

**PARENTS' AND TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS INCLUSIVE
EDUCATION IN SELECTED BASIC SCHOOLS OF KALULUSHI DISTRICT
OF ZAMBIA**

BY

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A dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of the Master of Education in Special Education.

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I, James Chilufya, do hereby solemnly declare that this dissertation represents my own work and that it has never been previously submitted for a degree at this or any other University.

Signed 




Date..12th December, 2005..

DEDICATION

For my late father Donald Chilufya and my mother Josephine Mwape Kalunga, whose support in my education, will forever inspire my soul.

APPROVAL

This dissertation by James Chilufya is approved as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Master of Education (Special Education) degree of the University of Zambia.

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ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
DEBS	District Education Board Secretary
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
ECZ	Examination Council of Zambia
EFA	Education for All
ESSP	Education Sector Support Programme
FINNIDA	Finnish International Development Agency
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
HIV	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus
INSPRO	Inclusive Schooling Programme
MOE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non – Governmental Organisation
NIF	National Implementation Framework
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences Programme
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNZA	University of Zambia
ZAMISE	Zambia Institute of Special Education

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the attitudes of parents and teachers towards inclusive education in 20 selected basic schools of Kalulushi District on the Copperbelt Province. Descriptive survey design was used, in which quantitative and qualitative methods were used. A sample of 200 respondents was selected from the 20 schools. There was 100% return rate. However, seven questionnaires were incomplete and wrongly answered while 193 (96.5%) of them were completed and correctly answered.

Data were collected using questionnaires and semi structured interviews. Data collected using questionnaires was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) while data from interview were analyzed qualitatively by coding and grouping similar themes together into categories using constant comparative techniques. After the analyses of data, tables of frequencies and percentages were used in the examination and presentation of data.

The findings of this study revealed that attitudes of parents and teachers varied considerably. Parents and special education teachers had negative attitudes towards inclusive education. Ordinary teachers and head teachers, on the other hand, had positive attitudes towards inclusive education. In addition, the study revealed that there was a relationship between attitudes towards inclusive education and disabilities. Those who had negative attitudes towards inclusive education were also found to have negative attitudes towards persons with disabilities. Conversely, respondents with positive attitudes towards inclusive education were found to have somewhat positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities.

Factors that influenced negative attitudes included lack of teaching-learning materials and management support as well as lack of appropriate training for teachers.

Other factors included large classes, examination oriented syllabuses, rigid timetables and lack of commitment to inclusive policies by government. Respondents who had positive attitudes towards inclusive education were influenced by factors such as inclusive education as a right, inclusive education policies, and good management support. Other factors were those related to avoidance of exclusion and segregation, respect for human choices and values as well as cost effectiveness of inclusive education. The study also revealed that respondents with more liberal social views had more positive attitudes towards inclusive education than those with predominantly conservative views. The findings of this study were in line with Kerlinger's attitudinal generalisations which explain people's complex thinking regarding attitudes (Kerlinger, 1984).

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1.0 BACKGROUND

The history of Special Education both in Zambia and at international level can be understood well when it is examined in three phases. These include segregation, integration and the inclusion phases. The first phase relating to the provision of education and placement of children with special educational needs was associated with segregation. During this phase, children with special educational needs were educated in special schools, separate from their colleagues who were called 'normal'. The attitudes of people towards children and adults with disabilities, affected the way persons with disabilities were treated and placed in school and community settings.

The earliest forms of Special Education in Zambia began in the 1930s. During this phase, the first persons with disabilities to be educated were blind. They were followed by the deaf. The education of persons with disabilities was regarded as a responsibility of the missionaries and not parents and the government. Missionaries were interested in providing education to persons with disabilities so that they could read the Bible and evangelize the communities around them. The earliest Special Education school for the blind was established in Eastern part of Zambia in 1929 by a Dutch Reformed Missionary, Ella Botes. Between 1930 and 1953 many different mission agencies opened schools for the blind at Lwena, Mambilima, Johnstone Falls (Mulundu), Bwanam'kubwa and Sefula (Kalabula, 1989:44).

In other countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States of America, Special Education started in the late eighteenth century. For example, the first school for the blind in France began in 1784 and in England it was opened in Liverpool in 1791 (Lowenfeld, 1974, and Abang, 1980). The first school for the deaf and the 'dumb' in Great Britain was opened by Thomas Braidwood.

Later, in the mid nineteenth century, the first education provision for the 'Mentally Defective' children was opened at an asylum for 'idiots' at Highgate (Kalabula 1991:13, Gearheart, 1980, Warnock, 1978, Solity and Ray Bould, 1988).

It appears from the above, that peoples' attitudes towards persons with disabilities' education provision and placement have been negative since time immemorial. The second phase relating to provision of Special Needs Education and placement of learners with special needs was integration. It emphasized the right and moral practice of people. As early as 1810, Johann Wilhelm Klein, founder of a residential school for the blind in Vienna, advocated for integration of persons with disabilities into ordinary schools. In 1842, government of Australia passed a decree that authorized the provision of education of blind children in public schools. Later, many countries began to advocate for integration (Kalabula, 1991, Lowenfeld, 1974).

The 1970s and 1980s saw the establishment of several policies and laws in support of integration all over the world. In the United States, the Public Law (PL 94 – 142) enacted in 1975, directed states to protect the rights of children with disabilities and their parents in relation to the placement and provision of education. It stated that persons with disabilities should receive education as much as possible in the 'mainstream' schools rather than in segregated settings (Salend, 1984). In the United Kingdom, the debate on integration 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 schools (Warnock, 1978).

In Zambia, Special Education first received attention in the Education Reform of 1977, which stated that children with disabilities should receive basic and further education by full-time study as any other children (GRZ 1977:23). However, the policy document does not mention that this education should be provided in ordinary or special institutions. Although this was not mentioned, the practice was that Special classes and units were created in ordinary schools soon after the Education Reform was written. This was in support of integration policies in other countries as discussed earlier.

The third and more recent concept as regards provision and placement of children with special educational needs is Inclusive Education. The concept has been very popular since the 1990s. While some professionals use inclusion and integration interchangeably, others distinguish the difference between the two. Inclusive Education is a wider concept than integration. According to Rosa Blanco (in Savolainen, 2000: 40) Inclusive education, emphasizes the right to education, to equal opportunities and participation. It is not just about access of children with disabilities to ordinary education 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 supposed to differentiate and adapt the curriculum and instructional strategies to suit these needs.

Inclusive education is also seen as the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all (UNESCO, 1994). In Zambia, inclusive education was introduced in 1997, soon after the Ministry of Education had developed a National policy on education, "educating our Future". The Policy endorses integration of children with Special Educational Needs in ordinary education and it is in line with the current thinking of Inclusive Education.

1.2.0 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Research on attitudes towards inclusive education seems to give different results in different countries and settings. In Zambia, a base line study carried out by Kasonde-Ngandu and Moberg (2001) on inclusive schooling in North-Western and Western provinces indicate that the idea of inclusive education was widely accepted; parents generally had negative attitudes while headteachers and ordinary teachers had more positive attitudes than special education teachers.

On the contrary, some studies have shown that parents have positive attitudes towards inclusive education. A similar study done in South Africa to measure the attitudes of

South African parents towards inclusive education revealed that parents' attitudes were positive. (Nyewe and Green, 1999: 13-25).

