

The Significance of Inclusion Concept in the Educational System as Perceived by Junior Secondary School Teachers: Implications for Teacher Training Programmes in Botswana

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(©) Corresponding Author

O. Adedoyin¹ 
E. Okere²

^{1,2}BA ISAGO University, Gaborone, Botswana

ABSTRACT

This is a quantitative study on Botswana Junior Secondary School teachers' perceptions of the significance of inclusion concept in the educational system. A questionnaire on inclusion concept was developed on a four likert scale and administered to a stratified random sample of 100 teachers in 10 CJSS schools in Gaborone. Out of which 81CJSS teachers responded to the questionnaire and their responses were coded, analysed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, means and standard deviations). Independent t-test and ANOVA were used to find if there were any significant differences in the teachers' perceptions with respect to gender and years of experience of CJSS teachers on the concept of inclusion in the educational system. The main findings for this study in general revealed that teachers have positive perceptions towards the concept of inclusion in the educational system. The findings also revealed significant differences with respect to gender of teachers and years of experience on their perceptions towards the significance of the concept of inclusion in Botswana educational system. The findings of this study have significant implications to the school administrators, teachers and other stakeholders who are directly and indirectly involved in implementing inclusive education in Botswana.

Keywords: *Inclusion concept, Disabilities, Perceptions.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of inclusion in the schools is one of the biggest challenges in any educational system all over the world. Inclusive education is about developing and designing schools, classrooms, educational programs and activities to enable students with different learning abilities participate together.

Inclusive education stipulated that all learners attend their neighbourhood schools and equal opportunities given to them with supportive services that promote learning. [Dakar Frame work for Action \(2000\)](#) among its six (6) goals ensures that by 2015 all children of Primary School age should have more access to and complete free schooling of acceptable quality and reduction by 50% adult illiteracy among others. [UNESCO \(2004\)](#) emphasized the right of every individual to education regardless of colour, creed or any form of differences in physical appearance or nationality.

Inclusion has been incorporated into almost every educational system, but there is still the need to learn and understand the real meaning of 'Education for All' with quality and equity and recognize the fundamental role of teachers in the advancement of social justice, human rights, and opportunities for welfare of students in the educational system. Every educational system needs to face the challenges in providing equitable education in order to consolidate inclusion for the benefit of the community.

Inclusion requires a large vision and specific competencies for all teachers in the education system. Teachers need to know that diversity is in the classroom, and that they should attend to learners with a range of diverse needs. It is not sufficient to have a neighbourhood school or building without a balanced curriculum that serves the needs of individuals included in the schools.

In the field of education, inclusion (or inclusive education) is a model of instruction consisting on providing educational services to students with special needs without having to leave the regular education classroom. The main principle of inclusion is that all students must be appreciated by their diverse qualities, and that the term "normal" is no longer a measurable trait. Within the 21st century model of teaching and learning, all students must be taught through standards designed by their developmental level of skill.

1.1. Inclusive Education Policy in Botswana

Education is a basic factor in the development of any Nation. The creation of an educated and informed Nation is a key policy declaration in Botswana Vision 2016 ([Botswana Government, 1997](#)). The revised ([Ministry of Education, 1994](#)) states that "Government is committed to the education of all children including the disabled ones and therefore will intensify efforts to increase access to education for disabled children.

The Government of Botswana developed inclusive policy of children with special needs into regular schools since 2011. It is very necessary to know how teachers respond to diversity in class, besides the knowledge the teachers need in order to respond appropriately to diversity in the classroom, and the preparation of teachers during teacher education programmes on the concept of inclusive education.

The Ministry of Education should come up with a workable plan that will support teachers in their effort to include individuals with disabilities in the classroom. Teachers not trained properly on inclusive education are very likely to have negative attitude and oppose having individuals with special needs in their classrooms. The reason for this resistance is due to lack of appropriate skills to properly manage them. Supporting the above, [Simmi et al. \(2009\)](#) indicated that many regular teachers in Botswana feel unprepared and fearful to work with learners with disabilities in regular classes and so display frustration, anger and negative attitudes towards inclusive education because they feel that it could lead to lower academic standards.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is imperative to prepare teachers for inclusion in all curricular plans for pre-service teachers, also for in-service teachers. But it is always assumed that both in-service and pre-service teachers in schools have acquired knowledge and understanding about the need of different learners in areas of adequate teaching strategies/ techniques and development of curriculum. According to Florian and Rouse (2009) 'the task of initial teacher education is to prepare people to enter the teaching professional fully equipped to improve the learning abilities of different types of learners. Simmi *et al.* (2009) indicated their concern of teachers towards the concept of inclusion and revealed that ' Teachers in Botswana have somewhat negative attitudes with some concern about inclusive education. Many regular teachers feel fearful and unprepared to work with learners with disability on regular classes and so display frustration, anger and negative attitudes towards inclusive education because they believe that it could lead to lower academic standards'.

