

Determinants of primary school teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Ezekiel Sarah

Master of Arts (Applied Social Psychology)

University of Dar es Salaam, School of Education, 2009

This study explored determinants of primary school teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. It was guided by three objectives and research tasks: to assess primary schools teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education; to identify and document the effect of sex, teaching experience, teachers' training and exposure to individual with disabilities in relation to teachers' attitude towards inclusive education; and to explore teachers' acceptance of pupils with disabilities in the inclusive classrooms. Some literature on inclusive education was reviewed and a conceptual framework based on predictive, mediating and outcome variable was adapted from Omari (1995). The study was guided by cross sectional survey design and total sample of 230 respondents were involved. The sample consisted of the regular classroom teachers and head teachers from eight primary schools who were obtained through purposive, stratified and simple random sampling procedures. Data were collected through questionnaire, interviews and documentary review and were qualitatively subjected to content analysis and quantitatively analyzed through SPSS Programme version 14.0. The findings revealed that primary school teachers' had fair understanding of inclusive education which excluded the notions of the gifted and children from other disadvantaged areas. The study further revealed that teachers' sex and teaching experiences had no significant effect in teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education, and that training in special and inclusive education and teachers exposure to individuals with disabilities were the strongest predictors of teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. The study noted that the nature and severity of disabilities largely influenced the teachers' acceptance of learners with disabilities, and that the nature and availability of resources in school environment and class size affected positively or negatively the attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education. It is recommended that special education training need be provided to both pre-service and in service teachers and that effective measures should be taken to resolve constraints related to large class size, inadequate training and scarcity of teaching and learning resources including lack of specialists in inclusive schools,

finally this study recommends further studies to examine teachers' attitudes in a wider setting and for establishing a more reliable cause-effect relationship for policy implications.