

**AN ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS LEARNERS WITH
LEARNING DISABILITIES: A CASE OF NAMPUNDWE SECONDARY SCHOOL,
LUSAKA PROVINCE, ZAMBIA.**

BY

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**A dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia in Partial Fulfilment
of the Requirement for the award of the Degree of Master of Education in
Special Education.**

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DECLARATION

I, **Hamusonde Miyoba**, do hereby make solemn declaration that this dissertation is a representation of my own work and that it has not been submitted previously for a degree at this or any other University. All the other people's work I have consulted have been acknowledged.

Signature:

Date:

DEDICATION

To my beloved husband Matthew Ntabo, my lovely daughters Nkwendela, Chabota, Shumina my son and my late lovely daughter Mpande, it is sad that you left us so early. I will always love cherish and remember you till we meet again. Rest in eternal peace my baby. This work is also dedicated to my father Gaali Hamusonde, all my aunties and uncles. Thank you for believing in me and your encouraging words. Many thanks goes to my beloved husband for his prayers and continued support, this kept me going. Nkwendela and Chabota, you have been there for me, helping me in every way possible, I expect you to do better than me. I love you all.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This dissertation by **Hamusonde Miyoba** is approved as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education in Special Education by the University of Zambia.

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ACRONYMS

CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DEBS	District Education Board Secretary
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
LD	Learning Disabilities
MDGS	Millennium Development Goals
MESVTEE	Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education.
NISTCO	National In-service Teachers Training College
PEO	Provincial Education Officer
SANORD	Southern African-Nordic Centre
UN	United Nations
US	United States
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNZA	University of Zambia

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to establish the attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities at Nampundwe Secondary School.

A Case study design was deployed in which self-administered questionnaires, semi structured interview guides and observation checklists were used to collect data from a sample of 82 participants. The respondents consisted of 50 learners with learning disabilities, 16 regular teachers and 16 parents of learners with learning disabilities..

From the study findings, it was established that regular teachers had negative attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities. The effects of teachers' negative attitudes included; poor classroom participation/ performance, poor teacher - pupil relationship, low self-esteem, resentment and fear towards their teachers, teachers not seen as role models, and learners were rarely guided on career choice.

Among the interventions established were; teacher training in Special Education, administrative support, small class sizes, regular teachers working in collaboration with school counselors and also working in collaboration with parents of learners with learning disabilities. These interventions may help regular teachers in changing their attitudes towards these learners.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made; The Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education should include Special Education in the curriculum from grades 1-12. This will help to change the negative mindset of regular teachers, schools should also ensure that in every Continuous Professional Development (CPD) meetings and workshops, Special Education should be discussed intensively so as to help regular teachers to understand learners with learning disabilities.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Over view

This chapter is composed of ten components and these are; background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, study objectives, research questions, significance of the study, theoretical frame work, limitations and the definition of terms.

1.1 Background to the study

A person is said to have a learning disability (LD) when achievement in reading, mathematics or writing is substantially below what would be expected for the child's age, schooling and intellectual ability, (Mash and Wolfe, 2002). Persons with learning disabilities are often seen as less capable and unproductive people of society compared to the so called "normal" persons. The world today, however is struggling to ensure equity and success for all individuals with learning disabilities and other disabilities in school and at work. So many conferences have been held and laws passed to support the education of learners with disabilities, for example, the World conference on Education for All (EFA) of 1990, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of which Zambia is a party. In Zambia, we have legal documents such as the Persons with Disability Act of 2012 and the Education Act of 2011.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is the process by which professionals like teachers reflect upon their competencies, maintain them up to date and develop them further. The term was coined by Richard Gardner, who was in charge of professional development at York University in the mid 1970s. The term embraces the idea that individuals aim for

continuous improvement in their professional skills and knowledge beyond the basic training required to carry out the job. Its continuous because education never ceases regardless of age or seniority, professional because it is focused on a professional competence in a professional role. It is also concerned with development because its goal is to improve personal performance and enhance career progression. In teaching this used to be called “In Service Training” (INSET). Continuous professional development also involves all activities aimed at enhancing the knowledge and skills of teachers by means of orientation, training and support (Coetzer,2001). The meetings and workshops are aimed at improving the delivery of lessons by teachers. In CPD meetings and workshops, teachers share what they learnt during the training, new methods that come on board and share what they realized out of the meeting and workshops. It is in these CPD meetings and workshops that teachers share knowledge on how learners with learning disabilities and other disabilities can be helped so as to enhance their learning and improve their performance.

Despite the sensitization of regular teachers on learners with learning disabilities in Continuous Professional Development, (CPD) meetings and workshops in Austria, regular teachers still seem not to understand learners with learning disabilities (D’ Alonzo et al.,1996). The researcher wonders if the situation was the same in Zambia. The study therefore sought to establish the attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities at Nampundwe Secondary School. The main types of learning disabilities at this school are reading and mathematical disabilities.

A learning disability affects how individuals with average intelligence take in, retain or express information. Incoming or outgoing information can be scrambled as it passes through the senses and the brain. These learners have difficulties in collecting, organizing or acting on

verbal and non-verbal information. Unlike most physical disabilities, a learning disability is a hidden problem (Mash & Wolfe, 2002). Attitudes towards disabilities reflect beliefs about people with disabilities and as such guide behavior towards individuals with disabilities (Roberts & Lindsell, 1997). Despite this, regular teachers' still do not seem to understand learners with learning disabilities resulting into the need to establish the attitudes and effects of regular teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities.

The challenge of learning disabilities research in Zambia is finding a way to distinguish those children who have actual learning disability from those who never had an adequate chance to learn (SANORD, 2009). This makes it very difficult to know the prevalence of learning disabilities in Zambia. Learners with learning disabilities are usually found in regular classrooms, thus the need to examine the attitudes of regular teachers' attitudes towards these learners and how these attitudes affect their learning and life in general. The issue of attitude is very important because it plays a key role in achieving equality and success for learners with learning disabilities. This is so because attitudes translate into behavior towards individuals and groups in society which may have positive or negative consequences on them.

1.1.1 Beginning of the study of learning disabilities

The origins of learning disabilities begun with early attempts to match functioning within certain areas of the brain to human behavior. Early physicians noticed that patients with certain types of brain injury experienced specific types of behavioral problems. Most relevant to learning disabilities were patients with injuries to the left hemisphere of the brain, who in many cases experienced problems such as slowness, laborious speech and the inability to name objects or persons. In the late 1800s, a

more set of cases were identified in which persons' ability to speak and write remained intact, but their ability to comprehend spoken or written words was impaired. These conditions were termed as "word deafness" and "word blindness". These studies were done by a group of American pioneers including Samuel Orton, Grace Fernald, Marion Monroe and Samuel Kirk. Thus, between 1960 and 1975 the field of learning disabilities began to emerge as a discipline unto itself in the US (Kirk, 1975).

and the 1996 "Educating our Future", (Ndhlovu, 2010). It is in the "Educating our Future" policy that inclusion was introduced. The policy indorses integration of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in ordinary classes which is in line with the current view of inclusion. The document upholds the principle that every individual has an equal right to educational opportunities regardless of personal circumstances or any discriminatory characteristics (MOE, 1996).

1.1.2 Global and local attitudes towards individuals with disabilities

Attitudes towards disability have varied significantly from one community to another. As Barker et al (1953) observed an examination of attitudes towards people with disabilities across culture suggests that societal perceptions and treatment of persons with disabilities are neither homogeneous nor static.

Among the Greeks, Plato recommended that persons with disabilities be put away in some mysterious unknown places. Early Christian doctrine however introduced the view that disability is neither a disgrace nor a punishment for sin but on the contrary a means of purification and a way of grace (Baker et al., 1953).

During the 16th century, however, Christians such as Luther and John Calvin indicated that the mentally retarded or intellectually disabled and other persons with disabilities were possessed with evil spirits, thus these men and other religious leaders of the time often subjected persons with disabilities to mental and or physical pain as a means of exorcising the spirits (Lippman, 1972). Sarpong (1974) noted that some communities banished or ill-treated the blind and some completely rejected them, in some communities they were seen as outcasts while others accorded them special privileges and treated them as economic liabilities.

Among the Chagga in East Africa, the physically handicapped were perceived as pacifiers of the evil spirits, hence care was taken not to harm them. Thus among the citizens of Benin, constables were selected from those with physical handicaps. In some communities in Benin children born with anomalies were seen as protected by supernatural forces. As such they were accepted in the community because they were believed to bring good luck (Wright, 1960).

Wright (1960) observed that among the Ibo of Nigeria, treatment of persons with disabilities varied from pampering to total rejection. Among the Ashanti of Central Ghana, traditional beliefs precluded men with physical defects such as amputations from becoming chiefs. This is evident in the practice of destooling a chief if he acquires epilepsy (Sarpong, 1974). "Children with deviations were also rejected. For instance, an infant born with six fingers was killed upon birth" (Sarpong, 1974: 18). Severely retarded children were abandoned on river banks or near the sea so that such "animal like children" could return to what was believed to be their own kind (Wright, 1960).

Franzen (1990) observed that in some communities in Kenya and Zimbabwe, a child with a disability is a symbol of a curse befalling the whole family. Such a child is a “shame” to the whole family, hence their rejection by the family or the community. Children treated with such beliefs and attitudes could hardly develop to their full potential. They got less attention, less stimulation, less upbringing and sometimes less nourishment than other children (Franzen, 1990).

Lippman (1972) sees societal attitudes and treatment of persons with disabilities within cross-cultural settings as a kaleidoscope of varying hues that reflect tolerance, hatred, love, fear, awe, reverence and revulsion. The most consistent feature in the treatment of persons with disabilities in most societies is the fact that they are categorized as “deviants” rather than “immates” by the society (Lippman, 1972).

History has shown that ignorance, neglect, superstition and fear are social factors that have exacerbated isolation of persons with disabilities but it is still not clear about the effects of these attitudes towards them.