Despite the policy on inclusive education it has been discovered that Botswana teachers do not possess adequate skills and attitude for including learners with special education needs (Mukhopadhyay, 2012). Moreover current teacher programmes are failing to address the situation of inclusion by preparing both regular and special needs teachers for inclusion of all learners in Botswana.

The purpose of this study is to find out teachers' perceptions on the concept of inclusion in the Botswana educational system. The significance of this study is to assist other researchers in evidence-based research and implementation of current and best practices in relation to inclusion of young students in regular classrooms. This study would also create awareness, fill the gap in literature on inclusive education across local, national and international settings and help teachers to be aware of the concept of inclusion in the schools.

Above all, how prepared are the teachers who should serve as community support network ready with experience to accommodate all learners in order to fulfil this mandate. Besides, if equalization of educational opportunities should be taken seriously and the only vehicle ready to accommodate all learners in its classrooms is inclusion then there is need to discover if the driver or the classroom managers (the teachers) ready to take off. The student's ability under inclusive education is dependent on the expertise of the teacher, the resources available and in particular a functional curriculum. The teacher ensures that learner's needs are met and the curriculum provides the direction through which learning should be implemented. Thus the need to discover teachers' perception on the concept of inclusive education in Botswana educational system.

2.1. Research Questions

1. What are the perceptions of JSS teachers in Botswana on the concept of Inclusion?
2. Is there significant difference with respect to gender of JSS teachers' in their perceptions on the concept of Inclusion?
3. Is there significant difference with respect to JSS teachers' years of experience in their perceptions on the concept of Inclusion?

2.2. Research Hypotheses

- The concept of Inclusion as perceived by JSS teachers is significant.
- There is no significant difference in perception of JSS teachers' on the concept of Inclusion with respect to gender.
- There is no significant difference in perception of JSS teachers' on the concept of Inclusion with respect to years of teaching experience.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Teachers' perceptions are the key to the success of inclusive programs in schools, and it is very important to examine their perceptions or attitudes towards inclusion of students with disabilities into regular settings as their perceptions may influence their behaviour towards and acceptance of such students in the classroom (Hammond and Ingalls, 2003). Van Reusen *et al.* (2001) emphasised that, the success of inclusive programs may be at risk if regular classroom teachers hold negative perceptions toward the inclusion of students with disabilities. Cawley *et al.* (2002) suggested that negative perceptions of inclusive education may become obstacles, as general education teachers attempt to include students with disabilities. Recent studies on inclusive education by Barco (2007); Ross-Hill (2009) have found that many teachers have less than positive attitudes towards students with disabilities and their inclusion in general education classrooms. Several other studies like Dupoux *et al.* (2005); Ross-Hill (2009) have shown that primary and high school teachers share similar perceptions regarding inclusive education; some negative, and some positive as well.

Wiggins (2012) found a significant relationship between high school teachers' perceptions of inclusion and classroom setting. This researcher concluded that teachers with experience in teaching within inclusive classrooms held more favourable perceptions toward inclusive education than those teachers who did not teach in inclusive classrooms.

Sharma *et al.* (2003) found that training in special education appeared to lessen pre-service teacher's concerns regarding inclusive education. Similarly, Subban and Sharma (2001) revealed that teachers who reported having undertaken training in special education were found to hold more positive perceptions about implementing inclusive education.

Loreman *et al.* (2007) reported similar findings which showed that teachers' perceptions of inclusive education were negatively impacted by their training, or lack thereof, in special/inclusive education. In contrast, Ali *et al.* (2006) found that in general, teachers held positive attitudes towards inclusive education. According to the results of their study, the teachers agreed that inclusive education enhanced social interaction and inclusion among the students and thus minimizing negative stereotypes on special needs students.

Teacher attitudes have been found to be highly related to successful inclusive education (Avramidis and Norwich, 2002). Teachers who hold positive and open attitudes towards creating an environment of inclusion for all students in the classroom, irrespective of differences or disabilities, were found to have been more successful in implementing inclusive practices (Avramidis *et al.*, 2000). Research by Pearce (2009a) suggested that maintaining a positive attitude towards inclusive education was even more important than either knowledge or skills. This was supported in a review conducted by Boyle *et al.* (2011) who added that a positive attitude towards inclusive education was even more important than school resourcing, as it was the teacher who had to implement the inclusive practices.

Pearce (2009a) also highlighted the importance of pre-service teacher training, noting that more positive attitudes were held by those teachers who had been prepared in their pre-service teacher training to teach all children, compared with those that had not been prepared and trained to teach a diverse classroom.