Meanwhile, factors that lead to parents and teachers' negative and positive attitudes towards inclusive education are not well known. Teachers in inclusive schools are not willing to include children with disabilities in their classes. Parents of these children are reported to have fears that their children would not feel at ease in their relationship with non disabled peers and that they would be teased or ignored. In some communities in Zambia children with disabilities are still being hidden in homes due to stigma. As a result, children with disabilities are excluded from formal education and consequently denied the right to education. This study therefore was undertaken in order to determine attitudes of parents and teachers towards inclusive education.

1.3.0 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of the study was to find out attitudes of parents and teachers towards inclusive education. The question of interest was; what were the parents and teachers' attitudes, perceptions and beliefs regarding inclusive education? The study was also seeking to find out factors that might contribute to parents and teachers' positive or negative attitudes towards inclusive education.

1.4.0 OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the study were to:

1. find out the attitudes of parents of children with disabilities, parents of non disabled children, headteachers, ordinary teachers and special education teachers towards inclusive education.
2. find out parents and teachers' attitudes, perceptions and beliefs regarding disabilities.

3. find out factors that might hinder or promote positive attitudes towards inclusive education.
4. find out whether or not there was a relationship between negative attitudes towards inclusive education and disabilities.
5. find out the working relationship that existed between teachers and parents in inclusive schools.
6. find out teachers' perceptions of their own abilities to teach children with disabilities.
7. examine the impact of the child with a disability on the classroom management.
8. examine the impact of inclusive education on the academic and social growth of children in inclusive schools.

1.5.0 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research attempted to answer the following questions:

1. what are parents and teachers' attitudes, perceptions and beliefs regarding inclusive education?
2. what are parents and teachers' attitudes, perceptions and beliefs regarding disabilities?
3. what factors might hinder or promote positive attitudes towards inclusive education?
4. is there a relationship between negative attitudes towards inclusive education and disabilities?

5. how do parents and teachers relate to each other in inclusive schools?
6. what are teachers' perceptions of their own abilities to teach children with disabilities?
7. what impact does the child with disabilities have on the classroom management?
8. what impact does inclusive education have on the academic and social growth of children in inclusive schools?

1.6.0 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The attitudes towards inclusive education and children with special needs are of prime concern. They can influence the success or failure of inclusion. Tibebu (1995) and Moberg (2000) point out that teachers' attitudes can facilitate or hinder the learning of children with special needs in ordinary classes. The attitudes of non-disabled children towards inclusion of children with disabilities are crucial to the success of inclusive education (Hendrickson et al, 1996).

Similarly, attitudes of parents towards inclusion are critical because they can influence the placement of their children. Ultimately, the attitudes of both parents and teachers can influence and shape the policies on inclusive education either positively or negatively. A study by Moberg (2000) show that Finnish teachers' perceptions of inclusive education are still rather negative, despite that the policy on inclusion has officially been approved and supported since the 1970s. A base line study by Kasonde-Ngandu and Moberg (2001), show that ordinary teachers and headteachers displayed more positive attitudes towards Inclusive Education than specialist teachers while parents had negative attitudes. This study therefore might contribute to the development of inclusive education in Zambia; provide useful information to teachers, parents, school managers and policy

makers. It is also hoped that the study would add new knowledge to research and perhaps generate questions and further research.

1.7.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study followed Kerlinger's generalization of attitudes. He proposes two attitudinal generalizations which explain peoples' complex thinking regarding attitudes. These are **Traditionalism** and **Progressivism** as related to education. Available research points out that, educator attitudes are being more aligned with Kerlinger's traditionalist position than with the progressivist (Bunch, 1997: 5).

He defines **Traditionalism** as a "set of educational beliefs that focuses on ultimate truths and principles, the intellectual aspects and standards of education, subject matter, spiritual and moral values, tradition, discipline, and the authority of the teacher, and education as preparation for further education and for life."

He further defines **Progressivism** as a "set of educational beliefs that is characterized by emphasis on the needs and interests of the child, the freedom of the child and the teacher, permissiveness, life experiences as educative, quality of teacher and student, democratic citizenship, physical, emotional and social development. Thus, education of the "whole child" (Kerlinger, 1984:23).

This theory suggests that some people's attitudes are generally conservative (traditional) while other people's attitudes are liberal (progressive). In relation to integration, Jenkinson (1997:30) found out that professionals with liberal social views had more positive attitudes than those with predominantly conservative views. On the other hand, professionals who favoured social control such as the use of discipline and punishment had more negative attitudes towards integration.

1.8.0 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Pupils were not involved in the study. Their views and attitudes towards inclusive education would probably have provided more information to the study. Adults with disabilities were also not involved in this study. Their contributions to this study would have made a difference. The study was also limited to Kalulushi because of time, transport and money constraints.

1.9.0 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study was restricted to 20 basic schools in one district only due to time, transport and money constraints. A sample of 200 respondents was randomly selected from the 20 Basic schools. However, 193 questionnaires were valid and collected out of the 200 distributed.

1.1.0 DEFINITION OF TERMS

ATTITUDE

Attitude is defined as a general enduring positive or negative feeling about somebody, object or issue (Fishbein & Ajzen 1975, Tibebu, 1995)

According to Kerlinger (1984:5) "Attitudes are enduring and organized structures of social beliefs that predispose individuals to think, feel, perceive, and behave selectively towards referents or 'cognitive objects' of attitudes." Fishbein (1965) defines attitudes as learned predispositions to respond to an object or a class of objects in a favourable or unfavourable way. That is either negative or positive attitudes. Essential feature of attitudes are that they are acquired or learned and are implicit. Kalabula (1991:21) points out that "attitudes are not immutable, they often change and new ones develop as individuals mature and widen their experiences in life." The concept of attitude used in this study is closely related to Kerlinger's definition of attitude.

INCLUSION

In this study, inclusion refers to the situation in which students with disabilities are educated together with their non disabled peers and special education support and services are being provided. Norwich (1999: 8-10) defines inclusion as being in the same place and doing the same things as other students. It is the right to individual's relevant learning.

It is an approach or principal which aims at removing barriers to learning. It is beyond integration. It is about the right of every child irrespective of disability, colour, creed, sex, race or social status to share the same educational resources in the same classroom with others. (Savolainen 2000:12).

INTEGRATION

It refers to the education of pupils with special needs in ordinary schools (Hegarty, Pocklington and Lucas, 1981). It is the process of increasing the participation of learners in the educational, social and community life of ordinary schools (Booth, 1981; Hegarty, 1980).

In this study integration would refer to all the three types of integration as defined by the Ministry of Education (2002:26), Tibebe (1995) and Warnock (1978). The first is locational integration where special classes or units are set up in ordinary schools or where special school and mainstream share the same site. The second is social integration where children with special educational needs attend a special class or unit but socializes with those without special educational needs in out of class activities. The third type is called functional integration which refers to the interaction of children with special educational needs and ordinary children. It leads to joint participation in academic and social programmes.

MAINSTREAMING

Mainstreaming is an American concept that describes the participation of learners with disabilities in ordinary education classrooms to the extent that it is appropriate to meet their needs.

INCLUSIVE SCHOOLING

It is a system of educating children with disabilities together with the ordinary children in the ordinary classes in their neighbourhood schools or schools they would attend if they did not have disabilities.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

It is a philosophy in which schools have a responsibility of meeting the needs of all children within the ordinary education. It is commonly associated with the participation of children with special educational needs in ordinary schools.