Lippman, (1972) observed that in many European countries such as Denmark and Sweden, citizens with disabilities are more accepted than in the United States and provided more effective rehabilitation services without regard to the type or degree of the disabling condition.

Throughout Africa, persons with disabilities are seen as hopeless and helpless (Desta, 1995). Abosi and Ozoji (1985) found in their study that Nigeria in particular and of course Africans in general, attribute causes of disability to witchcraft, juju, sex-linked facts, God/supernatural forces. Thus persons with disability are often stigmatized,

imposed with artificial limitations, denied equal opportunities for development and living and inequitably demoted to second class citizens to be pitied (in the sense where pity is seen as devaluation tingled with contempt).

Prevailing attitudes not only determine the social expectations and treatment accorded to a person with a disability in the society but also his /her self-image. Hobbs (1973) states that, the message that a child with a disability receives about himself from his environment determines to a large extent his feelings about who he is, what he can do and how he should behave.

Persons with disability frequently find their opportunities limited because of social rejection, discriminatory employment practices , architectural barriers and inaccessibility to transport. Thus societal attitudes are significant since they largely determine the extent to which the personal, social, educational and psychological need of persons with disabilities will be realized (Wright, 1960).

In Zambia, persons with disabilities were being perceived as “inhuman” and “outcasts” of society. Persons with disabilities had suffered innumerable restrictions on entry into certain roles such as education and employment (Kalabula, 1989). Persons with disabilities were viewed as incapable of making their own decisions and of taking control of their lives; they were viewed as people who always needed to be helped or as objects of pity and charity (Coleridge,1993).

Recent international and National Legislation has cast increasingly light on the philosophy of inclusion and inclusive schooling grounded in UNESCO’s Education policy, adopted at the Salamanca conference in 1994 (UNESCO, 1994). Inclusive education is

progressively being accepted as an effectual means by which biased attitudes towards students with disabilities may be reduced (Loreman and Deppeler, 2002). The Salamanca statement and Framework for Action promulgate education for every individual as a basic human right for all, irrespective of individual differences (UNESCO, 1994). Further, international focus through the Education For All, a 1989 United Nations convention on the Rights of children; the 1990 Jomtien Declaration and on the World Summit on Children, required countries to commit themselves in providing education to all children including marginalized ones.

According to the 1993 UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, states should recognize the principle equal primary, secondary and tertiary educational opportunities for youths and adults with disabilities in integrated settings. They should ensure that the education of persons with disabilities is an integral part of the educational system. This is a specific support for inclusive education. In Zambia, we have policy documents such as “Educating our Future” 1996, the “Education Act” 2011, “Persons with Disability Act” 2012. These policy documents all promote the education of learners with disabilities in regular classrooms. Despite these documents, regular teachers’ still do not seem to understand learners with learning disabilities.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Despite the sensitization of regular teachers on learners with learning disabilities in Continuous Professional Development, (CPD) meetings and workshops, teachers in Austria still do not seem to understand learners with learning disabilities (D’Alonzo, et al.,1996). It is however, not clear if the situation is the same in Zambia. The study therefore sought

to establish the attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities at Nampundwe Secondary School. The most type of learning disabilities at this school are reading and mathematical disabilities.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to establish the attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities.

1.4 Objectives

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To establish the attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities.
2. To establish the effects of regular teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities.
3. To establish interventions that can help regular teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities.

1.5 Research questions

As a way of addressing the above listed objectives, the research attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What are the attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities?
2. What are the effects of regular teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities?

3. What interventions can help regular teachers to understand learners with learning disabilities?

1.6 Significance of the study

The research outcomes may help stake holders like the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education (MESVTEE), Parents and teachers to understand the attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities and the ordinary learners and how these attitudes affect their education and life in general. It is hoped that the findings of the study will provide a platform for improving the way regular teachers perceive these learners. Furthermore, the study may help the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education and other stake holders to fully understand the effects of these attitudes towards learners thus enhancing the provision of services to learners with learning disabilities, helping them to learn effectively and become successful members of society.

1.7 Theoretical framework.

This study was guided by Azjen' theory of planned behavior, an extension of the theory of reasoned action (Azjen, 1991). The concept was proposed by Icek Azjen in 1985 to improve on the predictive power of the theory of reasoned action by including perceived behavior control. The theory is used to determine behavior arising from attitudes. The model suggests that attitudes towards behavior may be influenced by past experiences, previous knowledge and newly acquired knowledge. The theory states that attitudes towards behavior, subjective norms and perceived behavior control, together shape an individual's behavioral intentions. In short, attitudes play a significant role in determining behavior (Azjen and Fishbein, 1997).

The theory was chosen because it has been used on studies of the relations among beliefs and attitudes. The theory therefore helped to understand the attitudes and effects of regular teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities, thus being of great value to the study.

1.8 Limitations

Limitations according to Meredith et al. (2003) are restrictions, problems and such other elements which might affect the objectivity and validity of the research findings. One of the limitations of this study was that the observations were done for only one term due to limited time. Regardless of the limitation, the findings are consistent with the local and international literatures, therefore the findings of the study may be generalized.

The other limitation was that when teachers were aware that they were being studied, some respondents did not provide their real attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities and the ordinary learners. In spite of this limitation, efforts were made through triangulation to ensure that the results were valid and reliable. Therefore, the findings of this study may be generalized.

1.9 Definition of terms

Attitude: These are feelings (positive or negative) or predispositions held by people or individuals towards something or someone.

Disability: A restriction or disadvantage imposed on an individual's functioning as a result of impairment.

Impairment: An identifiable defect in the basic functions of an organ or any part of the body system.

Learner: A person who receives education.

Learning disability: A neurological disorder that results into a person's inability to listen, speak, reason, read, write, or do math.

Qualitative research: type of inquiry in which the researcher carries out research about people's experiences in natural settings, using techniques like interviews mostly in words rather than statistics.

Quantitative research: A formal, objective, systematic process in which numerical data is utilized to obtain information about the world.

Regular teacher: A person who teaches in a regular classroom environment and has little or no knowledge of teaching learners with disabilities (Special Education).

Self-esteem: How a person evaluates his/her own worth (what he/she thinks about himself/herself).

Social development: A process by which a person forms relationships with others and how they understand and deal with emotions.

Triangulation: The collection and confirmation of data using a combination of methods.

1.10 Organization of the dissertation

The dissertation is organized in six chapters. Chapter one is composed of the: background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, study objectives, research questions, significance of the study, theoretical frame work, limitations, definition of terms used in the study, organization of the study and summary of chapter. Chapter two presents reviewed literature relevant to the study while Chapter three contains the methodology. Research

findings are presented in chapter four. Chapter five discusses the findings of the study and chapter six contains the conclusion and recommendations. The chapter ends with suggestions for further research.

1.11 Summary

This chapter has covered the introduction to the study, the background, research problem, purpose, objectives, research questions, significance of the study, theoretical framework, study limitations, definition of terms and organization of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights literature concerning the effects of regular teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities. The chapter includes the following themes; the history of special education internationally and in Zambia, attitudes and how they are formed, what learning disabilities are and how they affect learning, attitudes of teachers towards learners with disabilities and the effects of these attitudes on learners. The chapter also looked at some interventions that can help regular teachers to understand learners with learning disabilities. The chapter ends with a summary.

2.2 History of Special Education Internationally and in Zambia

The history of Special Education at international level and in Zambia can be best understood when examined in three phases and these are: segregation, integration and inclusion. During segregation, learners with Special Educational Needs were educated in special schools separate from their peers, the so called "normal" (Chilufya, 2005: 1).

The second phase was integration. This was advocated by Johann Wilhelm Klein in 1810, who was the founder of a residential school for the blind in Vienna. He advocated for the integration of persons with disabilities in ordinary schools. In 1842, the government of Australia passed a decree that authorized the provision of education of blind children in public schools. Later many centres began to advocate for integration (Kalabula, 1991).

The 1970s and 1980s saw the passing of several policies and laws in support of integration all over the world. For example, the United Kingdom was supported by the Education Act of 1976 and the Warnock Report of 1978. The law and the report maintained that whenever possible and appropriate, the education of children with Special Educational Needs should take place in ordinary classes (Warnock,1978:2).

The recent phase as regards to the provision and placement of children with Special Educational Needs is inclusion. Chilufya (2005) states that inclusive education emphasizes the right to education, equal opportunities and participation. It is not just about access of children with disabilities to ordinary classes but it intends to transform the education system so as to provide the diversity of educational needs of all children in ordinary classrooms. For example teachers are expected to differentiate and adapt the curriculum and instructional strategies to meet the needs of learners.

Inclusion is seen as the most effective way of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all (UNESCO, 1994).

As regards learning disabilities, early attempts to match functioning within certain areas of the brain to human behavior were done. Early physicians noticed that patients with certain types of brain injury experienced specific types of behavioral problems. Most relevant to learning disabilities were patients with injuries to the left hemisphere of the brain, who in many cases experienced problems such as slowness, laborious speech and the inability to name objects or persons. These studies were done by a

group of American pioneers including Samuel Orton, Grace Fernald, Marion Monroe and Samuel Kirk (Hamill,1990:35).

In the late 1800s, a more set of cases were identified in which persons' ability to speak and write remained intact, but their ability to comprehend spoken or written words was impaired. These conditions were termed as word deafness and word blindness. Thus, between 1960 and 1975 the field of learning disabilities began to emerge as a discipline unto itself in the US. Most educators attribute coinage of the term learning disabilities to Kirk. "In 1963, the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities was formed ,which has now evolved into the Learning Disabilities Association of America. This is one of the most influential learning disabilities advocacy organization in the United States" (Mercer, 1997: 15).

Before the advent of Christianity in Zambia, most traditional cultures had strong belief in spirits. "Having a disability was therefore regarded as a curse or punishment from the ancestral spirits" (Ndhlovu, 2010: 24). Disability was also associated with witchcraft, so, a person with a disability was often regarded as been bewitched.

