

CHALLENGES TO IMPLEMENT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN ETHIOPIA

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that **CHALLENGES TO IMPLEMENT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN ETHIOPIA** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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SIGNATURE-----DATE-----

DEDICATION

I have dedicated this thesis for Ethiopian children who have been deprived of their right to education because of their disabilities and poverty. Being from the very remote part of Ethiopia, being visually impaired and coming from hand-to-mouth family, Here, I have accomplished my PhD successfully. To happen this to me, the almighty God was with me throughout my jagged journey. Almighty God lifted me up whenever I failed; He saved me from hell; backed me when I feel tired; and He wiped up my tears while I was sad. I thankfully solicit to the almighty to visit those children who have been denied access to education likewise he did to me.

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- Sipara: she is my one-year-old baby. Her babblings and warm love inspired me to accomplish the thesis energetically.

ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

| | |
|--------|--|
| BC | British Colombia |
| CBR | Community Based Rehabilitation |
| CwDs | Children with Disabilities |
| EFA | Education for All |
| FGD | Focus Group Discussion |
| PwDs | People with Disabilities |
| SNIE | Special Needs and inclusive education |
| SwSNs | Students with Special Needs |
| Unesco | United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organisation |
| WHO | World Health Organisation |

ABSTRACT

The aims of the research were twofold, namely, investigate challenges that hindered the implementation of inclusive education in Ethiopia and develop a framework that can enhance the inclusion of children with disabilities (CwDs). The ecology of human development has served as the theoretical lens underpinning this study to discover challenges that hindered the implementation of inclusive education. These barriers were also investigated from micro, meso, exo, and macro perspectives in the system. With this, I employed qualitative approach under the hegemony of constructivism paradigm. The hermeneutic design of the study enabled me to build knowledge about the barriers that hindered the implementation of inclusive education. Subsequently, using semi-structured interview and focus group discussion as instrument, I listened to experts in education, school supervisors, professionals in SNE and education vice heads. Thereafter, the data analysis went by transcribing the recorded interview verbatim. Then, using the transcribed and chunked data, I mapped the range and nature of phenomena, created typologies and found out associations between themes with a view to provide explanations for the findings. The process of mapping and interpretation was also guided by the original research aims as well as by the themes that have emerged from the data themselves. The participants revealed that the challenges to implement inclusive education ranged from the absence of mandatory national inclusive policy to the low income of the families of CwDs. Therefore, lack of collaboration among stakeholders of education, misconception of inclusive education, shortage of trained teachers, poor allocation of finance, poor school infrastructure and lack of mandatory inclusive policy were the few identified barriers among others. Finally, I have recommended collaborative effort among stakeholders to ensure inclusion of CwDs.

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CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 Background of the study

Historically, people with special needs were segregated from the mainstream society because of their uniqueness (Heward & Orlansky, 1988). This practice existed in Europe and America until the beginning of 18th century. The prejudice includes hiding, killing and abandoning children with disabilities (CwDs) (Armstrong, 2003; Heward & Orlansky, 1988). As Mackelprang and Salsgiver (2002) note, the history of disability in Europe is not a subject for celebration in view of the inherent violation of human rights as we know them today. People with disabilities (PwDs) were considered to pose a social threat and wrongly perceived to contaminate an otherwise pure human species. In addition, PwDs were killed and used as objects of entertainment. Against this background, the society had to be protected from PwDs and the converse was also true. therefore, PwDs had to be protected from society.

Evidently, society perceived that impairment was a result of curse and possession of evil spirits. Consequently, PwDs had suffered from this illegal act, and were mistreated even by their own families (Hallahan & Kauffman, 1994). Therefore, they were killed and used as objects of entertainment in ancient Rome and Greece (Mackelprang & Salsgiver 2002).

However, with enlightenment of Europe, even if it was disrespectful, new thinking expanded throughout the continent. Hence, philanthropists asserted that PwDs should be given custodial care. These attitudes led the group to be placed in asylums where they were fed and clothed. However, asylums were not meant to be educational institutions. Some PwDs, mainly those with physical and intellectual impairments as well as mentally ill persons, were placed in hospitals for custodial care and treatment. This was the period of institutionalisation (Heward & Orlansky, 1988).

Unfortunately, the practice of associating disability with curse and other wrong beliefs still exist in some cultures of developing countries. For instance, Nicolaisen (1995) points out that

in Malaysia, the society connects disability to taboo acts committed by either the father or the mother of the person with the disability. In the same vein, the Masai of Kenya believe that disability and illness are a sign of guilt and bad fortune (Helander, 1995). They believe that God causes disability because of inherited sin (ibid, 1995). As a result, Save the Children of Finland's (2010) report based on the responses from the community-based rehabilitation workers recently, indicate that many parents in Kenya have been found who feel shame and guilt about their disabled children. Some families even built a shed in their banana or maize plantation to keep the children out of sight and ensure that nobody knew of their existence.

As Helander (1995) reports, the people of southern Somalia believe that disability occurs when one has done harm to another person. To them, disability occurs when one does not return a favour or fulfil an obligation. For Somalians, the most common cause of disability is the evil eye (Helander, 1995).

Owing to traditional beliefs and other things, most Ethiopians associate disability with sin that parents have committed and perceive it as a curse from God (Tirussew, Savolainen, Agdew & Daniel, 1995). In Ethiopia, there is a general tendency to think of PwDs as weak, hopeless, dependent, and unable to learn and as subject of charity (Tirussew, 2005). The misconceptions of causal attribution added to the misunderstandings of the capabilities of PwDs have resulted in a generally negative attitude and stereotypes towards them. The societal reactions are largely clearly manifested in marginalised interpersonal relationships and participation at family, neighbourhood and community levels (ibid). Nevertheless, as Mackelprang and Salsgiver (2002) note, with the civilisation of humankind, the situation has been showing progress from time to time.

As Oliver (1990) notes, disability emanates from attitudinal and physical barriers facing PwDs that lead to exclusion from society rather than from impairment. Therefore, the social model recognises that disability is about the way society responds to the group. It contrasts with the medical model that sees PwDs as having a problem that needs to be managed, changed and/or adapted to circumstances (ibid.). In the same vein, the Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Reports of different years as cited in Lang (2001) acknowledged that to reach the marginalised, CwDs remain one of the main groups being widely excluded from quality

education. Disability is recognised as one of the least visible yet most potent factors in educational marginalisation even though CwDs have a right to education. Since the UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights was released in 1948, there has been a legal framework on providing the greatest barriers to inclusion caused by society not by medical impairments. Social stigma and negative parental attitudes to disability most often arise out of traditional practices and cultural beliefs. Hence, disability had been seen as the punishment of God (Lang, 2001).

Traditionally, disabled children and those with other special educational needs (SEN) have experienced exclusion, discrimination and segregation from mainstream education and their peers. Some are placed in separate classes or schools; many have been denied access to education of any sort (United Nations Economic, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco, 2003). As different documents by Unesco show, inclusive education initiatives often have a particular focus on those groups, which, in the past, have been excluded from educational opportunities. These groups include children living in poverty, those from ethnic and linguistic minorities, girls, and children from remote areas, and those with disabilities or other SEN. The latter are often the most marginalised, both within education and in society in general (Unesco, 2003).

According to Unesco (1994), many children experience learning difficulties and therefore have SEN at some time during their schooling. Therefore, schools have to find ways of successfully educating all children, including those who have serious disadvantages and disabilities. There is an emerging consensus that children and youth with SEN should be included in the education arrangements made for the majority of children. This has led to the concept of inclusive school. The challenge confronting the inclusive school is that of developing a child-centred pedagogy for all children, including those who have serious disadvantages. This in turn requires well-trained professional teachers and school managers. Because the merit of inclusive schools is not only that they are capable of providing quality education to all children, but also that their establishment is a crucial step in helping to change discriminatory attitudes in creating welcoming communities and in developing an inclusive society (Dark and Blind Care, 2008). According to Mitchell (2008), inclusive education means educating learners with SEN in regular settings.

However, inclusive education is not merely placement. Rather it means, “Putting in place a whole suite of provisions” such as modified curriculum, adapted teaching methods, modified assessment techniques, accessibility arrangements, and support. In other words, the child does not have to fit the environment rather the environment should fit the child’s need (Unesco, 2005; Mitchell, 2008). However, (Unesco 2001b) postulates that exclusion from meaningful participation in the economic, social, political, and cultural life of communities is one of the greatest problems facing individuals in our society today. Such societies are neither efficient nor desirable (Tirussew, 2005).

Despite encouraging developments, there are still cases where a great number of children are not attending school. Ninety percent (90%) of them live in low and lower middle-income countries, and over 80 million of these children live in Africa. Alarming, the countless others within the school system are being excluded from quality education (Unesco, 2009; 2005). As the same documents indicate, among those who do enrol in primary school, large numbers drop out before completing their primary education (Unesco, 2005; 2009).

Current strategies and programmes have not been sufficient to meet the needs of children and youth who are vulnerable to marginalisation (Unesco, 2005). The principle of basic education as a human right has been accepted internationally. However, the experience in many developing countries shows that a large number of children are not able to complete minimum number of school years. They face a variety of barriers before coming to school and even within the school (Ainscow, 1999). The approach has to be different in respect of the developing countries where many children are still out of school. Those who get enrolled are unable to complete minimum prescribed number of school years. The 1994 Unesco World Conference also realised this situation when it argued that a school should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, linguistic, or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic, or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalised area and groups (Unesco, 1994). Therefore, inclusive schools must recognise and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different styles of learning and ensuring quality education to all through

appropriate curricula, organisational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use, and partnerships with their communities (Unesco, 1994).

According to Unesco (1994), many children experience learning difficulties and therefore have SEN at some time during their schooling. Therefore, schools have to find ways of successfully educating all children, including those who have serious disadvantages and disabilities. Inclusion is an educational practice based on the notion of social justice that advocates access to equal educational opportunities for all students regardless of the presence of a disability. Inclusion entails the belief that students with special needs education (SNE) should be fully integrated into general education classrooms and schools and that their instruction should be based on their abilities, not their disabilities (Al-Zyoudi, 2006). There is an emerging consensus that children and youth with SEN should be included in the education arrangements made for the majority of children. This has led to the concept of the inclusive school. The challenge that the inclusive school faces today is organising welcoming school environment and developing child-centred pedagogy for all children with no difference of personal characteristics. For this to occur, well-trained professional teachers are undoubtedly required and school managers should be aware. Because the benefit of inclusive schools is not only that they are capable of providing quality education to all children, but also that their establishment is a crucial step in helping to combat discriminatory attitudes against PwDs and to create welcoming communities and in developing an inclusive society (Unesco, 2001; Al-Zyoudi, 2006).

Inclusive school is a scheme for social improvement, focusing on the improvement of schools. The goals have variously been to create happier learning environments for all students and to include special needs students in all aspects of school-life. The inclusive classroom is an idealistic class that practices inclusive education. Therefore, inclusion is about school change to improve the educational system for all students. It implies changes in the curriculum, changes in how teachers teach and how students learn, as well as changes in how students with and without special needs interact with and relate to one another. Inclusive education practices reflect the changing culture of contemporary schools with emphasis on active learning, authentic assessment practices, applied curriculum, multi-level instructional approaches, and increased attention to diverse student needs and individualisation.

The principle is that schools must change so that they become caring, nurturing, and supportive educational communities where the needs of all students and teachers are truly met. Inclusive schools no longer provide "regular education" and "special education". Instead, inclusive schools provide an inclusive education. As a result, students will be able to learn together. In other words, it is open to all students, and ensures that all students learn and participate. For this to happen, teachers, schools and systems may need to change so that they can better accommodate the diversity of needs that pupils have and that they are included in all aspects of school-life (Booth et al., 2001).

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Inclusive education is now being acknowledged as a global and developmental process to address the learning and social needs of all children and youth, especially those who are vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion. The fundamental principle of inclusive schooling fixes itself on the notion that all children are best educated together in age-appropriate, heterogeneous classrooms in public schools, wherever possible, with necessary supports and services (Unesco, 1994). Furthermore, inclusive education involves all children, families and adults' rights to participate in environments where diversity is assumed, welcomed and viewed as a rich resource rather than seen as a problem (Booth et al., 2001).

However, as Oliver and Barnes (2010) posit, in a culture where disability is commonly viewed as a tragic within-person characteristic, it is challenging to achieve the principle of inclusion of all children. Therefore, inclusive education requires on-going engagement with removing barriers to active involvement and participation in shared learning. Inclusion values the active participation of every child as a full member of his or her family, community and society. Hence, inclusive education is said to be an instrument that deals about every child's right to be a valued member of society and to be provided with equal opportunities to actively participate in and contribute to all areas of learning. In addition, inclusive education requires recognising impairment as one of many forms of human diversity, and welcoming and viewing diversity as a resource rather than a problem. Therefore, inclusive education creates a situation where all children can be valued and experience a sense of belonging and where all children are encouraged to reach their full potential in all areas of development (Oliver & Barnes, 2010).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Quality education nurtures human talent and creativity, thereby contributing to the personal and professional development of the individual person, as well as to social, cultural, economic, political, and environmental development of society at large (Glasser, 1990). It promotes peace, democracy, creativity, solidarity, inclusion, a commitment to a sustainable environment, international, and intercultural understanding. It also provides people with the critical knowledge, abilities and skills that are needed to conceptualise and solve problems that occur in the surrounding communities. Nevertheless, children with special needs have been denied these humble benefits of education (Glasser, 1990; Unesco, 1994). As it is reported by Unesco Institute for Statistics (2001), inclusive education is a right, yet 77 million children are not in school and at least 25 million of them have a disability. Hence, no more than 5% of CwDs in most of the world complete even a primary education (Unesco, 2006).

There are excellent examples of successful inclusion in every region of the world, but systems still exclude our children (World Bank, 2000). Because of this and other factors, CwDs stay at home, cared for by their families, but they are invisible because they are not counted in national statistics or often even registered at birth (World Bank, 2000; Unesco, 2006).

Mostly, exclusion is based on outdated attitudes and prejudices against PwDs. Furthermore, the exclusion basis itself on outmoded legal structures or policies (Oliver & Barnes, 2010). As education is a fundamental right for all, it is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and protected through various international conventions. As education is also a tool whereby PwDs can reach their full potential, develop their personal talents and enable their full participation in society, it should be perceived as a human right that all people should be entitled without discrimination and at an equal level. Therefore, it is governments' responsibility to ensure that barriers to education are removed and that CwDs are able to access education at the same rate as their non-disabled peers (Unesco, 1994; 2006; Ainscow, Booth & Dyson, 2006).

Internationally, the principle of basic education is accepted as it is human right, which is endowed for every human being (World Bank, 2000). However, the experience in many

developing countries shows that a large number of CwDs still are not able to complete a minimum number of primary school years (Unesco, 2006). Despite the efforts that have been made to bring about improvements in schools, some children and young people remain marginalised by current arrangements. Hence, the development of more inclusive schools remains one of the most challenging agenda that education systems faced throughout the world. Even today, inclusion remains a complex and controversial issue, and the development of inclusive practices in schools is not well understood (Ainscow, et al., 2006).

In line with this, CwDs face a variety of barriers before coming to schools and even within schools. As Jha (2002) elaborated the situation, there are walls between schools and children before they get enrolled. Moreover, they face walls with curriculum inside the classrooms and finally, they face more walls when they have to take examinations, which determine how successful they will be in life.

Barriers that our schools faced today are highly related to ignorance and will that stem from education authorities and even from their teachers (Ainscow, et al., 2006). Removing these barriers and bringing all children together in school irrespective of their physical and mental abilities, or social and economic status, and securing their participation in learning activities lead to the initiation of the process of inclusive education (Jha, 2002; Unesco, 1994). If these barriers within schools are again broken, schools may move out of their boundaries and possibly, they can reach out to the communities (Jha, 2002). Therefore, the inclusive schools should recognise and respond to the diverse needs of their students. More importantly, they should accommodate both different styles of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organisational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities (Unesco, 1994).

Therefore, education needs to be inclusive. This implies that CwDs are not separated from others in the education system (Unesco, 2006). Though this is the truth, however, in a majority of countries, there is a dramatic difference in the educational opportunities provided for disabled children and those provided for non-disabled children (Stubbs, 2008; Unesco, 2005).

For instance, the national average gross enrolment rate for children with no disability at primary level was 96.4% in 2010/11 in Ethiopia. However, that of CwDs was merely around 3.2% (Ministry of Education (MoE), 2012). This signifies that nearly 96.8% of CwDs are not being served by the education system and are still out of school. When we compare the school enrolment of children with and without disability in the country, inclusive education is at its peak of challenge. One of the most benefits of inclusive education is to increase school enrolment coverage of children with special needs (Unesco, 2005; Stubbs, 2008; MoE, 2012). With this critical situation, it will simply not be possible to realise the goal of EFA if we do not bring a complete change in our education system.

As Ethiopia is one of developing sub-Saharan countries, making education accessible for CwDs has been highly challenging issue for both the government and the family of CwDs (Tirussew, 2006). Subsequently, like most developing countries, Ethiopia also has faced challenges to make education accessible for all children (Tirussew, 2006). Even those few special schools for children with disabilities do exist primarily in urban areas. This means that many children are not receiving the early support they need (Zelalem, 2007; Tirussew, 2006). In particular, the needs of CwDs are not being identified before they start school, which means many CwDs subsequently drop out in the first grade when they find that their school cannot offer quality education that responds to their needs (Tirussew, 2006).

As research findings indicate, no responsible body in the education sector seeks to ensure accessibility of the classrooms, school facilities and the school compound at large. There is no also special transport arrangement for students with disabilities. With Ethiopia having a population of 100 million, inaccessibility of education is one of its major facets. Poverty and disability have also worsened the situation. According to the report of (WHO 1993 as cited in Tirussew et al., 1995), the population with disability consists of 10% of the total population of any country. Therefore, it is estimated that by now the population with disability in Ethiopia exceeds more than 10 million. Despite the large number of PwDs, the provision of SNE and other services is extremely limited. The development of SNE is very slow and many CwDs are still kept away from schools and other services. The erroneous understanding of disability and its association with moral wrongdoing forces parents to hide their children with disability

at home, to be ashamed of them and to undermine the child's potential to learn and lead an independent life (Tirussew, 2006).

With all these issues, the world failed to meet the 2015 objectives of EFA. Subsequently, still, only 3% to 4% of the school age CwDs in Ethiopia are enrolled to schools (MoE, 2012).

However, the 2016 education abstract portrays as the education of CwDs could not exceed one percent of the total school population in the country as it is indicated in the following table.

| Region | Children with disability from grade 1-8 | | | Children without disability from grade 1-8 | | |
|----------------------|---|--------|--------|--|-----------|-----------|
| | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total |
| Tigray | 8,858 | 6,666 | 15,524 | 590,368 | 548,530 | 1,138,898 |
| Afar | 100 | 105 | 205 | 109,274 | 86,130 | 195,404 |
| Amhara | 20,159 | 15,564 | 35,723 | 2,230,637 | 2,115,832 | 4,346,469 |
| Oromiya | 42,293 | 30,905 | 73,198 | 4,183,219 | 3,609,667 | 7,792,886 |
| Somali | 16 | 15 | 31 | 512,650 | 376,793 | 889,443 |
| Benishangul Gumuz | 2,012 | 1,524 | 3,536 | 126,454 | 102,693 | 229,147 |
| SNNP | 40,183 | 35,106 | 75,289 | 2,458,662 | 2,173,362 | 4,632,024 |
| Gambella | 8 | 8 | 16 | 63,798 | 53,601 | 117,399 |
| Harari | 827 | 641 | 1,468 | 24,290 | 20,027 | 44,317 |
| Addis Ababa | 9,860 | 8,922 | 18,782 | 232,626 | 287,244 | 519,870 |
| Dire Dawa | 243 | 171 | 414 | 37,973 | 33,611 | 71,584 |

Source: (MoE, 2016)

As the table above shows, the total school enrolment of children without disabilities is 19,977,441 whereas, the total school enrolment of CwDs is 224,186. The figure again tells the extent that the education of CwDs is undermined.

For the last 90 years, the education of children with visual and hearing difficulties was provided in special schools built up by overseas missionaries and later by the government (Tirussew, 2005). However, until now, the intake of these few special schools is limited and the number of children served in these schools remains insignificant (MoE, 2006; Tirussew, 2005). In particular, the education of children with intellectual deficiencies started with the

opening of special classes in Kokebe-Tsibah Primary School at Addis Ababa in the late 80s. Since then, special classes for children with intellectual deficiencies have been expanded to different regular schools settings across the country (Tirussew, 2006; Haile & Bogale, 1999).

Haile and Bogale (1999) note that children with intellectual deficiencies in Ethiopia were least likely to be supported to have access to education. The same authors mention that much of the work that is being done to develop education for learners with disabilities is by NGOs that do not necessarily continue after the initial support (World Vision, 2007; Haile & Bogale, 1999).

To the opposite to children with visual, hearing and intellectual disabilities, education of children with motor disorders, learning difficulties, language and communication disorder, behavioural and emotional difficulties and other children with special needs have been attending in regular schools with non-disabled peers (MoE, 2006). There has never been a placement service in the school system, which makes assessment at entry point to help these children who need back-up support. Consequently, most of these children seem to be left without any educational support (MoE, 2006; World Vision, 2007). As a result, they often suffer from psychological and academic difficulties and are intended to leave school early in life without success. In line with this, there is no responsible body in the education sector to ensure accessibility of the classrooms, school facilities and the school compound at large (Tirussew, 2006; World Vision, 2007).

Tirussew (2006) argues that although CwDs have been attending mainstream schools, their problems and needs are often not recognised, which has contributed to the alarming early school dropout rate in the country. As Tirussew (2006) highlights, Ethiopia has very few early childhood development programmes. Those that do exist are primarily urban-based. This means that many children are not receiving the early support they need (MoE, 2006). In particular, the needs of CwDs are not being identified before they start school, which means many children with special needs subsequently drop out in the first grade, when they find that their school cannot offer quality education that responds to their needs (Etenesh, 2000; World Vision, 2007).

With all these, World Vision (2007) reports that CwDs in Ethiopia could not go to school because teachers are not patient with them in the mainstream schools and non-disabled students do not understand their difficulties. On the contrary, there are very few schools in SNE system, which are too far from home and too expensive. The country's SNE programme strategy indicates that teachers' lack of awareness of all children's rights to education is a key reason for children with special needs being turned away from mainstream schools (MoE, 2006; 2008). The strategy again highlights that special units, special day schools and residential schools are mostly confined to urban areas and have long waiting lists to register students with disabilities (MoE, 2006; Tirussew, 2005).

Furthermore, the strategy postulates that the ESDP II allocated a persistent budget to SNE, yet regions did not report on any activities or expenditure under this budget component. Special schools and units apparently had their budget requests disapproved and the strategy attributes this to the lack of awareness and knowledge about SNE among district officials (MoE, 2006; 2008; Tirussew, 2006). In Ethiopia, from many other things, several prominent factors hindered school enrolment of CwDs. These include lack of sign language skills among teachers, resource and infrastructure constraints and inflexibility of curriculum, and teachers' lack of information and training on how to adapt teaching methods for children with special needs (Tirussew, 2006). Hence, in Ethiopia, teachers find it difficult to accommodate students with SEN, and compel them to adapt to the school environment instead of adapting the school to the needs of the students (World Vision, 2007).

Even those who have access to education are not equipped with modified teaching material and assisted trained teachers as well as have no modified environment. This either shows that the implementation of inclusive education is a dream or at its peak of challenge in the context of the country. Hence, the situation has motivated me to choose this research issue and investigate the challenge that inclusion has in the nation.

Even though inclusive education has been in existence for three decades, it is still in its infancy in Ethiopia. There is no common understanding among professionals of SNE about the practice of inclusive education in the country. The MoE argues for the presence of it to some extent while others justify the lack of practice of inclusion taking the criteria set by

Unesco and other organisation into account. This professional disagreement persuaded me to conduct this study.

1.3 Research Questions

Following the completion of this work, the researcher will attempt to answer the following questions.

Hence, the researcher asks:

- What are the challenges of implementing inclusive education in Ethiopia?

Sub-questions:

- What are professionals' perceptions about better setting for CwDs?
- Does the country have guidelines to implement inclusive education?
- How do personnel in the education system understand the concept of inclusive education?
- What challenges do personnel experience to implement inclusive education?
- How is the stakeholders' understanding regarding the rights of children with disabilities to education?
- How can a framework of enhancing the implementation of inclusive education be developed?

1.4 The aim of the research:

The researcher wishes to meet the following aims:

The primary aim:

- Investigate the challenges of implementing inclusive education in Ethiopia.

The specific aims are as follows:

- Find out professionals' perceptions about better setting for CwDs.
- Investigate whether the country has guidelines to implement inclusive education or not.
- Assess the understanding of personnel in the education system about the concept of inclusive education.
- Find out challenges that personnel in the education system experienced to implement inclusive education.
- Investigate the stakeholders' understanding regarding the rights of CwDs to education.
- Develop a framework that can enhance the implementation of inclusive education.

1.5 Rationale of the study

Even though the implementation of inclusive education is not an easy task to accomplish, Ethiopia has made significant strides in many areas of education in the last ten years. For example, primary school enrolments have increased from 68% in 2005 to an estimated 90%. However, it is statistically a much less successful picture for CwDs, in particular those with conditions such as those with hearing, visual, intellectual impairment, and others (MoE, 2012). As a result, meeting the EFA objectives has been a big challenge for the country as a developing nation. Nevertheless, it is an opportunity to eradicate poverty and ensure the rights of children to education as it is declared in the Convention of the Right of People with Disabilities of 2006 and Human Right Convention of 1948 (Unesco, 2009).

However, though the nation has shown a very significant progress in having enrolled 90% of schoolchildren, the enrolment of CwDs is estimated to be 3 to 4% only (MoE, 2012). Several reasons for this status quo include a severe shortage of trained practitioners, and classroom teachers generally do not have the training to handle a child with disabilities in classes that often include 60 to 100 pupils. As a result, when a child with disability does attend school, she/he often quickly drops out (Tirussew, 2005; MoE, 2012).

In line of shortage of skilled teachers, there is no policy that clearly guides the execution of the inclusion of CwDs. Consequently, as the aim of this study is identifying exclusionary factors, the research endeavours to develop framework to implement inclusive education to contribute to the existing policy of the country.

1.6 Motivation

One of challenging and observable facts for children with disability in Ethiopia is getting access to education. Rather than taking disability as a difference, the society stigmatises and discriminates against these children. This deep-rooted negative attitude sidelined CwDs from school in particular and societal activities in general. The undermining belief of society tells them not what they can but what they cannot. Owing to these and other facts, CwDs have developed low self-esteem and a feeling of incompetency. The negative attitude hinders them not to go school even to be hidden at home as sign of shame of the family.

I am also victim of this bitter prejudice and stigma since childhood. Rather than the limitation that happened to me because of my visual disability, what I cannot shoulder still is this lifelong stigma. I have experienced stigma and discrimination from my family, workplace, and even in my classroom. Against this background, I was inspired to conduct this study, namely, "Challenges to Implement Inclusive Education in Ethiopia."

Upon that, I have already mentioned drives; my exposure to the profession of teaching has also been a great motivation to study this issue. For the past five years, since I graduated with Master's degree in Special Needs Education, I have been teaching in different teachers' training colleges and universities respectively. The experience in turn enabled me to undertake short-term training workshops for a huge number of primary school teachers who are the main actors of the implementation of inclusive education. As we know, by now, school enrolment of children had to reach 100%. However, since the society does not consider CwDs who account to 10% of the total population, only 90% is achieved (Ministry of education of Ethiopia, 2012). Hence, it is believed to be lack of access to education of CwDs is in achievement of the millennium goal for international community. Therefore, the findings of

this study surely serve as driving force to policy makers in particular and the society as a whole.

1.7 The contribution of the research to the body of knowledge

Policy entails changing things so that they improve or to diminish hardship (Majone, 1980). Therefore, inclusive policy concerns with the best way to educate students of different abilities. To gear the change forward, research plays a vital role in finding out new things that serve as fertile ground for the development of curative policy. The findings of this study contribute in drafting inclusive policy and affix value to the body of knowledge.

As interpretations of reality are the building blocks of science (Majone, 1980). The constructs that will be made from the study serves as premise for policy draft in the field of inclusive education. Subsequently, one way that this research can contribute to the body of knowledge is by developing a framework that guides an effective implementation of inclusive education. At the same time, the framework that I have developed based the current literature and primary source of data also show the gap that exists in the research work.

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), theorising is the process of systematically formulating and organising ideas to understand a particular phenomenon. Therefore, a theory is a set of interconnected ideas that emerges from this process. Methodologically, as adhere qualitative research, I intended to create an appropriate theory that suits the research topic/challenges to implement inclusive education by using the inductive method. Reviewing the literature in the area of inclusive education is establishing knowledge and contributing to the body of knowledge. Since theory is an organised body of concepts and principles intended to explain a particular phenomenon, explaining the practice of inclusive education and reflecting the understanding the intended objectives of inclusion has theoretical relevance to the body of knowledge.

Like any other professional research, the accomplishment of this study will have practical contribution to the academic work of literature. It also serves as a bridge between the current

practices of education towards children with special needs, and the future direction of inclusive education in Ethiopia.

Through the investigation of the policy on condition that it has shortcomings, the study serves as input. Even though I do not dare to say that the country is on the right-track to meet the educational needs of all children with and without disability, the study fuels the effort of making education accessible to all.

1.8 The concept of inclusive education

1.8.1 The meaning

Inclusive education may mean different things to different individuals or groups. It means that a school/community welcomes children with special needs as full members of the community and values them for the contribution that they can make (Farrell, 2004). Hence, inclusive education is about having active participation and achievement of all learners (Unesco, 2005). Inclusive education is a practice that is based on the social premise of justice that advocates for equal access to educational opportunity for all children regardless of their personal characteristics (Loreman et al, 2005; Farrell, 2004).

According to Unesco (2005), *“Inclusion is seen as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. Inclusive education is the process of systematically bringing together all children with or without disabilities regardless of the nature and severity of disability in natural environment where children learn and play”*. “Inclusive also means including all children who are left out or excluded from school” (Unesco, 2003).

The above definitions reveal the extent to which the integration of CwDs ranges from physical to social union should be like. Inclusion entails the practice of educating students with special needs in regular classes with needed accommodations and services instead of special

education classes. According to Mitchell (2008), inclusive education means educating learners with SEN in regular settings. However, it is not a mere placement; rather it means “putting in place a whole suite of provisions” such as modified curriculum, adapted teaching methods, modified assessment techniques, accessibility arrangements and support systematically. The underlying philosophy embedded in the above definitions implies that inclusion is the social union of people with no differences (Unesco, 2009; Stubbs, 2008; Save the Children Finland, 2010).

As Mitchell (2008) posits, the philosophy of inclusiveness is entirely built on the philosophy of humanism. Therefore, inclusive education is understood as a developmental approach aiming to meet the educational needs of all children, youth and adults, and emphasising those who are subjected to marginalisation and exclusion. As a result, the most cost effective approach in reaching larger number of children with and without disabilities would be the systematic expansion of the inclusive programme where students are enrolled into mainstream classes (Hooker, 2007).

As it is widely understood, inclusive education means the inclusion of all children in all classroom and out-of-classroom school activities, and means that all children should have equal opportunities to reach their maximum potential and achievement regardless of their origin and abilities or disabilities, and regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, or linguistic differences (Unesco, 2009). Regular schools with the orientation of inclusivity are assumed as the best means of combating negative attitude, creating welcoming social environment, building inclusive society, and making education accessible for all. Furthermore, these schools can provide effective education to the majority of children with and without disability (Unesco, 1994).

Hence, inclusive education is a philosophy that ensures that schools, centres of learning and educational systems are open to all children. This again enables the learners to be included in all aspects of school-life.

1.8.2 Inclusion is a process

According to the diversity framework of MoE of British Columbia of Canada (2008), inclusive education is a process that involves the transformation of schools and other centres of learning to cater for all children. These include boys and girls, students from ethnic and linguistic minorities, rural populations, and those affected by HIV and AIDS. Even the problem includes those with disabilities and difficulties in learning and to provide learning opportunities for all youth and adults as well. Despite the diversity among them, all these young people have similar educational needs. All of them need to learn how to be economically self-sufficient, how to participate in improving the lives of people in their communities, how to understand the world in which they live, how to enjoy the benefits of their right, and how to rise, in turn, the next generation. In the broadest sense, schools are expected to serve as agencies for civic and democratic development and as places where culture and values can be sustained and transmitted to the youth. Today the world turned to schools to help us enshrine language rights, to preserve diverse cultural heritages, to promote social equality and justice through recognition of individual differences (BC MoE Diversity Framework, 2008).

Hence, the aim of inclusive education is to eliminate exclusion that is a consequence of negative attitudes and a lack of response to diversity in race, economic status, social class, ethnicity, language, religion, gender, and so on (Unesco, 2009).

It is also important to note that inclusion is a long process that requires an on-going educational reform on the learning environment, and accommodate needs of all learners. According to Stubbs (2008), inclusion involves not only restructuring cultures, policies and practices to respond to the diversity of students. It also involves locality in learning and participation of all students to exclusionary pressures that are not just for students with disabilities and improving schools for staff as well as students overcoming barriers to access and participation (BC Diversity Framework, 2008). Therefore, both Diversity Framework of BC of Canada (2008) and Stubbs (2008) respectively acknowledge that real sustainable

development cannot happen without the participation and inclusion of all members of society. The results of exclusive development are apparent today, namely, widening gaps between rich and poor, increased conflict, unrest, intolerance, and resource-drain.

1.8.3 The historical development of inclusive education

There are various international underpinnings about the history of inclusive education. Even if there is no similar opinion among scholars regarding the historical development of inclusive education, most of them agreed with some common events.

Inclusive education takes the EFA agenda forward. This is by finding ways of enabling all children to attend school as part of an inclusive educational system. Previously, inclusive education had meant or assumed as it is the process of including CwDs into regular classrooms and schools (Unesco, 2009).

As noted in the guidelines on inclusion of Save the Children of Finland, (2010), the root of inclusive education dates back to the 1948, with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Subsequently, international forums have emphasised the rights of all persons to education. For instance, the convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women of 1979, Jomtien World Conference (1990), The UN Standard Rules on Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993), the 1994 Salamanca Statement, Dakar Framework of Action on EFA (2000), and UN Convention on the Rights of PwDs (2006) have propelled the development of inclusive education.

Other researchers like Michelle (2008) as cited in Tirusew (2005) point out several significant events that led to the historical development of the idea of inclusive education. Among the first incidences there can be associated with the principle of “normalization” of Scandinavian countries. According to these countries, normalization was conceptualised as the process of making available to PwDs patterns of life and conditions of everyday life, which are as close as possible to regular circumstances and ways of life of society.

The other important event that gave drive to the development of inclusive approach occurred in North America in the 1960s and 1970s. During that time, the passage of the Education of All Handicapped Children Act gave momentum to the idea of equality and inclusion. This Act postulates that children with special needs to be educated in the “least restrictive environment”.

The other significant event was the international conference, which took place in June 1994 in Salamanca, Spain, where 92 governments and 25 international organisations made historical agreements. The resulting agreement is known as the Salamanca Statement, which demonstrated an international commitment to inclusive education (Stubbs 2008; Unesco 1994).

1.9 Research methods

1.9.1 Research paradigm

A research paradigm is a set of fundamental assumptions and beliefs as to how the world is perceived, which then serves as a thinking framework that guides the behaviour of the researcher. Research paradigm substantially influences how one undertakes a social study from the way of framing and understanding social phenomena (Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Jackson, 2003; Creswell, 2003).

Based on the underpinned assumption, I chose the constructivist paradigm as a guiding framework of this research. Constructivism allows individuals to understand the world in which they live and work. Moreover, constructivism enables participants to develop subjective meanings of their experiences directed towards challenging factors that can hinder the implementation of inclusive education. These meanings may be varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views of respondents rather than associating meanings into a few categories or ideas. The goal of this research was to rely as much as possible on the participants’ views of the situation being studied. The questions become broad and general so that the participants can construct meanings or challenges to

implement inclusive education based on the situation of PwDs. The more open-ended the questioning, the better, as the researcher listens carefully to what people say or do in their life setting. Often, these subjective meanings are negotiated socially and historically (Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Creswell, 2003).

The focus was on the specific contexts in which PwDs live and work in order to understand the historical and cultural settings that can impede the implementation of inclusive education. Therefore, the constructivism paradigm enabled me to analyse data inductively and observe, describe and interpret settings as they exist (Patton, 1990).

1.9.2 Research method

Qualitative method typically involves highly detailed rich descriptions of human behaviour and opinions. Therefore, the perspective helps the respondents to construct their own reality on the challenges of inclusive education, and an understanding of what they face today about the implementation of inclusion based on their experience and practicing it.

1.9.3 Research design

According to Van Manen (1990), the focus of phenomenological inquiry is what people experience with regard to some phenomena or other, and how they interpret those experiences. A phenomenological research is a study that attempts to understand people's perceptions, perspectives, experiences, and understandings of a particular situation. Therefore, the focus of phenomenological inquiry is what people experience pertaining to some phenomena or other and how they interpret those experiences that they have in relation to implementation of inclusive education (Creswell, 2007; Van Manen, 1990).

1.9.4 Location

As the title of the research indicates, the study was conducted in Ethiopia at national level. The country has nine regional states and two administrative cities. The research located itself in three regional states and one administrative city out of nine regional states and two administrative cities, namely, South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples, Amhara, Tigray

regional states and Addis Ababa Administrative City. These sample areas were selected purposefully since they have a better number of CwDs and made effort to attempt the practice of inclusive education.

1.9.5 Sample

For the purpose of this study, I employed purposeful sampling. According to the American Heritage College Dictionary (1993, p. 1206), a sample is "a portion, piece, or segment that is representative of a whole". In addition, sampling is "an act, process, or technique of selecting an appropriate sample". Therefore, sampling is a concept that transcends research studies in general and research paradigms in particular. The researcher attempted to obtain a sample that appears to be resourceful of the population (Bhattacharjee, 1998). Judgemental sampling is the most common sampling technique in qualitative research (Martin & Marshall, 1996). Therefore, the researcher selected the most productive samples to answer the research question.

1.9.6 Instrument

Instruments of data collection of the study are as follows:

The first type of instrument that I employed to collect data was the semi-structured interview. Experts, supervisors and officers in the MoE and regional bureaus have been interviewed.

The second type of instrument that I used to collect data was focus group discussion. Focus group discussants were professionals in SNE, school supervisors, experts in the education system, and education heads in each regional bureau.

1.10 Data collection

The process of data collection went after the approval of the instrument by the supervisor and getting the ethical clearance from ethical committee of the University of South Africa (Unisa). Subsequently, letters of requesting permission had been dispatched from the MoE to each Regional Education Bureau. This enabled me to access the necessary documents like workshop proceedings, office minutes, guidelines, and other relevant documents in relation to

inclusive education. However, I offered personal request for individual participants of the research. The next step was to translate the English version of the instrument into Amharic in order to avoid language barrier among interviewees and focus group discussants. Then, having gathered the necessary data via semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, I commenced the phenomenological analysis.

1.11 Data analysis

Data analysis included working with data, organising it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesising it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). The term theme then referred to clusters of categories that share some commonality such as reference to a single issue. Therefore, in using qualitative approach, my primary choice was the phenomenological analysis.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is established when findings reflect the meanings as described by the participants as closely as possible (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In addition, Padgett (1998: 92) explains that trustworthiness is not something that just naturally occurs, but instead is the result of the use of defined procedures. Threats to trustworthiness can include problems such as reactivity and biases on the part of the researcher and the participant (Padgett, 1998).

In any research, criteria should be set to:

- Establish confidence in the truth of the findings of a particular research for the respondents with which the inquiry was carried out.
- Determine the extent to which the findings of a particular research have applicability in other contexts.
- Determine whether the findings of a research would be repeated if the researches were replicated with the same respondents in the same context.

- Establish the degree to which the findings of a research are determined by the respondents and conditions of the research and not by the biases, interests or perspectives of the researcher.

Therefore, Lincoln and Guba (1985) propose four criteria to evaluate trustworthiness in naturalistic research. The four criteria that ensure trustworthiness in qualitative approach are credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. Each of the above-mentioned criteria has been discussed in detail in Chapter 3 of this research study.

1.12 Ethics

To begin data gathering, I took letter of consent from the MoE and dispatched it to each Regional Education Bureau. However, individual participants have been selected based on their consent. As the participants of this research are professionals in SNE, officers and supervisors in Regional Education Bureau and representatives of organisations of PwDs had been informed about the purpose of the study. During data collection, participants need to be respected participants were not put at risk, and vulnerable populations were respected throughout the study. Pertaining to voluntary participation and harmlessness, participants in this research were informed that their participation in the study was of their own free will. Accordingly, they were informed that they do have the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time without any unfavourable consequences, and they were not harmed because of their participation or non-participation in the research study.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter of the thesis, historical and current issues related with education of CwDs have been reviewed sequentially. Based on the taxonomy of literature that has been already identified, I have marked out topics from books, journals and internet databases. Thereafter, the review has been built around basic concepts of inclusive education. Hence, I have divided the chapter into four sections. The first section discusses with the theoretical framework underpinning the study. Ecological human development model views the developing child as existing within a very intertwined and complex ecological context consisting of numerous interfamilial and extra familial systems that affect children's development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The second section deals with historical development of education of PwDs in Ethiopia from ancient Christian Ethiopia to the modern educational practices. The third section highlights models of disabilities with their educational implication in relation to children with special needs. The fourth and the final section of the chapter gives brief details about the ideology of inclusive education. In addition, the philosophy, the dichotomy of integration versus inclusion, and its benefit to both children with and without disabilities and the barriers to implement as well as strategies to overcome its challenges has been reviewed.

2.2 Theoretical framework of the study

According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the understanding of human development demands more than the direct observation of behaviour on the part of one or two individuals in the same both social and physical environments. It requires inspection of multi-person systems of interaction not limited to a single setting and must take into account aspects of the environment beyond the immediate situation containing the subject.

The ecological systems model views the developing child as existing within a very intertwined and complex ecological context consisting of numerous interfamilial and extra familial systems that affect children's development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). As the same

author alluded, there are events that occur within specific settings that affect children's behaviour. These specific settings are micro-, meso-, exo-, and macro-systems. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the four subsystems of human ecology in relation with the development of a child and their impact upon the inclusion of the child with disability have been discussed.

The subsystems are critical to an overall understanding of factors that may influence the degree and form of inclusion of the child with disability. Therefore, the study has examined each subsystem in relation with the implementation and challenges of inclusive education from Ethiopian context. Microsystem is the innermost level, the one that is closest to the child with which he/she is in direct contact.

The microsystem consists of such contexts as family, playmates, day care, school, and neighbourhood wherein the proximal processes occur. This layer has the most immediate and earliest influence on the child. The relationships at this level can be *bi-directional* since the child's family can influence the behaviour of the child and vice versa.

The micro-level variables of early child development, either proximal or distal processes may include, among others, familial or childcare environments, nutrition, parenting style, parent's health, socio-economic status, marital status, and income. Among preschool children, that is, from age zero to five years, parenting is the primary proximal process. In instances where both parents work, their caretaking abilities are compromised, impacting microsystem influences on proximal processes.

Microsystem is the first level that is conceptualised as the inclusive environment variables operating outside the immediate classroom setting which can influence the implementation of inclusion. The *microsystem* represents an individual's immediate context characterised by direct, interactional processes as familial relationships and close friendships (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Therefore, the system consists of the immediate family environment in which the child lives. In this regard, the microsystem variables that can affect the inclusion of the child with disability are parents, siblings as well as other family members at home and their interactions that exert either negative or positive impact on the child.

Moreover, events occurring within specific settings affect children's behavioural and educational development, and Bronfenbrenner identified these specific settings as microsystems. For the purpose of this study, the microsystem is conceptualised as the inclusive classroom. Variables operating outside the immediate classroom setting influence the implementation of inclusion of the child with disability inside and outside the microsystem.

The *mesosystem* is the second immediate layer that contains the microsystem. The mesosystem focuses on the connections between two or more microsystems, essentially different microsystems, such as home, playmate settings, school, and so on. For instance, what happens in a microsystem, such as the home in which a child lives can influence what happens in the school or a playground, and what happens in a school or a playground can influence interactions at home. More specifically, a parent's and a teacher's involvement in the child's education, if mutual, will result in the functioning of the mesosystem.

The connection between other larger structures, such as a religious institution or community, can also be expected to have distal processes at work because they help the family to provide the necessary support a child needs. Counselling services available to the family in times of need can influence the functioning of the mesosystem.

