Teachers' pedagogical practices for including learners with Cerebral Palsy at a primary school in the Chipinge district, Zimbabwe

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Abstract—The study explored the teachers' pedagogical practices for including learners with cerebral palsy (LCP) in inclusive classrooms in the Chipinge district in Zimbabwe. It adopted a qualitative approach rooted in the interpretative research paradigm. It used a phenomenological research design to analyse data. Individual semi-structured interviews, non-participant observation of lesson delivery, and document analysis were used for data collection. Nine participants were purposively sampled. Data was analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis. The results showed teachers' various pedagogical practices when teaching LCP. These include differentiation of time and tasks, consultation and partnership, learner-centered learning, and embracing technology. The results of positive reinforcement, teaching social skills, knowing individual learners, and creating a psycho-social environment foster the inclusion of LCP in general classrooms through enhanced respect and acceptance of all learners. Challenges, which include teacher's lack of skills and knowledge, human and material resources, and lack of skills and knowledge, were seen to be hindering the effective inclusion of LCP. Recommendations include stakeholders pursuing rights-based inclusive education awareness and parental educational programmes and providing appropriate human and material resources.

Keywords: Disabilities, Inclusive education, Learners with Cerebral Palsy, Pedagogical practices

I. INTRODUCTION

GLOBALLY, due to the Salamanca statement in 1994, inclusive education was introduced, and most countries have consistently adopted it with the global fraternity (Khan, 2017). Inclusion has been defined in many ways, and these definitions lack universality; perhaps the most authoritative definitions are from United Nations agencies and treaties such as the Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Schuelka, 2018). According to Cerna, Mezzanotte, Rutigliano, Brussino, Santiago, Borgonovi, and Guthrie (2021), inclusion means a principle that values students' well-being, dignity, autonomy, and contribution to society, a continuing process to eliminate barriers to education and promote reform in the culture, policy, and practice in schools to include all learners including those with cerebral palsy. Inclusion begins with the assumption that all learners, including those with cerebral palsy, have a right to be in the same educational space, such as learners with other disabilities and other disadvantages are taught with their peers in a regular classroom for most of the school day (Anastasiou, & Bantekas, 2023). It is on this premise that inclusive education is based, but not without its challenges, including how and what pedagogical practices to best support learners, how to support teachers best, how to implement programmes successfully, and what embedded beliefs and practices need to change (Somma & Bennet, 2020).

Since 1994, several countries have adopted inclusion. However, there are wide variations in stages of development regarding appropriate legislation and policies for it, as well as in securing the necessary political will and attitudinal change (UNICEF, 2019). Several countries have adopted inclusion and passed policies and legislation to support inclusion. For example, the United States of America passed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004) that guarantees the right to free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment as well as accommodation and educational services to meet the needs of each learner, including those with cerebral palsy at no additional cost to parents (Stone, 2019). Similarly, India passed the Right to Education Act of (2009), which guaranteed every child between the ages of 6-14 years, including those with disabilities, the right to free and compulsory education at a neighborhood school (Verma, 2019). The legislation strongly focused on promoting equity for all children, requiring authorities to reach out to marginalised groups of learners (UNICEF, 2019), including those with cerebral palsy (Nel, Tiale, Engelbrecht & Nel, 2016). The policy paves the way for the enactment of inclusive education and associated support structures as pivotal aspects of that implementation within the South African context. Section 9 of the Education White Paper 6 obliges everyone to be equally treated, and no one should be directly or indirectly deprived of the right to education at any institution on any grounds, including disability (Adewumi & Mosito, 2019). This is meant to facilitate learning access for all learners with diverse, unique needs, including those with cerebral palsy, through eliminating discriminatory attitudes, allowing them access to quality education so that they can succeed and contribute effectively to the development of society, economy, and country at large (Bani Odeh, 2024).

