INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION GAPS IN TEACHERS' COLLEGES IN ZIMBABWE

Sophie Hlatywayo[1i],
Tichaona Mapolisa[2]
[1]Morgan Zintec College,
Harare, Zimbabwe
[2]Zimbabwe Open University,
Harare, Zimbabwe

Abstract:

This study sought to establish gaps in the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. The study was guided by the interpretivism paradigm, qualitative methodology and multiple case studies. Homogenous purposeful sampling and snowballing techniques were adopted to draw up a sample of eight (8) key informants and seventeen (17) participants. Data were generated using the researcher as a primary instrument, face-to-face interviews and observation guide. Thematic analysis and NVivo software were used to analyse data generated. The major findings were that the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges was affected by lack of financial support from the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development (MHTESTD) and Government to support the acquisition of relevant resources and assistive devices. Students with disabilities faced financial challenges when they fail to pay for their own tuition and materials required. The study concludes that as a result of rigid curriculum, teachers' colleges were not able to adequately accommodate diversity, and this affected the implementation of inclusive education. Also, shortage of financial, material, infrastructure and human resources greatly affected the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. The study recommends that the MHTESTD and teachers' colleges administrators should have a budget to support inclusive education in teachers' colleges. They could liaise with Non-Governmental Organisations and other organisations that could assist them with various resources. Teachers' colleges can introduce an inclusive education levy to help in funding inclusive education in the institutions. It is also recommended that Government through the MHTESTD should provide grants to help students with disabilities (SWDs) to pay their tuition fees and other services at teachers' colleges.

[i] Correspondence email: sophiehlatywayo@gmail.com, tichmap@gmail.com

Keywords: inclusive education; inclusive practices; inclusion, inclusivity; teachers' colleges

1. Introduction

A number of students with disabilities of different nature have been enrolled in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe as a way of complying with the Government standards and expectations regarding the philosophy of inclusivity. These students are part of the mainstream classes and receive instruction alongside their peers without disabilities. Despite the enrolment of students with various disabilities, colleges seem to be experiencing challenges in trying to meet all the educational needs of students with disability. Furthermore, the researcher had observed that resources seemed to be scarce in the colleges that are relevant for the diverse needs of the students. From the researcher's experience, it was observed that there seemed to be negative attitudes towards enrolling students with disability by the lecturing and non-lecturing staff members. They seemed to feel that they are being overburden by having to put more effort in trying to meet the needs of students with disability.

The researcher also noted that there seemed to be few students with disability in teachers' colleges. Zimbabwe State Report on CRPD (2017: 61) noted that 1.1% of students with disabilities were enrolled in teacher education institutions by school term two of 2015. This percentage is far from being representative of the population of people with disabilities. This shows that tertiary institutions, teachers' colleges included, could be lagging in terms of disability inclusion. Given this experience, the researcher was motivated to conduct this current study.

Inclusive education is a contemporary issue in Zimbabwe and the world over. The concept of inclusive education is anchored on the philosophy of Education for All people regardless of their individual needs and nature (UNESCO, 2009; Ainscow, 2010). There are a number of policies, frameworks and conventions that have been signed by the international community which inform inclusive education. Among them are, Sustainable Development Goals (2015); Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4 (2015); United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006); Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on special needs education (1994).

Zimbabwe is a signatory to a number of these International Policies and conventions to which inclusive education is an obligation. As a result, the Zimbabwe education system has to adopt the principle of inclusive education. A number of laws such as the National Constitution (2013), the Education Act of 1987, amended in 1996 and 2006, the Nziramasanga Commission of 1999 and other statutory instruments are guiding the principles of inclusive education in Zimbabwe. In light of various positive legal developments towards inclusivity in the education system, this study sought to explore the challenges in the implementation process of inclusive education specifically in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe.

Various studies were conducted which revealed challenges of implementing inclusive education. Valliant (2011) noted that in Latin America, there were challenges in implementing inclusive education among them, lack of motivation among teachers who were poorly paid. In another study on inclusive education in United States, Mackey (2014) established that one of the challenges that teachers faced was trying to make the curriculum interesting and relevant to diverse learners. In Asia, Feng, Deng, Rose, Forlin and Cooper (2012) noted in China that challenges to inclusive education emanated from national and cultural factors. Another study by Chowdhury and Hasan (2013) noted that in Bangladesh teachers argued that there were high enrolments figures in the schools in Bangladesh such that there was no room to give special care to a child with disabilities.

In Australia, Fossey, Chaffey, Venville, Ennals and Douglas (2017) highlighted the gap between students and staff in terms of knowledge made it difficult to negotiate reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities. Therefore, this showed that the staff members seemed to have challenges in meeting the needs of students with disability. A study in Spanish universities by Morgado (2016) established various challenges of inclusive education such as the structure of the buildings and classrooms which were not user-friendly to students with special needs as well as learning facilities like projectors and blackboards which were not accessible to students with disabilities.