According to Guijarro (in Savolainen, 2000: 40), Inclusive Education entails the right to education, equality of opportunities and participation. In addition, teachers are able to differentiate and adapt curriculum and instructional strategies to suit the various needs and abilities of each child in an ordinary school.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

It is a form of education designed to meet the special needs of children with various disabilities. It is implemented by providing individually planned and systematically evaluated instruction to support children with special needs.

SPECIAL NEEDS

These include intellectual disabilities, specific learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties, physical, hearing, visual impairments, speech and language difficulties, health impairments and talentedness and giftedness.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

These are extra educational resources needed for children with disabilities to receive education effectively.

SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION

In this study, special needs education refers to appropriate education provision for children with disabilities such as modified school infrastructure, modified teaching strategies, special schools, special units and well equipped inclusive classes.

IMPAIRMENT

This is the absence or malfunction of a part or organ of the body.

DISABILITY

This refers to a restriction or inability of the part of the body or organ to perform its intended function as a result of impairment.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Inclusive Education

Inclusive Education has been conceived from a movement associated with the struggle against exclusion of learners with disabilities and those with special educational needs to one which challenges all exclusion policies and practices in the world education systems (Savolainen, 2000). Some authors view inclusion as a process while others view it as an ideal state. For example, Booth (1996:96) believes that there are not many examples of inclusive schools that include all children from the neighbourhood, and therefore it is better to think of inclusion as a process of increasing participation.

Inclusive education is commonly associated with the participation of the ordinary schools in providing education to learners with impairments and those categorized as having “special educational needs” (Booth, 1996). The fundamental ideas of inclusive education are found in many international policy documents. Some of the most prominent documents include the convention on the rights of the child of 1989, the Jomtien World Declaration on Education for All of 1990, the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities of 1993 and the World Conference on Special Needs Education of 1994. All these policy documents have been written in order to promote, among other things, the right to education of learners with disabilities and those with special educational needs. Zambia is a signatory to most of these international declarations and conversions on the rights of the child.

The Salamanca Framework for Action, for example was adopted at the World Conference in 1994 in order to reinforce the principles expressed in the Jomtien Declaration and the Standard Rules, which states in part, that:

“schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street children and working children, children from remote or nomadic population, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas”. (Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action, art 3,1994).

Savolainen and Alasuutari (2000: 10) observed that although there was a considerable debate on inclusion in the literature today, its concept remained unclear, or at least it was used in various ways. They further observed that despite the consensus on the right of all individuals to education, children with disabilities were, perhaps the most excluded from schools and the education system as a whole. Despite the debates on inclusion and the continued marginalization of children with special educational needs and other vulnerable children by education systems, UNESCO and OECD in particular, have greatly supported the ideas of inclusive education. The Salamanca Conference in Spain provided a platform to affirm the principle of Education for All and five key areas were proclaimed (UNESCO, 1994: 10):

- Every child has a fundamental right to education, and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning,
- Every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs,
- Educational systems should be designed and educational programmes implemented to take into account the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs,

- Those with special educational needs must have access to regular schools which should accommodate them with a child centered pedagogy capable of meeting these needs,
- Regular schools with this orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all: moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system.

As a result of the Salamanca statement and Framework for Action and other international policies mentioned earlier, countries all over the World began to make changes in their education policies so as to accommodate children with special educational needs.

The policy on special education in Zambia was first documented in the Education Reform of 1977. The policy stated that children with disabilities were entitled to education like any other children and that they should receive basic and further education by full time study (GRZ, 1977:23). However, the policy did not state as to whether their right to a full time education was to be provided in the ordinary schools. Soon after the World Declaration on Education for All held in Jomtien (Thailand), Zambia came up with a second policy document on education called 'Focus on Learning' published in 1992. The policy emphasized the mobilization of resources for the development of school education for All including children with special educational needs. The document did not strongly support inclusive education.

The third major national educational policy document developed by the Ministry of Education in 1996, as a result of the global change in the provision of special needs education, was "Educating Our Future". The policy has since made an impact on the provision of free education, in basic schools from grade 1-7 through the Basic Education Sub-Sector Investment Programme (BESSIP) which ran from 1998 to 2003. As a response to the 1990 World Declaration on Education for All (EFA), the Ministry of Education has continued to provide free education to primary level (grades 1 – 7). In

2003, the Ministry took on board all the three educational levels: Basic, High and Tertiary education through the National Implementation Framework (NIF). All these programmes are part of the implementation of the 1996 policy.

As regards the provision of Special Needs Education, the policy states that the Ministry will, to the greatest extent possible, integrate pupils with special educational needs into mainstream institutions and will provide them with necessary facilities (MOE: 1996: 69). It further states that the Ministry will dispense all direct educational costs for children with special educational needs and will provide bursaries for such individuals at tertiary level.

As a commitment to integration of learners with disabilities in the mainstream, the Ministry introduced a programme known as Inclusive Schooling Programme (INSPRO) in 1997. The programme was first introduced in Kalulushi district on the Copperbelt province of Zambia as a pilot. After the programme succeeded, it was taken to scale in 1999 with financial and technical Support from NGOs and Cooperating partners such as DANIDA, FINNIDA and Ireland Aid. By the end of 2003, the programme had reached 21 districts. Training of ordinary teachers and sensitization of several other stakeholders on inclusive education were done. Key stakeholders involved in the sensitization included pupils, teachers, headteachers, parents, health workers, social workers and traditional leaders such as chiefs and headmen.

Some of the challenges of inclusive education in Zambia include, lack of commitment by some school headteachers, ordinary teachers, and policy makers towards inclusive education. There seem to be some resistance in some schools while others are doing extremely well. Despite the pledge in the policy, to supporting inclusive education in general and learners with special educational needs in particular, implementation has been very difficult. For example, there are currently no funding formulas or systems towards inclusive education in Zambia. However, special schools and units have continued to survive through the traditional funding system of grants.

Teachers' attitudes towards inclusive Education

Research findings on general attitudes of people towards inclusive education are mixed. Some have positive attitudes and others have negative attitudes. Factors that lead to positive or negative attitudes are varied. A UNESCO survey (1986, as quoted in Savolainen 2000:13) on teachers' views on integrated education show that, countries in which teachers had positive attitudes towards inclusive education had a law requiring this. It has also been shown that teachers' positive attitudes towards inclusion depend greatly on their experience with learners with special educational needs, teacher education, and availability of support, class size and workload.

The attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education vary and depend on several factors. A study conducted by Tibebe (1995:118) in Ethiopia on the meanings attached to disability, attitudes towards disabled people and towards integration in ordinary schools revealed that teachers' attitudes towards integration depended on the nature of the disability groups. For example, disability groups which were accepted included the visually impaired who could read printed materials, the physically disabled confined to wheel chairs and those who were partially deaf. Those who were not accepted were the mild mentally disabled, cerebral palsied, deaf, emotionally disturbed, epileptic, and those with speech problems. Teachers and parents had negative attitudes towards the inclusion of these groups into ordinary classes.

On the contrary, a survey carried out by Scuggs and Matropieri (1996:59-74) in Canada and the United States of America on perceptions of teachers regarding inclusion, showed that two thirds of the ordinary classroom teachers supported the concept of inclusive education.