The mesosystem further refers to interconnections between two or more settings or the interactions outside the family environment such as; school, teachers' awareness, peer influences and others. For this reason, the mesosystem comprises the interrelations between two or more settings in which the developing person actively participates. In terms of learners, this refers to relations between settings such as the home, school, neighbourhood, and peer group (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Therefore, the mesosystem can be described as a set of microsystems that continually interacts with one another. At mesosystem level, the variables that can affect the inclusion of the child with disability include the home surroundings such as playmates, the school, neighbourhood, teachers, home-school distance, and peer group.

Further, the mesosystem can be explained with factors that occur in other settings in which the child or other key participants in the microsystem might participate. For instance, mesosystem

variables may include an event occurring in the home or family or interactions occurring among professionals outside of the immediate classroom setting. These could be teachers' networks, parent teacher association, and collaborative interactions among professionals.

The exosystem is the third layer. Although the child does not directly encounter the system, it impacts his development. The system contains micro-and mesosystems, and thereby it impacts the education well-being of all those who come into contact with the child. Furthermore, the policies and decisions that are made at a wider level can also indirectly impact the child. For instance, a parent's workplace schedule can influence the proximal processes that occur and consequently the development of the child. In cases where a parent cannot get time off to attend to a parent-teacher meeting, the parent will have limited interaction with the teachers, thereby influencing a child's development adversely. A school's policies on special needs children can all be considered as an exosystem that influences the child.

The exosystem consists of events or individual's actions occurring in settings in which microsystem participants do not participate, but which have an influence on events or actions in the microsystem. For example, education policy, guidelines, strategic plans, and other relevant documents, which are established by individuals not directly participating in the inclusive setting, represent the exosystem variables. Hence, the exosystem is the community context that may not be directly experienced by the child, but which may influence the elements of the microsystem, such as sibling interactions. In particular, the exosystem refers to one or more settings that do not involve the learner as an active participant, but in which events occur that affect settings containing the learner. For example, school policies are created by school governing bodies to provide for the needs of learners that experience barriers to learning (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

The fourth level of the subsystem in the ecology of human development is macrosystem. It is the outermost context layer. This societal blueprint influences all the microsystem, mesosystem and exosystem, which are lower layers in the ecosystem. Aspects of the macrosystem that influence other lower layers include cultural characteristics, political

upheaval, or economic disruption, all of which can collectively shape the development of the child.

In this system, the variables are cultural or societal values and beliefs that affect participants or events in the microsystem. For example, cultural values related to disability or cultural roles related to the society represent macrosystem variables. At large, the *macrosystem refers to* the bigger cultural world surrounding learners together with any underlying belief systems and includes aspects such as government policies, political ideology, cultural customs and beliefs, historical events and the economic system (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Hence, the macrosystem is the wider and broader social, cultural, and legal context that encompasses all the other systems. An ecological systems view of inclusive education suggests that children with or without disabilities develop in a complex social world and that it is necessary to observe interactions at multilevel contexts and examine changes over time at all levels (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). To identify the challenge and to ensure the success of inclusive education, it is critical to integrate individual and contextual processes and to examine interrelations among these systems.

The interaction of the child with disability within these subsystems of ecology can either encourage or discourage the growing child to be included or excluded. Having examined the structure of the ecology that ranges from micro to macro system, it is possible to identify impeding factors to implement inclusive education in the country. Therefore, this research examined the interplay between the individual and environmental factors in the system to dig out exclusionary issues of the child with disability.

2.3 Historical Development of Education of Persons with Disability in Ethiopia

2.3.1 Church Education

Ethiopia has the second largest population in Africa after Nigeria. In line with this, diversity is one of its main characteristics with more than 80 ethnic groups. According to Ethiopian

Housing and Central Statistical Agency of 2007, the total population of the country exceeds 85 million. Based on this, the number of PwDs can account to 8.5 million as WHO estimates (WHO, 2011).

PwDs in Ethiopia have experienced discrimination, neglect, stigma, and other forms of segregation. This ranges from being killed to be systematically avoided by the family and their community as a whole. In the earlier times, causes of disabilities in Ethiopia were associated with curse, evil spirit, adultery, false swear, and other superstition beliefs just like in most other countries in the world (Tirussew, 2005). Consequently, this negative belief led PwDs to have miserable life.

However, through time, because of religious teachings, societal civilisation, and global experience some group of PwDs had exposure to church education. Like their fellow friends, PwDs were expected to pass through all levels of church education, which requires a long time. However, persons with hearing and intellectually impairment were not part of church education because of the nature of schooling. Predominantly, the teaching methodology of church education was oral. Historically, those who succeeded in their education were able to get positions and power (Adane, 1991).

Before the introduction of SNE to Ethiopia by missionaries, blind people were attending traditional church education. They had high achievement, especially in oral learning and teaching in the Orthodox Church. As Adane (1990: 75) reports, "The Ethiopian Orthodox Church has a long history of schooling persons with special needs who have advanced to positions of decision makers in various churches and monasteries". This practice has continued until the beginning of the 20th century that heralded 'western education' to the country. Even today, though their number is insignificant, they are still good witness in many monasteries for what I recognised above.

As church chroniclers narrate the situation, in Ethiopia, PwDs were participating in the traditional education earlier than "modern" education, though few in numbers. There were students around churches and mosques who were visually and physically impaired. These students were successful since education was given orally. This was confirmed by the

presence of visually and physically impaired teachers around mosques and monasteries who taught Koran, Bible, poem, and rhythmical religious songs even today (Fikru, 2013).

Until the early 1900s, formal education was confined to a system of religious instruction organised and presented under the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (Haile Gebriel, 2003). Church schools used to prepare individuals for the clergy and for other religious duties and positions. In the process, these schools also provided religious education to the children of the nobility and to the sons of limited numbers of tenant farmers and servants associated with elite families (Pankhurst, 1990; Hail Gebriel, 2003). The prevailing situation caused very few children to receive education. As a result, Ethiopia did not meet the educational standards of other African countries in the early 1900s (Pankhurst, 1990).

Towards the end of the 19th century, Minilik II had also permitted the establishment of European missionary schools. At the same time, Islamic schools provided some education for a small part of the Muslim population (ibid). At the beginning of the 20th century, the education system's failure to meet the needs of people involved in statecraft, diplomacy, commerce, and industry led to the introduction of government-sponsored secular education. The first public school to provide a western style education was the Imperial Minilik II, which was opened in October 1908 under the leadership of Hanna Salib and a number of Copt teachers. By 1924, Pankhurst notes that "no fewer than 3,000 students had passed through the school", and reports that in 1935, the school had 150 pupils. That same year, Emperor Minilik II established a primary school in Harar (Pankhurst, 1990; Haile G., 2003).

2.3.2 Modern Education

In the last four decades, the education of children with obvious sensory disabilities such as blindness and the deafness were served by special schools initially initiated by overseas missionaries. However, until now, the intake capacity of these few special schools was limited and the number of children served in these schools remains small (Tirussew, 2005; MoE, 2006).

As it is reported in the Strategic Plan of SNE of 2006, in recent years, there is a general trend towards inclusive education with the goal of mainstreaming CwDs in the regular school settings. This movement has culminated in a drastic increase in the scale of special classes in regular school settings for children with visual and hearing problems and children with mental disabilities. However, most of the special schools suffer from over crowdedness, scarcity of special instructional materials and facilities as well as shortage of teachers trained in special education (Tirussew, 2005). The special schools and classes as well as inclusive schools whose financing is dependent on the government report a serious problem of financial constraints. Even worse is the situation of the children with undetected or hidden disabilities who are attending classes with the non-disabled peers in the regular schools without any special educational support.

To expand the SNE programmes, the integrated approaches were suggested by the MoE. To achieve this, a total of 34 new schools and 66 additional classrooms had to be constructed to accommodate the children with SNE (MoE, 2006).

To accomplish this, Ethiopian education sector development programme proposed to;

- Offer training programmes in the teacher training institutes in SNE.
- Strengthen existing SNE training programmes and expand to meet the required manpower at every level of the programme.
- Offer short-term training programme in Braille, sign language, mobility, and orientation.
- Enhance teachers and professionals for the expansion of integrated special education programme and further enrich the formal education curricular materials (ESDP-IV, 2010).

2.3.3 Models of Disability

In history, no minority group has ever been oppressed other than PwDs. However, models that are proposed by different scholars could be a good witness to explain how societal attitude is changing from time to time. For this purpose, presenting theories and models of disability has a paramount importance to depict the journey of disability from exclusion to inclusion. The

various models of disability enforce contradictory responsibilities on the governing body in terms of action to be taken and in the way disability should be understood. Disability as an individual pathology and disability as a social pathology are the two primary approaches that policies, programmes, rights, and legal instruments reflect PwDs (Lang, 2001). Within these two overriding paradigms, the three major identifiable formulations of disability are the charity model, the bio-medical model and social model.

2.3.4 The Charity Paradigm

As Barnes (1991) notes, the charity approach gave birth to a model of custodial care, causing extreme isolation and the marginalisation of PwDs. Unfortunately, in some contemporary societies and cultures, the reflection of this model is still being practiced. For instance, a large number of mental health institutions today are still being managed and administered on the custodial approach of care characterised by prison-like structures with high walls and locked rooms. These institutions functioned like detention centres, in which persons with mental illness were kept (Heward, 1988).

2.3.5 The Psycho-medical Model

Throughout history, individuals with disabilities have struggled to live full and productive lives as independently as possible in a society overloaded with stigma, discrimination, attitudinal, and environmental barriers (Barnes, 1991; Lang, 2001). The medical model or individual model for Mike Oliver (1990) largely consigns the problem of disability to a deficit within the individual. According to this model, impairment is undoubtedly a personal tragedy that asserts that the impression of individual inadequacy is within the individual himself/herself rather than the society. Practices in medical model have regarded PwDs as unfit for society, sick, functionally limited, and unable to work (UPIAS, 1976; Barnes, 1991; Lang, 2001).

The dominant view of disability in medical model conceptualises disability as a functional limitation, individual problem, pathology, dysfunction, or deviance (Finkelstein, 1991). Oliver

(1996) emphasises that the individual/medical model locates the problem of disability within the individual and considers functional limitations to arise naturally from the individual deficit. This view is also called the personal tragedy theory of disability. The latter posits that disability is a natural disadvantage suffered by disabled individuals when placed in competitive social situations. Instead of viewing disability as inextricable linked to social, cultural and political scene, the medical or personal tragedy framework infers that the individual with disability is plagued by deficits and is in need of medical fixing (Gabel, 2005).

Accordingly, the medical model associates the concern of grief and loss with mental and physical disability. Individuals with disabilities are commonly depicted as suffering subjects, characterised by the devastating changes and crises for both themselves and their families (Oliver, 1990; 1996). The main thing that should be clarified about the medical model of disability are; firstly, it locates the problem of disability within the individual and secondly, it sees the causes of this problem as stemming from the functional limitations or psychological losses which are assumed to arise from disability. These two points are underpinned by what might be called the personal tragedy theory of disability, which suggests that disability is some terrible chance event that occurs randomly to unfortunate individuals (Lang, 2001).

Sometimes, researchers in the field use the phrase personal tragedy model as an alternative concept for the medical model because it regards the difficulties that people with impairments experience as being caused by the way in which their bodies are shaped and experienced (UPIA, 1976; Lang, 2001; Oliver, 1996). According to the assumption of medical model's view, impairment tends to be associated with PwDs having something wrong with them and hence the source of the problem. The medical model is the traditional model of disability that sees the disadvantage experienced by disabled people because of their individual impairments. This is still the dominant model used by the general population though most people do not know what the model means and to what they refer to it, including the medical professionals (Oliver, 1996). According to the same author, the medical model views disability is being caused by impairment and the solution, therefore, is to cure the impairment. Obviously, even with recent advances in medical science, this is not always possible. Therefore, according to the medical model, disabled people must be treated in an effort to make them more 'normal'. Otherwise, they are seen as dependent, weak, problematic, and a drain on society's resources

(UPIAS, 1976). For Finklestein (1980), perceiving disability as a particular individual health problem led not only the society but also the individuals with disabilities themselves to imagine disability as their own issue rather than societal. Subsequently, PwDs are perceiving themselves as, among other things, damaged, abnormal, as patients, and dependent objects for a variety of medical otherwise rehabilitative interventions (Oliver, 1993).

As Lang (2001) conceptualised, those who view disability through a medical perspective may concede that there are unfortunate social consequences that arise from having a disability. Within this paradigm, social exclusion is seen essentially as the result of limitations imposed by impairment. As the problem is primarily a medical one, the solution tends to be cure and/or rehabilitation, with the latter, in some cases, requiring segregation into special institutions. This is usually carried out by health service professionals of one sort or another, with the intention of caring for and protecting the person with disability, as in the case of institutionalisation, or to restore 'normal functioning' than a biological construct (Heward, 1988).

PwDs are therefore expected to co-operate with all medical procedures recommended by doctors, regardless of their interest and personal consent in an attempt to reduce the burden that they impose on the society (Finklestein, 1980; Oliver, 1990). If cure was not possible, professionals in the medical profession became almost obsessed with the aim of enabling people's with disabilities functioning to be brought as close as possible to that of 'normal' people, rather than accepting that PwDs would be best served by using wheelchairs or other assistive devices to enable them to function differently but effectively (Lang, 2001). Therefore, medical treatment and rehabilitation were imposed on PwDs in a way that was oppressive and disempowering by the medical profession whose professional and social status meant that non-compliance was often not a realistic option.

Through the medical model, disability is understood as an individual's problem. For instance, if an individual may have visual, physical, or hearing impairment, their inability to see, walk or hear is understood as their deficiency. Typical definitions based on this restricted perception are those historically offered by WHO as follows:

Impairment refers to any loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological or anatomical structure or function. Disability also refers to any restriction or lack, resulting from impairment, of ability to perform any activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being.

Handicap refers to disadvantage for a given individual, resulting from an impairment or disability that prevents the fulfilment of a role that is normal depending on age, sex, social, and cultural factors for that individual (WHO, 2011).

The contemporary bio-medical model of disability regards disability as a medical or genetic condition. The implication remains that PwDs and their families should strive for “normalization” through medical cures and miracles. Although, biology is no longer the only lens through which disability is viewed in law and policy, it continues to play a prominent role in determining programme eligibility, entitlement to benefits, and influences access to rights and full social participation (Gabel, 2005).

A critical analysis of the development of the charity and bio-medical models suggests that they have grown out of the interests of professionals and the elite to keep the PwDs uneducated and keep them out of the mainstream school system, therefore using the special schools as a safety than the mainstream schools (Tomlinson, 1982). However, such derogatory and unrefined definitions have led PwDs to stand for 'disability movement'. Despite this, PwDs are widely given a low priority when placed against the competing needs of other groups. Societies in most underdeveloped nations such as those in Africa and Asia view disabilities as curses or punishment inflicted upon them for their sins. They commit to such beliefs and attitudes not only demoralise PwDs themselves but also deny them the opportunity to participate in certain socio-economic activities, like in education and the job market (Dark and Blind Care, 2008; Unesco, 1994; Oliver, 1996).

2.3.6 The Social Model

Lang (2001) asserts that the increasingly expansion of academic work in the field of disability and the provision of disability service by practitioners has influenced the inception of the philosophy of the development of social model. The disability movement of United States of

America and United Kingdom has also propelled its impetus to the current view towards PwDs (Oliver, 1996). Today, disability study is developed into an academic discipline that investigates and theorises about the social, political, cultural, and economic factors that influence the definition of disability (Lang, 2001; Oliver, 1996).

Hence, activists of the disability rights, scholars and practitioners in the field of SNE and social work construct debates around two conspicuously dichotomy models of disability. These include the social and medical models of disability. The social model suggests that society's failure to adjust the physical as well as the social environment to meet their special need disable a person with impairment (Oliver, 1996). For example, the wheelchair is not the problem; rather the stairs are exclusionary factors (ibid). In line with this, the social model shifts away from consideration of the deficits of the functional, physiological and psychological abilities of the individual with impairment to the inability of society to meet the need of the group (Lang, 2001; Unesco, 1994; Stubbs, 2008). The systematic oppression and discrimination against PwDs, and the negative social attitudes they encounter throughout their day-to-day lives precluded them from full participation (Finklestein, 1980). According to the proponents of social model like Oliver (1990), disability is situated in the wider and external environment, and PwDs are not adequately accounted for within the contemporary social organisation of society. Therefore, for social model theorists, disability is perceived in attitudinal terms as a socio-cultural rather. Furthermore, disability is the result of society's failure to provide adequate and appropriate environmental access.

In the 1970s, a group called the Union of Physically Impaired against Segregation campaigned for the rights of people with impairments to participate fully in society, to live independently, to undertake productive work, and to have full control over their lives. They argued, "In our view, it is society which disables physically impaired people (Finklestein, 1980; UPIAS, 1976). Disability is something imposed on top of our impairments, by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society" (UPIAS, 1976: 6).

The social model removes the focus and "blame" from the disabled person to society in general. Since then, the social model has encompassed not just people with physical

impairments, but also people with sensory impairments, learning disabilities and mental health issues. The barriers that society puts include physical (the built environment) and attitudinal barriers.

One of the very famous social models, that is, Oliver (1990) postulates that impairment was not the main cause of the social exclusion of PwDs but the way society responded to PwDs (Oliver, 1990). In the broadest sense, the social model views disability as something that is nothing other than economic, political, environmental, and cultural barriers encountered by people who are seen by the non-disabled society as having some form of impairment whether physical or sensory (Oliver, 1990). For advocates like Stubbs (2008), the barriers that PwDs encounter today include inaccessible education systems, working environments, inadequate disability benefits, discriminatory health and social support services, inaccessible transport, houses, and public buildings. For instance, the social model of disability recognises that the communication problems faced by deaf people are not because they are unable to speak but because the society or the people who have hearing do not speak their language. Hence, disability results from the barriers facing PwDs (Unesco, 1994; Stubbs, 2008).

Attitudinal and physical barriers are the two compelling factors that lead to exclusion from society. The UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities recognises that disability is about the way we respond to the group. This social model of disability underpins philosophy that perceives disability as societal imposition rather than individual deficit. On the contrary, the 'medical model' sees PwDs as having a problem that needs to be managed, changed and/or adapted to circumstances. In its simplest form, the social model is about changing the system to fit the student, and not the student to fit the system (Mitchell, 2008; Gabel, 2005). The social model locates the problem of exclusion firmly within the society, not the person or their characteristics. It originated in the early days of the disability civil rights movement of PwDs, and provided a radically different definition of disability that influenced the understanding and practice of the human right activists as well as society at large (Oliver, 1996; Finklestein, 1980). This model postulates that society is disabling the people not their impairment particularly (Oliver, 1996). When the social model is contrasted with the medical model of disability, the former helps us to understand the differences between special, integrated and inclusive education. The social model is rooted firmly in the human rights

paradigm, arguing for inclusion and the removal of all barriers that hinder full participation of individuals with disability (Gabel, 2005; Mitchell, 2008).

2.4 The Ideology of Inclusive Education

2.4.1 The Philosophy of Inclusive Education

In principle, inclusiveness aims to bring children and place in regular schools. However, as the literature shows, inclusion goes far beyond this simple and conventional thinking. Therefore, this part of review highlights what inclusion looks like. Furthermore, it deals with the philosophy and the extent to which inclusive education benefits not only CwDs but even those who do not have disabilities.

There is a variety of understandings of what is commonly called “inclusion” among educators. Inclusion is not just about where children are educated; it is a philosophy that includes a whole school and it is everyone’s responsibility (Mitchell, 2008; Collins, 2003). Therefore, the inclusive classroom of today is a school where students learn from each other, and the teacher is expected to provide instruction to every student who entered the class (Ainscow, 1999). In addition, inclusion describes the principle that all students are entitled to equitable access to learning, achievement and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their educational programmes. The practice of inclusion is not necessarily synonymous with full integration in regular classrooms, and goes beyond placement to include meaningful participation and interaction with others (Mitchell, 2008). The term inclusion is often associated with collaboration. Moreover, inclusion is a philosophy or set of beliefs based on the idea that “everyone belongs, is accepted and supported by his or her peers and other members of the school community in the course of having their educational needs met” (Stainback & Stainback, 1990).

The term ‘philosophy’ is being used in this context to merely indicate a set of beliefs, and not a philosophical study or debate. Current educational thinking underpinning inclusive education reflects a paradigm shift from a pathological theoretical approach to one that values understanding of learning difficulties (Gabel, 2005; Allan, 2008). More importantly, inclusive education locates barriers to learning and development in the entire system instead of only

focusing on the individual. This implies that barriers may be located within the learner, within the centre of learning, within the education system and or within the broader socio-economic and political context. This thinking has its foundation in the systems theory. Implicit in the systems approach is the understanding that there are layers in the systems that interact with each other to produce certain outcomes (Mitchell, 2008; Allan, 2008; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The ecological model of human development postulates that effective implementation of inclusion requires the collaboration or interaction of multiple participants (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Inclusion in education is a process of enabling all children to learn and participate effectively within mainstream school systems. It does not segregate children who have different abilities or needs. Therefore, inclusive education is a rights-based approach to educating children and includes those who are subject to exclusionary pressures. It is widely believed that inclusive education creates a learning environment that is child-centred, flexible and enables children to develop their unique capacities in a way that is conducive to their individual styles of learning (Ainscow, 1999; Mitchell, 2008; Dark and Light Blind Care, 2008). Therefore, the process of inclusion contributes to the academic development and socio-economic welfare of the child and its family, enabling them to reach their potential and to flourish.

Clearly, inclusion is a set of best practice or strategies coupled with the moral view that all children bring value to the general education classroom. In inclusive classrooms, students have a variety of ways to access information and demonstrate what they know (Allan, 2008). Inclusion is also a philosophy where all students are valued and supported to participate meaningfully with each other. “The key to inclusive education is the acknowledgement that inclusive education is about all children as it shifted its focus to consider the pervasive nature of exclusion in and through education” (Mitchell, 2008:143).

However, education that is inclusive of disabled children is not easy, but the job as teacher may become more interesting and the teaching methods may respond more to the variety of learning needs of all the children (Frederickson, & Cline, 2009). All the children in the classroom can be benefited from more child-centred flexible and creative nature of inclusive education. In addition to this, inclusive and child-friendly schools welcome all children in the

community regardless of their gender, abilities, disabilities, HIV and health status, as well as their socio-economic, ethnic, religious or language background (Unesco, 1994; Frederickson, & Cline, 2009).

Inclusive and child-friendly communities and schools usually embrace diversity not merely tolerate it. Hence, if the school setting is inclusive, children learn at their own pace and according to their own abilities to achieve optimal academic, social, emotional, and physical development (Frederickson & Cline, 2009; Unesco, 2005). If children and parents are actively involved in the teaching-learning process, the knowledge and skills children carry with them from home is therefore valued and recognised. Against this background, inclusion may be seen as a continuing process of increasing participation and segregation as a recurring tendency to exclude difference (Forlin, 2001). As Mitchell (2008) note, children's knowledge and skills are developed through their interactions with each other. Therefore, inclusive education requires on-going engagement with removing barriers to active involvement and participation in shared learning. Students should learn with, and from, each other coming to know true diversity in terms of physical, cognitive, sensory, and emotional differences (Unesco, 1994). In this way, artificial notions of 'normalcy' that have served to diminish and devalue 'disabled' children for so long can begin to change (Collins, 2003).

Hence, inclusion values the active participation of every child as a full member of his or her family, community, and society at large. A particular issue to consider for students both with and without disabilities is that social and academic constructs are known to change over time (Mitchell, 2008).

2.4.2 The nature of segregated education

Traditionally, the education of CwDs encapsulated several approaches. These include segregation in which children are classified according to their impairment and allocated a school designed to respond to that particular impairment.

In the history of education, there is a continuous shift on modes of education for learners with disabilities. This condition is linked with the change in the conceptualisation of disability and also the changing paradigms in education (Tirussew, 2005). There are three basic types of special education, although many other approaches of classroom organisation and teaching are available within each modes of education.

Segregated education occurs when students with disabilities learn completely separate from their peers. Often, especially in developing countries, segregated education takes place in the form of special schools created specifically for the education of students with disabilities, or in completely separate classrooms for students with disabilities (Stubbs, 2008; Tirussew, 2005). As Unesco (1994) notes, segregated education pinpoints the child as the problem in the system and the impediment to learning. Therefore, these students will often receive a completely different curriculum and different methods of testing, rather than being taught the same curriculum as their peers. This separation in school often creates separation within other areas of life as well. Segregated/offsite education programme probably was the first educational programme that has been provided to children with special needs among other modes of education. The segregated setting includes special classes, special day schools, and special school programmes (Unesco, 1994).

The term SEN refers to all those children whose needs arise out of their specific and different abilities or learning difficulties. As a result, professionals in that approach practised the education of those children who have special needs in a segregated setting (Vislie, 2003). As Vislie (2003) notes, a segregated classroom is simply as the name implies a self-contained classroom filled with students who have a specific need and a single type of disabilities (2003). These classrooms are typically referred to as special classes. Such educational provision is segregated from the mainstream school programme (Unesco, 1994).

Conversely, the term SNE (SNE) means educational intervention and support designed to address SEN. The term SNE has come into use as a replacement for the term special education (Unesco, 1994). The earlier term was mainly understood to refer to the education of CwDs that takes place in special schools or institutions distinct from, and outside of, the institutions of the regular school. In many countries, even now, a large proportion of disabled children are

in fact educated in institutions under the regular system (Combrinck, 2008). Moreover, the concept of children with SEN extends beyond those who may be included in handicapped categories to cover those who are failing in school, for a wide variety of reasons that are known to be likely impediments to a child's optimal progress (Vislie, 2003; Unesco, 1994; Dixon, 2005). Whether or not this more broadly defined group of children is in need of additional support, depends on the extent to which schools need to adapt their curriculum, teaching, and organisation and/or to provide additional human or material resources to stimulate efficient and effective learning for these pupils. However, only in a few instances and documents, across the various states of the country, has SEN been accepted in its broad perspective. Overall, the focus has remained on learners with specific disabilities (Dixon, 2005).

For some people, the enrolment of students in special schools or special classes within regular schools can be a manifestation of inclusion. Conversely, for others, inclusion means educating all students solely in regular classes of neighbourhood schools. Therefore, the latter understanding of inclusive education is grounded in a different belief system compared to special education (Mittler, 2012).

Treating CwDs to a segregated education setting is believed to be earlier and diminishing practice in most developed countries. However, the practice is still going on in developing countries like Ethiopia. Proponents of this form of education portend that for children with some types of disabilities, for example those with hearing, visual, physical, and intellectual limitation, specialised units and schools are required in order to guarantee their right to education in the medium of sign language and access to Braille and other adapted materials (Unesco 2006, cited in Combrinck 2008).

However, the rationale of segregation was questioned, leading to another form of education, that is, integration (Combrinck 2008). Integration entails 'bringing CwDs into mainstream school' (Unesco, 2006). It may take different forms, but the most cited example of integration is having small units for the disabled children attached to the mainstream school. Like segregation, integration has also come under criticism for, it requires 'that learners with disabilities need to change or become ready' for accommodation in the mainstream (Stubs

2008; Combrinck 2008). This implies that instead of the school environment adjusting to the needs of the child, it is the child who should adjust to the school environment. As a way of mitigating these ills that are largely associated with exclusionary practices, it is evident in the segregation and integration systems of education. Therefore, integration happens when CwDs are placed in the mainstream system, often in special classes, as long as they can accommodate its demands and fit in with its environment (United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef), 2011). Special education focuses on separating CwDs from integrating these children into largely unchanging regular schools for regular children. However, the critique of special education was not restricted to the impact that it has on CwDs but on its negative influence on the children with no disability not to learn from each other. Even these days, traditional special education continued to expand its influence particularly in developing countries (Unesco, 1994). The special education, pressured by the demands of parents and progressive rights-based litigation, moved to conditional forms of integration or mainstreaming (Unicef, 2011).

Inclusive versus separated education

Separated education existed in the establishment of special schools in the 19th century and before. However, it had been given a stimulus in the early part of the 20th century by the systematisation of public education and by the simultaneous growth of the eugenic and psychometric movements. Proponents of segregated education gave what appeared to be a logical foundation for segregative systems at the same time as providing the metrics and the means for the execution of segregation. Together they gave the rationale and the institutionalisation for separation (Kauffman & Hallahan, 2005).

As it is documented in Salamanca Statement for action, since the concept of inclusive education is still vague, countries are exercising different modes of education to educate CwDs. As a result, learners with SENs are placed in three different school set-ups. The schools set-ups are special, integrated, and inclusive. These modes of education are still in practice in many countries, depending on the type of impairments. For example, at the primary level, learners with hearing impairments are either placed in residential special schools or special unit of a mainstream school while learners with intellectual impairments as

well as visual impairments are placed in special units of mainstream schools. In addition, learners with learning disabilities are placed in regular schools (Unesco, 1994).

Kauffman and Hallahan (2005) argue for the benefits of continuing separate education. Their arguments have been about the impracticability of inclusive education, its evidently ideological roots and the benefits of special education. According to the same authors above, segregated education could provide specialised services for CwDs. Since teachers have been trained with orientation of specific need of the children, the group could receive quality education and better attention than their inclusion in the mainstream setting.

Contrary to the above argument, Thomas (2013) has forwarded his firm argument in favour of inclusive education. The author, as a proponent of inclusive education, has also organised his argument into four themes. Firstly, there is a need to move outside the kinds of thinking that still construct and define failure at school. Secondly, arguments for a new form of inclusive education have to be built on knowledge of the damaging consequences of inequality, relative poverty and contrastive judgement in schools. Thirdly, inclusive education policy and practice has to build more firmly and conspicuously on knowledge about the benefits of social connection, communities of learning and social capital. Fourthly, understandings about the development of policy on inclusion must gain insight from international comparisons of policy and its effects (Thomas, 2013).

By now, it is believed that schools have to accommodate all children and arrange education according to their needs. As a result, many students with mild to severe difficulties are no longer being separated from their peers when it comes to education. CwDs must be educated in least restrictive environment (Unesco, 1994). Many educators have confused the concept of inclusion with mainstreaming. Mainstreaming also involves the placement of a special education student into general curriculum. The practice of inclusion allows for accommodation to the special students' academic programme while mainstreamed students are expected to meet the same academic standards as the general education students. Additional support needs entails a scenario in which there is a discrepancy between what a system of schooling ordinarily provides and what the child needs to support their learning. Therefore, the professional focus tends to be on what is additional to or different from the

provision which is generally available, rather than on what can be done to make schooling more accessible for all (Florian, 2007).

In addition, there are persistent beliefs that when children find learning difficult because there is something wrong with them. The classic special education view assumes that it is not possible to include CwDs in mainstream settings because their needs are different from other children.

The assumption that underpins this view is that it is desirable to group children according to the nature of their abilities, disabilities or difficulties. There are those who claim that because children are different. There will be a diversity of instructional needs. In turn, this requires teaching groups to be formed according to these perceived individual characteristics. According to Kaufman and Hallahan (2005), successful teaching of children who are different requires that they be grouped homogeneously so that teachers who have been trained in special pedagogy can deploy special pedagogical approaches. Mainstream teachers, especially those who were born and brought up in a context which centred on two separate systems of education, assumed that disabled learners were better provided for in special schools. Therefore, it appears that the eradication of medical view did not mean the end of conservatism in education. A consequence of this was inhibited growth in a shared inclusive school philosophy (WHO, 2011).

However, proponents of inclusive education argue that when special education is conceptualised in this manner, it is a barrier to the development of inclusion because it absolves the rest of the education system from taking responsibility for all children's learning (Thomas, 2013). Unesco (2000) has documented that concern about inclusion has evolved from a struggle on behalf of children having special needs into one that challenges all exclusionary policies and practices in education. Instead of focusing on preparing children to fit into existing schools, the new emphasis focuses on preparing schools so that they can deliberately reach out to all children. The goal of inclusive education is to break down the barriers that separate general and special education and make the included students feel accepted, and actually become active members of general education classroom (Unesco, 2005; Thomas, 2013; Dixon, 2005).

As the literature tells us, teachers' inclusive practices are likely to be sustained over a short to medium period as teachers employ practices they have learned. They then tend to revert back and draw on the personal practices entrenched in their own teaching experience. One may argue that the belief of exclusion became entrenched in many teachers, who are currently teaching, were trained in and began their teaching careers within a paradigm that held fast to the idea of the correctness of exclusion (Unicef, 2011).

The advocacy for inclusive education and its virtues in spite of progress towards embracing it has been slow in spite of the weight of educational research and ethical arguments, education systems have been slow to change (Thomas, 2013; Dixon, 2005; Waseda, 2014). Most countries still have signified numbers of CwDs in special schools or special classes.

According to inclusive education activists, the perpetual segregation in education impacts negatively on non-disabled children as much as it does for the CwDs. For them, segregation in education does not only disadvantages children with special needs and their families, but also their non-disabled peers (Waseda, 2014). According to the same author, children with no disability are deprived of the opportunities to discover these children as peers and as friends and are encouraged to grow up with a correspondingly narrow view of the richness and diversity of humanity. They are also deprived of the benefits that flow generally from a more flexible and individual approach to education (Unesco, 2009).

Integrated education programmes are education systems that offer educational services for persons with special needs in ordinary classrooms where the regular schools are adjacent to the family of CwDs. In such cases, the students usually attend to their education in the mainstreaming schools living with their families. However, they get additional educational services from SNE teacher. This type of educational programme was established in the USA in 1900 and widely spread to other continents in the mid-1960's and 1970's (Dixon, 2005).

Integrated education has served as a springboard for inclusive education. Integration is merely placement of children with special needs in a mainstream classroom without suitable provision that can meet their specific needs (Mitchell, 2008). However, students are expected

to fit to the existed physical environment, attitudes and unmodified curriculum and assessment. Integration is often criticised for its location and social togetherness rather than ensuring equality and equity among all students with no consideration of their personal characteristics (Unesco, 2005).

On the contrary, inclusive education involves restructuring the culture, policies and practices in schools so that they can respond to the diversified needs of students in their locality (Thomas, 2013).

2.4.3 Inclusion versus integration

The concepts of inclusive education emerged in Anglo-American countries in the mid-1980s and early 1990s as a critical response to the existing arrangements of special education and the integration model. Proponents of inclusive education have criticised the concept of integration as referring to a mere placement of children categorised as students with SEN into mainstream schooling without any substantial attempt to combat hidden exclusionary forces within the mainstream education and society (Mitchell, 2008). They argue that integration may become exclusionary and discriminatory and have unfavourable consequences for these students (Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2002 as cited in Egan, 2013).

According to Vislie (2003) and Barth (1996), the critique against integration is for its being inherently assimilations. In contrast, the concept of inclusive education attempts to address the exclusionary pressures within mainstream schools, which requires a profound reconstruction of schooling in all its aspects, that is, in the nature of the curriculum and teaching methods, school philosophy, and overall expectations (Unesco, 2005).

The term 'inclusive education' emerged as a new concept that distances itself from some basic premises of integration. Inclusive education advocates argue that integration still assumes a deficit in students, categorising them according to various diagnoses so they could be individually treated, though in a mainstream school setting (Thomas, 2013).

Integration requires the objects of policy to forget their former status as outsiders and fit comfortably into what remain deeply hostile institutional arrangements. In this sense, integration represents an attempt to rectify and eliminate differences between students. It also invites students to adjust and assimilate to the majority (Barth, 1996).

In contrast, inclusive education does not differentiate students into any categories – for instance, into those who have or not have SEN or disabilities but respects and celebrates the difference (Unesco, 1994; Thomas, 2013; Egan, 2013).

In literature, there is no consensus about the origins of the concept of inclusive education. For instance, Armstrong and Spandagou (2011 as cited in Egan, 2013) distinguish four origins that brought the concept of inclusion into life. Firstly, they claim that parents, teachers and other advocates of students with disabilities challenged the existing system of integration, which was posing limits on the level of students' impairments for them to be integrated in mainstream schools. In addition, integration required an elaborate system of assessment of SEN, which determined the amount of resources for various forms of individual interventions for students being withdrawn from the regular classroom.

Secondly, the emergence of the Social Model of Disability, which was introduced by Michael Oliver (1996), significantly challenged general thinking about disability. The Model postulates that it is not the person's impairment that disables them to actively participate in social life, but it is the way society responds to them, which disadvantages and excludes them. To simply explain how the model might apply to an educational context, it might mean, for instance, that a person using a wheelchair is not disabled by her/his own physical impairment, rather the physical construction of school building disables her/him by preventing free movement in its space.

Thirdly, the commencement of free-market philosophy, including competition, accountability, control, and choice into educational systems, provoked a wide critique of these educational reforms and how they influenced the ways schools managed difference. Fourthly, the initiation of international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), especially Unesco played

a pivotal role in establishing and promotion of inclusive education as a relevant policy agenda for all its member states and gave a political relevance for researching it (Unesco, 1994).

The notion of inclusive education has many conceptual and value threads that need to be identified (Collins, 2003). Inclusion is a term that owes its force partly to it replacing the term integration. Though many practitioners might see the terms as interchangeable, many of the proponents attach considerable conceptual and value significance to the notion of inclusion (Hegarty, 1993). As Collins (2003) notes, inclusion has been constructed to have a more embracing and Universalist meaning. As a result, inclusion does not set boundaries between different areas of 'vulnerability'. Therefore, integration is said to be about those with SEN or disabilities, but inclusion goes beyond to reference others who experience social exclusion, for example, including those from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds and ethnic minorities (Collins, 2003; Hegarty, 1993).

As it is vividly emphasised in the framework for action of Salamanca, inclusion is said to have a more systemic and social meaning in that it is about restructuring ordinary or regular schools to have the capacity to accommodate all children. Integration is seen to be more about placing the individual child in a system that assimilates the child without adapting itself to accommodate the child (Unesco, 1994; Collins, 2003).

Sometimes, the two terms, namely, integration and inclusive, are used interchangeably referring to children being integrated into a regular classroom and included into a regular classroom. However, there are significant differences between the two concepts. Having clear understanding about the distinction between the two concepts can help educators as well as PwDs to advocate for an inclusive environment that will help all children to learn (Collins, 2003).

As Mitchell (2008) highlights, integration models assume there is something wrong that must be fixed in order to fit into the present system. The supports and adaptations that occur are put in place to force a child into an existing classroom setting. The child must adjust to these adaptations or fail (Collins, 2003; Hegarty, 1990; 1993). Advocates of the inclusive model believe that all children are different, and all children can learn. There is nothing about a child

that needs to be fixed in order for that child to fit into a system (Mitchell, 2008; Ainscow, 1999). In line with this, the school system as a whole should be restructured to enable all children to learn in order to meet the individual needs of all learners (Unesco, 1994).

The inclusion model, like the integration model, places students with disabilities into the regular education classroom. However, as Collins (2003) further explains the integration practice, integration uses little or no special services or support in the regular education classroom. Although there is still the option of going outside the regular classroom for help, the regular education teacher in the classroom is primarily responsible for the student's progress (Collins, 2003). There is a great difference between the underlying concepts of integration and inclusion as they relate to placement decisions. As Collins (2003) notes, integration is not simply a soft version of inclusion, and using these two terms interchangeably is not only confusing but fails to highlight the philosophical differences that many educators and disability advocates wish to emphasise (p. 450). Hence, inclusion goes beyond integration. To take an example from the field of education, integration might be attempted simply by admitting CwDs to regular schools. However, inclusion is possible only when schools are designed and administered so that all children can learn and play together (Frederickson, & Cline, 2009; Mitchell, 2008). Inclusive schooling would entail providing such needed accommodations as access to Braille, sign language and adapted curricula (Unesco, 2005).

Against this background, the practice of inclusion is not necessarily synonymous with full integration in regular classrooms, and goes beyond placement to include meaningful participation and interaction with others. Therefore, inclusion is described as being about participation, not just placement or location (Mitchell, 2008). As Norwich (2008) argues, a distinction between inclusion and integration does not justify detaching the concepts from each other and treating integration in a negative way.

However, a troubling ambiguity for Norwich (2008) is that the term inclusive education is often used to describe only placement in a mainstream classroom, rather than a child's full participation in all aspects of the educational setting. Being physically present in a mainstream setting does not automatically result in inclusion. Being there is not enough; it is no guarantee of respect for difference or access to the material, social, cultural, and educational capital that people who do not have disability expect (Unesco, 1999). A lack of understanding about what inclusive education means by itself is a barrier to inclusion of children with diversified needs (Unesco, 1999). It is now widely recognised that placement within a mainstream setting, while a necessary starting point, is really only a starting point for bringing about inclusive education (ibid). The existence of CwDs in the regular classroom without involvement and sharing does not necessarily equate to inclusive education. A common misperception is that inclusive education requires a child who is being included or adjusts to fit within a setting as in a notion of assimilation rather than inclusion (Collins, 2003). This devaluing and dehumanising approach would be better understood as a demeaning understanding of inclusion compared to a facilitative understanding of inclusion whereby all people are recognised as valued human beings and rights holders. In contrast to demeaning understandings of inclusion as conditional assimilation, inclusive education requires recognising the right of every child to be included and adapting the environment and teaching approaches in order to ensure the valued participation of all children (Allan, 2008; Norwich, 2008; Unesco, 1999).

2.4.4 Inclusion as a Right for Children with Disability

Every student has an inherent right to education based on equal opportunity. Consequently, no student is excluded from, or discriminated within education on grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, disability, birth, poverty or other status (Frederickson, & Cline, 2009; Unesco, 2009). Hence, it is believed that all students can learn and benefit from education. Schools adapt to the needs of students rather than students adapting to the needs of the school (Mitchell, 2008). In inclusive schools, the student's views are listened to and taken seriously. Furthermore, individual differences between students are a source of richness and diversity, and not a problem. The diversity of needs and pace of development of students are addressed through a wide and flexible range of

responses (Unesco, 1999). Therefore, inclusion is about school change to improve the educational system for all students. Changes must be in the curriculum, teaching method and how students learn, as well as changes in how students with and without special needs interact with and relate to one another (Unesco, 2009). To achieve this, schools as centres of learning and educational systems must change so that they become caring, nurturing, and supportive educational communities where the needs of all students and teachers are truly met (ibid).

Inclusive education in Salamanca World Conference on SNE and Dakar World Education Forum and regular schools with inclusive orientation are acknowledged as they are the most effective means of combating discrimination, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society, and achieving EFA (Unesco, 1994; 2005; Mitchell, 2008). As Collins (2003) remarks, inclusion is a philosophical move away from the accommodation of students with special needs into a “normal” system towards a full inclusion model where everyone is considered normal, and where the needs of all can be met. This trend is situated within a broad social justice agenda, which argues that equality for all must include access for all students to their local school. This trend has been supported by United Nations policies that affirm the rights of children (the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989; the United Nations Standard Rules for the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 1993; the Unesco Salamanca Statement, 1994).

Educational policies in developed countries have responded to the social justice agenda in different ways. Inclusive education involves all children, families and adults’ rights to participate in environments where diversity is assumed, welcomed and viewed as a rich resource rather than seen as a problem. To recognise this, critical engagement is required in order to move from an understanding of bringing children who are excluded into current educational settings towards an understanding of inclusive education as providing the best possible learning environment for all children (Norwich, 2008). The movement again requires transforming educational systems rather than changing children to fit within current, exclusionary systems (Unesco, 2005, Mitchell, 2008). However, in a culture where disability is commonly viewed as a tragic within-person characteristic, inclusion is challenging to achieve. Ableism describes discriminatory and exclusionary practices that result from the

perception that being able-bodied is superior to being disabled, the latter being associated with ill health, incapacity and dependence (Oliver, 1996).

2.4.5 The benefits of inclusive education

In inclusive education, all learners learn and grow in the environment that they will eventually live and work in as participation of those who are “different” takes root. More importantly, all learners and teachers gain the virtues of being accommodating, accepting, patient, and cooperative (Unesco, 1999). Other children gain some valuable virtues such as being considerate, patient and humble as they support their peers with special needs. Reciprocally, some learners with special needs are gifted with special abilities from which their peers can be benefited (Stubbs, 2008; Unesco, 1999).

As it is well documented in the research work of Stubbs (2008), teachers get to share ideas and knowledge with each other, and significant others, therefore making education a meaningful aspect of everyday life. They also develop their skills and abilities when working as a team to address the challenges. This may also boost their status in the community. Inclusive education creates ‘A School for All’ where everybody benefits, resulting to an inclusive society (Unesco, 1999). Furthermore, the self-esteem of the child with special needs is improved in inclusive education. It is also cost effective and gives equal opportunities to all children, therefore promoting the rights of all to education (Unesco, 1994).

Furthermore, inclusive education is claimed by its advocates to have many benefits for the students. Instructional time with peers without need helps the learners to learn strategies taught by the teacher. Teachers bring different ways to teach a lesson for special needs students and peers without need. Therefore, all of the students in the classroom can be benefited from this interaction (Stubbs, 2008; Frederickson, & Cline, 2009).