Several studies have considered teachers' attitudinal changes towards inclusive education over years of experience (Leyser *et al.*, 1994). Generally, teachers with more experience indicated less positive attitudes towards inclusive education. Professional competency has been identified as an area of significant concern for teachers tasked to implement inclusive education (Forlin *et al.*, 2008). For improvement in attitudes towards inclusive education to occur, it has been suggested that ongoing professional training for existing teachers is necessary, as well as further development in pre-service teacher training for more inclusive practices (Forlin, 2010b).

A study by [Lambe and Bones \(2006\)](#) found that attitudes of pre-service teachers towards the philosophy of inclusive education were generally positive, with more than 80% of participants believing that all teachers should experience teaching children with special education needs. However there was a marked concern about training and preparation. Specifically, almost half of the participants felt that they did not have adequate experience to work effectively with students with special education needs, and more than half felt that they did not have the skills to teach in an inclusive setting.

The attitudes of pre-service teachers towards inclusive education have been shown to be a significant predictor for future implementation of inclusive education ([Sze, 2009](#)). All of the studies reviewed by Sze considered pre-service teachers as a single cohort, without any consideration for changes that may occur across the years of study. Pre-service teacher training for inclusive education has been shown to be an effective method for improving attitudes towards inclusive education ([Forlin, 2010a](#)). A study conducted by [Loreman et al. \(2007\)](#) into attitudes before and after training for inclusive education found that training was successful in improving attitudes. Further research compared methods of training between several Australian and international universities was unable to determine whether a specific training module was more effective at improving attitudes and knowledge about inclusive education than an infusion approach, which incorporated elements of inclusive education into several modules ([Sharma et al., 2008](#)).

Not all researchers agree that attitudes towards inclusive education are improved through training. [Hastings and Oakford \(2003\)](#) found that training was not a significant factor for attitudes towards inclusive education, and that attitudes were determined by types of disabilities, with less inclusive attitudes held towards children with behavioural and emotional difficulties than those with learning disabilities. A limitation to categorising disabilities in this manner was that many pre-service teachers may not have had any personal experiences or specific training with children in either or both categories, and attitudes may be indicative of stereotypes in the absence of personal experience or specific training.

A recent study by [Forlin and Chambers \(2011\)](#) found that while attitudes towards inclusive education were improved through training and knowledge, pre-service teachers' concerns and perceived stress about the implementation of inclusive education were not improved.

Despite the apparent benefits of inclusion, and regardless of the teachers' commitment and positive attitudes; and notwithstanding their having the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the educational needs of diverse students with disabilities, teachers were concerned about the academic, social, and behavioral adjustment of the students with disabilities in inclusive classes. Some teachers felt that inclusion would bring little benefit to students with disabilities and, consequently, they questioned the advantages of inclusion ([Heiman, 2002](#); [Priestley and Rabiee, 2002](#)). Other teachers stressed their concern that as more students are included, teachers would need additional tools and skills for coping with the social and emotional problems that accompany inclusive schooling ([Idol, 1994](#)). [Vaughn et al. \(1996\)](#) mentioned several aspects which might cause teachers to raise objections to inclusion, such as the large number of students in the class, budget shortages, the teachers' work load, difficulties in standardized evaluation.

Other barriers to inclusive education may be as a result of teacher- student ratio which ranges from 1:30 or even more. Individualized instruction is difficult in a large class. [Motsisi \(1990\)](#) quoting the National Union of Teachers (NUT) UK guidelines on negotiating for special needs that children with such statement should count for extra weighting in working out teaching group sizes and staffing establishment to ensure that learners are integrated into classes small enough for the teachers to give adequate attention to their needs as without detriment

to the needs of other children in the class. As a guide one child may count as the equivalent of five(5) children, thus reducing the class size by five(5)for each integrated statement child(p.4).

If the above is taking into consideration, for effective inclusion there is need to reduce the class size to a manageable number to enable the teacher to give the students individual attention. Tafa (2001) observed that large class size and the problem of covering the syllabus for examination purposes are some of the hindrances to quality education in Botswana. Teachers attitude of rejection to inclusion should turn to acceptance only if the Ministry of Education organizes awareness campaign to sensitize the teachers, parents, special needs students, the “normal” students and the entire public on their expectations to value diversity as a major principle of inclusion plus maintaining positive attitude towards disabled students in class.

4. METHODOLOGY

This is survey inferential research designed to explore the perceptions of a representative stratified sample of all Community Junior Secondary School teachers in Gaborone, Botswana on the significance of inclusive education in schools. The population consisted of twenty (20) Community Junior Secondary Schools in Gaborone, Botswana. A simple random sampling procedure was used to select teachers from (10) Community Junior Secondary Schools out of 20 CJSS schools. A total of one hundred (100) teachers were the initial target for this study, (10 teachers per school for 10 schools). Out of the one hundred (100) CJSS teachers, only 81 teachers responded to the questionnaire (27 Males and 56 females). Two (2) teachers were sampled per each core subjects. There are five (5) core subjects, as follows: English Language; Mathematics; Social Studies; Science and Setswana.

