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Challenges associated with implementation of inclusive education in Early Childhood Education classrooms: The case of Tategulu primary school.

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APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have supervised the student,Ndlovu Sithabile (R174016B)'s dissertation entitled; *Challenges associated with implementation of inclusive education in Early Childhood Education classrooms: The case of Tategulu primary school.*

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Declaration

I Ndlovu Sithabile declare that this project is my original work and affirm that it has not been submitted to this or any other university in support of any application for a degree or any other qualification. All the sources I have used in the study have been indicated and acknowledged by way of complete reference.

Student's Signature ……………………………………………

Witness ……………………………………………

Supervisor's Signature ……………………………………………

Date 26 November 2018

Dedication

This research is dedicated to my two lovely children Kgomotso Ndlovu and Tsholofelo Ndlovu who gave me the zeal to work hard and remain focused even when things were tough.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my project Supervisor Dr. E. Gudyanga for patiently and expertly guiding me through one of the most difficult but educational exercise of learning in my life.

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Abstract

This study was carried out at Tategulu Primary school in Cowdray Park cluster under Reigate district with the aim of finding out the challenges associated with the implementation of inclusive education in ECE classrooms. The researcher used a case study design. Interviews and observations were used to gather data. The target population comprised of teachers and parents at Tategulu Primary school. However a sample of 10 participants was randomly chosen comprising of 5 teachers and 5 parents. Mainly the descriptive statements were used for presentation and analysis of data. The study revealed that several challenges were faced at Tategulu Primary school ECE classrooms in an effort to effectively implement inclusive education. The study indicated that lack of skills and knowledge on the part of the teacher, and limited resources were the major barriers in implementing inclusive education in ECE classrooms. However the study brought some constructive strategies such as parental involvement and the change of curriculum to cater for learners with disabilities. The study concluded that facilities and resources in most ECE classrooms were not constructed with learners with disabilities in mind. Further the study revealed that the teacher pupil ratio was too high resulting in teacher's failure to give each learner individual attention. Finally the study recommended that training of ECE teachers in special needs was essential in order to make inclusive education in ECE a success.

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CHAPTER ONE
BACKGROUND AND ITS CONTEXT

1.0 Introduction

Every child has a fundamental right to education, and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning. Teachers and learners often times face challenges in implementing inclusive education in ECE. This research, therefore, aimed at studying the challenges faced by teachers and learners in implementing inclusive education in Tategulu Prymary school ECE classrooms.

1.1 Background of Study

The debate of including learners with disabilities without being stigmatised has been discussed internationally by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1949). Mukheyi and Dryden (2014) reflect that the struggle for the right for children with disabilities to be educated together with peers has had a long history and in 1978 Warnock recommended that children with special educational needs or disabilities should be integrated in mainstream schools. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) acknowledged education as a human right and enacted some articles to include them in every social factor.

Inclusive education has been a subject of debate at global meetings. The (1993) World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons under article 20 states that, "all member states agree that education for persons with disabilities should be carried out as far as possible within the general school system". A few years later the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child acknowledged the special needs of children with disabilities and stated that these children must be guaranteed, "Effective access to education in a manner conducive to the child, achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development". Such notion was further proclaimed by the 1990 World Conference on Education which was held in Jomtein (Thailand) where much emphasis was on Education For All. This was a move torwards abolition of discrimination of learners according to their disability.

The 1994 World Conference on Special Needs Education which was held in Salamanca (Spain) focused on inclusive education and it recommended that schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic and other conditions. Croft (2010) points out that the World Education Forum meeting that was held in Darkar in the year 2000 also reaffirmed the vision of inclusive education. In Zimbabbwe the gorvenment has made a policy to have children with disabilities included in regular schools. Most communal and urban schools have started enrolling learners with disabilities in ordinary regular classes learning the same curriculum as the non-disabled. Learners with disabilities tend to suffer inferiority complex and labelling while inclusive education was meant to curb these problems. The Zimbabwean Education Act of (1987), states that every child in Zimbabwe shall have the right of education.

The Nziramasanga Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (1999) recommended that the inclusive type of education be adopted to all levels of education including early childhood level. The Dakar (2000) Framework for Action goal number (1) one, is to expand and improve early childhood care education especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children. This goal clearly indicates the need to make provision for vulnerable and disadvantaged children while no child is barred from accessing ECE programmes. Efforts need to be made to cater for disadvantaged children especially those with disabilities.While the gorvenment had directed all primary schools to incorporate ECE clases (Director's Circular 12 of 2005) however, these clases do not have proper infrastructure, equipment, adequate teaching and learning materials for the children with disabilities. By implication it means the greater majority of children with disabilities do not access ECE programmes contrary to the spirit of inclusion. Therefore this study will address the challenges associated with the implementation of inclusive education.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the Zimbabwean government adopting inclusive education, learners with disabilities have little access to ECE programs. The major thrust underlying the carrying out of this study is to investigate challenges associated with implementation of inclusive education in Tategulu Primary ECE classrooms and find ways of addressing these challenges.

1.3 Research Questions

The study will seek to answer the following research question:

What are the challenges associated with the implementation of inclusive education in Tategulu Primary ECE classrooms?

In order to study the main research question, the following secondary research questions were established:

1.3.1. What are the challenges associated with implemantation of inclusive education in ECE classrooms?

1.3. 2. How do the challenges affect the teaching and learning of ECE learners with special needs?

1.3.3. What are the possible strategic interventions that can be employed to alleviate the challenges facing inclusive education implementation?

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study will be of fundamental importance to various stakeholders.

The school will be enabled to develop ways on how to promote an inclusive educational setup that benefits the disabled learners. Teachers will be able to understand the challenge disabled learners face and, hence, provide the support the disabled learners need, thereby creating an inclusive environment in the school. Teachers will also be equipped with skills on how to help the disabled learners integrate into the mainstream education at the school

The disabled learners would benefit as they will be supported in successfully being integrated into the mainstream education at the school. As a result, this may help to improve their education, social engagement and overall development.

Policy makers in education, communities and health sector will know how to provide the necessary support for the disabled learners, teachers and schools and to even families with disabled children, so that the disabled learners can be effectively included into the mainstream education. The study will also benefit the researcher by keeping her up to date with latest developments in the field of inclusive practice and special educational needs at ECE level.

1.5 Delimitations of the Study

The research focused on a study on the challenges associated with the implementation of inclusive education in Tategulu Primary ECE classrooms situated in Cowdray Park cluster under Reigate district. The research included a number of parents, teachers and disabled learners at this school to look at how these challenges can be addressed.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

The following limitations were faced by the researcher:

1. There was a limited access to information due to participants who did not want to fully participate as some participants were not free to say out their views. However the researcher prepared in advance to fully mobilize and prepare all participants so that they fully understand the importance of this research.

2. Time constraints and resources to fully conduct this research were a threat. Therefore, the researcher started the research way in advance and seeked to utilize basic resources as provisions to conduct the research successfully.

3. Some disabled learners faced difficulty in participating in the research due to difficulty of doing so because of their disability condition.

4. The researcher faced a hard time understanding the flow of communication with some participants from the disabled learners.

1.7 Operational Definition of Terms

Inclusive Education

According to Ainscow and Ceaser (2006) inclusive education is an effort to provide special services for exceptional children in the less resctrictive environment. Inclusive education is a form of education where individuals with learning disabilities are submerged in the normal classroom and environment resulting in alterations in attitudes, curricular and environments to meet the needs of all learners,(Eric, 2010). Therefore inclusive education is an education that considers disabled learners as part of the system and help them learn effectively with the so called normal children.