The first attempts to teach learners with disabilities in Zambia were made in 1905 in the Eastern province by the missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church. The first schools for learners with visual impairments were established in 1923 and 1929. The Zambia Council for the Handicapped continued with service delivery under the then Ministry of Labour and Social Services until 1971 when the then Ministry of Education (MoE) took over the arduous responsibility. Upon taking over, MoE established a special college and an inspectorate at the MoE headquarters in Lusaka (Kalabula, 2003).

After the Ministry of Education began administering Special Education in Zambia in 1977, a number of special schools and institutions were built. However, in response to international pressure toward inclusion, a number of special units and special classrooms within general education schools were established (Kasonde-Ng'andu & Moberg, 2001). By the late 1980s and early 1990s, a number of children with disabilities were placed in general education settings (Kasonde-Ng'andu & Moberg).

The period from 1971 was characterized by reform policies on special education in Zambia which included; the 1977 “Education Reform Policy on Special Education”, the 1992 “Focus on Learning” and the 1996 “Educating our Future”, (Ndhlovu, 2010). It is in the “Educating our Future” policy that inclusion was introduced. The policy indorses integration of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in ordinary classes which is in line with the current view of inclusion. The document upholds the principle that every individual has an equal right to educational opportunities regardless of personal circumstances or any discriminatory characteristics (MoE, 1996). Thus, the school system must provide for the needs of those who are handicapped, for they too can benefit from education.

2.3 Attitudes and How they are Formed

The concept of attitudes has been defined in many ways by different scholars. 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. The point of view can either be positive, negative, hostile or indifferent. One's attitude can account for one's behavior and or performance.

Kochhar (2008) also sees an individual's attitude as a set of categories for evaluating or judging various social stimuli- persons, objects, events, etc. further that his social attitudes are learned and established, through social interaction and that they are a matter degree, rather than being all or none, positive or negative.

Psychologists define attitudes 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).

Observational learning plays a fairly big role in the formation of attitudes, from watching and imitating parents and caregivers early in life to the influence of friends and role models. "The attitudes and beliefs of people we interact with and admire have a strong impact on our behavior and beliefs about certain things" (Myers, 1999:23).

Attitudes are also formed due to the process of differentiation, thus from several attitudes are formed special attitudes. For example, due to certain ill - feelings about some teachers, the pupils may start hating everything related to the school. Some attitudes however, are formed due to shock or tragedy. Generally when an individual is not ready for a tragedy, this becomes the basis of long standing 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, 2008:356).

Some teachers however, may have negative attitudes due to inadequate training (Heiman, 2001). 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 learning disabilities. It should also be stated that teachers' attitudes may be shaped by the type and degree of the disability of the student concerned (Agran et al., 2002). The inclusion of learners with multiple disabilities in regular classes seems impractical to most regular teachers (Sigafoos & Elkins, 1994).

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 *Behavioral component*: how the attitudes influences your behavior. Attitudes can also be explicit and implicit. Explicit attitudes are these that we are consciously aware of and clearly influence our behavior and beliefs. Implicit attitudes are unconscious but still have an effect on our beliefs and behaviors (Kochhar, 2008).

It is thus of great importance that we examine the attitudes of teachers towards learners with learning disabilities because their perceptions may influence their behavior and acceptance towards such learners (Hammond & Ingalls, 2003).

Attitudes towards disabilities reflect beliefs about people with disabilities and as such guide behavior and acceptance towards individuals with disabilities (Kochhar, 2008). The attitude of teachers does not just affect the academic performance but also their social life and future.

2.4 Learning Disabilities

Children and adults classified as learning disabled are those individuals who are of normal intelligence but suffer mental information processing difficulties. According to IDEA (1997), a learning disability is:

A heterogeneous group of individuals with intrinsic disorders that are manifested by specific difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or mathematical abilities. Learning disabilities do not include problems due primarily to visual, hearing, or motor handicaps; to mental retardation; to emotional disturbance; or to environmental disadvantage. Emotional and social disturbances and other adaptive deficiencies may occur with learning problems but they do not by themselves constitute a learning disability (IDEA, 1997).

A learning disability is not a problem with intelligence or motivation. Learners with learning disabilities aren't lazy or dumb. In fact, most are just as smart as everyone else. Their brains are just wired differently. This difference affects how they receive and process information. In short, "learners with learning disabilities see, hear and understand things differently and this can lead to trouble with learning new information and skills, and putting them to use. Following simple instructions can be confusing and frustrating" Mash and Wolfe (2002: 304).

When achievement in reading, math, or writing is substantially below what would be expected for the child's age, schooling and intellectual ability, he or she may be

diagnosed with a learning disability. In other words, a child with a learning disability is bright enough to learn the subject material but does not appear able to do so (Mash and Wolfe, 2002). So, the main characteristic shared by all children with learning disabilities is that they do not perform up to their expected level in school.

A learning disability affects how individuals with normal or average intelligence take in, retain or express information. Incoming or outgoing information can be scrambled as it passes through the senses and the brain. These learners have difficulty in collecting, organizing or acting on verbal and non-verbal information. Unlike most physical disabilities, a learning disability is a hidden problem. Learners with learning disabilities often have problems with reading, writing, or mathematics (Mash and Wolfe, 2002).

Social behaviours such as asking for assistance, greeting others, positive peer interaction and making conversation, are predictive of social acceptance (Swanson, 2000). However, “learners with learning disabilities often display inappropriate social behaviors which leads to social isolation and rejection of learners by their peers” (Swanson, 2000: 10).

The most common types of learning disabilities involve problems with reading (dyslexia), writing (dysgraphia), mathematics (dyscalculia), reasoning, listening and speaking. Most prevalent estimates are based on reading disabilities because they are by far the most common and overlap considerably with mathematics and writing disorders (Mash and Wolfe, 2002).

2.5 Regular Teachers’ Attitudes towards Learners with Learning Disabilities

The issue of 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. The attitudes of non-disabled learners is equally crucial to the education of learners with learning disabilities in the ordinary classrooms.

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.

A study by Frymier and Wanzer (2003) on the perceptions of students' communication with professors 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 disabilities as being slow learners and time wasters especially those learners who had problems in mathematics. Those with reading problems were also given few reading turns due to their slowness in reading.

Other studies by Mash and Wolfe (2002) 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 belief that students used learning disabilities as an excuse to get out of work.

2.5.1 Attitudes of Teachers by Gender and Age

Leyser and Tappendorf (2001) did a study on perceptions of teachers on inclusion in Australia. The findings of the study showed that female teachers are inclined to have more favorable attitudes and appeared to have higher expectations of students with disabilities than their male counterparts. Meaning that female teachers have more positive attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities compared to the male teachers.

Contrary to this, other studies found that male teachers were either significantly more confident than females, in their ability to teach students with disabilities (Jobe et al., 1996) or they held more positive views about inclusive education (Lampropoulou and Padelliadu, 1997).

Lampropoulou and Padelliadu (1997) did a study on teachers of the deaf compared to other groups of teachers in the United States. The findings of the study revealed that older teachers appear to foster less positive attitudes than younger teachers. Younger teachers appear more accepting of learners with learning disabilities than their older counterparts.

2.5.2 Attitudes of Teacher by Qualification and Experience

As regards to attitudes and teacher education, Heiman (2001) and Kuester (2000) stated 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 while the study by Stoler (1992) indicated that teachers with high levels of education qualifications had less positive attitudes towards learners with disabilities than those who did not achieve master's degree status.

A study by Chilufya (2005) on parents and teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in selected basic schools of Kalulushi district of Zambia, revealed that teachers' positive attitudes depended greatly on teacher education in Special Education, the work load and support. The study also showed that teachers' positive attitudes towards learners with special needs depended on their experience to dealing with these learners. This is similar to a study by Avissar (2000) on the views of general education teachers about inclusion in the United States. The findings of the study indicated that previous experience in this field allows teachers to feel more comfortable to teaching learners with learning disabilities.

2.6 Effects of Regular Teachers' Attitudes on Learners With Disabilities

Studies by Barga (1996) on students with learning disabilities in education in Australia have shown that learners with disabilities were misinterpreted as being unintelligent and that made them to feel intellectually inferior. A study by Monsen and Frederickson (2003) on teachers' attitudes towards mainstreaming and their pupils' perceptions of their classroom learning environment in New Zealand showed that the negative attitude of teachers on learners with

disabilities resulted into these learners performing very poorly in class thus developing a very low self-esteem.

Monsen and Frederickson (2003) also observed 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 behavioral problems.

Janney et al. (1995) conducted a study on general and special education teacher attitudes and beliefs on inclusion in the United States. They carried out individual interviews with 53 teachers and administrators from ten schools where learners with moderate and severe learning difficulties had recently been included. These staff expressed very positive attitudes towards their experience of teaching learners with disabilities together with those without. Another, key finding from the analysis was that teacher attitude played a significant role in creating an accepting environment in the classroom. One of the interviewees described his perception of the learners with disabilities as: By my accepting them and talking to them just like the other learners in class, and not making them different, the other kids will accept them like I did" (p. 436).

A study by Haambokoma (2007) on the nature and causes of learning disabilities in genetics at high school levels in Zambia, has shown that learners with learning disabilities are particularly vulnerable to experiencing a wide range of psychosocial difficulties. Learners with disabilities were found to have higher accounts of being bullied, teased, ridiculed and hounded, which has been shown to be the cause of high rates of loneliness, despair, depression,

anxiety, and low self-esteem (Denhart, 2008). This is similar to a study that was done by Gilmore and Cuskelly (2003) in Australia on changing student teachers' attitudes towards disability and inclusion. The findings of the study showed that learners with disabilities had fewer friends and experienced more rejection than their peers without disabilities.

Monsen and Frederickson (2003) observed that people acted in accordance with the way they were treated or expected to behave. Those with disabilities were expected to have less success than their counterparts without disabilities. This treatment towards those with disabilities resulted in those with disabilities altering their behaviors to fit and meet these expectations. Through the self-fulfilling prophecy it became evident that these negative perceptions had the ability to greatly influence the future life success of those with disabilities.