Reasons for supporting the inclusion varied according to disabling condition, the skills training and resources necessary for inclusion. While over half of the teachers felt that inclusion could benefit learners with disabilities, only one third believed they had the

skill, training and resources necessary for inclusion as well as sufficient time for learners with disabilities included in their classrooms.

A similar study by Moberg (2000), conducted in Finland on teachers' perceptions of inclusive education, revealed that teachers' perceptions were still negative even though the policy on inclusion was officially approved and supported since the 1970s. However he observed that the teachers' attitudes towards inclusion have been changing positively over the years. They were more willing to accept children with disabilities now than they did several years ago. Perhaps this suggests that experience might have contributed towards the change of attitudes.

Larrivee (1982) discovered five factors related to ordinary teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. The first is that teachers' general philosophy about inclusive education and its impact on the affective and emotional development might affect the teacher. The second factor was the classroom behaviour of the disabled child. The third is the perceptions of teachers of their own ability to teach the disabled children, the fourth is the impact the disabled child has on the classroom management and the fifth one is the impact integration has on the academic and social growth of the disabled child.

Research indicates that teachers' attitudes have serious impact on the success of inclusion (Tibebu 1995; Moberg 2000). Siegal and Jousovec (1994), point out that there is overwhelming evidence that teachers have negative attitudes towards inclusion and teaching students with special educational needs. Further more, teachers do not fully agree and do not believe that inclusion would work (Moberg 1998:156).

The findings of Kalabula (1991) in his study on the integration of the visually impaired children into Zambian schools, revealed that teachers had no training in dealing with the visually impaired children and that they did not have resources and support to teach effectively. These findings are in agreement with a research carried out by Mandyata (2002:66) on the views of teachers on inclusive education in Kasama district of Zambia, which revealed that teachers were not in favour of inclusive education. Their views were

influenced by lack of training and resources to equip them in handling children with special needs in ordinary classes.

In terms of inclusive education practices, Hardman et al (1990) suggested that not only were ordinary classroom teachers not supportive of inclusion but that they were also likely to experience frustration and anger as a result of including children with special educational needs in their classrooms. Research has also shown that teachers' negative attitudes towards inclusion are linked to lack of support to teachers. For example, Charles and Malian (1980) observed that ordinary teachers did not accept learners with special needs because of the extra support such as accommodation, individual instruction, teaching methods and other services that are required for them to learn. Teachers also felt that placing learners with special needs in their classrooms would affect their effectiveness, disrupt their classrooms, and 'dilute' their programmes (Bradfield et al 1973, Vaac and Kirst, 1977).

Many of the concerns raised by teachers in various studies also include time factor, lack of appropriate support, lack of skills in assessment and teaching. Jenkinson (1997) observed that if teachers' attitudes and that of the principal were poor, even if material resources were put in place and attitude of non-disabled pupils were positive, the pupils with disabilities would not perform well. He noted that school head teachers, teachers and parents express fears of including children with disabilities in ordinary classrooms. Principals feel that inclusion would call for major modification of school organization and the environment when they were already faced with competing priorities and limited resources. He further noted that teachers might feel threatened by having to cope with a child with special needs that they were ill-equipped to deal with. On the other hand parents fear the loss of facilities, expertise and security that their children with disabilities had once enjoyed in special schools or units.

Other factors that influenced teachers' attitudes are cultural related factors. A study by Leyser, Kappermen and Keller (1994, as quoted in Jenkinson 1997:30), confirmed that cultural influences were likely to affect teachers' attitudes to integration. The study

explored attitudes of teachers in six countries. They found out that cultural factors, such as religion and over crowding in schools might be related to attitudes.

Parents' Attitudes towards Inclusive Education

The success of inclusive education is not the task of the Ministry of Education alone, but it requires the co-operation of parents, communities, voluntary organizations and the public at large. UNESCO (1994) points out that a positive attitude on the part of parents, favours school and social integration. Parents are privileged partners as regards the special educational needs of their child and therefore they should be accorded a chance to choose the type of education provision and placement they desire for their children. Further more parents need support in order to assume the role of a parent of a child with special needs.

A study carried out in South Africa to measure the attitudes of South African parents' attitudes towards inclusive education of their children with mild and moderate mental disabilities, revealed that parents felt that the emotional climate of special needs education was superior, particularly in terms of teachers' patience and caring (Nyewe and Green, 1999).

On the contrary, other studies have shown that parents display negative attitudes towards Inclusive Education. Parents of children with special needs have more negative attitudes than other parents. One of the reasons was that they felt their children would be uncomfortable in their relationships with non disabled children. (Kasonde-Ngandu & Moberg, 2001:37). According to Jenkinson (1997:29), Parents' negative attitudes towards Inclusive Education was the fear for them to have their children lose the facilities, expertise and the security they received in segregated settings such as special schools. A study on integration of visually impaired students in Secondary schools of Zambia by Kalabula (1991: 239) reviewed that 75% of the parents interviewed said that their children were not happy at ordinary schools. He further found that 65% of parents were not in favour of integrating their blind children in secondary schools.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1.0 Research design

Descriptive survey design was used, in which quantitative and qualitative methods were used. This research design is concerned with conditions, or relationships that exist; practices that prevail; processes that are going on; effects that are being felt; or trends that are developing. (Best, 1970 as quoted in Louis Cohen and Lawrence Manion, 1994; 67). The design, therefore, was chosen because it is concerned with the beliefs, points of views, or attitudes that are held by parents and teachers towards Inclusive Education. Twenty (20) schools involved in the research were selected from a total of 47 schools in Kalulushi district using simple random sampling techniques. The technique involved listing all schools by numbering them and then the first 20 of those with odd numbers were picked. The 20 schools were selected because Inclusive Education was first introduced in the district by the Ministry of Education in 1997. As a result, the schools were expected to have more experience in inclusive schooling programme than other schools where the programme was introduced later. The schools were also selected because they have both rural and urban features and therefore they tend to represent most of the schools in the country.

3.2.0 Population

The population comprised of all teachers, head teachers and parents of children with and without special needs in 20 selected schools in Kalulushi District. From this population, one hundred and six (106) of them were ordinary teachers, thirty three (33) special education teachers, thirty (30) Headteachers, fifteen (15) parents of children with special needs and sixteen (16) were parents of children without special needs who were selected

by using simple random sampling techniques. The total sample was therefore 200 respondents who were randomly selected and participated in the study.

3.3.0 Sample and Sampling Procedure

All Basic Schools in Kalulushi are practicing inclusive education. From 20 Basic Schools, a sample of 200 respondents was randomly selected. This comprised one hundred and six (106) ordinary teachers, thirty three (33) special education teachers, thirty (30) Headteachers, fifteen (15) parents of children with special needs and sixteen (16) were parents of children without special needs.

3.4.0 Research Instruments and their Administration

Two questionnaires and a semi-structured interview were used in collecting data. Standard attitude questionnaires were adapted from Moberg (1996), Yuker et al (1966) and Bunch et al (1997). Questionnaires on attitudes towards inclusive education (ATIE) comprised of 20 questions, administered to all the respondents. These were ordinary and special education teachers, head teachers, parents of children with disabilities and parents of non disabled children. The second questionnaire for ordinary teachers only comprised 30 questions. The questions were constructed on a five – point Likert scale.

