Effectiveness of Inclusive Education in Colleges of Education. Case of David Livingstone College of Education

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Abstract: The study was conducted in order to evaluate the effectiveness of inclusive education (IE) in Colleges of Education. David Livingstone College of Education was the reference college. To achieve the objective, a qualitative research approach was adopted. The population of the study was made up of senior lecturers at David Livingstone College of Education in Livingstone District. Data was collected using desk study of documents relating to IE. Data was also collected using questionnaires which were administered to a stratified sample of 50 lecturers and. The data was analysed by means of descriptive statistics. The results indicated that IE at David Livingstone College of Education was satisfactory; there is increased access to higher education for IE students, and development of positive attitudes towards support for IE.

Keywords: Inclusive Education, Effectiveness, School Inclusive Team.

Introduction

The Legal and policy framework of the government of republic of Zambia has taken a number of legislative and policy steps that indicate commitment to advancing inclusive education and the rights of persons with disabilities. In terms of international instruments, these steps include: Signing and ratifying (in 2010) the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the first international, legally binding treaty aimed at protecting the human rights of persons with disabilities.

The Convention is available at: www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml

Educating our future 1996, adopted after the Salamanca statement (UNESCO, 1994), endorsed the inclusion of children with disabilities in general settings and set the stage for inclusive education in Zambia.

A. Background

The Persons with Disability Act, No 6 of 2012 Part V on Education Pg. 84 states that; "*The full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity*"

Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities STRATEGIC PLAN 2017 – 2021, Document: Promoting Inclusive and Sustainable Development backs the above statement that; "*Theory of Change (ToC) is that Zambia has: An inclusive society where persons with disabilities enjoy equal rights and opportunities that are fundamental for living and development.*"

Access and participation to quality education provision by all has been prominent in many forum advocating for equity and equality among learners. For development to be realized in a sustainable form, teacher education become key to make inclusive education a reality in schools away from just being documented and left to rot. Therefore, it is worth to note that Inclusive education allows students of all backgrounds to learn and grow side by side to the benefit of all.

The educational reforms of 1977 gave birth to special education which was recognised as the sole area to provide required services to persons with disabilities. However, results from the Salamanca statement as well as the jomtien conference outcome indicated that special education was not adequate to cater for all learners hence the development of inclusive education. Special education gave attention to the disabled but other children who are out of school as a result of various challenges such poverty seemed not be catered for. Therefore, being a new phenomenon; inclusive education was introduced in colleges of education.

Colleges of education became a priority to implement inclusive education because of its position in terms of

teacher education; basing on an assumption that when lecturers are trained, the ripple effect in terms of training more teachers will be effective.

A step by step implementation of inclusive education was finally introduced in 2019 in Zambian higher learning institutions. Training of lecturers in colleges of education started in 2021. Lecturers were trained in the initial training programme onto which significant progress was recorded. Therefore, this paper seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of inclusive learning at classroom level.

B. Problem Statement

David Livingstone College of education as well as other colleges of education implemented inclusive education in the year 2021. Three years after the implementation of inclusive education, there seem to be positive indicators in terms of access (introduction of free education and bursary scheme), and participation (integration of IE, positive attitude of all stakeholders) to education. However, it is not clear whether the increase to access of education, positive attitude by all stakeholders, and integration in the mainstream as a result of inclusive education has been in line with the policy; 'educating our future-1996'. The situation of this nature calls for a research.

C. Research Objectives

i) To investigate the effectiveness of inclusive education at David Livingstone colleges of education.
ii) To unearth the extent to which the national policy on inclusive education has been integrated in the college policies.
iii) Finding out the extent to which lectures integrate an inclusive lesson

D. Research questions

i) How effective is inclusive education at David Livingstone colleges of education?
ii) How has the national policy on inclusive education been integrated in the college policies?
iii) How are lecturers involved in integrating inclusive learning?

Literature Review

This section is a presentation of the reviewed literature on inclusive education.

Policies on Inclusive Education

The Signing and ratifying other treaties that advance the rights of people, including those with disabilities, for example the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women – all of which make some reference to protecting the rights of persons with disabilities to fair treatment, appropriate care, inclusion and full participation in society.

As reported in the 2016, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities shared in 2017, in 2012, Zambia enacted the Persons with Disabilities Act, which seeks to domesticate the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. (Disabilities Act No. 06 of 2012 of the Laws of Zambia.)

The Act promotes respect for the inherent dignity of persons with disabilities and ensures the equal enjoyment of several important human rights and freedoms by persons with disabilities.