Konza (2008) did a study in Australia on the Inclusion of students with disabilities in new times. He found that teachers had few interactions with learners disabilities. There was poor teacher - pupil interactions and they received fewer reading turns. Mash and Wolfe (2002) 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 disabilities feedback in response to incorrect answers and were more likely to be criticized by their teachers compared to their classmates. A study by Muwana (2012) on the Zambian student teachers' attitudes towards including students with disabilities in general education classrooms in Zambia has also shown that some learners with disabilities ended up developing resentment towards a certain subject especially in areas where they received a lot of criticism from their teachers like in English where learners were told to read and also in math where they were asked to do some calculations.

A study by Chilufya (2005) on parents' and teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in selected basic schools of Kalulushi district of Zambia, has shown that teachers' positive attitudes towards learners with disabilities depend greatly on their experiences with these learners, teacher education and the availability of support, class size and work load. This is in support with the study that was carried out by Mandyata (2002) on the views of teachers on inclusive education in Kasama district of Zambia. The study revealed that teachers were not in favor of educating learners with special needs in the ordinary classes. Their views were influenced by lack of training and resources to equip them in handling learners with special needs in ordinary classes.

2.7 Interventions that can help Regular Teachers in Teaching learners with Learning Disabilities

A study by Milson (2006) on Creating positive school experiences for students with disabilities in the US, showed that support from administrative staff is very important as it makes teachers to feel reaffirmed, similarly Vaughan (2002) stated that the successful implementation of any program depends on support from the administration and co-operative effort from the school personnel. This means that when the administration is supportive even the regular teachers will be motivated to work with learners with disabilities.

Larger classes place additional demands on regular teachers while reinforcing concern that all students may not receive proper time, Cornoidi et al. (1998) states that classes should not exceed 20 if there is one student with a disability in a regular classroom. Larger class

sizes may be stressful to the regular teacher thus the need for small class sizes thus being able to assist regular teachers in changing their attitudes towards learners with disabilities.

Working with counselors can be used to help regular teachers to strengthen desirable attitudes and weaken undesirable ones. So, regular teachers can change their attitudes after observing the behavior of others like counselors. school counselors could also serve as coordinators of peer tutoring programs and collaborate with teachers in the implementation of classroom based activities, Vaughan (2002).

Teachers may have a negative attitude towards learners with learning disabilities on account of inadequate training, it would appear that teachers perceived themselves as unprepared for teaching learners with learning disabilities because they lack appropriate training in the area of Special Education. So, inadequate training may result in low teacher confidence while increased training promotes more positive attitudes (Powers, 2002). Training in Special Education appears to enhance understanding and improves attitudes regarding learners with disabilities (Kuester, 2000).

Kocchar (2008) states that teachers can be helped to change their attitudes *by* motivating them to listen and think about the messages shared during workshops, thus leading to an attitude shift. Or they might be influenced by the speaker, leading to a temporary or surface shift in attitude. Messages that are thought provoking and that appeal to logic are more likely to lead to permanent changes in attitudes.

2.8 Summary

This chapter presented a review of literature considered relevant to the study on the effects of regular teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities. It reflects the history of Special Education internationally and in Zambia. The chapter also looked at what attitudes are and how they are formed. It further reflects the attitudes and effects of teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities. It also looked at the interventions that for regular teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities. So much work has been done by many scholars on learners with Special Educational Needs, on mathematical and reading problems, but little has been done specifically on learners with learning disabilities in general, very little has also been written on continuous professional development meetings and workshop and also on the attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities thus the need for this researcher to establish the attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities. In Austria, D- Alonzo et al., (1996) found that despite the sensitization of regular teachers on disabilities in Continuous Professional Development, (CPD) meetings and workshops, regular teachers still not seem to understand learners with learning disabilities. This researcher therefore, wonders whether the situation was the same in Zambia.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology that was deployed in the study. It starts with the description of the research design, target population, sample size, sampling procedures and research instruments. It also describes data collection procedures and how the data was analyzed. The chapter further describes ethical issues that were taken into consideration during the study and it ends with a summary.

3.1 Research Design

The study used a case study design. The design was used because it helped the researcher to establish the effects of regular teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities. The case study was used because it helped the researcher to have an in-depth understanding of the study. This was so because case studies are responsible for intensive study of a unit. This is consistent with Kombo and Tromp (2006) who stated that a case study design allows the researcher to describe a unit in detail, in context and holistically. In addition, a case study was used because the research methods used were more qualitative than quantitative. In addition, the case study design was used because they allow for simple observations of variables in their natural settings, the design also helped the researcher to test a hypothesis by D'Alonzo et. al (1996).

3.2 Research Site

The study was conducted at Nampundwe Secondary School. The site was chosen because it has learners with all types of learning disabilities.

3.3 Population

Population according to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) is a complete set of individuals, cases or objects with observable characteristics. The target population consisted of all regular teachers, learners with learning disabilities and their parents at Nampundwe Secondary School.

3.4 Sample Size

The sample consisted of 82 participants comprising 50 learners with learning disabilities, 16 regular teachers and 16 parents.

3.5 Sampling Procedure

The Sample for learners was drawn randomly using a simple random procedure. This procedure was used because it provides each element in the population an equal chance of being selected as a study sample (White, 2003). Purposive sampling procedure was used to pick regular teachers and parents. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) define purposive sampling techniques as one that allows a researcher to use cases that have the required information with respect to the objectives of his or her study. This procedure was chosen because it helped the researcher to pick regular teachers and parents of learners with learning disabilities with information relating to the study.

3.6 Research Instruments

Three research instruments were used to collect data vis-à-vis structured questionnaires, semi-interview guides and observation checklist. Structured questionnaires were chosen because they allowed the researcher to use the same question items to all respondents. The researcher also used semi-structured interview guide for it gave room for new questions to be brought up during the interview as a result of what the interviewee said. Semi-Structured interview guide also allowed the researcher to make follow up questions (Lindlof and Taylor, 2000). Lastly, observation checklists were chosen because they allowed the researcher to observe the participants in their natural settings and obtain data that may have not been obtained through other stated instruments. The researcher observed the regular teachers and learners with learning disabilities. Observations were mainly done during lesson deliveries (lesson observations) and also during sports activities.

In short, the researcher used these three instruments to collect data so as to come up with valid and reliable findings. Kombo and Tromp (2006) state that the triangulation of data is important as it helps to overcome the inbuilt bias that normally comes from the single data sources.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

An introductory letter was obtained from the Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies of the University of Zambia and then presented to the District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) and the Provincial Education Officer (PEO) for permission to carry out the research at Nampundwe Secondary School. Before administering the research instruments, the researcher explained to the respondents that the research was purely academic. Semi-structured interviews were conducted

to learners with learning disabilities and parents. Structured questionnaires were administered to regular teachers. Non participant observations were used to observe learners and teachers so as to establish the teachers' attitudes and effects of these attitudes on learners with learning disabilities.

3.8 Data analysis

Data analysis was done qualitatively and quantitatively. Thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative data. Descriptions of each theme was done. Quantitative data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) in order to obtain frequencies and percentages.

3.9 Ethical considerations

The study took into account all possible ethical issues. The purpose of the study was explained to the participants so that they could have voluntary involvement. The measures undertaken to ensure compliance with ethical issues included keeping the identity of the respondents confidential. In addition, during research, respondents' responses were neither interfered nor contested by the researcher. In addition, informed consent was obtained from both the respondents and the people in charge of the school where the research was carried out. Above all, the respondents were equally treated.

3.10 Summary

This chapter presented the methodology that was used in the study. A case study research design was used to understand the effects of teacher's attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities. The population comprised all learners, teachers and parents of learners at Nampundwe Secondary School. A total number of 82 respondents formed the sample. The

sample was selected through simple random and purposeful sampling procedures. Research instruments used included semi-interview guides, structured questionnaires and observation checklists. Data was also analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Above all, ethical issues were taken into consideration.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study on the effects of regular teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities at Nampundwe Secondary school. The findings from the learners with learning disabilities are presented first followed by those from regular teachers and finally from Parents of learners with learning disabilities. The findings are presented according to the study objectives, and these objectives were to:

1. Establish regular teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities.
2. Establish the effects of regular teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities.
3. Establish interventions for regular teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities.

4.1 Attitudes of Regular Teachers towards Learners with Learning Disabilities

This section presents the views of learners with learning disabilities, teachers and parents of learners with learning disabilities on the attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities especially those with reading and mathematical problems.

4.1.1 Views of Learners with Learning Disabilities

When asked on how the attitudes of regular teachers towards them were, 46 (92%) of the learners with learning disabilities said regular teachers' attitudes was negative.

When asked on why they thought that regular teachers had negative attitudes towards them, one of the learners with learning disabilities said that:

“Instead of being motivated, am mocked and they do not even point at me in class, my teachers especially my English teacher says I am dull even when I can speak good English but I can not read properly. She tells me that speaking good English alone is not enough, she says I should be able to write and read what I say ”

Another learner with learning disabilities interviewed stated that:

“Bamai (regular teachers) madam, balafubazya (like teasing) they can make you look like a fool. Just because I can not solve mathematical problems, you just know how difficult mathematics is madam. My mathematics teacher tells me that it is no wonder am in G (11G) because of being dull, he tells me to compare my performance to those in A (11 A)”.

4.1.2 Views of Regular Teachers on their Attitudes towards their Learners with Learning Disabilities

As a way of verifying the assertion by learners with learning disabilities on regular teachers' attitudes towards them, 81% of regular teachers stated that it was negative. When asked on why they had negative attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities, one of the teachers stated that:

“These learners are genetically dull, their problem is an inborn one, so it becomes very difficult teaching such kinds of learners, even if you have patience, for how long can you tolerate the slow pace at which learners with learning disabilities learn?