Inclusion

Inclusion is a process that suggests having learners with different exceptionalities and levels under one roof all being taught by a regular class teacher, (Thwala and Dhemba, 2012). Croft (2010) terms inclusion as the situation in which children with disabilities are educated with their non disabled peers, with special support services being provided as necessary. Therefore, inclusion is having everyone accepted and becoming part of the class. The concept speak of the notions of equality of opportunity and treatment, the idea of full participation and even the practice of eliminating socially constructed labels, categories and disabling phenomena.

Disability

According to Chakuchichi, Chimedza, Chunze and Kaputa(2005), disability can be defined as any restriction or lack of ability to perfom an activity in a manner or within the range considered normal for human beings.

Special needs

It is the special educational requirements of those with learning difficulties, emotional or behavioural problems, or physical disabilities.

Early Childhood Education classrooms

According to UNICEF (2001) early childhood education classrooms are those classes that provide services for holistic development of children from birth to eight years.

1.8 Summary

This chapter gave a general introduction which unveils the reasons that compelled the researcher to undertake the study. It also gave an introductory background to the study citing others who wrote about inclusion. The problem under investigation was given precisely as a statement. The research question and secondary questions were also outlined. Delimitations and some limitations that hindered the researcher in carrying out the research effectively were pointed out. Key terms were explained according to the context in which they were used in the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter looks at literature as specified by the topic. It briefly outlines the challenges associated with the implementation of inclusive education in ECE classrooms, how these challenges affect the teaching and learning of ECE learners with disabilities and the possible strategic interventions to alleviate these challenges.

2.1 Challenges faced in implementing inclusive education in ECE classrooms

The major challenge of inclusive education is that most regular early childhood teachers are not trained to teach children with special educational needs. Oliver and Reschly (2010) reflect that regular education teachers are not adequately prepared to manage students with special needs in the classroom. Such learners may have behaviours that inhibit them academically as well as socially and these often become a challenge for the teacher. Ramos (2018) states that students with severe and profound disabilities require more adaptation and medical attention than the average student. Teachers must be skilled in handling severe disabilities and create lesson plans based on individual abilities and adhere to dietary needs of the child.

Lack of experience can lead to the child not progressing with skills or cause of adverse medical incidents. Equally important was a study conducted by Fallon, Zhang, Kim (2011), which focused on training teachers to manage the behaviours of students with disabilities in the inclusive classroom. Many general education teachers lack the skill and knowledge necessary to effectively manage these challenging behaviours. The study focused on novice teachers that are certified in the general curriculum who wants additional certification in special education. Each participant in the study were volunteers in a graduate class in managing and assessing behaviours of

students with disabilities using functional behaviour assessment as well as behaviour intervention plans. The need to train teachers to manage students with behaviour disorders is imperative since the students are now educated in the same classrooms as their non disabled peers. Educating, training and cultural diversity should be considered when recruiting teachers to teach students with behavioural and emotional disorders.

According to Thwala and Dhemba (2012) research findings in a survey conducted by the Genaral Teaching Council suggest that 70% of teachers blamed the inclusion of children with special needs in regular classroom for bad behaviour. At times, children with special needs do not know how to control their behaviors and are frequently disruptive in the ordinary classroom. It also becomes a challenge for a teacher to teach the language and social skills especially behavioural and emotional skills. Ghadha and Advani (2003) contend that children with disabilities' motivation to cooperate and learn are not linear because they have learned to perceive and experience reality differently. These children may become more aggressive, demanding or attention seeking more than their peers in the classroom.

Teachers also find it difficult to successfully manage inclusive classes due to competing demands. Mafa (2012) indicates that lesson preparation, writing of resource materials, planning how to organise, actual teaching and other assessment of students' work place heavy demands on teachers. In the same view Chakuchichi, Nyaruwata and Chataika (2012) reflect that where teachers were assessed on the basis of the performance of their class, having children with diverse needs was seen to be compromising class performance as some children with disabilities would be seen to be lowering the class standards. The implication would be that teachers would be seen as no performers yet they might have put a lot of effort to ensure that the children with disabilities are included in the classrooms.

Increased administrative demands become a great challenge for the teacher. Forlin (2001) asserts that the administrative demands that accompany a child with special educational needs are seen to be overwhelming. Chandler (2000)

indicates that the need for annual subsubmissions for funding the legal requirement of individualised education, the burden of complex data collection required for procedures such as functional assessment and reports are a further cause of teaching challenges. On this notion Thwala and Dhemba (2012) posits that teachers are already overburdened, creation of the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) or Individualised Education Plans (IEPs) has overwhelmed even the most flexible teachers, hence, its barrage. Thus inclusive education demands a lot of work on the part of the teachers.

 Teachers may also lack specific skills to teach children who are at different levels of the curriculum in inclusive settings. Lack of practitioners' knowledge and skills about how to effectively work with children who have special needs creates an inevitable barrier to the implementation of inclusive ECE practices, (O' Moore, 2009). A study by Moloney and McCarthy (2010) indicated that finding the balance between needs of the individual child and the need of the group as a whole appeared to be a significant challenge. Chadha's (1999) study regarding inclusion as it existed in India showed that regular education teachers generally did not support inclusion, nor did they believe they possessed competency necessary to effectively instruct students with special needs. The study showed that the teachers did not believe the regular classroom was the setting in which these student's needs could be adequately met. Among the groups of special needs students who received negative responses from teachers were the hearing impaired and the intellectually challenged students. The most dorminant view emerging from the survey studies conducted is that teacher acceptance or resistance to the inclusion of students with disabilities into general education classrooms is related to the knowledge base and experiences of teachers. Also teachers may lack specific forms of disabilities. McGough, Carey and Ware (2005) posit that for children with special needs practitioner expertise is a critical factor in mediating the learning environment and constructing differentiated practices required for meeting the complexity of children's needs. Ramos (2009) state that lack of experience by the teacher can lead the child progressing with skills resulting in failure to develop the child into full potential.

A study by Mugweni and Dakwa (2013) indicated that the early childhood sub sector in Zimbabwe does not have qualified personnel with basic expertise in special needs education. For example, the teacher may not be able to use sign language to interact with children with hearing impairment. Thus, the teachers will always find it difficult to effectively teach inclusive classes if they do not have relevant competences. To this point, Mafa (2012) asserts that the assumption will be that qualified teachers will be in a position to select appropriate teaching methods, make individualised education programme accordingly and reach out to meet the diverse educational needs of learners with disabilities.

According to a study carried out by Konza (2008) it waz revealed that many teachers were trained in a period when special needs education was not included in their pre-servirce training. In this regard, teachers do not see themselves as having skills to handle a learner with disabilities. In the same view, Ramos (2009) indicates that teachers have not been exposed to special needs classrooms and this can be a disadvantage. Konza (2008) further indicates that teachers were not convinced of the benefits for either regular students or those with disabilities due to their lack of appropriate teacher preparation and resources.

A survey conducted by Choruma (2007) also reflected that teachers have difficulty in paying attention to children with special educational needs due to large numbers of pupils in inclusive classes while there are inadequate facilities for children with special needs within regular schools. Furthermore, the survey revealed that administrators lack knowledge of how to fully accommodate children with disabilities. Evidently, most of them are not able to advocate or influence decisions on matters relating to admission, curriculum, instructional methods and resource utilisation. Lack of information and knowledge also make it impossible for administrators and teachers to appreciate the impact of their actions, inactions and decisions on the educational needs of students with disabilities.

