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Special and Inclusive Education in Tanzania: Reminiscing the Past, Building the Future

MWAJABU K. POSSI and JOSEPH R. MILINGA

Abstract

Special education was introduced in Tanzania Mainland in 1950 by the Church Missionary Society. Despite its long history in the country, not many policies have clearly stipulated the need for special and inclusive education. This paper succinctly and systematically evaluates various educational reforms and policies in Tanzania, and points out some successes and embedded challenges in the development of special needs and inclusive education in Tanzania. To analyze clearly the current situation of special and inclusive education in the country, the Peter's model and cases of some identified schools for exceptional students are used. The analysis has indicated an evolution from special to integrated and later on to inclusive education, which has led to an apparent increase in the number of schools and subsequent relatively higher enrollment figures for children with special needs. Despite this evolution, Tanzania has a long way to go, when compared to other countries in effectively achieving the provision of education to exceptional individuals. Finally, towards a new era of special and inclusive education in Tanzania, various recommendations are offered.

Keywords: history, special and inclusive education, policies, reforms.



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Introduction

Deliberations on special needs education were formerly introduced in Tanzania Mainland in 1950 by the Church Missionary Society. Despite the apparent long history of this education in the country, literature is scarce in this area and few policies have been specifically geared towards special and inclusive education. Writing about historical perspectives of special education is important because it enables us understand the past and current situation of this education in Tanzania congruent with the international literature. Armstrong (2002) and Read and Walmsley (2006), for example, see the value of having written history of education for persons with disabilities, from the perspective of disabled individuals, as a crucial factor for current understanding of their social lives in English and French contexts. Based on the limited literature with a historical lens, the available policies in Tanzania did not and do not noticeably or strategically pinpoint what should be done as far as special and inclusive education is concerned. What we see today, more than 50 years after Tanzania's independence, is a manifestation of several processes towards education for all (EFA). Unfortunately, exceptional individuals as well as other marginalized groups have been left behind or rather put aside as far as education is concerned. It is therefore, the focus of this paper to discuss the impact of Tanzania's policies on special needs and inclusive education with a historical perspective.

It is widely accepted that education is a basic right for every individual, as well as an essential and instrumental human right for social change. Education is further conceptualized as an emancipation tool for empowering individuals, including those in special needs and other marginalized groups towards combating ignorance, poverty, and diseases. Through appropriate education policies and reforms, individuals from these groups can have access to, participate and ultimately succeed in education within inclusive settings without segregations, hence becoming productive members of the community.

The Government of Tanzania ratified the 1994 Salamanca Statement which emphasizes the need to provide basic education to exceptional individuals. This is an important step towards realization of EFA aspirations. The ratification has been instrumental in attempts to fulfilling the goals of the first Education For All conference held in Jomtien in 1990.

According to the United Nations (2007), the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was opened for signatures on March 30th, 2007, with such initiatives strongly supportive of inclusive education for persons with disabilities.

Within education, discussions about schooling for all children have been of global concern and include country-specific issues. Being part of such discourses, this paper revisits the historical development of special and inclusive education in Tanzania. It situates this development within international efforts to educate all children without any form of exclusion as envisaged in different conventions and frameworks. In this way, both local and international literature is reviewed to highlight general trends in this development, and common challenges to its implementation are explored. In order to record information about the development of special and inclusive education in Tanzania, three methods of data gathering are employed: documentary review, focus group discussions, and observation. Documentary review helped identify information on the educational reforms understood from a historical perspective. To this end, different policy documents and

educational reforms were critically analyzed. The first author of this paper was involved in collecting the primary data by conducting interviews and focus group discussions with the participants and carrying out observations in the visited schools/settings. The methodological approach adopted in this paper aims to provide readers with a good combination of primary and secondary data to inform about past and current experiences of attaining inclusive schooling in Tanzania. Importantly, the paper provides readers with students' voices from different schools as a way of depicting actual experiences of students in the selected settings.

Conceptual issues in special and inclusive education

It is glaringly obvious that students with special needs and those marginalized based on gender, poverty, ethnicity and other lifestyles should receive their education in inclusive settings. To better address this claim in the context of this paper this section presents conceptualizations of key terms that are often used in special and inclusive education discussions; given the importance of terminological shift and semantic distinction has in informing about relevant educational policies and classroom practices (Rodriguez & Garro-Gila, 2015).

Special education

Heward (1996) defines special education from an administrative perspective, maintaining that it is part of a school system's operation that requires certain teacher-pupil ratios in the classroom with special formulae for determining levels of funding according to the given numbers of exceptional children served. It is a specially designed instruction that meets the unusual needs of exceptional students (Hallahan & Kauffman as cited in Possi, 2009). In such instructions, special materials, teaching techniques, or equipment and/or facilities may be required. For students to benefit from this kind of instruction, the availability of related services such as special transportation, psychological assessment, physical and occupational therapy, medical treatment, and counseling may be required (Gargiulo, 2012). The most important goal of special education features in finding and capitalizing on exceptional students' abilities; it includes the education for the gifted and talented (Possi, 1986; Reber, 1995) which generally require specially trained personnel.