A study by Gebrehiwot (2015) established that students with visual impairment had limited access to assistive devices and curricular materials which positively responded to their needs in Ethiopian higher education institutions. In Swaziland, Zwane (2016) established that among the barriers to the implementation was lack of an inclusive curriculum and lack of competency on the part of the teachers. It should be noted that if the curriculum is not flexible and inclusive, it might fail to address the needs of the students with diverse needs.

In a Zimbabwean study conducted by Mafa (2012), teachers noted that it was difficult for them to handle inclusive classes effectively due to lack of specific skills such as using Braille and Sign Language. They added that planning and organising lessons and activities for inclusive classes increased the burden they already had in relation to workloads. A study on the implementation at Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo Polytechnic in Zimbabwe by Ngwenya (2016) established that there were challenges in implementing inclusive education such as lack of infrastructure, high fees charged by the ministry, poor working conditions, limited training resources and ineffective leadership skills.

It seemed as if there is limited research on Inclusive Education in Teachers' Colleges. Various studies were conducted in universities (Alhammadi, 2014; Moh, 2013; Gebrehiwot, 2015;) Universities have different curriculum and orientation from teachers' colleges. The findings from the current study could be more specific to the inclusive practices in teachers' colleges. The perceived knowledge and skills gaps on inclusive education as espoused by the consulted scholars (Mafa, 2012; Mafa & Makuba; 2013) are guiding the focus of the current study whose thrust is on challenges on the implementation of inclusive education at three teacher training colleges in Harare Metropolitan Province in Zimbabwe with specific reference to students with disabilities.

It is anticipated that this current study might unveil findings that are sync with educational dynamics.

Given this background, the researcher deemed it necessary to conduct a study on the challenges faced in the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe.

2. Statement of the Problem

Teachers' colleges are enrolling students with disabilities, yet the implementation of inclusive education might not be standardised due to the absence of policy guidelines. There is possible risk that student teachers with disability could just be physically placed without being included which could affect their effective development as professional teachers. Research has shown that inclusive education practices are mainly concentrated at primary and secondary school level while little research has been done to establish the inclusivity of teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. Therefore, the study sought to establish the challenges faced in the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe.

3. Research Question

The study sought to answer the following research question;

How do gaps with respect to the implementation of inclusive education manifest themselves in teachers' colleges?

4. Methods and Procedures

The interpretivism paradigm, qualitative methodology and multiple case studies research design guided this study. Interpretivism paradigm supported the researcher's interest in understanding the social world of participants and key informants in relation to their perceptions towards inclusive education in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. The views of the participants and key informants in this study helped to construct the social world of participants and key informants on challenges of inclusive education in teachers' colleges. The study was informed by qualitative research approach which is based on various meanings derived from the participants' experiences basing on the social and historical context in order to get a deeper understanding (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Multiple case studies research design enabled the researcher to study more than one case, that is, three teachers' colleges and their informants and participants.

Homogenous purposeful sampling and snowballing techniques were adopted to draw up a sample of eight (8) key informants and seventeen (17) participants. The researcher had to purposively identify the research sites (three colleges) and to seek permission from the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development (MHTESTD) to gather and analyse data from the three teachers' colleges. Homogenous purposive sampling enabled the researcher to select individuals who had

valuable information on the perceptions of college administrators, lecturers and students on inclusive education in teachers' colleges. In addition to homogenous purposeful sampling, the researcher also used snowballing sampling technique through the use of gatekeepers to reach the homogenous group of students with and without disability. Data were generated using the researcher as a primary instrument, face-to-face interviews and observation guide. Face-to-face interviews allowed deep engagement and interaction with participants and key informants on the practices of inclusive education. Interviews process took 20-49 minutes. Data gathered were analysed using thematic analysis and NVivo software. Using NVivo software enabled the researcher to create codes which can be referenced through a created link. This made it easy to store and retrieve data.

4.1 Description of Participants

In this study, eight (8) students with disabilities (SWDs) were the key informants in this study. They provided in-depth information about their experiences in teachers' colleges which are critical to establishing how inclusive education is being implemented and managed. The seventeen (17) participants of the study were college administrators, lecturers and student without disabilities (SWnDs) of the three teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe. Key informants and participants were drawn from the three teachers' colleges in Harare metropolitan province. All key informants were identified as Case 1 up to Case 17 depending on the chronological order in which they were interviewed.

5. Findings and Discussion

The findings revealed a number of gaps/ challenges in the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' Colleges of Zimbabwe. These were discussed under the following absence of inclusive education policy, shortage of resources, lack of funding, lack of skilled personnel, attitudes of college personnel, inaccessible environment, rigid curriculum, work overload by lecturers, stigma and discrimination and lack of information by students with disabilities.

5.1 Absence of IE policy

One of the gap/challenge that was noted was absence of inclusive education policy as noted by Case 1 and Case 19;

> *"No clear policy on what is to be done."* (Case 19)

> *"Currently, there is no policy in Teachers' College."* (Case 1)

From the foregoing excerpts, it was noted that there seemed to be no clear inclusive education policy on what is to be done in teachers' colleges. This might affect the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges as the colleges lack cohesion. ADB (2010) had established that there were no clear policies and systems in Asia that

ensure that vulnerable groups such as PWDS are admitted and managed in colleges. Without a guiding inclusive education policy, there is lack of uniformity of the roles and functions of personnel in teachers' colleges. Hence, this might negatively impact on the proper implementation and management of inclusive education in teachers' colleges.

