequacy of specialized materials.

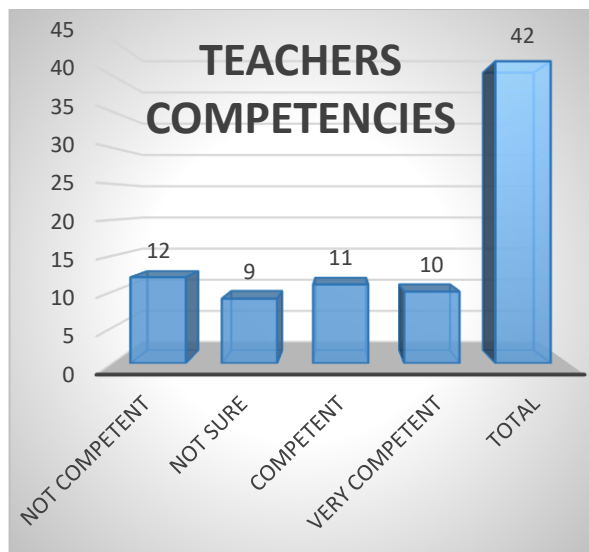
Lack of specialized training and lack of special materials for use by learners with disabilities were among the most notable factors causing challenges as teachers implement inclusive education in schools. Due to the stated challenges, Ainsow (2010) further states that the absence of a well-balanced learning environment makes it very difficult for learners to actualize their full potential as there is no equity in the educational provision. It is a well-known fact that there is an extent a teacher can go to adapt and accommodate the general curriculum to teach learners with disabilities. However, where there are no necessary materials to facilitate learning, it becomes practically difficult and hence learners with special educational needs (LSEN) are denied an opportunity to be taught at the same level with other learners without disabilities in class. UNESCO (2005) reported that most principals and teachers did not even understand the concept of inclusive education as there has been no capacity building on teachers on the policy of inclusive education. With reference to this statement on the challenges teachers face, this is what one head teacher said

Failure by teachers to identify special children and lack of experience handling learners with special educational needs (LSEN)

This knowledge gap has created a lot of difficulties to the implementation of inclusive education. Most learners with and without disabilities are not adequately attended to as required due to misconstrued inclusive

concepts by teachers. Mwamba (2017) argues that 'although Zambia has ratified some humanrights instruments and has policies and provisions in relation to persons with disabilities in place, there are challenges to implementation in terms of inadequate continuing professional development to in-service teachers in inclusive education pedagogy and misinterpretation of the concept of inclusive education'. Therefore, this study suggests that the people empowered to implement inclusion should be confident enough. Scholars have different thrust and assumptions on inclusive education and its implementation and this is where the problem emanates from. Zambia in particular is among the sub-Saharan countries working hard to actualize the affirmation of the international conventions on education such as the Salamanca framework of action and the UN agenda for 2030 and in particular SDG 4 on the provision of quality and equitable inclusive education for all by the year 2030. To actualize the full implementation is more of donor driven unlike government, therefore despite government coming up with the policy direction; provision of materials to implement the policy remains a challenge as revealed in this study.

Figure 4: Teacher's competencies to teach inclusive classes



Source: Field data Kasebula Francis 2023

Table 4 presents the teacher's competencies in the teaching of learners with special education needs. 23% of the respondents indicated that they were not competent in teaching learners with special education needs, 19% stated that they were competent while 21% indicated that they were very competent. 55% had no skills in braille and only 4% had skills in braille. There were no distinctive differences with the skills in sign language where only 13% had skills in sign language where as 66% had no knowledge of sign language. When it comes to the ability to assess learners for the purpose of identifying learners with specific learning disabilities, most teachers indicated lack of knowledge, only 26% were knowledgeable where as 47%. The researcher went further to try to find out if most of the respondents had undergone through inclusive training either in college or in-service trainings through Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and the following were the responses, 30% indicated that they have not under gone any inclusive education training, 17% indicated that they attended a one day workshop organized by an NGO within Livingstone (Community based rehabilitation), 6% stated that the only CPD they have had was about writing Schemes of work and 26% affirmed that they have had attended workshops on inclusive

education. The general overview depicted by the responses on how knowledgeable and competent the teachers were as regards to the teaching and use of some of the specialized materials indicates that most teachers have no or little knowledge in the teaching of learners with special educational needs in an inclusive class. This phenomenon explains the reason why most learners with special educational needs lag behind in terms of academic excellence as compared to the much able learners because most teachers do not have the skills to teach inclusive classes. The findings resonate well with what the UNESCO (2005) reported that most teachers do not even understand the concept of inclusive education. Teachers are the implementers of the policy and if they lack the skills and knowledge, how can the implementation be effective? Therefore it is of great importance that the Ministry of Education should embark on capacity building for teachers in order to inculcate knowledge and skills in the teaching of all learners in an inclusive set up.

This finding indicates that there is a shift of paradigm from partial integration to inclusive education as some of head teachers are playing their role to initiate the rehabilitation of schools' infrastructure. Construction of ramps in most points of access such as toilets, classes and other facilities could assist pupils with physical disabilities; this should be supported with the size of doors which are accessible for wheel chair to pass through. Environment is a barrier in attaining education goals this finding concurs with Kasebula (2021) study which reports that a least restrictive learning environment is crucial for learners to develop to their full academic, social, emotional and physical potentials. This is even more critical in an inclusive learning environment Table 4 presents the teacher's competencies in the teaching of learners with disabilities. 23% of respondents were not competent in teaching learners with disabilities, 19% stated that they were competent while 21% indicated that they were very competent. 55% had no

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This finding suggests that there is a move from partial integration to inclusive education. Some of head teachers are playing their role to initiate the rehabilitation of schools' infrastructure by building ramps in most points of access such as toilets, classes and other facilities. This could assist pupils with physical disabilities to have easy access to some facilities. Environment is another barrier to the attainment of educational goals, the finding concurs with Kasebula (2021) study which reports that a least restrictive learning setting is critical for learners to develop their full academic, social, emotional and physical potentials.

CONCLUSION

Based on the reveal of the findings and its analysis, it can be concluded that, there is inadequate facilities such as specialized sound proof rooms, resources such as customized computers for use by visually impaired learners for information and communication technology subjects (IT), specialized materials such as braille papers, writing frames and stylus, most teachers do not have skills and knowledge to teach learners with special educational needs (LSEN) and other learning materials for use by learners in inclusive schools in Livingstone district. The Inadequacy of teaching materials and teachers incompetence to teach LSEN, has significant effects on inclusive education provision by the year 2030.

Recommendation

With reference to the findings, analysis and discussion, we recommend that government through the Ministry of Education should provide much more resources for the procurement of adequate teaching and learning materials meant for learners with special education needs and their teachers. The Ministry of Education should also take a proactive strategy to ensure effective

implementation of the inclusive education policy. The government should also leverage on the collaboration cooperating partners to modify and build new infrastructures that is suitable for all learners.

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