Lack or limited resources has turned to be a challenge in most ECE classrooms. Chakuchichi, Chimedza, Chunze and Kaputa (2003) say most

developing countries do not have adequate materials and financial resources to have meaningful inclusion. Accordingly a disability scooping study done in Uganda by Lang and Murangira (2009) reflected that inclusive education will only work effectively if there are sufficient human and financial resources. In the absence of such resources, children with disabilities who do not attend regular schools are more likely to receive an inferior education. Merely placing children with disabilities in regular schools does not necessarily result in a genuinely inclusive educational environment. Haworth (2005) points out that inadequate teacher aide curriculum support in the form of modified materials hinder the learning process of children with disabilities. In this regard the diverse needs of children with special needs are not fully catered for. Also the curriculum is mearnt for non disabled learners and at times it becomes very difficult for the teacher to adapt or modify the curriculum to suit the needs of the learners.

2.2 The impact of the challenges faced in implementing inclusive education on the educational development of disabled learners.

Teachers are responsible for helping disabled learners gain in knowledge and understanding. Learning is a change in behaviour. The educational development of disabled learners lies in the ability of the teacher to overcome challenges in teaching and integrating disabled learners in the classroom. Hanson (2017) states that teachers understand the operation of the learning process, senses expose the pupil to a world around them. These sensory stimuli are relayed to the brain for processing which causes altered behaviour patterns. It is not just an accumulation of facts. It is an aggregation of knowledge and understanding that causes these changes in behaviour. Pupils learn by doing and using as many senses as possible. A teacher stimulates a pupil's senses to accomplish learning. Teachers are on constant alert for failure to meet the desired objectives. Failure to accomplish these goals of learning in disabled learners can be attributed to the teacher to a certain extent.

Every child, regardless of income, race, background, or disability can succeed if provided the opportunity to learn. Herald (2016) state that students with disabilities should be held to high expectations and have access to the general curriculum in the regular classroom. Inclusion in education is an approach to educating students with disabilities. Under the inclusion model, students with disabilities spend most or all of their time with non-disabled students.

Teachers need to understand the situation of the disabled learner. When children with disabilities learn in the same school as their non-disabled peers with the support necessary for them to be successful there, then the society is said to be "inclusive". All students in a school, regardless of their strengths and weaknesses in any area become part of the school community.

2.3 Strategic interventions that can be employed to alleviate the challenges facing inclusion Implementation.

Students of all abilities and backgrounds want classrooms that are inclusive and convey respect. For those students with disabilities, the classroom setting may present certain challenges that need accommodation and consideration. Picard (2016) states that in order to create an inclusive classroom where all students are respected, it is important to use a language that prioritizes the student over his or her disability. Often times words are used that exclude learners and this makes learners feel isolated in the classroom. The teachers should caution other learners from using labels that damage the confidence of disabled learners.

Picard (2016) states that disability labels can be stigmatizing and perpetuate false stereotypes where students who are disabled are not as capable as their peers. In general, it is appropriate to reference the disability only when it is pertinent to the situation. For instance, it is better to say "The student, who has a disability" rather than "The disabled student" because it places the importance on the student, rather than on the fact that the student has a disability.

There is need for more training. Bloomfield (2017) states that the need for teachers who have both the knowledge and the ability to teach special-education students is more critical today than ever before. Many teacher-education programs offer just one class for students with disabilities to their general-education teachers. As a result teachers graduate without any in-depth knowledge and know how on dealing with learners with a disability. In addition it is essential that teachers are trained in skills and strategies to support behaviour management in the classroom as well as the ability to differentiate instruction for students with special needs. Mpofu and Shumba (2012) suggest that if ECE centres are to meet challenges of educating children with diverse needs, teachers should embrace curricular that engage and encourage learners. In line to this Graves and Ward (2012) allude that it is the responsibility of the teacher to structure their classroom so that it has minimal distractions and create a learning environment for all children. Therefore teachers need to have knowledge and skills needed to select and adapt curricular and instructional methods according to learners' individual needs. To this point Ramos (2009) states that teachers must be skilled in handling disabilities and create lesson plans based on individual differences or abilities. Educators need to co-ordinate efforts and understand the needs of learners in terms of developing skills and lesson plans.

Teachers have to treat children with special needs according to their diverse needs for them to develop to their full potential. Graves and Ward (2012) reflect that students with special needs are deprived of a suitable education which may negatively affect learner's self esteem and dignity. Those working with children who have special needs are called upon to examine and reflect on their practice inorder to role model appropriate attitudes and behaviour as well as responding effectively to and accommodating individual learning needs. In this regard adequate staff development and technical assistance based on the needs of children with disabilities has to be provided. For example, information on disabilities, instructional methods, acceptance and activities for children with specific disabilities.

Also there need to be adequate resources and facilities for the effective teaching of inclusive classes. Mafa (2012) indicates that without suitable facilities and adequate resources it will be always difficult to implement inclusive education properly. In the same view Morrison (2012) states that special needs for children with disabilities need a variety of equipment if comprehensive services are to be delivered to learners. The physical environment si crirtical to enriching children's development and learning. Therefore the physical environment such as buildings and playground facilities and equipment which include toys, learning materials and assistive devices need to be adequate to meet children's needs.

2.4 Summary

In this chapter, the researcher reviewed various literatures on inclusion of children with special needs in regular classes.The chapter further explored on the challenges faced when implementing inclusive education and how these challenges affect the teaching and learning of ECE learners with disabilities. Lastly, the chapter explored various ways that can be used to improve inclusive education in ECE classrooms.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter focused on how the research was carried out. The population, sample and sampling procedures were looked into. In addition the chapter focused on the instruments for collecting data and justified the need to use them in the study. Data analysis procedures, validity and reliability were also looked into. The summary of the whole chapter was also highlighted.

3.1 Research design

According to Polit and Hungler (2004) a methodology refers to how the research is done and its logical sequence. It also refers to ways of obtaining, organising and analysing data. The research design, population, sampling procedure, research instruments, and other aspects of the methodology will be presented.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and Barbara (2006) state that research design refers to the overall strategy that one chooses to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way, thereby, ensuring you will effectively address the research problem; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. Cresswell (2009) says a research design is the overall plan of obtaining answers to the research questions.

 This research employed a case study approach. Case studies are in-depth investigations of a single person, group, event or community. Typically, data are gathered from a variety of sources and by using several different methods like observations and interviews, (Mcleod, 2008). The reason for using a case study is that case studies can be used to explain a situation, to provide a basis to apply solutions to situations, to explore, or to describe an object or phenomenon . In this case, the study attempted to effectively analyse the challenges associated with implementation of inclusive education in ECE classrooms. The other advantages of the case study method are its

applicability to real-life, contemporary, human situations and its public accessibility through written reports. The issues of learners with disabilities is a real life issue that needs attention and to be studied as it is important to integrate learners in learning. Case study results relate directly to the common readers everyday experience and facilitate an understanding of complex real-life situations like the integration of learners with disabilities.

Moreover, a case study is concerned with studying participants in their natural settings thereby enabling the researcher to use multiple sources and techiques in the data collection process. Punch (2005) indicates that all data relevant to the case are gathered and all available dataare organised in terms of the case. Also it focuses on the study of a single phenomenon hence enabling the researcher to have an in-depth study of it. Thus the nature of the research makes the researcher to engage on it so as to enjoy its benefits, the researcher could probe and persue leads that appeared fruitful. This allowed the researcher to get more information. A case study helped create a rapport between the interviwer and the interviewee. It also allowed the researcher clarify questions which the respondents did not understand.

3.2 Population and sample

3.2.1 Population

A population is a group of individuals who have the same characteristics and is further defined in quantitative research as a group of individuals with some common defining characteristics that the research can identify and study (Creswell, 2012).
Therefore, the researcher used a target population of 10 ECE teachers at the school of the study.