Honestly you really need to be so understanding and have a motherly heart, otherwise teaching such kinds of learners can be very frustrating”

In addition, from the responses given on the attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities, it was observed that regular teachers’ attitudes were negative regardless of the qualifications held. It was also observed that more male teachers portrayed more negative attitudes compared to the female folks. To this effect, one of the male regular teachers said:

“Their (learners with learning disabilities) slow pace in grasping concepts usually disturbs me and slows the progress of fast learners, they waste a lot of time, even when you ask them to read a small paragraph, when can you finish teaching with pupils who can read like that, what we need are learners who can read fast and are fluent with the English language. We can not start teaching these learners how to read now, it is too late, grade 12?”

4.1.2.1 Regular Teachers’ Reasons for their Negative Attitudes towards Learners with Learning Disabilities

When asked on why they (regular teachers) had negative attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities, the regular teachers gave the following reasons; learners with learning disabilities are slow to learn, thus repeating the same content over and over making it difficult to deliver a lesson in time. The regular teachers also stated that the slow pace of learners with learning disabilities in grasping concepts usually disturbs and slows the progress of fast learners who are quick to grasp concepts and want to move forward. They (regular teachers) also stated that they expect “baked” learners, but this is not the case, instead, we have

to start “baking” them again (teach them how to read and write). They do not meet teachers’ expectations. Regular teachers also said that they had no time to deal with learners with learning disabilities due to the high teacher-pupil ratio of 1:100. This makes it difficult for regular teachers to concentrate on learners with learning disabilities. Above all, some regular teachers believe that learners with learning disabilities are genetically “backward” and “dull”, so regular teachers believe that there is nothing that they can do to help these learners because the problem is a genetic one.

4.1.3 Views of Parents on Attitudes of Regular Teachers Towards their Children with Learning Disabilities

When asked on the attitudes of regular teachers towards their children with learning disabilities, 56% of parents stated that the regular teachers’ attitudes were negative.

When asked on why they (parents) thought that regular teachers had negative attitudes towards their children, one of the parents stated that:

“My child is always complaining about his teacher that she always makes fun of him in class just because he is not good in mathematics and can not speak good English. The teacher usually says that a grade 12 who can not read properly and can not do basic mathematics, you think can pass the exam? ”

4.2 Effects of Teachers’ Negative Attitudes towards Learners with Learning Disabilities

This section presents the views of learners with learning disabilities, regular teachers and parents of learners with learning disabilities on the effects of regular teachers’ attitudes towards learners with

learning disabilities.

4.2.1 Views of Learners with Learning Disabilities on the Effects of Teachers Attitudes Towards them

Among the effects cited by learners with learning disabilities were that their levels of classroom participation was negatively affected, the learners stated that they were given fewer reading turns and time to solve mathematical problems on the board due to their slowness in reading and solving mathematical problems.

When asked on why they thought that teachers' negative attitudes affected their levels of classroom participation, one of the learners with learning disabilities remarked:

“The attitudes of teachers affect my participation in classroom activities in that the teachers do not pointed at me to be a group leader especially during group work, teachers always want to put those (other learners) who are already doing well, which is bad, because these teachers should also be helping us not just concentrating on those who are already doing well”

When asked on how the attitudes of regular teachers affected their self-esteem, one of the learners with learning disabilities stated that:

“My teachers are always telling me how dull I am especially my English teacher who like telling me that I can not read not even a grade 2 English book. She was telling me that her child who is in grade four can even read and speak better English than me who is in grade 12, such kinds of comments “indipa kuvwa mbuli kuti ndili mudalu maningi” (makes me feel like am so dull). I feel

so bad”

The figure below shows the effects of regular teachers’ attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities. See details in figure 1.

Figure 1: Views of Learners with Learning Disabilities on Effects of Teachers’ Negative Attitudes Towards them

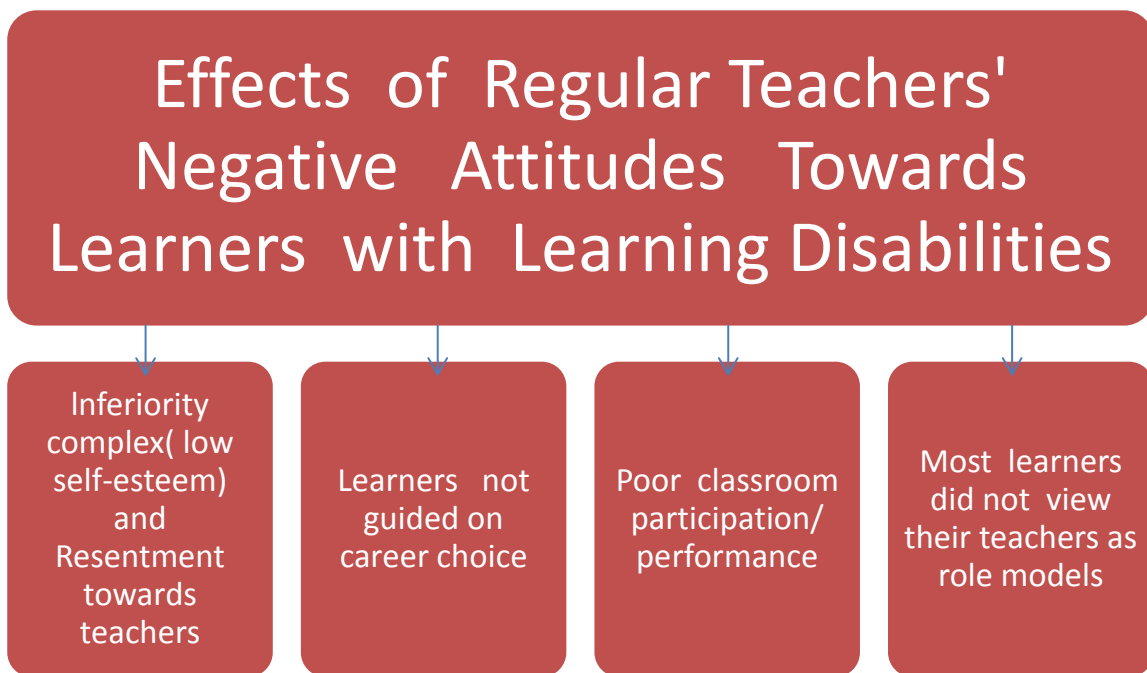


Figure 1 above findings shows that regular teachers’ attitudes positively correlates with poor classroom participation and the academic performance of learners with learning disabilities. It has also shown that regular teachers’ attitudes significantly correlates with the learners’ self-esteem, poor teacher-pupil relationships and also to the fact that these learners do not view their regular teachers as their role models.

When asked on whether learners wanted to be teachers someday, one of the learners with learning disabilities stated that:

“I do not want to be a teacher because some teachers are not good, “balasala.” (they are discriminative), they rarely point at me in class simply because I can not solve mathematical questions fast on the board, some teachers say that am not suppose to be in grade 11 and that they wonder how I managed to pass to grade 10, my mathematics teacher told me that I should also be going through the mathematics books for grade 2-7 to improve my mathematics skills, “nkufubaazya ooko” madam (that is teasing)”.

It has however been established that the attitudes of regular teachers does not affect way the learners with learning disabilities participate in sports activities. These learners have been found to do better in co-curricular activities especially in sports better than the ordinary learners. When the researcher asked the learners with learning disabilities on why they thought that the negative attitudes of regular teachers does not affect the way they performs in co-curricular activities like sports, cultural groups and drama, one of the learners with learning disabilities remarked:

“We are all talented in different areas, so even me this is my talent. Even if I do not do well in class I know that I can do well in other activities like football. When playing football, teachers like me a lot because am a very good footballer, so they treat me well (positively). They (regular teachers) can not treat me negatively because when we are out here (grounds) am the best student. So, their (regular teachers) negative attitudes for me, it ends in the classroom”

Another learner with learning disabilities stated that :

“The negative attitudes of regular teachers does not affect the way I perform in drama, drama is my passion, I enjoy doing it, infact when our teacher for drama is not around, I am the one who guides the group, even if in class am never a group leader but in drama, I am a leader. So, teachers treat me well in such activities. Sometimes I can even suggest some plays that when can perform during celebrations like on youth day, independence day and during other celebrations, am really good at that”

4.2.2 Views of Regular Teachers on the Effects of Their Negative Attitudes Towards Learners with Learning Disabilities

From the table on the next page, it has been seen that the regular teachers' attitudes positively correlates with the learners with learning disabilities' classroom participation and academic poor performance. The negative attitudes of regular teachers also affected the way these learners (learners with learning disabilities) looked at themselves (self-esteem). As a result of regular teachers' negative attitudes learners with learning disabilities were seen to be highly isolated from their peers without learning disabilities.

When asked on why they (regular teachers) thought that their attitudes affected learners with learning disabilities' levels of classroom participation and performance, one of the regular teachers stated that:

“we all react according to the way we are treated by others, these learners are mostly ignored in class especially those who have problems with reading, such learners can be

frustrating especially for us who teaches English, these learners are so slow and the majority of them cannot read properly, so why waste your time on such learners and when can you finish the syllabus if you teach at their pace of learning? So, because these learners are ignored, even their performance is affected because they receive very little attention from us teachers compared to the other learners without learning disabilities”.

As a way of verifying the effects of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities, one of the regular teachers remarked:

“One of the effects of our attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities is that some learners end up developing resentment towards their teachers, you will find that even when you meet outside the classroom like at the market, they can not greet you unless you greet them, some can even hide when they see you in such places (market). So, you can see that the attitudes of teachers does not just affect the way these learners perform at school but it does also affect the way they (learners with learning disabilities) behave outside the classroom, in the community. We have also received different nick names from these learners”.

The table on the next page shows the distribution of responses on the effects of regular teachers’ attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities.