In compliance with the countries mentioned above, some developing countries have crafted policies to enforce inclusion. However, most policies lack specificity, and the states struggle to implement these policies (Lang, Schneider, Kett, Cole, Groce, 2019). Namibia 2014 launched a new policy on inclusive education termed Namibia

Education Sector Policy on Inclusive Education, which aims to provide access, equity, and quality education to all learners, including those with cerebral palsy (Matengu, Likando, & Haihambo, 2019). The policy seeks to integrate the sector policy on inclusive education into all other legal frameworks and policies of the education sector, raise awareness of the constitutional right to education, and foster attitudinal change. It further supports institutional development by developing human and instructional resources, developing teacher education and training for paramedical and support staff, and developing a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Sector Policy on inclusive education (Ambili, Haihambo, & Hako, 2024). Like the rest of developing countries, Pakistan crafted Article 25 of the Constitution of Pakistan and the National Education Policy (2009) that foster inclusive education. Article 25 of the constitution of Pakistan endorses the right of every child, including those with special educational needs, to free primary education. The National Education policy encourages inclusive, child-friendly education (Pirzado, 2022). This is meant to ensure that every child in Pakistan has equal access to free and quality primary education on an equal basis without discrimination and responding to diversity, thereby reducing the exclusion of some learners.

Consistent with the global fraternity, Zimbabwe adopted inclusion in 1994 (Majoko, 2017). The adoption of inclusion was guided by several policies and legislations, which include the Zimbabwe Education Act of 1987, revised in (2006), The Zimbabwe Constitution Number 20 of 2013 section 75, the Disabled Act of 1996, The Principal Director'sCircular Number 20 of 2011, and the Director's Circular 12 of 2005 (Majoko 2019). Also, The Education Act of 1987, as revised in 2006, mandates free primary education for all learners, including those with diverse, unique needs like cerebral palsy, thus a stride towards the equalisation of opportunities for learners with unique, diverse needs like cerebral palsy and their neuron-typically developing peers (Majoko, 2019). The Zimbabwe Constitutional Amendment Number 20 of 2013 affirms that the government will provide resources to support learners with diverse, unique needs, including those with cerebral palsy (Ndlovu, 2020). Teachers are expected to simultaneously meet the individual needs of both learners with and without cerebral palsy in regular classrooms, thereby fulfilling the social justice agenda (Paledi, 2023). The Disabled Persons Act of 1992, which was amended in 1996, prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities to opportunities availed to non-disabled peers in public facilities, including regular classrooms.

It has been highlighted that the implementation of inclusive pedagogical practices by teachers is instrumental in yielding enhanced acceptance for diversity, reduced expenditure, enhanced socialisation, increased academic accomplishments, and achievement to learners with diverse, unique needs, including those with cerebral palsy through cooperative group learning, adapted instruction and academic interactions with neuron typically developing peers (Majoko, 2018, Tindal, 2017). Inclusive pedagogical practices allow learners with diverse, unique needs to build social skills, establish relationships, and experience higher levels of interaction, yielding a sense of belonging, enhanced self-esteem, body image, and a sense of freedom (Sanger, 2020). Nevertheless, some teachers are not implementing inclusive pedagogical practices that foster the inclusion of LCP in general classrooms due to limited knowledge of inclusive pedagogical practices and their impact on LCP in general classrooms (Thuketana, 2018; Stevens, 2018). Suppose teachers of children with cerebral palsy do not implement inclusive pedagogical practices. In that case, LCP will most likely be excluded while physically included, resulting in them being greatly bored, isolated, frustrated, traumatised, emotionally drained, decreased academic achievement, and discriminated against in general classrooms due to their deprivation of social justice and equality experience (Majoko, 2016).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Teachers' experiences in the inclusive classes

Rachmadani et al. (2021) found that despite limited knowledge and skills of inclusive education, some teachers experienced professional growth and increased personal satisfaction by teaching in inclusive classrooms as they acquired knowledge and skills to modify lesson plans for inclusive classrooms. Alvarado-Cando, Jara, Barzallo, and Torres-Salamea (2019) reported a link between teachers' experiences with inclusion and their enhanced teacher instructional competencies, thereby meeting all learners' needs as they all benefited from the modifications done even if they were not meant for them all. It is essential to note that various factors could influence teachers' experience in inclusive classes, such as mandatory inclusive policies,

Mandatory inclusive policies could be a factor that influences teachers' experiences in inclusive classes. Similarly, Jansen and Kalas (2020) suggested a need for clear, comprehensive policies to guide and foster effective implementation of inclusive practice and spell out the role of each stakeholder when they work together. The literature revealed that there is also a need for the promulgation of pro-inclusive policies accompanied by enforcement measures that will be cascaded to teacher education institutions so that teacher training focuses on inclusive teaching and effective implementation of these policies if inclusion is to take root (Bucholz, 2017). Teachers need to be allowed to form their positions and perspectives on the development of mandatory inclusive education policies since the basic reason that policy planning fails is that the planners of decision-makers of change are unaware of the situations that potential implementers of the policies are facing (Mustafawi & Shaaban, 2019).