3.2.2 Sampling

Rouse (2017) states that sampling is the selection of participants to acquire some knowledge of a statistical population. Sampling allows researchers and other data analysts to work with a small, manageable amount of data in order to build and run analytical models more quickly, while still producing accurate findings. Sampling can be particularly useful with data sets that are too large to efficiently analyze in full. In this study the researcher sampled one school in the cluster in order to get rich data and in depth analysis of the challenges faced by teachers in integrating learners with disabilities.

3.2.2.1 Sample

Powell & Connaway (2010) state that a sample is a selection of units from the total population to be studied. The research focused on one school in the cluster. For this research, the researcher used 10 ECE teachers from Tategulu Primary school.

Teachers were randomly sampled. Starnes (2008) state that a simple random sample is a subset of individuals (a sample) chosen from a larger set (a population). Each individual is chosen randomly and entirely by chance. Each individual is chosen
entirely by chance and each member of the population has an equal chance of being included in the sample. Every possible sample of a given size has the same chance of selection. The same procedure was done in selecting the 10 teachers.

3.3 Research Instruments

A research instrument is what you use to collect information (data) to answer your research question (Tan Kok, 2013). It helps the researcher keep track of observations and how to collected data from the participants or elements under research.

The researcher used interviews and observations to gather data.

3.3.1 Interviews

Interviews were conducted with 5 parents and 5 teachers. The use of the face to face interview method was employed for the research. Cohen and Shahani-Denning (2012) define an interview as a two person conversation initiated by an interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information. The interview method helped the researcher to get as much information as she can as it was conducted on a face to face basis.

Interviews were used due to their advantages. They allowed for more in-depth data collection and comprehensive understanding. Body language and facial expressions are more clearly identified and understood (Cohen and Shahani-Denning 2012). The interviewer probed for explanations of responses. Stimulus material and visual aids were used to support the interview. All interviews were audio taped so it allowed the researcher to replay the interviews repeatedly.

However, interviews are more time consuming to recruit and conduct. As a result of timing and travel, interviews can be expensive. Interviews can also deliver biased responses. They require the researcher to carefully vet the respondent's ability before investing time in the recruitment process and interview process.

3.3.2 Observations

In this study the researcher's own observations were necessary as they provided current information on how disabled learners are engaged in learning at the school. An observation checklist was used. The researcher observed the learners' participation and engagement during class lessons and the treatment of disabled learners at the school. Kombo and Tromp (2006) assert that observation is one of the very important methods for obtaining comprehensive data in qualitative research especially when a composite of both oral and visual data become vital to the research.

A key advantage of conducting observations is that the researcher observed what ECE learners actually do or say, rather than what they say they do. Observations provided the advantage of hands on experience and a direct analysis of various aspects of the research. However, observations can be subjective as disabled ECE learners may feel uneasy under scrutiny. Therefore, the researcher gave a brief note to ECE learners to assure them to be free in the research.

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

Rouse (2016) states that data collection is the systematic approach to gathering and measuring information from a variety of sources to get a complete and accurate picture of an area of interest. Data collection enables a person or organization to answer relevant questions,

evaluate outcomes and make predictions about future probabilities and trends. Chiromo (2006) reveals that data collection procedures give operational details such as how, when and who administers the instrumets during the collection of data. Prior to collection of data for the study the researcher carried out several necessary activities to facilitate its success. With the support of a letter from the Provincial Education Director Bulawayo Metropolitan Province the researcher made an application to seek for permission to carry out the research. Permission was granted by the Ministry

of Primary and secondary Education. During the process the researcher arranged convient dates, time and venues for interviews and observations. All responses were recorded for use in data analysis. The researcher opted for the data collection methods because they proved to be feasible and efficient as the researcher was engaged in the work personally.

3.5 Ethical considerations

Cresswell (2003) stresses the importance of considering ethical issues when conducting a research in schools because of power relations between teachers and learners. He sees ethical considerations as a central ingredient for research. This was particularly important in this research as the study dealt with vulnerable individuals in the society , who are disabled learners and this guided the ethical behaviour of the researcher in the study.

Informed consent means that research participants were fully informed about the procedures and risks involved in the study and gave them consent to participate. Ethical standards require that the researcher should not put participants in a situation where they might be at risk of harm as a result of them participating.

 The researcher ensured that respondents contributions were kept confidential through out the study and were assured and no information retrived from them will be shared to an un authorised party. In case of the interviews, although information was collected on a one on one basis respondents were assured of their confidentiality and the responses were coded so that the verbatim could be used to represent data.

The researcher treated partipants with respect and built a close relationship on trust.The ethical principle of anonymity requires that names or identities of the respondents should not be divulged. This means that the researcher gathered information without attaching names of the participants. The researcher used codes to identify the research participants. Respondents were also assuredof confidentiality and this allowed them to freely participate and give information as required without fear.

3.6 Validity and reliability

Mc millan and Schumacher (2009) define validity as the extent to which an instrument measures what it si supposed to measure. Thus validity is therefore the trustworthiness of the instruments that are being used to collect data. Reliability as aexpressed by Cohen and Manion (2003) is the extent to which a procedure produces similar results under constant conditions on all occasions. It is closely related to validity.

3.7 Data analysis procedures

Cohen, Mnion and Morrison (2007) describe data analysis as a systematic search for meaning. This infers that during data analysis the researcher made close scrutiny of the collected data, processed and organised it in order to communicate to others what have been learnt during the study. In this study, data collected from the interviews and observations was extracted, organised and analysed. The sets of responses were analysed in the context of secondary research questions, assumptions and reviewed literature given. The data was analysed with scrutiny to either confirm or disconfirm the reseacher's assumptions or to provide answers secondary research questions. This assisted the researcher to arrive at well informed findings and conclusions of her study.

3.8 Summary

This chapter focused on the research design and methodology used in the study for which the researcher opted for a case study. The chapter further identified the research participants who were ECE teachers parents, of leaners at Tategulu Primary school as well as disabled learners. The sample and sampling procedures were explored. Data collection instruments such as interviews and observations were outlined. Ethical considerations and the validity and reliability of instruments were specified. Data analysis procedures were also explored. Gathered data was used to form the basis of the next chapter which dwell on findings, analysis and discussion.

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses data collected through interviews and observations. The content of this chapter was generated from data to illuminate findings that were both intricate and substantial. Data was collected using document analysis and interviews from teachers and parents. The data being presented aims to answer the following research questions:

- ➢ What are the challenges associated with implementation of inclusive education in ECE classrooms?

- ➢ How do the challenges affect the teaching and learning of ECE learners with special needs?

- ➢ What are the possible strategic interventions that can be employed to alleviate the challenges facing inclusive education implementation?

4.1 Findings from research question 1 which says, what are the challenges associated with implementation of inclusive education in ECE classrooms?

4.1.1 Findings from interviews

In this study the researcher saw it fit to first find out from teachers what they understand by inclusive education. They made it clear that they had an idea on what inclusion entails. Responses from Respondent1, Respondent 2, Respondent 3 and Respondent 4 are as follows

"Is whereby children with disabilities are being educated in the same mainstream with children who are not disabled."

"It is including children with disabilities into the mainstream, so that they learn together with children who are "normal", and use the same resources and materials and buildings."

"Is whereby you include learners with challenges in a "normal" class to teach them together with those ones whom we say are "normal".

"Is whereby learners with special needs or certain disabilities are included in the formal education sector with other 'normal' learners."

From the above exceptions it can be noted that the teachers had an idea of what inclusive education is however, some respondents referred to the learners without special needs or disabilities as "normal" which showed that teachers somehow perceive learners with disabilities as not normal.

The teacher sought to know the challenges associated with implementation of inclusive education in ECE classrooms. Thus, in the interviews teachers were asked to say some of the challenges they see as affecting the effective implementation of inclusive education. Respondent 1 specifically stated that:

"Most teachers do not know what special needs are, therefore they call these learners names."