1	2	3	4	5
Agree	agree	Not decided	Disagree	Disagree
Strongly	Generally		Generally	Strongly

Reasons for choosing the five – point Likert Scale is that it provides a wider range of choices to the respondents than a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ type of questionnaire. On this scale, 1 and 2 are considered positive while 4 and 5 are negative. Choice 3 is considered a neutral or mild response.

The third instrument was a semi-structured interview consisting of 28 questions. These were administered to 15 parents, 30 teachers and 15 head teachers of the 193 who answered the questionnaires.

3.5.0 Pre-testing of research instruments

The pre-testing of instruments was done at Solwezi Basic School in Solwezi district of North Western Province of Zambia. This was done in order to ascertain the internal and external validity as well as reliability of the instruments. The pre-testing also provided a chance to revise ambiguous questions in the instruments and minimize potential errors and biases from respondents.

3.6.0 Data Collection Procedure

Two self-administered questionnaires were used as data collecting instruments. The last page of each questionnaire provided space for spontaneous comments which were read, coded and discussed. The first questionnaire comprised 20 questions for all respondents and the second comprised 30 questions for ordinary teachers only. A semi-structured interview was also used for some respondents. Interviews were arranged confidentially on an individual basis at a convenient time and place. They lasted for about 40 minutes. Interviews provided more qualitative and rich information on attitudes as they gave an opportunity for the researcher and respondents to discuss issues on attitudes in detail.

Parents who could not read or speak English were allowed to use the local language called Icibemba, which is widely spoken in Kalulushi district. Questions were therefore interpreted or asked in Icibemba in order for such parents to provide accurate responses.

To ensure confidentiality, anonymity, and honest responses, respondents were requested not to write their names on the questionnaires.

3.7.0 Data Analysis

Data was first edited to check, completeness, accuracy and uniformity of the respondents' answers. Through this process, four (4) questionnaires were found incorrectly answered and were declared invalid and three (3) were not returned. This was followed by data reduction through coding in preparation for analysis. The data was then analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences programme (SPSS). Frequencies, histograms, pie and bar charts as well as percentages were used in presenting and describing data. Correlation coefficients were also used to determine the strength of relationships between some variables.

3.8.0 Data Interpretation

Data was both quantitatively and qualitatively interpreted. Data which was analyzed quantitatively was interpreted according to statistical procedures and inferences. In most cases respondents' views with the highest frequencies or percentages were considered to be the views of the majority. The relationships between some variables were determined by use of correlation coefficients. For instance, $r = +1.0$ indicate a perfect positive correlation while $r = -1.0$ means a perfect negative correlation between two variables. Variables which have correlation close to +1 or -1 are considered to have a high positive or negative correlation. Qualitative data was interpreted as understood by the researcher without altering the meaning of the respondents' statements. In some cases, exact words of the respondents were quoted.

3.9.0 Ethical Considerations

Anonymity and confidentiality were observed and maintained while betrayal and deception of respondents were avoided. This was done by not requesting for respondents' identities and by ensuring that the information provided had no connection, in any way, with the identities. Also, the right of respondents to information was ensured by telling

them the true purpose of the study. Permission to conduct research was obtained from the District Education Board Secretary and the respective Heads of schools.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1.0 Respondents' sex

There were 200 respondents who participated in the study and out of this number 193 of them answered the questionnaires correctly. Of these, 58.5% were female and 41.5% were male.

4.2.0 Respondents' age

39.4% of the respondents were aged between 25 and 30 years, 25.9% were aged between 31 and 40 years, 20.7% were aged between 41 and 50 years, 7.3% were aged 51 and 60 years and 6.7% were under 25 years old. This implies that both the young and the old took part in the study.

4.3.0 Respondents' geographical location

The district is divided into three locations namely urban, peri-urban and rural. The majority (45.1%) of the respondents was from the peri-urban schools, followed by urban schools (27.5%) and rural schools (27.5%).

4.4.0 Respondents' highest academic qualifications

88.1% of the respondents had tertiary qualifications, 2.6% had attained secondary qualifications and 9.3% had none (Fig. 1).

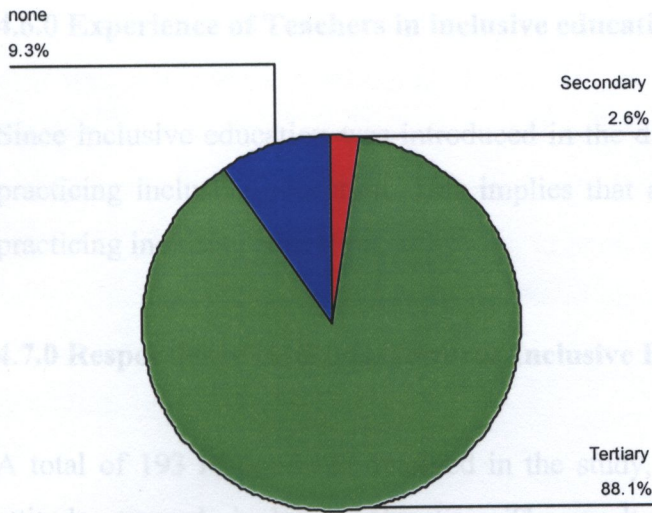


Fig1: Percentages of Respondents by academic qualifications

4.5.0 Respondents' positions

52.8% were ordinary teachers, 15.5% were special education teachers, 15.5% were headteachers, 7.8% were parents of children with disabilities and 8.3% were parents of children without disabilities. 47.2% of non teaching staff was almost half of all the respondents who took part in the study (Fig. 2)

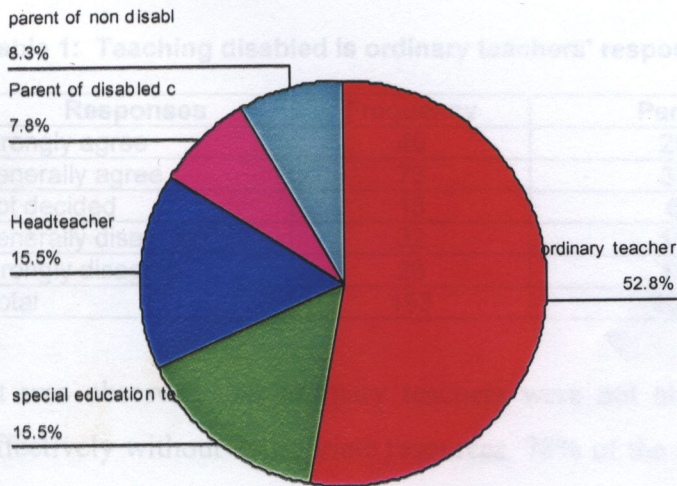


Fig 2: Percentages of respondents by position

4.6.0 Experience of Teachers in inclusive education

Since inclusive education was introduced in the district in 1997, all teachers have been practicing inclusive education. This implies that all teachers involved in the study are practicing inclusive education.

4.7.0 Respondents' Attitudes towards Inclusive Education

A total of 193 respondents involved in the study, were asked 20 questions about their attitudes towards inclusive education. The results varied considerably. 83.9% felt that pupils with severe disabilities should be educated in special schools. 52% believed that inclusion was a morally right thing to do in order to combat discrimination against children with disabilities in the education system. Over 70% of the respondents believed that integrating pupils with disabilities full time in ordinary classes meant equity for all. 49.2% believed that pupils with special needs should follow the programmes found in ordinary classrooms. Many of the respondents (63.2%) felt that it was the responsibility of the ordinary teachers to teach pupils with disabilities (Table 1). On pupils with severe disabilities, 69% of the respondents felt that these pupils should be taught by special education teachers.