Differentiation of instruction

Obinga-Ogono (2017) revealed that differentiation of instruction is closely aligned with learner-centered approaches to teaching that support learner agency in their learning, encourage learner choice, and consequently promote learner engagement with LCP. Thus, engagement in learning tends to be stronger because it considers the voice of learners with and without CP and addresses learners as equal individuals. Stevens (2018) found that differentiation of instruction permits no child with CP to be left behind since each learner has an individualised learning plan in line with his or her abilities, which results in a higher probability for all learners to achieve. Horn, Parks, and An (2019) reviewed the fact that differentiation of instruction maximises the achievement of functional independence and participation of LCP in mainstream schools. Tomlinson and Jarvis (2023) found that differentiation of instruction enables teachers to tailor regular school content to the different levels of cognitive development of individual LCP. Thus, instruction differentiation is effective for high-ability and struggling learners with and without CP.

Collaboration

It is essential to note that collaboration could efficiently assist learners in inclusive classrooms. In Kenya, Obinga-Ogono (2017) found that collaboration increases efficiency in assisting LCP by eliminating duplication of roles and removing redundancy. Thus, involved professionals bring their expertise to set the learner's goals with CP together and agree on how to achieve these goals such that the roles and boundaries of each stakeholder are spelled out. Pashmdarfard, Amini & Mehraban (2017) observed that professional collaboration enhanced parents' knowledge about caring for LCP, culminating in enhanced participation due to the learner's emotional, social, and physical well-being. Thus, when LCP are socially, mentally, physically, and emotionally stable, they tend to participate more in learning activities.

Parental partnership

Pereira et al. (2019) reported that parental partnership nurtures positive attitudes toward studies in LCP as they are their emulation models. This results in LCP being adventurous and focused, which can enhance participation in learning activities to please parents. Barnes, Bimrose, Brown, Gough, and Wright (2020) reported that parental partnership is instrumental in reducing the drop-out rate in LCP, culminating in all learners completing their educational programmes. Thus, teachers and parents support the LCP so that they develop a

positive attitude toward schoolwork and an appreciation for their efforts.

Cooperative learning

Ogalloh, Wamocho, and Otube (2018) qualitative study in Kenya found that cooperative learning enables learners with and without CP to add their perspectives to the discussion and get acquainted with different cultures. Thus fostering participation and tolerance among all learners from various backgrounds. A qualitative study by Bucholz, (2017) found that cooperative learning dissolves nervousness and insecurity in LCP as it results in mutual support and cooperation among group members since one cannot succeed unless all group members succeed. In Kenya, Obinga-Ogono, (2017) observed that cooperative learning fosters constant monitoring of LCP and reward interdependence where the whole group receives recognition for achieving the goal. This develops a sense of belonging in learners with and without CP and builds confidence, heightening participation. On the contrary, Stevens (2018) found that cooperative learning makes it difficult for individual learners with and without CP to get good grades. This means individual achievement becomes difficult to measure.

Peer tutoring

Thuketana (2018) found that peer tutoring enables the learner tutor to gain a deeper understanding of a topic by teaching it to another learner. Obinga-Ogono (2017) asserts that peer tutoring improves the social behaviours and attitudes of the learners involved. Thus, involved learners with and without CP have opportunities to practice specific social skills and generally yield a culture of acceptance and positive attitude towards learning. Adversely, Ogalloh et al. (2018) found that social development could be lacking if people only work with the same person every time and do not promote positive relationships between learners. Thus, monotony can result in boredom. In Malaysia, Abdurrahman et al. (2019) found that planning and preparing for peer tutoring requires additional time and organisation for the classroom teacher, and peer tutoring learners may go off task as they work with their friends.