Special schools

When writing on the history of special education in America, commented that special schools are institutions offering education in segregated settings to be the repositories for all kinds of children that cannot fit into the regular class without creating problems for the system. This definition has a negative connotation in that it refers to students with special needs as troublemakers. Special schools are those enrolling children with disabilities or those who are gifted and talented, and educates them through the use of specialized materials, specially trained teachers, and in special settings without non-special students. This paper adopts both definitions.

Integration

Possi (1986) defines the term as the teaching of students with special needs alongside non-special students using special equipment, special assistance, and through resource rooms and specialized teachers. Consequently, *integration* refers to providing education to

students with special needs in ordinary schools. It is a system which provides students with opportunities to get an education alongside their non-special peers. The term is used mainly in the British system of education and by those who have adopted it.

Mainstreaming

Another term that has evolved from special education, which is also closely related to integration, is *mainstreaming*. The term is mainly used in the American education system. It refers to one of the many functional arrangements which can meet the Least Restrictive Education (LRE) environment and mandates that to the maximum extent possible, children with disabilities should be educated alongside nondisabled children in regular classrooms, with special education support offered when necessary. Therefore, *Mainstreaming* is used for the legal doctrine of the LRE (Reynolds & Fletcher-Janzen, 2002). It seeks heterogeneous classrooms in order for children to perceive, understand and tolerate diversity within their midst. In this paper, mainstreaming is referred to as an educational practice of educating exceptional children alongside others by removing them from special classes and schools and placing them in regular classroom settings (Reber, 1995; Reynolds & Fletcher-Janzen, 2002).

Inclusive education

This is a term that is often confused with mainstreaming. The term carries with it elements of mainstreaming, integration, normalization, least restrictive environments, deinstitutionalization, and regular education initiatives. Some people use the terms interchangeably while others make distinctions. While integration has been used to denote "disability," inclusive education is "about values and principles, about the kind of society that we want and the kind of education that we value" (Evans & Lunt, 2002, p. 3). Writing about the evolution of terms from "integration" to "inclusive education," Thomazet (2009) acknowledges that the proponents of the latter usage emphasize on attributing learning difficulties experienced by individual learners to the school and wider community and not to the factors within the individual person; thereby making such institutions more responsible for reorganizing the learning environment to suit all learners. This pragmatic shift signifies our thinking about disability from "medical" to "social" perspectives (Haegele & Hodge, 2016) as championed by disabled people's struggle for their rights in the western world (Armstrong, 2007; Oliver, 2013). Tarkala and Aunio (2005) define inclusive education as a flexible education approach in which all kinds of children have the opportunity to participate in general education programs. The authors regard this approach as the highest level of development of special needs education. It demands teamwork and much cooperation with adults and the whole organization included. On the other hand, inclusive education for all children is based on the concept of social equity and is essentially a social construction perspective. Hence, inclusion capitalizes on achieving egalitarianism among students, realized through the adaptation to setting-out structures that are friendly to all students (Rodriguez & Garro-Gila, 2015).

On the other hand, defines inclusion as the opportunity for persons with disabilities to participate fully in all educational, employment, consumer, recreational, community and domestic activities that typify everyday life. He contends that the term does not mean dumping a child with disability into the regular classroom without support. Neither does it

mean including a severely handicapped child in a regular classroom. This means that teachers and special needs experts should not consider only physical placement as inclusive education, but rather what goes on in the teaching and learning process. There should not be exclusion of exceptional individuals in the process. That is why growing numbers of people feel that inclusion should not be considered optional but inevitable, especially in developing countries like Tanzania, if enrolment levels have to be functional both quantitatively and qualitatively. Indeed, inclusion is not just about children with special needs. It is about all children in a classroom being valued, being recognized, and feeling like they belong and are being socially and intellectually engaged. Inclusion is not “dumping,” neither is it a new concept in education.

It is noteworthy that inclusive education is not static. It is a constantly evolving process of change and improvement in schools to make education more accessible, learner friendly and beneficial to all children, regardless of their variations. Therefore, there has to be restructuring of education cultures, policies and practices so as to respond to the diverse range of learners; including those with a disability, male and female, as well as minority groups. The delivery system calls for flexibility so as to accommodate learners with special needs, especially because they have to access education without barriers. It responds to and addresses the needs of diverse learners and increases the participation of members of the community so as to reduce segregation. With inclusion, there has to be modification of curricular and their implementations: contents, teaching and learning techniques, as well as including children in the regular classrooms as much as possible. In fact, the four elements critical to the conceptualization of inclusion can be reiterated as, “a process” concerned with the “identification and removal of barriers” that recognizes the “presence, participation and achievement of all students, with a particular emphasis on those groups of learners who may be at risk of marginalization, exclusion or underachievement” (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2005, pp. 15-16).