As Stubbs (2008) outlines it, the inclusive school allows the students:

- Learn communication skills and interaction skills from each other;
- Can build friendships from these interactions;
- Can also learn about hobbies from each other; and

- Be able to relate to each other gives them a better learning environment.

Involving peers without need with special needs peers gives the students a positive attitude towards each other.

As the students are the next generation to be in the workforce, students with the special needs and peers without need will allow them to communicate in the real world someday (Unesco, 1999).

2.4.5.1 The benefit of inclusive education for children with disabilities

Inclusive education requires recognising impairment as one of many forms of human diversity, and welcoming and viewing diversity as a resource rather than a problem. Therefore, inclusive education creates a situation where all children can be valued and experience a sense of belonging and where all children are encouraged to reach their full potential in all areas of development (Unesco, 1999; Frederickson, & Cline, 2009). As it is clearly stated in Unesco (2005), inclusion is neither about disability nor is it only about schools. Instead, inclusion is about social justice. Collins (2002) reports that students with disabilities who are educated in segregated settings lack age-appropriate social interaction and have decreased levels of peer engagement. On the contrary, students in inclusive classrooms constructed a relatively confident and hopeful sense of themselves as legitimate participants in the mainstream school culture. Students in inclusive classrooms reported feeling like they learned more, made more friends and had higher levels of self-concept, including self-efficacy and self-esteem (Unesco, 2009).

From the perspective of students with disabilities, the major benefit of inclusive education is equal access to social and academic opportunities. There are many benefits of inclusion for children with diverse abilities. Unesco (2009), Ainscow (1999) and Frederickson and Cline (2009) have listed major benefits of inclusive education for CwDs as follows:

- CwDs demonstrate high levels of social interaction with non-disabled peers in inclusive settings when compared with segregated settings. This is especially true if

there is adult support to encourage socialisation, and if children with diverse abilities are included in their natural proportion to the community in general.

- Social competence and communication skills of children with diverse abilities are improved in inclusive settings. This is believed to be closely associated with greater opportunities for social interaction with non-disabled peers who act as models for children still developing age-appropriate social and communicative competencies.
- CwDs in inclusive settings often have a more rigorous educational programme, resulting in improved skill acquisition and academic gains. Some research suggest that the educational programme for children with diverse abilities in inclusive settings is generally of a higher standard than in segregated settings, and children in these settings spend more time engaged in academic tasks and demonstrate improved academic outcomes.
- Social acceptance of children with diverse abilities is enhanced by the frequent small group-work nature of their instruction in inclusive classrooms. Children get to see beyond the disability when working in small groups, and begin to realise that they have much in common with CwDs.
- Friendships commonly develop between with disabilities and those without disabilities in inclusive settings. Research has found that children in inclusive settings have more durable networks of friends than children in segregated settings. This is especially true of children included in their local neighbourhood school, where they can more easily see friends outside of school hours. Teachers have also being keen to play a critical role in facilitating these friends.
- CwDs who are included in regular schools tend to become adults who spend more time in leisure activities outside of the home. They also spend more time in their spare time activities with adults without disabilities. Still, they spend more time in community work settings than do their counterparts educated in segregated settings.

Other researchers indicated that inclusion assists in the development of general knowledge for CwDs (Hegarty, 1993).

2.4.3.2 The Benefit of inclusive education for children with no disabilities

The impact of inclusive education on students without exceptionalities is also suggested to be positive for a variety of reasons. Socially, students without exceptionalities reported higher degrees of friendship and advocacy, as well as lower degrees of abuse towards students with disabilities in inclusive settings as opposed to special education settings (Giangreco, 2009). Academically, inclusive education has been shown to be beneficial for all students. As research findings show, students with and without disabilities in inclusive classrooms have a stronger academic achievement than those in non-inclusive classrooms. Inclusive education does have a positive impact on the achievement of students without disabilities and that there is even a better increase in their scores (Fitch, 2003; Giangreco, 2009). Therefore, researchers agree to the greater extent that inclusive education fosters tolerance and acceptance of difference and is academically beneficial to students without disabilities. In many ways, children with giftedness benefit from inclusion just as much as children with diverse abilities (Unesco, 1999). The following benefits of inclusion for children without disabilities have been substantiated in the literature:

- The performance of children without disabilities or giftedness is not compromised by the presence of children with diverse abilities in their classes (Frederickson & Cline, 2009).
- Children without disabilities or giftedness can benefit from improved instructional technologies in the classroom. Some children with diverse abilities will require the use of technology to help them learn, such as specialised computer software or hardware to assist them in their work. Other children can benefit from the presence of these technologies, and can use them when they are not required by the child with diverse abilities (Unesco, 1994).
- Children without disabilities or giftedness can benefit from higher classroom staff ratios (Forlin, 2004). Frequently, extra funding for children with diverse abilities is directed towards the provision of additional staff, either specialist teachers or paraprofessionals. In either case, the presence of an extra adult in the classroom opens up a wide range of possibilities for all children.

- Children without disabilities involved in peer-tutoring situations can benefit from improved self-esteem and mastery of academic content (Allan, 2008). These children tend to demonstrate improved self-concept, growth in social cognition and the development of personal principles (Collins, 2003; Davis, 2000). Furthermore, it has been found that peer tutors demonstrate a higher mastery of academic content in a given area than do their peers who are not involved as tutors.
- Children without disabilities or giftedness have the opportunity to learn additional skills such as Braille or sign language (McDuffie, Mastropieri, & Scruggs, 2009). These skills can be taught in a meaningful context and represent an opportunity for growth not available to children who are not educated with others with diverse abilities (Giangreco, 2009).
- Children without disabilities or giftedness can learn to value and respect children with diverse abilities in inclusive classrooms. They learn to see beyond the disability or giftedness and the associated social stigmas when placed in inclusive classes (Unesco, 1994; 1999; McDuffie, Mastropieri, & Scruggs, 2009).

2.4.3.3 The Benefits of inclusive education for school community as a whole

It is important for the duty bearers and the community at large to understand why inclusive education is more important compared to the establishment of a special school. This is because inclusion can be side to the maintenance of the individual child in his/her natural environment while providing both academic as well as social needs of the child. This maintenance of the child with her/his cultural setting ensures that the child is not detached from the social fabric. On the contrary, special school deprives her/his of other rights (Save the Children of Finland, 2010).

Inclusive education can benefit all members of school community. In this regard, children with special needs can primarily benefit from this developmental education approach. For instance, as it is noted in policy guidelines for inclusion of Unesco (2009), in inclusive education, all learners learn and grow in the environment in which they will eventually live and work. Inclusive education creates a 'school for all' where everybody benefits, resulting in an inclusive society. The self-esteem of the child with special needs in education is improved.

Inclusion also improves the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the education system and gives equal opportunities to all children, therefore promoting the rights of all to education. Inclusive schools benefit all children because they help create an inclusive society (Stubbs, 2008).

According to Unesco (2005), the best thing about inclusion is that when it is done well, everyone wins. This includes CwDs, children without disabilities, gifted, and talented. Moreover, teachers can benefit from improved instructional technologies in the classroom. Since some children with diverse abilities will require the use of technology to help them learn, such as specialised computer software or hardware, to assist them in their work. Other children can benefit from the presence of these technologies, and can use them when the child with diverse abilities does not require them.

CwDs and those who are gifted can benefit from modified curriculum and other provisions of learning enhancements in the classroom. Dark and Light Blind Care (2008) made an overview of international experiences and approaches in inclusive education. In an inclusive school setting, it is inevitable to provide training workshop for teachers about inclusive principles and the basics of disability to ensure that their attitude and approaches do not prevent disabled children from gaining equal access to the curriculum. As we know, training should be ongoing, provided in short courses (or modules) and should take place within a local school environment, preferably at their own school. Moreover, training should take place at both pre-service, and in-service stages. Problem-based, on-the-job training is more effective than theoretical pre-service training (Dark and Light Blind Care, 2008; Unesco, 1994). In fact, encouraging teachers to meet on a regular basis to discuss their problems, and develop confidence in their own abilities is arguably the most effective form of staff development (Dark and Light Blind Care, 2008).

The importance of inclusiveness can be seen from three major perspectives, namely, educational and socio-economic justifications.

- Educational justification: The requirement for inclusive school to educate all children together means that they have to develop teaching methods that put the whole child at

the centre of focus by responding to their individual learning need and that therefore it can benefit all children. This means that though teaching is a group activity, learning is an individual activity.

- Social justification inclusive schools are able to change attitude towards diversity by educating all children together, and this forms the basis for a just and non-discriminatory society. This helps the children to learn together and appreciate each other despite their differences. If this tradition of appreciating each other is nurtured in children throughout their course of education, there is likelihood that it will be reflected in adulthood unlike viewing these children with activity limitations and participation restriction as a bad omen to the community.
- When one considers economic justification, it is less costly to establish and maintain schools that educate all children together than to set up a complex system of different types of schools specialising in different groups of children. Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), adopted in 2006, advocates for inclusive education, and recent legislation to protect indigenous languages both provide further international support for inclusive education. The provisions set out the central elements that need to be addressed in order to ensure the right to access to education, the right to quality education and the right to respect in the learning environment (Save the Children Finland, 2010).

The role of school personnel's for effective implementation of inclusive education

Although there is widespread support for inclusion at a philosophical level, there are fears of difficulties of the policy of inclusion to implement because teachers are not adequately trained, sufficiently prepared and received enough support from the administration to teach in inclusive settings. As a result, the above justification tells us that inclusion requires that teachers should receive appropriate training, adequate support and have readiness to accept the responsibility for creating classrooms in which all children with and without disabilities can learn and feel they belong (Egan, 2013). However, as Mafa's (2012) research finding indicates, so many teachers think that the problems that some students have in learning should not be their responsibility because they have not been trained in such a way to deal with these issues. For a number of reasons, the practice of inclusive education has been blamed on a

variety of factors, including competing policies that stress competition and ever-higher standards, a lack of funding and resources and existing special education practices. Research findings have also reported that one of the greatest barriers to the development of inclusion is because most teachers do not have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to implement inclusive education in their classrooms (Forlin, 2001).

Therefore, although inclusion is seen as important strategy to educate CwDs in most countries, the literature reveals that it has been difficult to meet the special needs of CwDs for a number of reasons. Among the reasons that the literature highlights are the following:

- Uncertainty about professional roles and the status of teachers especially those who have responsibilities for additional support needs;
- A lack of agreement about the nature and usefulness of specialist knowledge;
- Territorial disputes between general education teachers and SNE teachers regarding their role and responsibilities in the classrooms; and
- Inadequate preparation of teachers' education colleges and a lack of on-going professional development opportunities for in-service teachers (Unesco, 1994; 2005; 2009; Egan, 2013; Dixon, 2005).

To implement inclusive education effectively, the general education teacher needs to recognise, identify and understand that each student attaches to the learning process at different levels and rates. This is because students with special needs bring with them into the classroom a sort of instructional need on how to create an environment fitted to meet their individual needs (Mitchell, 2008).

One of the most significant stipulations that allow for successful inclusion of students with special needs is the attitudes of the general education teacher regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities into their classroom. Because classrooms are now becoming more diverse with respect to students abilities, sensitivity and awareness on the part of general education teacher are required to accelerate effective inclusion (Etenesh, 2000). In fact, so many factors can influence the general education teachers' attitude towards inclusion. When general education teachers are provided proper training and supportive services through a

collaborative consultant and designated time to meet willingness to participate in team works, they can become equal with special education teachers (Unesco, 1994).

In attempting to achieve the goals of inclusion, school personnel must realise that regular and special educator needs to share responsibility of educating all of their students. The first step in implementing this type of collaboration involves assessing the needs of the school and those involved, mainly the teachers. Once the specific needs are determined, the next step may be to make the needs a reality. Both the general and special education teachers must function as a team. The team or partnership should be such that special education and general education assess the educational needs of the students with disabilities in collaboration and cooperatively develop educational strategies for meeting the needs (Idol, 1997). One way to achieve the consistent joining of the two disciplines is through training. This training must be systematic, promoting collegial interaction and fostering teacher support system (Idol, 1997; Egan, 2013; Unesco, 2009).

The importance of studying the factors that influence the regular education teachers' attitude towards the inclusion of students with special needs into a regular education classroom is critical to achieve the goals of inclusive education. As a result, the regular education teacher must now accept an additional role. The professionals who had specialised training and had the desire to be involved students with special needs once held this role. Many school administrators feel the resistance by the regular education teachers to include the students with disabilities into their regular programme. Therefore, in order to assist the regular education teacher, knowledge and understanding of their attitudes or perception towards having students with special needs is critical. In addition, school administrators need to understand not only that regular education teachers have these attitudes or perceptions, but also more importantly, understand and acknowledge the reason (Egan, 2013; Dixon, 2005). According to Egan's (2013) findings, this information is helpful for several reasons. Firstly, it provides school administrators insight into as to what are the inclusion practices in the classroom. Secondly, it provides insight into the teachers' biases or prejudices of students with disabilities in their classroom. Thirdly, it provides the administrators first-hand knowledge of the support and

services needed by the regular education teacher in order to provide an effective educational programme for students with disabilities within the regular education classroom.

Al-zyoudi (2006) reports on the attitudes of both regular and special educators towards inclusion. Here both groups of respondents reveal more favourable attitudes towards inclusion after their in-service training. He concludes that staff development is the key to the success of inclusion. Naicker (2002) describes and analyses the perceptions held by regular education teachers towards the placement of students with disabilities in their classrooms. Key findings of this study were that class size should be reduced to support inclusion and that teachers are basically enthusiastic about participating in inclusion. Teachers were also concerned about their level of training regarding modification and received effective teaching strategies for students with disabilities.

Al-zyoudi (2006) examined the attitude and perceived knowledge of mainstream and special education teachers of primary and secondary schools towards inclusive education in Jordan. The main finding shows that, in general, teachers have positive attitudes towards inclusive education. They agreed that inclusive education enhances social interaction and inclusion among the students. Therefore, inclusive education minimises negative stereotypes on special needs students. The findings also show that collaboration between the mainstream and the special education teachers is important and that there should be a clear guideline on the implementation of inclusive education. The findings of the study have significant implications to the school administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders who have involved in the implementation of inclusive education.

2.5 Barriers to implement inclusive education

2.5.1 Attitudinal Barriers

In many Ethiopian communities, disabilities are explained to be resulting from God's punishment for some wrongs done to the ancestors or to some person's problems. As such, the child experiencing any of these conditions is seen as a curse or possessed by the evil spirits (Zelalem, 2007).

Such superstitions have led many parents who give birth to children to deviate from the 'normal' to hide the child, hence deny him access to education. Other negative attitudes by the community include stereotypic and superstitious beliefs such as a mother who gets a baby with disability has been adulterous and if a pregnant woman looks at a person with physical disability, she will get a baby with physical disabilities (Tirussew et al., 1995).

As Zelalem's findings in his master's dissertation (2007) shows, the negative attitudes of the community and the family denied children access to education. The greatest barriers to inclusion are caused by society, not by particular medical impairments. Negative attitudes towards differences result in discrimination and can lead to a serious barrier to learning. Accepted ways of thinking, reacting and doing become firmly embedded in society and can be remarkably resistant to change. Therefore, negative attitudes can become institutionalised: "We often see the impact of negative attitudes in how one person treats another. However, negative attitudes are also the foundation stone on which disabling policies and services are built (Unesco, 2009).

Negative attitudes can take the form of social discrimination, lack of awareness and traditional prejudices. Regarding CwDs, cultures in different countries of the world still maintain established beliefs that educating the disabled is pointless. Often the problem is identified as being caused by the child's differences rather than the education systems shortcomings. The attitudinal barrier to inclusion is so great that the level of resourcing is irrelevant. It is people's attitude to those resources and the way they utilise them, that is crucial to the promotion of inclusive education.

Successful inclusion ultimately depends on the attitudes and actions of school principals and the investment of other school personnel as they create the school culture and have the ability to challenge or support inclusion (Ainscow, 2002). Research has found that although teachers often report that they agree with the idea of inclusion, they actually believe that the needs of learners with disabilities are best met in separate classrooms, particularly those learners with greater special needs and more severe disabilities. Lack of support and resources, as well as

the prevailing negative attitudes towards disability, all contribute to the general bewilderment in the implementation of inclusive education (Stubbs, 2008).

Some of the greatest barriers associated with inclusive education are negative attitudes. As with society in general, these attitudes and stereotypes are often caused by a lack of knowledge and understanding. The attitudes and abilities of general education teachers and para-educators in particular can be major limitations to inclusive education. Training teachers and para-educators to understand and work with CwDs is often inadequate, or it may be fragmented and uncoordinated. If educators have negative attitudes towards students with special needs or have low expectations of them, children will unlikely receive a satisfactory, inclusive education.

Researchers like Etenesh (2000) argue that there is a strong relationship between teacher attitude towards inclusion and teacher effectiveness. Teachers with a positive attitude towards inclusion can provide all of their students with significantly more practice attempts at a higher level of success. Researchers have also attempted to discover the factors associated with the successful inclusion of students with disabilities. The majority of these studies in implementing inclusive education have assumed that a positive attitude towards inclusion was necessary for the successful inclusion of CwDs into inclusive classroom setting (Dark and Light Blind Care, 2008). However, teachers' attitudes are seen as the decisive factors for successful inclusion. As mentioned earlier, inclusive education has been based on the assumption that teachers are willing to admit students with disability into regular classes and be responsible for meeting their needs. However, regular classroom teachers do not perceive themselves as having the appropriate training and skills to meet the instructional needs of students with disabilities (Moberg, 1997 cited in Etenesh, 2000). Unfortunately, evaluation studies indicate that teachers do not always have the support they need to make inclusive education successful. Studies have examined the relationship between negative attitudes and inclusion.

Understanding social constructions of disability and impairment can help to explain why PwDs have been marginalised and discriminated against and can draw attention to what needs to be done to eliminate negative attitudes (Norwich, 2008; Mitchell, 2008; Smith &

Armstrong, 2005). Negative attitude of teachers, parents and other stakeholders may affect the inclusion of CwDs. For several years, researchers have concluded that teachers' attitudes are one of the most crucial factors in the success of inclusive education. These attitudes can create positive or negative expectations and behaviours that increase or limit the successful inclusion of students with a disability in educational environments. It is important to obtain an accurate picture of teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education because these attitudes are predictors of the success of inclusion efforts for both students with and without disabilities (Schumm & Vaughn, 1995). An understanding of these attitudes is essential for curriculum planning, in-service and pre-service training programmes.

However, inclusive orientation is the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society, and achieving EFA (Unesco, 2009). Accepted ways of thinking, reacting and doing become firmly embedded in society and can be remarkably resistant to change. Therefore, negative attitudes can become institutionalised: "We often see the impact of negative attitudes in how one person treats another. Nevertheless, negative attitudes are also the foundation stone on which disabling policies and services are built. Harmful attitudes that limit and restrict are institutionalised in policies and services and therefore, maintain the historic disadvantage that disabled people have faced (Stubbs, 2008).

In its policy guidelines on inclusion in education, Unesco (2009) emphasises the importance of attitudinal change as the Precursor to Effective Policy Development. Inclusion often requires a shift in people's attitudes and values (Armstrong, 2003). Such change takes time and involves significant reassessment of conceptions and role behaviour. Raising awareness should involve both better understanding of inclusive education and those societies become more tolerant and understanding. As a result, national policies on inclusion, local support systems and appropriate forms of curriculum and assessment are important to create the necessary context for the development of inclusion.

In this regard, The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action of (1994) postulates that education policies from the national to the local should stipulate that a child with a disability should attend the neighbourhood school, that is, the school that would be attended if the child

did not have a disability. Educational institutions should not see themselves as the only experts on education. Supporting the policy cycle, inclusive education systems and societies can only be realised if governments are aware of the nature of the problem and are committed to solving it (Dark and Light Blind Care, 2008). This must be reflected in the willingness to undertake in-depth analysis of the size and character of the out-of-school populations and ensure their integration into quality school and other kinds of education and training programmes. Such analysis would frequently require improved data systems and data collection methods.

Government commitment would also express itself in appropriate legal frameworks established in accordance with relevant international conventions and recommendations ensuring that inclusive education is appropriately understood and interpreted as a human rights issue (Armstrong, 2003). The government's priority in national policy, planning and implementation should be reflected in the comparative allocation in national budgets. In addition, this should be reflected in requests for development assistance from international partners and appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms need to be put in place to evaluate the impact of inclusive education policies as regards the learner, the education system and wider societal development (Unesco, 2009).

According to Save the Children of Finland (2010), among barriers noted to hinder progress of education for all learners are lack of appropriate national policy and legislations, which can arise from negative attitudes and ignorance. The effects of these attitudes may be reflected on parents, educators and policy maker. Most of the available legislation that supports special needs such as the Disability Act, Children's Act and others are not specific about inclusive education practices required of all players in most African countries (2010).

Owing to this and other factors, there should be a policy to determine which category of learners may remain in special schools. Legislation should be established to ensure effective organisation and implementation of special needs programmes. Each stakeholder will be held responsible and this will promote accountability (Dark and Light Blind Care, 2008). Negative attitudes towards disability and the resulting discrimination, stigma and prejudice in the

society manifest itself as a serious barrier to include CwDs in the learning environment (Unesco, 2003).

2.5.1.1 The misconception of inclusive education

As Mittler (2012) notes, the concept of inclusivity lugs not only issues of special needs even education of marginalised people. Rather, the philosophy amalgamates social justice with equitability of resources and school coverage with quality education. To contextualise the philosophy, an inclusive school has been described as one that caters for the needs of all learners where all learners are valued and respected (Mittler, 2012; Unesco, 1994). Hence, inclusive schooling involves school change and effective leadership programmes. With all these, inclusive schools attempt to provide quality education by ensuring equal education to all students who are enrolled (Unesco, 1994; Slee, 2011).

Proponents of inclusion elaborated on the philosophy of inclusive education and justified “the why” of it. For them, inclusion is a philosophy that has imbedded itself in three main principles: The first is the deinstitutionalization, which is the transformation from being segregated to inclusion. The second is civil rights movement of 1960s and 1970s rights movement of PwDs against discrimination, stigma and prejudice in England and North America. The third route of the philosophy of inclusion is related with social justice. As it is seen in many documents, social justice is the yolk of the philosophy since it strives for quality and equity of education of all children with no boundary of economy, colour, ethnic background, and other personal characteristics (Mittler, 2012; Slee, 2011; Unesco, 1994).

The philosophy of inclusion and the development of inclusive schools have great rhetorical power. They are influencing special education policy and practice in many countries. Even though the confusion of “integration and inclusion”, created dilemma among personnel in education, the adoption of this philosophy has brought profound changes to the provision of educational services for children with special needs (Berlach, & Chambers, 2011).

Despite the fact that the right to education of children with special needs is recognised in international conventions and enshrined in the constitutions of most nations, the actual provision of education to children who have special needs remains a huge challenge globally.

A number of CwDs are proved for under a segregated arrangement with special adjustment to meet their SEN. However, the practice faced critique because the practice is discriminatory (Thomas, 2013; Berlach, & Chambers, 2011).

Proponents of inclusion argue that inclusion should move from merely addressing exclusion of CwDs from general education to challenging all exclusionary policies and practices in the education system (Thomas, 2013). As it is noted in many literatures of education of PwDs, an inclusive school is where children are treated with respect and ensured equal opportunities to learn together (Unesco, 1994; 2005; 2009; Mittler, 2013; Berlach & Chambers, 2011). There are various understandings about the philosophy of inclusive education, which created confusion among educators. Inclusion is not just about where children are educated. Rather, the philosophy includes a whole school and the responsibility of each stakeholder in education. Therefore, an inclusive classroom is a place where students learned from each other, and the teacher is expected to provide instruction in accordance to the needs of each learner (Mittler, 2013; Forlin, 2004; Loreman, 2009; Slee, 2011).

As Unesco (1994) points out, inclusion begins with the belief that all children belong to the general education classroom. If the students' special needs require other placement, another alternative setting should be arranged. However, "special arrangement" is always a sign of segregation. The endless discussion of educational setting for CwDs has not ended. For this, the debate that the philosophy of inclusive education has brought could be the cause. Then, the misconception that stakeholders in education held has been a barrier to choose either integration or full inclusion. Nevertheless, segregated setting is a primary choice to educate children in many countries (Loreman, 1999).

Like the inclusion setting, the mainstreaming setting places students with disabilities in the regular classroom. However, what personnel misconstrued is their usage of the term mainstreaming as if it was a synonym for inclusion. Using these two terms synonymously is not only confusing but also fails to highlight the philosophical differences that many educators and disability advocates wish to emphasise (Unesco, 2009; Berlach, & Chambers, 2011).

Inclusive education is a contentious concept that lacks a clear and common understanding among policy makers, administrators and even teachers who execute the approach. As a result, the contentious nature of the concept of inclusive education misled the implementers to conceptualise both integration and inclusion as if they were synonyms. Again, the lack of a common definition of inclusive education has contributed to its misconception and confused practice across countries (Berlach & Chambers, 2011). As Berlach and Chambers (2011) point out, in the absence of a unified definition of what inclusion is, attempts to measure or compare such a complex equity issue are challenging.

The interpretation of inclusive education is increasingly becoming a controversial term that challenges personnel in the education system to think deeply about the concept of inclusion in different ways and from different perspectives. The lack of a tight conceptual focus from which inclusive education suffers may have contributed to the misconception and confused practices (Berlach & Chambers, 2011).

The need of CwDs is different from the needs of others and assumes that because of this difference, these children can be legitimately denied entry into mainstream. On the contrary, proponents of inclusion posit that the concept of inclusive education alternatively seeks to move away from managing the deficits of students to the creation of a more inclusive classroom environment that responds to the diversity of children including their diverse needs. They argue that segregated educational systems perpetuate the discrimination of children with learning needs and implicitly blame the children for their disabilities (Loreman, 2009; Berlach & Chambers 2011).

The philosophy of inclusive education is controversial since it has multiple interpretations and implications to different people. As a result, its implementation will depend on how it is conceptualised in a given context. No matter how it is viewed and interpreted, the bottom line is that inclusive education has to acknowledge that each learner has unique abilities and needs (Forlin, 2010; Unesco, 2005).

Proponents of inclusion believe that separate education for learners with diverse needs was seen to address these needs. This is exemplary of the practice of focusing on impairments

rather than on emphasising on strengths of learners. Various ideologies and perspectives that marked their moments in history have propelled the move from segregated special education in special schools to integration and the development of units within schools, then to inclusion of pupils in mainstream settings (Berlach, & Chambers, 2011). Beside all of the above fact, the route that inclusive education has become the lens that researchers see and the philosophy it follows created misconception within the education system. In principle, inclusive education aims at giving children equal opportunities to co-exist and learn together in the same classroom based on the values of non-discrimination. Therefore, inclusive education implies practices and strategies that aimed at varied needs of learners in supportive environments. Valuing diversity and providing appropriate and timely support is critical in inclusive educational practices (Mitchell, 2008). However, to the opposite of the above fact, the misconception of inclusive education can deny the right of children with special needs to access education on equal basis. The misconception can be resulted from inadequate trained teachers, negative attitudes from teachers, peers, and the general community, and lack of political will in funding inclusive education schools (Mitchell, 2008; Mittler, 2012; Forlin, 2010).

2.5.1.2 Lack of collaboration of stakeholders of education

The collaboration of teachers, principals and other education stakeholders is vitally important to succeed inclusive education and maintain a positive attitude towards inclusion. Stakeholders of education have to be firmly convinced of the benefits that inclusive practices bring to both children with and without disabilities. Even if inclusive education is enshrined in constitutions of many countries and mandated by international conventions and declarations, it will never succeed without the active involvement of parents of marginalised children, teachers, school administrators and other stakeholders of education (Unesco, 1994). Obtaining such support involves behavioural and attitudinal change, which is not an easy task or process.

There are a number of ways to accomplish such change, and the following two activities are strategies that have been used successfully to create the collaboration among the stakeholders in education:

- Classroom teachers who teach non-disabled student in group-work with their peers with disabilities should take responsibility of ensuring inclusion of the latter group.
- Integrating knowledge about the benefits of inclusive education into initial training programmes for student teachers in colleges and universities has a paramount importance for the collaboration that could be created later (Unesco, 1994; Lazarević & Vukašinović, 2013; Leyser & Kirk, 2011; Chimhenga, 2013).

Research findings in the literature of inclusive education indicate that many parents do not involve themselves much in the education and development of their children, and it is left entirely to the school community (Leyser & Kirk, 2011; Chimhenga, 2013). The lack of support from parents places much strain on educators, which, in turn, hampers the implementation of inclusive education in schools. According to Leyser and Kirk's (2011) research finding, at many schools, parental involvement is limited to the attendance of general parent meetings where parents are informed about problem behaviour that their child might be displaying, parental involvement in fundraising events, and meetings to discuss the child's progress when retention forms need to be completed. There also seems to be a lack of constructive effort on the part of schools to create and maintain effective positive partnerships through continually involving the parents in all aspects of their children's educational development (Leyser & Kirk, 2011; Chimhenga, 2013).

Against this background, the reluctance of some parents to collaborate with school communities may be attributed to the fact that they are not treated as equal partners in the development of their children's education. Owing to the lack of collaborative partnerships between educators and parents, learners are not able to comprehend how the school and their parents relate to each other in terms of the learners' inclusion. Following this, the CwDs consequently may see their educators and their parents as being separate entities, who work independently of each other regarding their education (Mafa, 2012; Unesco, 1994).

Lazarević and Vukašinović (2013) observed that as parents were not equal partners in education of their children in school issues even though collaboration among role-players is required in order to improve learners' achievement. Furthermore, research findings revealed that there were lack of constructive collaborations and encouraging communication between

the school and the parents of children with special needs (Chimhenga, 2013; Lazarević & Vukašinović, 2013; Elweke & Rodda, 2002).

As Unesco (1994) underscores, stakeholders of education particularly parents of CwDs are key players in the process of inclusion of CwDs. Hence, inclusive education cannot be achieved without collective responsibility of families, communities, schools, NGOs, and the government. Owing to this fact, parents are key entity in promoting inclusive education (Mafa, 2012).

Owing to their strong partnership, parents particularly can enhance inclusion by feeding schools with adequate information about their children. Lazarević and Vukashinovic (2013) argue that there must be strong collaboration between schools and homes with clear communication channels to make inclusion possible for all parties to have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of inclusive education. Consequently, Unesco (2005) postulates that family involvement in schools activities as being critical to the achievement of inclusive education agenda. It is argued that families are important stakeholders in children's education and as such, they should always be motivated to take an active role (Egan, 2013; Lazarević & Vukashinovic 2013). According to Unesco (1994), the high levels of poverty in many of the developing countries leads to some parents arguing that institutions meet their child's needs better than they can providing rehabilitative services as well as diet. In addition, there are positive examples of some institutions building opportunities for children to connect more closely with their local communities. As Unesco (1994) highlights, deinstitutionalisation depends on the development of effective alternative inclusive education. In line with this, social class does affect the way in which children's lives are shaped in school. Al-Zyoudi (2006) also reports that teachers usually ask for parental involvement to educate CwDs in regular schools. Therefore, social class shapes the resources that parents have at their disposal to comply with teachers' requests for assistance. The literature has shown that parental engagement of various kinds has a positive impact on many indicators of student achievement.

Egan (2013) found that parental effort in all kinds of engagement has a large effect on achievement of students with disabilities compared with school resources. Parental support is positively linked with school success, and parental involvement is legislated for the international community, including the lack of such support from a teacher's perspective is not random. However, social class has a powerful influence on parent involvement in the education of CwDs in the inclusive approach. Other research findings have also highlighted the importance of parental involvement in the area of promoting inclusion of CwDs (Al-Zyoudi, 2006; Unesco, 2009).

According to Lazarević and Vukašinović (2013)'s research findings, parents are scared to include their CwDs because of the following reasons:

- Misconception that the child will be stigmatised and discriminated;
- Their own shame because their child is different from other children;
- The child will be isolated and rejected from the environment; and
- Lack of understanding of the advantages of education guided by the low level of education of parents.

However, if the parents do not give their consent for the schools even after the measures undertaken by associates, the student's class teacher or the expert team dealing with inclusive education, the individualised method of work is applied without the preparation and execution of inclusion of the group. The same authors have also pointed out that parents of students with disabilities perceive the inclusive potential of schools as if it was unrealistic.

In principle, parents of students from vulnerable and marginalised groups (social deprivation, developmental impairment, and physical disabilities) should participate in the implementation of the inclusive education for their children and propose experts from outside the institution as members of the team. Parents may also decide to be present during educational activities in order to help the child. Educational practice in many countries has shown that the key stakeholders in the education process, parents, teachers, and the school are in completely different positions, which brings into focus the question of their cooperation and poses a

challenge for the development and maintenance of partner relations to implement inclusive education (Mafa, 2012).

2.5.1.3 Financial inadequacy

In the past (before the 1960s and 1970s), children with special needs were excluded from education because of their disabilities (Mitchell, 2005; 2010; Slee, 2006; Barrett, 2014). However, as many researchers in the field of special needs and inclusive education pointed out, civilisation has brought a new thinking regarding education of children with special needs (Forlin, 2010; 2004; Lormen, 1999; Carrington & Robinson, 2006). This paradigm shift emerged with special programmes, institutions and special educators, which functioned outside the regular schools (Ainscow, et al., 2007).

In the late 1960s and 1970s, again, the civil right movement and parental discontent with the expansion of special education and institutionalisation compelled educators to commence integration. The latter facilitated CwDs to share the same classrooms with their non-disabled peers for several hours of the day (Mitchell, 2005; Carrington & Robinson, 2006). However, the Salamanca Statement for Action in 1994 facilitated a paradigm shift in the education of PwDs. The shift from exclusion to inclusion was not only limited to PwDs, rather, it embraces other marginalised or diversified children (Unesco, 1994).

From economic perspective, the new approach has been found to be cost effective when it is compared with segregated education (Mitchell, 2010; Dyson, 2004). In fact, for some, inclusive education is seen as very costly. However, Richler (2004) reports on the cost-effectiveness of inclusive education. Subsequently, not only promoting quality education for marginalised children but inclusive education has also come to the scene with economic justification (Barrett, 2014).

One of unresolved debates even today regarding inclusive education is its financing. As Mitchell (2010) notes, the debate focused on the “cost analysis” between inclusive and segregated settings. However, Unesco (1994) postulates that inclusive education is not only cost efficient, but also cost effective when it is compared with earlier modes of education of persons with special needs (Barrett, 2014).

According to Mitchell (2010), successful implementation of an inclusive education system requires adequate budget that may not be more than the expenditure of segregated education. Hence, effective implementation of inclusion of children with special needs based on adequate allocation of finance and provision of resources. However, as many researchers agreed, the expenditure of inclusive education is not exceeding the amount of money that would be spent to execute programmes in special schools. It is widely recognised that the amount of fund can impact upon the implementation of inclusive education. Therefore, the amount of finance that governments allocate can either foster or hinder the implementation of inclusive education (Barrett, 2014; Mitchell, 2010; Wormnaes, 2004).

Though no one is sure about the overall costs of inclusive education, there is a general understanding that inclusive education systems cost less to implement and maintain than special education mode of education deliveries. In fact, it has been found difficult for personnel in the education system to be certain about the exact expenditure of inclusive education. Nevertheless, as it is stated in many document, inclusive approach of education is less expensive than segregated education (Unesco, 2009; Barrett, 2014).

Inflexibility of curriculum

According to Maghuve (2006), curriculum adaptation is modification that related specifically to instruction or content of a curriculum. Curricular adaptation involves the following:

- The learning and teaching classroom environment;
- The assessment techniques;
- The support material for the learning and teaching that enhances a learner's performance or allows at least partial participation in a learning activity; and
- Structured number of learning instructions and assessment (Marsh 1997; King, 2001).

At the same time, a curriculum has no formula since each teacher, learner and classroom is unique and whatever adaptations made will be specific to each situation (Marsh 1997; Tripp, 1994; Hall, 2009).

As researchers in the field of special needs and inclusive education advocates the rights of children with special needs to education, the curriculum should be adopted should be inclusive by specifying minimum requirements for all learners (Snell & Janney, 2000; Evans, 1997). The special educational, social, emotional, and physical needs of learners will be addressed if the curriculum developers consider CwDs during its design and development (Corbett 2001; Snell & Janney 2000; King, 2001; Glat, 2007). As William (1998) points out, curriculum adaptations do not only benefit students with disabilities, but also facilitate successful learning for all learners in acquiring mastery of context. The same author argued for many students with disabilities and for many without the key to success in the classroom lies in having appropriate adaptations, accommodations and modifications made to the instruction and other classroom activities (William, 1998; Glat, 2007).

However, research findings show that in some instances, curriculum is further found to be inflexible, especially with regard to the design and management of timetables. For instance, the timetables most often do not take care of CwDs yet. In ideal situations, a child with special needs might need more time to accomplish the same assignment that can be done by a non-disabled peer (Glat, & Oliveira 2007; Evans, 1997).

For many students with disabilities and for many without, the key to success in the classroom lies in having appropriate adaptations made to the instruction and other classroom activities. Therefore, curriculum adaptations are about recognising individuals learning styles and finding ways to employ the style most effectively in the learning situation (Janney & Snell, 2000; Corbett, 2001).

As the guideline of inclusive education of Unesco (2005) posits, an inclusive approach to curriculum policy has built-in flexibility and can be adjusted to different needs so that everyone benefits from a commonly accepted basic level of quality education. This ranges from varying the time that students devote to particular subjects, to allowing more time for guided classroom-based work (Reid, 1999; Pinar, 2004; Marsh, 1997). In the same vein, Pritchard (2005) supports this view with the belief that children learn in different ways to each other and they often choose to use a preferred learning style. Curriculum adaptation must provide the setting and climate in which learners can grow and develop their capacity, and criteria for selecting curricular content should be based on an understanding of the learners (Janney & Snell, 2000; Grundy, 1987; Maghuve, 2006).

According to Tomlinson (2001), adaptations or modifications to the curriculum do not mean creating a new or preparing alternative curriculum. Rather, it is intended to supplement the teaching and learning in an inclusive classroom. Hence, the purpose of adapting a curriculum is so that all learners who experience barriers to learning can access the curriculum. Therefore, adaptations may be practices in inclusive classrooms, which can occur when teachers decide to conduct lessons, manage the class, the timetable and assessment, which meet individual learners' unique needs by working on adapted the subject matter (Tomlinson, 1999; Maghuve, 2006; King-Sears, 2001).

As the literature indicates, the current curriculum in most countries is designed to address those children who have no disabilities and more appropriate for the majority of children (Unesco, 2003; Evans, 1997; Pritchard, 2005). Subsequently, CwDs faced barriers to

participate actively in their education because of such inconsiderate curriculum (Unesco, 2003).

There are a number of implementation concerns related to curriculum adaptation because of the diversified learners in schools. For inclusive approach to succeed, there is the need for relevant related adjustments in terms of learning styles, instructional training methods, modifications and adaptations to accommodate learners with special needs in an inclusive classroom (Reid, 2005; Unesco, 2003). For Reid (2005), identifying individual learning styles and designing appropriate instructional methods involve consideration of the visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning modes relative to various instructional methods such as printed materials, verbal lecture materials, workbook sheets, audio-visual materials, and demonstrations using concrete materials (Evans, 1997).

As Tomlinson (1999) notes, among the other things, learning programmes, work schedules and lesson plans can be adapted to cater for the individual needs of learners with special needs. The provision of support services should include modifications and adaptations that make instructional materials most effective for persons with special needs in inclusive schools (Unesco, 2003; Tomlinson, 2001). According to Unesco (2003), modifications and adaptation may include ink-print materials in Braille, large print versions of regular materials, a note taker, a peer tutor, a person who serves as a reader, captioned film, and over-head transparencies, visual materials, and taped versions of written materials. With the absence of the above modifications, the curriculum is inconsiderate and hinders the implementation of inclusive education (Unesco, 2003).

In order to implement the policy of inclusive education, researchers suggest that practitioners, in particular, personnel in the education system in general must continuously remind themselves that inclusion is about acknowledging that all children can learn and that all children need support (Tomlinson, 2001). Because of the knowledge-based curriculum, the examinations are also too much content-oriented rather than success-oriented, which is the demand of flexible inclusive curriculum (Unesco, 2003).

2.5.2 Socio-economic Barrier

One of the major problems that the world is facing today is poverty and marginalisation. These two facets of the planet are excluding people with disability not to have meaningful societal participation in economic, social and cultural activities in their community in which they live (Unesco, 2003). Funding is a major constraint to the practice of inclusion. Teaching students with disabilities in general education classrooms takes specialists and additional staff to support students' needs. Coordinating services and offering individual support to children requires additional money that many schools do not have, particularly in a tight economy (Save the Children Finland, 2010). Inadequate funding can hinder on-going professional development that keeps both specialists and classroom teachers updated on the best practices of inclusion. Inadequacies and inequalities in the education system are most evident in areas that have sustained poverty and high levels of unemployment (Unesco, 1994; 1998; Norwich, 2008). The impact of violence and HIV/AIDS can also have adverse effects.

A major constraint is serious shortages of resources – lack of schools or inadequate facilities, lack of teachers and/or shortage of qualified staff, lack of learning materials and absence of support. The inadequacy of resources available to meet the basic needs in education is a pervasive theme. It is estimated that achieving education for all will require additional financial support by countries and donors (Unesco, 1999).

2.5.3 Environmental barriers

Majority of schools are physically inaccessible to many learners, especially to those who have mobility problems. In poorer, particularly rural areas, the primary schools are often inaccessible largely because buildings are rundown or poorly maintained. They are unhealthy and unsafe for all learners (Unesco, 2003).

Obviously, a student with a disability cannot learn in an inclusive classroom if he cannot enter the room, let alone the school building. Some schools are still inaccessible to students in wheelchairs or to those other mobility aides and need elevators, ramps, paved pathways and lifts to get in and around buildings. Accessibility can go beyond passageways, stairs, ramps to recreational areas, paved pathways, and door handles. For instance, a student with cerebral

palsy may not have the ability to grasp and turn a traditional doorknob. Classrooms must be able to accommodate students' assistive technology devices, as well as other furniture to meet individual needs. Inclusive education is concerned with removing all barriers to learning, and with the participation of all learners vulnerable to exclusion and marginalisation (Unesco, 2009).

As it is enshrined in the policy guideline of Unesco (2009), creating accessible environment is a strategic approach designed to facilitate learning success for all children. An accessible environment addresses the common goals of decreasing and overcoming all exclusion from the human right to education. Mountainous terrain and poor infrastructure are context-specific and extremely difficult to overcome. Attitudes and physical barriers are the vast majority of obstacles for students with disabilities.

Most schools in rural areas are unhealthy and unsafe for all learners. Many schools are not equipped to respond to special needs, and the community does not provide local backing. Environmental barriers included doors, passageways, stairs, ramps, and recreational areas. As it is reported in Save the Children Finland (2010), a major problem identified by many students is physically getting into school.

An accessible environment is essential if CwDs are to enjoy their right to participate in the community and to have the chance to realise their full potential. Therefore, CwDs need access to all schools to reap the maximum benefits of education. Children who are educated alongside their peers have a much better chance of becoming productive members of their societies and of being integrated in the lives of their communities (Save the Children of Finland, 2010; Unesco, 2003).

2.5.4 Policies as barriers

Policy makers who do not understand or accept the concept of inclusive education are a barrier to the implementation of inclusive policies. In some countries, there may still be policies that facilitate the possibility for authorities to declare that some children are 'uneducable'. Usually, this practice applies to children with severe intellectual disability. In some other countries, the education of some specific groups of learners might be the

responsibility of all citizens. Harmful attitudes that limit and restrict PwDs are in policies governing institutions, and services meant to maintain the historic disadvantage that they have faced (Stubbs, 2008).

In its policy guidelines on inclusion in education, Unesco (2009) emphasises the importance of attitudinal change as the Precursor to Effective Policy Development. Inclusion often requires a shift in people's attitudes and values (Armstrong, 2003). Such change takes time and involves significant reassessment of conceptions and role behaviour. Therefore, raising awareness should involve both better understanding of inclusive education and those societies become more tolerant and understanding. National policies on inclusion, local support systems, and appropriate forms of curriculum and assessment are important to create the necessary context for the development of inclusion.

In this regard, the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action of (1994) posits that education policies at the national to the local levels should stipulate that a child with a disability should attend the neighbourhood school, that is, the school that would be attended if the child did not have a disability.

Educational institutions should not see themselves as the only experts on education. Supporting the policy cycle of inclusive education systems and societies can only be realised if governments are aware of the nature of the problem and are committed to solving it (Dark and Light Blind Care, 2008). This must be reflected in the willingness to undertake in-depth analysis of the size and character of the out-of-school populations and ensure their integration into quality school and other kinds of education and training programmes. Such analysis would frequently require improved data systems and data collection methods (Norwich, 2008).