Co-teaching

Thuketana (2018) observed that co-teaching enhances the learning experiences of LCP by capitalising on two or more teachers' expertise and instructional strategies. Thus, teachers combine their knowledge to be more helpful. Rytivaara, Pulkinen, and Palmu (2023) discovered that co-teaching provides one-on-one interaction between teachers and LCP, leading to stronger relationships. Similarly, Akcamete and Gokbulut (2018) found that co-teaching allows sharing ideas that lead to enrichment and differentiation, better meeting every learner's needs. By assessing and monitoring learners, co-teachers can suggest useful recommendations for the learner. However, Obinga-Ogono (2017) postulated that personality conflicts among involved teachers usually characterise co-teaching due to differing expectations and rigidity in teachers to accept the new strategy.

Embracing assistive technology

Cavanaugh (2021) revealed that engaging any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customised, may increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. Similarly, Alvarado-Cando et al. (2019) observed that having the right equipment will likely optimise LCP experiences of challenge and mastery, culminating in better performance. Thus, LCP can receive and express skills and knowledge most conveniently, and teachers may also modify assignments using different technologies if appropriate tools are available. On the contrary, Majoko (2018) reported that some technologies seemed overly complex to some people, which may discourage them from making the best use of them. Training for teachers must take place to be able to use the technology properly.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study explores the teachers' practices for including LCP in classrooms at primary schools in the Chipinge District. It explores the teachers' understanding of the challenges of including LCP in mainstream schools in Chipinge District.

IV. METHODS

Research approach

This study used a qualitative research approach conducted in a natural environment (Aspers and Corte, 2019). This approach was useful as it allows the researcher to use data collection techniques such as direct observations, indirect observation, document analysis, photographs, individual interviews, focus group interviews, and other instruments to collect data (Taherdoost, 2021).

Research paradigm

The study used the interpretive research paradigm to explore the pedagogical practices in teaching LCP in inclusive classes. A research paradigm is a set of beliefs and agreements shared between scientists that guide how problems should be understood and solved. Creswell, and Creswell, 2018). The interpretivism paradigm views the world subjectively, which depends on how you look (Kankam, 2019; Ugwu, Ekere, & Onoh, 2021). In addition, the paradigm argues that the researcher and participants construct knowledge, that the social world is not understood from one standpoint, and that reality is socially constructed (Kankam, 2019; Ugwu et al., 2021).

Research design

This study was embedded in a phenomenological research design. This research design attempts to understand the essence of a phenomenon from the perspective of participants who have experienced it (Neubauer, Witkop, & Varpio, 2019). It provides rich, detailed descriptions and comments about the phenomenon being investigated (Van Manen, 2023). It was advantageous because it helped the researcher to analyse data on teachers' pedagogical practices for the inclusion of LCP from semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis individually and across the three data sets, thereby availing comprehensive information that results in a deeper understanding of teachers' pedagogical practices for the inclusion of LCP in general classrooms in the Chipinge District.

Data collection methods

The researcher used semi-structured interviews, non-participant observation, and document analysis to collect data on teachers' pedagogical practices for including LCP in mainstream classrooms in primary schools in the Chipinge District in Zimbabwe.

Semi-structured interviews

This study used semi-structured interviews to understand teachers' reasoning behind the pedagogical practices they use in teaching LCP in mainstream classrooms. The semi-structured interviews employ closed- and open-ended questions, often followed by follow-up why or how questions (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021). This permits interviews to be focused while allowing the researcher to explore pertinent ideas that may arise during the interview (Adams, 2015).

Non-participant observation

Non-participant observation is used to understand a phenomenon by entering the community or social system while staying separate from the observed activities. It assists in capturing the aspects of context found in other data and the relationships between different contextual aspects (Eldh, Rycroft-Malone, van der Zijpp, McMullan, & Hawkes, 2020). Non-participant observation was used to understand a teacher's pedagogical practices for including LCP in mainstream classrooms while staying separate from the activities being observed. The researcher observed lesson delivery to get a deeper understanding of teachers' pedagogical practices in the inclusion of LCP.

Document analysis

Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating texts and images that have been recorded in either printed or electronic documents without the researcher's intervention (Dalglish, Khalid, & McMahon,2020). Document analysis was used to verify findings or corroborate evidence from other sources, resulting in reinvestigation if the documentary evidence is contradictory and greater

confidence in the trustworthiness of findings if there is convergence (Marshall & Rossman, 2017). I examined and interpreted documents such as scheme-cum plans, Individualised Education plan records, and lesson plans to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge on teachers' pedagogical practices for including LCP.