Special and inclusive education in Tanzania: Revisiting the past

Situation before independence

There were no formal schools for individuals with special needs in either Tanganyika or Zanzibar until 1950, at which point a school for students with visual disabilities was opened at Buigiri in Dodoma by the Church Missionary Society. The church trained teachers and obtained assistance from abroad in terms of teaching and learning materials. The school had boarding facilities for students with blindness who were seldom integrated with students without disabilities. Subsequently, the Furaha Primary School was opened by the Pentecostal Church in Tabora in 1951. The curriculum of the school, like that of Buigiri, included vocational as well as academic skills including basketry, and weaving. Furthermore, teachers improvised teaching and learning materials according to the needs of the students and their immediate environment. For instance, seeds from some kind of trees were used to prepare teaching and learning aids for counting and tactile skills.

At that particular time, the government had not ventured into special needs education. Consequently, quite a large number of children with disabilities were left at home due to ignorance, stigma, and superstitions attached to causes of disability and the disability conditions. Another observation is that, children with low vision were not appropriately

catered for since most of them were forced to use Braille instead of being trained to use their residual vision (Choma, 1985). As for children who were gifted and talented, there was no proper placement or even assessment for them. It is worthwhile mentioning, however, that at least acceleration was allowed for high achievers who were allowed to skip grades. Children with hearing, physical, mental and/or emotional disabilities did not have schools catering for their educational needs.

Situation after independence

Tanganyika gained political independence in 1961, after which, deliberate efforts were made to have national development plans so as to improve education delivery in the country. In the same year the Roman Catholic Church opened a primary school for the Deaf in Tabora. Similarly, the Salvation Army opened a school for students with physical disabilities in Dar es Salaam, at Mgulani. Right after independence there were changes that called for various plans to do away with colonial legacies. Unfortunately, almost all the plans and policies at that particular time had no direct consideration for the education of children with special needs. For a meaningful analysis and understanding of the current situation in special needs education in Tanzania, it was considered necessary to review the key educational events and developments which have occurred over the past 50 years, as evidenced in the following sections.

First Three-Year Development Plan

This plan was incepted in 1962 and was crucial to the development of secondary school education. The three-year development plan and the expansion of secondary education ordinance became effective in 1962, and aimed to abolish racial discrimination and empower rural local authorities as envisaged in the Education Act of 1962 (Mushi, 2011). This was the year when Furaha and Irente special primary schools for students with visual impairment were opened by the Swedish Free Mission and Lutheran Churches respectively (Choma, 1985; Tungaraza, 1994). It was also during this phase that integrated schools were initiated. In 1963 the government joined efforts with the missionaries in providing special needs education. Uhuru Primary School in Dar es Salaam was opened as an integrated school for children with visual impairment. This was the first government school to specifically enroll children with disability. From that time onwards, the government committed itself to integration. The training of teachers and provision of equipment was undertaken by both the government and donors, especially missionaries such as the Christophel Blinden Mission. The Swedish Government, particularly through SIDA cooperation, also played a great role. However, up to that time there were no clearly stipulated policies or regulations on special needs education.

First Five Year Development Plan (1964-1969)

In 1964, the First Five-Year Development plan was introduced with the objective of meeting the requirements of the national economy by having high level manpower and ensuring quality primary school education. While recognizing the importance of short- and long-term investment in education, adult education was given the topmost priority for immediate impact in transforming the national economy (Mushi, 2011). From this plan, racism in education was abolished with all schools made accessible to all children, regardless of race or religion. There was free education for all, which implied that those with special

needs would be somehow facilitated by the government's education provisions. In 1966, the duration of primary school was changed from eight to seven years. It was during this time that the Buhangija and Mugeza integrated primary schools were opened for children with visual impairment in Kigoma and Bukoba respectively. These schools were established by philanthropists and then later on operated by the government.

A revolutionary change in education came in 1967 with the policy of Education for Self-Reliance (ESR), which emphasized curriculum reforms so as to integrate theory with practical skills for national development and the world of work. The then President of Tanzania, *Mwalimu* Julius Kambarage Nyerere, insisted that the education system must foster the social goals of living and working together for a common good. He was of the view that education had to prepare young people to play a dynamic and constructive part in the development of society; inculcate a sense of commitment to the local community and help students accept values appropriate to a better future, not those appropriate to the former colonial masters. He asserted that the Tanzanian education system must stress the concepts of quality and responsibility to provide services with some special ability, whether it be carpentry, animal husbandry, or in academic pursuit. In the same year, the government started Kabanga, Masasi, and Ikungi primary schools for integrating children with visual impairment. Most of the schools had their curricular geared towards skills like basketry and carpentry apart from the ordinary curriculum of academic subjects. Pongwe primary school was opened in 1968, also as an integrated school with similar curricular.