"Teachers shun theses children since they cannot teach them."

From the response above it can be noted that teacher lack knowledge about inclusive education as a result they are stereotypical about the children and go on to shun them with the mentality that they are not fit enough to teach the children with special needs. Moreover, Respondent number 2 said that parents were also a challenge. She stated that:

"Some parents are ashamed of their children, they leave them at home."

The response above reveals that some parents they want to live their lives according to the society's approval. It was noted that some parents are ashamed to be seen moving around with for instance a disabled child going to school. This implies that the parents are worried about what people think as a result they leave their children behind closed doors when they move around in the neighbourhood. However, Respondent 2 agrees with Respondent 3 who also identified parents as another challenge that effective implementation of inclusive education in saying:

"Parents do not like to be called to school to discuss problems their children may be having."

In this case it implies that the parents who would have sent their children to school do not like to occasionally visit the school to meet their children's teachers to discuss the children's challenges and progress. To add on to that lack of teaching and learning were also mentioned as a challenge. One respondent clearly stated that:

"The most challenge we are facing as educators is lack of materials. These children with special needs need special equipment to learn better."

This implies that teaching and learning materials are lacking in school and the situation is exacerbating the problem. It was noted that none of the schools has instructional and special materials like braille and hearing aids. In an attempt to fully exhaust the question, data from the interviews carried out revealed that proper infrastructure was also a challenge. They stated that:

"Infrastructure is very poor."

"Sanitation facilities are not good".

This implies that, the school does not have proper buildings and toilets that accommodate all learners including ones with disabilities. Classroom arrangements and classroom materials were also mentioned as challenges that are affecting effective implementation of inclusive education. Respondent 4 stated that:

"The tables and chairs in the classrooms are not suitable especially for learners with cerebral palsy, because that child needs a proper and special chair and table."

This implies that, the furniture was purchased without considering or expecting to enrol learners with special needs in the school. The statement above clearly states that, learners with cerebral palsy need special chairs that the schools do not have. Respondent 4 went on to say;

"The environment is not conducive, learners cannot maneuverer freely, and they cannot move around, the classroom set up is so crowded."

On top of having furniture that does not accommodate learners with special needs, it was also reported that the classroom environment is not conducive.

Learners cannot maneuverer freely because the setup of the classrooms is too crowded. This implies that the environment is inhibitive to learners who are on wheel chair to move around freely. The system was also mentioned as a challenge: Respondent 2 clearly stated that:

"The syllabus and the curriculum have to be inclusive, as for now it favours the learners who are "normal".

This implies that, the curriculum seems to be in favour of learners who do not have special needs. It was noted that some of the school facilities are not accessible to learners on wheel chairs, even the school competitions like netball only needs learners who are able bodied and do not have physical challenges. In an attempt to fully exhaust the question on the challenges associated with implementation of inclusive education in ECE classrooms. Apart from curriculum being noted as a challenge, learners with special needs themselves were reported to be a challenge. Respondent 3 reported that:

"They are difficulty to manage because of their unpredictable and worrying behaviour, and sometimes they start to attend school late and are older than other pupils."

This implies teachers faced challenges of learners who would start school late; as a result children will no behave like their younger counter parts in the classroom. The following question was also asked during interviews:

Teachers were solicited of their opinion on whether adequate skills and knowledge are important in handling learners with special needs. Respondent 5 clearly stated that:

"If you do not know how to handle children with special needs, it is difficult for a teacher to teach, because most of the times if you are unknowledgeable with things concerning special needs you cannot cope."

This implies that, the interviewee strongly believes that adequate skills and knowledge are of great essence in handling learners with special needs. The fact that, they are ECE learners they need maximum skill, knowledge and patience for one to be able to manage them. The need for skill and knowledge

is even worse when the learner has special needs. One must be specially trained in order to manage either learners with special needs or ECE learners.

Respondent 7 stated that:

They come to school too old.

They do not like to do activities that are being done by other children

4.1.2 Findings from observations

During the course of this study I observed that on physical facilities the school under study had buildings that were well spaced according to the city council standard since all the schools were built by the city council. However, the classroom corridors and toilets did not have rail rods on them, which make it difficult especially for learners who use wheel chairs to stand in the corridors. This observation is in agreement with the interview reports that infrastructure was a challenge to the implementation of inclusive education.

I also noticed that the ramps on the classroom and office entrance are still new showing that they were recently erected. However, people who use wheel chairs were said to be complaining that the ramps were too steep. I observed that there was congestion around the classroom, meaning that there were too many learners in the classrooms. As a result I noticed that the classes were too large which is a challenge that affects the teaching and learning of ECE learners with special needs since the teachers could not attend and address each and every learner's individual needs.

On equipment, materials and other resources I noticed that, the furniture in the classrooms was not user friendly especially to learners with cerebral palsy. The desks have sharp corners which may be a hazard to learners with eye sight problems. All the schools were still using green chalk board which is also a challenge to learners who are visually impaired. I observed that none of the school grounds had concrete pavements on them where learners who use wheel chairs could move freely and fast without being pushed by other learners.

I also observed that the curriculum was not favourable to learners with special needs. Learners who are able bodied were the only ones seen participating in

school competitions like athletics and netball. Moreover, it was also observed that learners with challenges did not interact with peers during break time or play time. Learners with special needs seem isolated. They were part of play but watching from afar. They would also laugh when other children are laughing which showed that they would enjoy more if included in the play.

In the classrooms I noticed that the learner who had a challenge was older than the rest of the group. Upon inquiring it was revealed that the learner was older to the rest of the group because he was slow in developing. Hence, the parents had to wait long for him to start doing other activities and show development on some milestones like talking. I also discovered that other learners did not like to socialise with him because he was bully. He would beat them if they seem to disagree with him. As result it was noted that, it is a challenge when older learners learn in the same class with very young learners.

4.1.3 Discussion of research question 1 which says, what are the challenges associated with implementation of inclusive education in ECE classrooms?

Findings revealed that, inadequate and knowledge was reported by most teachers as a hindrance to effective implementation of inclusive education in their schools. This implies that teachers teaching inclusive classes do not have sufficient skills and knowledge to teach both regular and special education learners in the same class because majority of the teachers were not fully trained to teach pupils with special needs. The findings are in agreement with Kalabula and Mandyata (2003) who pointed out that there were no specialist teachers in most schools in Africa to provide advisory services that would assist ordinary teachers with managing the learners with special need who were being included in ordinary schools. As a result learners with special needs lack the specialised care they need. However, teachers are trying by every means possible to accommodate the learners with special needs.

From the findings it was observed and noted that inadequate facilities such as few classrooms were also one of the challenges to the implementation of

inclusive education. It was observed that from the school under study, it lacks facilities like basic technical devices for instance; braille, hearing aids or specialised play materials. This is in agreement with Oriedo (2003) who observed that schools buildings are not accessible, making it difficult for learners with physical disabilities to attend. From my observation from the school under study erected ramps that are not up to standard. It seems they used a builder who did not know the measurements or required standard for the ramps are too steep. Hence, it was concluded that schools should be provided with a policy that clearly shows the measurements that they should follow when making adjustments to the school facilities. For inclusion to be successful the school environment should be modified to support the learners with special education needs.

Findings showed that parental involvement was also a challenge to the implementation inclusive education in schools. One participant specifically stated that, parents rarely come to schools to consult on their children with special needs. This shows that parents are not concerned with the performance of the learners. I observed these learners suffer from discrimination and are looked down upon even by their parents. This is in agreement with Engelbrecht (2005) who discovered that low involvement of parents makes learning process hard especially for special needs pupils since education is a continuous process. This implies that parents are considered partners with teachers and other professionals in ensuring appropriate education for ECE learners. Thus, it was concluded that parents should be educated on their role and importance of their involvement in their children's education life.

