

# The impact of Inclusive Education (I.E) on the Rights of Children with Intellectual Disabilities (IDs) in Chegutu

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## Abstract

This study investigated the impact of Inclusive Education (IE) on the rights of children with Intellectual Disabilities in schools around Chegutu. The qualitative case study method was used for the research. Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data from schools around Chegutu. Random sampling was used to choose the sample group from a total population of 80. Thirty respondents which comprised of 10 teachers, 10 children and 10 parents from the five secondary schools constituted the sample group. The results of the study showed that inclusive education recognizes the rights of children with intellectual disabilities. However, parents complained that IE do not offer conducive learning environments of children with IDs because the infrastructure in the schools do not cater for the children with IDs. Also the children interviewed looked down upon children with IDs. They called them ZIMCARES, imbeciles or morons. This tended to violate the ID children's rights to dignity. This study encourages the government to uphold the rights of ID children in IE. There should be an education policy to fully cater for the educational needs of learners with IDs in inclusive settings. There is a serious need for awareness campaigns to remove the stigma attached to learners with IDs.

**Key Terms:** inclusive education, rights of children, intellectual disabilities, schools

## 1. Background of the study

Disability carries multiple stigmas that are the source of exclusion from school and society at large. Exclusion from both school and society has cost the intellectually disabled people their right to education. The United Nation, cited in Chimoyo et al (2011:03) posts that, "of the 61 million children out of school globally, a third (1/3) of them have disabilities and most of them live in sub Saharan African (43%) and South and West Asia (27%), in Nepal, almost 6% of children are out of school and 85% of these have disabilities that include intellectual disability (ID)". According to Ternward Cheshire handbook (2012) in Malawi and Tanzania, having disability doubles the probability of children never attending school. The new Zimbabwean constitution cited in Monolipa (2013:03) reports that "one in every three children with disabilities in Zimbabwe is out of school and that 75% children with disabilities never complete primary school in Zimbabwe".

The ratification of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2008 and the assenting of the new constitution of Zimbabwe on May 13 2013 by the President signaled the dawn of a new era for persons with disabilities.

According to the Norwegian SINTEF Disability Living Conditions Survey, from 2001, 28% of disabled children never attended school but with the advent of disability legislation from 2008 only 13% of the children with disabilities could not attend school. Most children with intellectual disabilities had been included in regular school.

The inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities (IDs) in regular schools prompted the research to investigate the impact of inclusive education (IE) on the rights of ID children in Zimbabwe's secondary schools.

## 2. What is Inclusive Education?

The National Centre for Educational Restructuring and Inclusion (NCERI) in Hardman et al (1999:39) defines inclusive education as:

*Providing to all students including those with severe handicaps equitable opportunities to receive effective educational service with the needed supplementary aids and support services in age appropriate classes in their neighborhood schools in order to prepare students for productive lives as full members of the society.*

UNESCO cited in Chimonyo et al (2011:01) defines inclusive education as a:

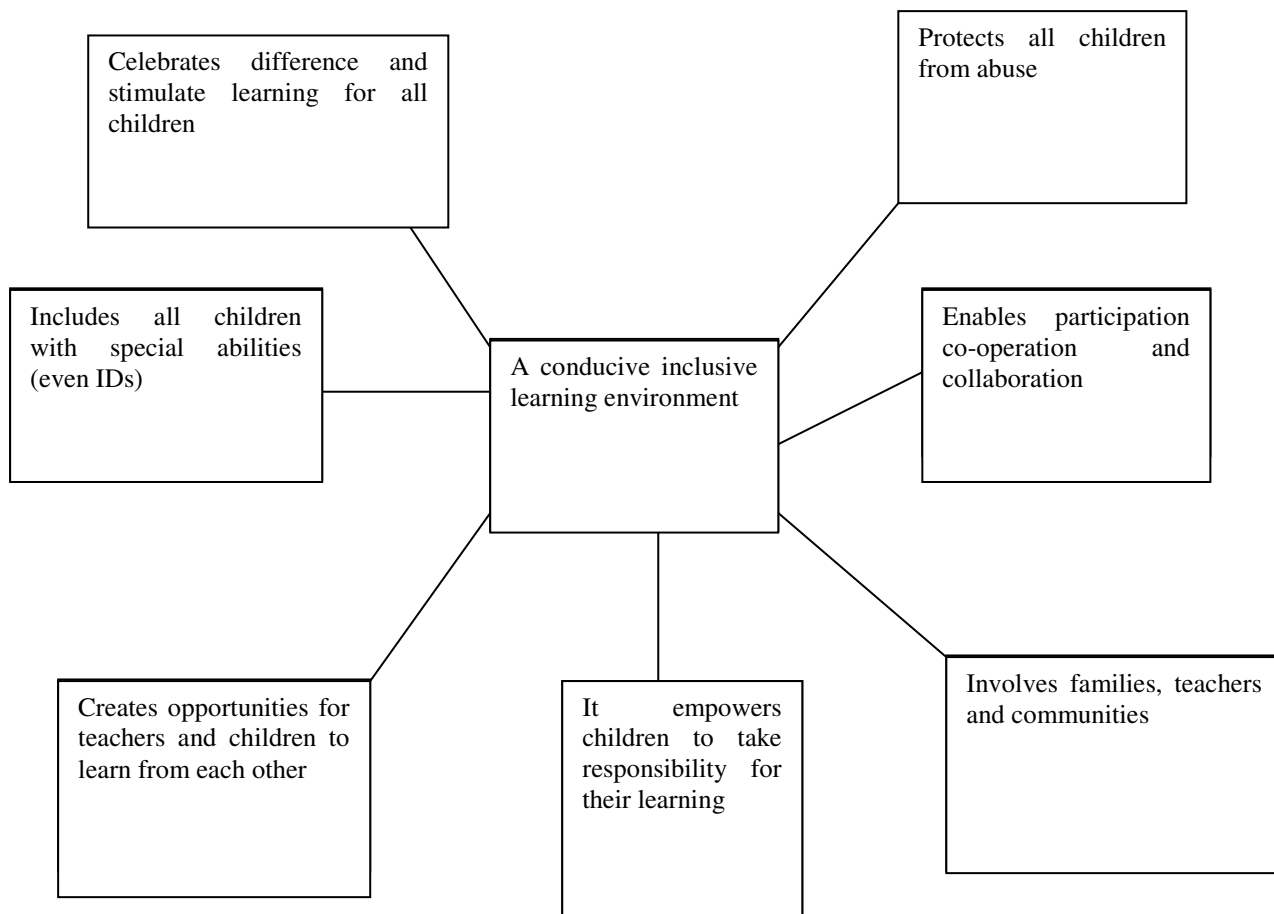
*process of dressing and responding to the diverse needs of all children, youths and adults through increasing participation in learning, culture and communities, reducing and eliminating exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision that covers all children with the appropriate range and a conviction that it is a responsibility of the regular system to educate all children.*

Inclusive education is thus perused on some of the following important points:

- all children, irrespective of their abilities have equal rights to education and should be accorded opportunities to education;
- inclusive education should assess the needs of pupils with various disabilities and afford them education that suits their needs;
- inclusive education should provide infrastructure that makes schools more user friendly to all children; and
- inclusive education should provide skills to teachers and parents to be able to handle children with different disabilities so that these children realize their full potential and become useful members of society.

An inclusive school includes all children with special abilities including the intellectually Disabled (IDs). Manolipa (2013:08) asserts that inclusion is about minimizing all barriers in education for all learners. “This means that the Intellectually Disabled Children (IDs) have equal access to education just like an able bodied pupil attending regular school.

Chimonyo et al (2011) diagram summaries the important tenets of inclusive education (IE) for children with Intellectual Disabilities (IDs) as shown below:



From the above diagram it can be concluded that children with intellectual disabilities can learn together with other able bodied children as long as their diversity or differences are taken into consideration. This is in line with their right to education as is enshrined in the new Zimbabwe constitution of 2013. Inclusive education (IE) for (ID) pupils means their total participation in the learning process. Teachers should not exclude them from any learning activity so that they feel that they belong, are understood and are valued. The inclusion of IDs children in schools with help fight the differences that are created as a result of the stigma attached to disabled people, Santoli (2008:118) argues that “inclusive schools change attitudes to existing differences by educating all learners together forming the basis for a just and own discriminatory society”.