Second Five Year Development Plan (1969-1974)

This plan came in place in 1969 when the Education Act was enacted with the aim of making sure that the Tanzanian education system reflected the nation, hence the name change from the Ministry of Education to the "Ministry of National Education." According to the plan, all schools moved to become under government authority. The plan stipulated that every Tanzanian child should be given basic education as soon as the financial circumstances of the government permitted, which was in plan for 1968. Besides, Hombolo, Mwanhala and Makalala primary schools for children with visual impairments were opened by the government. After two years, the Musoma Resolution was passed in 1970 which stipulated that adult literacy and functional education should be intensified and that primary education should be universal and compulsory. This was another, though implied, chance which enabled children with disabilities to be enrolled in schools.

Third Five Year Development Plan (1974 -1979)

The Universal Primary Education (UPE) policy of 1974 emphasized the right of all Tanzanian children to free primary education. This policy is always referred to when discussing the development of education in Tanzania. However, the policy did not pay attention to the development of special needs education. Despite the negligence, the UPE led to the introduction of the Post Primary Technical Centers (PPTCs) in 1974. Similarly, during this period, Folk Development Colleges (FDCs) were opened as part of post primary training programs. There was also diversification of secondary schools (Form I-IV). These plans had some influence in special needs education. For instance, there were folk development officers who were providing special needs education to some adult learners in some of the centers.

The Education Act No. 25 of 1978 was passed to legalize education changes that were introduced between 1967 and 1978 following the implementation of Education for Self-Reliance. The 1978 Education Act affirms the right of every child to attend school from age seven to 13 years. Further, the Government Notice No. 35 of the Education Act No. 25 stated:

Subject to the National Policy on National Education and other National Plans and priorities appropriately specified from time to time, every citizen of the United Republic shall be entitled to receive such category, nature and level of National Education as his ability may permit him.

This policy implied that there was consideration for people with special needs education. It was through this policy that child finding peripatetic teachers was made possible. It was a milestone in special needs education, since some children with disabilities who were being hidden by parents because of stigma, became enrolled in schools. However, the policy was not explicit enough. Karakoski and Ström (2005) had similar thoughts and asserted that despite the fact that the Education Act of 1978 made education for all school-age children (7-13 years) compulsory, and that the notion of primary education as a human rights issue was reinforced in the act, it had no significant impact on the education of children with disabilities. The majority of children were and still are experiencing barriers to learning and exclusion from their right to education.

It should be noted here that in 1978 the University of Dar es Salaam, which was the only University in the country, started enrolling students with disabilities. Two students with a visual disability were enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts with Education program.

First Union Development Plan

In 1981, a Presidential Commission on Education was appointed to review the system of education and propose necessary changes needed to be met by the country towards the year 2000. During this plan, a special school for children with mental disabilities was opened in 1982 with the joint efforts of the Tanzanian government and the Anglican Church in Lulindi, Masasi (Tungaraza, 1994). In the same year, the Lutheran Evangelical Church opened a school for children with mental disabilities in Mtoni Diaconic Centre, a special unit of Mtoni Primary School. This was a breakthrough with a push from the 1981 International Year of the Disabled. For the first time, children with a mental disability were considered for special needs education in Tanzania.

As for teacher training, efforts were initiated in 1976 by the Ministry of National Education to train teachers for both blind and deaf children at the Tabora Teacher Training College (Tungaraza, 1994), and later on in 1983 teachers to serve children with intellectual disability began to be prepared at this college (Ngata, 2011; Tungaraza, 1994). This was a big step in special needs education since at that time special needs teachers were being trained abroad which was relatively very expensive.

Ten Year Development Program for Secondary Education Expansion (1984-1993)

The plan was established in 1984 for the expansion of secondary education. In 1985, the communities started the construction of Community Secondary Schools and fees for

secondary education were reintroduced. Unfortunately, there has not been any community school serving children with special needs.

It was in the Ten-Year Development Plan that the so-called secondary schools for the gifted and talented, namely; Mzumbe, Ilboru and Tabora boys' secondary schools as well as Tabora, Jangwani and Msalato girls' secondary schools, were opened for students considered gifted and talented. Unfortunately, the students were not screened properly. They were enrolled in the schools because of high scores. In actual sense, based on the selection criteria, the students could be classified as high achievers rather than gifted and talented. It was also appalling that there were no teachers with special training on how to handle the students. The curricular and teaching techniques used were not challenging enough for the students. In fact, the schools should have not been labeled as schools for the gifted and talented because they did not qualify to be so.