Table 1: Distribution of Responses on the Effects of Regular Teachers' Attitudes towards Learners with Learning Disabilities, (N 16)

Effects	Male	Female	Total
Poor performance	9	7	16
Low self - esteem (inferiority complex)	9	2	11
Learners are not guided on career choice	7	3	10
Isolation	5	4	9
Poor classroom interaction /participation (learners were left behind and unattended to during and after the lesson	4	1	5
Poor teacher-pupil relationship	2	1	3
Learners are forced to work hard	1	0	1
Learners are not given room to explore their potentials	1	0	1
Some learners fear/ run away from teachers	0	1	1

From the questionnaires administered to regular teachers and semi structured interview schedules administered to learners with learning disabilities, the above responses were given of which poor performance, inferiority complex, lack of guidance on career choice and isolation were the most stated effects of regular teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities.

4.2.3 Views of Parents on Effects of Regular Teachers' Attitudes Towards Their Children with Learning Disabilities

When asked on the effects of teachers' attitudes towards their children, the parents stated that it made their children to performance poorly in class. Some parents stated that their children were neither encouraged nor motivated to study hard. Some parents stated that their children had low self-esteem and did not know exactly what to do after school, probably because they were not guided by their teachers on career choices.

When asked on why they thought that their children were neither encouraged nor motivated to study hard, one of the parents of learners with learning disabilities stated that:

“ When my child comes back from school or even during holidays, he does not study, when I try to encourage him to study, the only thing he tells me is that “ mum, there is nothing that you can tell me, my teacher has already told me that am dull, so why study when I know that I will fail anyway”? This makes it difficult for me to keep on encouraging him, it seems like what his teacher has told him stuck in his mind, so, these teachers do not motivate my child to study in any way”

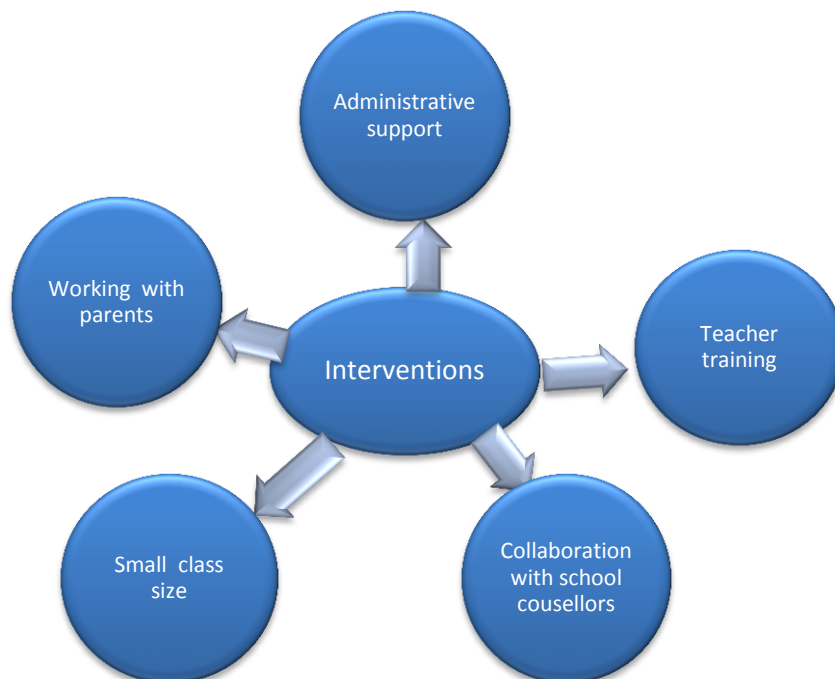
4.3 Interventions For Regular Teachers' Attitudes Towards Learners with Learning Disabilities

This section presents the findings of the third objective of the study which sought to establish interventions for regular teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities.

Among the interventions suggested was the small class sizes as this can help regular teachers to positively manage or help every learner in the classroom. One of the regular teachers remarked that:

“It is important for the administration to ensure that they reduce on over enrolment so that we can have small class sizes as this can help us to have enough time to deal with learners with learning disabilities, and not the way the situation is at the moment, where in a class you have 90- 100 pupils, it becomes very difficult for us teachers to concentrate on these learners, the classes are not manageable and the learners will be complaining that we do not treat them well in class, how can you treat them positively with such kinds of numbers in one classroom? It is so stressful really”.

Figure 2: Interventions for Regular Teachers' Attitudes Towards Learners with Learning Disabilities



4.4 Summary

This chapter presented the findings of the study in line with the study objectives. The study found that regular teachers had negative attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities. Regular teachers had negative attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities because they believed that these learners were genetically “backward” and “dull”. They also believed that learners with learning disabilities were slow to learn thus wasting time for the ordinary learners who were believed to be fast, smart and intelligent.

Regarding the effects of regular teachers' attitudes on learners with learning disabilities, it was found that these learners had low self-esteem (inferiority complex), performed and participated poorly in class, had poor teacher-pupil relationship, were isolated, had no guidance on career choice and most learners did not see their teachers as role models.

Regarding the third objective, it was established that regular teachers should work in collaboration with the school counselors and parents of learners with learning disabilities as this will help in changing the negative mindset of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities. It was also established that administrative support, teacher training in Special Education and small class sizes are very important as they can help regular teachers to change their negative attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of finding in line with the research objectives. The objectives were to; establish teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities, establish the effects of regular teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities and also establish interventions that can help regular teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities.

5.1 Attitudes of Regular Teachers Towards Learners with Learning Disabilities

The first objective of this study aimed at establishing the attitudes of teachers towards learners with learning disabilities at Nampundwe secondary school. This section therefore first discusses the findings on the attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities. It is followed by reasons for teachers' negative attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities, then the effects of these attitudes on learners with learning disabilities. Views of learners with learning disabilities, regular teachers and parents of learners with learning disabilities are discussed. These findings are discussed in line with what other researchers wrote on the attitudes of teachers towards these learners.

From the study, it was established that regular teachers had negative attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities. This finding is supported by 92% of the learners with learning disabilities who stated that regular teachers had negative attitudes towards them; and 81% of the regular teachers responded that they had negative attitudes towards learners

with learning disabilities. Tags such as “genetically dull” and “backwards” were given by regular teachers to describe how they viewed learners with learning disabilities. The majority (75%) of parents of learners with learning disabilities also said that regular teachers had negative attitudes towards their children. From these findings it can thus be said that generally regular teachers had negative attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities. This finding is consistent with that of D’Alonzo et al. (1996) on teacher attitudes towards inclusive education in Australia where it was argued that despite the continued movement toward inclusive practices, regular teachers still had negative attitudes towards students with special educational needs.

The above finding is also similar to the study by Frymier and Wanzer (2003) on the perceptions of students’ communication with professors in Netherlands that 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. Teachers were seen to have low expectations from these learners. The low expectations of teachers could be one of the reasons why learners with learning disabilities end up performing poorly in class.

Some regular teachers (25%) however, had positive attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities. This was supported by four percent (4%) of the learners with learning disabilities who said that teachers had a positive attitude towards them. Even though, these figures are very low, they still show that not all regular teachers had a negative attitude towards learners with learning disabilities. This finding is in line with that of Janney et al. (1995) on the general and special education teacher attitudes and beliefs on inclusion in the US. They carried out a study on 53 teachers and administrators from ten schools where learners with moderate and severe learning difficulties had recently been included. The staff expressed very positive

attitudes towards their experience of teaching learners with disabilities together with those without. The study also showed that teachers' positive attitudes played a significant role in creating an accepting environment in the classroom. One of the interviewees described his perception of the learners with disabilities as: "By my accepting them and talking to them just like the other learners in class, and not making them different, the other kids will accept them like I did".

5.1.1 Reasons for Regular Teachers' Negative Attitudes on Learners with Learning Disabilities

Among the reasons given by regular teachers for their negative attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities were that: they were not trained to teach such kinds of learners so it is very difficult for us to teach learners with learning disabilities effectively because they do not know on how best they can help them. Some regular teachers stated that learners could not meet the regular teachers' expectations because they expect learners who are in grades 8-12 to be able to read, write and at least solve some basic mathematical problems but that was not the case. Other regular teachers stated that their negative attitudes were due to the fact that they had no time to deal with these learners due to the poor teacher–pupil ratio which is 1: 100 in some classes; there are too many pupils in one classroom, thus making it very difficult for teachers to give these learners the needed attention. The regular teachers also stated that the slow pace of grasping concepts of learners with learning disabilities usually disturbs regular teachers and slows the progress of ordinary learners. The learners were also seen as slow learners, thus making it difficult to deliver the lesson in time. Some regular teachers also believe that these learners were genetically backward and dull. Above all, regular teachers said that it became boring for ordinary learners who are fast

and intelligent.

The above reasons could have contributed to the poor performance and participation in classroom activities of learners with learning disabilities. However, if teachers could change their attitudes towards these learners even the performance of these learners can change. This finding conforms to Janney et al. (1995) study findings on the general and Special Education teacher attitudes and beliefs on inclusion in the US. The findings of their study showed that teachers' attitudes played a significant role in creating an accepting environment in the classroom.

5.1.2 Attitudes of Regular Teachers by Gender and Age

The study revealed that female teachers portrayed more positive attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities compared to the males. This is supported by the findings that showed 25% of female teachers had positive attitude towards learners with learning disabilities and only 13% of male teachers had a positive attitude towards these learners. This finding is supported by Leyser and Tappendorf (2001) who in their study on perceptions of teachers in Australia found that female teachers were inclined to have more favorable attitudes and appeared to have higher expectations of students than their male counter parts. For example, when teachers were trying to come up with special classes to assist those learners who could not read and write, at Nampundwe secondary school, one of the young male teachers asked: "Who is going to teach these special classes because personally, I was not trained to teach such learners with learning disabilities, or is it that the administration is planning to give us something (money) for teaching these learners?"

The positive attitudes by female teachers could be due to the fact that most females were

mothers and spent more time with their children thus being more understanding of learners with learning disabilities compared to the male folks. Lampropoulou and Padelliaou (1997) linked the positive attitudes by female teachers towards students with disabilities to cultural factors stating that it is the role of women to take care of children.