Government commitment would also express itself in appropriate legal frameworks established in accordance with relevant international conventions and recommendations ensuring that inclusive education is appropriately understood and interpreted as a rights issue (Armstrong 2003). Its priority in national policy, planning and implementation should be reflected in the comparative allocation in national budgets and in requests for development

assistance from international partners. In addition, appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms need to be established to evaluate the impact of inclusive education policies as regards the learner, the education system and wider societal development (Unesco, 2009).

According to Save the Children of Finland (2010), among barriers noted to hinder progress of education for all learners are lack of appropriate national policy and legislations, which can arise from negative attitudes and ignorance. The effects of these attitudes may be reflected on parents, educators and policy makers. Even most of the available legislations that support SNE are not specific about inclusive education practices required of all players in most African countries.

Owing to this and other factors, there should be a policy to determine which category of learners may remain in special schools. Legislation should be established to ensure effective organisation and implementation of special needs programmes. Each stakeholder will be held responsible and this will promote accountability (Dark and Light Blind Care, 2008).

Discriminatory policy actually segregates CwDs and prevents them from attending school or professional training, including teaching. There is no specific policy on disability or education of CwDs (Norwich, 2008). As it is reported by Unesco (2009), in many countries, there are reasonable policies that are not implemented and have poor resource allocations to education for the CwDs. School-going age for children both with and without disabilities may vary from region-to-region and country-to-country. National governments have policies and laws stipulating the age limits for primary and secondary school. For CwDs, who often begin school later than their non-disabled peers and who sometimes require additional time, the process of setting an age limit law can prevent the completion of a basic education (Unesco, 2005; 2009).

As Oliver remarked in his book entitled, "The Politics of Disablement" (1990) in order to experience equal access to full citizenship, disabled people require some kind of collective and redistributive policy. Such redistribution needs to be in the context of a value system, which values diversity and in which PwDs are treated as belonging and contributing citizens

to the communities in which they live. However, according to Davis and Watson (2000), there is little room for making progress within the ideological framework driving current disability policies. Any educational policy must be able to meet the challenges of pluralism and enable everyone to find their place in the community to which they primarily belong and at the same time be given the means to open up to other communities. That education policy must be diversified and must be designed in such a way not to become another cause of social exclusion and that schools should foster the desire to live together (Unesco, 1999; 2005; 2009).

Education is both a right in itself and the means for realising other rights. A policy that promotes inclusive education is necessary to realise the civil, political and economic rights of all children and young people (Oliver, 1990; Davis, & Watson, 2000). Policy documents emanating from the United Nations subsequent to Jomtien also clearly identify inclusive education as a key strategy to address those who are marginalised and excluded. With this principle, education policy is a policy that involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures, and strategies, with a common vision that covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children. Therefore, a policy that is in favour of inclusive education aims to ensure that these children are afforded equal rights and opportunities in education (Norwich, 2008; Mitchel, 2008; Unesco, 2009).

As attitudinal change is precursor to effective policy development, inclusion often requires a shift in people's attitudes and values. Such change takes time and involves significant reassessment of conceptions and role behaviour (Norwich, 2008). As research findings reveal, raising awareness should involve both better understanding of inclusive education and that societies become more tolerant and understanding. National policies on inclusion, local support systems and appropriate forms of curriculum and assessment are important to create the necessary context for the development of inclusion (Unesco, 2005; 2009). According to Norwich (2008) and Mitchell (2008), the following common circumstances explain why national education laws and policies often make the inclusion of CwDs difficult:

- No specific law to protect the rights of CwDs. Since CwDs are often not recognised as equal citizens in society, generic laws in most countries are usually insufficient.
- Even though specific law exists but it is not effective owing to limited knowledge about the existing law, negative attitudes towards CwDs and limited knowledge on how to implement it.
- The existing law most often specifies that CwDs should attend special schools.
- Laws is recognised but only partially implemented within the country context, and only certain education officials actually promote the law.
- There are commonly a number of prohibitive policies relating to school examinations. In some developing countries, governments do not take into account specific needs of children with special needs in terms of completing examinations, such as extra time to complete the examinations; an assistant to transcribe the answers; an assistant to read the questions; provision of examinations in alternative formats (e.g. Braille, for students with visual impairment) (Unesco, 2009).

2.5.5 Professional barrier

Among the challenging issues facing the implementation of inclusive education in developing countries mostly today is the lack of qualified and well trained professionals. The latter should be capable of working with the increasing numbers of students with diverse needs referred for special education supports and services. In research literature, experts are attempting to delineate the numbers of schools and programmes without trained, certified special educators and are attempting to predict how many have more specialised skills (Loreman, Sharma, Forlin, & Earle, 2005). Teachers of general education must be trained in special education methodology that goes beyond a simple introductory course in SNE. As Unesco (2009) asserts, inclusive educators must be trained and must recognise the methods of the general educator. Both are specialists in differing ways. Working together also requires the working out of differences in philosophy, style, and culture that permeate the current general classroom and inculcate the development of a truly inclusive classroom in both culture and philosophy.

According to Unesco (1994), many children experience learning difficulties and therefore have SEN at some time during their schooling. As a result, schools have to find ways of

successfully educating all children, including those who have serious disadvantages and disabilities. There is an emerging consensus that children and youth with SEN should be included in the education arrangements made for the majority of children. This has led to the concept of the inclusive school. However, the challenge confronting the inclusive school is that of developing a child-centred pedagogy for all children, including those who have serious disadvantages (McDuffie, Mastropieri, & Scruggs, 2009). This in turn requires well-trained professional teachers and school managers (Norwich, 2008).

The attitudes and the skill of classroom teachers in delivering the inclusive curriculum are very crucial. However, teachers may develop negative attitudes towards inclusive classroom. This can be associated with a number of reasons. Among others, they may have inadequate training. They may have limited subject knowledge and feel more comfortable with a traditional curriculum that they had in their initial training or which is contained in textbooks. Furthermore, they may feel more confident with a traditional curriculum, which requires the teacher to make fewer decisions about how to respond to the diversity of their students and they may gain professional satisfaction that their students are learning something tangible (Tirussew, 2005). Owing to these factors, inefficient training of teachers may hinder the implementation of inclusive education (Dark and Light Blind Care, 2008; Tirussew, 2005). As most scholars agree, inclusive practice relies on knowledge, skills, understanding, resources, and attitudes. Professionalism is a necessary starting point and the availability of physical and human support has consistently been shown to be associated with inclusion (Unesco, 2009; Stubbs, 2008). Studies have indicated that teachers who have been implementing inclusive programmes, and who have active experience of inclusion possess positive attitudes. Research also highlights the importance of professional development in the establishment of teachers' positive attitudes (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). Teacher resistance to inclusion has been attributed to the challenges teachers face when attempting to implement inclusive practice. These challenges have been linked to teachers' lack of confidence relating to personal instruction, skills and availability of resources, teachers' inadequate professional development, and the ability to deal with a variety of disabilities and/or SEN (ibid, 2002).

Etenesh (2000) argues that there is a strong relationship between teacher attitude towards inclusion and teacher effectiveness. Teachers with a positive attitude towards inclusion can

provide all of their students with significantly more practice attempts at a higher level of success. Researchers have also attempted to discover the factors associated with the successful inclusion of students with disabilities. The majority of these studies in implementing inclusive education have assumed that a positive attitude towards inclusion was necessary for the successful inclusion of CwDs into inclusive classroom setting (Dark and Light Blind Care, 2008). However, teachers' attitudes are seen as the decisive factors for successful inclusion. As mentioned earlier, inclusive education has been established on the assumption that teachers are willing to admit students with disability into regular classes and be responsible for meeting their needs. However, regular classroom teachers do not perceive themselves as having the appropriate training and skills to meet the instructional needs of students with disabilities (Moberg, 1997 cited in Etenesh, 2000). Unfortunately, evaluation studies indicate that teachers do not always have the support they need to make inclusive education successful. For several years, researchers have concluded that teachers' attitudes are one of the most crucial factors in the success of inclusive education. These attitudes can create positive or negative expectations and behaviours, which increase or limit the successful inclusion of students with disabilities in educational environments. Consequently, it is important to obtain an accurate picture of teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education because these attitudes are predictors of the success of inclusion efforts for both students with and without disabilities (Schumm & Vaughn, 1995). An understanding of these attitudes is essential for curriculum planning, in-service and pre-service training programmes.

Furthermore, they express concerns about their lack of preparation for inclusion and for teaching all learners (Forlin, 2001). Nevertheless, in settings where teachers are encouraged to try out a range of teaching strategies, they report that they knew more than they thought they knew and, for the most part, children learn in similar ways. Although some children might need extra support, teachers do not distinguish between 'types' of special need when planning this support (Smith & Armstrong, 2005). Many teachers report that they did not think that they could teach such children, but their confidence and repertoire of teaching strategies developed over time. This would suggest that by 'just doing it', teachers are capable of developing knowledge and positive attitudes to inclusion. However, the training needs of staff at all levels are not being adequately met. Little or no training and capacity building

opportunities exist for special need resource persons, particularly for itinerant teachers. Most often, training workshops tend to be fragmented, uncoordinated, inadequate, unequal, and often inappropriate to the needs of developing countries (Stubbs, 2008; Avramidis, & Norwich, 2002). There are number of challenges in teacher education that faced the systems moving towards inclusive education. Generally, the level of specialists and their training are relatively high in contexts where they are available, but the level of ‘mainstream’ teachers is not a factor that affects pre-service and in-service training in teacher training colleges (Avradimis, & Norwich, 2002).

Direct training helps schools to achieve different objectives while retaining an array of strategies and models. In addition, it addresses different needs to promote self-development, creating opportunities for networking among teachers, schools and communities, and encourage teachers themselves to develop new teaching materials (Unesco, 2003). The best way to improve education for CwDs is to improve the education sector as a whole. In countries where teachers are untrained, working with large class sizes and few resources in structurally unsafe classrooms, pragmatic context-specific and cost-effective decisions are necessary (Stubbs, 2008; Dark and Light Blind Care, 2008).

2.6 Strategies to overcome barriers to implement inclusive education

2.6.1 Executing the International Convention of the Right of Persons with Disability

There is no country in the world where disabled people's rights are not violated. The discrimination, oppression, violence, and abuse faced by disabled people do not respect national boundaries, national wealth or national poverty (Oliver, 1990). Against this background, disability remains a common occurrence and children who experience disability are among the most excluded throughout the world. Article 24 of the CRPD encapsulates the right of every person who has impairment to participate fully in an inclusive, quality education on an equal basis with people who have no disabilities. Specifically, this involves the right to inclusive education at all levels of education intended to support “the full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of

respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity” (CRPD, Article 24). In addition, the realisation of the right to education requires ensuring accommodations will be made and support will be provided to facilitate effective education consistent with the goal of full inclusion.

Therefore, that tackling under-achievement and increasing inclusion of CwDs are part of a worldwide agenda (Unesco, 1999). Because of this interest, a series of national and international initiatives intended to broaden participation for vulnerable groups of children have been enacted. These include the United Nations Education for All (EFA) initiative, which was launched in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990, and the Dakar Declaration (Unesco, 2003). The rights of the children were envisaged at the UNCRC and reaffirmed through the more recent UNCRPD 2006. The UNCRC remains a landmark document that comprehensively covers civil and political, social, economic, and cultural rights of children. It takes due consideration of the survival, development, protection, and participation needs of children. It also emphasises that every child has a basic right to education and every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities, and learning needs. The Salamanca Statement posits that ‘inclusion and participation are essential to human dignity and the enjoyment and exercise of human rights’. Therefore, inclusive education largely emanates from the human rights perspective, which upholds that variations in human characteristics associated with disability, whether in cognitive, sensory, or motor ability, as inherent to the human condition and such conditions do not limit human potential (Unesco, 2009).

Inclusive education systems and societies can only be realised if governments are aware of the nature of the problem and are committed to solving it. This must be reflected in the willingness to undertake in-depth analysis of the size and character of the out-of-school populations and ensure their integration into quality school and other kinds of education and training programmes. Nations should express their commitment in establishing appropriate legal frameworks in accordance with relevant international conventions and recommendations ensuring that inclusive education is appropriately understood and interpreted as a rights issue (Stubbs, 2008; Mitchell, 2008). Its priority in national policy, planning and implementation should be reflected in the comparative allocation in national budgets and in requests for development assistance from international partners and the private sector. Therefore,

appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms need to be put in place to evaluate the impact (Allan, 2008).

As it is well stated in inclusive education guideline of Unesco, (2005), education is considered a human right for all children and has been enshrined in several international documents since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. The EFA movement and the subsequent international conventions have pointed out that particular groups of children are especially prone to exclusion or have been denied a chance to optimally participate in the learning activities, which take place in formal, informal or non-formal settings. The social, cultural, regional, and economic environments in which they live educationally disadvantage these children. The right to be educated within the regular school setting is highlighted in several international declarations. These include the world declaration on EFA (Unesco, 2005); UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunity for People with Disabilities (1993); UNCRC (1989) as well as the UNCRPD (2006). These international treaties call on all member states to ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and the Dakar Framework for Action, (2000). In an effort to promote equitable inclusive quality basic education all over the world, several conventions, declarations and recommendations have been made over time. These conventions and declarations set to bid the United Nations to promote access to EFA without any form of discrimination on whatever basis.

Below is a summary of the conventions and declarations to inclusive quality basic EFA.

Table 1 summary of the conventions and declarations to inclusive quality basic EFA

| Conventions On The Right To Education | Main Features Relevant To Inclusive Quality Basic Education |
|---|---|
| Convention Against Discrimination in Education (1960) | Right of access to education and to quality of education. |
| International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Right (1966) | Right of everyone to access all levels of education, including technical and vocational education. |
| International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) | Elimination of discrimination to race, colour, sex, language, religious, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other state. |
| International Convention on the Eliminations of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965) | Adoption of measures, particularly in the field of teaching, education, culture, and information, to combat prejudices that lead to racial discrimination. |
| Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) | Elimination of discrimination against women in the field of education. Elimination of stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women by encouraging co-education, the revision of textbooks, school programmers and the adaptation of teaching methods. |
| Convention concerning indigenous and Tribal peoples in independent countries (1989) | Right to education that is responsible to culture and needs of indigenous peoples. Elimination of prejudices ensuring that textbooks and other educational materials provide a fair, accurate and informative portrayal of the societies and cultures of these peoples. |
| Convention on the Right of the Child (1989) | Right to free and compulsory primary schooling without any type of discrimination. Emphasis on child well-being |

| | |
|--|--|
| | and development, and measures to support child care. |
| International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (1990) | Facilitation of teaching of mother tongue and culture for the children of migrant workers. |
| International Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst forms of Child Labour (1999) | Access to free basic education and vocational training for all children removed from the worst forms of child labour. |
| Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) | No exclusion from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of disabilities. Assurance of an inclusive education system at all levels and in lifelong learning. |

(Unesco, 2003; 2005; 2009; Mitchell, 2008; Norwich, 2008).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I have attempted to review the literature in relation to the education of PwDs. In the past, even today, the church is responsible for the education of PwDs in Ethiopia. Hence, the education of CwDs went back to the early Christianity era of Ethiopia. The delivery of education was church-oriented since the arrival of missionaries in Ethiopia.

With this, PwDs have experienced different setting of education ranging from institution to integration. In addition, models of disability that guide the type of provision that PwDs receive have been treated in-depth. With a paradigm shift in education, the time demands inclusion of CwDs into regular schools. However, implementing inclusive education in Ethiopia is not only at its challenge but also a dilemma. Therefore, investigating the situation has a paramount importance to tackle the challenge and resolve the dilemma. Against this background, I chose the qualitative method to undertake the research process.

Qualitative method has a deep tendency to describe, analyse, and interpret the constructive aspects of the social world (Creswell, 2007). Since qualitative method is inductive, it helps researchers to construct a useful theory within a research study (Creswell, 2007). In the process of this research work, knowledge was constructed from the individuals' experience while executing their primary education as teachers, supervisors and SNE professionals. To accomplish the research work, phenomenology as an approach, judgemental sampling, semi-structured interview, and focus group discussion as instrument and phenomenological interpretation as method of analysis have been used.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), paradigms are a systematic set of beliefs and methods that represents a refinement of what we think about the world. Paradigm can also be defined as a set of ideas, assumptions and beliefs that can shape and guide research activities of a scientific community (Jackson, 2003). Based on the underpinned assumption, I chose constructivism as a guiding framework of this research methodology. Constructivism as a paradigm allowed individuals to understand the world in which they live and work. Moreover, constructivism enabled participants of this research to develop subjective meanings of their experiences directed towards challenging factors that can hinder the implementation of inclusive education. These meanings may be varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views of respondents rather than associating meanings into a few categories or ideas.

As researchers agreed upon, paradigms are fundamental beliefs that affect the ways of conducting social research; including the choice of a particular research methodology. Therefore, research paradigm substantially influences how one undertakes a social study from the way of framing and understanding social phenomena (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Jackson, 2003; Creswell, 2003). Paradigms reflect issues related to the nature of social reality and to the nature of knowledge.

Qualitative researchers function under different ontological assumptions about the world in which they live. They do not assume that there is a single reality apart from our perceptions. Since each of the research participants experiences from their own point of view, each participant experiences a different reality. As such, the phenomenon of multiple realities exists. In general, qualitative research is based on a relativistic, constructivist ontology that posits that there is no objective reality. However, multiple realities exist among individual social actors who experience a phenomenon of interest. As the philosophical assumption of multiple realism, meaning lies in cognition and not in elements external to human beings (Lincoln & Guba, 1994). Constructivism typically involves highly detailed rich descriptions of human behaviours and opinions. The perspective is that humans construct their own reality,

and an understanding of what they do may be based on why they believe they do it. There is allowance for the multiple realities individuals might construct in an environment. The construction of meaning is the task of constructivists in the method of qualitative research (Creswell, 2007).

Hence, constructivism generally starts with the assumptions that individuals have an active role in the construction of social reality and that research methods that can capture this process of social construction are required. The ontological stance of constructivism asserts that social entities are not pre-given but that human beings attach meaning to their social reality and that as a result, human action should be considered meaningful. It is important for the researcher to reflect the specific belief and assumption that I have in the process of enquiring knowledge. The goal of this research, then, is to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation being studied. The questions become broad and general so that the participants can construct meanings or challenges to implement inclusive education based on the situation of PwDs. The more open-ended the questioning, the better, as the researcher listens carefully to what people say or do in their life setting. Often these subjective meanings are negotiated socially and historically (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Creswell, 2003).

As a constructivist, I addressed the process of interaction among individuals. It is also possible to focus on the specific contexts in which PwDs live and work in order to understand the historical and cultural settings that can impede the implementation of inclusive education. Therefore, constructivism paradigm enabled me to analyse the data inductively and observe, describe and interpret settings as they were (Patton, 1990).

3.2.1 Ontological assumption

Realities are constructed by the social interaction that happens among research participants and the researcher. There is no unitary reality about challenges of inclusion apart from our experiences. Since each of us experienced from our own point of view, each of us experienced different realities regarding challenges to implement inclusion of CwDs. Subsequently, realities from constructivism point of view are multiple in their nature and relative in that no reality is considered more true than any other. However, they may be more or less well

informed within the given context of the social actors' lives. Researchers in the philosophical belief of constructivism embrace the idea of multiple realities. In addition, they report on these multiple realities by exploring multiple forms of evidence from different individuals' perspectives and experiences that are under investigation. It is through mutual engagement that existed between the participants of the research and I constructed the subjective reality of the challenges that Ethiopia has faced in implementing inclusive education. In this regard, challenges to implement inclusive education were multiple according to experience of each individual participant of the research and the context of school environment. Consequently, the researcher assumed challenges to implement inclusive education as multiple truths in their nature as they were in the mind of each individual experience. Realities of the challenges to realise inclusion are understood in the form of abstract mental constructions that are experientially based, local, and specific (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Ontologically, I believed reality is the social construction of human mind. Owing to this, I attempted to acknowledge the truthfulness of each individual's numerous responses as they were.

3.2.2 Epistemological Assumption

Epistemology is the philosophy of knowledge or how we come to know the best way to understand any phenomenon is to view it in its context (Lincoln & Guba, 1994). Epistemologically, the best way to understand what is going on about inclusive education in Ethiopia is to become immersed in the practice and to move into the process of implementing inclusion of CwDs, which is being studied and experience what it is like to be a part of it. Subsequently, I decided to interact with the respondents of research to build knowledge. Hence, findings are created through interaction between researcher and researched participants. From epistemological point of view, I have tried to get as close as possible to participants being studied in order to establish subjective meaning of potential factors of inclusive education. Owing to this fact, subjective evidence is assembled based on individual views from research conducted in the field.

3.2.3 Axiological Assumption

Cultural and moral values have a privileged position all the way through data collection and analysis of this research. As the research intended to dig out challenges to implement inclusive education, often, there is a value-laden purpose to the research. I am not reluctant to be openly passionate about pursuing the research. Because of this, I gave great weight for the role of ethical values throughout this research. Hence, I made my values known in the study and actively reported my ethical values and biases as well as the value-laden nature of information gathered from the field. As the study dealt with inclusion of CwDs, I prioritised their personhood rather than their disability and acknowledged their right to education are among other things that I valued.

3.3 Research Method

If constructivism is chosen as a paradigm of the study, it governs the type of method that the researcher should follow. In this study, therefore, I have used qualitative research method that focused on discovering and understanding the experiences, perceptions, from the perspectives of thoughts of participants. It explores meaning, purpose, or reality (Padget, 1998). In other words, qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the natural setting. It consists of a set of interpretive and material practices that make the world visible. The qualitative method involves an interpretive and naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Innermost of qualitative inquiry is the presence of multiple truths that are socially constructed (Padget, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The approach is the description of the interactions among participants and the researchers in naturalistic settings with no strong boundaries, resulting in a flexible and open research process. These unique interactions imply that different results could be obtained from the same participant depending on who the researcher is because results are created by a participant and researcher in a given situation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

As Bhattacharjee (2012) notes, qualitative research has an interpretive character, aimed at discovering the meaning events have for the individuals who experience them and the interpretations of those meanings by the researcher. Furthermore, as the qualitative research should as closely as possible reflect the thought, feelings and experience of the people who participate in the research. Accordingly, recruiting education officials, experts, representatives of PwDs enabled me to obtain information in-depth about the challenges to implement inclusive education. In addition, the qualitative method typically involves highly detailed rich descriptions of human behaviours and opinions. Therefore, the perspective helped the participants to construct of their own reality about the challenges of inclusive education, and an understanding of what they did face in the past about the implementation of inclusion based on their experience and practising it.

In the qualitative method, the lived experiences of real people in real settings are the objects of study (Van Manen, 1990; Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). According to Creswell (2007), qualitative research is as interested in inner state as outer expression of human action. Because these inner states are not directly observable, qualitative researchers must rely on subjective judgements to bring them to light (Creswell, 2007).

The qualitative method is typically more flexible. It allows greater spontaneity and adaptation of the interaction between the researcher and the study participants. For instance, in qualitative research, the method of data gathering asks mostly open-ended questions that are not necessarily worded in exactly the same way with each participant. Hence, participants in this research were free to respond in their own words, and these responses tended to be more flexible (Jackson, 2003; Van Manen, 1990; Bogdan, 1992). Furthermore, with qualitative approach, the relationship between the participant and I as the researcher was often less formal than in other type of approaches had to be. Participants had the opportunity to respond more richly and in greater detail than it was typically expected in the case with quantitative approach. In turn, researchers have the opportunity to respond immediately to what participants say by moulding subsequent questions to information the participant has provided (Creswell, 2007).

3.4 Research Design

In a phenomenological design, the researcher can deeply understand the experience that several individuals have had on a certain phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). The main aim of phenomenology is to reduce the experience that individuals have about a certain phenomenon so that finally the description of the universal essence is created, which means to grasp the very nature of the thing (Van Manen, 1990). The origin of phenomenology has philosophical roots that went back to 1859-1938 to research work of Edmund Husserl (Van Manen, 1990). Edmund Husserl founded the philosophical approach of phenomenology (Creswell, 2007; Van Manen, 1990). Researchers have divided the approach into Hermeneutics and the Empirical Transcendental phenomenology. Martin Heidegger developed hermeneutic phenomenology approach first. However, VanManen (1990) has expanded it. Van Manen (1990) also describes this type of approach directly towards the lived experience in order to interpret texts of life of individuals.

The other major category is transcendental phenomenology conceptualised by Moustakas (Creswell, 2007). Hermeneutic phenomenology possesses an interpretive attitude that allows a phenomenon to manifest in an intelligible manner to humankind. Hermeneutic approach is different from transcendental phenomenology in its preposition of the vitality of theoretical approach for sciences that are based on disciplines (Creswell, 2007). The primary objective of a phenomenological study is to explicate the meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experiences of an individual or a group of people around a specific phenomenon (Van Manen, 1990). The phenomenologist attempts to understand human behaviour through the eyes of the participants in the study.

Hence, I chose phenomenological research to understand people's perceptions, perspectives, experiences, and understandings of the implementation of inclusive education. The phenomenological study described the meaning of several individuals' lived experience about alternative educational approach of CwDs. With this, the study attempted to locate the common nature of challenges of inclusive education, identified shared experience among various experts and locates essence of an experience what was experienced and how the participant faced challenges to implement inclusive education. As the focus of

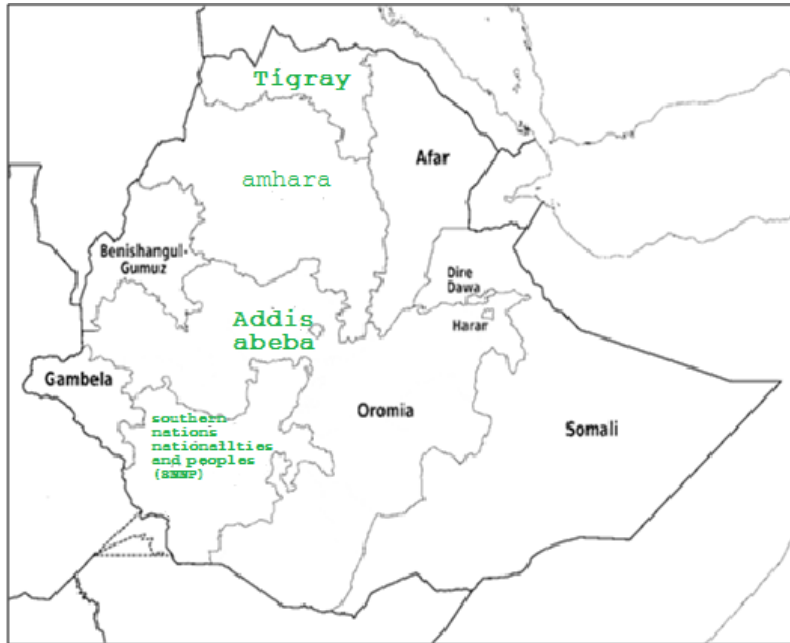
phenomenological inquiry exposes what people experience in regard to some phenomenon or other and how they interpret those experiences, the approach enabled the researcher to unearth lived experiences of individuals in order to come up with major findings of challenges of inclusive education (Creswell, 2007; Van Manen, 1990).

3.5 Location

As the title of the research tells, the study was conducted in Ethiopia at national level. According to the Centre of Census Agency (2007), the Ethiopian population is approximately 90 million. Among which the population of PwDs exceeds 70 million (CARDOS, 2010). Geographically, the nation is located at the horn of Africa bounded by Somalia to southeast, Kenya to the South, Sudan to the west and north west, Djibouti to north east and Eritrea to north. Since the fall of Derge Regime in 1991, the country has been divided in to nine regional states and two administrative cities. The research located itself in three regional states and one administrative city out of these nine regional states and two administrative cities respectively, namely, South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples, Amhara, Tigray regional states and Addis Ababa Administrative City. These sample areas were selected purposefully since they had a

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better number of registered CwDs and made effort to attempt the practice of inclusive



education.

3.6 Sampling technique and participants' profile

3.6.1 Sampling and sampling technique

For the purpose of this study, I employed purposeful sampling. According to The American Heritage College Dictionary (1993: 1206), a sample is "a portion, piece, or segment that is representative of a whole." In addition, sampling is "an act, process, or technique of selecting an appropriate sample". Therefore, sampling is a concept that transcends research studies in general and research paradigms in particular. I attempted to obtain the sample that appears to me to be resourceful of the population. Judgemental sampling is the most common sampling technique in qualitative research (Martin & Marshall, 1996). Therefore, the researcher had to select actively the most productive samples to answer the research question. This could involve developing a framework of the variables that might influence an individual's contribution and was based on the researcher's practical knowledge of the research area, the

available literature, and evidence from the study itself (Padget, 1998; Martin & Marshall, 1996). Bearing in mind the aforementioned sampling theory, all participants of this research were designated purposefully.

3.6.2 Profile of research participants

I. South Nations, nationalities and peoples

From this region, I selected four participants as I have already mentioned in the section of sampling technique. I began the interview with one of the vice heads of Regional Education Bureau. He qualified in educational planning and management with 20 years of service at different levels, including teaching at primary school. The second and third interviewees were school supervisors who qualified in Amharic language and curriculum. They had a very good exposure to primary schools in the region since they used to visit at an interval of a month. The last interviewee that had from the Region was an expert in SNE. He was in his late 50's. Since I could not come across females, all participants were males.

II. Tigray National Regional State

Differently from the previous region, I interviewed only one interviewee. However, the participant was taken among vice heads of education bureau.

III. Amhara national regional state

In the Region, I had six focus group discussion (FGD) participants. Four were male discussants but the rest two females qualified in Amharic language and SNE. The former four participants had diversified educational background. I had also interviewed one of heads of education bureau. The head served the region only for eight years, which was the least service of all. Again, the head was the youngest of all.

IV Addis Ababa City Administration

The last setting for research participants was Addis Ababa. Five interviewees took part from which one was from the MoE. His first degree is in Chemistry and he received his second degree in SNE. The other qualification was from an NGO. The participant served as a field worker, supervisor of community-based rehabilitation and currently he took position of Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Manager. I had also scheduled semi-structured interview for three participants from Education Bureau of Addis Ababa City Administration. Again, one participant was qualified in SNE. The rest two were curriculum graduates with different positions in the Bureau. From these two, one participant was school supervisor and the second one was Vice-Head of Bureau.

3.7 Instrument

Instruments of data collection of the study were much of semi-structured interview and focus group discussion.

3.7.1 Interviews

Interviews are valuable when employing the qualitative method. The flexibility of the technique allowed the investigator to probe, clarify, and create new questions based on what has already been heard (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, I chose semi-structured interview in order to obtain information in the respondent's own words, gain a description of the object of intention and elucidate the respondents' perceptions of the research issue without my imposition on them. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews helped me to get inside the respondents' experiences regarding inclusive education and discover factors that influence the implementation of inclusion of CwDs in the regular classroom. In line with this, the instrument helped me to investigate ways in which the external view was integrated with the respondent's internal view about challenges of inclusive education and uncover evidence of processes at work in the respondent's mind and personality. To do this, the interview questions roofed wide areas of policy documents, personal experiences, environmental accessibilities and others (refer to Appendices E, F, G, and H).

3.7.2 Group discussion

Many researchers agree that FGD consists of six to 12 discussants at a time. When FGD interview is compared with other instruments, it is less threatening to many research participants (Krueger, 1994). Again, the situation is helpful for participants to discuss perceptions, ideas, opinions, and thoughts freely. Therefore, a FGD enables the researcher to collect data from multiple individuals in a chorus. The type and range of data generated through the social interaction of the focus group discussants are often deeper and richer than those obtained from one-to-one interviews (Creswell, 2007). Hence, FGD could provide information about a range of ideas and feelings that individuals have about the situation of inclusive education in Ethiopia in general and in their region in particular. In this research, FGDs were experts, school supervisors and professionals in SNE. With this, the number of discussants in focus group had been six. The focus group interviewees discussed upon themes like the role of stakeholders of education towards the implementation of inclusive education and the challenges that they faced to implement inclusion of CwDs in the regular classrooms (see Appendix I).

3.8 Data Collection

3.8.1 Focus group discussion

Then, following the selection of the participant respondents, one FGD was held in Amhara Regional Education Bureau. To undertake the FGD among experts and school supervisors was with an assumption that the participants there in already mentioned regional state were near to the practice of inclusive education and policy makers. Owing to the above fact, it was promising to obtain rich the data that was obtained from the discussants. Again, this was with an assumption that they knew and had concerned about the issue much more than any other.

The FGD consisted of moderator and assistant moderator. I served as a moderator by taking the responsibility to:

- Facilitate the discussion;
- Prompt members to speak; and

- Request overly talkative members to let others talk.

The role of my assistant was to record the session using tape-recorder, taking notes, creating an environment that was conducive for group discussion, making sure everyone had a seat, and providing verification of data. Finally, he assisted me by analysing the FGD data. Using tape-based analysis, in which I listened to the tape of the FGD and then it was possible to create an abridged transcript.

3.8.2 Interview

Having developed the interview questions and getting approval from the supervisor, data were collected from the SNE experts, school supervisors and education heads in each Regional Education Bureau. I also conducted interviews with higher officials including directorate of SNE in the MoE. With all these, the necessary documents were collected from regional bureaus and federal headquarters.

3.9 Data analysis

Data analysis includes working with data, organising it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesising it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). The term theme then refers to clusters of categories that share some commonality such as reference to a single issue (Creswell, 2003). Within the qualitative paradigm, my primary choice was phenomenological analysis. Phenomenological analysis is iterative, complex, and requires creativity in its nature (Van Manen, 1990). In practice, the interpretive analysis in phenomenological studies is iterative and multi-directional. In this section of the research, the focus of analysis was on content, use of language, context, and interpretative comments (Creswell, 2007). In selecting themes, it is important not only to take into account prevalence of data but also the richness of the extracts and their capacity to highlight the themes and enrich the account as a whole.

As Creswell (2007) and Van Manen (1990) note, in phenomenological interpretive analysis, there are different stages of analysis. The process of phenomenological approach consists of four stage of analysis.

During the initial stage, it was important to read the whole transcript more than once and record some observations and reflections about the interview experience in a separate reflexive notebook and textual analysis. During the second stage, it was demanding to return to the transcript to transform the initial notes into emerging themes. Here, my task was to formulate concise phrases that contain enough particularity to remain grounded in the text and enough abstraction to offer conceptual understanding. In third stage of analysis, my task was to examine the emerging themes and clustering them together according to conceptual similarities. The task at this stage was to look for patterns in the emerging and pre-set themes and produce a structure that will be helpful in highlighting converging ideas.

Finally, I produced a table of themes and the table consisted the structure of major themes and sub-themes. An illustrative data extract or quotation was presented alongside each emerged and pre-set theme, followed by the line number so that it could be possible to check the context of the extract in the transcript.

Following the analysis of all transcripts and the construction of table of themes for each, a final table of themes will be constructed for the study as a whole. In the process of constructing the final table, the tables of themes for each participant will be reviewed and, if necessary, amended and checked again with the transcript (Bogdan, 1992). The table of themes enabled me to prepare starting points for writing up a narrative account of the research. The narrative account also consists of the interplay between the participants' account and the interpretative activity of the researcher. In constructing the final table of themes, it may be possible to amalgamate some themes or to prioritise and reduce the data included in the individual tables.

Again, from the already mentioned technique of analysis, pre-set category will guide this research. Pre-set categories are list of themes in advance, and then hunting the data for these topics. For example, I may start with concepts that I really want to know about or may begin with topics from the research literature. These themes guided me regarding directions I looked for in the data. Therefore, identifying the themes before categorising the data enabled me to search the data for text that matches the themes.

3.10 Trustworthiness

According to Creswell (2007), trustworthiness is established when findings reflect the meanings as described by the participants as closely as possible (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Padgett (1998) explains that trustworthiness is not something that just naturally occurs, but instead is the result of that the use of defined procedures. Threats to trustworthiness can include problems such as reactivity and biases on the part of the researcher and the participant (Padgett, 1998).

In this regard, Lincoln and Guba (1985) propose four criteria to evaluate trustworthiness in naturalistic research. The four proposed criteria are to replace internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity, which are common in positivist paradigm.

As Lincoln and Guba (1985) propose, the criteria are as follows:

- **Credibility**

This concept replaces the idea of *internal validity* by which researchers sought to establish confidence in the truth of their findings (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Creswell, 2003). For instance, qualitative researchers can use member checks to ensure the degree of credibility of their findings. Here participants are given their interview transcripts and the research reports so they can agree/disagree with the researcher's findings. In addition, credibility is built up through prolonged engagement in the field and persistent observation and triangulation of data. To ensure the credibility of this research, I made available the transcribed data for both interviewees and focus group discussants to go through the record and give their own feedback. The participants gave constructive feedback after analysing the transcribed data.

- **Transferability**

Guba and Lincoln (1994) underscore transferability replaces the concept of external validity. Instead of aiming for random sampling and probabilistic reasoning, qualitative researchers are encouraged to provide a detailed portrait of the setting in which the research is conducted. The aim here is to give readers enough information for them to judge the applicability of the findings to other settings.

- **Dependability**

According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), the concept dependability replaces the idea of *reliability*. It encourages researchers to provide an audit trail. For this, I have opened the documentation of instruments, methods and decisions about the research to external scrutiny.

- **Conformability**

As Guba and Lincoln (1994) note, conformability is parallel to objectivity, which is a quality criterion in positivism paradigm. Conformability is the extent to which a researcher is aware of the individual subjectivity. As Creswell (2007) points out, auditing could also be used to

establish conformability in which the researcher makes the provision of a methodological self-critical account of how the research was done. In order to make auditing possible by other researchers, I filed all collected data in a well-organised and retrievable form so that it could be made available to them if the findings of my research could be challenged.

To sum up, trustworthiness of this research was ensured using the already mentioned techniques. These include reflexivity, audit trail, triangulation, peer debriefing, member checking, and prolonged engagement in the process of data collection and intensive reading.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

According to Creswell (2007), research is mostly carried out to generate knowledge and contribute to cultural transformation, policy, practice, and generally to the well-being of the people who participate in it. At the same time, research has a positive ethical value and respect for persons, which comes out of the belief in sets of principles. Consequently, it is essential to the successful promotion of health and well-being the dignity and rights of participants. Hence, research participants must be the primary consideration in any research study (Babbie, 2002; Creswell, 2007; Grant, 2002). As Grant (2002) notes, in research, ethical considerations are more complex in qualitative than quantitative approach, more personal methods and more intrusive into the everyday world of the participant.

- **Permission**

To begin data gathering, I had a letter of consent from the MoE. Then, it was dispatched to each Regional Education Bureau. The process was also come about even to other organisations. However, individual participants were selected based on their consent. As the participants of this research were professional in SNE, officers and supervisors in Regional Education Bureau, they were aware enough about the purpose of the study. During data collection, it was with benevolence of the participants. I declare not to put participants at risk, and respect vulnerable populations throughout the study.

Participants in this research had been informed that their participation in the study was of their own free will. As a result, they had the freedom to withdraw from the study at any time

without any unfavourable consequences, and they were not harmed because of their participation or non-participation in the research. Following the clarification about the purpose and nature of the research, I obtained voluntary and informed consent from participants. I also declare to avoid any psychological, social, legal, and dignitary harm or threat to the participants. Therefore, participants had been selected equitably as much as possible so that no groups of people are unfairly included or excluded from the research.

- **Confidentiality and Anonymity of Research Participants**

Confidentiality and anonymity are the two important aspects of the privacy issue. These guiding principles also deal with offering respect and protection to research participants through assurance of confidentiality of the data shared and anonymity by not revealing the identity of the individuals and institutions involved in the research (Grant, 2002; Creswell, 2012). With this, researchers should endeavour to ensure that all data are treated with appropriate confidentiality and anonymity. Typically, anonymity is provided using pseudonyms. In most cases, researchers meet research participants in person. Nevertheless, Walzer (1983) advises researchers to follow certain steps towards providing subjects with limited anonymity.

According to Walzer (1983), in qualitative research, the investigators know subjects and anonymity is virtually non-existent. Therefore, it is important to provide subjects with a high degree of confidentiality. Researchers commonly assure subjects that anything discussed between them will be kept in strict confidence. Naturally, this requires that the researchers systematically change each subject's real name to a pseudonym or case number when reporting data. In research reports, papers, or published materials, I strongly assured to remove obvious identifiers. In my case, for example, when I recorded the interviews, I levelled the cassettes with the respondents' pseudonym instead their actual names. Finally, I assured participants about the confidentiality of their identities and the information that they had provided. During data analysis, pseudonyms have also been used.

- **Human rights**

As protection of human rights is a mandate in any research, respecting people is therefore, the recognition of participants' rights (Walzer, 1983). The latter author maintains the right to be informed about the study, freely decide whether participate in a study, and withdraw at any time without penalty (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Creswell, 2003).

- **Voluntary participation**

Researchers presume that voluntary participation is accepted norm in all scientific research (Grant, 2002; Walzer, 1983). In other words, researchers cannot force anyone to participate in their research without that person's knowledge or consent. Participation in this research is made based on voluntarily or good will of the participants. Hence, I did not force participants either psychologically or physically to take part in my research.

- **Consent**

As it is indicated in many research guidelines, informed consent covers a range of procedures that must be implemented when the study includes human subjects. Human subjects in any study must be informed about the nature of the research project, and researchers must obtain their consent prior to their participation in the study (Walker, 1983). Therefore, informed consent is defined as a subject's voluntary agreement to participate in this research study was based on a full understanding between me the researcher and the participants about the possible risks and benefits involved. Although it sounds simple, ensuring that one has actually obtained informed consent is a much more complex process than any researcher might initially presume.

In a qualitative research study, this principle is honoured by informed consent, which means making a reasonable balance between over-informing and under-informing (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Participants exercise their rights as autonomous persons to voluntarily either accept or reject the invitation to participate in the study (Walzer, 1983).

- **Risks and Benefits**

As it is documented in ethical guidelines, the principle of beneficence implies that risks to subjects are minimised and that benefits are maximised. Therefore, the principle of beneficence can help determine whether a particular research project may be ethically permissible as a determination separable from consent. That is, certain research ought not to be conducted simply because the risks involved are not proportionate to the potential (Grant, 2002; Creswell, 2012; Walzer, 1983). Therefore, the benefits of interviewees in this research are self-acknowledgment, sense of belongingness to the study issue, awareness about the subject matter, and providing a voice for the disenfranchised group.

3.12 Chapter Summary

The chapter described the methodological aspect of the research and philosophically. I have adopted constructivism for the philosophical underpinnings of this study. I briefly discussed the methodological elements of the research. As the intent of the research is to build theoretical explanation about challenges to implement inclusive education, phenomenological interpretation has been prioritised. With this, the instrument comprised document analysis, semi-structured interview, and FGD. Hence, I have selected 11 participants for the purpose of interviewed nominated six discussants for FGD. I also used purposeful sampling technique to select interviewees and focus group discussants. The analysis is in line with hermeneutic phenomenology.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction to the chapter

In the previous chapter, methodological issues were discussed and the technique that I employed to analyse the data was also determined. Here again, this chapter presents the findings in relation with the research questions and other emerged themes. As the purpose of the study is to investigate challenges that Ethiopia faced to implement inclusive education, the lived experiences of 17 personnel in the education system took part in the research. Subsequently, I went on the analysis with those themes, which represent the basic and sub-questions of the research and others, which emerged throughout data gathering.

In line with this, though I interviewed 17 participants from different hierarchy in education, I merged them according to their position that they have into four categories for the purpose of analysis. The number of themes that I identified has also been presented in the table below.

4.2 Identified themes

| Themes developed from focus group discussion | Themes developed from semi-structured interview with professionals of SNE | Themes developed from semi-structured interview with education experts/supervisors | Themes developed from semi-structured interview with education heads |
|---|---|--|--|
| Absence of inclusive policy | Ambiguity of the better educational setting | Misconceptualisation of inclusive education | The dilemma of inclusive education |
| Lack of political commitment | Inconsistent data | Unplanned awareness programmes | Limited parental involvement |
| Poor quality of teachers' training Ignorance of stakeholders about children's right to education | Structural problem | Lack of guideline to implement inclusive education | Lack of commitment among education heads |
| Shortage of teachers in SNE | Lack of commitment among stakeholders of education | Inadequate provision of adapted school material | Inconsiderate curriculum |
| Inaccessibility of school infrastructures | Skill gap | Lack of collaboration among stakeholders of education | lack of financial statute |
| Inadequate budget | Low family income | | Societal negative attitude |

4.3 Themes developed from focus group discussion

4.3.1 Absence of inclusive policy

The participants perceived as anything which containing a word 'inclusive' is regarded as a policy. For instance,

Discussant A: "*Ethiopia has inclusive education policy.*"

Discussant B: "*There is strategy to implement inclusive education.*"

Discussant C: "*There is job distribution from the top that is the MoE to each primary school.*"

Discussant D: "*The policy calls for all 'children with special needs and without special needs' to learn or have access to education.*"

Discussant F: "*the policy doesn't clearly stipulate the inclusion of 'children with special needs and without' to learn together.*"

None of the discussants mentioned clearly which policy deals with inclusive education. For them, any document that has a 'word' inclusive education is a policy. It is straight forward that policy governs the direction and overall implementation for which it is intended.