"Other inclusive policies and Legislation in place that are also being implemented include the Vibrant DPOs, DSOs and CSOs which are networking and advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities." (Chitalu; Director –ZAFOD: 2019)

Government Ministries and other stakeholders providing inclusive services include; ZAPD which is sustainably regulating and coordinating the disability sector. The mission of ZAPD is "To coordinate and regulate the provision of inclusive services for persons with disability through targeted coordination and regulation interventions, creation of strategic Partnerships and fostering awareness creation on disability issues" (Zambia agency for persons with disabilities –strategic plan 2017-2021)

Educational reform: proposals and recommendation of 1977-highligted education as an instrument for personal and national development including children with special needs.

Focus on learning 1992 – which emphasised the need for the mobilisation of resources for the development of schools.

Finally, the policy document; 'educating our future; 1996' provides the roadmap for inclusive education.

"The ministry of education upholds the principle that every individual has an equal right to educational opportunity."

Understanding of inclusive education

Some writer (Mandyata-2021, Banda and Mbewe-2018, Ngulube etal; 2020) have perceived inclusive education as special education.

Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative research approach. In this study it was not possible for the researchers to manipulate the views of the senior lecturers directly, because it is assumed that those views regarding the issues affecting the effectiveness of inclusive education were already created. Hence a non-experimental design is appropriate for this study and a

survey was adopted as the research design because of its ability to scan through a wider field of issues. Furthermore, it relies on inner ontology of the respondents representing a wider population (Mertens, 2010). The population in study was made up of senior lecturers from David Livingstone College of Education in Livingstone District. A systematic stratified random sample of 50 senior lecturers was drawn from a total number of 73. The senior lecturers were selected randomly from lists drawn from sections. At each section, 60 percent of the respondents were randomly identified, by putting the names of all lecturers in a tin and the names of those lecturers who were to participate in the study were picked. Data was collected through studying policy documents on Inclusive Education and also a structured questionnaire was utilised to collect the data. The decision to study policy documents was arrived at because the researchers wanted to acquaint themselves with the ministry of education target, while a questionnaire was employed, because of the large number of respondents (Mertens, 2010).

Ethical clearance was obtained from the David Livingstone College Administration. Additionally, permission was also sought from the Ministry of Education- southern province. Researchers explained verbally the purpose of the study to the senior lecturers and also assured them that the information given would be used only for the purpose of the study. Thereafter, the researchers collected all completed questionnaires from the lecturers for analysis. The researchers adopted descriptive analyses, such as frequencies and percentages, to compare the proportions of participants who responded in different directions.

The results on lecturers' views regarding the effectiveness of IE in this study are presented in accordance with the themes generated. These themes include: policy issues, increased access to higher education for all learners and the extent to which lecturers integrate inclusive lessons. The results are presented below.

Findings and Discussion

This section presents findings of the study as well as the discussions based on the results of the study.

Policy Issues

The researchers generated five statements about the policy issues. In view of the trend of all the responses, it seems that the respondents generally agreed with all five statements. The results are summarised in table 1.

Table 1: Policy issues							
Statement		Agreed		Not sure		disagreed		Total
		f	%	f	%	f	%	%
1	DALICE policies incorporate nation policy on inclusive education	42	84	2	4	6	12	100
2	Management at DALICE exhibit inclusive leadership	45	90	1	2	4	8	100
3	Management at DALICE have adopted a holistic approach to inclusive education	41	82	1	2	8	16	100
4	Management at DALICE give inclusive support to lecturers	31	62	4	8	15	30	100
5	Management at DALICE has increased access for inclusive education	37	74	1	2	12	24	100

An analysis was conducted for table 1. According to table 1, 45 lecturers felt that management at DALICE exhibit inclusive leadership DALICE policies incorporated nation policy on inclusive education, 42 lecturers felt that DALICE policies incorporate nation policy on inclusive education, 41lecturers felt that management at DALICE have adopted a holistic approach to inclusive education, 37 lecturers felt that management at DALICE has increased access for inclusive education while 31 lecturers felt that management at DALICE give inclusive support to lecturers.

Access to Higher Education

Six statements were recorded in this section. The results are presented in table 2.