### 3. Argument for Inclusive Education

Nziramasanga et al (1999:18) post that “inclusive education is not just a matter of charity or an oral obligation, rather it is a legal right and therefore an obligation of law, it is based on both national and international legal frames”. Inclusive education recognizes the right to education of all intellectually disabled (ID) persons, According to Zinai (1997), the education Act (1987) outlines that every child has the right to education and that primary education must be free and compulsory. The education Act (1987) is backed by the Disabled Persons Act (1992) which disapproves discrimination of people with disabilities in parents, public and places of employment. According to Hedebe (1993) the education Act of 1987 has set in motion the establishment of inclusive schools that cater for ID children. All learners learn together in these schools including the ID learners. Thus their right to education is recognized in these inclusive schools.

The concept of all learners learning together in IE irrespective of their diversity or differences also ensures that the ID children are not discriminated, marginalized or excluded due to their values conditions. This is in line with the Zimbabwean constitution which states that discrimination against any person with any form of disability is unconstitutional. This has gone a long way in ensuring that persons with intellectual disabilities are fully and effectively included in all the sectors of Zimbabwe. The right to dignity, worth and equality is also enshrined in the constitution (2013), the disabled pupils’ Act of 1987 and in the United Nations convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities (CRPD), which is the basis for inclusive education. Badza (2010:81) argues that “IE recognizes the need for learners to feel that they belong, are understood and are valued”.

IE values diversity or differences in abilities of all learners. According to Slavin (1996:08) “teachers in inclusive schools have acquired skills of teaching that will cater fully for individual differences, thereby benefiting learners, including the IDs”. Madepa (2013:08) Observes that “IE recognizes diversity because inclusive schools offer sign language to address the communication burners that persons with speech functional and hearing disability have been facing in Zimbabwe”. IE is in compliance with the new constitution of Zimbabwe (2013) which menders the development of communication suitable for persons with physical or intellectual disabilities. By making provisions for the recognition of sign language, IE observes the right of children with IDs to education despite the need for special help.

However, despite sign language being captured as an official language in Zimbabwe, there is no domestication of this legal provision in schools. For example, most inclusive schools in Zimbabwe have children with IDs but they have no teachers with the expertise to teach sign language. Lang (2007:51) posts that “there are less than two thousand (2000) teachers trained in sign language to cater for more than 100 000 ID children with speech and hearing problems”

IE also plays a very important role of protecting the intellectually Disabled children from any forms of abuse. The Zimbabwe constitution (2013) section 83 cited in Mandepa (2013:08) sates that “the state has an obligation to take appropriate measures, to enable persons with disabilities to become self-reliant, to protect them from all forms of exploitation and abuse, to give them access to medical, psychological or functional treatment”. According to Lander and Weaver (1997:231) children with IDs normally face sexual abuse, perpetrated mostly against the intellectually disabled girl child since they may not be in a position to positively identify the perpetrators and are not competent and compliable witness before court of law”. When these children go to school, the children are in the hands of school authorities who protect them from abuse.

According to Mandepa (2013) in Zimbabwe 1.9% of the population are people with disabilities and a quarter of these people are intellectually Disabled (ID), 30% of these ID people are children. Most of these children attend inclusive schools and one of their grounds. For example most state run schools and hospitals in Zimbabwe have very few officials who are trained to handle people with IDs and with hearing speech functional disabilities. In Zimbabwe many states run inclusive schools are inaccessible to people with disabilities. Most in schools have no guiding rails, in urban schools, the elevators (if there are working at all) have recorded voices for persons with both ID and visual impairments. The rails are too narrow to accommodate wheel chairs and the toilets cubicles are too high for people with both ID and physical disabilities.

IE can improve the rights of people with IDs by training of personnel that can address the special needs of children with IDs Forlin and Mavhundure cited in Chimedza and Peters (2001) argue that negative attitudes towards children with IDs can only be addressed if there are trained teachers to handle inclusive classes in Zimbabwe.

Inclusive schools should improve infrastructure and amenities to handle children with IDs. A study carried out by Crates (2007) showed that about 1% of the population have ID and of these 85% have mild ID. Of the 85% of the population that has ID, 20% of them have ID and a form of physical disability. This means that inclusive should set up infrastructure and emeritus to cater for IDs. Madepa (2013) posts that schools, court of law and state recreational facilities should have furniture, guiding rails, elevators and toilets cubicles to cater for children with disabilities, “Inclusive schools should have infrastructure and emeriti’s that are user friendly to children with IDs.

