

The *Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research* (ZJER) is published tri-annually by the University of Zimbabwe (UZ), Human Resources Research Centre (HRRC).

Editor-in-Chief : Prof. Fred Zindi

Technical Editor : David Mupfurutsa

Editorial Board

Prof. Levi M. Nyagura
University of Zimbabwe
Prof. Charles Nherera
Chinoyi University of Technology

Editorial Advisory Board

Prof. Linda Chisholm
Witwatersrand University
Prof. Danton S.J. Mkandawire
University of Namibia
Prof. John Schwille
Michigan State University

ORDERING INFORMATION

	Within Zimbabwe		Outside Zimbabwe	
	Annual	Three Year	Annual	Three Year
Individual:	ZW\$30,000	ZW\$75,000	US\$125	US\$350
Institution:	ZW\$45,000	ZW\$120,000	US\$150	US\$400

Single copies: ZW\$12,000

Human Resources Research Centre
Faculty of Education
University of Zimbabwe
P. O. Box MP 167
Mount Pleasant
Harare
Zimbabwe
Tel: (263-4) 303271 Ext. 1601
Fax: (263-4) 302182
E-mail: hrrc@justice.com
Website: www.uz.ac.zw/education/zjer/

Volume 16 Number 1 March 2004

ISSN 1013-3445

CONTENTS

Utilisation of Resources at Science and Mathematics Centres in Zimbabwe <i>Viola Manokore, Kenneth Chavhunduka, Chipso Fumbanda, Faith Joko, Sure Mupezeni, & Danmore Musadema</i>	1
Education For All: Towards Inclusive Education Policy Development in Zimbabwe <i>Fred Zindi</i>	13
An Assessment of Mathematics Teachers' Motivations for Attending a Hand-Held Technology Workshop at Bindura University <i>Lovemore Nyamwe & Ravindraw Bappoo</i>	19
Developing Critical and Reflective Thinking in Art Studio Practice through Formative Portfolio Management: An Analysis of Pre-Service Art and Design Secondary School Teachers <i>Attwell Mamvuto</i>	29
A Study of the Role of Teacher-Mentors in the Supervision of Secondary School Student Teachers on Teaching Practice Attachment <i>Pharaoh Joseph Mavhunga</i>	53

EDUCATION FOR ALL: TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT IN ZIMBABWE

Fred Zindi
University of Zimbabwe

Abstract

In this paper, the author discusses his understanding of inclusive education and suggests various ways in which it may be demystified. It is argued that the inclusive education policy in Zimbabwe should take into account the needs of all marginalised, socially disadvantaged and oppressed pupils. Furthermore, the author argues that the Zimbabwe education system should take heed of the Salamanca Statement, and enrol all the children in mainstream classrooms, while providing appropriate teacher-training for would-be-teachers.

What is Inclusive Education?

A variety of definitions and interpretations on what is meant by Inclusive Education have been forwarded by different authors. For the purpose of this paper, inclusive education is a process which brings about a broad vision of Education for All. It is often equated with the integration of disabled pupils into regular classrooms, but in this paper, inclusive education takes into account a greater diversity of learners, starting from those with disabilities; those from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds; those from different linguistic backgrounds; those who experience exclusionary pressure; those who are socially disadvantaged; those who are marginalised, those who are geographically or socially isolated; those suffering from disease; to those who are oppressed. In this paper, all these will be categorised as children with special needs.

The concept of inclusive education, therefore, means that all schools are expected and challenged to educate every child in their neighbourhood.

This thinking is in keeping with the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994), which urges all governments to "adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise ..."

(This declaration was arrived at during the Salamanca Conference which was held in Spain in 1994, where more than 300 participants from 92 countries endorsed the policy of Education for All).

As a result of the Salamanca Statement, UNESCO (1994) adopted an international policy which suggested that it was desirable for schools to accommodate all children regardless of whatever handicaps they may have.