Teachers' negative attitude was also noted from the findings as a challenge to the full implementation of inclusive education. It was observed that some teacher attach labels or derogatory names on learners with special needs. This is in agreement with Zalizan (2000) who noted that, the success of the inclusive program depends among others on the attitudes of the classroom teachers towards the children with special needs. From my observation it implies that teachers are likely to have negative attitudes towards learners with special needs since the majority of the teachers are not trained to handle

inclusive classes, thus they have some misconceptions and hold some stereotypes due to lack of knowledge.

Findings revealed that behaviour of learners' with special needs was also a challenge. Teachers reported that special needs learners were older than their regular counter parts in the classroom. Zalizan (2000) noted that, some of them were indiscipline and did not want to be punished because they felt they were grown ups.

Lastly, too large classes were also noted as a hindrance to effective implementation of inclusive education. I observed that most all of the ECE classes balloons up to 30 learners with one teacher. As a result play materials are not enough for all the learners. To make matters worse with that teacher-pupil ratio it was observed that it is impossible for the teacher to cater for all the learners' individual differences. These findings mirror the studies by Oriedo (2003) who noted that, individual play materials enhance learning and increase learners' success by allowing the pupils to explore the knowledge independently as well as providing for repetition. Thus, enough play materials should be availed and should be selected according to the specific needs of the learners or individual differences.

This study has identified a rigid curriculum, poor stakeholders' attitude, lack of or inadequate resources, lack of specialist teachers and lack of parent and community involvement as key challenges in implementation of inclusive education.

4.2 Findings from research question 2 which says, how do the challenges affect the teaching and learning of ECE learners with special needs?

4.2.1 Findings from interviews

The main objective of this question is to find out how the challenges mentioned above affect the teaching and learning of ECE learners with special needs. The accepts below from Respondent 5 reveal how the challenges mentioned above affect the implementation of inclusive education.

"Labelling from other learners who call them derogatory names like,"isiphofu,   spezhozho. Because of that they feel inferior and tend to have low self-esteem, hence   that   will   disturb   their   psychological development."

This implies that labelling or calling the learners using derogatory names was affect the teaching and learning of ECE learners with special needs because these names thwart the learners' inner being. The names are so demining to the extent that learners with special needs tunes into the self-fulfilling prophesy and acts accordingly and end up perceiving themselves as sub humans who are worthy nothing. Labelling kills the learners with special needs' self-worthy. Thus, learners with special needs will slowly coil back into their shell until they are invisible to the rest of the class. As a result the development is hindered. Additionally, Respondent 2 had this to say on effect of lack of teaching and learning materials:

"Learning material are inadequate, it forces the teacher to improvise, thus using sub-standard materials."

This implies that, lack of or inadequate learning materials also affect the teaching and learning of ECE learners with special needs. Since learners with special needs need proper and special types of teaching and learning materials like braille and hearing and sometimes computers, if these materials are not available the learners will not benefit from the teacher who teaches using the chalk board. When the teacher cannot provide learners with personalised material they will resort to using the chalk board or any other substandard materials at their disposal. Respondent 4 reported on the effect of toilets that are a challenge to the implementation of inclusive education. Respondent 4 clearly stated that:

"Even the toilets are a challenge; as a result those on wheel chairs need to be pushed around by other people"

This implies that, improper toilets affect ECE learners with special needs for instance the one who use wheel chairs. The toilets affect them in the sense that they cannot go the toilets on their own. They would need someone to always push and accompany them to use the facilities. As a result they would

not enjoy the freedom to use the facilities in private. Thus, their privacy is limited. In an attempt to fully scrutinise the question respondents were solicited of their views about the inclusion of learners with special needs at ECE level.

All the interviewees were in agreement that, including learners with special was a good idea. Responses from Respondent 2, Respondent 3 and Respondent 5 are as follows:

"It is a good idea, although it is difficulty. It is good in the sense that children with special needs will feel included and can learn social skills through socialisation."

"It is very crucial for children with special needs to be included because children need to socialise and by so doing they learn social skills from other."

"It is okay, because it encourages the children with special needs to socialise with peers, for example, if the child has a speech challenge, the child will end up wanting to talk and will learn language from other children."

From the above statements, it was noted that all the teachers agreed that learners with special needs should be included into the mainstream so that they learn together with other children of their ages. The respondents reported that including them was a good idea because it boosts the learners' self-esteem when they see that they are loved and accommodated by peers regardless of their physical ability. In a way they reported that including learners with special needs is therapeutic because they can imitate their peers on language and improve their linguistic skills in cases where the special need has something to do with speech or language defect.

4.2.2 Finding from observations

I observed that, lacking of teaching and learning material had an effect on the teaching and learning of ECE learners with special needs. I noted that the most reliable and available mode of instruction in the classroom were chalk boards that were not to the level of the learners. They were mounted way up on the walls. They were also immobile. As a result learners were affected in

the sense that they had to learn looking up so that they can see the teachers' demonstrations or drawings on the board.

I also noted that, inadequate or lack of facilities such as few classrooms and appropriate furniture had a major effect on the teaching and learning of learners with special needs at ECE level. Since the existing facilities lack the basic technical training devices like braille, hearing aid and specialised materials. This challenge affected the learners with special needs in that they would not benefit when the teacher is teaching because they need a special and specialised type of material to cater for their type of need. This challenge affected them as they had to compete unfavourably with the regular learners.

I observed that, inadequate skills and knowledge by teachers affect the teaching and learning of learners with special needs in the sense that the learners would lack specialised care they need since the teacher does not the skill to deal with any special need. As a result learners would not benefit or develop because the teacher will be trying to make the learners to conform to the situation at hand.

During observations, I noted that ECE learners whose parents do not come to meet the teacher showed a low morale. They were not keen to talk about their parents to other children or to the teacher because other parents would continually say 'you saw my mother / father yesterday'. Hence, that it was noted that when parents shows that they are ashamed of their children, which automatically destroys the learner's self-esteem when socialising with peers.

I observed that improper infrastructure is a challenge that affects learners with special needs. Improper infrastructure limits learners' mobility. They cannot move up and down the school premises as they would want to do because the school corridors do not have rail rods or lifts to go the upper areas of the school. Hence, learners with disabilities are excluded from gaining access to buildings around the school especially for wheel chair users.

During observations, I noted that the curriculum seemed to be favouring the able bodied learners. The curriculum is result oriented whereby it concentrates on the academics which may be challenge to some special needs that affected the cognitive state. The curriculum is not flexible and

tends to be content-heavy. This kind of a curriculum is rigid and tends to exclude learners with special needs from the mainstream education. This type of a curriculum affects the learners in that it expects the learner with special needs to adjust and suit the system instead of the curriculum to adjust to the learner's needs.

4.2.3 Discussion of research question 2 which says, how do the challenges affect the teaching and learning of ECE learners with special needs?

Findings from the study showed that the challenges that were identified affect the teaching and learning of learners with special needs deeply. Kochung (2003) noted that unsuitable infrastructure hinder learners' mobility. This challenge affect learners with special needs because these learners are excluded from getting access to buildings. Additionally, Teachers' negative attitudes destroys learners' self-esteem. This is in agreement with Lindsay (2007) who noted that pupils with learning difficulties and special needs suffered extreme stigmatisation by members of the society. Some parents were also found to be ignorant about their children's incapability. The study showed that the attitude reported was generally unfavourable and many teachers and the so called "normal learners" were seen to perceive learners with special needs with a negative light. As a result this challenge of negative attitude affect the learners' social life and socialisation for they are always excluded during social play. Lindsay (2007) noted that lack of enough play materials makes the children have to continuously play catch up. This challenge affect learners as they compete unfavourably with the regular learners or the 'so called normal'.