5.2 Lack of funding

Lack of funding was identified as another challenge that was encountered inclusive education implementation in teachers' colleges. Participants had this to say;

> *"Lack of funding to purchase assistive devices and other equipment… Government should avail funds to colleges or to individuals for their support at colleges."* (Case 10)

> *"Major one (barrier) is to do with funding. Because of the economic environment in the country, there are no funds to buy necessary resources. I haven't seen any institution that set aside funds for IE."* (Case 5)

The sentiments by Case 5 and case 10 showed that there was no financial support that teachers' colleges were getting from the Government through the MHTESTD. After probing Case 5, the researcher established that there was no clear budget on inclusive education, yet the implementation of inclusive education has cost implications. Such funding could be used to assist teachers' colleges where they fail to acquire necessary materials and equipment to support students with disabilities.

Key informants (Cases 11, 14 and 20) noted that some people were coming from challenging backgrounds. As such, there were people who wanted to enroll in teachers' colleges but, could not afford because they did not have funds. As echoed by Case 14 below;

> *"My friends and I pay for our own tuition. It is difficult for us. If the economy is difficult for those who could run around, how about us who have challenges".*

The foregoing views implied that there were financial challenges which affected everyone but students with disabilities were the most affected due to their conditions. One key informant propounded that many students with disabilities came from disadvantaged families and therefore were likely to lack a lot of resources. Echoing these sentiments was Case 20 who explained;

> *"Most PWDs portray they are coming from poor backgrounds…2014 and 2015- we applied for cadetship which was never realized. Most sponsors had withdrawn after hearing of the cadetship so most of us had not paid fees".*

The sentiments showed that PWDs face challenges in securing funding for their tuition fees which might deter many of them from attending colleges. Palmer (2011) cites Elwan (1999) noted interconnectedness of poverty and disability where by one causes the

other and could be an effect of the other. On the issue of poverty, one participant (Case 5) posited;

> *"In most African countries the problem is funding because most people live in poverty. To get money to buy a wheelchair is difficulty considering there won't be any food on the table."*

From what the participant said, the level of poverty might lead to the deprivation of necessary services such as education in order to be able to provide for food. In such a scenario, paying fees would be out of reach for people in such predicament. According to Zaidi and Burchardt (2005), households with a member with disabilities are more likely to experience hardships in providing material things such as food, housing, healthcare, safe water and sanitation. Thus, most PWDs lacked financial resources to make them proceed to teachers' colleges which continued to undermine their representation in teachers' colleges.

5.3 Shortage of resources

Linked to lack of funding was shortage of resources as one of the gaps that institutions encounter. It was revealed that colleges are affected by lack of resources. Participants (Cases 1, 3, 4, 5, 10, 15, 16, 17 and 25) noted that there were no adequate resources to cater for the needs of SWDs. As noted, there were no resource centres which further explained the lack of resources. One participant noted;

> *"There are no adequate resources, we provide for our resources just like any other student, like paying for our own fees, nothing is provided by the college for special services. For our medical expense we pay for medical services as part of the fees structure, though amenities where we pay for clinic services."* (Case 11)

The key informants (Case 6, 20) noted that the resources that they needed were not available. They explained that they had specific devices that were peculiar to their disabilities and these were not available. As such, they provided for themselves or they managed without these important resources. However, the researcher saw one wheelchair in the college clinics which was not adequate. This supports the findings of Reupert et al, (2010), OECD (2011), Nketsia (2016) and Ngwenya (2016) that there was a shortage of resources to effectively implement inclusive education in various institutions. This was evidenced by failure to establish resource centres by the three colleges.

Furthermore, one key informant (Case 6) noted that the computers in the library were not user-friendly and the seating position while using the computer or while reading affects them. Case 6 clearly stated;

> *"In the library … eyes get sore and end up being painful while working on the computer…. Furthermore, there is need for some relevant software."*

The position sitting position derived from the set-up of computers would affect those with visual impairments and back deformities and would not be comfortable. Observations made showed that there were computers in the library and computer laboratories and the furniture catered for the needs of the general students and not specific for those with special needs. They were not disability friendly. There were no special chairs and the computers did not have screen guards to protect eyes from the screen light. The key informant noted that she was fortunate that he/she could sit properly and had his/her own laptop, but other students with disabilities have challenges. This implied that there was no proper furniture to make all students comfortable as well as relevant technology to suit all students.

It was noted by a Case 5 who asserted:

"Most institutions preferred students to buy themselves. Some gadgets are personal like spectacles for students with visual impairment and hearing aid for students with hearing impairment and they buy themselves…"

Another participant (Case 17) added;

"They (assistive devices) have become so expensive and at the same time the material only applies to only one student. It is expensive to buy equipment to be used by only one or two students and as result it may become redundant."