Inclusive schools can make use of class peers and friends to support children with IDs. Chimonyo et al (2011) assert that “peers and friends are vital socializing human experience which develop self identity, improve self esteem and assertiveness in learners”. Class peers can be used in group learning to help the children with IDs. According to Bounce (1988:101) a class which has a positive attitude towards learners with IDs allows them to take risks them to venture into unknown territories. The involvement of peers in the learning of children with IDs helps learners to learn together and remove discriminatory tendencies that IDs can be transferred to unborn babies. It is superstition that can lead to the discrimination of children with IDs, so if workshops and awareness campaigns are held society will understand the nature of ID and avoid discriminating children with IDs.

IE should also involve the family in upholding the rights of people with IDs. Most of the stigma comes from society where the family is unused. Without support from school most families tend to hide or to keep indoors with IDs thereby violating the rights of these children to their freedom. According to Smith (2004:116) “Inclusive schools should develop a joint approach by requesting parents to prepare the child for school, there should be shared responsibility, shared planning between the school and home”. This will reduce stress on the family which can result in abuse of the ID.

There is need for a highly individualized education programme (IEP) for learners with ID. Mapuranga and Nyakudzukwa (2014:69) argue that it is important for teachers to up the IEP for each learner with IDs to cater for the individual needs of each learner”.

Government should enact clear policies that cater for the rights of IDs pupils in IE. Zimbabwe does not have clear policies on what is to be done in inclusive schools. To uphold the rights of IDs Government should also put measure in place to make sure that these disability rights policies are emplacement.

Badza and Tafangombe (2010) also argue that there is need finding of programme running in inclusive schools (IE). This can be done through inclusive schools partnering with prorate partners. Mandipa (2013) argues that the biggest challenge with IE lack of funding of their projects and activities. Therefore if IE programmes are well funded we will have a current situation where ID children go to school to play and be made fun of by their peers. The ID will be engaged in activities that commensurate with their abilities because resources will be available to cater for their differential needs.

#### **4. Methodology**

The study used both quantitative and qualitative approaches to investigate the phenomenon under study. It focused on the impact of inclusive education on children with ID in secondary schools. The respondents who used both the questionnaires and interviews as instruments to gather and other school children, in this regard the study concerned with the new and perceptions of parents, teachers and children on the impact of IE in as far as children with ID is concerned. Masuku (1999:24) argues that “qualitative research design has the natural setting as the direct source of information the conclusion are arrived at after considering any recurrent patterns which may emerge”. In view of this qualitative research was the best method to use

#### **5. Presentation and Discussion of Findings**

For the research to answer the main research question, the investigation had four research questions which were answered by the respondents in the questionnaires and interviews during data collections. The responses were as follows:

##### **Question1: What is your understanding of children with IDs?**

All the respondents (the children, the teachers and the parents) were asked what they understood about IE for children with IDs. From the findings, was noted that all the respondents mentioned the idea of learners (irrespective of differencing ability) learning together all learners having a right to education and the total participation of all learners. Out of the B (1) 15 respondents interviewed 13 showed that they understood I.E. The other 15 respondents who used questionnaires all showed from their responses that they knew what I.E for ID children was. Thus the majority (93%) understood what I.E for IDs was. However, 24 out of 30 respondents showed that they did not know what was involve in I.E for ID. Again 26 out of 30 (87%) of children understood what ID is, however 30% of the respondents did not know the various forms of ID. From the findings it was observed that 93% and 87% of the respondents knew what I.E and ID meant respectively not know the various forms of I.D. the findings concern with those by learning Cheshire foundation (1999) when they investigated the knowledge various stakeholders had on I.E and I.Ds. The study carried out in Harare Urban established that more than 90% of parents understood I.E and I.D.