Table 1: Teaching disabled is ordinary teachers' responsibility

Responses	Frequency	Percent
strongly agree	49	25.4
generally agree	73	37.8
not decided	13	6.7
generally disagree	32	16.6
strongly disagree	26	13.5
Total	193	100.0

It was observed that ordinary teachers were not able to meet some academic needs effectively without appropriate resources. 78% of the respondents observed that ordinary schools did not have resources and qualified personnel to meet the diverse academic needs of all pupils.

61% of the respondents observed that pupils with disabilities felt most comfortable when they were with others of the similar needs. 75% respondents said that pupils integrated in ordinary classes were sometimes rejected or teased by non-disabled pupils. However, respondents were confident that although some faced such negative treatments, their self-esteem would improve if they continued to learn with the non disabled pupils. 62.7% of the respondents observed that the presence of pupils with disabilities in ordinary classes did not interfere with general class management and the quality of education provided to non disabled pupils.

4. 8.0 Ordinary teachers' Attitudes towards Inclusive Education

The percentage of ordinary teachers who were involved in the study was 52.8%. All the teachers in the study were practicing inclusive education for the past 7 years since inclusive education was introduced to the district in 1997 by the Ministry of Education (District Education Board Secretary, 2002). Thirty (30) questions were asked on attitudes towards inclusive education. The questions were grouped under five headings: Teacher self-confidence on inclusion, Effective of inclusion on the ordinary class teacher, Effective of inclusion on the included student, Appropriateness of regular teacher workload and Teacher confidence in administrator support.

Teacher Self-confidence in Inclusive Education

While 64.5% of ordinary teachers were confident and sure that they could teach pupils with special needs in their classes, they believed that training in special needs education would help them become more effective in their work (Fig. 3). 72% said pupils with special needs would feel welcome in their classes and that they would enjoy their lessons. 81 percent said they were able to evaluate pupils with special education in their classes. However, 49% felt they could not manage the behaviour of some pupils with special needs.

Table 2: Children with disabilities will benefit academically in ordinary classes

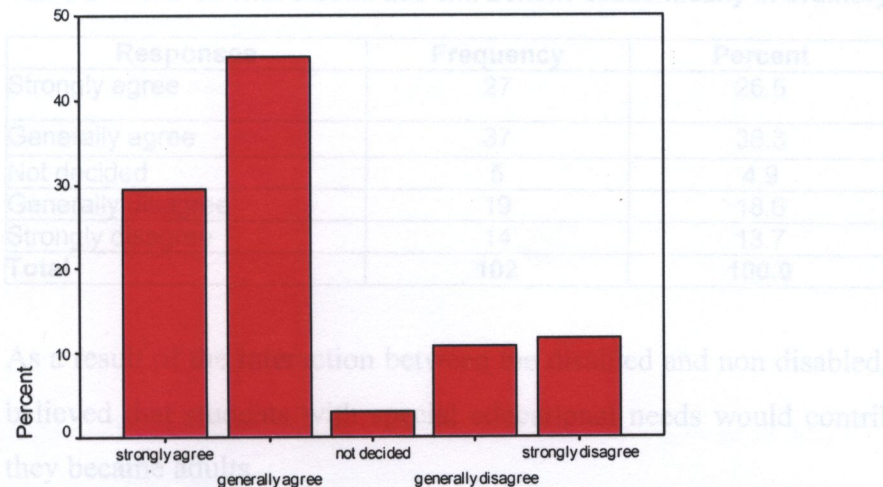


Fig 3: Ordinary Teachers' confidence to teach the disabled

Effect of inclusion on the ordinary class teachers

40.2% said they had sufficient time to plan and prepare adequately for pupils with special needs. 54.9% noted that their time tables were not flexible enough to allow for individual attention 77.5% said there was need to change the classroom environment by providing teaching and learning resources and modifying the school infrastructure in order to cater for all special educational needs. On social interaction between the teacher and the included students, 79.4% of the teachers observed that pupils with Special Educational Needs were accepted in ordinary classes.

Effect of inclusion on the included students

The study found out that pupils with special needs would socially and academically benefit. While 62.8% of the teachers said pupils with special educational needs would benefit academically (Table 2), 50% said that ordinary teachers did not have access to specialized learning materials. 67.7% believed that the self-concept of pupils with disabilities would improve if they were educated in ordinary classes.

Table 2: Children with disabilities will benefit academically in ordinary classes

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	27	26.5
Generally agree	37	36.3
Not decided	5	4.9
Generally disagree	19	18.6
Strongly disagree	14	13.7
Total	102	100.0

As a result of the interaction between the disabled and non disabled, 90% of the teachers believed that students with special educational needs would contribute to society when they became adults.

Appropriateness of regular teacher work load

Ordinary teachers said most of the classes were over enrolled forcing teachers to have 'double class shifts', a situation not conducive for inclusive education. This research found that there was a strong relationship ($r=0.8$) between teachers' confidence to teach and the workload to support teachers' views. 81.4% observed that they needed assistant teachers in order to cope with large classes. While 53% of the teachers noted that most of the techniques used to teach ordinary pupils were not very much different from those required for children with special educational needs, others felt that there was need to modify and vary teaching strategies to meet specific educational needs.

Teacher confidence on administrator support

93.1% of the ordinary teachers agreed that headteachers would help in developing policies for inclusive education (Table 3). While 42.2 % of the teachers noted that their head teachers were too busy to give them moral and educational support, 61.8% acknowledged that headteachers supported their innovations they made on inclusive education (Table 4).

Table 3: Percentage of respondents supporting Headteachers' help in developing Inclusive Education policies

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	75	73.5
Generally agree	20	19.6
Not decided	1	1.0
Generally disagree	2	2.0
Strongly disagree	4	3.9
Total	102	100.0

Table 4: Headteachers support teachers' innovations in inclusion

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	30	29.4
Generally agree	33	32.4
Not decided	12	11.8
Generally disagree	10	9.8
Strongly disagree	17	16.6
Total	102	100.0

About 60% of the teachers said their headteachers overloaded them with extra responsibilities, which reduced their time from providing individual attention to children with special educational needs.

Ordinary Teachers' most preferred pupils with disabilities they would teach

Ordinary teachers were asked to choose the type of children with disabilities they would prefer to teach in their classes. The majority (41.2%) of the teachers preferred children with learning difficulties to the rest. This was followed by those who preferred to teach children with physical disabilities (24.5%). The percentages of teachers who preferred to teach other disabilities were below 10% with cerebral palsy having the smallest choice (Fig. 4).