Hence, policy is more than guideline, strategic plan and any other document. However, as if it were degrading the government to declare the absence of inclusive policy, the discussants argued for the inclusivity of the education and training policy of 1994 of the country. However, the respondents would have cited the article that deals with inclusive education clearly in the policy.

To the contrary of four discussants, two of participants remarked as there was no policy in the area as follows.

Discussant E: "*There is no independent policy like; gender, HIV, children and other social issue policies.*"

Discussant F: *"There is the concept in various documents of the nation like education sector and strategic plan."*

Though the discussants were insisted on arguing for the presence of policy in inclusive education, finally, they agreed as it was not separately issued. They have also reported as nations and regions follow 'special class approach'. By this they have contradicted with their prior account of the presence of inclusive policy. The good thing was that the participants admitted as there was no even guideline to implement inclusive education at both regional and national level. What I have observed from the discussion was that the discussants were highly defensive about the government documents.

Truly, all of the focus group discussants were experts in education and have rich experience in it. Nonetheless, no discussants were aware of inclusive policy. Undoubtedly, the absence of policy in inclusive education together with oblivious policy belief of educator has hampered the implementation of inclusion of CwDs.

4.3.2 Lack of political commitment

As all of the participants agreed, if politicians had commitment, they could play a vital role to implement inclusive education. In any programme, the goodwill of the politics boosted up the execution of plans and activities. As the discussants told me, it would not be possible to allocate budget and purchase books without the goodwill of the political leaders.

Discussant A: *"Nothing is done without the knowledge of the political leaders."*

Discussant B: *"Oh! It is obvious. The political system decides /manages the overall implementation of any programme."*

Discussant D: *"It is the political system which allocates budget, human resource, and strategy to execute a programme."* The discussants' account revealed the extent to which the political leaders could play a vital role to implement any programme including inclusive education.

However, lack of commitment is observed among political leaders. Three of the discussants have evidenced this with the following account:

Discussant C: *"No guideline."*

Discussant E: *"No clear direction about the implementation of inclusive education."*

Discussant F: *"The government paid less attention for the execution of inclusive education. As a result, school population with disability accounts only 4%."*

4.3.3 Poor quality of teachers' training

As quality training could enhance inclusion, poor training of the opposite develops a feeling of incompetency among teachers. The practice in turn held back learners particularly those who have disabilities from receiving quality education. The participants acknowledged the problem as follows:

Discussant A: *"Teachers aren't capable of modifying lessons."*

Discussant C: *"Regular teachers can't communicate in sign language."*

Discussant D: *"Education bureaus use special class approach due to shortage of teachers of special needs education."*

Discussant E: *"Some graduates of special needs education have no mastery of Braille and sign language."*

As a result, CwDs could not receive quality education. This in turn indicates the extent to which our training institutions have deep-rooted problem. Teachers were not well trained in such way that they could teach those students who have different ability and background. Being proficient in Braille and sign language were not sufficient and organised for in-service trainees. Live alone the regular teachers, even those who have trained in SNE were not well equipped in skills of Braille and sign language.

Discussant B added: *“The training colleges focus on the theoretical aspect of special needs education rather than the practical.”*

Discussant C substantiated *“Trainers in training institutes aren’t preparing teachers in a way that they can support children with special needs.”*

As discussants together agreed, quality training is one of basic ingredient for quality inclusive education. However, teachers’ training has basic problems in educating children according to their specific needs.

As the discussants agreed, CwDs were not receiving quality education. For this, poor teachers’ training and shortage of trained teachers reciprocally have contributed for the delivery of poor quality education for CwDs. Though there were few teachers, who have been graduated in SNE, the training in which they have passed did not enable them to be efficient in teaching.

4.3.4 Ignorance of stakeholders about children’s right to education

As it is believed, stakeholders of education are parents, children in schools, teachers, school principals and supervisors, experts, and officers in the education system. However, there is such discrepancy among stakeholders of education regarding the right of CwDs to education.

Discussant A: *“Parents of CwDs sometimes aren’t willing to send their CwDs to schools. Even when they are invited to send, they keep quite.”*

Discussant B: *“An ideal principal in a school should support those who have special need. By asking himself/herself; what do they need? What resource does the school have?”*

Discussant C: *“Yes, CwDs have the right to education.”*

Discussant D: *“Teachers have better understanding to push parents.”* the recognition of the right of CwDs to education varies from stakeholder to stakeholder. Though there was no consistency among discussants, some told me as stakeholders of education have recognised

the right of CwDs to education. Whereas, others stakeholders could not recognise the right of children to education fully.

Discussant E asked: *"Do you know? The awareness level varies from person to person."*

Meanwhile of our discussion, the participants of the study contradicted one another. For instance, at the beginning of our discussion, they had told me it was possible to say that stakeholders of education have recognised the right of CwDs to education. However, later in the discussion, the discussants admitted as there was a gap obviously regarding recognition of the right of CwDs. If it there was not gap, the children would have been included in the regular schools rather than be segregated in special units. As they witnessed, the inaccessibility of Education Bureau itself, insufficient budget allocation and unavailability sign language interpreters in schools could be evidence to the extent to which the education system was ignorant of the right of CwDs education. Subsequently, I have observed as each stakeholder from top to down even to parents did not recognise sufficiently the right of CwDs to education.

4.3.5 Shortage of teachers in special needs education

Teachers, who are trained in special needs could facilitate the implementation of inclusion of CwDs. To do this, their number should be enough to provide professional support for general education teachers and students with disabilities themselves. However, to contrary, the country is not able to train SNE teachers adequately to meet the demand. To adhere this, the FGDs said the following:

Discussant A: *"No! I don't think. There are no trained teachers in SNE adequately."*

Discussant B: *"Sometimes, since parents who have problematic children couldn't get professional support for their children at schools, they prefer to sit their CwDs at home."*

Discussant C:

"I have observed as some parents want to send their CwDs to private or commercial schools. But since the school leaders couldn't reject the child officially, they enrolled him/her to spend

the school time in the compound by playing. Because the commercial schools don't have trained teachers in special needs or professionals in the field."

Discussant D: *"Even parents are forced to take their CwDs to primary schools where there is special classes are available rather than to the adjacent schools."*

Discussant E: *"It is not possible to say that there are special needs education teachers."*

Discussant F: *"If no shortage of special needs education teachers, the education sector is eager to integrate CwDs in to regular schools."*

As FGDs ubiquitously underlined, among a variety of factors that hindered the implementation of inclusive education was the inadequacy of teachers who have trained in SNE. To ensure the realisation of inclusion of CwDs, either the general education teachers should have training or SNE teachers should assist them in the classroom. I have observed the multifaceted impact of shortage of professionals in special needs/inclusive education on the process of inclusion. For instance, one of the discussants witnessed the extent to which parents were discontent to send their CwDs to regular schools. Even those who have the will, they had to travel kilometre to get schools where there were special classes. Since most of Ethiopians are agrarians, there is job allotment among householders. As a result, the one looks after the cattle, the other harvests, still the other collects firewood, even the other may fetch water. With all these, hunting schools that have special classes, taking and returning the child with disabilities to these schools subsequently, a task that might have no owner. Therefore, the only harsh choice was to hide their child with disability at home.

In the towns, though there are abundant commercial schools, since hiring SNE teachers is costly, and not to enrol CwDs has legal impeachment, they enrol the CwDs and 'dump' them without any special support in their compounds. Significantly, the insufficient number of teachers of SNE has hampered the integration of CwDs in to the regular schools.

4.3.6 Inaccessibility of school infrastructures

More than 85% of Ethiopians live in rural areas where the infrastructure is not yet well constructed. As a result, houses are dispersed, schools are far-flung, and the topography is full of blockages. As participants unanimously agreed, in addition to the unfriendly topography, most buildings including schools are not designed in a welcoming manner to PwDs. The discussants have confirmed the fact this way;

Discussant A: *"In our country, most schools are inaccessible and remote."*

Discussant B: *"Look! It is education bureau. It is with three floors. But if a person with physical disability or wheelchair user comes, no way to talk to the head. Unless and otherwise, somebody can carry him/her."*

Discussant C: *"The poor infrastructure challenged students with disabilities to come to school."*

The observable fact was that having to build infrastructure seems challenging for the implementers since schools are dispersed and was remote to most villagers in the country to implement inclusive education. Pathways from home to schools are cliffy. With all these, children with motor and visual disabilities particularly have encountered difficulty primarily to go school to the worst to integrate themselves with non-disabled children in school activities. The participants have also substantiated the information with the statements, which come hereafter.

Discussant D: *"The other barrier is the inaccessibility of school environment. The entrance of school gates isn't well built to allow wheelchair users."*

Discussant E: *"Mostly, classroom to classroom movement is difficult."*

As the discussants have observed, students with visual disabilities faced physical barriers to move about inside primary schools because of difficulties of school environment. The poor

infrastructure together with, pathways to classroom, offices, guidance, and counsellors challenged students with disabilities not to come to school and not to have active participation in the learning process as well. Less restricted environment could enhance the realisation of inclusion of CwDs. To the opposite of the above fact, however, most pathways are cliffy, ridge and sloppy. To jump such ways was difficult task for students with physical and visual disabilities as most of the participants of FGD were of the same mind.

4.4 Themes developed from semi-structured interview with professionals of special needs education

4.4.1 Ambiguity of the better educational setting

Among many groups of special needs, those who were getting special support in Ethiopia were only five groups of CwDs. The rest or mostly those who had invisible disability had been out of site. The information system developed by the MoE offered information about those who had visible disabilities. In addition, the interviewees reported that there was no assessment to and well-trained professional who could assess, diagnose and intervene. Even the MoE seemed indecisive about the mode of educational setting that could suit CwDs. The participants have confirmed this fact the following way:

Participant A: *“We use boarding schools for children with visual and hearing impairment from Grade 1 up to Grade 6.”*

Participant B: *“The other alternative that we used to teach CwDs is integration in the regular schools.”* As they unanimously told me, there was no inclusive approach to educate CwDs in the country so far. Rather, the two dominant modes of educational setting that the MoE used to educate CwDs were separated and integrated settings. However, though it was aborted, NGOs had commenced inclusive education in the Northern part of the country. As participants remembered, Sp A, *“Earlier, there was inclusive model school at Chilgga District, which is far by 800 kilometres from Addis Ababa.”* He continued: *“Inclusive school was established by Unicef and Norwegian fund. It was ‘Tinsis nebere’ or it was inception of inclusion.”*

Participant B narrated his experience: *“We use all. Those who have hearing and visual disabilities are being educated separately in the lower grades until they learn Braille and sign language. Then they learn together. For this, we facilitate them with material.”* Separated education and to some extent, integrated education, are the predominant modes of educational setting that the country follows currently. This is believed to be in a better situation compared to education of children with visual impairment at German school. When it is compared, though the education of children with visual disabilities were better approach than other groups of disabilities at German school, still it was not more than integration as it is observed professionally.

Hence, considering home-school distance, the economic situation of parents with disabilities, social stigma in the community and other factors; the interviewees suggested the expansion of boarding schools for CwDs in future. In line with this, when the participants were asked about the future modes of education of CwDs, they had different opinions. Participant A emphasised the necessity of strengthening the current boarding schools in Oromia, Tigray, South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples. On the contrary, participant B had different view about education setting for CwDs. As he noted:

“Inclusive is better. Whatever it is, inclusive education global agenda. What we can say that CwDs are fully educated is when they are included in the regular schools.”

As the two interviewees together agreed, the two most prevailing mode of education in Ethiopia were boarding school and special class in regular school. Though the second interviewee stated the presence of all modes of education for CwDs in South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples, what he could confirm with me was about the aforementioned modes that were the boarding school and special class in the regular school. Their account could be evidence for the experience that Ethiopia had no inclusive education. Rather as it was separated and integrated education of CwDs.

Because of many factors, implementing inclusive education could be difficult in Ethiopian context. Furthermore, I have observed as there was no consensus among professionals of special needs regarding the mode of educational setting that can suit CwDs.

4.4.2 Inconsistent data

Like other things, inconsistent data of number of PwDs has been identified as one of barriers of inclusion of the group. Participants have substantiated the fact in this way. Participant A remarked: *“We usually obtain different figure; in one specific place or village, for instance, we collect sometimes 100, 90, and the other time; 101 and so on.”*

Participant B: *“There is data inconstancy regarding PwDs.”*

One of the most challenging issues to implement inclusive education in developing countries like Ethiopia is obtaining accurate data about PwDs. Moreover, there is no information system that can provide accurate data about their number. Since the economy of the country does not allow the government to facilitate every school to be inclusive, the accurate number of schools together with their students with disabilities should be at hand in order to realise inclusion. For this, data are very important to distribute resources accordingly. However, the interview vetted the presence of data inconsistency regarding CwDs. Regarding this, the participants said the following:

Participant A: *“We don’t know the number of special classes, inclusive schools, special day schools, and others.”*

Participant B: *“We don’t have the exact number of CwDs to distribute teaching aids.”*

Subsequently, the inconsistency regarding PwDs in general and CwDs in particular had been barrier to actualise inclusion. As informants confirmed me, the federal government as well as Regional Education Bureaus did not organise the database that portrays the situation of PwDs yet. In this regard, there was no consistent data about disability across the nation. With no accurate number of CwDs, it seems difficult to facilitate schools with adapted teaching material and follow-up the education of the group.

4.4.3 Structural problem

Inclusive education is addressing the diverse need of learners. To implement inclusive education, therefore, the education system is to be structurally responsive to the diverse need of citizens. However, the existing practice was the opposite. In line with this, the interviewees have reported their experience to maintain the above statement.

Participant A: *“If we were able to hire experts of special needs education at all level of the education system, it would be possible to follow –up the inclusion of CwDs.”*

Participant B: *“No expert in special needs education at tonal and district level.”*

Administratively, the country follows a federal state structure. Following this, there are different administrative structures from the top the federal state to the bottom “Kebelie” level. Structurally, the education system was not responsive to specific needs of CwDs. As the data reveal, the civil service structure did not allow the education bureaus to hire experts at zone, “*Wereda/district*” and “*Kebelie/county*” level. This in turn, has left CwDs aside of education without concerned body. Since there was no expert in special needs and inclusive education, the inclusion of children with special needs has been a challenge.

Again, as one of the interviewee told me, there were discriminatory documents against PwDs in the structure of the education system. For instance,

Participant A: *“According to the teacher selection criteria document; a teacher should be more than 1.45 metres, not blind to lower grades, not deaf teacher for students in first and second cycle.”*

Based on the above account, the structure with different manifestation has hindered the implementation of inclusive education at all levels. Referring teacher selection criteria that discriminated teachers with disabilities in the MoE, it was undoubtedly clear how much the presence of discriminatory documents in the structure hindered the realisation of inclusion.

4.4.4 Lack of commitment among stakeholders

Number one key players in the development of inclusive system should be political leaders. Then, managers in the structure of education should be in the lead. For instance,

Participant A: *“if the curriculum is modified, teachers at school level should have commitment to execute it.”*

Participant B exclaimed, *“The most important resource in the school is the teacher.” So, though all adjustment and modifications are made with no commitment among teachers, the implementation of inclusive education would be at its challenge.”*

Fortunately, both participants agreed that teachers had an indispensable role in realising inclusion of CwDs in the regular schools. Overall, the participants have touched upon all segments of the society as critical element of inclusive education though the contribution of the segment differed according to the interviewees’ viewpoint. Hence, Participant A said: *“The commitment of the political leaders is more than anything else to include CwDs in to the regular school.”*

Participant B: *“The commitment of higher education institutions, parents and professionals as more critical components of inclusive education.”*

To begin inclusive education in Ethiopia, the commitment of all stakeholders of education is required. Until the country has committed leaders, we will wait for the commencement of inclusive education.

As Participant A said: *“Indicators of commitment to commence inclusive education are modifying the curriculum, creating accessible school environment, adapting school material, and so on.”*

Commitment is highly required to implement inclusive education. In the process of inclusive education, stakeholders are to be parents, CwDs themselves, teachers the community, education officials and others. With no goodwill of these stakeholders, the implementation of inclusive education is a challenge. Awareness raising programmes by themselves may not ensure us the presence of commitment among stakeholders of education.

4.4.5 Skills gap

When I asked the interviewees if the country has adequate teachers who have the requisite skill of Braille and sign language to implement inclusive education, they have reported the existed practice as follows:

Participant A: *“An attempt was made in three primary schools by training 85 teachers in the areas of sign language and Braille. Subsequently, the trained teachers had begun the ‘Tansies’/inception. However, they stopped it because there is no conducive environment to work. First and foremost, the teacher education training was not effective.”*

Participant B: *“No, We don't have”. In our region, we have about 1,400 cluster schools and 6,222 primary schools. However, we can't reach them with trained teachers.”*

A teacher who has not been well trained could not train others in a competent way. The number was not also as such significantly adequate to implement inclusive education. For instance, Participant A said: “*Universities and colleges are preaching rather than training.*”

As a result, the training in colleges and universities was more theoretical. Therefore, the trained teachers could not teach skills like Braille, sign language and daily living skills. The primary stakeholders of inclusive education were teachers. They have effect on the implementation of inclusive education and therefore it is crucial for teachers to receive quality training. Nonetheless, as the interviewees together reported, universities and teacher education colleges were not able to produce quality teachers in order to meet the special needs of CwDs. That was to say, graduates could give theoretical explanation about Braille and sign language. However, teachers were not equipped with the practical skills of Braille and sign language. Furthermore, both the interviewees confirmed as there was no adequate skilled teachers to implement inclusive education in Ethiopia.

4.4.6 Family income

Most Ethiopians are weak in their income to educate CwDs. Discussants agreed with the preceded statement this way.

Participant A: “*Parents don't want to be idle by taking CwDs to school and returning them from schools.*”

Participant B: “*The society perceived as it has no return to educate a child with disability.*”

The discussants reported that economic factor could be another factor to educate CwDs in the regular school. Most parents of children in every family member in Ethiopian rural areas have

economic engagement. For instance, some are shepherds, some others are farmers, still others collect firewood, and there are also others who accomplish home activities. However, when disability happens to one of those family members, he/she will be dependent on the rest to get daily food. With all this, taking that disabled child to school would be another burden to the family. Then, the choice of the family had to be either to sit the child at home or give for charity organisation.

Participant A: *"Parents' income doesn't allow them to buy adapted material for their children with special needs."*

Participant B: *"More than 80% of the population in Ethiopia lives in rural. Hence, parents of CwDs can't cover transport cost, purchase adapted school material and assign a person to take and return the child from school."*

The above accounts to what extent family economy could affect the implementation of inclusive education. The interviewed professionals in SNE have narrated what they have experienced during their field visit. While the professionals continued, severe disputes were common among parent teacher association (PTA) whenever there were school meetings. The reason behind the dispute was the inability of parents to bring their CwDs to schools. As the participants told me, even schools did not want CwDs. However, reporting a big number of school enrolment could contribute to the annual work efficiency of school principals. After the report of the beginning of each academic year, schools were not interested to follow-up on the education of the children.

Participant A: *“As I have observed, parents give priority for daily food rather than education.”*

Participant B: *“To educate the child with disability, two members of the family including the child himself/herself will be idle.”*

Since disability is a common and heart-breaking phenomenon, it usually appears in very impoverished families. As a result, not only lack of awareness and the negative attitude of the family, but living from hand-to-mouth caused the society as a whole to hinder CwDs from being included in regular schools.

4.5 Themes developed from semi-structured interview with education experts/school supervisors

4.5.1 Misconceptualising inclusive education

When the education experts and school supervisors were asked how they had conceptualised inclusive education, they replied this way.

Participant A: *“Inclusive education is teaching both CwDs and non-disabilities together. Or “tena yelechewn kalachew gar abro mastemar new.”*

Participant B: *“Inclusive education is to teach the abnormal children with normal children.”*

Participant C: *“Inclusive education is about teaching children those who have health problem.”*

Participant D: *“Inclusive education is to educate and support all children with no difference of disability versus ability.”*

Though all of the interviewees were in the education sector, they had conceptualised inclusive education differently. From the four above, the concept of integration has clouded on the first two interviewees' understanding of inclusion. However, only one among the four explained inclusive education as if it were only for CwDs. The good thing was that the fourth interviewee perceived it from diversity perspective. In fact, inclusive education is a process and it is a wide concept. Therefore, it can be conceptualised from different perspectives, namely, from equity, diversity and accessibility of education perspective. In addition, inclusive education is a strategy in which teachers teach students according to their abilities. The concept of inclusivity requires not only conducive and accessible school environment but also accepting difference as learning resource rather than a problem. It also demands avoiding derogatory language that can dehumanise learners. However, the language that the three interviewees had used (normal and abnormal) inadvertently indicates how much they were offensive when they described the situation. The three of them have defined inclusive education as teaching CwDs together with non-disabled children. Beside this, the term 'abnormal' was used as an alternative for CwDs.

The participants also reflected what they had observed the knowledge of the concept of inclusive education among teachers.

Participant A: *"Inclusive education is not clear for all teachers yet."*

Participant B: *"I usually go to fieldwork. Subsequently, I pose questions if teachers are clear about inclusive education. Relatively, junior teachers have better knowledge than senior teachers about inclusive education."*

Nearly all interviewees agreed that there was no clear understanding about inclusive education among teachers. Even as interviewee reported, there were teachers who conceptualised inclusive education as a strategy to educate CwDs separately vocational rather than academics. However, divergence was observed among junior and senior graduates. The former had conceptualised inclusive education better than the latter. Though the participants witnessed the prevalence of misunderstanding of inclusive education among teachers, the participants themselves were vague about the conceptualisation of the issue. I got a sense that the problem is widespread in the education system because the participants reported there was no clear direction regarding inclusive education of children with special needs from the education system. This in turn has been confusing experts and school supervisors in order to manage and support inclusion of children with special needs.

4.5.2 Unplanned awareness programmes

Whenever there is well organised awareness campaign against discrimination, stigma and prejudice of PwDs, school enrolment of children with special needs can increase and it is possible to ensure inclusion. The status of the awareness campaign against discrimination is not uniformly planned and constantly scheduled to achieve the intended objectives as the informants told me. For instance:

Participant A: *“The awareness programme is being delivered via general meetings, teacher parent associations, workshops, mass mobilisation, and monthly discussions of good governance.”*

Participant B: *“There is no independent awareness programme regarding CwDs.”*

Participant C: *“No, awareness programme has not been lunched so far.”*

As the participants’ account showed, even though there was the attempt, the awareness campaign could not be scheduled by its own independently targeting inclusion. Therefore, inclusion was not taken as an agenda in most regions of the country. If it had been, it would have fostered inclusion of CwDs and increased their school enrolment. When I interviewed them about the uneven issues of discussions, the participants have told me the following reports:

Participant A: *“We discuss about school enrolling, school barriers, and others are discussed.”*

Participant B: *“The increment of CwDs from year to year and their problem while schooling.”*

In fact, discussing upon issues like; school barriers, increment of school population of students with disabilities and other issues related with special needs could be awareness. Though it was not also independently, education bureaus have conducted awareness rising together with other education agenda. When the three interviewees continued, the awareness raising schedules were not sufficient since the programmes were not independently planned and organised. To the opposite of this, there was no awareness rising regarding education of CwDs in some region at all.

4.5.3 Lack of guideline to implement inclusive education

Beyond doubt, teachers and schools at grassroots level, and education heads at the top together require guidelines to let them see how to implement inclusive education. However, issuing the document was not a simple task for Ethiopian education system as I observed and

heard from the research participants. The interviewees have confirmed the absence of guideline of inclusive education as follows:

Participant A: *“No, We don’t have.”*

Participant B: *“There is strategic plan. But not guideline.”*

Participant C: *“The MoE is discussing about. But not yet.”*

Participant D: *“I think strategic plan is enough.”*

One of inclusive policy documents is having prepared a guideline of inclusive education to implement it effectively. Subsequently, if no guideline which leads how to implement inclusive education, the process would be subjected to personal interpretation. For instance, participant D reported that it had been perceived the adequacy of strategic plan to implement inclusive education.

The above evidence indicates the extent to which experts and school supervisors were not clear about guideline and strategic plan. The strategic plan may help the education system to check and balance the goal that they were supposed to achieve with the plan that they had already scheduled. If the country had guideline of inclusive education, it would help stakeholders of education to demystify the wrong perception that the stakeholders possessed and would give them clear direction about the implementation of inclusive education.

When I inquired to know why the country did not issue guideline of inclusive education, I received a variety of answers from the participants. Particularly, two of the participants reasoned out the absence of guideline of inclusive education as follows:

Participant B: *“We have about 76 ethnic groups. Therefore, preparing such a number of guidelines is costly.”*

Participant C: *“Do you know?”* [and he laughed], *“Ah ah ah ah!”* [He continued], *“Document is nothing with any commitment.”*

Truly, Ethiopia is one of multi-ethnic nations in Africa. As a result, the country is exercising multilingual curriculum. No matter how the country has multi-ethnic groups, issuing guideline of inclusive education would not be costly when it is compared with the benefits that it could bring quality, equity and social justice in our education system. More than its cost, lack of commitment among political leaders has also delayed the endorsement of inclusive guidelines.

The interviewees together agreed as there were no national and regional guidelines that were developed to guide the implementation of inclusive education. Hence, none of the participants reported the presence of guideline of inclusive education in Ethiopia. Off course, the country has designed strategic plan of special needs/inclusive education in 2006 and 2012. However, the strategic plan was a general concept that could serve as clarification of the concept of SNE. Even as one of the interviewees told me, the document was only for the purpose of state relief. The manual that was developed in some regions was equivalent to that of the strategic plan, which was issued by the MoE.

4.5.4 Inadequate provision of adapted school materials

Mostly, school directors were not willing to include CwDs in the regular schools with reason of shortage of adapted materials. Participant A: *“When I visit schools, principals request me Braille and sign language books.”*

Participant C: *“Some principals complain about shortage of finance to furnish resource rooms with special equipment.”*

Participant D: *“When schools get finance from NGOs, they aren’t able to find adapted materials in the market.”*

The participants together reported that whenever there was meeting, school directors used to forward their unease to include CwDs in the regular schools. When the participants continued narrating their experience, it was not only lack of awareness that prevailed among school administration, shortage of adapted teaching material for students with disabilities was their headache more than anything else to include the group. Hence, education experts and school supervisors in common remarked poor provision of special needs equipment as a main challenge to implement inclusion.

Besides, the participants reported why special classes were preferred to inclusive schooling.

Participant B: *"It is difficult to get adapted materials in the market."*

Participant C: *"Education bureaus aren't able to distribute equipment of special needs to every school since they don't have the accurate number of students with disabilities."*

Participant D: *"Schools don't have enough budgets to purchase equipment of special needs for students with disabilities."*

According to the participants’ experience, equipment of SNE were no longer sold in the local market. Their reason was the technology. As they told me, Braille embossers, Perkins, hearing

aids, even slates and styluses could not be manufactured locally. Consequently, principals have faced challenge of creating inclusive schools.

Further, MoE and Regional Education Bureaus did not develop a mechanism which could enable them to know schools that have/have not registered a child with disability. At the same time, the bureaus have budget insufficiency. As a result, they could not facilitate even those few schools with slate and stylus, Braille, paper, Braille textbooks, hearing aids, sign language books, wheelchairs and other adapted and modified materials with explanation of budgetary problems. As a result, insufficient provision of adapted school materials has been identified as one of challenges of inclusion of CwDs in to the regular schools. Owing to this fact, students with visual impairment were obliged to learn with no Braille. School supervision reports also tell as the group was attending lessons by listening. Children with hearing impairment had also school attendance with their physical presence. As Participant C said: *“No mandatory either policy or guideline which enforce school directors to purchase even the available adapted teaching material from the market.” This is evident that the poor provision of special need equipment has obstacle the full inclusion of CwDs in the regular schools in Ethiopia today.*

4.5.5 Lack of collaboration among stakeholders of education

The success and failure of inclusive education entirely depends on the collaboration that can exist among stakeholders of education. To make sure this fact, I had asked the interviewees to tell me level of collaboration that they established.

Participant A: *“Parents of CwDs encouragingly participate in school meetings. NGOs support us both financially and technically.”*

Participant B: *"Parents are better than before in their school participation. Though we don't go to the NGOs, we welcome them whenever they come to our office."*

Participant C: *"It differs from school to school. In some schools, parents of CwDs participate in school issues."*

Participant D: *"We don't go to the stakeholders. However, whenever NGOs come and ask what to help, we invite them to do something for CwDs."*

As the data revealed, the collaboration among the education system, parents of CwDs and NGOs was much loosened. For this, education experts and school supervisors had to take the line share to establish the network. However, since people in the education system were reluctant and there was doubt among parents of CwDs regarding their children's ability, the collaboration that had to be had been found to be at its infant stage. As a result, the poor collaboration that existed among stakeholders of education has hindered the effective inclusion of CwDs.

As one of the interviewees reported, the education bureau in which he was working had attempted to create collaboration with the community and NGOs in order to consider CwDs during school and pathway constructions. Nevertheless, the supervisor could not bring evidence for his account with written document. The rest of the three participants acknowledged as there was no such kind of effort in their perspective regions. However, the interviewees declared the presence of rare collaboration with the initiative of the NGOs. The situation implies that even the very little collaboration was not well organised. Owing to this fact, making schools inclusive in Ethiopia is unaccomplished task.

4.6 Themes developed from the semi-structured interview with education heads

4.6.1 The dilemma of inclusive education

Many factors interfere in to the inclusion of CwDs with their non-disabled counterparts. These include the dilemma that the education heads held about inclusive education hinders the full inclusion or else the quality education that CwDs could receive. In this regard, the interviewees have reported the following:

Participant A: *"I understand as inclusive education is subsector of education."*

Participant B: *"Inclusive education is an approach to educate children those who have impairment with those who are healthy/'dehinegnoch'."*

Participant C: *"Teaching children those who have different needs and problems together."*

Participant D: *"Inclusive education is about teaching those who have both visible and invisible problem with those who don't have different needs."*

As the research investigated, the interviewees were not in clear mind about the aim of inclusive education. The aim of inclusive education is to address all children with particular emphasis of the marginalised group. Nevertheless, the participants fixed the aim of inclusive education with disability only. This wrong perception of officials has clouded their mind not to have clear direction regarding the philosophy of inclusive education. As a result, the education system of Ethiopia has followed special class approach from Grade 1 to Grade 4 as well as physical integration from Grade 5 and onwards as if it were inclusion.

Hence, nearly all of the participants defined inclusive education as it was about placement of CwDs in regular school with non-disabled children. The participants reported the following while they were asked why they used to say the education of CwDs from Grade 5 and onwards 'inclusive'.

Participant B: *“Because, CwDs attend their school under the instruction of the general education teacher.”*

Participant C: *“Because, both children with and without disabilities learn together in the same classrooms.”*

The above statements of the participants indicates how much the education heads perceived inclusive education as it were merely placement with excluding all other suit of provisions. Though inclusive education is more than placement, the participants understood as if it were adequate to sit a child with disability with his/her non-disabled peer in the regular school. Following this fact, therefore, the education heads neglected the allocation of adequate budget, developing guideline, modifying teaching aids and other auxiliaries to implement inclusive education in the country.

4.6.2 Limited parental involvement

Unquestionably, parents of CwDs are stakeholders of education. Hence, their active involvement in education can enhance inclusion of the children. However, the reverse of this holds back the overall inclusion of the children. As the intent of inclusive education is to reach the marginalised group, parents are expected to have active participation in promoting education of children with special needs. To know the status of parental involvement in

education of their CwDs, therefore, I asked the one participant to tell me their experience of the incident.

Participant A: *“These days, parents of CwDs began to participate in school meetings. But they don’t mind to bring their children to school regularly with reason of household activities.”*

Participant B: *“I have observed reluctance among parents of CwDs to take part in school activities.”*

Participant C: *“Parents of CwDs attend school meetings whenever there are representatives of NGOs.”*

The participants revealed the reason parents of CwDs sometimes used to attend school meetings. According to their opinion, it was to collect aid on behalf of their CwDs rather than follow-up the education of their children. The fact tells us that parents were double-minded to follow the education of their children. The one is their doubt about their children’s ability while the other was their hand-to-mouth lives that prevented them not to have active participation in their children’s education. In addition to the above two facts, societal pressure has limited parental involvement of education of CwDs. Regarding this, the interviewees have told me the following:

Participant A: *“In the past, parents of CwDs used to hide their children due to fear of social stigma. But not now.”*

Participant C: *“As I know, still in rural parts of Ethiopia, the society associate disability with curse.”*

Participant D: *“When we go home-to-home to register children to school, parents of CwDs are not willing to expose their child with disability.”*

In a society where stigma and prejudice is prevalent, it is common to hide CwDs at home rather than to send to school. Owing to this, CwDs are denied to play, learn and be included with their counterparts. Parental fear of stigma and prejudice, together with poverty therefore, restricted them from taking part in the education of their children.

4.6.3 Lack of commitment among education heads

Awareness by itself may not ensure us the presence of commitment among education leaders. Hence, commitment is highly required to implement inclusive education. Regarding the commitment that the officials in the education had, I have observed their viewpoint as follows:

Participant A: *“We are trying to help CwDs. But, the absence of inclusive guideline, policy and other documents might not be priority of the government.”*

Participant C: *“I think it is good to have four percent of school coverage of CwDs.”*

Participant D: *“We are attempting to educate CwDs. But, what we do is what we can.”*

The above statements implied the extent to which education heads were not committed to educate CwDs. The absence of inclusive guideline and inclusive policy also indicates the poor commitment that the education system has towards inclusive education. The other thing that indicates the presence of poor commitment in the education system was the *“four percent of*

school coverage of CwDs" that the country reached. I had also enquired the participants' opinion about low school coverage of children with special needs and special class approach.

Participant A: *"The school coverage is not bad. Since we don't have additional money to train, we can't assign teacher to each school."*

Participant D: *"We have limited resource."*

Participant C: *"The financial support that comes from parents and non-governments is insignificant."*

Financial limitation has been perceived as a great barrier by education heads to educate CwDs. With this again, education officials waited for parents and NGOs to finance the education of CwDs particularly. Hence, the reported data revealed the less attention that the officials paid for the education of CwDs and their poor commitment as well. Acknowledging *"four percent of school coverage of CwDs"* as an achievement by itself indicates how the education leaders have lessened the value of education of CwDs. Based on the participants' account, lack of commitment towards inclusion of CwDs has been highly observable and prevalent problem among education heads, parents and NGO. With no goodwill of these stakeholders, the implementation of inclusive education is at risk.

4.6.4 Inconsiderate Curriculum

As interviewees overall reported, regions had nearly the same curriculum which did not consider the special needs of students with disabilities. It was adapted from the national curriculum. With this, the interviewees substantiated the fact in the following way:

Participant B: *“We have the same curriculum for both students with and without disabilities/”letenegnoc hunatenn aleelelachew”.*”

Participant C: *“We have little awareness about disability. But, we don’t know how to design considerate curriculum.”*

Participant D: *“I don’t think that our curriculum is designed the way that it can meet the special needs of students with disabilities.”*

The first thing that I have observed was the homogeneity of the national and regional curriculum in Ethiopia. The second thing is, though the curriculum was sensitive to ethnic difference, I found it as the interviewees observed, the content of curriculum was not sufficiently free from derogatory expressions and did not well address issues of special needs. Further, no explanation of diagrams, pictures and charts, for students with visual disabilities particularly. The curriculum was not free from derogatory terms and was not prepared considering CwDs. As they have observed, the curriculum did not have verbal explanations for diagrams, charts and maps for students with visual disabilities sufficiently.

Regional education heads reported the following based on their experience:

Participant B: *“Teachers can decide content modification to meet the need of students with disabilities.”*

Participant D: *“The teacher can take measure if a student with visual impairment needs more time during assignments and examination.”*

Besides the above statements, all education heads who participated in this study acknowledged the absence of instructional differentiation in the curriculum to meet the need of students with visual, hearing impairments and intellectual limited students. When the heads added, everything is left for the teacher to decide upon content, methodological and other modifications regarding students with special needs. As the participants told me, lack of knowledge, carelessness, absence of accountability and others, were the reasons for not incorporating issues of disabilities in the curriculum.

4.6.5 Lack of financial statute

As the participants narrated, there were two financial sources at school level, namely, school and block grants. The former was from the NGOs and the latter was from government. Subsequently, the interviewees gave me their witness regarding the financial practice in the education of Ethiopia as follows:

Participant A: *"Block grant is for each student per head."*

Participant B: *"School grant is for six programmes according to school improvement programme."*

Participant C: *"There is no specific budget for inclusive education."*

Participant D: *"There is no budget or financial title to execute inclusive education."*

Though inclusive education is not costly when it is compared with separated education, it requires finance to be implemented. However, as there was no budget title in the finance, it was challenge for officers to modify and adapt the learning input to suit CwDs. Since the first

that is the school grant had guideline, one percent of it would go to the education of CwDs. However, since the block grant did not have clear guideline, no one knew how much of it would go to the education of CwDs.

The interviewees together reported as there was no clear budget allocation to execute inclusive education. Truly, all regions allocated finance to support CwDs. However, it was not planned and progressive.

For instance,

Participant A witnessed, "*The budget is declining from four million to three million for the last three years.*"

Participant C reflected his experience as follows: "*the finance is allocated according to financial capacity that the region has and the need that has come from the beneficiaries.*"

All regions in which this study has been conducted did not allocate budget specifically for the execution of inclusive education. As a result, budget allocation for SNE has been dependent on the personal will of the officials. Owing to this fact, some group of SNE has been benefited more than others. To justify the above statement, interviewees have put forwarded the existed practice in the following way:

Participant A: "*There is budget for inclusive education even though the amount might not be adequate so that we are purchasing Braille books, sign language dictionary for deaf children and other assistive technology for other children with different type of disabilities like intellectual limitation and physical disabilities. We also planned to purchase embossers.*"

Participant C: "*The budget covers; to purchase Braille material, payment for examination readers, pocket money, another related expenditures.*"

Participant D: "*The region is fulfilling cane, Braille paper, slate and stylus for students with visual impairment. The region has also allocated about four million Birr for transcription of Braille textbooks.*"

However, since there was no guideline on how to use finance from block grant for inclusive education, inequality was observed even among students with disabilities. Hence, based on the interviewees' account, it could be possible to conclude that children with visual impairment were benefited much than other CwDs in each region. This is because most of the budget went to purchase slate and stylus, cane, embosser, digital voice recorder, and other equipment of Braille.

4.6.6 Societal negative attitude

Ethiopia is an agrarian society where negative attitude towards PwDs is a prevalent phenomenon.

Participant B: *“Stakeholders have doubt about success of CwDs.”*

Participant C: *“The society is in charity model because prefers to give alms rather than educating CwDs in inclusive approach.”*

Participant D: *“As I know, having a child with disability is to be cursed.”*

Particularly, in rural Ethiopia where more than 85% of the population lives, the society perceived disability as a sign of shame to the family and incapability to the person or beholder. Therefore, schooling a child with a disability is not accepted yet. Rather, the common thing that the society accustomed to do was to avoid the child with disability from home. Regarding this, the participant has reported their experience as follows:

Participant A: *“In my birth place, when disability happens to a child, the family takes him to church for church education. But, if the child is female, her fate is to be hidden.”*

Participant B: *“During school visit, I came across with 22 year old student in grade two. The school principle told me as she was hidden at home for a long time.”*

Participant C: *“As I observed in, a child with disability has the least chance to go to school from the family.”*

Participant D: *“The society believes as it is wastage of time to take and return a child with disability from school.”*

As the participants’ account revealed, the deep-rooted ignorance that the society developed has prevented CwDs from full inclusion. Even, having disability has segregated the children not only from schooling but also from the family life. Because of misperception of the society, CwDs were deprived from their right to learn and play together with their non-disabled counterparts with the pretext of church education. For one of the participant, the main challenge to implement inclusive education was the established negative attitude among the society.

4.6.7 Inadequate budget allocation

Though inclusive education is not costly when it is compared with separated education, budget adequacy is unquestionable to implement inclusion of CwDs effectively. However, as the lived experience of the participants showed, the government could not allocate adequate budget for inclusive education. To substantiate the preceded data, education officials have reported the following.

Participant A: *"There is budget for students with disabilities. But, it varies from year-to-year according to the overall finance that the government allocates to the region."*

Participant B: *"For instance, for the last three consecutive years; the region allocated four, three and two million for students with disabilities."*

Participant C: *"The one percent from school grant that is from the NGOs goes to students with disabilities whereas the allocation from the block grant/government depends according to the expenditure of the school."*

Participant D: *"The one reason to follow special class approach is our failure to furnish each school with adapted materials."*

The data imply not only the inadequacy of budget, but the education bureaus were not also allocating adequate budget for the education of CwDs. For instance, participant witnessed how the budget went down from four to two million from year-to-year. To the opposite, the number of school CwDs was progressively increasing. With this again, NGOs fixed the budget that could go to the students with disabilities whereas, the education bureaus shared out finance for students with disabilities with no plan and in accordance of the number of the group.

According to the informants' explanation inadequacy of budget and its fluctuation has been observably hindered the implementation of inclusive education this way.

Participant C: *"Materials of special needs education are very expensive; sign language dictionary for instance costs one hundred and twenty-seven Birr. At the same time, Braille*

dictionary costed us six thousand Birr per book. As a result it is difficult to distribute to each regular school."

Participant D: *"We bring with visual disabilities in to a regular school where there is special class since Braille materials are costly."*

Insufficient budget allocation forced CwDs to travel a number of kilometres to get school where there was a special class. By that, the children were segregated not only from their non-disabled counterparts but also from their family.

4.7 Chapter summary

Following the identification of themes of the research, the analysis went on with categorising the themes in line with their sources. As the researcher used semi-structured interview and focus group discussion, the themes were classified accordingly. With this again, the hierarchical position that the interviewees had in the education system was also considered to classify the themes as well. Subsequently, a number of challenges that hindered the implementation of inclusive education were identified. These challenges streamed from a variety of layers of the society among which the education system, and parents the political system, the environment and economic situation of the country had impotent factors to hold back inclusive education.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS

5.1 Introduction

The discussion of this study is situated in the analytics of the theory of ecology of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In the previous chapter, the data collected via semi-structured interview and focus group discussion were categorised in line with the participants' duties that they had in their respective bureaus. By that, researcher has identified several barriers that hindered the inclusion of CwDs in Ethiopian primary schools. The results of interview and focus group discussion data have also been amalgamated into the number of identified themes to facilitate the ensuing discussion.

In the current chapter again, the themes have been discussed sequentially in the same way they were presented in Chapter 4. Therefore, the discussion has folded a range of matters that conspicuously hindered the effective implementation of inclusive education in Ethiopia. Subsequently, themes that I chose for discussion are shown in the Table 5.1.

5.2 Themes for discussion

| Themes developed from focus group discussion | Themes developed from semi-structured interview with professionals of SNE | Themes developed from semi-structured interview with education experts/supervisors | Themes developed from semi-structured interview with education heads |
|---|---|--|--|
| Absence of inclusive policy | Ambiguity of the better educational setting | Misconceptualisation of inclusive education | The dilemma of inclusive education |
| Lack of political commitment | Inconsistent data | Unplanned awareness programmes | Limited parental involvement |
| Poor quality of teachers' training Ignorance of stakeholders about children's right to education | Structural problem | Lack of guideline to implement inclusive education | Lack of commitment among education heads |
| Shortage of teachers in SNE | Lack of commitment among stakeholders of education | Inadequate provision of adapted school material | Inconsiderate curriculum |
| Inaccessibility of school infrastructures | Skill gap | Lack of collaboration among stakeholders of education | lack of financial statute |
| Inadequate budget | Low family income | | Societal negative attitude |

5.3 Themes emerged from FGD for discussion

5.3.1 Absence of inclusive policy

As the finding portrays, the discussants had two different views about the presence of inclusive policy. However, the available documents and the final account of the discussants proved that the country does not have inclusive education policy. For instance, Article 3.2.9 of the Education and Training Policy of 1994 stipulated this statement: “Special education and training will be provided for people with special needs (p.17)”. It is possible to conclude from the above statement as the education and training policy of Ethiopia is not inclusive. Rather, the phrase ‘special education’ in the quotation reveals the medical model approach that the policy has intended to follow. Whereas, education sector development programme ESDP of 2015 remarks about the population of students with special needs in the primary schools. Nonetheless, the document has nothing about the education strategy that Ethiopia follows to educate children with special needs.