The foregoing views implied that it is waste of resources to purchase expensive equipment that might be used by few people and might be unused until a student with the same condition enrolls. The researcher observed that there was no assistive devices and special equipment for students with disabilities in the three teachers' colleges. Ngwenya and Chabwera (2016) found out that polytechnic colleges may go without SWDs and would find it as a waste of resources to adapt the environment which does not have SWDs.

5.4 Lack of skilled personnel
With regards to human resources, participants established that there was a shortage of lecturers in teachers' colleges. Another participant (Case 5) propounded;

"Another challenge is on number student- lecture ratio is overwhelming considering that there is marking to do , planning for the lecture, teaching practice, and having time to sit down with a SWD who may need more time with you. It becomes difficult ".

Having large lecturer-student ratio was an indicator of shortage of lecturers. Shortage of lecturers could affect the implementation of inclusive education because it was the lecturers who are key implementers of inclusive education. The researcher observed that there were no adequate lecturers when mass lectures were conducted with many students in lecture theatres or halls. This concurs with the findings by Meng et al.

(2012) noted that there was shortage of quantity and quality of teachers in China despite the training of teachers for inclusive education. Such shortages impacted on the workload of lecturers as well as their motivation and how they discharge their duties. Once lecturers are not motivated, they may fail to adequately meet the needs of students with disabilities and would ultimately affect the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges. Valliant (2011) lack of motivation among teachers who were poorly paid affected the implementation of inclusive education in Latin America. The foregoing results might lead one to support Siddiqui (2016) that there was lack of preparation by the government to implement inclusive education in India. The lack of preparation in implementing inclusive education could be in terms of resources such as human, financial, material and facilities may be detrimental to the effectiveness of inclusive education in teachers' colleges. It might seem as if the idea of inclusive education was just thrown to colleges without adequate preparation.

The participants (Cases 3, 5, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19) noted that educators (lecturers) did not have skills to handle such learners (students with disabilities) in the college. They were not empowered and equipped to handle severe cases of disabilities. Case 17 stated;

> *"Most of our lectures' background has a separation on those that are disabled and those that are not. In as much as they may want to embrace inclusivity, they lack skills. For many of us, it is the case of how to handle that variation because we didn't have that background."*

The views of the participant implied that the background of the training that the lecturers got as teachers during their time did not include inclusive education and special education. Thus, they tended to have view education of people with disabilities as separate from that of other people without disabilities. Hick et al. (2018) revealed that teacher educators in Ireland were supportive of inclusive education but highlighted their lack of confidence and expertise in implementing inclusive education in teacher education programmes. Inclusive education as a new phenomenon requires the lecturers to be staff developed.

In addition, Case 3 revealed:

> *"We are dealing with a community that is coming up with new understanding. In terms of training we haven't done much… Most programs tend to fail because not everybody understands what is to be done. We have a challenge in trying to incorporate everyone on what is supposed to be done. At times we find that we only have 10 % of the staff that seem to be accommodating these individuals with challenges, while others are saying, no we are not specialized to handle this extra task and yet we are saying society is very inclusive in nature."*

The foregoing sentiments showed that most of the lecturers were not equipped with skills and knowledge to handle students with disabilities. Therefore, most of the students were left alone to handle most of the work with very little assistance. Another

participant (Case 5) revealed that most of the lecturers were not equipped to handle inclusivity. There were only a few members who were concerned about students with disabilities because they had done special education and had some knowledge on inclusive education.

5.5 Attitudes of college personnel

Central to inclusive education is the issue of attitudes and these presented a gap in the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges. One participant (Case 5) noted lack of support from the college managers which negatively affected effective implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges. This is especially where resources are needed and are not availed.

> *"Because of financial barriers, it is difficult to adjust and due to attitudes, it not a priority to college leaders considering other developments being made in the college."*

The sentiments showed that due to negative attitudes, renovations on the infrastructure are not a priority considering that there are other developments being made in the college. Negative attitudes led to inadequate provisions of resources to adapt the environment. Central to the implementation of inclusive education are positive attitudes by stakeholders (UNESCO, 2003).

Another important challenge in the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe is the attitudes of the lecturers. There is a significant relationship between teachers' attitudes and their commitment to work (Wanderi, 2015). It was revealed (Case 5 and Case 10) that the attitudes by lecturing and non-lecturing staff toward inclusive education were negative. As such, the attitudes and willingness of academic staff to adapt their curriculum to the needs of students and to implement changes are crucial in including students with disabilities (Moriña et al., 2015). As noted by one participant that:

> *".... we cannot rule out the question of attitudes because people have their feelings and perceptions due to various pressures which is normal."* (Case 17)

Such negativity might be attributed to societal and cultural values that an individual had been exposed to in terms of disabilities. However, some participants showed that they were very positive about inclusive education and they were committed to work with vulnerable groups such as those with disabilities.

5.6 Inaccessible environment

With regards to the physical environment, participants and key informants established that the environment was not accessible and user friendly to students with disabilities. One key informant (Case 2) explained;

"In terms of physical set up, a person using a wheelchair for example, might want to use the library, that person cannot go to the library, the same applies to hostels, they are also not accessible because there are stairs and no ramps. College authorities should look into the infrastructure."