5. INSTRUMENT

5.1. Instrument Used for Collecting Data

A questionnaire was developed on the perceptions of JSS teachers on the significance of inclusive education in schools. The questionnaire consisted of two sections A and B. In Section A, CJSS teachers were asked about their background information. And Section B consisted of thirty (35) closed ended questions in statements form on the significance of the concept of inclusion in schools on a four Likert rating scale, Strongly disagree(SD) Disagree (D) Agree(A) Strongly agree (SA).

5.2. Data Analysis

The responses of these CJSS teachers were analysed statistically using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS software), the mean and standard deviations of teachers' responses to each item were calculated and tabulated, independent t-test at 0.05 alpha level was used to find out if there were any gender significant difference on the CJSS teachers' perceptions on the significance on the concept of inclusion in schools and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 alpha level was used to find if there were significant differences in relation to years of experience of CJSS teachers.

6. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Question 1

What are the perceptions of CJSS teachers in Botswana on the concept of Inclusion?

Table-1. Teachers' perceptions on the significance of concept on inclusion in schools.

| | Statements on the concept of Inclusive Education | SD | D | A | SA | mean | SD | t-value | Sig. |
|-----|--|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|----------------|-------------|
| 1. | Inclusive Education places great importance on creating opportunities for students to learn and be assessed in a variety of ways. | 14 | 5 | 41 | 27 | 2.93 | 1.009 | 3.984 | .000* |
| 2. | Inclusive Education creates an environment in which every student has the opportunity to learn. | 12 | 10 | 44 | 21 | 2.85 | .947 | 3.454 | .001* |
| 3. | Inclusive Educational practices build a school's capacity to educate all learners effectively. | 21 | 15 | 31 | 20 | 2.57 | 1.096 | .636 | .526 |
| 4. | I can approach my colleagues for assistance when needed if I have students with special needs in the classroom. | 13 | 37 | 13 | 24 | 2.55 | 1.054 | .458 | .648 |
| 5. | My educational background has prepared me to effectively teach in inclusive classroom. | 29 | 40 | 15 | 3 | 1.91 | .802 | -6.888 | .000* |
| 6. | All disabled students should receive their education in special education classroom. | 18 | 36 | 19 | 14 | 2.33 | .984 | -1.579 | .118 |
| 7. | I feel supported by my Administrators when faced with challenges presented by students with learning difficulties in my classroom. | 2 | 14 | 35 | 36 | 3.21 | .794 | 8.300 | .000* |
| 8. | Inclusive Education allows academic support that will enable each student access the full curriculum. | 14 | 18 | 41 | 14 | 2.63 | .941 | 1.310 | .194 |
| 9. | Teachers in my school work in collaboration with the parents of students with special needs. | 12 | 13 | 50 | 12 | 2.71 | .875 | 2.267 | .026* |
| 10. | Inclusive Education for students with disabilities can only be successful when those students feel that they are truly a part of the school community. | 13 | 8 | 46 | 20 | 2.84 | .951 | 3.326 | .001* |
| 11. | The benefits of inclusion in the school system outweighs the challenges. | 7 | 42 | 29 | 8 | 2.44 | .776 | -.695 | .489 |
| 12. | Inclusive Education supports respect for diversity which creates a welcoming environment for all. | 18 | 6 | 38 | 25 | 2.80 | 1.077 | 2.639 | .010* |
| 13. | Teachers have adequate professional development to be able to cope with the concept of inclusion in schools. | 30 | 34 | 21 | 2 | 1.94 | .826 | -6.293 | .000* |
| 14. | Inclusion does not simply mean the placement of students with disabilities in general education classes. | 11 | 16 | 46 | 12 | 2.69 | .873 | 2.050 | .044* |
| 15. | Inclusive Education supports and addresses the individual needs of each learner. | 14 | 17 | 36 | 20 | 2.71 | .999 | 1.986 | .050 |
| 16. | Inclusion allows teachers to learn new teaching techniques that can help all students in the classroom. | 12 | 8 | 35 | 32 | 3.00 | 1.012 | 4.610 | .000* |
| 17. | Inclusion allows classroom teachers to be creative with their teaching methods by avoiding monotony. | 6 | 9 | 39 | 33 | 3.14 | .865 | 6.879 | .000* |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|----|----|----|----|------|-------|--------|-------|
| 18. | Inclusion can create an awareness of the importance of direct individual instruction for all students, which can often get lost when using traditional teaching methods. | 3 | 18 | 44 | 22 | 2.98 | .777 | 5.724 | .000* |
| 19. | Inclusion allows teachers to develop teamwork skills. | 3 | 13 | 47 | 24 | 3.06 | .753 | 6.909 | .000* |
| 20. | Inclusion increases staff morale and staff relationships as a result of many different staff members working together on a common student issue. | 21 | 18 | 38 | 10 | 2.43 | .984 | -7.708 | .481 |
| 21. | Inclusion is a policy driven concept which is unrealistic and forces all students into the mode of regular education. | 13 | 29 | 30 | 15 | 2.54 | .950 | .395 | .694 |
| 22. | Inclusion always have many detrimental effects on students and teachers in a classroom. | 11 | 24 | 34 | 18 | 2.68 | .946 | 1.756 | .083 |
| 23. | Inclusion does not require special classroom for students to get the maximum benefit of learning. | 25 | 20 | 35 | 7 | 2.28 | .973 | -2.149 | .034* |
| 24. | Inclusion allows students with disabilities to have low self-esteem and low self-concept. | 34 | 15 | 25 | 13 | 2.20 | 1.119 | -2.539 | .013* |
| 25. | All teachers and support staff have sufficient administrative support in planning and preparing for inclusive education. | 20 | 31 | 23 | 13 | 2.33 | .996 | -1.561 | .122 |
| 26. | Inclusive classroom is more active than a non-inclusive classroom. | 14 | 26 | 18 | 29 | 2.71 | 1.099 | 1.805 | .075 |
| 27. | Inclusion can create a degree of resentment among regular education students and special education students. | 11 | 25 | 27 | 23 | 2.72 | 1.002 | 2.045 | .044* |
| 28. | Inclusion has a huge impact on regular education teachers. | 12 | 13 | 42 | 20 | 2.80 | .950 | 2.989 | .004* |
| 29. | Inclusion brings about reluctance and discomfort for teachers. | 21 | 29 | 25 | 12 | 2.32 | .994 | -1.672 | .098 |
| 30. | Inclusion requires teachers to have good training and support from the school management. | 9 | 11 | 31 | 36 | 3.08 | .979 | 5.530 | .000* |
| 31. | Inclusion makes teachers have a negative attitude towards teaching students with disabilities. | 34 | 16 | 26 | 11 | 2.16 | 1.088 | -2.908 | .005* |
| 32. | Inclusion allows students to understand individual differences. | 5 | 12 | 41 | 29 | 3.08 | .838 | 6.458 | .000* |
| 33. | Inclusive education reduces the pace in teaching / learning in class. | 8 | 16 | 33 | 30 | 2.98 | .952 | 4.673 | .000* |
| 34. | Inclusion will make the disabled student object of ridicule in class. | 10 | 32 | 30 | 15 | 2.57 | .910 | .766 | .446 |
| 35. | Inclusion will assist teachers to evaluate their classroom management as well as assess their teaching methodology. | 3 | 15 | 41 | 28 | 3.08 | .796 | 6.805 | .000* |