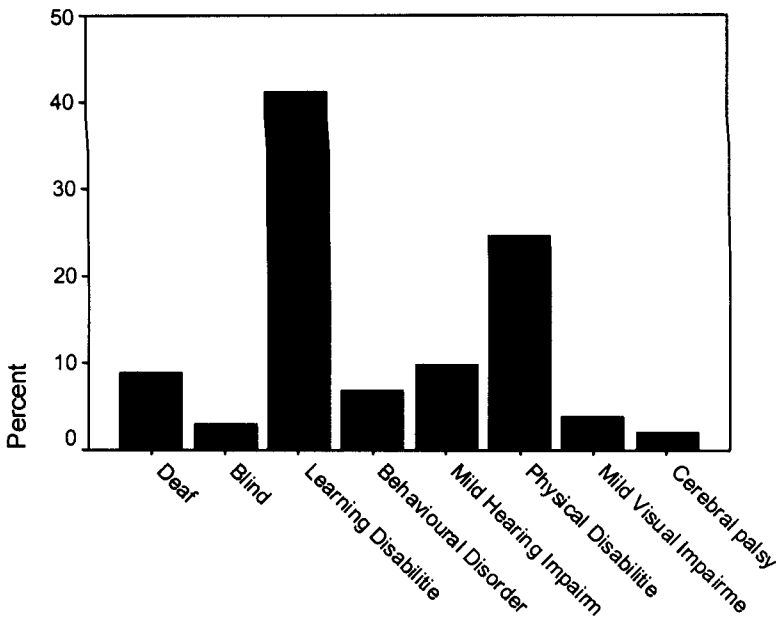


Fig 4: Ordinary Teachers' most preferred pupils with disabilities

The study also found that there was a relationship ($r = 0.70$) between attitudes towards persons with disabilities and inclusive education. Those with positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities tended to have more positive attitudes towards inclusive education than those with negative attitudes.

4.8.2 Special Education Teachers' Attitudes towards Inclusive Education.

There were 30 special education teachers involved in the study (Fig 2). 73% of special education teachers were of the view that children with severe disabilities should not be included in ordinary classes. 63% supported the notion that only pupils with mild disabilities should be included in ordinary classes. They also felt that the presence of children with disabilities in ordinary classes slowed down the teaching process because the teachers had very little time to provide individual attention. 53% observed that in this way teaching was lost and wasted. 57% believed that children with disabilities interfered with the quality of education for children without disabilities.

All special education teachers pointed out that classes were over enrolled and the syllabuses were examination oriented. As a result teachers were in a hurry to complete

the syllabuses and to prepare pupils for examinations. They observed that in the process it was the children with special educational needs who suffered most. 90% of the teachers said there was need to motivate teachers handling children with special educational needs by paying them allowances.

On performance of pupils with special educational needs, teachers observed that pupils would perform better if they were placed in special schools where facilities were adequate. However, they pointed out that pupils with disabilities should follow the same programmes which are found in ordinary classes but should not learn in the same classes with non disabled pupils. By programmes they meant activities such as core and extra curricula. They believed that all children had the right to education provided they were educated in an appropriate environment. They also believed that including pupils with disabilities in ordinary classes did not mean equity for all pupils.

On the rights of children with disabilities to freedom of association, special education teachers observed that while special education denied them of this right, efforts could be made to introduce special classes within ordinary classes. However, they noted that when children with disabilities were introduced in ordinary schools for the first time, they created a spectacle and were sometimes rejected or teased. But the longer they stayed in schools, the stronger the positive relationships with teachers and pupils without disabilities were established.

4.8.3 Headteachers' attitudes towards inclusive Education

There were 30 headteachers involved in the study (Fig 2). The attitudes of headteachers towards inclusive education were positive. 80% of them felt that pupils with special educational needs would perform well in ordinary classes. They observed that children with disabilities were sometimes rejected or teased by non disabled. 73 % of the headteachers said that non disabled pupils were friendly to the disabled pupils. 67% of them believed that it was the responsibility of both ordinary and special education teachers to teach pupils with disabilities. One respondent remarked:

“Pupils with disabilities and those without disabilities should be taught together so that they will learn to appreciate each others’ individual differences”.

60% of the headteachers said that all pupils regardless of the severity of their disabilities should be placed in ordinary classes and should not be segregated against by forcing them to learn in segregated schools. By segregated schools respondents meant special schools. 70% of the head teachers said ordinary teachers would be able to meet the needs of pupils with disabilities if they were trained. 73% of them said the presence of pupils with disabilities did not interfere with the quality of education provided to non disabled pupils.

Some headteachers felt that inclusion would succeed if appropriate teaching and learning were provided in ordinary classes by government. Others felt that teaching children with disabilities was involving and therefore both ordinary and special education teachers should be remunerated. As one headteacher remarked;

“Pupils with learning disabilities should be treated like ordinary pupils and government should motivate the teachers”.

Over 80% of the headteachers said that education was a right to all children and therefore children with disabilities deserved education in the ‘normal’ environment. By normal environment the respondents meant ordinary classes or mainstream. 67% believed that inclusion would provide quality education.

4.8.4 Parents’ Attitudes towards inclusive Education

There were 31 parents involved in the study (Fig 2). 16 were parents of children without disabilities and 15 were parents of pupils with disabilities. All parents made up 16% of the total number of respondents. They answered questionnaire number 1 and participated in the interviews.

77% of the parents felt that ordinary schools did not have the resources and qualified personnel to teach their children with disabilities. 68% of them did not believe that the mere placing of their children in ordinary classrooms meant providing quality education to them. While they accepted the concept of inclusion, they felt that their children were not adequately provided with the quality of education they deserved. 57% of the parents observed that it was wrong to ask ordinary teachers to admit pupils with severe disabilities in their classrooms when they were not trained to teach them. They believed that only pupils with mild disabilities should be included in ordinary classrooms and those with severe or profound disabilities should be educated in special schools where they would receive more attention. As one parent retorted;

“Pupils with disabilities certainly need to be provided with special education that suits them. I would further strongly suggest that (more of) such schools are established”

Attitudes of parents of children without disabilities were similar to those whose children had disabilities. While parents of children without disabilities accepted the concept of inclusion as being a good one, they felt that children with disabilities were not given enough attention in ordinary classes compared to similar children in special schools.

During interviews, one parent remarked;

“Pupils with disabilities should be taught in special schools meant for them and their teachers for improvement of their education standards”

By ‘their teachers’ the respondent meant special education teachers. 71% of all parents agreed that children with disabilities should follow the same programmes found in ordinary classrooms. By ‘programme’ parents meant the core and extra curricula. They also felt that inclusion should not be imposed on their children. One parent made the following remarks;

“Generally, ordinary schools and teachers should be provided with enough equipment and facilities, but pupils who wish to be educated in special schools should be allowed”.

53% of all parents felt that inclusion should not only be determined by social acceptance of pupils with disabilities in ordinary classes but also by academic performance of pupils placed in these classes.

Although both groups of parents had negative attitudes towards inclusive education, parents of children with disabilities had more negative attitudes than parents of non disabled children.

4.8.5 Attitudes towards Inclusive Education by geographical settings

The study revealed that rural and peri-urban respondents had more positive attitudes towards Inclusive Education than urban respondents. Also, peri-urban and urban respondents displayed more negative attitudes towards disabilities than rural respondents. 77% of the respondents from the rural schools agreed that ordinary classroom is the best placement for children with disabilities. This was followed by peri-urban (75%) and urban (72%) respondents. 74% of the peri-urban respondents supported the idea that children with severe behaviour problems should be placed in special schools while the rest of the respondents disagreed. The study also revealed that pupils with disabilities were more rejected and teased in urban schools than in peri-urban and rural schools. 52% of the peri-urban respondents indicated that it was the responsibility of ordinary teachers to teach children with disabilities while the rest of the respondents argued that it was not. In addition, 53 % of the peri-urban respondents revealed that inclusion provided quality education. This was followed by respondents from rural (32%) and urban (25%) areas.