The excerpt reveals mobility challenges to students with physical disabilities. In support of inaccessible physical environment, Case 1 revealed;

"No facilities for those with disabilities to move freely in terms of classrooms, library, lecture room and also no restrooms for people with disabilities."

The physical environment presented the inadequacies of the infrastructure in terms of effective inclusive education. Ngwenya and Chabwera (2016) had revealed that the infrastructure in colleges does not support students with special needs. To show how serious the issue of environment is, participant (Case 17) explained that sometimes they failed to enroll some students because they could not accommodate due to lack of facilities and resources relevant to their needs. Morgado (2016) had revealed that in Spain learning facilities like lecture rooms, projectors and chalkboards might not be accessible to students with special needs. In agreement, Siddiqui (2016) established that there was poor infrastructure (buildings, classrooms, toilets, playgrounds, library facilities) in most Indian schools which affected implementation of inclusive education

Besides the physical environment, it was revealed that the social environment was still hostile to students with disabilities. The college social environment was also likely to prevent students with disabilities from disclosing their disability for fear of being stigmatised and discriminated. This revelation resonates well with the findings made by Morina (2017) that some students who had invisible disabilities did not want to disclose them except to those who were close to them or when they wanted assistance.

However, from the interactions that the researcher had with participants it was noted that participants (college leaders and other students) were welcoming to students with disabilities and willing to accept them despite their various conditions. Case 23 highlighted;

"When l came (to college) the principal and the dean of students asked me of my special needs."

The gesture offered by the Principal and Dean of students showed how the administrators had accepted diversity and were willing to assist the student. The informant's case was exceptional in that the impairment was visible but there could be challenges when the disability is not visible, like partial visual impairment or partial hearing impairment.

5.7 Rigid curriculum

Another challenge is the rigid curriculum which is not flexible and inclusive. Some participants highlighted the lack of inclusivity by a rigid curriculum which colleges have to implement.

> *"Curriculum is not really inclusive."* (Case 19)

> *"Curriculum is the same for all students. Same expectations (for all students) from the curriculum. Curriculum is rigid."* (Case 1)

The inflexible curriculum posed a threat to inclusivity of teachers' colleges. The sentiments support revelations by Zwane (2016) that failure by the curriculum to be flexible and inclusive might not meet the needs of the students with diverse needs. The researcher observed that teachers' colleges had many programmes and activities which take up most of the time. As a result, there might be less time to attend to students with disabilities.

5.8 Work overload by lecturers

Participants revealed that work-related issues of lecturers presented a gap that affected the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges. They established that lecturers were overwhelmed with their duties of marking, lecturing, supervision of curriculum depth studies and research among other duties. Lecturers managed large classes of students and this affected their effectiveness with students with disabilities. One participant propounded:

> *"Another challenge is on number student-lecture ratio which is overwhelming considering that there is marking to do, planning for the lecture, teaching practice, and having time to sit down with a* students with disability *who may need more time with you. It becomes difficult. Time factor is a challenge."* (Case 5)

The participant showed that there was limited time to attend to the needs of individuals with diverse needs. Lecturers were overloaded with various tasks as their work demands. As such, they failed to have adequate time to cater for those with diverse needs. This finding concurs with Mandina (2012) who posited that those large classes among other factors are a challenge in effective implementation of inclusive education. The researcher observed mass lectures and noted that lecturers could notice individual differences among students unless the case has been presented earlier on.

Linked to the curriculum is the structure of the ministry which one participant (Case 19) noted as hierarchical.

> *"Another challenge is the hierarchical structure of our institution and ministry. The structure is top down does not consult the implementers on what should be done."*

Despite its effectiveness, hierarchical structure may present challenges in implementing inclusive education. This could be because of the top-down approach to the implementation of inclusive education which might limit creativity among lecturers. In addition, it appeared as if the lecturers were not consulted on what is to be done on inclusive education. These sentiments were in line with the findings in South Africa by Donohue & Bornman (2014) that the top down approach presents a challenge to inclusive education. Thus, educational personnel might not know what really should be done in the implementation process.

5.10 Stigma and discrimination

Stigma and discrimination were identified as one of the challenges faced by students with disabilities. It was noted that there was stigma and discrimination among students. Case 6 noted;

> *"Discrimination from various groups in the college, some are discriminatory and others are not… here it's a big institution, some people do not hide their feelings, they do not act out but show you that they don't want you. So you are forced to stay alone…. sometimes you are left out by some other students especially in group work, you are not told. Other lectures can call other students and leave me."*

The foregoing excerpt showed that students with disabilities were stigmatised by other students as well as by lecturers. The stigma was evident when other students did not include the key informant in some class activities. The case at hand was student with disability who felt there was some segregation due to the condition. The results are in tandem with the revelations by Ajisuksmo (2017) that some lecturers did not want to teach students with disabilities and that some students without disabilities showed gestures that they did not want to communicate with students with disabilities. Ramakuela and Maluleke (2011) found out that students with disabilities feel rejected by other students without disabilities, staff and the institution. Issues to do with disability have been perceived negatively by the society hence, the prevalence of stigma and discrimination. When probed on how the key informant (Case 6) had addressed this challenge, the response was;

> *"Generally, you know the people you want to associate with; it's almost 3 years now. You know those who want to and those who don't want to associate with you. At time we get to situations which are difficult."*

The participant showed that they have learned to adapt to the stigma and discrimination by relating with those students who showed positive attitudes. However, form the views of the key informant, it can be deduced that students with disabilities could stigmatise themselves as well. Just the thought of being different from others might make one to stigmatise oneself thinking that others would be stigmatising them.