During this period, students with hearing impairment began to receive secondary school education services. Ruvu Secondary School, which had a focus on agriculture, and Moshi technical secondary schools started enrolling students with hearing impairment. However, there were problems of ordinary teachers not being able to attend the needs of the students. The challenge was that the majority of special needs teachers were trained to teach in primary schools. Attempts were later made to deploy specialized teachers to assist, at least in language signing. The Government Declaration of 1992 indicated support in regular schools in terms of classroom assistance, additional pedagogical support and access to visiting specialists. It is worthwhile noting that at this point there were now peripatetic or itinerant services in inclusive primary schools.

1995 Education and Training Policy

The education sector reforms began in 1995 with the 1995 Tanzania Education and Training Policy (ETP) which, according to the then Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (United Republic of Tanzania, 1995), stipulated that the government would promote and facilitate access to education by disadvantaged social and cultural groups such as those with an intellectual disability, or visual or hearing impairment. The overall objectives of introducing educational reforms together with other policy initiatives was to ensure growing and equitable access to high quality formal education and adult literacy through facilities expansion, efficiency gains, and quality improvement, accompanied with efficient supply and use of resources. It is stated that *"Every child has a right to proper primary education as a human right regardless of sex, color, ethnicity and abilities."* This statement is too general to have an impact in special needs education, similar to the observations of Karakoski and Ström (2005).

Economic Liberalization Period

The then Ministry of Education and Culture started implementing various plans including the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP). There was also the Primary Education Development Program (PEDP). The former reactivates the commitment of the country to realization of UPE by paying special attention to access and equity; quality of education provided; institutional arrangement; capacity building; and improved financing. On the other hand, the Secondary Education Development Program (SEDP) dealt with five program areas: improving access and equity; improving the quality of education provided; enhancing

management reforms; devolution of authority; and improving education management information systems (EMIS). It can obviously be observed that special needs education was not a priority in the plan.

Education and Training Policy 2014

This newly formulated education and training policy came into being following what was considered shortcomings and/or challenges of the preceded policies, notably the education and training policy of 1995 discussed in the previous sections. With regard to special and inclusive education, although it recognizes the importance of having proper identification of students with special educational needs, like the 1995 policy, the statements are too general in addressing the needs of exceptional learners. However, the policy is in the right direction in addressing inclusion demands despite its lack of focus.

National Policies on Disability

There are several Acts and/or policies on disability which have been in place in Tanzania since the country's independence; some of which are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Relevant disability policies enacted by Tanzania

<i>Policy Name</i>	<i>Year Enacted</i>	<i>Key Information</i>
Disabled Persons (Employment) Act (No. 2)	1982	Establishes quota system, stipulating 2% of workforce (companies of 50+ employees) must be those with disabilities. Also establishes a National Advisory Council to advise the minister for disability issues.
Disabled Persons (Employment) Regulations	1985	Defines the eligibility and registration requirements for people with disabilities.
Vocational Education and Training Act (No. 1)	1994	Provides a legal framework for the implementation of a flexible vocational education/training system.
National Employment Promotion Service Act (No. 9)	1999	Provides or makes arrangements for the registration, employment, counseling, vocational rehabilitation, and placement of persons with disabilities.
National Policy on Disability	2004	Aims to provide a conducive environment for people with disabilities to engage in productive work.
United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	Signed: 2007 Ratified: 2009 (Optional protocol signed 2008 & ratified 2009)	Recognizes the right of persons with disabilities to work on an equal basis with others. Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability with regard to all matters concerning all forms of employment, including conditions of recruitment, hiring and employment, continuance of employment, career advancement and safe and healthy working conditions.

<i>Policy Name</i>	<i>Year Enacted</i>	<i>Key Information</i>
Persons with Disabilities Act	2010	Provides an obligation for employers to provide employment to qualified persons with disabilities; mandates the continuance of employment for workers who acquire a disability; prohibits discrimination in employment towards people with disabilities; mandates safe and accessible work environment. Requires that all employers of a workforce of 20+ must hire at least 3% of employees with disabilities.

It is obvious from the policies that there was no policy specifically targeting education of students with disability; with most focused on employment. The attempt made on education is on the national policy on disability through the then Ministry of Labor, Youth Development and Sports of 2004 (United Republic of Tanzania, 2004), where education is mentioned as key to development and should be made available to all school-aged children. Despite this commitment the educational system is inaccessible to a large number of children with disabilities. More needs to be done in inclusive and special education. Inclusive education does not mean having schools enrolling student with disability as well as nondisabled. It is more than placement. There has to be sufficient and appropriate teaching and learning materials, trained teachers and other relevant support services.

Current situation of special and inclusive education in Tanzania: Case studies examined

The inclusive education policy was drafted in 2008 and ratified in 2009. Among other things, the policy states that students with disability should be educated with their nondisabled colleagues in same classrooms and that the book-student ratio for those with disability is 1:1. This has not been easy to implement due to lack of funds, as well as teaching and learning facilities. In Tanzania, inclusive education began in 1998 as a pilot program in two schools in Temeke Municipality with 20 students participating in the program. By 2002 there were a total of seven schools and 259 students at the inclusive schools. In January 2004 the project reached 36 primary schools in the Mbeya region (Karakoski & Ström, 2005). After the pilot, Iringa rural and urban districts implemented inclusive education in their districts. Currently, there are inclusive schools in almost all regions of the country.