4.8.6 Attitudes towards Inclusive Education by level of education

The study revealed that respondents without professional qualifications had more positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities than those with secondary and tertiary qualifications. Conversely, respondents without academic or professional qualifications

displayed negative attitudes towards inclusive education than those with secondary or tertiary qualifications.

4.8.7 Attitudes towards Inclusive Education by gender

The study revealed that there was little difference between attitudes of male and female participants towards Inclusive Education. For example, 77% of the female respondents pointed out that ordinary classrooms were the best placement for pupils with disabilities and 71% of the male respondents supported the idea. 73% of the female respondents observed that pupils with disabilities were rejected and teased in ordinary classes and 79% of the male respondents also supported the idea. The male (71%) and the female (65%) respondents agreed that inclusion meant equity for all. 54% of both sexes pointed that inclusion provided quality education. Overall, female respondents had more positive attitudes towards inclusive education than male respondents. However, female respondents had more negative attitudes towards persons with disabilities than male respondents.

4.8.8 Attitudes towards Inclusive Education by age

The study revealed that the younger respondents had more positive attitudes towards inclusive education than the older ones. 82% of the respondents aged between 25 and 30 years old indicated that ordinary classrooms were the best placements for learners with disabilities. This was followed by those below 40 years old (74%). Only 45% of those above 40 years old were in favour of the idea of inclusion. The majority (76%) of the respondents below 31 years old were of the view that teaching learners with disabilities was the responsibility of ordinary teachers while those above 30 years old did not agree with this idea. The study also revealed that those below 31 years old (69%) argued that learners with disabilities should learn together with the non-disabled while those above 31 years were against the idea. The same age group (below 30 years old) indicated that the presence of learners with disabilities in ordinary classrooms did not interfere with the quality of education for learners without disabilities.

4.8.9 Factors that influenced Respondents' attitudes towards Inclusive Education

Respondents gave various factors that influenced their attitudes towards Inclusive Education. These have been grouped into two; those which influenced them positively and those which influenced them negatively.

4.9.0 Factors that influenced Respondents' positive attitudes towards Inclusive education

1. Inclusion as a right

Respondents with positive attitudes towards Inclusive Education perceived inclusion as a right like the right to any other form of education. They said that children with disabilities had the right to education and the right to be educated in schools their parents chose. They felt that the children had the right to associate and learn with those without disabilities. They observed that special schools promoted injustice, discrimination, and segregation against persons with disabilities. They also observed that as a result of these vices, persons with disabilities failed to fit in society when they grew up as adults.

2. Inclusive Education as a policy

Teachers and headteachers who supported Inclusive Education were aware of the policy of the Ministry of Education on inclusion. They considered the decision on the policy as the right one. However, they observed that implementation of the policy was not adequately supported by resources.

3. Management support to Inclusive Education

The study revealed that school and district managers supported Inclusive Education. Despite lack of resources, they encouraged teachers to teach children with special educational needs and to conduct home based teaching. Parents were encouraged to take their children with disabilities to school. Managers also supported teachers who were working with health personnel and social workers on awareness campaigns on Inclusive Schooling Programme (INSPRO).

4. Avoidance of exclusion and segregation

Those who supported inclusion observed that there were many children hidden in homes who could not attend schools nearest their homes because parents believed that their children could only be educated in special schools. They observed that the few existing special schools were boarding and that they were scattered through out the country.

It became more expensive for parents to send their children to these special schools than to ordinary schools closest their homes.

5. Respect for human choices and values

Respondents in support of Inclusive Education felt that parents of children with disabilities should not be forced to send their children to special schools. They said they had the right to determine placement of their children to schools of their choice.

6. Cost effectiveness of Inclusive Education

The study revealed that it would probably be more cost effective to educate children with disabilities in ordinary schools than to build separate special schools in every community. Respondents observed that sharing common resources by children with disabilities and those without disabilities would reduce costs and increase enrolments of children with disabilities excluded from the education system.

4.9.1 Factors that influenced Respondents' negative attitudes towards Inclusive education

1. Unclear concept of inclusive Education

Some respondents with negative attitudes towards inclusive education felt that the concept of inclusion was not very clear and that it was sometimes confusing. Some interpreted inclusive education as an approach aimed at abolishing all special schools and transferring pupils with disabilities into ordinary classes. Others viewed inclusion as a concept that promoted social acceptance and belonging of pupils with special educational needs into normal settings but with little emphasis on academic achievement.

2. Unclear Inclusive Education systems

Respondents with a bias towards traditional provision of special educational needs indicated that the current provision of special education was not clear. They felt that placement modalities, monitoring systems, and deployment of trained teachers were not clear.

3. Examination oriented syllabuses in schools

Respondents observed that the current school curriculum was examination oriented. They observed that teachers were always rushing through the syllabuses in order to prepare pupils for examinations. In the process, pupils with special needs were not learning.

4. Lack of specialised training

Respondents indicated that ordinary teachers handling children with special educational needs were not equipped to teach these children. They also observed that since government schools were experiencing a shortage of teachers mainly due to HIV/AIDS

pandemic, it was not prudent to burden a few teachers with children with special educational needs.

5. Lack of Specialised equipment and Materials

The study revealed that inclusive schools did not have specialized equipment and materials for children with special educational needs.

6. Lack of Political will

The other reason that was given for negative attitudes towards inclusion was that government lacked funding ratios and systems for learners with special needs and persons with disabilities in the country.

4.9.1 Respondents' views on Inclusion during interviews

Although section A of the interviews was meant for all parents and section B for all participants, only 15 parents, 30 teachers and 15 headteachers attended the interview due to time limit.

Parents were asked to give their views on whether children with special needs would learn better in special classrooms or schools than in ordinary classrooms or schools. 65% of the parents said children with special needs would learn better in special schools than in ordinary schools because they receive attention and care. They also said that special schools had qualified personnel to teach children with special needs. They observed that when children with special needs moved from special schools to ordinary schools, they lost the attention and care they had enjoyed in special schools. Parents, however acknowledged that children with special needs benefited by interacting with their non disabled peers when they moved from special to ordinary schools.

Parents were also asked to give their views on whether children with special needs could be educated and contribute effectively to society. 60% of the parents believed that

children could be educated and contribute effectively to society. Over 40% said some children with special needs would not benefit from academic work even if they completed primary education. They said others were very good and could even reach university level. They said those children who might not perform well academically could still contribute effectively to society if appropriate skills such as tailoring, carpentry, bricklaying and gardening were taught to them.

Parents and other participants were asked to give their opinion on the placement of children with special needs depending on the degree of their disabilities. 50% of the participants said children with severe impairments should be educated in special classes and should spend less time in ordinary classes. 45% of the participants said every child with special needs, regardless of their severity of their impairments should be given an opportunity to be educated in ordinary classes. They observed that some children performed well despite having severe impairments.

Participants were asked to give their opinion on the current government funding towards special education. They said government was not committed enough to provide support for children with special educational needs. For example government residential special schools and inclusive schools were poorly funded. They said there was need for government to provide human, financial and material resources towards the education of children with special educational needs.