Going further on stigma and discrimination, Case 13 explained:

"It is a challenge when some do not want to disclose their disabilities and as a result the admin may treat them as other general students which results in many challenges. For those who disclose the college is trying to accommodate them. They call them and say if you have any problem come and be assisted. They cannot be helped because they have not requested for such help."

From the participant's view students with disabilities might fail to come and disclose their disabilities due to fear of stigma and discrimination. Therefore, it was difficult for college personnel to give them the necessary support if they did not come up and identify themselves. Ngwenya (2016) had revealed that college administrators do not seem to discriminate PWDs. Similarly, another Case 4 added:

"Those PWDs also need to be very confident, some of them shun from communicating in class and to communicate with lecturers to show their problems. They just stay away, they discriminate themselves…Much as we might want to help, some might be reluctant to adjust. They should be able to do whatever they want to do and we give them the chance."

Students with disabilities were encouraged to be confident and identify themselves so that they were given relevant assistance where possible. Usually, students with disabilities did not want to identify themselves because they were afraid of being discriminated by lecturers and by the other students. Liasidou (2014) established that some students do not want to disclose their disabilities and thereby forfeit their support entitlements. Non-disclosure has been attributed to stigmatisation associated with disabilities (Habib et al., 2012 in Majoko, 2018). Some were afraid of being withdrawn from the college, so they tried to work within their limits so that they were not identified. The participant shows that students with disabilities should make their own way and fit in the system of the college.

Nonetheless, the background of the students with disabilities determined their conduct and how they interacted and it was important to understand them from such perspectives. A key informant revealed:

"I started college at 34 and now I am 38. This was because I had low self-esteem. I lacked information. The family would not release us and overprotected us.…" (Case 20)

Their behaviour could have been influenced by the way they were brought up, the parenting styles and the surrounding they grew up in. Such issues are also derived from how the microsystem of the Ecological Model influence the development of individuals especially those with disabilities (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). What happens at home directly affects the individual at school or teachers' college (Berk, 2001). Therefore, as indicated by Case 20, how an individual was brought up determines the interactions at college.

5.11 Information dissemination

Another challenge revealed by key informants was lack of information about inclusion and disability rights by PWDs. A key informant (Case 20) noted that PWDs lack information on how to access services. The participant confessed;

> *"I only got to know about social welfare after the first part of my course. I later on realised that some institutions like University of Zimbabwe and National Rehabilitation Centre offered free tuition for courses to PWDs."* (Case 20)

However, it was also revealed by the same key informant (Case 20) that some students with disabilities were aware of their rights and would want them to be met at all cost.

> *"There are two types of students at college – students with disabilities who are from general schools…I was introduced to rights issues at college. The other group are those from special schools who have been exposed to rights issues… were very combative and want things to go their way. Some would create more rules on top of other rules. They have to do things their way and being protected by the rights. As a result, some would have more advantages and add more."* (Case 20)

The excerpt showed that the ability to complain of mistreatment and to defend oneself depended on the background of the student and the knowledge they had about how they should be treated. If one is not knowledgeable one might remain quiet and be afraid of the unknown. If one is knowledgeable, one could complain and have his or her protection rights awarded. Students with disabilities would not participate effectively if they were not empowered.

Further, it was noted by one key informant that there was a barrier in communication. The key informant (Case 8) noted;

> *"My major challenge is communication with other lecturers and other students. Announcements are said and l rely on my friend to tell me."*

The key informant had hearing impairment and the foregoing sentiments showed that students with hearing impairment were mostly affected due to language barrier. In most cases, few people could use Sign Language which posed a gap in communication. Having hearing impairment on its own makes one to lack a lot of information which could be acquired through various channels of formal and informal communication.

Despite having students' representative in the Student Representative Council (SRC), the lack of a patron was a challenge to students with disabilities. In the words of one of the key informants;

> *"We don't have a "Patron" for PWDs. The Dean is overwhelmed with large numbers of students and should have patrons such as male and female lecturers who would take care*

of us. These should not be appointed by the Principal but with consultation with PWDs." (Case 20)

The idea was that of having skilled personnel who were accommodative in terms of disabilities. Such an individual could assist in meeting the special needs of various students with varied abilities. Teachers' colleges had the Dean of students who seemed to be overwhelmed with large numbers of students to be catered for. This showed that the Dean of students might not adequately respond to the needs of students with disabilities in colleges considering the numbers he or she had to cater for. Case 25 supported that the college Dean of students was overwhelmed by the number of students they attended to and could not adequately respond to the needs of students with disabilities Case 20 suggested that the patron could be a lecturer or manager whom the students with disabilities felt might be chosen from among staff members who understood them better.