##### **Question 2: Which rights are being observed by employing I.E?**

The rights that the study focused on are shown in the table below:

**Table 1: The rights being observed by employing I.E.**

Right	Number	%
1. The right to education	27	90
2. The right to be protected from discrimination	24	80
3. The right to dignity, equality and worth	25	83
4. The right to the use of suitable facilities and amenities	6	20
5. The right to be protected from any form of abuse:		
emotional	24	80
physical (corporal punishment)	25	83
sexual	28	93
6. The right to gender equality	25	83

The respondents were asked if the right to education for children with I.Ds was being observed in the I.E. From the findings it was seen that the majority 27 (90%) of the respondents agreed that I.E observed the right to education of children with I.Ds. Most of the respondents indicated that the children with I.Ds had access to education in most schools in their locality. The respondents stated that the access to education for children with I.Ds was made possible through the government policy of free education to all primary school going children. The responses are supported by the survey carried out by SINTEF a Norwegian Disability Living Conditions Survey (1999) which states that in 2001, only 28% of children with IDs attended school but by 2013 after the ascending of the new constitution 87% of children with I.Ds were attending school. This is contrary to the response from 3 (10%) respondents who argued that I.E did not observe the right to education for children with I.Ds. The respondents argued that the high school fees in I.E deterred children with IDs from attending school. From the above responses, it is clear that the respondents agreed that the right to education for children I.Ds is observed in most inclusive schools in Zimbabwe.

To further establish if the other rights were being observed in I.E the study inquired if the right to protection from discrimination for children with IDs was being observed in I.E. The findings showed that 27 (80%) out of the 30 respondents agreed that the right to protection from discrimination for children with I.Ds was being observed in I.E. The respondents indicated that when children with I.Ds go to school they are treated just as their peers, they learn together and there is no use of derogatory terms such as moron, ZIMCARE, duzman or imbecile from peers or teachers. Chimonyo et al (2011:20) argues that “the following terms should be avoided when describing persons with intellectual disability: imbecile, moron, spastic, idiot, mentally subnormal uneducable or retarded”. The above terms are derogatory and they affect the self esteem of children with I.Ds. The rare use of the above terms in I.E as stated by the respondents clearly shows that I.E observes the right of children with I.Ds to be protected from any form of discrimination. From the 30 respondents only 6 (20%) argued that the right of children with I.Ds to be protected from any form of discrimination was violated. they stated that children with I.Ds in schools are not allowed to associate with their peers every time they are grouped and put into one class (room) that is normally manned by personnel that is under qualified or has nothing to do in the school. The respondents further argued that the other learners in the school do not want to associate with children with I.Ds as they sometimes give them degrading names such as ZIMCARES, morons or imbecile. However, the large percentage of the respondents (24) 80% agreed that the right to protection from discrimination for children with IDs in I.E observed.

The research also investigated if the right to dignity, worth and equality for children with IDs was being observed in I.E. From the findings 25(83%) out of 30 respondents indicated that the right to dignity, worth and equality for children with IDs was being observed in I.E. The respondents stated that most inclusive schools treat children with IDs with respect and dignity just like they do to their peers who are able bodied. In support of the respondents Leonard Cheshire. Zimbabwe handbook (2011,06) states that “ I.E in Zimbabwe allows students with disabilities and those without disabilities and those without disabilities one school nearest their home, share the same learning resources, get taught by one teacher who treats them with dignity, worth and equality and attend one class with one curriculum”. 15 (17%) of the respondents indicated that the right to dignity, worth and quality for children with IDs in I.E was not being observed. The respondents argued that other learners mocked children with IDs and even used derogatory terms such as ZIMCARES, morons or imbeciles. According to the respondents some learners avoided children with IDs as the children associated the disability with evil spirits. However, the large percentage of respondents (83%) clearly indicated that the I.E observed the right to dignity, worth and equality of children with IDs.

The respondents were also asked if the right of IDs to the use of suitable facilities and amenities in I.E