The absence of inclusive policy has obviously hampered the effect of inclusive education in Ethiopia. As a result, with no such mandatory policy, facilitating inclusive education seems unrealistic. With similar finding, Thomas (2013) has remarks that inclusive policy would make inclusion mandatory, and could force authorities to deploy resources and other support services to ensure implementation. Policy might result in clear directions and implementation strategies (2013).

As Unesco (2009) postulates, policy governs the direction and overall implementation of inclusive education for which it was intended. Hence, policy is more than guideline, strategic plan and any other document. However, the participants of the current study perceived policy as a piece of document. Therefore, for them, even strategic plans are policies though the country does not have one yet. Against this background, it is concluded that the country does not have influential document to implement inclusive education other than the Strategic Plan

of 2012. Undoubtedly, the absence of policy in inclusive education and ignorance of educators about policy have hampered the implementation of inclusion of CwDs.

5.3.2 Lack of political commitment

As Mafa (2012) confirms, decision makers have indispensable role either to dissuade transition from segregated setting to an inclusive mainstream educational system or facilitate inclusion. With this, research participants had a belief that the political leaders could play a vital role to execute any programme including inclusive education effectively. However, the practice in Ethiopia is contrary. As the finding reveals, lack of commitment is observed among political leaders to ensure inclusion of children with special needs. The finding evidenced the absence of guideline, with only 4% school population of CwDs and sceptic understanding of the concept of inclusive education among leaders to show the prevalence of the reluctance of the government to execute inclusive education in the country.

The reluctance of political leaders has resulted in insufficient budget allocation, inadequate procurement of adapted school materials, human resource, and development of inclusive guidelines. All these factors have hindered the realisation of inclusion of children with special needs. Similarly, Mafa (2012) found that political reluctance is a challenge to implement inclusive education in Zimbabwe. For him, lack of political commitment could deny adequate resource allocation to educate children with special needs in regular schools.

5.3.3 Poor quality of teachers' training

As the findings reveal, one of the greatest barriers to realise inclusion of children with special needs is because most teachers do not have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to carry out this work. With this, inadequate preparation of teachers and a lack of on-going professional development opportunities have been observed as impeding factor for inclusion (Naicker, 2006).

According to the accounts of the research participants, quality training could enhance inclusion while poor training of the opposite develops a feeling of incompetency among teachers. In this regard, researchers like Wook (2013) and Naicker (2006) have found that the

poor quality training of teachers held back CwDs from full inclusion. Conversely, Adebisi (2010) suggests that the effective implementation of inclusive education entirely depends on the high quality of teachers' training at both pre and in-service levels to equip them for and update their knowledge and skill in meeting the needs and rights of children with special needs.

The training colleges in Ethiopia focus on the theoretical aspect of SNE rather than the practical aspect. Trainers in training institutes are not preparing teachers in a way that they can support children with special needs. To substantiate this fact, Naicker (2006) underscores that the paramount importance of teachers' training to be of in-depth nature can relate theory with practice. Even, most regular education teachers have seldom or never taken courses regarding special education during their teacher training. This in turn has hindered the effective implementation of inclusion of children with special needs.

5.3.4 Ignorance of stakeholders about children's right to education

The current study reveals that stakeholders in education can include teachers, parents, school principals, and students with and without disabilities. The findings reveal the extent to which these stakeholders were unaware about the right of children with special needs to be included in the regular schools. Among the stakeholders, teachers are believed to have a better awareness than others. However, even teachers in Ethiopia were not aware of the benefits of inclusive education. This finding has been backed by the findings of Etenesh (2000). In her study in which she has analysed "The situation of PwDs in Ethiopia," she found out that teachers believed that inclusion of children with special needs would not bring academic and social benefit for the group.

Hence, a gap obviously is observed regarding recognition of the right of CwDs to education. If stakeholders in education had not been ignorant of the right of children to inclusion, the children would have been included in the regular schools rather than be segregated in special units. Evidently, the findings indicate that the inaccessibility of education bureau itself, insufficient budget allocation and unavailability of sign language interpreters in schools

demonstrate the extent to which the education system neglected the right of CwDs to education. I have observed that each stakeholder from top to down even to parents did not sufficiently recognise the right of CwDs to education. Similarly, Lazarević and Vukašinović in their study of Serbia (2013) have identified that stakeholders (teachers and parents of CwDs) were in completely different viewpoints regarding the education of CwDs.

5.3.5 Shortage of teachers in special needs education

Research findings show how trained teachers are important to support general education teachers and students with disabilities (Mafa, 2012). It is also believed that teachers who are trained in special needs could facilitate the implementation of inclusion of CwDs. To do this, their number should be adequate enough to provide professional support for general education teachers and students with disabilities themselves. However, to contrary, the country is not able to train SNE teachers adequately to meet the demand. To adhere to this, Mukhopadhyay (2009) has recognised the extent to which lack of training in SNE bare the full inclusion of CwDs in Botswana.

As the findings reveal, there was inadequate number of teachers in the field of SNE. For this, the field has been introduced to the country, colleges and universities that offer training SNE finger counted. Owing to these and other unmentioned factors, the country has faced shortage of teachers in the field to implement inclusive education. Subsequently, parents of children with special needs were obliged to travel considerable distance to get special units where there were SNE teachers seeking support for their CwDs. Hence, the findings have identified shortage of teachers in special SNE as a top factor to implement inclusive education. Similarly, Mukhopadhyay (2009) has reported how lack of trained special educators was a pervasive barrier to include learners with disabilities into regular school classrooms.

Even the situation was painful for parents to take their CwDs to very remote primary schools in which special classes were available rather than to the adjacent schools. As research participants ubiquitously underscored and among a variety of problems that hindered the implementation of inclusive education, inadequacy of teachers who have been trained in SNE was the leading factor.

5.3.6 Inaccessibility of school infrastructures

Ethiopia is one of underdeveloped sub-Saharan countries where the infrastructure is not yet well constructed. In addition, houses are dispersed, schools are far-flung, and the topography is rugged. As a result, pathways from home to schools are cliffy. In addition to the unfriendly topography, most buildings including schools were not designed in a welcoming manner to PwDs. All these geomorphological obstacles have been identified as major barriers to ensure full inclusion of CwDs particularly for those who have mobility problems.

Here, one of the participants noted his observation as follows: *“Look! It is education bureau. It is with three floors. But if a person with physical disability or wheelchair user comes, no way to talk to the head. Unless and otherwise, somebody can carry him/her.”* The above quotation proved how geomorphological accessibility became a challenge on the top to prevent inclusion. Naicker’s (2006) study corroborates the findings of this study when reporting that this way, a physically disabled person using a wheelchair for instance, required a ramp to gain access to a mainstream school, which was not provided for by the system. As the same author noted, access to education was prevented because of barriers that reflect the incapability of the system rather than the incapability of the person (Naicker, 2006).

CwDs were facing physical barriers not only outside schools. They were confronting the physical barriers even within schools. The findings confirmed that children with motor and visual disabilities particularly have encountered difficulty primarily pertaining to going to school to the worst to integrate themselves with non-disabled children in school activities. This finding is consistent with the findings of Mukhopadhyay (2009). He discovered that structural barriers limited the independent access to classroom and school activities, and impacted the participation and competence negatively the curricular and co-curricular activities of students with mobility limitations.

Personnel in the education system pointed out that buildings in most mainstream schools were not constructed with PwDs in mind. As it was clearly indicated in the findings, the poor infrastructure together with pathways to classroom, offices, guidance, and counsellors, challenged students with disabilities not to come to school and not to have active participation

in the learning process as well. Entirely, the primary schools had full of up and down topography, the inclusion of children with mobility impairment had been at its challenge. As a result, the observable fact was that provision of infrastructure seems challenging for the implementers.

5.4 Themes emerged from interview with professionals in special needs education for discussion

5.4.1 Ambiguity of the better educational setting

As the finding of the current study shows, there was no consensus among professionals in SNE regarding the better educational setting for children with special needs. Lack of trained professionals who could assess diagnosis and intervene was the first challenge.

Since there was no assessment, the placement about the better educational setting could suit CwDs. The Ministry used to apply as it would be. That is the reason the MoE seemed indecisive about the mode of educational setting that could suit CwDs. This in turn has impeded the implementation of inclusive education. Similarly, Mafa (2012) has also confirmed that professionals did not conceptualise that inclusion would lead to higher levels of academic or social learning compared to education in segregated settings. SNE professionals and the Minister of Education had to have unwavering mind. Conversely, they had two different views.

The findings confirmed as the country followed different setting to educate CwDs. Special class in regular schools, boarding schools, special day schools and others were inclined to separate education. Though integration was applied, the type of setting was not more than social and locational integration. Still, professionals in SNE had two different views about the better education approach of CwDs. In favour of this finding, researchers confirmed that it is not yet possible to say with any degree of certainty about the kinds of educational approaches work best for CwDs even in many countries of Africa (Adebisi & Onye, 2013).

As the finding reveals, the aforementioned educational settings accommodated only those who had sensory (visual, hearing and intellectual limitations) and those with physical disabilities. The rest of children with different type of special needs were not yet receiving support or special need services from the MoE. Based on this finding, it is possible to conclude that professionals in SNE were not either aware about how to support other children with special needs or reluctant about children with special needs other than those who had physical, visual, hearing and intellectual limitations.

The finding also highlights how inclusive education was incepted at a town of Chilga of Gondar, which is far by 800 kilometres' from Addis Ababa. However, the inception of the inclusion was aborted when Unicef and the Norwegian organisation withdrew from the area. Because of social stigma, home-school distance and economic problems of the families, the interviewed professionals preferred separated education to CwDs. Therefore, the aforementioned account has supposedly viewed as a big challenge to ensure inclusion of children with SNE in the country. The findings of this study resonated well with the study findings of Mafa (2012). As he found out in his research in Zimbabwe, lack of understanding about the principles of inclusive education has been a barrier to inclusion.

5.4.2 Inconsistent data

Because of cultural prejudice and societal discrimination, families do not want to expose their CwDs. As a result, it has been challenging to have accurate data about PwDs for health and other services (WHO, 2011). Similarly, the current study identified that there was no accurate data in the study regions regarding students with special needs. In line with this, researchers proved the presence of little data on CwDs and what evidence does exist is based on a smaller set of studies than available for most other non-disabled children (Cortiella & Horowitz, 2014).

Even the data that exist in different offices of the hierarchy of the education have been inconsistent and would not give a real picture about the actual number of PwDs in general and CwDs in particular. Therefore, it has been found out that not only accurate data but also data inconsistency is one of the most challenging issues to implement inclusive education in

Ethiopia. Hence, as the findings confirm, the very observable fact is that all of the participants of the research from top (education heads) to the bottom (school supervisors) were not aware about the actual number of students with disabilities whom they were serving in their respective regions. The federal government as well as Regional Education Bureaus did not establish database either for research purpose or service delivery for CwDs yet. Therefore, there was no office or sector in the education system that had consistent data about disability across the nation. In support of this, Wapling (2016) found out as absence of information is a prevalent phenomenon relating to data on numbers of CwDs in mainstream education.

The country may have economic constraint to furnish all schools with adapted materials and special equipment in order to create access for CwDs. For this, identifying schools that enrolled students with special needs and having consistent data of the number of CwDs would be indispensable fact as precursor to actualise inclusivity.

With no accurate number of CwDs, it seemed unrealistic to facilitate all schools with adapted teaching material and follow-up the education of the children. The absence of accurate and inconsistent data has reciprocally hindered the implementation of inclusive education in Ethiopia.

5.4.3 Structural problem

Inclusive education should be everywhere and for everyone. To realise this fact, responsive personnel is required in the administrative structure of the education system. When the reverse is the case, the implementation of inclusive education would be at risk. This was a slowdown incidence to ensure the inclusion of CwDs where the current study has been conducted. Administratively, the country follows a federal state structure. Following this, there are different administrative structures from the top the federal state to the bottom “Kebele” level.

However, except at federal, Regional Education Bureau and zonal level, the assigned personnel were not most often professional. To the worst, the rest hierarchies (Wereda/district and “Kebele”) levels do not have the personnel to follow-up the education of CwDs. The last two administrative structures are the grassroots where the children are at hand. Since there were no experts in SNE at Wereda/District and “Kebele,” no effort has been made to increase

enrolment of CwDs in schools. In line with this, as two researchers from Nigeria noted, when people in the administration of SNE at various levels of administrative structure are non-professionals, a task to facilitate inclusion of children with special needs might be left without the owner (Adebisi & Onye, 2013).

Though some are coming to schools, they used to travel a distance to reach special units where adapted school materials were available. As a result, the principle of inclusion has been compromised. To implement inclusive education, therefore, the education system is to be structurally responsive to the diverse needs of citizens. Otherwise, with the absence of clear line of responsibility and mechanism for coordination, monitoring and reporting across sectors, issues of inclusion would be pushed to the corner (Natasha Graham, 2014). However, the existing practice was the opposite. For this and as the data reveal, the civil service structure did not allow the education bureaus to hire experts at zone, “Wereda/district” and “Kebelle/county” level. This in turn has left CwDs aside of education without concerned body. Because the education bureaus at region level could not hire experts at grassroots level, the education system has faced gigantic challenge to actualise the principle of inclusive education.

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As respondents confirmed, a teacher selection criteria document discriminates against the equal opportunity of teachers with disabilities to employment. According to the teacher selection criteria document, a teacher should be more than 1.45 metres, not blind to lower grades, not deaf teacher for students in first and second cycle.

Based on the above discriminatory document in the MoE, the study has identified the structure barred the implementation of inclusive education at all levels. Therefore, teacher selection criteria document discriminated teachers with disabilities in the MoE. It was undoubtedly clear how much the presence of discriminatory documents in the structure hindered the realisation of inclusion.

5.4.4 Lack of commitment among stakeholders of education

As Unesco (2009) postulates, stakeholders of inclusive education are the government, teachers, school heads, students with disabilities, and their parents. Therefore, with the above

assumption, number one key players in the development of inclusive system should be political leaders. Then, personnel in the structure of education should subsequently be in the lead. In this study, both participants witnessed that teachers had an indispensable role in realising inclusion of CwDs in the regular schools. However, though teachers are among the stakeholders, they were not committed to modify the lessons that they used to teach and lacked motivation to include CwDs in their classrooms. In line with this, research findings from Ethiopia found out those teachers in Ethiopia lacked goodwill to integrate CwDs, particularly those who had severe disabilities (Etenesh, 2000).

The study has also identified that there was no good relationship between parents of CwDs and their respective school heads. Similarly, a study conducted in Zimbabwe reported the poor relations between parents and school heads as an obstacle to encourage the involvement and participation of all stakeholders of inclusive education and this negatively affects the implementation of inclusive education in the primary schools of developing countries (Chimhenga, 2013).

Overall, the participants have touched upon all segments of the society as critical element of inclusive education though the contribution of the segment differed according to the interviewees' viewpoint. As Chimhenga (2013) found out stakeholders, specifically, the school heads, regular teachers and parents had poor commitment to include CwDs in primary schools. Hence, until the country has committed leaders, we will wait for the commencement of inclusive education.

As it is already mentioned, in the process of inclusive education, parents, CwDs themselves, teachers the community and education officials, and others should be important stakeholders. With no goodwill of these stakeholders, the implementation of inclusive education is a challenge. Though attempts were observed to create awareness among stakeholders, awareness raising programmes by themselves may not ensure us the presence of commitment among stakeholders of education. Other research findings proved that inclusivity can be promoted both at school and at wider community levels and that the efforts operate with reciprocal commitment (Thomas, 2013; Chimhenga, 2013; Unesco, 2009). Indicators of

commitment to implement inclusive education are issuing policy documents, modifying the curriculum, creating accessible school environment, adapting school material and so on.

5.4.5 Skills gap among special needs education teachers

The other obstacle identified as a great barrier to implement inclusive education is inadequately trained teachers in special needs and inclusive education. Currently, the country faced inadequately skilled teachers who had no skill in using Braille and sign language to accommodate students with visual and hearing difficulties in the regular schools. The existing practice is using special class approach from Grade 1 to Grade 4 in Amhara Regional State. However, the prevalent practice of Tigray and South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples regional states is different. In the aforementioned regional states, the education personnel used to assign one graduate of SNE for five schools (school cluster). As the data indicates, the experience happened not only because of shortage of teachers in SNE but also because of lack of skilled teachers in sign language and Braille. Wook's (2013) study confirms that teachers are not being in a position to read and write Braille when handling students with visual impairments and teachers not are able to use sign language when interacting with children with hearing impairments.

Eighty-five (85) teachers attempted to undergo training in sign language and Braille in three primary schools. The trained teachers had begun the practical skill training. However, they left the primary schools since there was no conducive work environment. Similarly, researchers have reported that even if there is less attention from governments, special need educators for those with visual impairment play the role of Braille transcribers and translators for deaf students (Wook, 2013; Naicker, 2006).

Most teachers who were SNE graduates could not read and write in Braille and communicate in sign language. For this, the personnel in the education system complained about teacher education colleges and universities. For them, instructors in the higher institutions used to “preach Braille and sign language” instead of teaching the skills. As a result, the graduates could not be equipped with the practical skills of Braille and sign language. According to the

informants' reports, the existing skill gap among teachers was perceived as an impeding factor to realise inclusive education in Ethiopian 1,400 cluster schools and 6,222 primary schools.

5.4.6 Low family income

Though education is a fundamental human right, there are intervening factors that can hinder its effect. Low family income is among those factors that can interfere in the education of CwDs. Ethiopia is one of those underdeveloped countries and the majority of the population live in rural areas where infrastructure is inaccessible.

The study has identified low family income among other barriers that hindered the implementation of inclusive education. As the data witnessed, CwDs who were from low family income had no opportunity to be included in the regular schools. Since schools were remote and the topography is cliffy, CwDs particularly those who had physical and visual limitation could not manage the home–school journey. At the same time, parents were found to be less interested to accompany their children to school. With these facts, more than 96% of children with special needs have denied their right to education (MoE, 2012).

In Ethiopia, particularly in the rural areas, there is job distribution among the family members. In such society where physical dexterity has high value, CwDs could not be a big issue in the household. Therefore, low family income together with the lever value of the society excluded CwDs from inclusion. As the participants confirmed, it was not only lack of companion to go to school, even parents' inability to purchase adapted school facilities deprived CwDs of being included in the regular schools.

5.5 Themes emerged from interview with experts and school supervisors

5.5.1 Misconception of inclusive education

In Ethiopia, like many other countries especially in the developing world, the concept of inclusive education is a very recent experience in the field of in particular and education in general. Therefore, the philosophy of inclusive education is not clearly defined. Subsequently,

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based on the findings of the current study, it is possible to recognise how experts and school supervisors misinterpret inclusive education.

As it is observed from the data, derogatory terms or language that can dehumanise persons with SNE was prevalent throughout the interview. Terms like 'normal,' 'abnormal,' 'health problem', and others could be a very good evidence how much the participants were out of realm of inclusive education. The language usage of the participants indicates that personnel in Ethiopian education perceived diversity as problem rather than learning resource.

The other thing that the research has found out is participants' difficulty to differentiate "Integration versus inclusion". For them, educating children with and without disabilities in regular schools together is inclusion. As Idol (1997) notes, integration is not the same as inclusive classrooms. In an integrated setting, a student with special needs is educated partially in a special education programme, but to the maximum extent possible, they are educated in the general education programme. On the contrary, inclusive setting is 100% placement in general education (Idol, 1997).

Hence, this research understood the knowledge gap that personnel had to differentiate between integrated and inclusive settings as an impeding factor to implement inclusive education. With this again, school supervisors and education experts observed that teachers had doubts about children's academic success in inclusive setting. Similarly, other research findings reported that teachers did not believe that inclusion would lead to higher levels of academic or social learning compared to education in segregated settings (Mafa, 2012; Urt, 2009).

As Unesco (2009) postulates, an integrated education system considers the individual as a problem. Following this, the child with disability is required to fit the school environment than the school environment had to fit the child's need. As it is noted in the same document and other research findings, in the principle of inclusive education, the problem is related with school environment. As a result, the curriculum, the physical environment, learning materials, and others should be modified to meet the need of the child with disability (Unesco, 2009;

Urt, 2009; Idol, 1997). Inclusion, unlike integration, focuses on transforming education systems and schools so that they can cater to diverse students' learning needs. On the contrary, education personnel in Ethiopia propagated the practice of integration as if the practice of inclusive education existed. This misunderstanding in turn has been a big obstacle to implement inclusive education truly.

5. 5.2 Unplanned awareness campaigns

One of the prevailing barriers of inclusive education is lack of awareness about ability of children with special needs. Parents, experts of education and teachers to some extent have doubt about the academic success of CwDs in an inclusive classroom. In support of the above statement, Mafa (2012) found out that teachers did not believe inclusion would enable CwDs to be successful academically in comparison of segregated setting. Sometimes, as informants experienced, even teachers were reluctant to accommodate students with disabilities in regular schools since they were unaware about the benefits of inclusive education. Other research findings in Ethiopia have exposed teachers' reluctance to accommodate CwDs, particularly those who have severe impairment in their classrooms (Etenesh, 2000).

To change the situation and ensure inclusion, Regional Education Bureaus have made a little effort to create awareness. However, the education bureaus did not conduct the mainstreaming awareness campaigns. Even the irregular campaigns found out uneven and pass by other agenda of discussions. Owing to the above fact, no personnel has internalised the benefits of the principles of inclusive education and the right of children to education from higher officials on the top and school teachers to the bottom. This in turn prevented children not to enjoy their right to inclusion.

Moreover, the status of the awareness campaign against unawareness is poorly planned and coordinated to constantly to achieve the intended objectives. The findings have also revealed the absence of awareness creation as a component of many other activities in the education bureaus of some regional states. Hence, the study realised the insignificant contribution of the fragmented awareness programmes for full inclusion of children with special needs in regular

schools. On the contrary, the absence of uniformity of awareness raising discussions misled the stakeholders of education not to gear towards full inclusion.

5. 5.3 Lack of guideline to implement inclusive education

Ethiopia does not have a policy of inclusive education. In addition, the country does not have guidelines to execute inclusive education. Some of the personnel in the system took the adequacy of strategic plan. However, though the strategic plan can answer the question “how” in the process of implementation of inclusive education, it could not replace guideline and answer the “what” practically.

Beyond doubt, teachers and schools at grassroots level, and education heads at the top together require guidelines that could guide them what to do to implement inclusive education. The absence of e guidelines created misunderstanding among experts and education heads about what inclusive education entails. At the same time, the absence has also led the personnel to confuse the two education settings (integration and inclusive education). Following this, the education system could not identify the better educational setting that can suit the need of CwDs. The absence of inclusive education policy and guidelines inadvertently subjected the concept of inclusive education to personal interpretation. The study has entwined the absence of guideline with misconception of the role of strategic plan and guideline as well as lack of commitment that the personnel held.

This study has accentuated the absence of guidelines of inclusive education as a determinant factor to ensure inclusion of children with SNE into the regular schools. In line with this, international documents recognised that the absence of inclusive policy, guideline and related documents could hinder the implementation of inclusive education likewise other social and environmental barriers (Unesco, 2005). More than anything else, the absence of inclusive guidelines indicates the deficient political commitment of leaders to act upon inclusive education. Lewis (2009) has also showed up in his comparative study of Ethiopia and Rwanda, in the case of the former, not only the absence of inclusive guidelines but the imprecision of the concept of inclusive education that experts and school supervisors held barred the realisation of the approach.

5.5.4 Inadequate provision of adapted school materials

Most often, school directors have no interest to register students with special needs in regular schools because of shortage of adapted school materials. It is evident that the poor provision of special need equipment obstructs the full inclusion of CwDs in the regular schools in Ethiopia today. In line with this, Nwoagba (2013) highlights the shortage of adapted school materials as the major constraint and barrier to the growth of inclusive education.

Beside shortage of equipment of special needs, the worst thing was inappropriate distribution of adapted school materials since the MoE and Regional Education Bureaus had no accurate data about schools that have enrolled students with disabilities. Even, whenever there was distribution of resources, a problem of inaccuracy was observed. For instance, based on their experience, participants witnessed that Braille books of a single subject have been allocated to different schools (Volume I to one school and Volume II for another school).

In Amhara Regional State, the education bureau followed “special class” approach because of the inadequacy of equipment of SNE. Similarly, Mukhopadhyay (2009) found that the inadequacy of fund restricted schools not to modify the physical environment and purchase equipment for students with disabilities. Even the very few modified materials were concentrated in towns where special units were established. As a result, the poor provision of adapted school material hindered the expansion of inclusive education. The “special class” approach has impacted both implementation of inclusion of CwDs and school enrolment of the children since it created distance between rural and towns.

As the participants observed, the unavailability of adapted teaching materials in the market and inadequate budget allocation dawdled the full inclusion of children with special needs. Similarly, other research findings have showed that unmodified infrastructure, poor provision of equipment and learning materials have retarded the most acceptable strategy or the principles of inclusive education that could suit the special need of CwDs (Adebisi & Onye, 2013).

5. 5.5 Lack of collaboration among stakeholders of education

As research findings show, inclusive education is meaningful only when embedded in collaboration among teachers, parents, school administration, and other stakeholders of education (Thomas, 2013). However, if the opposite is being practised, the situation could impact the implementation of inclusive education. In this regard, the current study has examined the level of collaboration of stakeholders to ensure inclusion of CwDs. The findings confirmed poor collaboration that existed among the already mentioned stakeholders.

In this study, teachers were perceived as key stakeholders of education. Furthermore, teachers were supposed to be keen collaborators to realise inclusive education. However, most teachers were found to be reluctant to collaborate with others for successful implementation of inclusion. In support of this view, Wook (2013) established that many teachers think that the problems that some students have in learning should not be their responsibility because they have not been trained to deal on these matters. Other studies have also reported that regular education teachers did not collaborate as much as it fosters inclusion (Mukhopadhyay, 2009; Leyser & Kirk, 2011)

As Thomas (2013) notes, parents are important partners in the back-up maintenance and enhancement of collaboration to create inclusion. Nevertheless, this research has found out parents of CwDs in Ethiopia were neither active nor passive in advocating for inclusive education. In fact, as the data reveal, parents' collaboration in school issues of their CwDs had not been inexcusable. According to education experts and school supervisors' experiences, the collaboration of parents of CwDs fluctuated based on their income and the place that they used to live. For instance, those who were very poor attended school meetings whenever there were NGOs' representatives. The reason behind the attendance was to use their CwDs as a means of receiving aid. It was also found that parents with disabilities in towns and cities collaborated better than those who were in rural areas. Hence, the poor collaboration of parents who lived in rural areas account to more than 80% of excluded CwDs.

Other stakeholders of inclusive education are NGOs. However, because of policy-related problems and the prevalent reluctance from education personnel side, NGOs could not

contribute effectively to inclusive education in Ethiopia as they were expected. As two of the participants witnessed, there was no effort to create collaboration from education bureaus' perspective. With the above reasons, the lost collaboration that existed among schools, families of CwDs and NGOs could not foster the realisation of inclusive education. Even sometimes, poor collaboration among stakeholders in education led CwDs to be perceived as something secondary in the society. In view of the above fact, researchers remarked as collaborative practices in school could promote inclusion for all students or might lead to stigmatisation and exclusion of a large portion of student population from education or even school dropout (Wook, 2013; Naicker, 2006).

5.6 Themes emerged from interview with education heads for discussion

5.6.1 The dilemma of inclusive education among education heads

Inclusive education is a system of education in which all children, youth and adults are enrolled, actively participate and achieve in regular schools and other educational programmes regardless of their personal characteristics by minimising institutional and environmental barriers as well as by maximising of resources (URT, 2009). Though this is the fact, the dilemma that the education personnel held highly barred the implementation of inclusive education in Ethiopia. As the current study has discussed, many factors interfered into the inclusion of CwDs in regular schools. The dilemma that the education heads grappled with regarding inclusive education was the one that hindered full inclusion or else the quality education that CwDs could receive. In favour of the above finding, Mafa (2012) and Mitchel (2010) argue that there is still much scepticism and ambivalence towards the implementation of inclusive education for CwDs.

As the study identified, the four education heads from three regional states and one city administration had no clear mind about the philosophy of inclusive education. Owing to this fact, the participants had a dilemma regarding which mode of education to follow. To change the dilemma, therefore, researchers have suggested the need for consensus on the proper meaning of the philosophy, apart from the confusion and misunderstandings of the intents of inclusive education (Nwoagba, 2013).

Though the aim of inclusive education is to address all children with particular emphasis of the marginalised group, the participants attributed the aim of inclusive education to disability only. This wrong perception of officials has clouded their judgement not to have clear direction regarding the education of CwDs. As a result, the education system of Ethiopia has followed special class approach from Grade 1 to Grade 4 as well as physical integration from Grade 5 and onwards as if it were inclusion. Subsequently, the dilemma that education officials held lagged the development of inclusive education in the country. With this, the findings discovered that the concept of inclusion is a dilemma that was infused to the officials' mind, which hampered the implementation of inclusive education. To strengthen the finding, some researchers pointed out the extent of lack of understanding about what inclusive education means can be a barrier to inclusion (Mafa, 2012).

5. 6.2 Limited parental involvement

Parental involvement has a paramount importance to educate CwDs. Though some changes have been observed, still parents of children with special needs could not involve to the education of their children satisfactorily. In accordance with the finding above, research finding in Serbia underscored the insufficient parental involvement in the process of education and lack of mutual understanding and support has delayed the realisation of inclusion of children with special needs (Lazarević & Vukašinović, 2013).

As the data show, there were a number of factors for poor parental involvement in school issues among which poverty took a lead. Since the most were under poverty, they search for daily food rather than following up their children's education. Even home-school distance detached school parent relationships. Similarly, the same authors above reported the presence of challenges that parents of students with disabilities faced specifically relating to school distance to educate their children (Lazarević & Vukašinović, 2013).

Further, parental fear of stigma and prejudice restricted them from taking part in the education of their children. This intern held back the implementation of inclusive education. In collaboration with the above finding, other research findings reported how parents of CwDs

and the school abound with problems, ranging from the lack of readiness and motivation to absenteeism of school meetings (Leyser & Kirk, 2011). The education officials reaffirmed the absence of parental involvement in school issues, not only the implementation of inclusive education but it has also hindered school enrolment of CwDs in Ethiopia.

5. 6.3 Lack of commitment among education heads

Beside awareness, commitment from officials is required to implement inclusive education. Nonetheless, lack of commitment was a prevalent problem among regional and administrative education heads where this study was conducted. For instance, one of the education heads courageously said: *"I think it is good to have four percent of school coverage of CwDs"* and acknowledging *"4%" school coverage as a good achievement indicates the poor commitment and the lessen attention that the education system gave for CwDs*. The above finding of the current study is consistent with the findings of Adebisi and Onye (2013). These researchers maintain that lack of political commitment by the policy makers is a major barrier hampering the implementation of inclusive education (Adebisi & Onye, 2013).

Waiting for financial support from parents of CwDs and NGOs and other sponsors again tells of the poor commitment of education heads towards inclusive education. Receiving financial aid from parents and NGOs might not be bad. However, the education of CwDs should not be seen differently from other non-disabled children. Rather, governmental commitment should also express itself in allocating adequate finance for the meaningful inclusion of CwDs (Unesco, 2009) at the same time. It was appalling that none of the participants was apologetic about the 96% of CwDs who were denied access to education.

As the participants' account reveals, education heads perceived that the education of CwDs was not the primary responsibility of the government. *"The financial support that comes from parents and non-governments is insignificant."* The above complaint of the education heads discovered their intent of education of CwDs would not be their own responsibility. All facts that the education officials held challenged the implementation of inclusive education by and large.

5.6.4 Inconsiderate curriculum

The current study has found out that both national and regional curriculum was not considerate. The regions have a mandate to develop curriculum from Grade 1 to Grade 8. However, personnel in the regions developed the curriculum in line with the national curriculum. Following this fact, the regional curriculum was not different in its approach and dimension from the national curriculum. Hence, the drawbacks that the national curriculum had were replicated in the regional curriculum.

As the data again witnessed, the curriculum at both national and regional level was inflexible to meet the diversified needs of learners particularly of those children with special needs (Naicker, 2006; Mafa, 2012). As the researcher reported, a rigid curriculum that does not allow carrying out tests or the use of different teaching methods can be a big barrier to inclusion. Similarly, the inconsiderate curriculum in Ethiopia has hindered the full inclusion of CwDs. For instance, textbooks contained charts and diagrams without verbal description for students with visual disabilities.

Overall, as the participants agreed, teachers, textbooks and other personnel in the education were not free from using derogatory terms, which could degrade personality of PwDs. In support of the above finding, researchers noted as barriers to inclusion may arise from within the various interlocking parts of the curriculum. Among which, using derogatory language and unmodified content of a curriculum were reported as challenges to implement inclusive education (Naicker, 2006; Mafa, 2012).

5.6.5 Lack of financial statute

Lack of budgetary title has been learned as one of big obstacles to the realisation of inclusion of CwDs in the country. *Inadequate funding* could be regarded as the main reason for delayed and slow pace of development in *inclusive education* in all levels of educational system as it is well documented by Unesco (2005). Public schools in Ethiopia had two financial sources. Primarily, the government allocates finance with a title of “Block grant”. As the education

heads witnessed, the allocation of such budget was based on per-head of learners rather than the special need of each student. This fact has been confirmed by Mukhopadhyay's finding of (2009). As the same researcher reported, direct funding is not allotted to primary schools for buying equipment and structural modification.

However, the challenge of the education officials was its thoughtlessness towards students who have special needs. As participants informed, "Block grant" did not have financial guidelines. Subsequently, school principals used the aggregated budget to school priorities for the benefits of the majority. However, those students who have special needs and very few could not receive school heads' attention and were not able to claim their right since it was not documented. Similarly, as it is reported in other research works, funding guidelines impact negatively upon the implementation of inclusive education. The guidelines of finance and their implications for expenditure can either foster or hinder inclusive education (Mitchell, 2010; Unesco, 2009). Nwoagba (2013) has also identified funding as the major constraint and barrier to the development of inclusive education.

The other observed challenge to implement inclusive education was the absence of uniformity of regions in allocating budget for students with disabilities. As it is stipulated in the data, some Regional Education Bureaus had allocated four, three and two million of Birr for students with special needs in the last three years. On the contrary, other Regional Education Bureaus used to allocate based on budget surplus instead of the need of students with disabilities. This finding is consistent with the finding of Nwoagba, 2013). As the same author found out, most often, accommodation decisions are made based on budgetary considerations rather than on the assessment of the actual needs of students with disabilities (Nwoagba, 2013). This type of allocation is based on budgetary consideration rather than on the practical needs of students with disabilities.

Even inequity of financial allocation to the beneficiaries with special needs was observed. The findings reveal that a large amount of the finances has been allocated to students with visual disabilities. For instance, among equipment that were purchased by regional educations,

Braille, cane, slate, and stylus took the highest portion of the budget. Hence, with such practice, the implementation of inclusive education could not be reality.

Moreover, for the majority of the participants, problems of students with visual limitation came to their mind whenever they thought of inclusive education. This in turn violated the principle of “EFA”, which was the primary mission of inclusive education (Unesco, 1994) Hence, this partiality has been found out as one of big barriers of inclusive education in the regions where this study was conducted. The study understood the observed partiality among CwDs and lack of uniformity in financing SNE by regions was because of the absence of financial act regarding inclusive education in the country.

5. 6.6 societal negative attitude

Among countless barriers of inclusive education, the current study has highlighted negative attitude that parents, teachers and the society possessed as a leading factor to hinder the implementation of inclusive education. Similarly, Unesco (2009) recognised that negative attitudes as greatest barriers associated with inclusion in education. As the data show, negative attitude mostly exhibited itself with the cause of disability. Once the ‘disability’ happened to a child, the society perceived the ‘disability’ as a sign of shame to the family and incapability to the child or beholder. In view of this, one researcher from Ethiopia has remarked as it was a common belief in Ethiopia that a child with a disability is a punishment to the families for their sin in the past (Tirussew, 2005).

The deep-rooted ignorance that the society developed has prevented CwDs from full inclusion. Disability has segregated the children not only from schooling but also from the family life. Because of misperception of the society, CwDs

were deprived from their right to learn and play together with their non-disabled counterparts under the pretext of church education. In line with this, Natasha (2014) reports that parents were unaware of the rights of their children to education and may accept the community’s view that these children cannot learn. The attitudes and abilities of general education teachers

and education heads in particular had been major limitations to the practice of inclusive education in the regions where this study has been conducted.

The participants' experience did not enable them to predict the social, academic and psychological benefits of inclusive education. For them, the treatment that children received in segregated education unquestionably had no alternative. However, as Unesco (2009) posits, if the inclusion of children with special needs is recognised, accepted and respected, it is being involved in the learning process and social life of the community. The study investigated the negative attitudes and stereotypes that the education heads developed was because of lack of knowledge about the benefits of inclusive education. Whatever the case might be, the negative attitudes and stereotypes the society in general and the education heads in particular have dawdled the realisation of inclusive education in Ethiopia.

5.7 Chapter summary

The study has explored a number of barriers that held back the implementation of inclusive education in Ethiopia. As the study was also guided by Bronfenbrenner's theory of ecological model human development, the researcher understood the multidimensional factors that affect the implementation of inclusive education (1979; 1986; 1989). The interactional nature of micro, meso, exo, and macro systems have influenced the inclusion of children with special needs in to regular schools. Having made a number of interviews and discussion, the researcher found out the systemic nature of barriers of inclusion of the children of special needs. Subsequently, the challenges of inclusive education ranged from family to policy-related issues have embedded themselves within the micro, meso, exo, and macro systems.

CHAPTER SIX

CONTEXTUALISING THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK, LIMITATION, SUMMARY, AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

6.1 Introduction to the chapter

In the previous chapter, themes, which were identified as barriers to implement inclusive education, have been discussed in relation with research findings of other researchers. In this chapter, I contextualise the theoretical framework of the study, and highlight the strength of the study. In line with this, the contribution of the study to the body of knowledge is discussed in relation to theory, policy and the practice. The limitations of the study are highlighted with an assumption that it could be lesson to the novice researchers. Finally, I adequately summarised and put forwarded possible recommendations based on the research findings.

6.2 Contextualising the theoretical framework of the study

The theory of ecology of human development of Bronfenbrener (1989) offered me the lens to examine challenges that Ethiopian CwDs faced to be educated in an inclusive setting. With the lens of system theory, the study has identified challenges that hindered the implementation of inclusive education ranging from micro-level to macro-level within the ecological-system. Subsequently, the findings of the current study reveals that most of the challenges that the country faced to implement inclusive education stemmed from the bi-directional and interactions of CwDs and the environment within the ecology as the Figure 1 shows.

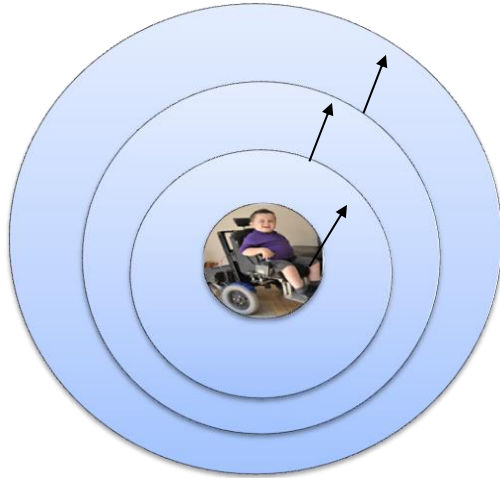


Figure 1

According to the figure above, the child with physical limitation is at the innermost of the system being encircled by the micro (the family), meso (teachers and the school environment), exo (decision of personnel in the Regional Education Bureaus) and macro (the MoE via its policies, guidelines and other documents).

Hence, the identified barriers of inclusive education have been examined from micro, meso, exo, and macro levels perspectives within the theoretical framework of the ecology of human development of Bronfenbrenner (1979).

6.2.1 Micro-system

The findings of the current study reveal there are barriers that intertwined to the micro-system. Inadequate family income has been found to be a big barrier to ensure inclusion of CwDs in the mainstream schools. In addition, unemployment in the household held back CwDs to be disregarded by the family members at micro level. With this, again, I was able to see that CwDs were receiving less attention to be equipped with adapted school materials.

6.2.2 Meso

The observable and the prevalent lack of collaboration among stakeholders in education such as teachers, school administrators and the community members as a whole obstructed the inclusion of CwDs at meso-level in the system.

6.2.3 Exo

The poor quality training of teachers has impacted the implementation of inclusive education. Colleges and universities do not have direct impact upon the CwDs. However, their graduates are future teachers of CwDs. The poor quality training has resulted sign language and Braille skills gap which in turn blunted the inclusion of CwDs.

6.2.4 Macro

Still, the level has no direct interaction with the child. Nevertheless, the absence of mandatory inclusive policy, financial statute for inclusion and the non-existence of guideline to instruct the implementation of inclusive education excluded CwDs from learning together with their non-disabled counterparts. Therefore, the theory of ecology of human development helped me to locate where the exclusionary elements stanch within the system.

6.3 The contribution of the study

The research has come up with a bunch of barriers to implement inclusive education through hermeneutics phenomenology employing the experience of personnel in the education system of the country. As a result, this study contributes to the limited corpus of literature on education of PwDs, including the emergent literature documenting the Ethiopian experience towards educating CwDs. More specifically, within the scope of educational setting for CwDs, it can alleviate the dilemma that confronts education experts, school supervisors and education heads have in implementing inclusive education. The results of this study may also contribute to the germinal literature of inclusive education with specific reference of the inclusion of CwDs documenting the lived experiences of personnel in the education system of Ethiopia.

On top of the above fact, this study also marked out the broader discourse regarding the controversial boundary between integration and full inclusive setting. Again, the results of the study further speak to the policy makers, personnel in the education system in general and stakeholders more specifically parents of CwDs and school communities in particular about the right of CwDs to education.

6.3.1 Contribution to theory perspective

Theory provides a broad and comprehensive mechanism for understanding the core aspects of inclusive education and the challenges that hindered the implementation of inclusion of CwDs. As the current study has recognised, personnel in the education are fogged up with the “integration and inclusive” to educate CwDs. When the participants were asked to define ‘inclusive education,’ they explained it as if both “integration and inclusive education@” were synonym. Furthermore, the theoretical contribution of this research work has also revealed the extent to which the misconception of inclusive education clouded the education of CwDs through personnel in the education sector. Subsequently, the theoretical explanations of this study may help stakeholders in education to conceptualise the philosophy of inclusive education clearly.

As the findings of the current research highlighted the education of CwDs is swinging between “special class, physical and social integration”. For this, the theoretical explanation of the thesis may help the personnel to have clear mind by throwing light on the misconception that they have held. Theoretically, the thesis contributes to the personnel in the education system by broadening the tenet of inclusive education.

The study findings unearthed misconceptions of inclusive education. Empirically, the study asserted that a new conceptualisation of inclusion is required. Hence, by enlightening the tenet of inclusion, major policy issues on the top and factors at home to the bottom that barred inclusion of CwDs in Ethiopia could receive due attention from the perspectives. In line with this, the thesis renewed attention to equity and social justice to critically examine what it means to be included and the nature of spaces in which students are ‘included’. Otherwise,

inclusive education might just become a push for assimilation, particularly for those students who have been severely marginalised.

6.3.2 Contribution to policy

As the participants of the research repeatedly reported it, Ethiopia has no inclusion policy. Though discussants misunderstood any document that contains the word ‘inclusive’ as if it was a policy at the beginning of the focus group discussion, by the end of the discussion, however, they have realised that the absence of inclusive policy like HIV and gender policies independently. Following this, the thesis vibrantly showed how the education of CwDs is left upon the shoulder of benevolent school principals and personnel in the education system without policy document.

Subsequently, dismantling the deep-rooted policy view of personnel in the education system through focus group discussion could also be a mounted contribution of the thesis. Hence, exposing the absence of inclusive policy as a limitation could be one of the biggest contributions of this thesis to policy makers. Again, the current study echoed the difficulty of ensuring inclusion of CwDs with the absence of mandatory national inclusive policy.

As a researcher, I have conscientised heads in education and experts in education to the bottom about the inevitability of inclusive policy to implement inclusive education effectively. With this, in the expansion of education and realising education as indispensable human right, inclusive policy is imperative to show clear commitment to create genuine inclusion of CwDs at all levels of the education system in the country.

6.3.3 Strengthening the practice

As the literature shows, inclusive education works only and if only collaboration among stakeholders, adequate provision of adapted materials, and inclusive policy in place. As the literature shows, the practice of inclusive education involves educating all children with and

without disabilities together in regular schools (Unesco, 2005). Moreover, inclusive education takes into account unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs of all children. Classrooms are now becoming more diverse with respect to students abilities. Therefore, sensitivity and awareness on the part of personnel in the education is essential to promote successful inclusion. Subsequently many variables shaping the practice of inclusive education can be partly attributed to the absence of inclusive policy, shortage of trained teachers in special needs and inclusive education, inadequate allocation of resource, lack of collaboration among stakeholders in education, and others.