Gethin (2003) when teachers fail to get the necessary materials they resort to using the chalk boards which are not effective for all learners in inclusive classes. The unavailability of text books and classrooms deprived learners with special needs of reading sessions, materials and other resources to address their academic problems. Gachiri (2010) says pupils without learning aids and support materials have their mobility reduced and they feel inferior to the normal pupils. With the reason of not being able to hear, see and express themselves properly and writing slower than other children results in many of

them failing to develop fully. The problem of a curriculum that is rigid and expect the learner with special need to

Tategulu primary school. Therefore the researcher intended exploring and discovering change in order to it in the mainstream school was also noted as a challenge that is hindering effective implementation of inclusive education.

Lack of training by teachers make them use teaching that are appropriate for learners they are managing especially one with special needs. Chhabra, Srivastava and Srivastava (2010) advise that learners with learning disabilities need professional support and should be referred to specialists when necessary. Findings revealed that lack of trained teachers as material resources affect the teaching and learning in inclusive education, since teachers resort to treat all learners as regular learner and not considering the learners' special needs. As a result learners do not get the special care they need to develop holistically.

4.3 Findings from research question 3 which says, what are the possible strategic interventions that can be employed to alleviate the challenges facing inclusive education implementation?

4.3.1 Findings from interviews

The researcher sought to understand the possible strategic interventions that can be employed to alleviate the challenges facing inclusive education implementation. A number of strategies were suggested by the respondents. Respondent 1 reported that:

"The syllabus has to be inclusive, as for now it favours the learners who are "normal".

"Curriculum should be planned in a way that it includes learners with special needs."

This implies that, teachers noticed that the curriculum should also include practical subjects that can be done by learners with special needs especially those who are not gifted academically. They also suggested that prior to enrolling learners with special needs the administrators should first assess if

the learner qualifies for mainstream education or should be referred to special schools. Respondent 2 stated that:

"We need to orient and teach administrators before they do enrolment they need to be equipped and have little knowledge on learners with special needs."

This implies that, school heads should have knowledge on how to assess learners with special needs before offering them places in the school. This is important because they may cause more damage by enrolling the learner where she will not benefit anything. Teaching and learning materials were also included as suggestions that could help alleviate the challenges associated with implementation of inclusive education in ECE classrooms. Respondent 5 stated that:

"All schools should have braille and speech trainers."

"Resources need to be availed to the teacher and learners."

This implies that, the schools should be supported by all stake holders so that they can have appropriate and adequate teaching, learning and instructional material so that inclusive education can be implemented effectively. Teacher training was also suggested as strategy that can help alleviate challenges associated with inclusive education. Respondent 3 stated that:

"We want teachers who are oriented in issues pertaining special needs education, so that they can handle these learners in the classrooms."

"Teachers need to be trained, training must be compulsory."

This implies that, for inclusive education to be effective teachers require having a systematic and intensive training by competent and experienced people and from reputable institutions. From a different angle, Respondent 1 said the government should show initiative. He specifically stated that:

"We should set up structures from top i.e. from ministerial level up to the classroom level. We need to have a minister for people with disabilities. We should also have strategic people so that they campaign for inclusivity in all government departments."

This implies that, issues and matters of inclusive education should be presented and be debated in the parliament by members of the senate or parliament so that they can cascade the information down to their area and let everyone be educated on importance of inclusive education. Parental involvement was also suggested as a strategy that could help alleviate challenges associated with education. Respondent 4 reported that:

"Parents should be involved in their children's education life."

This implies that parents should take a leading role by working together with teachers for the full development of the learners with special needs. Parents are a central resource as primary care givers of their children in the education system, thus, to counter challenges associated with inclusive education parents should love their children regardless of their physical or mental ability.

4.3.2 Findings from observations

During observations, I observed that some of the learners with disabilities are sometimes referred to schools psychological services so that they can assess and rate them. Sending learners to schools psychological services was good for both the learner and the teacher because the learner will be given appropriate education that will benefit them. I noted referring learners was a good strategy because the schools psychological services may help to connect the school with donors that may donate teaching and learning material the learners may be in dire need of.

I observed that, there are learners with special needs in the schools and they are learning in the same environment with regular learners. However, learners with special needs like learning disabilities and low intelligence always come at the bottom of the class when they are being rated according to presentations in class. However, this was a good strategy that could help learners to learn to socialise with peers they perceive as different from them.

I also noted that the teachers accommodate learners with special needs by giving them too many toys to play with and are sometimes over protective. They do not allow the learners to play outside with others during break time fearing that they will hurt others or may be hurt by other children. However,

this strategy could be harmful to the learners' emotional development because he or she will not be able to sort issues verbally with other children with being physical.

I observed that teachers were more that wishing and willing to work with parents of learners with disabilities. I noted through communication books that they are always calling and inviting parents to come to school to discuss the challenges and the progress learners will be making. Unfortunately, parents were more than once called concerned their children's unbecoming behaviour especially beating other children.

4.3.3 Discussion of research question 3 which say, what are the possible strategic interventions that can be employed to alleviate the challenges facing inclusive education implementation?

Training of teachers.

The first strategy that can employed to alleviate challenges facing inclusive education implementation is by training enough and specialist teachers or special needs learners. This is in agreement with Kochung (2003) teachers with adequate understanding of the nature of exceptionality of learners with special educational needs are potentially more capable in teaching them. From my observation I noted that teachers who are not specialists in special education are apprehensive about having learners with special needs in their classroom. Hence, for inclusive education to be fully implemented, it is important that special teachers are trained so that they can manage learners with special educational needs effectively.

Moreover, Landsberg (2005) asserts that for inclusive teaching, teachers need systematic and intensive training, either as part of their initial training, or as well-planned in-service training by competent and experienced people. Thus, for inclusive education to be a success only specialised teachers should teach learners with special needs. Furthermore, Mcdonnel (1997) says teachers require information and appreciation of learners with special needs. This means that, teachers should have information on how to identify learning difficulties and how to adapt the environment and instruction to accommodate the learners' special needs. Successful implementation of an inclusive system

requires that teachers are committed and supported within service training. Thus, effective implementation of inclusive education needs a long term commitment to professional development.

Appropriate teaching and learning materials.

Another strategy that can be employed to improve the implementation of inclusive education is by providing enough and appropriate learning materials for learners with special needs. UNESCO (1990) says a school with learners with special needs requires special resources to cater for their needs. This implies that different types of special needs require different types of resources. It was noted that learners with special needs are likely to benefit from additional services such as different approaches to teaching, use of technology, a specifically adapted teaching area or resource room. Thus for inclusive education to be successful schools should provide adequate, specific and educational materials that will help the learners to develop holistically.

Involve parents

Findings from the study revealed that parents were not immensely involved in their children's education. However in order for inclusive education to be a success parent's should also take part as equal stakeholders in the success of the programme. UNESCO (1990) advises that the teachers should allow parents to give input in decision making process for their attitude to mere favourable. This implies that teachers should consult parents and include them during decision making meetings. UNECO (1990) asserts that parents are very instrumental in the success of inclusionary placements for their children. They are also important in the success of inclusive education because they collaborate with school, and community members to create and support inclusive education programme and encourage other parents to support inclusive programme. Thus, successful implementation of inclusive education requires positive attitude among parents and the whole society.