was observed. The only 6 (20%) of the respondents indicated that this right was being observed in schools that offered inclusive education. (24) 80% stated that I.E did not observe the above. In support of the respondents Mandipa (2011:04) posits that, “in Zimbabwe many governments workplaces, schools courts of law and recreational facilities are in accessible to people with disabilities, in schools the toilet cubicles are too high for persons with physical disabilities and the elevators (if they are working at all) have no recorded voices for persons with visual impairments. The respondents argued that most inclusive schools did not have the financial capacity to provide suitable facilities and amenities such as desks, chairs and toilets for the children with disabilities. The respondents who indicated that the right of IDs to the use of suitable facilities and amenities was being observed in I.E argued that most privately run inclusive schools such as mission schools and company owned schools have most of the facilities and amenities needed by children with IDs. The study also investigated if the right of children with IDs to be protected from any form of abuse was being upheld in schools. From the findings it was seen that 24 (80%) of the respondents stated that the right of children with IDs to protection from emotional abuse in I.E was being observed. The respondents said that in most inclusive schools there was no use of derogatory language such as imbeciles, morons and ZIMCARE, terms that were rife before the introduction of I.E. The respondents attributed this to the wide coverage being given to disability issues in both the print and electronic media. In support of the responses above, Matabvu (2015:13) asserts that the I.E revolution has sensitized parents, teachers, other children and other stakeholders to address the emotional needs of children with IDs”. The other 6 (20%) of the respondents disagreed with assertion that the right of children with IDs to be protected from emotional abuse was being observed. These respondents again cited the prevalent use of demeaning words such as ZIMCARE and imbecile in referring to children with IDs which greatly affected the emotional being of the children.

However, the biggest percentage (80%), clearly stated that I.E observed the right of children with IDs to be protected from emotional abuse. Respondents were also asked if children with IDs were protected from any form of physical abuse especially corporal punishment in I.E from teachers. From the findings 25 (83%) of the respondents indicated that corporal punishment was not administered on children with IDs. The respondents stated that incentives and rewards have taken precedence in I.E to mould good behaviour in children with IDs. Smith et al (2004) assert that rewards and incentives are very good instruments that have been used by schools actioners to control deviance in inclusive schools. The other respondents who constituted 17% (5) of the sample population argued that physical abuse on children with IDs was still rampant in most inclusive schools in Zimbabwe especially those in the rural areas. The respondents argued that lack of skilled personnel to handle children with IDs left the handlers with very few options other than a stick to control the behaviour.

The research also investigated if the children with IDs were subjected to sexual abuse in I.E. 28 (93%) of the respondents indicated that the school was a very safe haven for children with IDs. In support of the respondents, a 2004 report by Save the children Norway found that 87,4% of girls with disabilities had been sexually abused whilst they were housed at home and approximately 48% of them had IDs. However, with the advent of I.E in 2009, the 38,8% of girls with disabilities had been sexually abused and approximately 21% of them had IDs. Thus the advent of the I.E ushered in a new era which helped reduce cases of sexual abuse on children with IDs. The respondents further stated that most of the sexual abuses of girl children with IDs took place at home and the main perpetrators were close family members who did this mainly for ritual purposes. Only 2 (7%) of the respondents indicated that most girl children with IDs were often sexually abused by strangers on their way to and from school. In support of the respondents Mandipa (2013:04) posits that persons with disabilities normally face abuse, especially sexual abuse perpetrated mostly against women with mental disabilities since they may not be in a position to positively identify the perpetrators and they may not also be competent and compellable witnesses before courts of law”.

The respondents were also asked if the right to gender equality of children with IDs was being observed in I.E. 25 (83%) of the respondents indicated that I.E observed the right of children with IDs to gender equality. The respondents argued that inclusive schools enrolled all children with IDs irrespective of their gender. Both girls and boys with IDs were given an equal opportunity to be enrolled in inclusive schools. The respondents also stated that the curricular offered in inclusive schools was gender sensitive. It did not discriminate along gender lines. However, the 5 (17%) of the other respondents from the sample group argued that I.E did not observe the right of children with IDs to gender equality. The respondents stated that most girl children with IDs did not attend school as compared to their male counterparts. According to the Norwegian SINTEF Disability living conditions survey (2009) 34% of girls with disabilities never attended school as compared to 22% of boys who also did not attend school. This shows that to some extent girl children who are ID are not given equal opportunity to attend school as their male counterparts.

### **Question 3: What challenges are faced after the recognition of the right of children with disabilities in I.E?**

The research investigated challenges faced by children with IDs after the recognition of their rights in I.E. All of the 30 (100%) respondents stated that their biggest challenge was in raising school fees for the

children with IDs. The respondents argued that their situation was made even worse by the current liquidity crunch in the country. According to Leonard Cheshire international (2009), the 2002 – 2008 meltdown forced more than 150 000 children with disabilities to drop out of school and join their counterparts in the streets. However the government initiative of free primary education has helped to cushion children with IDs from the high school fees.