Participants

The study population comprised three primary schools in the Chipinge District in Zimbabwe. Taherdoost (2016) defines population as the entire set of people who conform to specific criteria on which the study focused. The study used purposive sampling to select participants from the population. According to Borg and Gall (2016), purposive sampling is a procedure that enables the researcher to select informants who are likely to be information-rich for the study. The researcher purposively selected nine teaching LCP as key informants in the study. Hossan, Dato'Mansor, and Jaharuddin (2023) define a sample as a portion or a subset of a larger group called a population.

Biography of the participants

Nine teachers were informants, five females, and four males. Three teachers were from school A, three from school B, and the other three from school C. Their ages ranged from thirty to fifty-five years. Of these, six had a Diploma in Education as their highest qualification, one had an Honors degree in Adult education, and two had a master's degree in special education. Their teaching experiences ranged from three to eight years. Their teaching grades ranged from Early Childhood Development A to Grade 7, representing every grade. Four participants were from the Ndau tribe, three from Karanga, and two were from Manyika.

Research site

The research was conducted in rural schools A, B, and C near the Mozambican border in Chipinge East District in Manicaland Province of Zimbabwe. The schools were established in 1945,1954, and 1960 respectively. These schools were built without learners with disabilities in mind since institutionalisation was the norm in those years. This means the environment is not conducive for learners with disabilities. School A specialises in tea production. Most learners at schools A, B, and C are Ndau speakers from poor socio-economic backgrounds and families that depend on farming. Most of their guardians are farm workers. The community specialises in farming, and most learners who attend the school come from native farms around the school, meaning they are usually busy. The schools had a population of 1038, 1124 and 1093 respectively. Having so many learners at each school, the schools had few teachers, and most of them had low qualifications, of which some of those who were teaching inclusive classes did not have Special Needs qualifications.

Data analysis

Data was analysed using the seven stages of Interpretive Phenomenological analysis to understand teacher's pedagogical practices for including LCP in general classrooms. The stages entailed reading and re-reading, initial noting or coding, developing emergent themes, clustering themes, moving to the next case, looking for patterns across cases, and taking interpretations to deeper levels (Mines, 2024). A thorough reading of noted data from interviews, document analysis, and observation was done several times. It was then coded and developed into emergent themes. The researcher then searched for connections across emergent themes or meaning units into clusters. It was then sorted according to overarching themes. A deeper review of identified themes was done by checking the themes in the coded extracts. Patterns across cases were looked for, and the analysis was transformed into an interpretable piece of writing using vivid and competing extract examples related to the themes, research questions, and literature.

Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are ways of being sensitive to and considering the rights, duties, and responsibilities of individuals who are participating in a research study in terms of their status, religion, race, ability, and age (Henrickson, Giwa, Hafford-Letchfield, Cocker, Mulé, Schaub, & Baril, 2020; Weinbaum, Landree, Blumenthal, Piquado, & Gutierrez, 2019). This study sought and secured clearance from the Great Zimbabwe University, which was then attached to the application letter and used to seek permission from the head office of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education of Zimbabwe. The permanent secretary granted permission, and the researcher was issued a letter to liaise with the provincial director and district inspector. After that, the Department of Education granted the research authorisation to access the participating primary schools in the Chipinge District. The researcher also used consent forms to seek and secure consent from the participating teachers in this study. Participants were also assured that the data to be collected was kept confidential and could be used for educational purposes only.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Teachers' understanding of inclusive education
Learners' responsive pedagogy

Participants revealed that they understood inclusive education as a learner-responsive pedagogy in general education. This entailed education designed to benefit all learners with and without diverse, unique needs in regular classrooms through engaging necessary adaptations to meet the individuality of these learners. This is evidenced in the following selected excerpts.

"Inclusive education refers to an approach where learners, regardless of ability or disability, learn together in the same environment, being taught by the same teacher but being catered to their needs individually" (Participant 5).

"Inclusive education means education that is accommodative to all learners through accepting, understanding, and attending to the varied characteristics of these learners" (Participant 8).

The findings are in support of the policies on inclusion, which include The Salamanca Statement on Inclusive Education (1994), which mandates the education of all children in mainstream schools within their communities, taking into cognisance the unique abilities and learning needs of learners with special needs (Dube 2024). Understanding what inclusion means is a powerful tool that enriches teachers in dealing with learners with diverse needs. Their pedagogical practices will be based on fulfilling the aim and objective of inclusive education, which was designed to benefit all learners with and without diverse, unique needs in regular classrooms.