Analysis of the results showed that male teachers did not like spending too much time on one thing/lesson. They usually wanted to deliver the intended work in time and not repeating the same content over and over. Learners with learning disabilities usually take time to grasp new concepts and knowledge, the slowness in grasping concepts frustrates regular teachers especially the male folks.

Concerning age, it was established that young teachers had more positive attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities compared to older teachers. The findings has shown that young teachers had more knowledge on the government policy on inclusion of learners with disabilities. This finding is supported by Lampropoulou and Padelliau (1997) who in their study on the comparison of teachers of the deaf and other groups of teachers in the United States found that older teachers appeared to foster less positive attitudes than younger teachers. Younger teachers appeared more accepting of learners with learning disabilities than their older counterparts.

5.1.3 Attitudes of Regular Teachers by Qualification and Experience

The findings of the study revealed that teachers who did some diploma courses, like secondary teachers' diploma from the then Nkrumah College of Education (now Nkrumah University) and National In-service Teachers' College (NISTCO, now Chalimbana University) before obtaining a degree from UNZA or other universities portrayed more positive attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities than those teachers who directly obtained a degree, (like Bachelor of Arts with Education). The reason behind this finding could be that these teachers were taught Special Education in colleges but those teachers who got a degree in other areas rather than Special Education might not understand Special Education Needs of learners. However, those who had degrees in Special Education portrayed more positive attitudes compared to those without a degree in Special Education.

This finding is similar to that of Chilufya (2005) on parents and teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in selected basic schools of Kalulushi District of Zambia. The findings of the study revealed that teachers' positive attitudes depended greatly on teacher education in Special Education, the work load and support.

As regards to experience, it was established that regular teachers who had been in the teaching service for a long period of time, showed more positive attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities compared to the newly deployed teachers, those who have been in the service for less than 5 years. Old regular teachers understood learners better and they spent more time helping them. This finding is similar to that of Chilufya (2005) who found that teachers' positive attitudes towards learners with special needs depended on their experience in dealing with these learners.

5.2 Effects of Regular Teachers Attitudes towards Learners with Learning Disabilities

It was established that the negative attitudes by regular teachers made learners with learning disabilities to have poor classroom participation, these learners were poorly involved in classroom activities like in classroom group discussions, very few learners asked questions when teachers were teaching and few of them were given opportunities to answer questions. So, this negative attitudes of teachers eventually made these learners to have poor academic performance. This study showed that 75% of learners with learning disabilities said that the negative attitude of regular teachers affected their academic performance. Learners were made to feel like they were not capable of achieving anything, thus being ignored most of the times. This finding is similar to the study that was done by Barga (1996) on students with learning disabilities in education in Australia. The findings of the study showed that learners with learning disabilities were misinterpreted as being unintelligent and that made them to feel intellectually inferior. This greatly negatively affected their classroom participation and performance.

It was however observed that regular teachers' negative attitudes did not affect the way these children performed in co-curricular activities like in sports and drama. The findings showed that even though these learners did not perform well in class, they were actually doing better in other school activities like sports than the ordinary learners. This finding is consistent with that of Mash and Wolfe (2002) who found that the self-concept of learners with learning disabilities in areas such as sports was however less affected.

The findings of the study also showed that learners with learning disabilities had low self-esteem. This was due to the fact that regular teachers had negative attitudes towards them

thus affecting the way they looked at themselves (self - esteem). This finding is consistent with that of Monsen and Frederickson (2003) on teachers' attitudes towards mainstreaming and their pupils' perceptions of their classroom learning environment in New Zealand. The findings of their study showed that the negative attitude of teachers on learners with disabilities resulted into these learners performing very poorly in class thus developing a very low self-esteem. Monsten and Frederickson (2003) also observed 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 behavioral problems.

This finding is in line with that of Haambokoma (2007) on the nature and causes of learning disabilities in genetics at high school levels in Zambia. The findings showed that learners with learning disabilities are particularly vulnerable to experiencing a wide range of psychosocial difficulties. They were found to have higher accounts of being bullied, teased, ridiculed and hounded, which was one of the causes of high rates of loneliness, despair, depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem.

From the findings, it was observed that learners with learning disabilities were neither motivated nor encouraged to study hard. There was no feedback given to these learners for their wrong work and no remedial work was given to them. It can therefore be said that these learners were not motivated to work hard in any way, thus not being able to try their best in class. This finding is consistent with Mash and Wolfe (2002) who observed that teachers frequently failed to give learners with disabilities feedback in response to incorrect answers and were more likely to be criticized by their teachers compared to their classmates.

The other finding of the study indicated that there was poor teacher- pupil relationship among learners with learning disabilities and their teachers. This is similar to the study that was done by Konza (2008) in Australia on the Inclusion of students with disabilities in new times. He found that teachers had few interactions with these learners. There was poor teacher -pupil interactions and they (learners) received fewer reading turns. This is also in line with that of Mash and Wolfe (2002) who found that the amount and quality of interaction in learning and the teacher- pupil relationship is very important as it affect the quality of learning.

The findings of the study also revealed that learners with learning disabilities were given few reading turns and time to solve mathematical problems on the board due to their slowness in reading and solving out mathematical problems. This finding 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. The findings of his study showed that teachers looked at learners with disabilities as being slow learners and time wasters especially those learners who had problems in mathematics. Those with reading problems were also given few reading turns due to their slowness in reading.

Another finding of the study showed that regular teachers were not seen as role models as most learners ended up hating their teachers. They hated their teachers especially those who teased them in class. The learners did not just hate the regular teachers but also the subjects that those regular teachers taught. It was also observed that some learners ended up avoiding their teachers outside the classroom and others even ran away from their teachers as a way of avoiding coming into contact with them (teachers). This finding is similar to that of Muwana (2012) whose study showed that some learners with disabilities ended up developing resentment towards their teachers and in certain subjects especially in areas where

they received a lot of criticism from their teachers like in English where learners were told to read and also in mathematics where they were asked to do some calculations.

The study also indicated that the negative attitudes of regular teachers made learners with learning disabilities to isolate themselves from the ordinary learners. It was observed that most learners with learning disabilities had few ordinary learners as their friends. Most of the learners with learning disabilities who had ordinary learners as their friends were seen to be coming from the same compounds, meaning that these learners knew each other from their homes. This is similar to a study that was done by Gilmore and Cuskelly (2003) in Australia on changing student teachers' attitudes towards disability and inclusion. The findings of their study showed that learners with disabilities had fewer friends and experienced more rejection than their peers without disabilities.

5.3 Interventions that can help Regular Teachers in Teaching learners with Learning Disabilities

The findings has shown that small class sizes are vital so as to enable regular teachers to positively teach learners with learning disabilities. Over-enrolment of pupils in classes has been seen to be one of the reasons why regular teachers have negative attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities. This is so because having large numbers of pupils in one class can be stressful for regular teachers. For example one of the classes had 90 learners, this is really stressing for teachers. So, if the classes were small there would be good teacher-pupil contact thus treating every learner positively. This finding is similar to that of Cornoidi et al.,(1998) who states larger classes place additional demands on educators while reinforcing concern that all students may not receive proper time or attention. He further states that

classes can not exceed 20 if there is one student with a disability in a regular classroom. Small class sizes are needed in order to maximize learning opportunities for all pupils, which is only possible if regular teachers have a manageable class-load. This intervention can help to change the negative attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities.

It was also established that parental involvement of learners with learning disabilities is very important so that a platform for mutual interaction between school (teachers) and the learners' parents are put in place. Working with parents of learners with learning disabilities can help regular teachers in understanding learners with learning disabilities in that parents can be able to educate regular teachers on their children's problems and also help the regular teachers to understand that their children with learning disabilities are just like any other children and can learn just like others if only they (teachers) can change their negative attitudes towards them (learners with learning disabilities).

Working with parents would also be done in order to supplement school in-put through remedial work and home work meant to assist learners with learning disabilities. This finding is similar to that of Henderson and Berla (1994) who stated that the more intensively parents are involved in the education of their children with disabilities, the more beneficial are the achievement effects. This means that parents will be able to help regular teachers to change their negative mind set by sharing with them on how their children's disability affect their learning, thus helping regular teachers to understand learners with learning disabilities.

The study has also established that support from the School administrators (head-teachers) is very important as it should ensure that they guide, encourage and monitor teachers for learners with learning disabilities to be tolerant, patient, loving in order to create and sustain a

psychologically learner friendly learning atmosphere as opposed to unfriendly one. So, support from the school head teachers is crucial as it can help to change the negative mind set of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities. This is supported by Vanghan (2002) who states that successful implementation of any type of program depends on support from the administration and co-operative effort from the school personnel. Vanghan (2002) recommended that school administrators should assess their cultures, existing policies and procedures. Negative messages can be unintentionally be communicated to students and regular teachers through language or procedures. For example putting learners with learning disabilities in one class instead of integrating them together with the ordinary learners, and by also assigning certain regular teachers to be just teaching those classes for learners with learning disabilities. This practice de-motives regular teachers who in turn treats learners with learning disabilities negatively.

From the study findings, it has been established that most regular teachers have negative attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities simply because they were not trained in Special Education so, if regular teachers are trained in special education, they will be able to understand the fact that the pace at which learners with learning disabilities learn is different from that of ordinary learners. Thus being able to have patience and positive attitudes towards these learners. This finding is similar to that of Haiman, (2001) who stated that teachers may have negative attitudes towards learners with disabilities on account of inadequate training . Teachers often perceive themselves as unprepared for teaching learners with disabilities because they lack appropriate training in the area of Special Education. Haiman (2001) further states that inadequate training may result in lowered teacher confidence thus treating learners with disabilities negatively.

Similarly, Powers (2002) states that increased training in Special Education promotes more teacher positive attitudes towards learners with disabilities. This is also supported by Kuester (2002) who stated that training in Special Education appears to enhance understanding and improve attitudes regarding learners with disabilities.