The respondents also cited lack of clearly defined government on the rights of the IDs in inclusive education in Zimbabwe. The majority of respondents 26 (87%) stated that an I.E policy on the rights of the IDs has been lacking in the Zimbabwean education system since the system relies on other pieces of legislation (Nziramasanga, 1999, Zindi, 1997, Chiswanda in Chimedza and Peters, 2001). Because of a lack of a clearly defined government policy, the majority of the respondents 28 (93%) assert that there is lack of funding of I.E projects dealing with IDs from both the government and the donor community. According to Badza and Tafangombe (2010), government and the donor community should fund teacher training programme school based development workshops, in service, courses and seminars to equip teachers with skills and knowledge on how to handle rights issues of children with IDs in I.E.

Failure by government to domesticate or implement provisions in the Convention on the Rights of People with Disability (CRPD), the Disability Act and Mental Health Act was cited as one of the biggest challenges faced by children with IDs after the recognition of their rights in I.E. All of the respondents (100%) indicated that there were no suitable facilities and amenities for children IDs to use in inclusive schools. In support of the respondents Mandipa (2011) posits that most inclusive schools in Zimbabwe do not have proper furniture and toilet facilities specifically resigned for the physically disabled (PD) children.

The respondents also highlighted the large classes that are not manageable as a challenge faced after the recognition of the rights of children with IDs to I.E. Mpofo (2000) argues that the average teacher to pupil ratio in most of the classes in inclusive schools is 1:50. According to Kisanyi (1997) this ratio does not allow the teacher to adequately cater for the individual needs of all children in the class. From the findings 28 (93%) of the respondents indicated that the large classes posed a very big challenge to the learning/teaching process after the recognition of the rights of the children with IDs in I.E. The other 2 (17%) of the respondents chose to remain neutral. Thus, it is very clear from the findings that large classes posed a big challenge after the recognition of the rights of children with IDs in I.E.

The respondents were asked how I.E can improve the rights of people with IDs in Zimbabwe. The findings were presented in the form of a table as shown below:

Response	Number of people	%
1. Training of personnel	28	93
2. The improvement of infrastructure	27	90
3. The use of class peers and funds	28	93
4. Awareness campaigns and meetings	30	100
5. Funding of I.E programmes	29	97
6. The enactment of clear policies by Government	30	100
7. The involvement of the family	30	100

Out of the 30 respondents, 28 (93%) of the respondents indicated that there was need for training of personnel that handles children with IDs in inclusive schools. The respondents suggested that there is need for in service training and staff development workshops to enhance the skills of teachers already handling the children with IDs. According to the respondents this will go a long way in helping to recognise the rights of children with IDs as the teachers will be conversant with the rights of children with IDs and to observe them. In support of the respondents Vlactusu (1997:228) asserts that “training for special needs teachers equips them with the requisite skills to handle properly children with disabilities”. 27 (90%) of the respondents also indicated that I.E should improve the infrastructure used in inclusive schools to uphold the rights of children with IDs in Zimbabwe. The respondents argued that most inclusive schools do not have amenities and facilities to cater for the needs of the children who are disabled. In support of the respondents, the World Health Organisation (1985) posits that most inclusive schools in Zimbabwe do not have suitable furniture (desks, chairs and tables) specially designed for children with both physical and IDs. This violates their right to education as their learning is hampered by facilities that are not user friendly. Baine cited that “the buildings in inclusive schools have doors that are too narrow to accommodate wheel chairs and the toilet cubicles are too high for persons with physical disabilities (PDs). According to Mandipa (2013) the failure to provide these facilities by inclusive schools is not in

convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (CRPD) which provides for equal access to the physical environment, transportation, communication and other facilities to enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life. Thus it is imperative that I.E should strive to improve its facilities and amenities the rights of people with IDs in Zimbabwe. It is clear from the findings that most inclusive schools do not have facilities and amenities that uphold the right of children with disabilities.