Change curriculum

The curriculum should create a learning environment that reflects and validates the diversity and complexity of different personal experiences. Each learners' unique needs are supposed to be met through adaptation of equipment, specialised instructional personnel. Since the schools accommodate all learner regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotion, linguistic and other conditions. Therefore, UNESCO (2003) says the emphasis is on reviewing schools and the system then changing them to accommodate all learners rather than changing the learner. This implies that the system should change so that each and every learner can fit in and be comfortable. Kochung (2003) says the curriculum offered in education should be all-encompassing and extensive both in content, methodology and evaluation process thereby recognising and valuing both diversity of the school population in the learning and teaching process. Thus, for inclusive education to be a success and effective the inclusive curriculum should affirm the life experience of all learners, regardless of gender, place of origin, religion, cultural, ability/disability and linguistic background. Moreover, Jonsson (1994) stresses the need for a process based flexible curriculum. This implies the curriculum should not be rigid so that it does not exclude learners with special educational needs and marginalise them for main stream education.

Conclusively, this study has identified change of curriculum, training of specialist teachers, parental involvement and use of appropriate teaching materials as strategies that can help to alleviate challenges facing inclusive education implementation.

4.4 Summary

In this chapter, the results from the study have been presented and discussed in the context of research questions. The main findings from the interviews and observation on the challenges associated with implementation of inclusive education in ECE classrooms were revealed and discussed. Most teachers reported that they are not trained to teach children with special educational needs. It was noted that, these are regular teachers who are not adequately trained and prepared to teach and manage learners with special needs. Results from the findings revealed that the learners have behaviours

that inhibit them academically as well as socially and these often become a challenge for the teachers. Hence, it was concluded that it is important to use a language that prioritises the learner over his or her disability.

Teachers should treat learners with special needs according to their diverse needs or them to develop to their full potential. It was also concluded that, the need for teachers who have both the knowledge and the ability to teach special education learners is more critical today than ever before. The need for adequate learning resources and facilities for effective teaching and learning must also be availed.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

Chapter five of this study presents summary of what transpired throughout from chapter one to four. Thus the methodology of the study is briefly explained followed by major conclusions that have been made with reference of the findings made. However to any study there are loopholes, hence recommendations on the basis of research findings discussed in the previous chapter were made for further study

5.1 Summary

This study was an examination of the efforts that are being made by Tategulu primary school in an endeavour to include learners with disabilities in ECE classrooms. Thus focus was on the challenges that are being faced by the school regarding inclusive education strategies being put into practice. The researcher chose this area of study because she felt that inclusion of learners with disabilities in ECE classrooms was a typical issue with little or no research at all being carried out at Tategulu primary school. Therefore the researcher intended to find out atmore about what was in this school regarding including learners with disabilities in regular ECE classrooms.

In the first chapter the research looked at the background of the study which outlined the factors that led the researcher to engage in this type of study, the statement of the problem which reflected the area of concern was also highlighted in this chapter. Additionally, the chapter stated the main research question and the secondary questions. Limitations were also pointed out which included time constraints and the possibility of limited access to information from participants who are not willing to cooperate. Delimitation of the study was also cited which indicated that parents, teachers and disabled learners are going to be used. Key terms of the whole study were defined. Of significance was that if carried out well the study will benefit all concerned

stakeholders to be well informed on the short comings of inclusive education and come up with proper guidelines regarding special needs education at ECE level.

In chapter two, the researcher reviewed related literature from various authorities to find out what other researchers concluded concerning inclusion of learners with disabilities in ECE classrooms. Firstly the chapter explored the challenges faced in implementing inclusive education in ECE classrooms. The chapter further explored the impact of the challenges in implementing inclusive education on the educational development of disabled learners. Lastly the chapter explored various strategic interventions that can be employed to alleviate the challenges facing inclusion implementation.

In carrying out the research the researcher made focus on one school in the cluster. In this school the researcher targeted the teachers, parents. From this population the researcher sampled five teachers and five parents for use in her study. The researcher then engaged the techniques of a qualitative research design in the form of a case study to conduct her research where interviews and observations were used as the main instruments. The researcher used interviews as they allowed the researcher to solicit first hand information in a face to face dialogue, this chapter also explained the methods of data presentation which were used in chapter four.

In chapter four the researcher presented the data using instruments outlined in chapter three. Firstly the researcher presented data from interviews and observations answering all the research questions. Findings from this study indicated that ECE teachers at Tategulu primary include learners with disabilities in daily activities and viewed inclusion as beneficial to them, learners with disabilities and those without disabilities. They however experienced a lot of challenges in effectively implementing inclusive education due to lack of resources, inappropriate infrastructure, lack of skills and knowledge on the part of the teacher. Finally the researcher discussed the findings which were made in relation to the secondary research questions in chapter on e and literature gathered in chapter two.

The fifth chapter presented a summary of what transpired throughout the study. Thus the introductory chapter was briefly explained, followed by review of related literature in regards to the topic. A summary of how the research

was carried out was presented indicating the population, sample, sampling techniques and data analysis procedures. Furthermore a summary of how data was presented, analysed and discussed was outlined in this chapter. Lastly the chapter drew some conclusions from the research findings which made the researcher to come up with recommendations that may help improve inclusion in ECE level.

5.2 Conclusions

Concerning strategies put in place at Tategulu primary school to include learners with disabilities in regular ECE classrooms, the study concluded that the diverse needs of learners with disabilities were not adequately met. It was also established that the participants had numerous challenges in inclusive ECE classrooms which included lack of teacher's knowledge and skills to handle learners with disabilities. From the study it was pointed that facilities and resources in most ECE classrooms were not constructed with learners with special needs in mind. Most teachers were of the view that effective teaching and learning in ECE classrooms requires a lot of play materials and resources which are not available at this school in the event classes do not have developmentally appropriate materials for the learners with special needs, then it will always be difficult to teach effectively. Furthermore, the study revealed that the teacher pupil ratio was too high and this resulted in the teacher's failure to give each learner individual attention. Lack of such attention may mean that most learners' concerns particularly those with special needs will remain unresolved resulting in failure to develop the learner holistically.

It can also be concluded that the study identified training of specialist teachers, change of curriculum, use of appropriate teaching materials, parental involvement as strategies that can help alleviate challenges facing inclusive education implementation

5.3 Recommendations

There were some pertinent issues noted during this study and these propelled the researcher to come up with the following recommendations:

➢ There is need for comprehensive teachers training programmes for all those working or intending to be ECE practitioners and administrators to adequately include learners with special needs.

- ➢ Administrators should take account of the needs of all the children with special educational needs in terms of planning , implementing and resourcing of ECE classrooms

- ➢ Teachers colleges and universities that offer special needs courses during pre-service and in-service training need to increase the course duration in order to enhance ECE practitioner's knowledge and skill in issues concerning special needs. The one semester module they have in Universities does not adequately equip them with appropriate skills to handle learners with disabilities in ECE classrooms.

- ➢ The physical environment and equipment need to be adequate and developmentally appropriate to meet diverse needs of learners. Facilities to be modified to accommodate inclusive education by putting adaptive structures to meet the needs of children with disabilities.

- ➢ Administrators need to understand the needs of learners with disabilities so as to procure appropriate materials for use.

- ➢ There is need for ECE practitioners to engage in their own research on the on going basis to keep up to date developments in the field of inclusive education practice and special educational needs since throughout the study they felt compromised in their ability to work effectively with learners with special needs because of lack of basic knowledge and expertise in terms of inclusive education.

- ➢ Parents need to be encouraged to co-operate with teachers in terms of attending meetings and visiting their children with special needs to assess their performance

- ➢ The ministry of primary and secondary education need to make model centres that adequately cater for the diverse needs of learners with special needs in order to support inclusive practices in the ECE sub sector

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