The findings has also indicated that regular teachers usually have CPD meetings and workshops once a term and sometimes the term will pass without holding any CPD meetings, what has been observed in these CPD meetings and workshops are that very little is discussed about learners with learning disabilities, this may have been attributed to the few Special Education teachers at the school, it is a just by the way thing. In short, the topic about learners with learning disabilities in these CPD meetings is never discussed in detail, not much is talked about. This was the reason why despite the sensitization of regular teachers on learners with learning disabilities in CPD meetings and workshops, regular teachers still seem not to understand learners with learning disabilities. It is thus of great value for the school administrators to invite other professionals trained in Special Education to visit the school once a well so as to sensitize regular teachers on learning disabilities.

This finding is similar to that of Kocchar (2008) states that teachers can be helped to change their attitudes *by* motivating them to listen and think about the messages shared during workshops, thus leading to an attitude shift. Or they might be influenced by the speaker, leading to a temporary or surface shift in attitude. Messages that are thought provoking and that appeal to logic are more likely to lead to permanent changes in attitudes.

5.4 Summary

This chapter discussed the findings of the study in line with the research objectives. It

first discussed the attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities, then the effects of regular teachers' attitudes towards these learners and finally the interventions for regular teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities. From the study findings, it was established that regular teachers had negative attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities. Tags such as “genetically dull” and “backwards” were used to describe how regular teachers viewed learners with learning disabilities.

Among the effects of regular teachers' negative attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities established were; poor participation in classroom activities, poor academic performance, low self-esteem, learners were neither motivated and encouraged to study hard and there was poor teacher- pupil relationship. These learners were given fewer reading turns and time to solve mathematical problems on the board, apart from that teachers were not seen as role models as most learners ended up hating their teachers.

Regarding the third objective, it was established that small class sizes were important as they can enhance the good teacher-pupil ratio or contact thus helping regular teachers to treat every learner positively. It was also established that working with parents of learners with learning disabilities can also help in changing the negative mindset of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities. Teacher training in Special Education was another intervention that was suggested as well as administrative support. It was further established that working with school counselors can also help to change the negative attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter concludes the study and also makes some recommendations based on its findings. The study was aimed at establishing the attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities and to also establish the effects of these attitudes on learners with learning disabilities. Above all, the study aimed at establishing interventions for regular teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities.

6.1 Conclusion

This study has shown that regular teachers had negative attitude towards learners with learning disabilities. This was attributed to the fact that some teachers had very little knowledge and understanding of these learners; they know very little about Special Education.

The effects of negative attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities included the following; poor classroom interaction/ participation, poor academic performance, poor teacher pupil relationship, learners' self - esteem was also negatively affected, learners were not given room to explore their potentials. Apart from that, some learners ended up developing resentment and fear towards their teachers as a result ended up avoiding them (teachers). From the above findings, it can thus be concluded that negative attitudes lead to negative effects while positive attitudes lead to positive effects on the learners.

Among the interventions suggested were small class sizes as this can enhance the good teacher-pupil ratio or contact thus helping regular teachers to treat every learner positively. It was also established that working with parents of learners with learning disabilities can also help in changing the negative mindset of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities. Teacher training in special education was another intervention that was suggested as well as administrative support. It was further established that working with school counselors can also help to change the negative attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities.

6.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- The Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education should include Special Education in the curriculum from grades 1-12. This will help to change the negative mindset of regular teachers, thus helping learners with learning disabilities to learn effectively thereby enabling them to become successful and productive members of society.
- The Head teachers should ensure that in every CPD meetings and workshops, Special Education is discussed intensively so as to fully sensitize regular teachers on how best they can help learners with learning disabilities. During such meetings, interventions suggested by each department should be implemented, monitored and evaluated in order to address the negative attitudes of regular teachers towards learners with learning disabilities.

- School administrators (head-teachers) should ensure that over-enrolment of pupils in classes is controlled so that there is good teacher-pupil contact in order to maximize learning opportunities for all pupils. This is only possible if regular teachers have a manageable class-load. When regular teachers have small class sizes, they will be able to treat every learner positively.

6.3 Area of future research

A research involving more districts, some from rural areas and others from the urban areas would be more ideal. Such a research undertaking would be more comprehensive because it would capture a wider area.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Dear respondent,

This serves to give you an understanding of the purpose of this study and procedures that will be followed. Furthermore, implications for your participation are explained. Finally, you are asked to sign this form to indicate that you have agreed to participate in this study.

The researcher is a University of Zambia student pursuing a Master's degree in special education, seeking to establish the effects of teachers' attitudes towards learners with Learning disabilities and the ordinary learners. Your participation in this exercise is therefore dependent on your consent. You are free to refuse to participate in this exercise. The researcher would like to assure you that all data collected from this study will be treated with ultimate confidentiality. Participates are assured that they will remain anonymous and untraceable. Above all, all efforts will be taken to ensure that the rights of the participates are protected and respected. No harm will result from your participation in this exercise. You are free to ask for any clarification at any point of the exercise and to inform the researcher if you feel uncomfortable about any procedure in the study.

Declaration.

I have read and fully understand this document, its contents has been explained to me. I therefore agree to participate in this exercise.

Signature

Date

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS FOR LEARNERS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

A. Personal details

(i). Gender Male { } Female { }

(ii). Gender of child..... Age of child Grade of child.....

B. Attitudes of teachers towards learners with learning disabilities and the ordinary learners

1. What do you think are the attitudes of teachers towards the ordinary learners?

.....

2. Justify your response?

.....

3. What are the attitudes of teachers towards your child?

.....

4. Justify your response?

.....

.....

C. Effects of teachers' attitudes on learners with learning disabilities

5. What are the effects of teachers' attitudes towards your child?

.....
.....
6. Does the teachers' attitude really matter in the education of your child?

7. Justify your response?

.....
.....
8. Apart from affecting your child academically, do you think that the attitudes of teachers also affect the way your child behaves at home?

9. Justify your response?

.....
.....
10. Does the attitudes of teachers also affect the way your child interacts with his/her peers?

11. Justify your response?.....

.....
12. Do you think that teachers' attitudes towards your child may also affect your child's choice of career?

13. Justify your response?

.....
D. Interventions that can help Regular Teachers in Teaching learners with Learning Disabilities

14. what are some of the interventions that can help regular teachers in the teaching of learners with learning disabilities?

.....
.....
15. Justify.....
.....

THANK YOU.

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

This questionnaire is intended to collect data on the effects of teachers' attitudes towards learners with Learning disabilities and those without. The study is purely academic hence your confidentiality is assured. Answer the questions as honestly as possible and help us to come up with a true reflection on the topic.

A. Personal details

(i). Gender Male { } Female { }

(ii). Where were you trained as a teacher?

(iii). What qualification did you get?

B. Teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities and the ordinary learners.

1. What is your attitude of learners with learning disabilities?

Positive { } Fair { } Negative { }

2. Justify your response?

.....
.....

3. How often do you hold CPD meetings and Workshops? Very often { } Not very often { } Others (specify)

4(a). Are you sensitized much on learners with learning disabilities in these meetings and workshops? Yes { } No { }

4(b). Justify your response?

.....

5. What is your attitude towards the ordinary learners?

Negative { }

Positive { }

Fair { }

6. Justify your response?

.....

C. Effects of teachers' attitudes on learners with learning disabilities.

7. What are the effects of your attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities?

.....

.....

8. Does your attitudes as teachers really matter in the education of learners with learning disabilities? Yes { } No { }

9. If 'Yes' to 7, explain how it matters?

.....

.....

10. Does your attitudes also affect the way these learners look at themselves (self-esteem)?
Yes { } No { }

11. Justify your response?

.....

12. Do you also think that your attitudes may affect the way these learners interact with others (peers)? Yes { } No { }

13. If 'Yes' to 12, explain how it does so?

.....
.....
14. Do you think that your attitudes as teachers also affect the career choice of learners with learning disabilities?

Yes { } No { }

15. If 'Yes' to 14, explain how it affects learners with learning disabilities?

.....
.....

D. Interventions that can help Regular Teachers in Teaching learners with Learning Disabilities

20. What are some of the interventions that can help you as regular teachers in the teaching of learners with learning disabilities?

.....
.....

THANK YOU.

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW SCHEDULES FOR PUPILS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

A. Personal details

(i). Gender Male { } Female { }

(ii). Age Grade

B. Teachers' attitudes on learners with learning disabilities and the ordinary learners

1. What are your teachers' attitudes towards you in class and outside class?

.....

2. Justify your response?

.....

C. Effects of teachers' attitudes on learners with learning disabilities.

3. What are the effects of teachers' attitudes towards you?

.....

.....

4. Do you think that your performance is affected by the way the teachers treat you?

.....

5. Justify your response?

.....

6. Does the teachers' attitudes affect the way you interact with your peers in class and outside the classroom?

7. Justify your response?.....
.....

8. Does the teachers' attitudes also affect the way you interact with your peers in society?

9. Justify your response?

10. Does your teachers attitudes affect the way you look at yourself (self-esteem)?
.....

11. Justify your response?

12. Does your teachers' attitudes also affect your choices like choosing your career?
.....

13. Justify your response?.....
.....

14. In which other ways does the teachers' attitudes affect you?
.....
.....

D. Interventions that can help Regular Teachers in Teaching learners with Learning Disabilities

15. What are some of the interventions that can help you as regular teachers in the teaching of learners with learning disabilities?

.....

.....

THANK YOU.

APPENDIX E

OBSERVATION SCHEME

1. Study site

2. Grade of learners

3. How often do teachers hold CPD meetings and Workshops?

.....

4. Are regular teachers sensitized much on learners with learning disabilities in these meetings?

.....

.....

5. What are the teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities?

.....

.....

6. What are the effects of teachers' attitudes towards learners with learning disabilities?

.....

.....

7. Does the attitudes of teachers affect the way these learners perform in class?

.....

.....

8. Does the attitude of teachers affect the way these learners interact with their peers?

.....

.....

9. what are some of the interventions that can help regular teachers to effectively teach learners with learning disabilities?

.....

.....