

Inclusive School Social Work in Sub-Saharan Africa: A focus on Children with Disabilities

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Introduction

Calls for inclusive education and respect for the rights of children with disabilities have been growing, particularly during the last couple of decades. The term inclusive education relates to a situation where groups (such as children with disabilities and minority groups) who have traditionally been excluded, learn in the same classrooms in the same schools, as everyone else. Schools have for the longest time, been touted as safe havens for children, including those with disabilities. However, this view seems to have since changed as school-based violence, in particular bullying, sexual and gender-based violence, child rights violations, and child abuse in general have become the norm.

Children with disabilities are more likely to suffer violence in schools as compared to their compatriots (without disabilities). Inclusive education continues to face huddles such as stigma and discrimination of children with disabilities, and expensive consumables associated with persons with disabilities. This chapter explores the plight of children with disabilities in accessing inclusive education. It commences by considering rights of children with disabilities, before delving into disability models, explanations of causes of disabilities from both Eurocentric and Afrocentric perspectives. Additionally, the chapter explores challenges associated with realization of the goal of inclusive education before proffering suggestions for achieving inclusive education.

The challenges associated with inclusive education can do with expertise offered by social work professionals. The chapter observes that despite