Human rights and social justice philosophy

Participants exhibited that they understood inclusive education as an international human rights and social justice philosophy that calls for changes in the regular schools. This involves a shift that mandates regular schools to welcome learners with and without diverse, unique needs from all backgrounds in regular educational settings in their neighborhood schools by providing necessary adaptations, services, and support for learning such that every learner is accepted, participates, and can achieve. This is shown in the following statement:

"A human rights and social justice approach to education entails enacting changes to the education system and modifying content, pedagogical practices, teaching methods, approaches, structures, assessments, and strategies to meet individual learners' unique characteristics in regular neighborhood school classrooms. The approach ensures quality and equal access, acceptance, participation, and success of all" (Participant 3).

From the findings above, it can be deduced that knowing inclusive education as a human right enables teachers to adhere to rules and regulations about including LCP. Similarly, Oduwole (2019) proposed a human system approach whereby strategies are planned by everyone in an active, free, and meaningful way for every individual or group. In this regard, by understanding inclusion as a human right, teachers may develop pedagogical practices that enhance the full inclusion of learners with disabilities, including those with cerebral palsy. This also aligns with The Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2008), which promotes the right of persons with disabilities to inclusive education (Article 24). However, this needs the support from different

stakeholders to implement policies on human rights and inclusion to include learners with disabilities, including those with Cerebral Palsy, fully.

Teachers' practice in inclusion of LCP

Differentiation of tasks and time

Findings indicated teachers differentiate tasks and time by including LCP in regular classes. Such involves different quantities of written assignment tasks, allocating different times for completing written tasks to individual learners in response to their disabilities, and changing teaching methods of topics in response to their participation and achievement. This is illustrated in the subsequent selected quotes:

I give learners tasks according to their abilities. I also change teaching methods if children with CP do not engage and respond favorably when teaching a particular concept. I can change individual tasks to group tasks if children with CP struggle to accomplish them (Participant 1).

I give them extra time to finish assigned tasks. I also give them light work, like arranging furniture in the classroom. They have problems handling things and balancing, so carrying heavy objects may result in them falling or dropping the object (Participant 9).

The above findings indicated that teachers differentiate instruction to meet individual needs. Learners who are given tasks according to their abilities enjoy it and feel motivated to continue attending school. This was supported by Stevens (2018), who alluded that differentiation of instruction permits no child with CP to be left behind since each learner has an individualised learning plan in line with his or her abilities, culminating in a higher probability for all learners to achieve. This resonates with Tomlison and Jarvis (2023), who revealed that differentiation of instruction enables teachers to tailor regular school content to individual levels' cognitive development of individual LCP.

Consultation and partnership

Responses from teachers expressed that they consult and work in equal partnership with all the stakeholders within their reach to include LCP in regular classes. Such stakeholders involve LCP, co-teachers, specialist teachers, parents, administrators, ancillary staff, social workers, and health personnel to tap the case history of the learner, establish a zone of proximal development of the learner, establish support services and goals, tap strategies workable with the learner and pool resources to support learners. One participant said this:

"I discuss with the parent and support personnel like teachers, ancillary staff, administrator, and health personnel within my reach and set goals on a learner's current needs and skills to address the needs of all learners who require a range of support. I teach the agreed skills listed for a particular learner, thereby improving the quality of life of a LCP" (Participant 3).

Other participants said the illustrated subsequently selected quotes:

"I consult the administrators and parents when an issue arises with the LCP. In many cases, the administrators and parents have contributed valuable suggestions and harmoniously solved the challenges LCP face by availing resources or referring them for further assessment" (Participant 4).

The above sentiments concur with Obinga-Ogono (2017), who discovered that collaboration increases efficiency in assisting LCP by eliminating duplication of roles and removing redundancy. This entails reflection of practices and exchange of knowledge among stakeholders involved in promoting the dignity and development of LCP, resulting in new and better strategies being developed and problems solved. Similarly, the Critical disability theory requires incorporating the voices and experiences of individuals with disabilities, including LCP, their families, and communities, throughout the planning process to help determine educational norms. It supports to avoid enforcing 'individual assimilation (Hong et al., 2020).