According to Mkonongwa (2014), inclusive education is a recent reform in the broad field of special needs education. It is an initiative that challenges previous conceptions of special education and its practices. The history of special education has evolved from separation and integration or mainstreaming, to inclusion which is a new initiative in the area of special needs education which considers people with special needs within a wider perspective.

So far, inclusive education in Tanzania is not working well due to a number of problems. However, it is noteworthy that as a result of the various policies and acts to date, there are more special and inclusive schools which has increased the enrolment of students with special needs. Statistics indicate that students with a physical disability are in the majority in primary schools in Tanzania, followed by those with other disabilities. For instance, in 2016 data indicate the following distribution of pupils with disabilities enrolled in primary schools: albinos (1,870), autism (1,003), deaf/blind (6,318), deaf/mute (512), intellectual disability

(8,906), physical disability (11,839), low vision (3,767), and blind (2,182) (United Republic of Tanzania, 2016). It is obvious that the number of schools and students with various types of disabilities have increased since the 1980's. For instance, in 1980 there were five types of disability being served in 23 schools with a total of just 1,125 students (Karakoski & Ström, 2005). Recently, trends indicate that there has been increased enrolment of students with disabilities in primary schools; from 30,433 in 2011 to 37,034 in 2016 (United Republic of Tanzania, 2016).

Given such a situation, it was important collecting data to establish the current situation of special and inclusive education at least from selected primary schools. The purpose of the data collection was to understand the current situation for students with disability in inclusive schools. This task was intended to establish the condition of teaching and learning in the schools before conducting a major study. The "Input-Process-Output" model was used in order to discuss the obtained data from selected cases/schools.

The *Input-Process-Output* model was used to discuss the situation of special needs education in Tanzania. The previous sections have discussed some education policies and regulations, with some having been in place since independence. Discussions have attempted to highlight how policies and regulations have influenced the development of special and inclusive education. This section critically analyzes the education provision for students enrolled in special and inclusive education. The discussions are made on the basis of the authors' experience in special needs education and primary data gathered from selected schools.

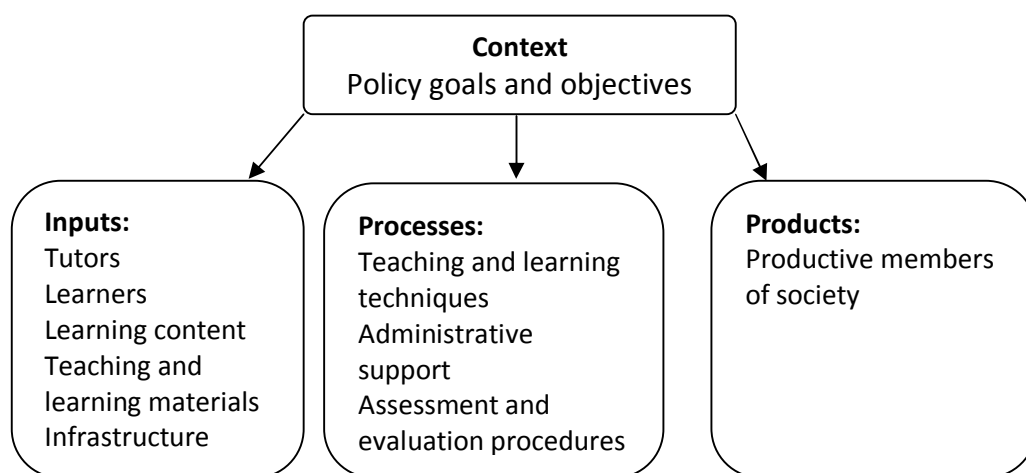


Figure 1. Conceptual framework: modified from Peters (2004)

Case Studies

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1994) states that the fundamental principle of inclusive school is that all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have. The inclusive schools, therefore, must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different styles and ratio of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities. There should be continuum of support and services to match the continuum of special needs encountered in every school. A case study of six schools for students with disability is used to reinforce the discussions on the development of special and inclusive schools.

Inputs

For any school or educational institution, there have to be inputs which will facilitate the teaching and learning. Such inputs include the content to learn, teaching and learning materials, buildings and their accessibility and personnel.