6. Conclusions made on gaps/challenges affecting the implementation of Inclusive Education

Conclusions on this section were made basing on the findings established on gaps/challenges affecting the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges.
- The absence of the inclusive education policy from the MHTESTD affected the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe.
- As a result of rigid curriculum, teachers' colleges were not able to adequately accommodate diversity, and this affected the implementation of inclusive education.
- The hierarchical structure of the ministry might have paved way for top-down approach which posed as a challenge in implementing inclusive education.
- The implementation of Inclusive education in teachers' colleges was affected by lack of financial support from the MHTESTD and Government to support the acquisition of relevant resources and assistive devices. Students with disabilities faced financial challenges when they fail to pay for their own tuition and materials required.
- Shortage of financial, material, infrastructure and human resources greatly affected the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe.
- The partially accessible physical environment resulted in teachers' colleges failing to accommodate all students thus affecting the implementation of inclusive education. In addition, the hostile social environment affected inclusive practices to some extent. Stigma and discrimination in one way or the other from their colleagues as well as their personal stigmatisation and discrimination still made the social environment hostile for students with disabilities.

- Due to lack of skills and knowledge on inclusive education and disability by the lecturers, students with disabilities are not adequately catered for in teachers' colleges thus, affecting their professional development.
- The work overload by lecturers at teachers' colleges impedes the implementation of inclusive education to the extent that there was no time to attend to individual needs of students.
- Lack of information by students with disabilities on their rights and services that they could get made students with disabilities susceptible and less empowered.
- Failure to use Sign Language by lecturers and other students presented communication barriers for students with hearing impairment in teachers' colleges. Students with disabilities with hearing impairment were the most affected in colleges when they faced communication barriers. Hence, students with hearing impairment were placed and not adequately included.

7. Recommendations

Basing on the findings and conclusions made on gap/challenges in implementing inclusive education, the following recommendations were made;

- The MHTESDT and teachers' colleges administrators should have a budget to support inclusive education in teachers' colleges. They could liaise with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and other organisations that could assist them with various resources. Administrators in teachers' colleges can introduce an inclusive education levy to help in funding inclusive education in the institutions.
- The MHTESDT should have a flexible structure to accommodate ideas from the implementers of inclusive education in teachers' colleges.
- College administrators and lecturers should speed up the process of establishing resource centres so that they support inclusive education programmes.
- The MHTESDT should employ more lecturers so that lecturers are not overburden by many duties and to reduce the lecturer-student ratio. This would enable lecture to give individual attention to students.
- College administrators should orient students with disabilities so that they become confident and participate in all activities.
- Teachers' college administrators should provide practical training to college personnel in Sign Language and Braille so that they are able to accommodate those students with hearing and visual impairment respectively.
- Teachers' college administrators should have patron for students with disabilities whom they relate and interact with. This would enhance their representation in decision making processes of the colleges.
- Government through the MHTESDT should provide grants to help students with disabilities to pay their tuition fees and other services at teachers' colleges.

References

Asian Development Bank (ADB) (2010). *Strengthening Inclusive Education. Manila: ADB.* Available at: https://www.adb.org/publications/strengthening-inclusive-education. Accessed on: 20/10/18.

Ajisuksmo, C. R. P. (2017). *Practices and Challenges of Inclusive Education in Indonesian Higher Education.* Available at https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/ad00/b65f5c027e17fa9327f54848d9ea36c80c0f.pdf. Accessed 05/10/19.

Alhammadi, M. (2014). *Students with Vision Impairments in the UAE Higher Education System.* Thesis for Doctor of Philosophy. Deakin University.

Chowdhury, S. K. & Hasan, M. Md. (2013). Training on Inclusive Education: Perception of Primary Teachers. *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR), India Online ISSN: 2319-7064. 2 (7), 272-279.*

Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005*). The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research (3rd ed.).* London: Sage Publications.

Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2000). *Handbook of qualitative research (2nd ed.).*

Donohue, D. & Bornman, J. (2014). The Challenges of Realising Inclusive Education in South Africa. *South African Journal of Education; 2014; 34(2).1-14.*

Feng, Y., Deng, M., Rose, R., Forlin, C., & Cooper, P. (2012*). Challenges to teacher education for Inclusive Education: The status quo of the teacher educators at tertiary level in China. Available at:* https://www.aare.edu.au/publications-database.php/6532/challenges-to-teacher-education-for-inclusive-education-the-status-quo-of-the-teacher-educators-at-t. Accessed on: 26/08/17.

Forlin, C. (2013). Changing paradigms and future directions for implementing Inclusive Education in developing countries. *Asian Journal of Inclusive Education*, *1*(2), 19-31.

Fossey, E., Chaffey, L., Venville, A., Ennals, P. & Douglas, J. (2017). Navigating the Complexity of Disability Support in Tertiary Education: Perspectives of Students and Disability Service Staff. *International Journal of Inclusive Education. Volume 21(8*),

Gebrehiwot, Y. G. (2015). *Towards More Inclusive University Curricula: The Learning Experiences of Visually Impaired Students in Higher Education Institutions of Ethiopia.* Doctor of Education Thesis, University of South Africa, Pretoria, http://hdl.handle.net/10500/19196.