Kisanji (2002), following the UNESCO policy, suggests that inclusive education should mean the following:

- (i) moving away from parallel systems of education to a unified system,
- (ii) moving away from disability to special needs,
- (iii) moving away from special needs to Education for All,
- (iv) moving away from schools for some to effective schools for all,
- (v) moving away from competition to collaboration, and
- (vi) moving away from education at school to education in and in partnership with the community.

Wolery, Bailey and Sugai (1988) as well as Sindelar (1995) are in agreement with this broad vision of Education for All as an inclusive concept. They further suggest that the best approach to adopt in order to make inclusive education effective is to aim at using the applied behaviour analysis approach. This approach consists of the following six steps:

- (i) The teacher identifies the overall goal;
- (ii) Further information is then obtained on the identified skill area or behaviour by taking a baseline measurement which tells the level at which the pupil is currently functioning in order for the teacher to compare the pupil's performance at a later stage;
- (iii) The teacher then decides on a specific learning objective;
- (iv) After this, the teacher implements an intervention designed to increase needed skills or to decrease inappropriate behaviour;

- (v) The teacher then continues to measure performance more frequently in order to monitor progress; and
- (vi) The teacher finally evaluates the effects of the intervention, usually by judging the pupils' performance during the intervention and comparing it with baseline performance. Based on this evaluation, the teacher then decides on whether to continue, modify or end the intervention.

Inclusive Education in Zimbabwe

There appears to be little dispute among educators in Zimbabwe regarding the principle of inclusive education. Since 1987, the Education Act made an indirect provision for mainstreaming by declaring that "every child in Zimbabwe shall have the right to school education". Educational integration of children with special needs is the accepted policy in Zimbabwe. However, the extent to which children with special educational needs or those who are marginalised are included in mainstream classrooms still remains a controversial issue. The Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture still has in place separate schools for the majority of pupils with disabilities, e.g. Emerald Hill for children with hearing impairment, Jairoso Jiri and Danhiko for children with multiple physical handicaps, Morgenster school and Kapota for visually impaired children, and Sibantubaye for children with mental handicaps.

However, despite this, integration units have been established mainly in primary schools where specialist teachers withdraw pupils from regular classrooms for part of the day and take them to resource rooms in order to give them special help, depending on the nature of their educational needs.

This premise, some would argue, allows for individualised education programme, least restrictive environment and due process. However, it can also be argued that by withdrawing marginalised pupils from their regular classrooms, the purpose behind inclusive education is defeated. Advocates of human rights may also argue that any practice that restricts a person's equal access to an opportunity is detrimental to equal rights. Oliver (1992) argues that while special needs education is a human rights issue, it is not so much the right to be in the same school, but rather a right to education that values all as individuals. He further argues that a deaf child who can only lip-read or use sign language cannot fully benefit from a normal class if the

teacher turns his/her back to the class or does not use sign language. This argument probably vindicates the Zimbabwean government for the continued use of separate schools. Moreover, not all teachers are trained to deal effectively with special needs children. Those without the confidence of their own instructional skills seem to be a hindrance to inclusive education. Other factors include prejudice against special needs children as well as cultural beliefs and superstitions about people who are disabled.

In addition, in Zimbabwe, the government has not been able to provide special facilities for children with special needs in mainstream schools. If regular schools cannot have access to state funds to make their schools effective for all, then it becomes impossible to implement inclusive education properly.

Attitudes Towards Inclusive Education

While current global thinking favours inclusion as a moral imperative (Saleh, 1996), it seems most educators in Zimbabwe are still teaching in order to prepare pupils to pass examinations instead of using child-directed approaches which meet the needs of all their children (Peresuh, 2000).

Polloway and Patton (1992) recommend the application of skills such as task analysis and modelling in inclusive education. In task analysis, teachers are involved in determining the skills needed for each individual pupil before they start to teach, whereas in modelling, teachers either demonstrate or use other individuals to actively perform the behaviour which is to be learned.