As Unesco (1994) asserts, the goal of inclusive education is to break down the barriers that separate general and special education and make the included students feel like, and actually become an active member of general education classroom. The result of this study recognised that inclusivity is complex. However, the study also highlighted that inclusion should not be seen as an issue of placing learners with diverse needs and barriers in regular classes without the appropriate support. To practice inclusive education, therefore, the result of this research calls for the presence of adequate collaboration among stakeholders in education as well as mandatory inclusive policy. Among many other things, the study gave emphasis awareness raising and tackling the negative attitudes for successful practice of inclusion of CwDs in regular schools.

Hallahan, Kauffman and Pullen (2009)'s study findings resonate with the findings of this study regarding inadequate provision of resources, inflexible curriculum, and negative attitude of teachers, parents and community are among many challenges that hampered the effective practice of inclusive education. In view of the above facts, the findings of the current study identified the absence of legal frameworks, lack of political commitment, inflexible curriculum, and insufficient provision of adapted school materials, and others as barriers of inclusion of CwDs. By reversing these, the study has come up with the possibility to enhance the practice of inclusive education in Ethiopia.

6.4 Limitations of the study

According to Orodhoz (2008), limitation is an aspect of a research that researchers

know and may adversely affect the results of the study, but over which the researchers have no direct control. Hence, it is essential to note that this research was carried out during years of dilemma of inclusive education in Ethiopia. In the earlier years of the implementation of inclusive education, therefore, the controversy is expected among implementers or personnel in the education. The following are the limitations that I have identified with the accomplishment of the study:

- This study is restricted in scope because only three out of nine regional states and one out of two administrative cities were sampled. It may be helpful to determine if the experience of other regional states were incorporated in order to identify other barriers other than those challenges that I have already found out.
- In line with this, the sampled areas used in this study are considered to be narrow, which makes it challenging for the conclusions to be generalised to the whole nation.
- Owing to financial and time constraints, the sample population was restricted only to personnel in the education office. However, if teachers who faced day-to-day challenge to educate CwDs had participated in the research, it would not have been taken as a limitation of the study.
- The other major limitation of the study, which is worth doing to list, is the thoughtlessness of the researcher to invite PwDs to take part in the study. The findings of the research would be enriched from their educational experience.

6.5 Summary

As the reports of the MoE showed, more than 96% of CwDs have no access to education yet. Even the majority of those CwDs, who had access to education, were in a fuzzy educational setting. With this, the mode of education to educate CwDs is not marked out clearly. As a result, the education system has faced challenge to achieve EFA. To ensure inclusion, therefore, identifying the barriers and suggest panacea has a paramount importance to reverse the situation. Theoretically, ecology of human development guided the study to investigate challenges that Ethiopia faced to implement inclusive education. With this, I have employed

qualitative approach under the hegemony of constructivism paradigm. The hermeneutic design of the study enabled me to build knowledge about the barriers that hindered the implementation of inclusive education.

Subsequently, using semi-structured interview and focus group discussion as an instrument, I listened to experts in education, school supervisors, professionals in SNE and education vice heads. Thereafter, the data analysis went by transcribing the recorded interview verbatim. Then, using the transcribed and chunked data, I mapped the range and nature of phenomena, created typologies and found out associations between themes with a view to provide explanations for the findings. The process of mapping and interpretation was also guided by the original research aims as well as by the themes that have emerged from the data themselves. As the findings revealed, participants' account unveiled that the challenges to implement inclusive education ranged from the absence of mandatory national inclusive policy to the low income of the families of CwDs. Therefore, lack of collaboration among stakeholders of education, misconception of inclusive education, shortage of trained teachers, and poor allocation of finance, poor school infrastructure, and lack of mandatory inclusive policy were the few identified barriers among others.

6.6 Recommendations

Having investigated the education of CwDs in Ethiopia, several challenges to implement inclusive education have been identified. Subsequently, based on the findings of the study, the following major recommendations have been put forward.

6.6.1 MoE

The necessity of financial guideline: Block and school grant are the two financial sources for Ethiopian schools. The former comes from the government and the latter is from non-governmental organisation. Still the latter allocates one percent of the budget for children with special needs whereas, the block grant that comes from the government does not have guideline. As a result, students with special needs were not beneficiaries. Based on this

finding of the study, I recommend that the government should issue financial statute to promote and ensure inclusion of children with special needs and their right to education.

Inclusive policy: As the informants reported, one of the biggest barriers to implement inclusive education was lack of mandatory inclusive policy that directs and ensures the inclusion of CwDs. Hence, MoE should develop mandatory policy that has an obligatory rather than advisory role.

Legislation: The documentary findings indicate the absence of laws supporting inclusive education in Ethiopia. Subsequently, educational legislation should be supported by complementary legislation within the areas of finance, curriculum development and accessibility of school environment.

The necessity of collaboration: As the findings of the current study reveal, lack of collaboration has hindered the implementation of inclusive education. Owing to this fact, I urge MoE to create collaboration among stakeholders in the education system. Hence, MoE on the top, Regional Education Bureaus in the middle and schools to the bottom should create collaboration among parents and NGOs to ensure inclusion of CwDs and their right to education.

Education leaders: MoE and universities within education programmes should be directly involved in the advocacy, development, and implementation of inclusive education courses. Their presence within the course selection and development can increase the importance of courses during the delivery at higher education institutions.

Shortage of trained teachers: The findings of this study reveal how shortage of trained teachers in special needs affected the inclusion of CwDs. For this, some of the participants linked the problem to training gap of colleges. Subsequently, MoE should guide and ensure the adequacy and course relevance of teacher education training colleges to enable newly graduate teachers to address diversified learners.

6.6.2 Non-governmental organisation

Collaboration: The findings indicate that personnel in the education could not create collaboration among stakeholders of education of CwDs. Following this, NGOs are not in a position to catalyse the implementation of inclusive education in Ethiopia. Though this is the observable fact, NGOs should break through the bureaucratic barriers to facilitate the implementation of inclusive education.

Preparation of inclusive documents: Undoubtedly, the NGOs have the opportunities to adapt the international experience. Subsequently, the NGOs should support the government in issuing inclusive documents and paving the way forward for the implementation of inclusive education.

6.6.3 School community

Skills of sign language and Braille: As the findings of the study underscored, skill gap in sign language and Braille are a big challenge to implement inclusive education in Ethiopian schools. Subsequently, schools should mainstream sign language and Braille through clubs to ensure inclusion of children with hearing and visual impairment.

Accessibility: Most schools in Ethiopia are dispersed and physically inaccessible. To reverse the situation, school directors should pave entrances to allow CwDs free movement inside their schools.

6.6.4 The family

Parental involvement: As the findings of the study show, the parents of CwDs have inadequate involvement in the education of CwDs. To tackle the challenge, therefore, parents should increase their school participation in order to ensure their children's right to education.

Lack of knowledge: The insignificant school involvement of parents of CwDs is owing to lack of adequate knowledge about their children's rights. Therefore, parents need to organise themselves and challenge exclusionary practices via PTA.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FRAMEWORK MODEL OF THE STUDY

7.1 Introduction to the chapter

Based on the previous chapters of the study, I conceptualised the philosophy of inclusive education as floating subject rather than being inherently indoctrinated in the education system of the country. According to the findings of the barriers of inclusion of CwDs ranged from micro-system with family neglect to macro-system with the absence of inclusive policy in the ecology of human development. Subsequently, scrutinising literature and research

participants, I have shed some light on a framework model regarding education of CwDs in Ethiopia.

7.2 The education framework model for Ethiopian CwDs

According to Unesco (1994), traditional schooling could not meet the need of heterogeneous learners. Therefore, moving away from homogeneous learners to heterogeneous or diversified need is the tenet of inclusive education. However, the question might be the economic efficiency, political commitment and recognising education as an undisputable right of all citizens. For a number of centuries, there were attempts to meet the educational needs of CwDs through religious institutions in Ethiopia. Nonetheless, owing to the nature of teaching method of these institutions, they were not accessible for all type of children with special needs. For instance, as teaching delivery is oral and it requires long memory, both children with hearing difficulties and intellectual limitations were not attendant in these religious educational institutions respectively. With the aforementioned exceptionalities, the religious institutions endeavoured to cater for children with special needs likewise other children with no disabilities.

Beside this, in the past five and six decades, several international and national conventions and declarations were endorsed in the area of education of persons with special needs in order to tackle problems related with social injustice, inequity, inequality, and inaccessibility globally. For this to happen, the international community devised inclusive education as a strategy to dismantle obstacles that marginalised PwDs from their right to education. Nevertheless, there are critiques against inclusive education for its elusive presumption rather than its practicability. The root cause of the criticism is linked to its origin. As we know, the ideology of inclusive education emanated from the west and that take cues in conceptualising their own situation.

However, the political, social and cultural context of many developing countries in general and Ethiopia in particular is different from that of the west. Without considering this difference, inclusive education as a strategy was imposed on the education system of many developing countries by international donor agencies. In this process, subsequently,

indigenous beliefs, knowledge, and practices are undermined and regarded as inferior (Mapara, 2009). Hence, to implement inclusive education in all cultures, political and economic development as it is, suggests using a one-size-fits-all approach.

As I have already denoted frequently in this thesis, the concept of inclusive education was first developed by the collaboration of Unesco, international donors and disability activists from the west. As a result, the inclusive education policy was imposed on the education system of many developing countries by international donor agencies (Mukhopadhyay, 2014). Though inclusive education is an admirable intervention as a strategy to reach the marginalised children, the researcher believes it requires economic development, cultural transformation, political commitment, and positive attitude towards PwDs. However, with the absence of the aforementioned elements, the idea of inclusive cannot be realistic. Instead, it is simply an imposition of the west on the developing countries (Mukhopadhyay, 2014).

Owing to the above fact, many limitations to implement inclusion have been identified in this study. These limitations ranged from the national education policy itself to the each household. In line with the above fact, and the observable reality is the equation of impairment and poverty with which, the latter accounts the highest cause for the prior in underdeveloped countries. As we know, this fact is indisputably down to the earth in the case of Ethiopia particularly. Even the findings of the current study indicated, low income of the parents prevented them not to fulfil the SEN of CwDs. Taking a CwDs a long distance for schooling has been perceived as a waste of time since their living is hand-to-mouth. Subsequently, a better choice for such parents would be abandoning their CwDs to residential schools. Owing to the degree of severity of the impairment of CwDs, and with fear of teasing and ridicule that may come from non-disabled school children, some parents prefer to send their child to special day school. On the contrary, those parents who have better awareness and income prefer to teach their CwDs in integrated settings. As a result, I call upon the education system of Ethiopia to arrange not only inclusive education as a perfect setting for the delivery of educational services, but a continuum of placement options that would address the needs of all students with disabilities as the figure below shows.

7.3 Continuum placement option for students with disabilities



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Figure 2

Adapted from Heward, W. L. & Orlansky, M. D. (1988).

A child with disability should access to all these settings. This is because the economic development and political commitment of the country could not allow the system to render inclusive education at the time. Even professionals in SNE in the semi-structure interviews recommended that the model of education for children with disabilities would fit best to Ethiopian context and the education delivery must be simple, but still cover all settings and functions needed to assure access to education of CwDs. Therefore, the MoE should publicise the settings of education for CwDs that are under practice in the country clearly.

7.4 Preparedness to render inclusive education

As the interview data and the strategic plans of (2006 and 2012) together show, personnel in the education system used terms “inclusive”, “integration” and “SNE” as if they were synonym. More specifically, the Ministry documented inclusive education as an approach to educate CwDs. However, as it is already stated and the findings also show, students with disabilities used to attend from Grade 1 to Grade 4 in ‘special class’ separately. Again, from Grade 5 to upward grades, they would attend in regular schools with non-disabled counterparts with no at least moderately modified environment.

Hence, the MoE used to follow “special class and both physical and social integration” to educate CwDs particularly those who have visual, hearing and intellectual disabilities. On the contrary, the rest group of children with special needs have no received attention by the MoE. Therefore, the country particularly the education sector should clearly marked out the educational settings of “integration” and “inclusion” of students with disabilities in the regular schools.

Even the Education and Training Policy (1994) declared “special class” approach in ordinary schools to educate children with special needs. From this researcher’s reading, and as the policy recommended CwDs to attend “special class” in regular schools, the education of CwDs is not even partial inclusion.

Beside this, and as the findings of the current study show, the misconception of inclusive education by the personnel from different hierarchy of the education system has blurred the developmental nature of educational setting in SNE. Hence, most of the participants of the research assumed as if both integration and mainstreaming were inclusion. This in turn tells us the extent that the philosophy of inclusive education could not be inculcated in the mind of the executers of education yet. Since the concept of inclusive education did not either emerge from the culture or adapted to the indigenous knowledge, policy makers on the top and implementers of education to the bottom could not internalise inclusive education as an approach to educate CwDs.

However, whatever education delivery CwDs had in the past, and misconception fogged up the current educational practice, inclusive education as a strategy to educate CwDs is inevitable since the globe is moving forward to actualise the model. Again, the philosophy of inclusive education will no longer be exotic to the indigenous epistemology. Rather, the tenet of inclusive education will invoke the existed educational practice. Therefore, collaborative effort is required among stakeholders of education to have diamond plan to implement inclusive education. The figure that is the diamond plan below may show how stakeholders of education should prepare to render inclusive education.

MoE

Developing national inclusive policy

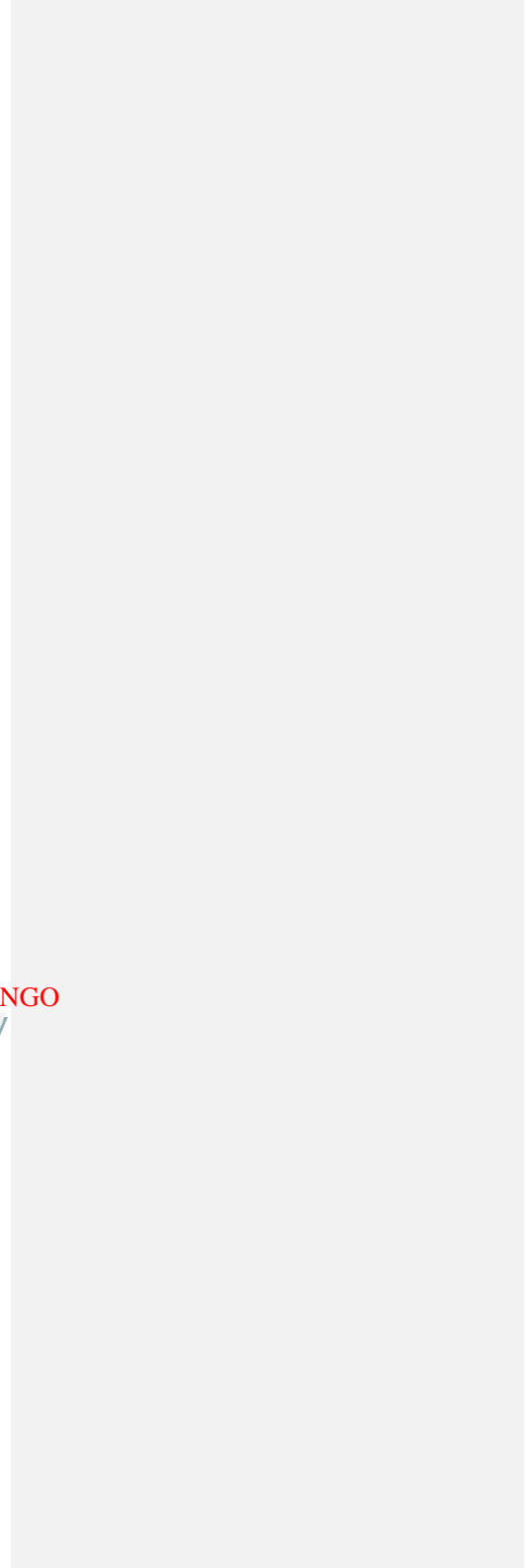
Regional Education Bureau

Developing guideline of

- inclusive education financed statute
- allocating adequate budget

NGO

Adapting the international experiences to indigenous knowledge



School

- Modifying the school environment
- Establishing school club of Braille and sign language
- Creating collaboration among stakeholders of education
- Reporting the enrolment of children with disability
- To communicating with parents of disability

Higher Education

- training adequate number of professional
- offering short-term training of Braille and sign language

Figure 3

In the figure above, school administrators are required to report the school enrolment of children with disabilities to Regional Education Bureaus to receive skilled manpower and adequate budget to meet the special needs of their CwDs.

7.5 Conclusion

The following conclusions have been drawn based on the findings of this study. The study has concluded as the challenges ranged from the absence of national inclusive education policy to the poverty of the family. Subsequently, the major challenges that the study identified are as follows:

- profound national budget constraints;
- shortage of trained personnel in SNE;
- home-school distance;
- the skill gap of Braille and sign language among teachers;
- the absence of legal frameworks;
- the negative attitude that the society held;
- insufficient provision of adapted school materials;
- the dilemma of the ideology of inclusive education among personnel in the education system;
- the inaccessibility of school infrastructure; and
- lack of commitment among stakeholders of education in general and education heads in particular impacted the implementation of inclusive education considerably. In line with this, the finding of this research has revealed that much of the barriers to implement inclusive education in Ethiopia laid at meso and exo-levels of the ecology.

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Appendices

Appendix A

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

18 November 2015

Ref # 2015/11/18/53342933/30/MC
Student #: Mr TZ Melese
Student Number #: 53342933

Dear Mr Melese

Decision: Ethics Approval

Researcher: Mr TZ Melese
Tel: +251911411231
Email: 53342933@mylife.unisa.ac.za

Supervisor: Prof M Magano
College of Education
Department of Inclusive Education
Tel: +2712 481 2766
Email: maganmd@unisa.ac.za

Proposal: Challenges to implement Inclusive Education in Ethiopia

Qualification: D Ed in Inclusive Education

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the College of Education Research Ethics Review Committee for the above mentioned research. Final approval is granted for the duration of the research.

The application was reviewed in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics by the College of Education Research Ethics Review Committee on 18 November 2015.

The proposed research may now commence with the proviso that:

- 1) The researcher/s will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.*
 - 2) Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study, as well as changes in the methodology, should be communicated in writing to the College of Education Ethics Review Committee.*
- An amended application could be requested if there are substantial changes from the existing proposal, especially if those changes affect any of the study-related risks for*

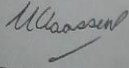
the research participants.

- 3) The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study.

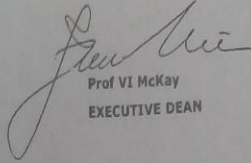
Note:

The reference number 2015/11/18/53342933/30/MC should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication [e.g. Webmail, E-mail messages, letters] with the intended research participants, as well as with the College of Education RERC.

Kind regards,



Dr M Claassens
CHAIRPERSON: CEDU RERC



Prof VI McKay
EXECUTIVE DEAN

Sample letter to request research participant for semi-structured interview

Dear

This letter is an invitation to consider participating in a study I, Zelalem Temesgen Melese am conducting as part of my research as a doctoral student entitled at the University of South Africa. Permission for the study has been given by the Ethics Committee of the College of Education, UNISA. I have purposefully identified you as a possible participant because of your valuable experience and expertise related to my research topic.

I would like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail if you should agree to take part. In this interview the research is on: Challenges to implement inclusive education in Ethiopia. Therefore, the study intends to investigate major challenges that hinder the implementation of inclusive education in the country. As an expert in education, you are in an ideal position to give me valuable first hand information from your own perspective. The interview takes around one hour and is very informal. I am interested in getting your thoughts and perspectives on the implementation of inclusive education in Ethiopia. I would like to have your views and opinions on the challenges to implement inclusive education in Ethiopia. This information can be used to improve the education of CwDs in the country.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It will involve an interview of approximately sixty minutes in length to take place in a mutually agreed upon location at a time convenient to you. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so wish. Furthermore, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences.

With your kind permission, the interview will be audio recorded to facilitate collection of accurate information and later transcribed for analysis. Shortly after the transcription has been completed, I will

send you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to confirm the accuracy of our conversation and to add or to clarify any points. All information you provide is considered completely confidential. Your name will not appear in any publication resulting from this study and any identifying information will be omitted from the report. However, with your permission, anonymous quotations may be used. Data collected during this study will be retained on a password protected computer for 12 months in my locked office. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study.

If you have any questions regarding this study, or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at +251 911 41 1231 or by e-mail at 553342933@mylife.unisa.ac.za.

I look forward to speaking with you very much and thank you in advance for your assistance in this project. If you accept my invitation to participate, I will request you to sign the consent form which is on the next page.

Yours sincerely

.....

Appendix- C

Focus group/interview assent and confidentiality agreement

I _____ grant consent/assent that the information I share during the group discussions (focus group interviews) may be used by the researcher, Zelalem Temsgen Melese, for research purposes. I am aware that the group discussions will be digitally recorded and grant consent/assent for these recordings, provided that my privacy will be protected. I undertake not to divulge any information that is shared in the group discussions to any person outside the group in order to maintain confidentiality.

Participant's Name:

Participant's Signature:

Researcher's Name: Zelalem Temesgen Melese

Researcher's Signature:

Date:

Appendix- D

CONSENT FORM

I have read the information presented in the information letter about the study on the challenges to implement inclusive education in Ethiopia. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions related to this study, to receive satisfactory answers to my questions, and add any additional details I wanted. I am aware that I have the option of allowing my interview to be audio recorded to ensure an accurate recording of my responses. I am also aware that excerpts from the interview may be included in publications to come from this research, with the understanding that the quotations will be anonymous. I was informed that I may withdraw my consent at any time without penalty by advising the researcher. With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

Participant's Name:

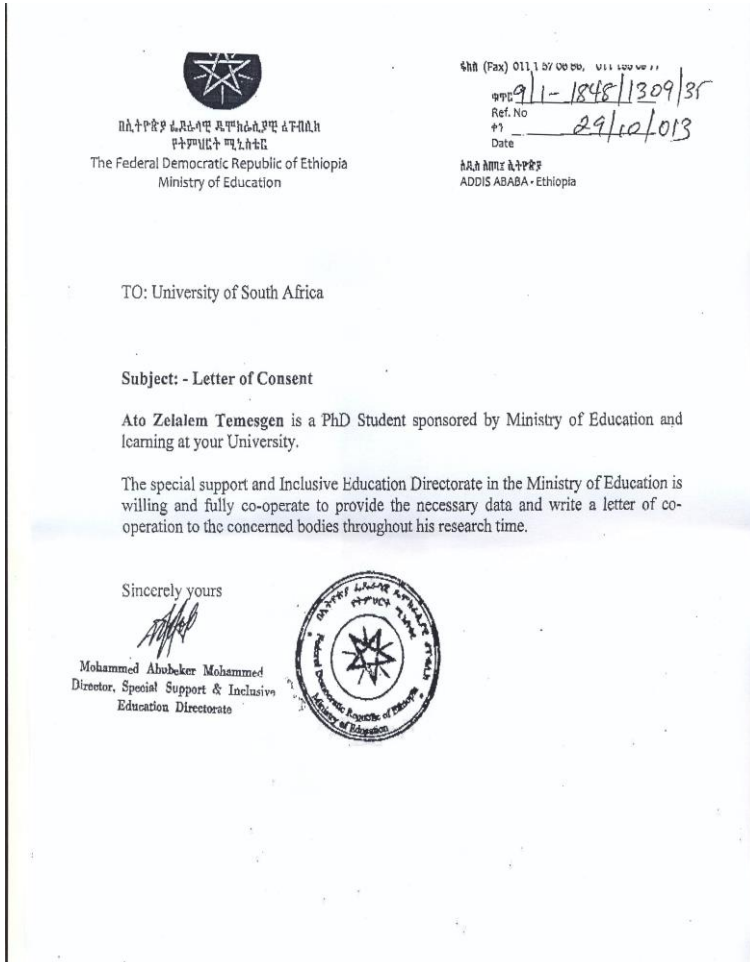
Participant Signature:

Researcher Name: Zelalem Temesgen Melese

Researcher Signature:

Date:

Appendix- E Letter of Consent from MoE Ethiopia



Appendix-F

Semi-structured interview for education officers.

1. What challenges do you have in implementing inclusive education?
2. Who do you see as the critical people to create inclusion of CwDs (e.g., parents, students, teachers, government, NGOs)?
3. What are the biggest challenges facing Ethiopian schools to welcome CwDs?
4. Is there annual budget allocation to realise inclusion?
5. How should inclusive education be financed?
6. Has the education bureau ever identified challenges to implement inclusive education?
7. Does the education bureau have inclusive education implementation guidelines?
8. What types of inputs (materials, equipment, and training) are needed to implement inclusive education in the region?
9. What measures should be taken in order for CwDs to be fully included in Ethiopian schools?
10. Do schools have SNE professionals?
11. What are the biggest challenge facing Ethiopian children and youth with disabilities to go to school?
12. What needs to happen in order for Ethiopian students with disabilities to be enrolled in schools?

Appendix –G

Semi-structured interview for Education experts/supervisors.

1. What is your understanding of inclusive education?
2. Is the concept of inclusive education well known and accepted?
3. Do parents take an active role in the education of CwDs?

4. Have awareness programmes been launched to support inclusive education?
5. Are the local community and the private sector encouraged to support inclusive education?
6. Is inclusive education seen as an important factor for economic and social development?
7. Are competencies available at special schools or institutions well used to support inclusion?
8. Is the regional curriculum sensitive to disability issues?
9. Is the national curriculum flexible to meet the special needs of students with disabilities?
10. Did your Regional Education Bureau develop guideline to implement inclusive education?
11. Can you list major challenges to implement inclusive education from the context of your region?
12. What remedies do you suggest to implement inclusive education at national and regional level?

Appendix- H

Focus group discussions-The discussants are professionals in SNE.

Themes for focus group discussion:

1. Does Ethiopia issue documents such as (policy, strategic plan, guideline, and any other document) which guide how to implement inclusive education? How do you use the documents?
2. How do politics play an active role in the implementation of inclusive education?
3. Do stakeholders (policy makers, education officials, parents and others) recognise the right of CwDs to education?
4. What do you think is the main challenge to implement inclusive education in Ethiopia?
5. Does the country have enough and well-trained teachers to implement inclusive education?

Appendix- I

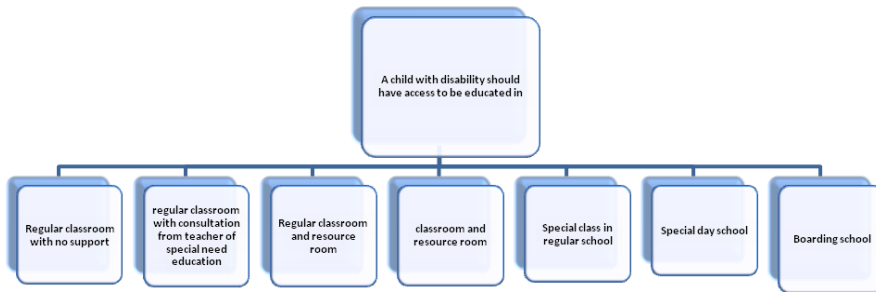
Semi-structured interview guide for Professionals in SNE.

1. Who are the target groups of inclusive education?
2. What type of modes of education are you delivering for children with special needs??
3. What are the constraints and the difficulties that you face to implement inclusive education?
5. Which type of education delivery do you suggest for Ethiopian CwDs?
6. What do you think are the future possibilities of inclusive education?
7. Which factors play an important role in the development of inclusive systems?
8. Why it is necessary and worthwhile to implement the principles of inclusive education?
9. Does your Regional Education Bureau design strategy or guideline on how to implement inclusive education?
10. Do you have enough trained teachers to implement inclusive education?

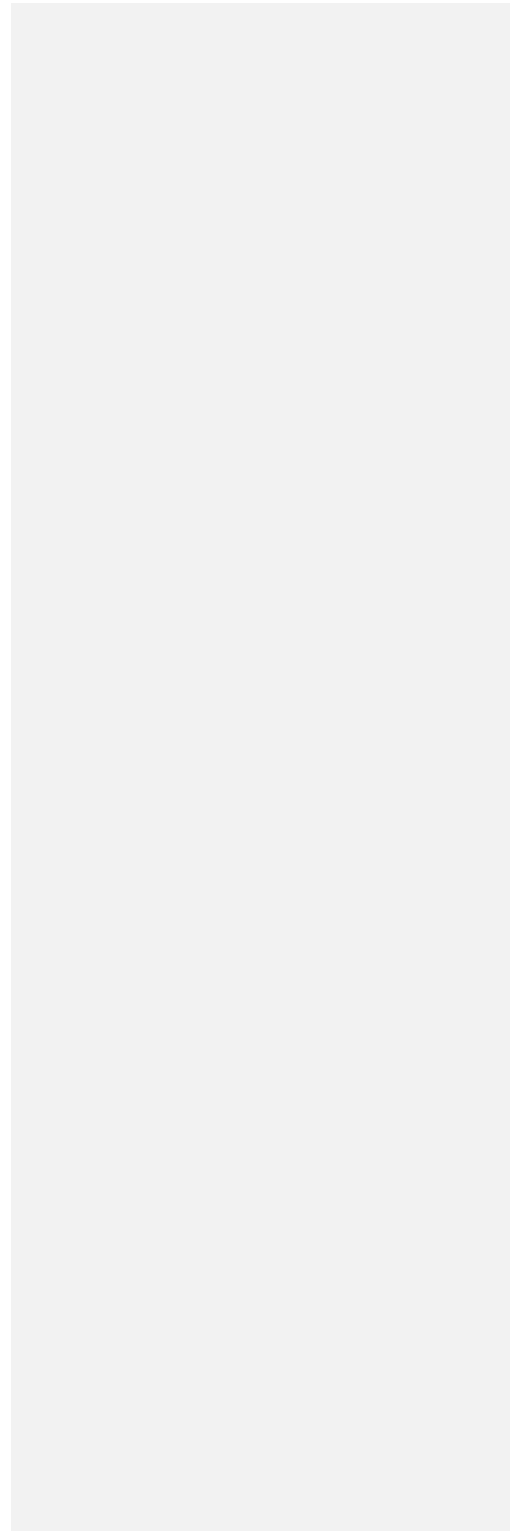
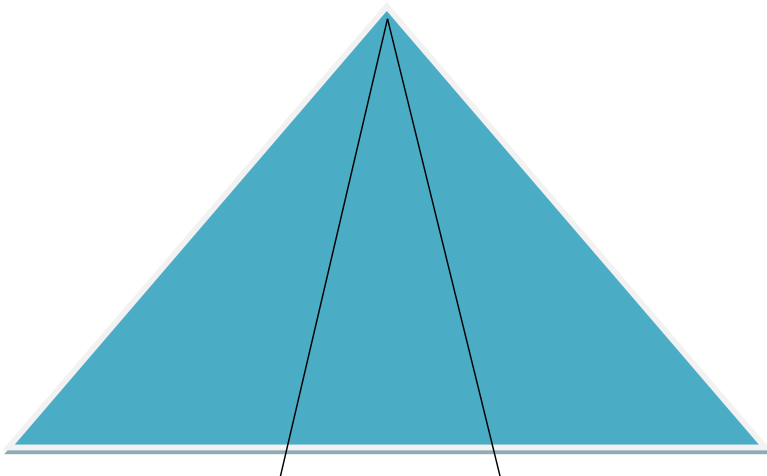
Appendix- J



Appendix- K



Appendix- L



MoE

Developing national inclusive

policy

Regional Education Bureau

Developing guideline of

- inclusive education fiancé statute
- allocating adequate budget

NGO

Adapting the international experiences to indigenous knowledge

School

- Modifying the school environment professional

Higher Education

- training adequate number of

- Establishing school club of Braille and sign language
- offering short-term training of Braille and sign language
- Creating collaboration among stakeholders of education
- Reporting the enrolment of children with disability
- to communicating with parents of disability

Appendix-M

Data from focus group discussion

The focus group discussion was conducted in Bahir Dar metropolitan city which is the capital of Amhara regional state. The participants were six in number. From whom, two of them were again females and the rest four were males. The discussion went on for an hour in one of the participant's office. Then, the discussion began with brief introduction of the purpose of the study and establishing ground rules. The rules: Switching off mobiles, use of codes instead of real names and respecting one another during the discussion. While the commencement of rap session, however, heavy silence had been fallen on the discussants. Following my question however, the one broke the silence. 1. How do you understand inclusive education?

After a while, one of the men defined inclusive education as follows:

When children come to schools, it is with their different economic, cultural, ethnic, religion, ability/disability, gender and other background. Then, they learn in the same classroom with their differences. Subsequently, inclusive education is teaching children with all the above mentioned differences. The other discussant added:

Inclusive education is identifying and supporting CwDs to be equal with their 'normal' or those who have no special needs counterparts. It is designing methodology to support children with and without visual impairment to learn together. Further, inclusion involves those who have special needs. Because they are not coming from the same environment and setting. Using different method to enable children who are different in their ability because of physical or mental impairment. For example, He continued:

According to our context, there are four groups of disabilities excluding children who are gifted and talented. Creating access to education for Cads to have equal or near to equal ability with those who have no disability.

2. Does Ethiopia issue documents such as (policy, strategic plan, guideline, and any other document) which guide how to implement inclusive education?

One of them said, yes, Ethiopia has inclusive education policy. There is also strategy to implement it. There is job distribution from the top that is the MoE to each primary school. The researcher reminded them to remember what the education policy of 1994 says. However, the group insisted on the presence of inclusive policy. They justified this way: policy is something that is summarised or condensed. It may not go to each detail. As discussants agreed the policy urges calls for all ‘children with special needs and without special needs’ to learn or have access to education. The discussion went on with explaining as the policy didn’t clearly stipulate the inclusion of ‘children with special needs and without’ to learn together. For them, no straightforward article which declares the inclusion of children with and without disabilities in the document “in black and white” to say clearly. But it doesn’t mean that the policy is not inclusive. The reason is since policy is condensed. On the contrary, two discussants had different idea about the policy. “Though there is no independent policy like; gender, HIV, children and other social issue policies, there is the concept in various documents of the nation like education sector and strategic plan.” The nation in general and regions in particular, are following ‘special class’ approach. They continued: there is lack of awareness even among policy makers. Rather, it had been better to train regular school teachers in sign language during college and university trainings to include children with hearing impairment starting grade one or kindergarten. Therefore, the implementation of inclusive education is impossible with no enough sign language training among regular teachers and awareness in school community. However, though the policy calls for “The right of all children to education.” In a condensed way, since there are no guidelines which specifically address the special needs of CwDs inclusive education will be “dream.” Among the six discussants, the one finalised by confirming as the policy was inclusive.

3. Can political leaders have role in the process of implementing inclusive education?

The political system could play a vital role to implement inclusive education. What experts did or executed was what the political system has intended to be. Or issues which have received the attention of the political leaders. Among the discussants, the one:

The role of the political leaders to implement inclusive education is via; first by facilitating the education of CwDs from the nation to region. Second the role can be by following up the execution of the direction that it gave. The other continued:

Oh! It is obvious. The political system decides /manages the overall implementation of any programme or activity. Nothing is done without the knowledge of the political leaders. It is the political system which allocates budget, human resource, and strategy to execute a programme. The other discussant added:

The system infact has paid attention. For example, when ink-printed books are purchased, Braille-printed books for Cave are also ordered to be purchased. Pocket money and the provision of Braille books for students with visual impairment are allowed by the top managers. The civil servant can't do anything without the will of the politics. As a professional, none could do something without the goodwill of the political system. However, it didn't mean that experts/professionals had no saying. But they would have the right to propose with justification something to be done.

4. Do stakeholders (policy makers, education officials, parents and others) recognise the right of CwDs to education?

Yes, it is possible to say that stakeholders of education have recognised the right of CwDs to education. The problem is when it comes to the practice. Off course, there is difference among stakeholders according to their level of consciousness. For instance, in the community, particularly, Whereas, So Posing their discussion, I the researcher narrated them "my experience what I came across while I was training primary school principals once upon a time." The incidence was as one of principals told me, "He turned back a student with disability home." It happened since there was no space. The focus group discussants together murmured, "no, no," They added, "It hadn't been." Principals should respect the right of CwDs to education. Therefore, that man violated the law.

Who should collaborate to support CwDs?" Nonetheless, directors who react in such way aren't few in number. Lack of awareness is one thing. But, parallel to lack of awareness carelessness or lack of commitment to the problem widely ubiquitous among school leaders. School teachers and directors, to the top, district, zonal and regional education heads are stakeholders though they uniformly haven't recognised the right of CwDs to education. Regarding recognition of the right of CwDs, obviously there is the gap. If it hadn't been, the children would have been included in the regular schools rather than be segregated in special units. According to the discussants' observation, lack of awareness is prevalent among stakeholders of education. If it wasn't, there could be material, skilled manpower and less restricted environmental readiness to include CwDs in the regular schools. In many ways, stakeholders couldn't recognise the right of CwDs to

education. For instance, there is building proclamation which declares the accessibility of buildings for persons with physical disabilities. However, most buildings are inaccessible including the building in which we are discussing. So no one follows the implementation of building proclamation. One of the discussants exclaimed, "Look! It is education bureau. It is with three floors. But if a person with physical disability or wheelchair user comes, no way to talk to the head. Unless and otherwise, somebody can carry him/her."

5. Does the country have enough and well-trained teachers to implement inclusive education?

From the ladies, the one took the first chance to answer the question. She proceeded

No! I don't think. There are no trained teachers in SNE adequately. Sometimes, since parents who have problematic children couldn't get professional support for their children at schools, they prefer to sit their CwDs at home." Even parents are forced to take their CwDs to very specific primary schools rather than to the adjacent schools. She continued:

I have observed as some parents want to send their CwDs to private or commercial schools. But since the school leaders couldn't reject the child officially, they enrolled him/her to spend the school time in the compound by playing. Because the commercial schools don't have trained teachers in special needs or professionals in the field. The second lady continued:

It is not possible to say that there are trained teachers adequately. For instance, the bureau is eager to include CwDs in to regular schools. To do this, each regular school teacher should have skills of Braille and sign language. However, since teachers have skill gap particularly in sign language and Braille, special unit has been taken as a remedy. As she reported, the following observation could be very good evidence. Students with hearing and visual impairment attend their education from grade one to grade four in special units. But starting grade five, they are included in the regular schools. Unfortunately, deaf children attend their education in regular schools by observation since there is no either interpreter or subject teachers don't know sign language. Students with visual impairment also attend the spoken lesson only. Hence, teachers couldn't support students with disabilities in the regular schools because of the skill gap that they have. As discussants added, according to Ethiopian civil service structure, no SNE professional at district/"Wereda" level to follow up the education of CwDs at school level. Teachers aren't well trained in such way that they could teach those students who have different ability and background. Quality training is one of basic ingredient even for quality inclusive education. Teachers' training however, has basic problem in educating children according to their specific

needs. They added infact the awareness could be created with short-term trainings. But the skill of Braille and sign language weren't sufficient and organised in-service training. Live alone the regular teachers, even those who have trained in SNE weren't well equipped in skills of Braille and sign language. As a result, CwDs couldn't receive quality education. This in turn indicates to what extent our training institutes have deep-rooted problem.

6. What are the main challenges to implement inclusive education in Ethiopia?

One of the discussant continued: For me the main challenge to implement inclusive education is lack of awareness among the society. For him, the society is still in 'charity model' because prefers to give alms rather than educating CwDs in inclusive approach. The deep-rooted ignorance existed in the structure of education that is from top to the bottom has hindered the inclusion of CwDs in to regular schools by large. Still stakeholders have doubt about success of CwDs in their education.

The other problem mentioned by the discussant was lack of commitment among those who have better awareness. Commitment towards inclusion of CwDs has been highly observable and prevalent problem among experts, leaders and education heads in common. From the top policy makers to the bottom experts in education weren't committed to educate CwDs. As a result of prevalent ignorance, all stakeholders of education couldn't set clear direction and develop commendable experience for the implementation of inclusive education.

Discussants reported that economic factor could be another factor to include children in to the regular school. Most parents of children in Ethiopia were weak in their income. "Every family member in Ethiopian rural has economic engagement. For instance, some are Sheppard's, some others are farmers, still others collect firewood and there are also others who accomplish home activities. But when disability happens to one of those family members, he/she will be dependent on the rest to get daily food. With all this, taking that disabled child to school would be further another burden to the family." Then, the choice of the family had to be either to sit the child at home or give for charity organisation and to the government to learn with subsistence. On the other hand, MoE and Regional Education Bureaus couldn't facilitate even those few schools with slate and stylus, Braille, paper, Braille textbooks, hearing aids, sign language books, wheelchairs and other adapted and modified materials. A student with visual impairment had to learn with

Braille. But school supervision reports tell as the group was attending lessons by listening. All these were challenges to include CwDs in to regular schools.

The other barrier is the inaccessibility of school environment. The entrance of school gates isn't well built to allow wheelchair users. Mostly, classroom to classroom movement is difficult. As the discussants have observed, students with visual disabilities faced physical barriers to move about inside primary schools. Because of ups and downs of school environment. The poor infrastructure challenged students with disabilities not to come to school. Pathways from home to schools are cliffy. So that it is required physical facility to make schools inclusive. On the other hand, fulfilling infrastructure challenging for the implementers since school coverage is low when it was compared with the geographical size of the country. To implement inclusive education, pathways to classroom, offices, guidance and counselors and other service providers should be accessible. To the opposite of the above fact, however, most pathways are cliffy, ridge and sloppy. To jump such ways was difficult task for students with disabilities as most of the participants of focus group discussion were of the same mind.

Appendix- N

Data from Semi-structured interview with SNE professionals

In this semi-structured interview, two professional of SNE took part. The one was from the ministry of education. He served as an expert in SNE for the last eleven years. Before that he taught chemistry for more than twenty years. The second interviewee was also serving in the education bureau of South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples though he didn't qualify in SNE. Here after, the discourse went on with their pseudo names of Belay and Degu.

1. Who are the target groups of inclusive education?

Belay explained target groups of SNE by referring MoE as follows;

According to the information system that the MoE has established, there are about five target group of SNE. The category includes five groups of CwDs. These are; persons with visual, physical, intellectual, hearing and others. Degu added as each of the group was divided as mild, moderate and severe disability. Further, glossary has also been prepared for regular school teachers in order to identify CwDs for classroom support since there was no clinical assessment in the country. I had probed the interviewees to tell me about other group of disabilities. As the interviewees replied others weren't primary target for special support by the education system. Others like; autistic, deaf-blind, communication, behavioural and emotional, learning disabilities and children those who are gifted and talented weren't considered as target group of SNE by the MoE.

2. What type of modes of education are you delivering for children with special needs??

Dominantly, two modes of education delivery have been reported by the interviewees as experienced and professionals in SNE. Belay continued; The However, due to the law that the government has passed against non-governmental organisations, the inception reversed. Belay

Somewhat, Degu

At the same time, in South Nations, nationalities and peoples, there is boarding school at Arbaminich town. The school is accommodating children with visual, hearing and intellectual limitation. The Regional Education Bureau of South Nations, nationalities and peoples is financing the boarding school with annual budget. Degu has finalised as region was exercising all modes of education delivery for CwDs and their plan that the region intended to transform the special school in to inclusive setting

3. Which type of education delivery do you suggest for Ethiopian CwDs?

the two experts of SNE had different opinion about the better educational setting for CwDs in Ethiopia. Belay recommended boarding or separated setting for CwDs based on the current practice of the country. Further, Belay has justified the importance of boarding school considering home-school distance, economic problem of parents of CwDs, and social stigma against CwDs and their parents as critical challenges to implement inclusive education. Whereas, Degum acknowledged the importance of inclusive setting due to its global recognition.

4. What are the constraints and the difficulties that you face to implement inclusive education?

Degu

Therefore, Degu continued:

When we clear such negative attitude, and when make school environment accessible, it is possible inclusion.

Belay questioned;

“Do you know?” He began:

Inclusive education is addressing the diverse need of learners. To implement inclusive education, therefore, the education system should be changed first. For instance, textbooks should be adapted, the language should dignify or shouldn't be derogatory, the curriculum should add human value of diversity, there should be flexible teaching and other adaptations should be made. However, such things aren't on the ground.” He continued by reminding me ‘the teacher selection guideline’. The document outlined as a teacher should be; more than 1.45 metres, not blind to lower grades, not deaf teacher for students in first and second cycle. First of all, there was attitudinal problem among head officials. Even those who had a better attitude didn't have commitment to execute inclusive education according to the international belief. In addition to attitudinal and commitment problems; rigid curriculum, inaccessible school environment, insufficient budget allocation and so on. The interviewee concluded his answer for the above question by stressing the negative attitude and lack of commitment that existed in the mind of decision makers as constraint to implement inclusive education. Degu stressed to what extent special budget allocation was potent factor to ensure inclusion of CwDs as follows:

As Degu underlined,

5. What do you think about the future possibilities of inclusive education?

Belay supposed “To me,” he continued; the implementation of inclusive education could request the country to go a very long journey. It took much time to begin inclusive education in Ethiopia. First and for most, attitudinal change should be achieved. Then, commitment should follow it. Until the country has committed leaders, we will wait for the commencement of inclusive education. As he said, “indicators of commitment to commence inclusive education are;

modifying the curriculum, creating accessible school environment, adapting school material and so on.” All these, therefore, might take much time. He looked exhausted when he thought about the future possibility of inclusive education. Officials on the top and he added as policy makers should worry about the education of CwDs to begin to think about future direction of inclusive education.