*significant perceptions of JSS teachers on the concept of inclusion.

From table 1, the asterisk items were significant inclusion concepts as perceived by CJSS teachers in the educational system. The CJSS teachers perceived the inclusion concept significant as summarised below:

- Inclusion help teachers' to support, respect, manage and appreciate students with diverse qualities which creates a welcoming environment for all.
- Inclusion creates an environment in which every student has the opportunity to learn.
- Inclusion demands that teachers should design appropriate lessons for students learning in the classroom.
- Inclusion establishes collaborative, supportive and nurturing environments for students to develop educationally and teachers for professional development.
- Inclusion allows teachers to learn new teaching techniques that can help all students in the classroom.
- Inclusion allows classroom teachers to be creative with their teaching methods by avoiding monotony.
- Inclusion assists teachers to evaluate their classroom management as well as assess their teaching methodology.

The findings revealed that inclusion is significant in the educational system in terms of teachers having experience with diversified students, teachers will have the opportunity to collaborate with others, and teachers will also be creative in terms of teaching methods in the classroom to accommodate for the different abilities of students. Teachers will also be exposed to classroom management techniques. These findings are also very similar to [Wiggins \(2012\)](#) who found a significant relationship between high school teachers' perceptions of inclusion and classroom setting. The findings are also related to [Salend \(2001\)](#) who suggested that there are four main principles upon which the framework and philosophy of inclusion is based.