Table2: Access to Higher Education								
statement	agreed		Not sure		Disagreed			Tot
	f	%	f	%	f	%		%
1 Increased access for all-inclusive learners.	32	64	10	20	8	16		100
2 Available support for inclusive learners	40	80	3	6	7	14		100
3 Involvement of experts enhanced effectiveness of IE	45	90	1	2	4	8		100
4 Availability of expert support	41	82	8	16	1	2		100
5 CPD enhanced effectiveness of IE	16	32	2	4	32	64		100
6 Lecturers receive support for IE	44	88	5	10	1	2		100

According to the summary, it appears that more lecturers were in agreement with statements 2,3, 4 and 6, as opposed to statement 5, where the majority disagreed. According to table 2, it is interesting note that 32 lecturers felt that CPD did not enhanced IE. Table 2, also shows that 45 lecturers felt that the involvement of expert personnel was an essential factor for enhancing effectiveness of IE. Furthermore Table 2 also shows that 44 lecturers were of the opinion that the lecturers receive support for IE, and 40 lecturers indicated that there is available support for inclusive learners. Finally, table 2 also shows that 32 lecturers were of the opinion that increased access for IE students played an important role in the effectiveness of IE.

Integration inclusive lessons

Lecturers' Attitudes towards Integration IE

In this section four statements were recorded. The results are presented in table 3.

Table 3: Lecturers' Attitudes								
statement	agreed		Not sure		Disagreed			Tot
	f	%	f	%	f	%		%
1 Positive attitudes helped lecturers to integrate IE	47	94	0	0	3	6		100
2 IE integration at DALICE depended on lecturers' attitudes	50	100	0	0	0	0		100
3 Initial training on IE helped lecturers to build confidence in integrating IE	25	50	0	0	25	50		100
4 Leadership support stimulated positive attitudes towards IE integration	37	74	4	8	9	18		100

It is worth noting that 50 lecturers were in total agreement with statement 3 that indicated that success of integration of IE depended on lecturers' positive

attitude. Table 4 also shows that 47 lecturers felt that positive attitude helped lecturers to integrate IE. Additionally, table 4 shows that 37 lecturers were of the opinion that their positive attitude towards IE was anchored on leadership support. Table 4, also shows that 25 lecturers representing 50% felt that CPDs on IE helped the institution to have an effective IE.

Discussion

Policy Development Issues

The findings of the study show that the majority of lecturers felt that DALICE management exhibited effective inclusive leadership. This finding is line with the evaluation study conducted by McCall Education Consultancy Ltd (2015) whose findings shows that persuasive effective leadership support for inclusive education among administrators improved the effectiveness of inclusive education in primary and secondary schools. This may confirm the suggestion put up by Qeleni (2013) who indicated that support from supervisors regarding inclusive education was critical in supporting the efforts in teaching learners with special needs. This could implicitly mean that failure to support IE policy by the leadership, the effectiveness of IE could be negatively affected. The second rank statement was that DALICE policies incorporate nation policy on inclusive education. The findings from this study shows the majority of lecturers were in agreement with this statement. This was consistence with the educating our future Policy in Zambia that advocates for IE at all levels of education. This may also imply that IE could be effective in the institution, deliberate incorporate the nation policy on IE to support the implementation. The other explanation could be that, incorporating IE policy into institution policies shows administration's will to implement IE. In reciprocating this, lecturers would be compelled to implement that which is embedded in the institutional policy. The third rank statement relating to policy issues, Management at DALICE has adopted a holistic approach to inclusive education. The response from the lecturers was overwhelming. The findings from the study revealed that the majority of lecturers felt that the holistic and inclusive approach adopted filled the gap identified in the study conducted by Madrid (2015). Madrid (2015) indicated that, there are gaps between policy and its implementation. The findings in this study show that strengthening policy orientation and coordination could upsurge the effectiveness of IE in higher institutions of learning. The fourth rank statement, relating to policy issues, states that Management at DALICE has increased access for IE. This study reveals that most of the lecturers agreed that DALICE

embraced and increased access for all IE students. The findings of this study were in line with the Jomtien conference outcome which indicated that education should be provided for all learners. The implication here could be that the embracing and increasing of access for the IE students by management was a scaling up factor for effective implementation of IE in higher institutions of learning. The fifth rank statement, relating to policy issues, states that management at DALICE gave inclusive support to lecturers. The findings of this study indicates that, a substantive number of lecturers were in agreement with the statement. This finding was in line with the findings in the study conducted by Qeleni (2013) who noted that institution leaders influence inclusive institutional change when they provide appropriate support to teachers. This means that institutional support ensures effectiveness. Furthermore, this implies that supporting the inclusive policy in higher learning institution enhance the effective implementation of IE.