The respondents also stated that the use of peers and friends can also be used to improve the rights of children with IDs by involving the family. 29 out of 30 (97%) of the respondents indicated that the family plays an important in improving the rights of children with IDs in I.E. Chimonyo et al (2011:27) argues that “I.E should develop a joint approach with parents to solve problems there should be shared responsibility between the school and home and I.E should provide as much information to the parent as possible about the child”. This will reduce stress on the parents and prevent cases of abuse such as physical abuse and solitary confinement for long hours of children with IDs. The respondents also stated that there are myths and beliefs stated by the respondents include the belief that mental challenges are a curse or punishment from the ancestral spirits for some wrong doings from elders of the family. These beliefs and myths have a bearing on how children with IDs are handled. Gates (2007) argue that myths and superstition in traditional African families have an effect of undermining the rights of children with IDs. Traditional African families do not treat children with IDs with dignity and respect and they are discriminated because they are believed to have evil spirits. I.E can remove this stigma by providing as much information as possible to parents on myths, realities and beliefs associated with IDs.

The respondents were also asked about the impact of awareness campaigns in improving the rights of people with IDs in I.E in Zimbabwe. From the findings, all the sample group indicated awareness campaigns on the rights of children with IDs in I.E would go a long way in improving the rights of children with IDs. The respondents argued that inclusive schools should organise street marches in local communities to educate people on the rights of children with IDs. According to Vlachos (1997) inclusive schools should hold all stakeholders workshops in schools to conscientise people on the rights of children with IDs.

When asked about the of finding on the rights of children with IDs in I.E, the majority 29 (97%) of the respondents stated that finding for the inclusion programmes was imperative as it helped to observe the rights of children with IDs. The respondents argued that I.E should look for donors to find disability issues targeting at income generating projects aimed at empowering children with IDs. In support of the respondents, Mandipa (2013) asserts that there is need to look for donors to create facilities and amenities such as furniture, buildings and ablution facilities suitable for children with disabilities in inclusive schools. By so doing, their right to access buildings and amenities to which the public has access is observed.

The respondents were also asked on how I.E should involve the government in improving the rights of children with IDs in I.E in Zimbabwe. All the respondents (100%) indicated that I.E should engage the government to address disability issues. The respondents argued that I.E should indicate for the enactment of laws by government that address disability issues. According to Wener (2013) I.E should ensure that the government domesticates these laws as disability issues have a low priority with the government of Zimbabwe. The domestication of disability laws would ensure that the rights of children with IDs are recognised in inclusive schools. From the findings, it is clear that I.E should engage the government for it to enact laws that recognise and domesticate the rights of children with IDs.

## 6. Conclusions

In view of the findings above, it is concluded that:

- while teachers can define the concept of inclusive education, the teachers themselves, the parents and the children alike have scanty knowledge of the issue that pertain to I.E and the rights of children with IDs;
- Despite the scanty knowledge on I.E and the right of children with IDs, the respondents agree that inclusive education recognise most of the rights of children with IDs;
- learners with IDs benefit in a number of ways from inclusion;
- disability issues have a low priority with the government of Zimbabwe;
- there is need for teachers to be staff developed on disability rights in I.E.;
- children with disabilities in I.E still face problems of discrimination, lack of resources and failure to recognise their right to dignity and respect;
- I.E requires findings from both the government and donor community to bankroll income generating projects aimed at empowering persons with disabilities; and
- parents, teachers, friends and peers play a critical role in the observance of rights of children with IDs in I.E.



## 7. Recommendations

From the conclusions drawn above, it is recommended that:

- peace education be introduced in the I.E curriculum with a component to do with rights issues of children with IDs;
- inclusive schools should organize awareness campaigns on a regular basis at school and community at large on the rights of children with disabilities;
- government enacts laws to deal with rights issues of persons with disabilities in inclusive schools;
- inclusive schools should hold staffs development workshops regularly to educate teachers on the rights of children with disabilities;
- since I.E recognizes most of the rights of the children with IDs, inclusive schools, the government and the donor community should mobilize resources for the successful implementation of I.E;
- government should domesticate policies to do with I.E and the rights of children with IDs;
- inclusive schools should organise in service training through seminars, courses and workshops for teachers to acquire knowledge on the rights of children with disabilities and how to handle them;
- inclusive schools should have explicit affirmative enrollment policy to weaver the entry requirements for children with disabilities especially the girls who are always disadvantaged;
- all-inclusive schools should have infrastructure that is user friendly to children with disabilities; and
- a quota system should be used to allow parents of children with disabilities to be included in the SDA committees of inclusive schools to represent their children's interest.

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