Degu has differed from Belay about “The future possibility of inclusive education.” For him, they have begun the practice of inclusive education. As Degu remarked:

We began to proceed not to stop. Our beginning inclusion is not to stop; but we are at infant stage. We laid the stone. As I said before resource rooms are spring board for inclusion. All students should have: teacher advisor. Books; and accessible.

School leaders should welcome all students with no discrimination. There should social justice. There should be a positive attitude that students with disabilities are equal. There should be communication between school and the community or parents of CwDs. Parents should say, “My child is equal with non-disabled students and should equal treatment with others.” From school improvement programme perspective: I school leadership, school and community linkage, school accessibility. “All teachers must teach in all media” [That is in sign language, Braille, and other medium of instruction.]

6. Who are critical elements in the development of inclusive systems?

Degu has divided the role players to implement inclusive education in to three critical elements in the society. According to his classification:

I. the community or the society in general; the community/Parents have been taken as critical element of inclusion since they could play by sending their CwDs to schools. They could also urge schools to be accessible.

II. Officials, experts, who are in the structure from district/Wereda to MoE, should give focus.

III. The colleges; because they are the foundations. Since they produce trained personells. Major task of inclusive education should be managed by the universities. For instance, in South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples, The education bureau gave direction to Dilla University to support colleges. Hence, all these stakeholders were critical elements to implement inclusive education.

Though the focus of the element was a little bit different, Belay spoke nearly the same thing. As Belay stated:

Number one key players in the development of inclusive system should be political leaders. Then, managers in the structure of education. For instance, if the curriculum is modified, teachers at school level should have commitment to execute it. The interviewee exclaimed, “The most important resource in the school is the teacher.” So, though all adjustment and modifications are made with no commitment among teachers, the implementation of inclusive education would be at its challenge. Hence, the teaching culture in schools should be changed.

7. Why it is necessary and worthwhile to implement the principles of inclusive education?

Belay:

Because, “Education is human right which is entitled for all.” Education is pivotal to keep personal hygiene, interpersonal communication and get information. With an assumption of multifaceted benefits of education, inclusive education is a strategy to reach CwDs so that they can enjoy all benefits of education. “Poverty and disability are vicious circles.” To bring PwDs out of poverty, therefore, education plays fundamental role. It also enables to create inclusive society.

Degu added;

All citizens will be active participant in all societal activities if we implement inclusive education. When we say all people, we are saying including PwDs. If PwDs aren't participant, it is possible to say there is development. All citizens should be participants in all issues of the country and should have equal right. To do this inclusive education or the principle of inclusive education is very important because with discrimination nothing is possible. When we say ‘EFA’ including all 'CwDs. In South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples, for instance, ten percent of the population out of school. There are only 60,334 CwDs in school. That is with fifteen percent of CwDs the rest 85 percent are out of school. If we aren't able to implement inclusive education, it is not possible to foster the economy of the country, social development; manpower of the country can't be fulfilled, because ten percent of the population is out of school. That is why inclusion very crucial for all citizens. “By the way, citizens have a right to education. So when we implement inclusive education, there will be equality in all aspect of life like; economy, social, and other things.

8. Do you have strategy or guideline which guides the implementation of inclusive education?

Degu;

South Nations, Nationalities and Peoples, together with an NGO/Light for children have a manual of inclusive education. The manual was developed by university teachers of Addis Ababa University. But we are trying to adapt it. Because in our region there are about 56 ethnic group. So that we are expected to consider this diversity. We also incorporated in SIP {school improvement programme} SIP has four areas; the one is about teaching and learning process; this then to say, students with special needs. In this area, do students receive book each other? Is the school environment accessible? This includes the classroom, toilet, the gate, and so on. Is there communication or relation between school and the community including or regarding CwDs? In the manual, the role of principals in fulfilling the special needs of those students who have special needs. The adaption also includes about assessment.

Belay continued;

The MoE has strategic plan which shows how to implement inclusive education. However, what to implement about inclusive education that is the guideline isn't yet not issued. What the Ministry education has is a strategic plan which concerns the general concept of inclusive education. I probed the interviewee to tell me the importance of guideline of inclusive education if the country may take much time to implement. He laughed, AH AH AH Ah! "Simply, to have relief." Today the main problem in Ethiopia is lack of commitment and accountability. He substantiated citing building proclamation 624/2009 as good evidence. In the proclamation, articles 33 and 36 envisage elevator and ramp for persons with physical disabilities to have access. But not yet implemented after seven years.

9. Do you have enough trained teachers to implement inclusive education?

Belay has reported the existed practice as follows;

An attempt was made in three primary schools by training 85 teachers in the areas of sign language and Braille. Subsequently, the trained teachers had begun the "Tinsis". However, they stopped it. Because there was no conducive or workable environment. First and for most, the teacher education training was not effective. A teacher who couldn't be trained qualitatively is like a "Dog which has wound on its buttock." The number was not also as such significant to

implement inclusive education. The training in colleges and universities was like preaching. Therefore, the trained teachers couldn't teach skills like Braille, sign language and daily living skills.

Degu has nearly similar answer about the adequacy of trained teachers to implement inclusive education. He said, "No, We don't have". In our region, we have about 1,400 cluster schools and 6,222 primary school in all these schools, there are students with special needs. Even though we can't reach the 6,222 primary schools with trained teachers; at least, we planned to reach the 1,400 with trained teachers. To reach the 1,400 cluster schools, we are training Braille and sign language for a semester. To meet our need of trained manpower, Braille and sign language courses are being delivery in all of our colleges. So we hope to fulfill in the coming five years.

The other challenge for the implementation of inclusive education is mobility. Particularly, children with visual impairment have no accessible environment. There are ups and downs hills and valleys; it is tiresome for children with visual impairment to school. Hence, they prefer to remain rather to go school.

Appendix- O

Data from Semi-interview with education experts/supervisors

I have interviewed four experts/supervisors from four education bureaus of Addis Ababa, South; Nations, Nationalities and Peoples, Amhara and Tigray regional states. The interview schedule took an hour in average with each interviewee in their office. I have traveled again nearly 3000 kilometres from one region to the other to conduct the interview. All of them were males. Their age ranged from thirty-two to fifty-one. I had assigned them pseudo name for each interviewee before the interview took place.

1. How do you define inclusive education?

For Werku:

Inclusive education is teaching both CwDs and non-disabilities “tenna yelechewn kalachew gar abro mastemar new.” Tilahun’s definition was not far from the prior definition. Hence, Tilahun and Werku have defined inclusive education in such away. Inclusive Education was to teach the "abnormal children with normal children."

For the same enquiry, Abdu gave the following explanation: Inclusive education is a process. And wide concept. Therefore, it can be defined from different perspective. To be more specific, particularly, from equity and accessibility of education perspective; inclusive education is to educate and support ‘all children with no difference of disability versus ability’ in regular classroom. In addition, inclusive education is a strategy in which teachers teach students according to their abilities. The concept of inclusivity requires conducive and accessible school environment.

2. Is the concept of inclusive education well known and accepted?

Tilahun has acknowledged as inclusive education was not clear for all teachers.

As an expert, Worku explained:

I usually go to fieldwork, Subsequently, I pose questions if teachers are clear about inclusive education; some of the teachers have better awareness about inclusive education. Particularly, those who graduated recently or “wetatochi” have better understanding about inclusive education. But teachers who stayed long in teaching or senior teachers feel as inclusive education is to teach SwDs in separate school/classroom. Even sometimes, the senior teachers assume education of PwDs shouldn’t be academic rather as it should be vocational. Therefore, during our school visit, We try to inform about education of PwDs as it should be with non-disabled children. “children who have problem should learn according to their problem”. Hence, the awareness is not uniform. The recently graduated have better attitude than earlier graduated teachers.

3. Do parents take an active role in the education of CwDs?

Nearly, all of the interviewees have reported the same experience regarding parental role to educate CwDs. For instance, Tsegaw witnessed the following based on his experience as a school supervisor. The interviewee:

Yes, I dare to say the parents' participation of CwDs is relatively good when it is compared with parents of children with no disabilities. When we supervise schools, we come across parents of CwDs. But When we say 'SNE' it doesn't mean only those who have disability. But since there is no identification tool, the concept of special needs is restricted to those who are visual, hearing, intellectual, physical, emotional, and others. for instance, gifted aren't either considered or receive special support. Parents of CwDs particularly of children with intellectual limitation receive training and relatively they are better than other parents in following up their children. They accompany their children to schools and take back after schooling. In line with this, Werku has divided parents of CwDs in to two. Earlier, parents of CwDs used to hide their CwDs. For instance, in my birthplace, I have seen one aged students with disability who were hidden by her parents for long time. By now, she is in grade two but she is old for that grade. Her father had decided to hide her for a long period of time. In Dalie “wereda” I came across fourteen students with disabilities in a single school while I was supervising the teaching and learning process. And I asked ‘how these CwDs came to school?’ As teachers in that school told me, the children were hidden but now, because of some information that was exchanged during education conferences with parents, parents were informed about the possibility of education for CwDs. Hand in hand to this, during the campaign of bringing children with school age to school, parents of CwDs were also aware about education of their children. The progress of those CwDs who came to school and got opportunities to education had been lesson for other parents to send their CwDs to school. So there is better awareness today than before. Further, discussions among ‘development army’ in “Kebelie” agitated parents of CwDs to allow their CwDs to go to schools. Tilahun has reflected the same observation with the prior informants. As the interviewee observed:

in the earlier times, parents were not willing to send their CwDs to schools. or parents used to hide their CwDs. but nowadays, they began to expose their CwDs. so there is a better awareness today for the group.

4. Have you ever conducted awareness raising programmes to support inclusive education?

Tsegaw: The bureau has section of SNE which follows up the situation. Even across other departments of the bureau, the issue of special needs/inclusive education is being taken as

crosscutting issue. The awareness programme is then via general meetings, during teacher parent associations, workshops, during mass mobilisation, during monthly discussions of good governance, during all these gatherings; issues like; enrolling, school barriers, and others are discussed. Therefore, the awareness programme is possibly good.

Werku: During quarterly reports, there is discussion about the increment of CwDs from year to year. Again the report discusses about the problem of CwDs while schooling. However, there is no independent awareness programme regarding CwDs. As it is already mentioned, inclusive education is an element in overall report of education.

Tilahun: no, awareness programme has not been launched so far.

5. Are the local community and the private sector encouraged to support inclusive education?

Tsegaw:

Yes, sometimes, CwDs are considered during school based programmes. Like trainings, path way constructions, and when buildings are constructed. With different NGOs the bureau of Addis Ababa city administration works with some NGOs on school based programmes. But it doesn't mean that the situation is encouraging. I have probed and asked a question to crosscheck what the interviewee narrated. As he confirmed there is no document or report which shows the participation of stakeholders of inclusive education in the Addis Ababa City Administration Education Bureau. But when he added, the documents might be available at school level. Because schools usually sign memorandum agreement with NGOs to implement a kind of project to facilitate education. Tilahun:

when NGOs themselves come to the bureau, we invite them to take one or two or three CwDS to support. otherwise, we didn't launch any programme.

Werku: So far, We couldn't go to the stakeholders. However, whenever NGOs come and ask what to help; we invite them to do something for CwDs or to support SwDs. For instance, very recently, when I was in "Gomugofa" administrative zone, one non-governmental organisation was constructing a modified toilet for wheelchair users with request of the primary school.

6. Is the national curriculum sensitive to disability issues?

As interviewees all in all reported, regions had nearly the same curriculum. It was adapted from the national curriculum. As Werku said, “We have the same curriculum for both “letenegnochunatalelelchew.” As the interviewees observed, the content of curriculum wasn’t sufficiently free from derogatory expressions and didn’t well address issues of special needs and. Further, no explanation of diagrams, pictures and charts, for students with visual disabilities particularly. As Tsegaw underlined, “tenyalelelchewlijoch” are competing with those have no disability. For this, DPOs should work in collaboration with MoE. Because, there is lack of expert in the area.

7. Is there nationwide guideline to implement inclusive education?

The interviewees together agreed as there was no national and regional guideline which was developed to guide the implementation of inclusive education. Abdu:

No! There was no guideline of inclusive education at education bureau level. Yet, they were preparing at Ministry education level.”

8. Can you list major challenges to implement inclusive education from the context of your region?

For Tilahun, the major challenges to include CwDs were: shortage of trained teachers; shortage of special equipment; lack of budget; awareness; home-school distance and others. Whereas; Abdu has categorised the main challenges of inclusive education in to four. These were:

I. From resource perspective; most of learning materials or equipment weren’t available in the market like other school materials.

II. Lack of awareness; lack of awareness was observable fact among all stakeholders of education. Parents of CwDs particularly had lack of awareness to send their children to school. In addition, the society abuse CwDs particularly children with visual impairment. They used to steal their money, guide them to the wrong direction. Rarely, even there was sexual abuse. The society also teases at children with hearing impairment. Sometimes, though had the awareness been created, commitment couldn’t be achieved.

III. Lack of skill; there were skills required to implement inclusive education. Some of the skills that were listed by the interviewee were; sign language, Braille reading and writing and adapted teaching methods.

IV. Inaccessibility: Home-school distance, inaccessibility school infrastructure, unmodified transport.

Again, Werku has classified major challenges of inclusive education in to five from his region and the nation perspective likewise, Abdu. He continued:

I have ever observed classrooms during my field visits; once I came across fourteen CwDs in one school; in that school students were in different grade level. But the teacher was only one. Since the teacher was only one, students with different grade level like grade; one, two, three, four and so on, were in a single classroom. Hence, there is lack of trained teachers. II. There is lack of Braille materials and other equipments for SNE. III. The other problem is students with disabilities should learn lessons practically, but since there is shortage of material or budget, it is difficult. IV Still the problem of implementing inclusive education is even if there is shortage of trained teachers, there are very few in the primary schools. But when the students with disabilities move to secondary schools, there are no trained teachers at all. V. Because of economic problem, students with disabilities dropout from school as soon as they complete primary schools. Because secondary schools are relatively far from their home. The dropout students with disabilities discourage other parents of CwDs.

9. What remedies do you suggest to implement inclusive education at national and regional level?

Though all participants have forwarded almost the same way out for the effective implementation of inclusive education, I put their opinions separately in order to respect their sayings. Abdu suggested the following:

Everyone should take inclusive education as his/her own work. There should also be accountability about the implementation of international conventions. Creating awareness through media and issuing forceful law was also mandatory to implement inclusive education. There should be an organisation which follows up the implementation of laws, regulations, and proclamation regarding inclusive education. Adapted and modified material like teaching aid, hearing aid, eye-glass, skill of Braille and sign language were required.

It is the traditional or existed practice was considered as a main challenge of schools to welcome CwDs Tsegaw and Tilahun added. For these two interviewees, in the practice, children were expected to come to school rather than the schools had to go to the children. However, things were vice versa. Lack of trained teachers was the other challenge that schools had. The budget allocation to schools for CwDs couldn't be clear yet. As the interviewee added no budget for SNE specifically. There was budget title/school grant in the finance system. In this grant each student had his/her own. However, the allocation didn't considered special need of children. For this, the deep-rooted poor awareness among finance officers had been responsible.

Werku suggested possible remedies for the effective implementation of inclusive education this way:

- I. The government should allocate budget for inclusive education. II. The other thing is there should be experience exchange among educators to improve education of CwDs. Students with disabilities complete primary schools; they should be able to move to secondary schools with no problem. For this, government should conduct a study and select secondary school which are suitable for the students with disabilities. Even after graduation, PwDs should have access to jobs. Because it encourages other students with disabilities. Otherwise, job inaccessibility for graduates with disabilities discourages those who are at home. Even it may lead parents to believe teaching CwDs as time wastage.

Appendix- P

data from Semi-structured interview with education heads

I conducted the interview separately in each participant's offices. From the four education officials, the one was female and the youngest of all. All of the interviewees had taught in different primary and secondary schools before they became education heads. Tayitu, Kasa, Hagos and Lemma were their pseudo names. Before I began the discussion, again, I have briefed them as the purpose of the study was to deal with challenges to implement inclusive education. To do this, I kindly invited participants to identify challenges to implement inclusive education based on their rich experience as teachers and education heads. Further, I have highlighted the mode of education in which I experienced as a person with disability and CwDs were going through.

1. How do you understand inclusive education?

Tayitu answered, "I understand inclusive education from the context of our country; inclusive education is subsector of education which didn't receive attention." She added:

Inclusive education is an approach which educates children those who have impairment with those who are "Healthy/"dehenegnoch". For her, the theory and the practice of inclusive

education was very different in the context of the country. Even though inclusive education would be controversial, it was to educate children with and without disabilities together. Subsequently, the education bureau in which she was working used to exercise 'inclusive' starting grade five. The practice of 'inclusive' couldn't include those who are under grade five. For this, the officer has put four reasons. I. Resource: while grades increase, the diversity of subject areas also increases. Then, it is difficult to provide adapted material equally with diversified subjects or courses. The teaching methods and teaching aids or media also increase to meet the demand of CwDs. The available teaching materials are designed for those who are "dehenegnoch".

II. Lack of skilled manpower:

The region doesn't have teachers who are trained in SNE.

III. Number of students with disabilities: usually, when the grade level increases, the number of students with disabilities decreases. So it is difficult to assign a teacher who has training in SNE for single SwDs. Special units also should be expanded. IV. Age factor: In lower grades, CwDs need special teaching aid according to their age. Teaching them with non-disabled children might be difficult because of their different needs. Children want to learn by touching, looking, hearing, tasting; and since there are practical works, they should be educated separately. Hence, the children should master basic skill before they join 'inclusive classroom'.

Lemma and Hagos have also defined inclusive education as:

Teaching children those who have different needs and problems together." Kasa has defined 'inclusive education' in an expanded way than Lemma and Hagos as follows:

What we understand about inclusive education is to teach children those who have special needs or "chigir yalebachew" with those or "ketenegnoch gar" to teach together. It is education process where concerned body follows the education of CwDs with those who don't have problem. Or those who have visible or invisible problem with those who don't have different needs.

2. Whom do you see as critical people to create inclusion of CwDs?

As Hagos told me: All educators from primary school to education bureau and policy executers are very important elements of inclusive education. The other critical elements of inclusive

education are teachers, representatives of the community, and experts in the education system are all important to create inclusion. Kasa forwarded nearly similar answer with Hagos. But the later gave detail explanation as follows:

It begins from the top officials. Because guidelines to implement inclusive education is required. If so, the top management is important. However, more that, schools are near to the children, with in the school, there are teachers and principals. The interviewee understood the importance of school leaders and teachers to implement inclusion. Kasa added, “To me, the government structure is the main one. But it doesn't mean the community has no role in the process of inclusion of CwDs. If the community is aware enough, it is possible to follow up the constructions of school buildings; the stakeholders of education should have role in considering children in any school activities.”

Tayitu narrated her experience regarding critical elements of inclusion of CwDs this way:

In the structure of education, the main stakeholders are the government. Particularly, Next to the government, parents of “normal” children have great responsibility in contributing input for schools. The other stakeholders are higher institutions. Because they can contribute in training inclusive teachers and conducting research about education of CwDs. Including teacher education college, the higher education institutions can play a vital role in producing quality teachers. The other stakeholders of education are NGOs. These include community based organisations. Some of this organisation like Hosana deaf school gave sign language trainings for our teachers. There is also Braille material support like slate, stylus and Braille paper support from other organisation. Again, US AID is on the way to equip schools with modified and adapted teaching aids for students with disabilities in the region. For Lemma Teachers, school principals, supervisors, in general, those who were in the structure of education from top to the bottom were among critical groups to implement inclusive education. Moreover, the political leaders could have invaluable role to implement inclusive education because their direction and guidance could bring change regarding PwDs.

3. What are the biggest challenges facing Ethiopian schools to welcome CwDs?

Tayitu:

The main challenge to primary schools today to welcome CwDs is shortage of classrooms. Trained teachers are the other challenge for primary schools to welcome CwDs. Still, shortage of

modified or adapted teaching material of provision is considerably a big problem for these schools. The above problems are entirely related with budget. So if schools have sufficient budget, they may not have problem to include CwDs. As Lemma reported on the same question; among many challenges that schools in our region faced were; physical facilities, inaccessible of classrooms and lack of awareness among school community. The skill gap that teachers have could be also another problem to include CwDs in to the regular schools. The other problem that the primary schools in the region was lack of trained teacher in the field. Though the region had been training about 780 teachers at Adowa teacher education college However, it was difficult to assign teachers of SNE in each primary school. So that the region has assigned at cluster level one SNE teacher for five schools. }

Lemma observed the difficulty to create accessible environment and adapt teaching material or creating conducive environment as a serious problem for Ethiopian schools to welcome CwDs. According to the interviewee, the barrier would begin from the gate of the schools. And there were other in accessibilities for the children. Lack of trained teachers in sign language that could teach subject matters in sign language; teachers who could read and write Braille; Insufficiency of schools to provide books for students with disabilities; and the inaccessibility of school facilities like modified toilet and sport field had been reported as serious challenges for Ethiopian schools to accommodate CwDs for the majority of the interviewees. In addition to the above, Kasa underlined lack of commitment among school principals and school community as whole as barriers to welcome CwDs. But other than everything else, for Hagos, the negative attitude of school community was remarkable barrier to welcome CwDs. To welcome children with hearing impairment, not only teachers but the community should be able to use sign language. But which could be impossible at the time of interview.

4. Is there annual budget allocation to realise inclusion?

Tayitu: Yes, the bureau allocates budget. There is also an expert to execute day-to-day activities. The budget covers; to purchase Braille material, payment for examination readers, pocket money, another related expenditures. Block grant is for each student per head. Whereas, school grant is for six programmes according to SIP or school improvement programme. However, there is no specific budget for inclusive education.

Both Kasa and Lemma reported as there was no budget or financial title to execute inclusive education. However, Lemma gave detail explanation how the region had been supporting children. Lemma's account:

Rather the finance was allocated according to financial capacity that the region had and the need that has come from the beneficiaries. Subsequently, the region allocated for the last three years 4, 3.5 and 3 million Birr consecutively. Earlier, Lemma remembered:

The government didn't pay attention to the education of the CwDs. However, there is change starting the last two and three years. For instance, the region is fulfilling cane, Braille paper, slate and stylus for students with visual impairment. The region has also allocated about four million Birr for transcription of Braille textbooks. However, since we had technical problems of Braille, we couldn't be successful in Braille prints. Hence, we bought laptops for secondary school teachers with visual impairment. At the same time, we bought digital invoice for primary school teachers and students with visual impairment. In addition to this, the region communicated with foreign stakeholders to record textbooks using native speakers of English again for students with visual impairment. About fifteen resource centres are also on the way to be established with regional expense. To teach children with intellectual disabilities, the region was processing to purchase Montessori equipment. The budget allocation was done from the region directly and through schools one percent from their total budget. For this, trainings were given for district"/Wereda" officers to follow up the one percent budget execution. Even though boarding school doesn't go with inclusive education, the region has established one boarding school for children with visual impairment particularly for those who haven't parents and couldn't get support from their parents.

Which wasn't far from the previous account, Hagos reported the following: There is budget for inclusive education even though the amount might not be adequate. So that we are purchasing Braille books, sign language dictionary for deaf children and other assistive technology for other children with different type of disabilities like intellectual limitation and physical disabilities. We also planned to purchase embossers. According to the region the allocated budget is sufficient. But when you go down to the bottom structure, there is a problem of implementing the allocated budget.

5. How should inclusive education be financed?

As Hags acknowledged, there are two types of budgets. These are school grant and block grant. The former comes from NGOs but the later comes from the government. In the case of the first/school grant, there is guideline or prescription how to use the budget. Hence, around one percent of the total budget goes to the implement inclusive education. There is no budget allocation from block grant to implement inclusive education specifically. Nevertheless, inclusion should be financed not only by education bureau but also by the community. Even though it is not sufficient, we use budget from block grant. For instance, embosser, slate and stylus are to be purchased from block grant. But we don't have guideline how to use finance from block grant for inclusive education.

As Lemma believed government should own the finance of inclusive education. Infact, non-government could be important to support the implementation of inclusive education. However, the government should own it. The role of non-government organisation could be facilitation. Particularly According to the interviewee's belief, the education bureau of Tigray required technical support from the non-governmental organisation rather than the finance. To educate CwDs, Kasa added that all stakeholders of education should be very responsible. The government and the NGOs had responsibility. For instance, the general education programme has its own budget. Likewise, inclusive education should have its own. In line with this, any organ which allocates budget for education had to consider CwDs. Kasa acknowledged "Equity can be ensured if there is equal distribution of resources." Tayitu has also confirmed:

When we say education should be accessible for all, it is for every Ethiopian. CwDs are Ethiopians as a result they the government should allocate budget for them. But since the government budget is limited, other organisations should support it. Even for this, the government should take the role of coordinating the finance whether it comes from the government or non-government.

6. Has the education bureau ever identified challenges to implement inclusive education?

As Tayitu knew or to her knowledge, no research that was conducted to identify problems of inclusive education particularly this year. Regionally, no such kind of research which was conducted regarding inclusive education.

Though Hagos was in a position of top management, He didn't have any knowledge about the presence of identification process of challenges to implement inclusive education in the region.

As he told me, He was new for the position Then, He couldn't say whether the region has identified challenges of inclusive education or not.

Kasa was vague if the bureau had identified challenges to implement inclusive education. He began with doubt as the process of identification could be done. His justification was the absence of structure of SNE previously. But, He added, by now, there is a structure with a name of 'multidimensional' "zerfe-bizu". There is a person who is assigned to collect data and organise information about SNE. Subsequently, the assigned person might have identified number of CwDs. The education bureau has paid attention to the issue. For this, the department of supervision has incorporated SNE issue in the developed checklist of school supervision. There is one strategic goal in the supervision checklist. So, when schools are supervised, they are expected to clarify how they "handled, identify, support children with special needs." in the strategic goal of school evaluation is about those who have special needs. The education bureau of Tigray region has a better experience regarding identification of challenges of inclusive education than other regions. As I am informed, Even though it wasn't in-depth, the regional bureau has conducted survey of the problems of inclusive education in collaboration with Michele University. But, more than the survey, the bureau used to conduct quarterly evaluation regarding the teaching and learning process. The issue of CwDs is one of evaluation points. Schools, districts, zones and the education bureau itself had duties and responsibilities and evaluate one another. So far, based on the finding of the evaluation, 'awareness' has been taken as a very serious problem. Next to that, inadequacy of special needs support at school and then, insufficient effort that the stakeholders made to bring CwDs to schools was another problem. To improve the situation, raising the problem of school enrolment of CwDs in the annual public forum was taken as a strategy. With this, the responsibility of bringing CwDs to schools was given to women's developmental unit in each 'Kebelie'. Each women's developmental unit consisted of twenty-five women that was twenty-five household. So that the unit investigate each house whether there was a child with disability or not. As a result, school enrolment rate of CwDs has been improved. By the time of discussion, school population of CwDs reached twelve thousand from the total regional population of seventy thousand.

7. Does the education bureau have inclusive education implementation guidelines?

Tayitu exclaimed No:

There is a plan with general term of the concept of SNE. Otherwise, to implement inclusive education, no guideline. She reported the need of guideline of inclusive education, particularly to

guide environmental accessibility, how to support CwDs. To show accountability and responsibility of schools and other stakeholders of education about the quality of education for them, coverage, and school enrolment.

The region of Tigray education bureau has adapted strategic plan from the MoE. However, as the interviewee confirmed, there was no guideline of inclusive education. As Hagos has also narrated, the region didn't issue guideline which can guide the implementation of inclusive education in his respective region. However, it was on discussion.

In contrast, Kasa accounted the presence of guideline of inclusive education. However, what he acknowledged as a guideline was a statement in a plan. I witnessed his words as follows: Yes, one of the main things in the GDTP is under the strategic plan of accessibility and equitability of education is to address issue of SNE. The issue is also incorporated in the balanced score card card. The five year plan cascaded in to yearly plans. In these yearly plans, therefore, SNE is one of the components. By now, the bureau has given direction to conduct research about the status of SNE in the city administration.

8. What types of inputs (materials, equipment, and training) are needed to implement inclusive education in the region?

Tayitu has categorised the need in to three areas. The first thing was quality teacher training. Like other subjects, inclusive education should be offered for any teacher who would attend regular, summer or extension programme. The training should enable teachers to support CwDs inside and outside the school. For this the curriculum should be redesigned. Regarding this, and as she told me, the education bureau was discussing with teacher education colleges since they were under the bureau. Higher education institutions should also offer quality training. So teachers should be aware about special needs and receive quality training. The quality training should be not only for the preservice teachers but also for in-service teachers equally. However, for the time being, if there was budget, and trainers, teachers had to receive short-term training to solve the problem.

II. Input: That is material support according to the need of each student with disability. There should be modified or adapted material according their need.

III. Creating awareness: in line with the structure of education bureau, for students through min-media, should accept PwDs as full member of the society. About their right to education and their ability to have good achievement. And can reach any level of education if they get support.

Hagos:

We don't have professional in SNE. The assigned person is simply focal person. But he doesn't have the qualification in the field. Therefore, there should be structure in the office to hire professional in the field of SNE. The bureau has faced a problem to identify equipment related with SNE as a result of lack of expert in the field. Therefore, the bureau has been obliged to seek advice from others out of the bureau. To purchase the necessary material, the bureau made discussions with associations like deaf, blind and others by that the bureau spends much time unnecessarily. Subsequently, the officer of South Nations, nationalities and peoples suggested the necessity of experts of SNE from top to the bottom of the structure of the Regional Education Bureau. If the bureau had an expert in SNE, he/she would guide what to purchase, what kind of guideline is required and how to implement inclusive education. Infact, there are professionals in the market; however, the problem was no structure from top to the bottom to employ them. So what is required is to adjust the structure. When the researcher highlighted the experience of team approach of Tigray, the officer exclaimed, "Ah AhAh! That was true. You know! The situation depends according to the experience of the region. In the country, each region practices special needs based on its knowledge and experience." For instance, the bureau planned to buy Braille embosser in millions, but if the machine encounters technical difficulty, it could stop working simply. The office structure should be revised.

On the other hand, the other two interviewees needed establishing and enriching resource centres; trained personell in SNE; Up to-date training; and sufficient budget. The other need that the education bureau of Tigray had was expert in the area of intellectual disability. Though the number of children with intellectual limitation were significant in number, however; no teacher who had skill and could teach them.

9. Do schools have SNE professionals?

All interviewees agreed unanimously about shortage of professionals in SNE across the nation. For instance, Tayitu:

If there is no special unit, the bureau doesn't assign SNE professional or trained teacher in SNE. In the structure of education bureau, from top to down, experts in SNE has been assigned. But, sometimes, unprofessional can be assigned in the structure if there is shortage of qualified experts.

Kasa: Even though I don't dare to say all schools have SNE teachers, there are professionals in most schools of the city.

Hagos: No, the region doesn't have enough professionals. We need more and more.

Lemma: The region didn't have adequate number of trained teachers in SNE. The bureau has organised about three hundred –thirty school clusters. For these school clusters, two teachers of SNE have been assigned. But the challenge was to assign one trained teacher in special needs in each two thousand and two hundred thirty-four schools.

10. What challenges do you have to implement inclusive education?

Tayitu began:

Not only in Amhara regional state but at national level, the main challenge of inclusive education is skilled manpower. Higher institutions don't train in the area of inclusive education. Even the common course that they offer is not well organised to equip teachers with the necessary skill to teach CwDs efficiently. Teachers who graduate from higher education have no readiness to train CwDs. Rather; they have the orientation to teach other children. These teachers have no skill of Braille, sign language and know how to treat children with special needs. Even the pedagogy designed to teach the 'normal' students. Teachers' experience and the way that they had been brought up and the way they are teaching was within the same trained. The concept of inclusive is new idea. So teacher education colleges and universities are not yet ready to train their candidates how to accommodate CwDs in the regular classroom. Therefore, teachers support CwDs to the extent that know and the level of their commitment. For instance, means of communication of deaf children is sign language. In the process of communication, sign language is mother tongue for the deaf. But this language is not understood by other members of the society. The deaf only use it or others may use it by their own initiative. As a right they may claim sign language as their mother tongue. Since teachers don't have the skill of sign language,

deaf students learn only the visual aspect of the lesson. The learning in the classroom has both audio and visual which is seen on the black board. However, the deaf children attend the second one only. This is a big challenge.

The second challenge comes from the society or the community. The society once perceived as CwDs couldn't success whether they learn in an inclusive mode or segregated. School participation of CwDs is insignificant specially, when the grade level increases the dropout increases. The reasons were lack of follow up and special support. The other reason for their dropout was while they grownup, they couldn't withstand the negative attitude that comes from their peers and the community entirely. According to the structure of education of Amhara region, there were satellite schools for those who were at their age of seven and can't reach primary schools. If the number of children was less than forty and fifty, education bureau used to assign a teacher to bring together the children and teach them. There were also alternative education settings for very remote areas. These settings were very flexible as a result they teach children at any hour of the day with the convenience of the children. Though this is the fact, teachers in such settings or satellite and alternative education settings had no either the responsibility or the training to accommodate CwDs. At the same time, the CwDs were also recommended to go to special units rather than to the already mentioned settings. The distribution of units that could accommodate CwDs had been very rare when they compared with regular schools. The reason was the number of CwDs could be one or two, so that assigning a teacher for these one or two students with disabilities unfair in terms of resource. Further, No matter how primary schools were accessible, the regional topography by itself was full of ups and downs. So it could be a great barrier for children with physical disabilities.

Kasa: The first thing is, there is no clear understanding about the concept of inclusive education. In relation with this, and in the process of education of CwDs, there are no teachers who have sufficient experience and skill to teach them. The other thing is the community itself has a problem of accepting the education of CwDs. Because of the above problems, inclusive education can't be successful in regions specifically and the nation at large. Off course, there is a problem of creating conducive environment. This is to say that the teaching material is not adapted; school buildings aren't accessible; even there is no expertise to implement inclusive education. For instance, schools don't have teacher who can treat a child with hearing impairment. So there is skill gap among teachers. Beside this, teachers' training process is not effective to enable graduates to be effective in implementing inclusive education. The training colleges of education aren't well organised to produce quality teachers.

According to my understanding, there is no budget which is allocated for the implementation of inclusive education. Education of children with special needs is being performed by the education bureau of Addis Ababa city. But no budget title which is specifically allocated for inclusive education. Furnishing resource rooms, Purchasing sign language books and Braille manuals and even books are financed by the regular budget.

Home-school distance is the other challenge to create inclusion of CwDs. For example, as the interviewee told me, he used to live at the outskirts of the city. As a result, he observed, as there were children with physical disabilities who used to creep to reach school. So the government should arrange the situation for the students who have such kind of problem to learn nearby their home.

Hagos has listed challenges to implement inclusive education based on his work experience as a teacher and education manager. He continued: of course there are challenges to implement inclusive education. Among these; I. lack of equipment for special need education like Braille and other assistive technology. II. Shortage of skilled manpower. There are no sufficient trained teachers to implement inclusive education. III. There is attitudinal problem. Lack of awareness among teachers. Even students with disabilities.

Lemmas: According to the interviewee's point of view, the following were the main challenges of inclusive education in Tigray region in particular and in Ethiopia in general. Skilled manpower in SNE; Lack of awareness among the society at large and the stakeholders education specifically; Poor adapted school facility; Home-school distance, though the average home-school distance was 2.5 kilometre, it could be difficult to travel daily such distance for physical and visual disabled students particularly.

Tayitu has finalised challenges of the country to implement inclusive education this way: No priority from the family. Parents are not willing to send to school. No awareness about child with disability in the family. Mostly, parents consider a child with disability as if they lost the child in death. Somehow, the child with disability get the opportunity to go school, he/she may not have someone to support to go school. That is to take him/her to school and bring him/her back. Even after going to school, there is a problem of integrating with non-disabled children.

11. What measures should be taken to include CwDs in Ethiopian schools fully?

Kasa: The bureau should give direction based on the problems. Specifically, Awareness should be created with in schools, and among the community surrounding the schools. The awareness shouldn't be periodic. Rather, the awareness programmes should be well organised, continuous; there should be trainings for school teachers. At the same time, the trainings should be based on need assessment to fill the skill gap. Inclusive education should have its own budget title. If all these are fulfilled, it is possible to implement inclusive education.

Hagos: The Regional Education Bureau has planned to mobilise the stakeholders of education from the bottom to the top level. With this, according to the plan, the bureau gave orientation to the people to send their children to schools. The bureau should available the necessary equipment for CwDS. The bureau should also negotiate with NGOs to support the process. Training institutes should train SNE teachers sufficiently.

Tayitu: off course! It is difficult to bring CwDs hundred percent. But, minimising school home distance; Satellite and alternative education access has been created for “dehnegnoch” or “tena lalachew”. Better than this, the government should do the same for those who have special needs. For Tayitu; building teachers’ capacity, assessing the need and expansion special units can increase the enrolment rate of CwDs. Next to that, there should be budget increment. Still, if there is financial aid, training teachers is a good measure.

Appendix-Q

Data from semi-structured interview with representative of NGOs.

I invited the interviewee because of his rich work experience in SNE. The interview took forty-five minutes at interviewee’s office. The interviewee has worked in one of national non-governmental organisation for the last eighteen years. He qualified in SNE and served as community based rehabilitation field worker and field supervisor.

1. What do you understand by the concept of inclusive education?

Interviewee:

Inclusive education is a process that can be mature due to the effort of all stakeholders especially government, association of person with disabilities, parents of children with special needs and

children with special needs themselves. On the other hand it is a system of teaching children in the regular class considering their language, disability, poverty, ethnicity, diversified capacity and potential and their medical and related issues in to account.

Inclusive education is a tree that can grow in the community with a fertile environment that cultivate and closely follow by responsible farmer. Where the enabling environment including policies strategies considered as a pave responsible soldiers including schools, universities and colleges, teachers, students with special needs and their parents and students with special needs are front soldiers that march in realising inclusive education in practical manner. As the interviewee remarked, the word inclusive was attractive but practically difficult to achieve spontaneously. Hence, without proper planning and commitment from all side with special focus on government.

2. Who do you see as the critical people to create inclusion of CwDs?

Interviewee:

The issue of inclusive education is the issue of right. In addressing the right of children with special needs through inclusive education, the main duty bearers are government and parents that are the two most important groups that have a key role. As far as the government has the commitment to materialize inclusive education, teachers, students, professionals on the field, NGOs and others can join the effort of realising inclusive education.

3. Have you observed annual budget allocation from the government to realise inclusion?

Interviewee:

It is very difficult to accept that the government has allocated the necessary budget to realise inclusive education. This is mainly originated from the less attention given by responsible stakeholders including policy makers and planners.

4. How should inclusive education be financed?

Interviewee:

As I have mentioned earlier the issue inclusive education is the issue of right, hence the allocation of budget should be harmonize with the total number of students with special needs including CwDs. Proper data should be organised at national, regional and school level that enables to equip schools, professionals on the field, colleges and universities. In a country like Ethiopia education took the first rank in budget share from all sectors it is unacceptable to find a budget source on promoting inclusive beyond a slogan and theoretical explanation.

5. Do you develop guideline of inclusive education?

As the interviewee witnessed, Manuals and supporting documents were produced but not guidelines by themselves. Though this was the truth, the manual and the documents could serve as necessary inputs to change inclusive education from slogan and mote to reality that enable CwDs and others to be beneficiaries from all walks of life including education.

6. What types of input (materials, equipment, and training) are needed to implement inclusive education in the country?

Interviewee:

The training that aims teachers should include practical aspect like sign language, brail reading and writing, and production of inclusive learning materials from locally available materials. Brail paper, slate stylus, hearing aid, wheelchair, and crutch should be considered and availed for the target children. The other thing that the interviewee mentioned important to implement inclusive education was adequate and realistic budgeting and systemic follow-up and monitoring of implementation of inclusive education was a key instrument in equipping schools and others with the input.

7. Do schools have SNE professionals?

Interviewee:

Some schools particularly governmental schools do have SNE teachers. However most of them are assigned on other field. In private schools it is hard to get special needs professional. This is a reflection of the wrong perception that gives implementing inclusive education for others.

8. What are the biggest challenge facing Ethiopian children and youth with disabilities to go to school?

The interviewee:

The biggest challenge faced children and youth with disabilities is lack of rehabilitation services at their early age. In the Ethiopian case the bridge between the home of children with disability and schools are not yet constructed or seriously broken due to different barriers including wrong attitude on the potential and capacity of children and youth with disabilities, lack of appliances and assistive devices, less interest of organisation to support CwDs and other can be considered as the biggest challenge that impede children and youth with disabilities to enjoy access and quality education just like their non-disabled age mates.

Even though it is very difficult to say are now implementing inclusive education in its true sense our efforts on creating enabling environment for inclusion impeded by numerous challenges but emanated from interwoven causes. To mention few –

- A. The first challenge is the confusion that starts from the word inclusion and its level of implementation in Ethiopia.
- B. As a practitioner of inclusive education, lack of resource at schools including trained manpower, assistive devices are critical that impedes the implementation of inclusive education
- C. Lack of commitment from the government to advance the effort one step ahead through allocation of adequate budget and assigning proper professional at proper place.
- D. Lack of understanding and interest from many organisations working with children that limit their involvement in promoting inclusive education.

In addition, the main challenge for Ethiopians on creating enabling environment for CwDs was emanated from two most critical issues; the wrong perceptions that consider creating friendly environment is the responsibility of only parents and organisations working on the issue of

disability which is wrongly deep-rooted in the mind of the community including school community. On the other hand inadequate allocation resource for CwDs from the government side and considering creating welcoming and friendly schools for CwDs as additional works that can be done only the responsibility staffs like special needs professionals assigned in the respective schools.

9. What needs to happen in order for Ethiopian students with disabilities to be enrolled in schools?

Enrolling to school for students with disabilities is not a simple task for parents and the child. Preliminary activities like assessment, rehabilitation plan, enhancing the awareness of the family members and the community, provision of appliance and assistive devices should get equal attention from all stakeholders but mainly from government and NGOs. There must be a strategy to bridge the gap between the school and home of CwDs. Opening the door of schools, assigning professionals, produce and in place strategies and guidelines without facilitating the necessary rehabilitation services is just a ship that starts to move without a compass.

Subsequently, when we talk of functional inclusion, there is a need to exert effort at all levels, including on the child, parents, community, school, colleges of teachers education, universities and other segment of the social and political stratum. The strategies and policies should get a right hand from government and others to practically implement. There must be a mechanism that enables to monitor and evaluate the difference created in implementing inclusive education at all levels including schools. Encouraging NGOs working on rehabilitation and promotion of inclusive education at grassroots level is also get attention from the government and other stakeholders. College of teachers' education should modify their curriculum with the objective equipping teachers with the necessary skill beyond theoretical knowledge. Providing brail reading and writing and sign language for all teachers should get acceptance from government and start to take action for the realisation inclusion at all level.

Appendix- R

Glossary of terms

Terms below are presented on the basis of their contextual meaning in this research. The meanings of the terms might not have a very significant unlikeness from their denotation in other literature. However, since I have believed that they are slightly different, I have provided their contextual meaning in accordance to the current study here under.

Adapted materials: teaching or learning material that are modified in a way to meet the different need of students with disabilities.

Block grant: finance that Ethiopian government used to allocate to schools with no consideration of students with disabilities.

Disability: Socially constructed characteristic of an individual following his/her impairment.

Education system: refers to the established structure of education from the top MoE and to the bottom of each school.

Impairment: inability to hear read ink-print and walk without support of others.

Inclusive education: a strategy to educate CwDs together with those who have no disabilities in less restricted environment.

Inclusive policy: a policy which considers PwDs. Or, a policy which allows provision or privilege for PwDs.

Institutional education: a residential school designed to accommodate CwDs only.

Integration: to educate both children with and without disabilities in an environment where attempts aren't made to meet the special needs of students with disabilities.

“Kebelie”: the very bottom administration in the structure of the government.

Mode of education: a type of educational setting in which CwDs are being educated.

School grant: a school finance which comes from non-governmental organisation with guideline. According to school grant guideline, one percent of the finance goes to students with disabilities.

Segregation: a type of educate CwDs separately.

SNE: a field of studies which deals the specific need of diverse learners.

“Wereda”: administrative structure which is equivalent to district.

Zone: administrative structure between regional education and district education bureaus.