Teaching social skills

Findings from the study indicated that teachers taught social skills by including LCP in regular classes. This included teaching rules of etiquette required for learners to work in harmony and cooperatively fighting against unfair treatment and discouraging discriminatory language that devalues LCP, culminating in every learner with and without CP feeling a sense of belonging.

"I promote a classroom that values cooperation instead of competition. I teach my learners moral values and social skills like tolerance, sympathy, and teamwork, which results in peaceful learning and togetherness in my learners. I teach them social skills like greeting, turn-taking, thanking, and apologising so that they work with others peacefully" (Participant 6).

"I actively discourage bullying and teasing in my class. I reprimand learners who bully others and counsel the whole class by teaching moral stories and discouraging discriminatory language among learners" (Participant 7).

Findings indicated that teachers teach social skills that promote the acquisition of social values and norms. This is supported by Hasan and Islam (2020), who alluded that the social skills of learners with CP promote positive interdependence, increase the quantity and quality of peer interaction, and create a supportive and less stressful. learning environment for learners. This means mastering social skills enhances cooperative learning and eliminates the nervousness and insecurity of LCP. In concurrence, Obinga-Ogono (2017) study found that social skills enhance appropriate interactions of learners with and without CP, affording them opportunities for observational learning. In this regard, teachers' teaching of social skills facilitates the promotion of acceptance, respect, and dignity while reducing anxiety and addressing transition problems in LCP in general classrooms.

Environmental modifications

Participants reported that they used environmental modifications to include LCP in regular classes. This included a physically spacious arrangement of classroom objects for learners with and without diverse, unique needs to move easily. This can be evidenced in the following statement:

No matter the severity, LCP usually have difficulties with movement due to the contraction of muscles. Therefore, I always arrange furniture and classroom objects so that there is enough space for learners to maneuver independently even if they use mobility devices like walkers, crutches or wheelchairs (Participant 3).

The whole class cares for the learner and makes sure that objects that can disturb him are out of reach (Participant 1).

Findings showed that teachers, through their practice, made environmental adaptations to aid the safe and efficient mobility of LCP around the class. In support of this, Ogalloh et al. (2018) established that spacious arrangement is critical in learning settings to facilitate typical functioning movement patterns in LCP, encouraging learner skill development and independence. However, despite teachers' awareness of the need for efforts to create physically spacious arrangements of classroom objects for easy mobility of learners with and without CP in general classrooms to enhance their inclusion, the restrictive infrastructure limited their engagement in practice.

Use of Technology

Findings indicated that the use of technological tools to foster the inclusion of LCP in regular classrooms is usually done. Such included using computers to present content in various forms to address the needs of learners with and without CP and searching for intervention strategies for LCP from the internet. This is illustrated in the following statement.

"I sometimes present content in pictures or steps for doing a skill on the computer to motivate the learners instead of oral presentation" (Participant 3).

"It has developed the habit of researching new knowledge, resulting in me grabbing up-to-date information on inclusion issues" (Participant 5).

It has been deduced from the findings that presenting content in pictures or demonstrating steps of a task makes LCP understand things quickly and simultaneously reduces teachers' workload. As alluded to by Cavanaugh (2021), engaging any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customised may increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.

Teacher's challenges in the inclusion of LCP

Lack of human and material resources

Results from the study showed that teachers are experiencing a lack of human and material resources in the inclusion of LCP in general classrooms. This was felt to be a major drawback in practicing the

philosophy. Such resources included modified furniture, modified manipulatives, learning resources, accessible modified facilities, assistive mobility devices, and specialists' teachers to consult when clueless, culminating in excluding LCP in some learning activities and not accessing some facilities at a regular school. This is shown in the following selected quotes.

"Lack of resources is another challenge. Comfortable chairs and adapted chairs, adapted swings, modified manipulatives like papers with large lines and clipboards to stabilise the paper when writing" (Participant 6).

"No other specialists come to assist teachers in educating children with CP, yet they have a lot of work. Specialist teachers and therapists are needed" (Participant 2).

Findings indicated that a shortage of human and material resources affects the learning of LCP. In a study by Adewumi et al. (2019), most teachers expressed difficulties in implementing inclusion due to limited assistance from other stakeholders. In addition, Adewumi et al. (2019) argue that teachers have a huge role because they are also expected to take on all the responsibilities. Psychologists, social workers, government officials, community specialists, and government district support teams are identified as academic personnel (Okongo et al., 2015). On the other hand, most furniture is found not to be suitable for LCP. Therefore, providing resources that can make life easy for LCP during learning is crucial.