1. Diversity :the placement of all learners together in a general education classroom irrespective of learning ability, race, linguistic ability, economic status, gender, learning styles, family structure and social orientation, Inclusive practices welcome all on board and everyone has the opportunity to learn.(p.6)
2. Individual needs: inclusion recognizes those factors that make individual students unique for instance disability, race, linguistic background, gender and economic background which directly affect students in a school set-up both in performance and socialization. In the school community- the administration, teachers, family members must be aware of individual needs and differences. The school community is sensitized to welcome diversity and all students are valued and capable of learning.(p.7)
3. Reflective Practices: This requires all educators to modify their attitudes, teaching and classroom management practices, and curriculum to accommodate individual needs. When inclusion is well practiced, teachers are flexible, responsive and aware of students' needs. This results in teachers to critically examine their assessment techniques, curriculum accessibility, teaching strategies, technology, physical design adaptations and other related services which will in turn provide students with multilevel and multimodality curriculum and social experiences that are in line with their abilities and needs (P. 7)
4. Collaboration: Inclusion requires group effort among educators, professionals, students, families and the community. The support and services students need are provided in the regular classroom. There is sharing of resources, skills and responsibility and advocating for student benefits. There is also collaboration to address students' needs and it is the responsibility of the school district to provide support, training , time and resources to restructure the programme.(P.7)

Question 2

Is there significant difference in the perceptions of CJSS teachers on the **concept of Inclusion** with respect to **gender**?

An independent samples t-test was conducted to examine whether there was a significant difference in perceptions between Male and Female CJSS teachers. The test revealed a statistically significant difference between males and females CJSS teachers with respect to the items on table 2. There were significant differences in terms of gender with respect to the perceived significance of inclusion concept within the educational system by the teachers.

Table-2. Independent t-test results on significance difference in the perception of JSS teachers on the concept of Inclusion with respect to gender.

| | gender | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | F-value | t-value | Sig at 0.05 |
|--|--------|----|------|----------------|-----------------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Q1.Creating opportunities for learning and variety of assessments | Male | 27 | 3.33 | .620 | .119 | 9.587 | 2.773 | .007* |
| | Female | 56 | 2.70 | 1.111 | .148 | | | |
| Q4.Caters only for gifted students | Male | 27 | 1.81 | .681 | .131 | 18.651 | -4.94 | .000* |
| | Female | 56 | 2.91 | 1.049 | .140 | | | |
| Q8.Allows academic support that will enable each student access to full curriculum | Male | 27 | 2.78 | .698 | .134 | 46.87 | 2.296 | .024* |
| | Female | 56 | 2.54 | 1.026 | .137 | | | |
| Q12.Supports respect for diversity which creates a welcoming environment for all. | Male | 27 | 3.26 | .764 | .147 | 13.12 | 2.771 | .007* |
| | Female | 56 | 2.57 | 1.173 | .157 | | | |
| Q17.Allows teacher to be creative with their teaching methods avoiding monotony. | Male | 27 | 3.41 | .797 | .153 | .185 | 2.196 | .032* |
| | Female | 56 | 2.98 | .884 | .118 | | | |
| Q20.increases staff morale and relationships as a result of many staff working together on a common student issue | Male | 27 | 2.85 | .949 | .183 | .545 | 2.412 | .020* |
| | Female | 56 | 2.32 | .917 | .122 | | | |
| Q21.Inclusion is a policy driven concept which is unrealistic and forces all students into the mode of regular education | Male | 27 | 2.15 | .907 | .175 | .280 | -2.495 | .015* |
| | Female | 56 | 2.70 | .952 | .127 | | | |
| Q22. Inclusion has many detrimental effects on students and teachers in classroom | Male | 27 | 2.30 | .912 | .176 | .458 | -2.946 | .004* |
| | Female | 56 | 2.91 | .880 | .118 | | | |
| Q27.Creates a degree of resentment among regular education students and special education students | Male | 26 | 2.42 | .945 | .185 | .033 | -2.306 | .024* |
| | Female | 56 | 2.95 | .961 | .128 | | | |
| Q 33.Inclusion reduces the pace in teaching and learning in class | Male | 27 | 2.59 | .888 | .171 | .059 | -2.571 | .012* |
| | Female | 56 | 3.16 | .968 | .129 | | | |

• SPSS output of independent T-test for gender significance

From the responses of JSS teachers, it can be summarised that ten (10) items from the questionnaire were significant with respect to gender of teachers as follows:

Table-3. Inclusion concept significance with respect to gender as perceived by teachers.