Situation at Primary School A

In a study for the Under the Same Sun organization to find out the situation of children from displaced homes at one of the schools enrolling students with albinism, blindness, physical disability as well as nondisabled students, it was discovered that the students faced a number of problems, some of which area presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Situation at School A

Variable(s)	Status
Infrastructure	<p>Generally observed to be poor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dormitories in poor condition, with cracks on floors and walls in need of apparent significant repair. ▪ Dormitories too small to accommodate large numbers of students, resulting in over-crowdedness due to large numbers of students compared to room sizes. ▪ Insufficient quantities of tables and chairs in the dining room. ▪ Deficient numbers of toilets, while those available were in very poor condition, requiring drastic improvement/renovation. ▪ Dirty environments, in particular dirty toilets due to among other factors, lack of cleaning tools and disinfectant.
Human Resources	<p>Generally characterized by the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shortage and/or lack of trained teachers, nurses and matrons. ▪ Lack of in-service training. Personnel complained of no frequent seminars, nor long or short term training on special needs education. Such courses could motivate and make those working with children of special needs to be recognized by others, which would subsequently increase their confidence.
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poor security with no barbed wire around the school compound.

Variable(s)	Status
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Negative attitudes towards people with disabilities by members of the community, as well as by some members of staff.

It is worth noting that teachers' and students' voices indicate a lack of special facilities, as well as teaching and learning materials at most of the schools visited. At school **A** it was noticed that there was a shortage of and at times a lack of necessary amenities for people with disabilities such as body lotions for those with albinism etc. The school also lacked talking books and maps for blind children.

At school **E**, the Head Teacher stated the following on teaching and learning materials;

There is a great shortage of equipment. It would be good if we could get a photocopier machine to make copies of enlarged prints to assist students with albinism so that they have their own notes rather than copying information from the blackboards.

An academic teacher echoed the same, stating that the school was short of teaching and learning materials and other related facilities.

Participants from school **F** also said that the availability and use of learning and teaching materials was a big problem. A similar situation was noticed at school **G** where the Head Teacher expressed the following;

“Learning and teaching materials are insufficient. The teaching facilities for students with blindness and low vision are very expensive. We also do not have a technician to repair the equipment if they are damaged or have a technical problem.”

In terms of games facilities and personnel, one of the students said that;

“There is no specific day for games at our school. We do not have a sports and games teacher. Neither do we have audible balls for the blind. We don't have sportsgrounds.”

The students also said that they needed to have clubs for singing, drama, and other kinds of clubs or groups in which to participate. They were of the opinion that the clubs could be initiated according to various subjects and departments. They also needed health clubs where they could discuss issues concerning their health.

Situation at Primary Schools B, C and D

A total of 88 students with physical, visual, and hearing impairment as well as those with albinism who were interviewed were requested to provide information about the situation in their schools. The interviews were conducted to examine the availability and physical conditions of infrastructure such as dormitories, dining halls, washrooms, classrooms, playgrounds, dispensary, fences and other aspects such as security guards. The findings showed that the situation was not very different from school **A**.

The students with visual impairment complained that they did not have maps in Braille; which was similarly observed earlier by Possi (1986). It shows that the problem of lack of appropriate teaching and learning materials to still be rampant. When students with visual impairment were requested to talk about what they hated and liked most in their schools, they said that they disliked missing out on essential items. For example, they were

concerned about lacking essential items such as eye glasses, white canes, pencil and pens, text and exercise books, cutlery such as spoons, plates, and teaching and learning materials like maps, pictures and similar items.

Students with a physical disability in the Mgulani primary school complained about a lack of teaching and learning materials, and assistive devices such as crutches, shoes etc. The following are some of the statements from the students:

“Nahitaji baisikeli ya miguu mitatu, vitabu, pia vifaa vya kusomea. Nahitaji magongo”

[I need a tricycle, books, as well as reading equipment. I need crutches].

Another student said

“Nahitaji magongo na malapa ya kuvaa miguuni”

[I need crutches and sandals to assist me in mobility].

Students with hearing impairment at school **C** complained of a lack of hearing aids, maps, and visual aids. It is clear that there are problems related to the shortage of staff members, teaching and learning materials and equipment as well as transport facilities.

Process

Students and teachers at primary schools **A**, **B** and **C** were asked to comment on the teaching and learning techniques used, as well as the administrative support and teachers' preparations. With regard to teaching and learning techniques, it was reported that in virtually all schools teachers were using lecture methods due to a lack of teaching and learning facilities. There is a problem of teacher incompetency in sign language and total communication techniques.

Administrative support is equally important in making special and inclusive education a success in Tanzania. In order to implement it, the Ministry responsible for education has made sure that there are district education officers as well as officers in regions in charge of special needs education. There are also zonal inspectors in charge of special needs. The heads of special schools also have to specialize in special needs education. Focus group discussions with students at school **A** showed that students were unsatisfied with some personnel at the school. The students had the following to say;

“We need more caregivers. The ones we currently have do not pay adequate attention to small children. We are forced to take care of them. Cleanliness is not satisfactory. Care and support from caregivers is inadequate.”