Government of Zimbabwe (2013). *The Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013).* Harare: Fidelity Printers and Refiners, Harare.

Government of Zimbabwe (2013). *The Education Act (1987, 1996, 2006).* Harare: Government Printers.

Hick, P., Solomon, Y., Mintz, J., Matziari, A., Ó. Murchú, F., Hall, K., Cahill, K., Curtin, C. and Margariti, D. (2018). Initial Teacher Education for Inclusion: Phase 1 and 2 Final Report to the National Council for Special Education. NCSE Research Report No. 26. Available at: http://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/NCSE-Teacher-Education-Inclusion-Phase1-2-RR26-for-webupload.pdf.

Kauffman, J. M. & Hallahan, D. P. (eds) (2005). *The Illusion of Full Inclusion: a comprehensive critique of a current special education bandwagon (second edition)*. Austin, TX: PRO-ED.

Lopez- Gavira, R, Moriña, A, Melero-Aguilar, N, & Perera Rodríguez, V. H. (2016). Proposals for the improvement of university classrooms: the perspective of students with disabilities; 2nd International Conference on Higher Education Advances, HEAd´16, 21-23 June 2016, Valencia, Spain, *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 228 (2016) 175 – 182.*

Mackey, M. (2014). Inclusive Education in the United States: Middle School General Education Teachers' Approaches to Inclusion. *International Journal of Instruction, 7(2), 5-20.*

Mafa, O. & Makuba, E. (2013) Mainstreaming Inclusion in Teacher Education in Zimbabwe. *The International Journal of Engineering and Science (IJES),* 2(5), 27-32.

Mafa, O. (2012). Challenges of implementing inclusion in Zimbabwe's Education System, *Online Journal of Education Research, 1(2), 14-22.*

Majoko, T. (2018). Participation in Higher Education: Voices of Students with Disabilities. *Cogent Education, 5(1),* 1542761. 1-17; https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2018.1542761.

Mandina, S. (2012). Bachelor of Education in Service Teacher Trainees' Perceptions and attitudes on Inclusive Education in Zimbabwe. *Canadian Center of Science and Education. Asia Social Science, 8(13).*

Molina, V. M., Rodreguez, V. H. P, Aguilar, N. M., Fenandez, A. C., Morina, A. (2016). The Role of Lecturers and Inclusive Education. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs. Vl 16 (1, 1046-1049.*

Morgado, B. (2016). Inclusive Education in Higher Education? *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 16(1), 639-642.*

Moriña. A. (2017). Inclusive Education in higher education: challenges and opportunities, *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 32(1), 3-17, DOI:* 10.1080/08856257.2016.1254964.

Ngwenya, G. (2016). *Enhancing Inclusive Education at Tertiary Education in Zimbabwe; A Case of Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo Polytechnic.* Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Ngwenya_Geniehttps://www.researchgate.net/profile/Ngwenya_Genie. Accessed on: 15/06/17.

Ngwenya, V. C. & Chabwera, S. (2016). A Case Study: Accessing Inclusive Education at Bulawayo Polytechnic in Zimbabwe *Account and Financial Management Journal ISSN: 2456-3374, 1 (6), 375-385.* [Google Scholar].

Nketsia. W. (2016). *Initial Teacher Preparation for Inclusive Education in Ghana; Status and Challenges.* Academic Dissertation Faculty of Education of the University of Jyväskylä, Studies in Education, Psychology and Social Research 573.

OECD (2011). *Inclusion of Students with Disabilities in Tertiary Education and Employment, Education and Training Policy*, OECD Publishing. Available at: http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264097650-en. Accessed on: 20/02/17.

Palmer, M. (2011). Disability and Poverty: A Conceptual Review. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies 2011 21 210,* http://dps.sagepub.com/

Ramakuela, N. J. & Maluleke, T. X. (2011). Students' Views Regarding the Social and Learning Environment of Disabled Students at the University of Venda, South Africa. *African Journal for Physical, Health Education, Recreation and Dance, 2(1), 285-294.*

Reupert, A, Hemmings, B. & Connors, J. (2010). Do We Practice What We Preach? The Teaching Practices of Inclusive Educators in Tertiary Settings. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education 2010, 22(2), 120-30.*

Siddiqui. M. A. (2016). Inclusive Education in Indian Context: An Appraisal. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS), 21(9), 05-10.*

UNESCO (2009). *Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education.* Paris: UNESCO.

Valliant, D. (2011). *Preparing teachers for Inclusive Education in Latin America*; Prospects Quarterly Review of Comparative Education, 137(1). http://denisevaillant.com/PDFS/ARTICULOS/2011/Prospects2011.pdf

Zaidi A. &. Burchardt T. (2005). Comparing Incomes When Needs Differ: Equivalization for the Extra Costs of Disability in the UK. *Review of Income and Wealth,5(1):89-114.*