| Male teachers | Females teachers |
|--|--|
| <p>Q1 . Creating opportunities for learning and variety of assessments There was a significant difference in the perception of male teachers (M= 3.33, SD= .620) and female teachers (M=2.70, SD=1.111) : t (81)= 2.773 , p=0.007.</p> <p>Q8. Allows academic support that will enable each student access to full curriculum There was a significant difference in the perception of male teachers (M= 3.33, SD= .620) and female teachers (M=2.70, SD=1.111) : t (81)= 2.773 , p=0.007.</p> <p>Q12.Supports respect for diversity which creates a welcoming environment for all There was a significant difference in the perception of male teachers (M= 3.33, SD= .620) and female teachers (M=2.70, SD=1.111) : t (81)= 2.773 , p=0.007.</p> <p>Q17.Allows teacher to be creative with their teaching methods avoiding monotony There was a significant difference in the perception of male teachers (M= 3.33, SD= .620) and female teachers (M=2.70, SD=1.111) : t (81)= 2.773 , p=0.007.</p> <p>Q20.increases staff morale and relationships as a result of many staff working together on a common student issue. There was a significant difference in the perception of male teachers (M= 3.33, SD= .620) and female teachers (M=2.70, SD=1.111) : t (81)= 2.773 , p=0.007.</p> | <p>Q4.Caters only for gifted students There was a significant difference in the perception of male teachers (M= 3.33, SD= .620) and female teachers (M=2.70, SD=1.111) : t (81)= 2.773 , p=0.007.</p> <p>Q21. Inclusion is a policy driven concept which is unrealistic and forces all students into mould of regular education. There was a significant difference in the perception of male teachers (M= 3.33, SD= .620) and female teachers (M=2.70, SD=1.111) : t (81)= 2.773 , p=0.007.</p> <p>Q22. Inclusion has many detrimental effects on students and teachers in classroom There was a significant difference in the perception of male teachers (M= 3.33, SD= .620) and female teachers (M=2.70, SD=1.111) : t (81)= 2.773 , p=0.007.</p> <p>Q27.Creates a degree of resentment among regular education students and special education students There was a significant difference in the perception of male teachers (M= 3.33, SD= .620) and female teachers (M=2.70, SD=1.111) : t (81)= 2.773 , p=0.007.</p> <p>Q 33.Inclusion reduces the pace in teaching and learning in class There was a significant difference in the perception of male teachers (M= 3.33, SD= .620) and female teachers (M=2.70, SD=1.111) : t (81)= 2.773 , p=0.007.</p> |

• Discussions for the SPSS independent T-test output for gender significance.

The findings in this study are related with other studies that investigated teacher attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities into regular settings, found that female teachers are inclined to have more favorable attitudes (Pearman *et al.*, 1992; Leyser and Tappendorf, 2001) and appeared to have higher expectations of students with disabilities than their male counterparts (Hodge and Jansma, 2000). Contrary to this, other studies found that male teachers were either significantly more confident than females, in their ability to teach students with disabilities (Jobe *et al.*, 1996) or they held more positive views about inclusive education (Lampropoulou and Padelliadu, 1997). In this study both male and female teachers had their perceptions on the significance of inclusion concept.

Is there significant difference in the perceptions of CJSS teachers on the **concept of Inclusion** with respect to **years of experience**?

A one –way ANOVA was conducted to examine whether there were statistically significant differences in perceptions among the CJSS teachers with respect to teaching experiences. The results revealed that teachers with teaching experiences from 16-20 years and 21-25 years were significantly different in their perceptions on the concept of inclusion from teachers with teaching experiences 0-5 years, 5-10 years and 11-15 years with respect to the items in table 4 below. There are several studies which have investigated whether there is any significant correlation between a teacher's age, years of experience and qualification to that teacher's attitude toward the inclusion of students with disabilities into regular classrooms (Stoler, 1992; Cornoldi *et al.*, 1998; Avarmidis *et al.*, 2000; Heiman, 2002). Some studies record that older teachers appear to foster less positive attitudes than younger teachers (Lampropoulou and Padelliadu, 1997; Cornoldi *et al.*, 1998). Younger teachers appear more accepting of inclusive trends than their more experienced counterparts (Cornoldi *et al.*, 1998).

Table-4. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to find significant differences in perceptions of CJSS teachers on the concept of Inclusion with respect to years of experience.

| | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|----------------|----------------|----|-------------|-------|---------|
| Q1. Inclusive Education place great importance on creating opportunities for learning and variety of assessments | Between Groups | 11.074 | 4 | 2.769 | 2.967 | .024*** |
| | Within Groups | 76.512 | 82 | .933 | | |
| | Total | 87.586 | 86 | | | |
| Q2. Inclusive Education creates an environment where every student has opportunity to learn | Between Groups | 10.124 | 4 | 2.531 | 3.101 | .020*** |
| | Within Groups | 66.934 | 82 | .816 | | |
| | Total | 77.057 | 86 | | | |
| Q3. Inclusive Education builds school's capacity to educate all learners effectively | Between Groups | 12.711 | 4 | 3.178 | 2.877 | .028*** |
| | Within Groups | 90.554 | 82 | 1.104 | | |
| | Total | 103.264 | 86 | | | |
| Q4.I can approach my colleagues for assistance when needed if I have students with special needs in the classroom. | Between Groups | 12.459 | 4 | 3.115 | 3.075 | .021*** |
| | Within Groups | 83.058 | 82 | 1.013 | | |
| | Total | 95.517 | 86 | | | |
| Q5. My educational background has prepared me to effectively teach in inclusive classroom. | Between Groups | 6.110 | 4 | 1.527 | 2.548 | .045*** |
| | Within Groups | 49.154 | 82 | .599 | | |
| | Total | 55.264 | 86 | | | |
| Q10. Inclusive Education for students with disabilities can only be successful when those students feel that they are truly a part of school community | Between Groups | 9.844 | 4 | 2.461 | 2.972 | .024*** |
| | Within Groups | 67.904 | 82 | .828 | | |
| | Total | 77.747 | 86 | | | |
| Q12. Inclusive education supports respect for diversity which creates a welcoming environment for all. | Between Groups | 22.160 | 4 | 5.540 | 5.860 | .000*** |
| | Within Groups | 77.519 | 82 | .945 | | |
| | Total | 99.678 | 86 | | | |
| Q13. Teachers have adequate professional development to be able to cope with the concept of inclusion in schools. | Between Groups | 9.114 | 4 | 2.279 | 3.767 | .007*** |
| | Within Groups | 49.598 | 82 | .605 | | |
| | Total | | | | | |
| Q15. Inclusive education supports and addresses the individual needs of each learner | Between Groups | 13.297 | 4 | 3.324 | 3.759 | .007*** |
| | Within Groups | 72.519 | 82 | .884 | | |
| | Total | 85.816 | 86 | | | |
| Q17. Inclusion allows teacher to be creative with their teaching methods avoiding monotony. | Between Groups | 11.453 | 4 | 2.863 | 4.439 | .003*** |
| | Within Groups | 52.892 | 82 | .645 | | |
| | Total | 64.345 | 86 | | | |
| Q20. Inclusion increases staff morale and relationships as a result of many staff working together on a common student issue. | Between Groups | 10.885 | 4 | 2.721 | 3.083 | .020*** |
| | Within Groups | 72.380 | 82 | .883 | | |
| | Total | 83.264 | 86 | | | |
| Q24. Inclusion allows students with disabilities to have low self- esteem and self-concept. | Between Groups | 15.349 | 4 | 3.837 | 3.408 | .013*** |
| | Within Groups | 92.329 | 82 | 1.126 | | |
| | Total | 107.678 | 86 | | | |
| Q29. Inclusion brings about reluctance and discomfort for teachers. | Between Groups | 12.189 | 4 | 3.047 | 3.432 | .012*** |
| | Within Groups | 72.800 | 82 | .888 | | |
| | Total | 84.989 | 86 | | | |
| Q30. Inclusion require teachers to have good training and support from the school management. | Between Groups | 16.248 | 4 | 4.062 | 5.032 | .001*** |
| | Within Groups | 66.189 | 82 | .807 | | |
| | Total | 82.437 | 86 | | | |
| Q31. Inclusion make teachers have a negative attitude towards teaching students with disabilities. | Between Groups | 13.080 | 4 | 3.270 | 3.024 | .029*** |
| | Within Groups | 88.667 | 82 | 1.081 | | |
| | Total | 101.747 | 86 | | | |

• SPSS output of ANOVA on the perceptions of teachers with respect to years of experience.

7. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to determine teachers' perceptions on the significance of the inclusion concept in the educational system. Results of this study revealed that CJSS teachers in Botswana were aware with the inclusion concepts and had a positive perceptions towards inclusion. These teachers perceived the significance of inclusive education as a way of collaborating with other teachers, to have the experience of teaching diverse learners and also exposing the teachers to teach with different teaching strategies. There were also significant differences with respect to gender of the teachers and teaching experience on their perceptions of inclusion concept. This study has revealed that there should be an increasing effort in promoting inclusive education in the school system, and the need to provide adequate resources for inclusive mode of teaching and learning.

In response to the inclusion movement, post-secondary institutions have recognized their role in preparing pre-service teachers with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to successfully manage diverse groups of learners (Ashan *et al.*, 2012a). There is an urgent need to equip teachers to work in diverse settings, and it is evident that most post-secondary institutions offer some form of inclusion training as part of their teacher preparation program. With the growing focus to address the needs of all students, including those with disabilities, inclusion is a component of school restructuring agendas (McGregor and Vogelsberg, 1998). The inclusion model has become the current education classroom standard. Consequently all teachers have a need to be trained and prepared for the inclusion of special needs students in the general education population.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Teachers need more instructional planning and collaboration time to meet the needs of disabled students
2. Teachers should change their mind set towards students with disabilities and accept them by maximizing their strength and potentials rather than seeing them as problems that need to be coped with.
3. There is need for staff training and continuing professional development to sufficiently prepare all professionals involved in inclusive programme.
4. There is also need to involve parents in order to achieve the objectives of inclusion.
5. Administrators should also allow free communication with teachers and other stakeholders on issues pertaining to inclusion and decision making.

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