Access to Higher Education

The first rank statement in this section states that the involvement of experts enhanced effectiveness of IE. The response in this study was overwhelming. The majority of lecturers were in agreement with the statement. Many lecturers felt that higher institutions of learning require expert personnel to assist with the diverse needs of all learners and to assist with the successful implementation of IE. The inference that could be made here therefore is that higher institutions of learning require expert personnel from all subject areas. The second rank statement under this section states that Lecturers received support for IE. The findings in this study reveals that there was an overwhelming agreement with the statement from lecturers and the third ranking states that lecturers felt that, adequate expert support received in terms of remedial and attention to diverse needs of students enhanced the effectiveness of IE. This is in contrast to the findings in the study conducted by Banda and Mbewe (2018) who noted that; "…Lecturers who are not trained in special education do not know how to use some resources such as embossers, low vision devices, head pointers, braille machines…." The assumption here could be that only lecturers specialized in special education should be the ones to implement inclusive education, a statement not so much in line with the policy which is clear that all stakeholders should be involved in implementation of inclusive education. The fourth rank statement states that there is available support for inclusive learners. This study revealed that many lecturers were in support of this statement. The finding is in line with

the study conducted by Mwaura (2004) who noted that it would be helpful if adequate support could be provided to mainstream lecturers in order to meet the needs of learners in inclusive classes.

The fifth rank statement states that increased access for all learners enhanced effectiveness of IE. The findings in this study show that many lecturers supported this statement. Their assumption was that, the introduction of free education and bursary scheme for all IE students served as a stimulating factor for learning about the diversity and understanding of effective IE delivery. The inference here was that lecturers realised that the presence of expert personnel made it possible and easier to effectively implement IE.

The sixth rank statement states that CPD enhanced effectiveness of IE. The finding in this study shows that the majority of the lecturers were not in agreement to this statement. The explanation here was CPDs were attached to credit scoring systems. The implication was that promotions and other privileges were given through the credit scoring system.

Lecturers' Attitudes

The first rank statement states that IE integration at DALICE depended on lecturers' attitudes. The finding in this study revealed that 50 lecturers were in agreement with the statement. They felt that attitude; especially of the educator plays an important role in the effective delivery of IE. The assumption is that practical problems may be encountered in the inclusion of students with diverse educational needs but often the practical difficulties have more to do with attitudinal change. These findings are in line with the studies conducted by Peacock (2016) and Al-Zyoudi (2006) who found that teachers' attitudes were the greatest barrier to IE. This could imply that with positive attitudes, lecturers would effectively achieve better results in IE even in the face of difficulties.

The second rank statement states that the positive attitudes helped lecturers to integrate IE. CPDs on IE integration equipped lecturers with skills to deal with diverse needs. The study reveals that the majority of lecturers agreed with the statement. The positive attitudes made them see beyond benefits of integrating IE lessons; the concentration became the success of IE. This finding is in line with the findings of Zulu (2007) who found that the success of IE depended greatly on educators' attitudes. Furthermore, Zulu (2007) noted that, for IE to be successful, educators need to be prepared and properly trained. The message here could be that educators are aware that their attitudes are a barrier to inclusive education.

The third rank statement states that Leadership support stimulated positive attitudes towards IE integration. The data show that more than half the number of lecturers was in agreement with the statement. This finding is in line with the findings in the study conducted by Horne and Timmons (2009) who found that, to implement inclusion successfully anywhere in the world, educators must have adequate training, sufficient support and positive attitudes.

The fourth rank statement states Initial training on IE helped lecturers to build confidence in integrating IE. The finding in this study revealed that the majority of lecturers were in agreement with the statement. Their assumptions were that a lack of training for educators enhances negative attitudes towards IE. This finding is consistent with that of other researchers, such as Zulu (2007) and Newton, Cambridge and Hunter-Johnson (2014) who assumed that educators' negative attitudes are due to a lack of knowledge, skills and insufficient support. The implication here could be that lecturers' negative attitudes are created by a lack of initial training.

Conclusion

This study evaluated the effectiveness of IE in higher institutions of learning. David Livingstone College of Education (DALICE) was the reference institution. The study examined three main areas including: policy issues, access to higher education by all eligible students, and the extent to which lecturers integrated IE in their lessons. The study concludes that the delivery of IE in higher institutions was satisfactory. The effectiveness of the inclusive education was enhanced by increased access, positive attitudes towards leadership support for IE.

Recommendations

1. IE activities to be evaluated annually as a measure towards achieving intended policy target
2. Redefining of inclusive education concept by harmonizing special education and inclusive education

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