It is, therefore, recommended that teachers must avoid teaching children as if they are all of the same ability.

Research has also shown that teachers' specialist training, teaching experience, age and gender have an influence on their attitudes towards inclusive education.

Mataruse (2002) found that the teacher's type of training influences his/her attitude towards children with special needs. Specialist trained teachers' attitudes were found to be more positive to special class placement than non-specialist teachers. These findings are consistent with those of Naor and Milgam (1980), who found that special education courses for teachers fostered a positive attitude towards inclusion

than those with no special education training. Thus, regular class teachers without special education training had significantly more positive attitudes towards inclusion than those with no special education training who, generally, have less favourable attitudes towards the process of inclusion than special educators. Although the Zimbabwe Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture has provided special services in the form of special services classes and resource units since 1981, it is clear that the success of such a programme depends on appropriate attitudes by teachers. Without the correct attitudes in the resource units, inclusion of pupils in regular classrooms becomes impossible.

Recommendations

In order to instil positive attitudes towards Education for All, it is recommended that all would-be-teachers should be trained in special needs education.

In-service courses in special needs education should be mounted for all teachers who are already in the field.

- All children, no matter what their backgrounds maybe, should be given the right to attend school and to be enrolled in mainstream classrooms.
- Teaching method in schools should include, wherever possible, the requirements of special needs pupils instead of concentrating on the preparation for examinations only.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the world today is moving towards inclusive education for children with special needs. Children with special needs are part of the richness of human diversity. Effective regular schools are, therefore, the only option left for meeting the learning needs of all. Zimbabwe, in this context, is encouraged to join the global trend where the development of an inclusive education policy is a must in order to provide education for all.

References

- Barnartt, S.N. & Kabzems, V. (1992). Zimbabwean teachers' attitudes towards the integration of pupils with disabilities into regular classrooms. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 39(2), 135-146.

- Kisanji, J. (2002). Inclusive education and deaf education: Should they co-exist? *African Journal of Special Needs Education*, 7(1), 26-33.
- Mataruse, K. (2002). Gender, race and social class effects on dyscalculia. *African Journal of Special Needs Education*, 7(1), 1-12.
- Naor, M. and Milgram, S. (1980). Two pre-service strategies for preparing regular class teachers for mainstreaming. *Exceptional Children*, 47, 126-129.
- Oliver, M. (1992). Intellectual masturbation. *European Journal of Special Education*, 7, 20-28.
- Peresuh, M. (2000). *Facilitating the Inclusion of Mentally Handicapped Children in Zimbabwe*. Seminar Report in Horizon (pp 19-21). Harare: The British Council.
- Polloway, E. and Patton, J. (1992). *Strategies for Teaching Learners with Special Needs* (5th ed.). New York: Merrill.
- UNESCO. (1994). *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*. UNESCO World Conference on Special Needs Education, Salamanca, Spain.
- Saleh, L. (1996). From Inclusive Education to Inclusive Communities. Conference Paper Presented at the University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa.
- Sindelar, P. (1995). Teacher perceptions of mainstreaming. *Journal of Exceptional Children*, 62(1), 59-72.
- Van Reusen, A.K., Shoho, A.R. & Barker, K.S. (2000). High school teacher attitudes towards inclusion. *High School Journal*, 84(2), 7-20.
- Wolery, M., Bailey, D.B. & Sugai, G.M. (1988). *Effective Teaching Principles and Procedures of Applied Behaviour Analysis with Exceptional Students*. Boston: Allyn Bacon.
- Zimbabwe Government. (1987). *The Education Act*. Harare: Government Printers.



This work is licensed under a
Creative Commons
Attribution – NonCommercial - NoDerivs 3.0 License.

To view a copy of the license please see:
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

This is a download from the BLDS Digital Library on OpenDocs
<http://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/>