The students also said that they were being discriminated against by members of staff and the matron, as well as by the nondisabled students. They also complained that some teachers were treating them badly, stating;

When we make mistakes some teachers and the matrons do not take time to explain to us about where we have gone wrong. They use discouraging statements and hit us with sticks all over our bodies. Some punishments are administered to us during sunshine and students with albinism get sunburn.

There were similar observations at schools **B**, **C**, and **D** in Dar es Salaam. When students with disability were asked to say what disgraced them the most they said that they hated

what some nondisabled teachers and students did to them. They administered physical punishment and overworked students to the extent that some students failed to concentrate and perform well in their studies. Another finding is that the students are stigmatized or teased because of their disabilities as well as being harassed and traumatized. As for interaction, it was noted that students with total blindness depended on those with physical disability or those with albinism for mobility and directions to where they would want to go. The results showed that despite being in inclusive settings, students with disability are not yet accepted by those without disability.

Discussions and Recommendations

In the previous sections, an evaluation based on the analysis of different educational reforms and policies in Tanzania has been made. Generally, the analysis indicates that education provision has gone through a number of landmark changes in an attempt to provide quality, relevant and equitable education in Tanzania. However, the key policy documents reviewed indicated a lack of specific legislation and regulation addressing special and inclusive education issues. This is with respect, for example, to teacher preparation for the increasing diversity of learners, funding, curricular, assessment and evaluation procedures, and restructuring of existing infrastructures to suit inclusive best practices. As Howes, Booth, Dyson, and Frankham (2005) pointed out, in attempts to develop inclusive schooling, teacher learning is critical as implicated in their contextual knowledge and their involvement in policy formulation and interpretation for student best learning.

Based on the case studies examined, the results show that students with special needs have a hard and rough time in their schools, and that the implementation of inclusive education suffers in a number of different ways. The factors that have been observed to affect the learning of students in special and inclusive settings feature in such areas as the absence of support services, supportive infrastructure and a lack of properly trained personnel. Indeed, these factors are also evident in other developing countries as being among the barriers to effective implementation of inclusive education (Eleweke & Rodda, 2002; Gibb, Tunbridge, Chua, & Frederickson, 2007) calling for reforms in a number of areas including policies in order to remove barriers. Cultural beliefs and related factors were observed to affect the social interaction of students with disabilities and other members of given schools congruent with what was reported by Kisanji (1995) and Stone-MacDonald (2012) regarding beliefs held by members of the wider community about disability. One would have expected that with over 50 years since the country's independence, such problems would not have been so rampant in schools.

Despite efforts in Tanzania to achieve inclusion in education, as in other parts of the world, the journey still faces a long road ahead (Bines & Lei, 2011; Ferguson, 2008). Given the current situation of its development in Tanzania, the journey is deemed to succeed if current efforts are directed accordingly, as put forward by Bines and Lei (2011), on revisiting policies and practices of inclusion as a way to address marginalization in education. It is evident from the findings and literature analyses that some of the policies in Tanzania have, to some extent, contributed to the improvement of special needs and inclusive education since independence. Credit is accorded to the then Ministry of Education and Vocational Training for having in place the 1995 (and current 2014) education and training policy which has somehow shown the way in the educational needs of people with disabilities than in

past policies, despite the fact that some categories of exceptionality do not feature in the document. While to a certain extent students in special and inclusive schools receive the support they need, the paper has indicated some problems facing students in inclusive and special schools such as lack of teaching and learning equipment, poor infrastructure, stigmatization, physical punishment, harassment and segregation by teachers and students as well as other members of the community such as matrons. Consequently, the following recommendations are made for a desired future of special and inclusive education in Tanzania.

Recommendations for action: There is a need to look into ways of increasing financial resources, as well as improving the infrastructure and physical environment, and teaching and learning materials for schools enrolling students with special needs. This should go hand in hand with in-service training for all teachers, care givers, members of administrative staff at inclusive and special schools in order to impart them with special needs skills and how to take care of children and students with special needs. This in turn is hoped to improve the teaching and learning conditions in schools for children with special needs, as well as in inclusive settings through appropriate teaching and learning materials and techniques.

Recommendations for policy: The Education and Training Policy should be revisited and revised so that it strongly features the special needs aspects across all exceptionality categories, since the current categories of special educational needs are not specifically defined in legislation despite the fact that they are accepted in practice. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in collaboration with the Ministry of Policy, Parliamentary Affairs, Labor, Employment, Youth and the Disabled should come up with proper definitions and categories of special needs and their rights. Further to that, the ministry responsible for education and other interested parties should, given the global emphasis on inclusion, exert efforts on improving the practice of inclusive education so that students with special educational needs enjoy education and social activities along with their non-disabled peers within the regular school system.

Recommendations for research: Research should be conducted on the perceptions of students, parents, and teachers on inclusive and special education so as to find out their opinions on the two systems of education. The results can assist in coming up with the appropriate policy for special needs education. Additionally, there should be research on assessing the products of these schools in terms of molding the children into functional citizens.

Notes

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