Lack of support structures

Results indicated that teachers are not getting enough support from other stakeholders, including LCP, in general classrooms. That was seen to interfere with the educational practice. The lack of support from administrators and support personnel like counselors, therapists, and others restricted the potential development of LCP in different domains. The pooling of appropriate resources and support services hinders teachers from informing pedagogy. This is illustrated in the subsequent selected quotes:

Lack of support from administrators and personnel like counselors, therapists, and other stakeholders restricts the holistic development of LCP and the pooling of appropriate support services (Participant 3).

Moreover, some headmasters do not even respond to our requests concerning LCP, as if their learning is less important and their presence in regular classrooms is enough. Once you go there with an issue, even a matter that requires them to refer to, they will only explain that the process will mostly not succeed, so let the parent do it independently (Participant 5).

From the above interview excerpts, it has been deduced that administrators' support is insufficient. Teachers are struggling as most support structures show less commitment to supporting LCP. This compromises inclusive pedagogy since every stakeholder has a role in effectively including LCP. In the study by Nembambula, Ooko, and Aluko (2023), limited or no support was expressed as one of the challenges affecting the implementation of Inclusive Education in classroom settings. Since learners exist in a complex interactive system, they need to have a support network of education role players (Nembambula et al., 2023). Although working collaboratively with other stakeholders was seen to be a challenge in Zimbabwean schools, it is crucial for inclusive practices (Nembambula et al., 2023)

Limited skills and knowledge

Findings showed that teachers lack the skills and knowledge needed to include LCP in regular classrooms, which was seen to interfere with the educational practice. Such included lack of awareness of the disability itself, limited skills to manage LCP, inadequate preparation to work in an inclusive setting, inability to adapt the curriculum effectively, and inability to effectively use assistive technology that LCP utilise, which resulted in teachers excluding and misunderstanding LCP or even feelings of frustration, anxiety, and incompetence in teachers in regular classrooms. This is illustrated in the following quotes.

Limited knowledge about the disease and skills to manage children with CP was a challenge to me. I misunderstood LCP as children who wanted to always draw people's attention by preferring their way of doing activities. I was helpless in most cases when the learner was under attack with seizures. It was difficult to tell other learners not to be afraid, yet I was frightened too

(Participant 1).

The lack of prerequisite skills and knowledge to facilitate learning for LCP makes it difficult for the teacher to deliver lessons effectively and control the class. Addressing issues of inclusive classes needs someone well equipped with skills and knowledge to deal with learners with diverse needs. Proper training, consistent workshops, and staff development can help equip teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to teach and learn LCP in inclusive classes. This is in line with a study done by Aktan (2020), who alluded that to ensure the desired success of the inclusion of learners with disabilities, teachers who are primarily responsible for the education of these learners are required to improve their professional competencies. This can be successful through several training sessions for teachers at all levels.

VI. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that including LCP is possible through some pedagogical practices that teachers employ. Some teachers are aware of inclusive education, but its practices are lagging as teachers sometimes fail to meet the needs of LCP due to a lack of human and material resources. The innovation and creativity of teachers are decisive in the inclusion of LCP in general classrooms, as these learners were included regardless of the rurality and lack of resources in their contexts. The study also concludes that resistance of the responsible authority to respond accordingly might consequently compel teachers to abolish all the inclusive practices they are engaging in. Due to teachers' boldness in disclosing that they lagged in skills and knowledge of inclusive education, the study concludes that not availing opportunities for continuous training and professional development might compromise their practice. Though teachers modify available resources to be usable by LCP, availing artificially ready resources might save time and afford ample practice time.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that stakeholders pursue rights-based inclusive education awareness programmes to eradicate misconceptions about inclusive education and to an understanding of the philosophy of all stakeholders. There should also be a provision of appropriate human and material resources in general schools to maximise the achievement of all learners. In addition, there should be an Initiative on parental educational programmes at the societal level to foster counseling of parents, opportunities for parents to better care for their child, and their responsibilities in their child's education. An in-depth study will be conducted on the effects of specific pedagogical practices that include LCP in the general classroom.

VIII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There are no conflicts of interest.

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