

## Teaching and Learning Strategies in Inclusive Public Primary Schools in Tanzania.

### Abstract

This study assessed on effective implementation of inclusive education in enhancing quality education in public primary schools in Karagwe district. Specifically, this study aimed at assessing the teaching and learning strategies applied in inclusive public primary schools in Karagwe district. The study employed a mixed method approach and was guided by behaviourism theory. Respondents were sampled by purposive sampling and simple random sampling techniques. The target population included teachers, head teachers, Primary District Education Officer, Ward Education Officer, District Special Education Officer, and Quality Assurance Officers. The sample size comprised of seventy-six (76) respondents. Data were gathered using questionnaire, interview, and observation methods. Data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 and thematic analysis method. The study findings revealed that the teaching strategies applied in inclusive public primary schools in Karagwe district are mainly lecture method, group discussion and questions and answers. The study recommends that inclusive education course should be taught in the teacher's education curriculum. It further recommends that in-service teachers should get inclusive education trainings to enhance their awareness about inclusive education.

### Introduction and Background to the Study.

Education has been identified for so long as a tool which prepare an individual development (Mahona and Pacho, 2021). The need for new knowledge and using the discoveries in bringing constructive effects in the earth has a significance to prove that quality education has a vital role to play in the development of an individual to be a valued native of society. Captivatingly, the significant purpose of education according to Plato is to produce individuals to respond to complex issues and challenges facing the community (Paschal, 2022 b). Quality Education is viewed as the fourth Sustainable Development Goal of the seventeen goals of the General Assembly of the United States formulated in 2015 to be achieved in 2030 (Ofodu, Fatimayin, and Paschal 2022). The central aim of this fourth goal is to achieve an inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning prospects for all (Paschal and Gougou, 2022). In recently period, education remains to be an indispensable field of concern on this fast changing world. From this standing point, there have been considerable changes in the teaching and learning process since emergency of the twenty-first century. The old methods have been receiving little attention and the new strategies of teaching and learning are being put in action to solve the existing challenges related with teaching and learning (Paschal and Mkulu, 2020). In order to access to equal right to education many countries across the globe have been improving the systems of education. Inclusive education has been among of the improvement that has been emphasised by the United Nations and its agencies such as UNESCO.

### Conceptualizing inclusive education

According to UNESCO (2009), inclusive education is a process of addressing and responding to the variety of wants of all learners through cumulative participation in learning culture and communities and reducing their segregation from education. UNESCO (2009) adds that the goal of inclusive education is to enable the entire education systems to facilitate learning situations where teachers and learners embrace and welcome the challenges and benefits of diversity. In an

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inclusive education, learning environments are nurtured whereby individual needs are met and every student has a chance to prosper.

According to Kozleski and Yu (2016), research in inclusive education started in the 1980s. By then it was framed as an alternative to special education. Inclusive education later expanded its activities in schools and the school system to increased access, participation, and opportunities to marginalized learners. Mbwambo (2015) state that the term inclusive education was coined because of the Salamanca Conference of 6<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> June 1994 in Salamanca Spain organized by UNESCO. This conference advocated for children's rights to education, with special emphasis being placed on children with special needs. The Salamanca conference was an international inclusive education stakeholders' forum which provided a framework on how children with special needs should be accommodated in education systems all over the World.

Possi and Milinga (2017) confirm that the government of Tanzania ratified the 1994 Salamanca statement which emphasized the need to provide basic education to exceptional individuals in Tanzania. The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action have reinforced the obligation for schools to accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or other conditions.

The government of Tanzania ratified inclusive education conventions and agreements including the Salamanca statement of 1994 and the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), and prepared National Inclusive Education Strategies of 2014-2017. The current inclusive education strategy of 2018-2021 aims at providing better and inclusive education environment for children with special needs (Mbwambo, 2015)

As a result of the Salamanca statement, the Government of Tanzania put in place some strategies that would ensure proper implementation of the inclusive education agenda. Among the strategies put in place were the formulation of the Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP)1 of 2002-2006 and PEDP 2 of 2007 -2011. Mbwambo (2015) argues that the aim of these plans was to translate Tanzania Development Vision 2025 and education and training policy of 1995 into specific priorities and achievable targets and to realize the goals and targets agreed upon in the Salamanca statement and the framework of actions of 1995, Dakar Framework of Action for Education for All (EFA) and the summit for Millennium Development Goal (MDGs).

The implementation of inclusive education in Tanzania started in 1998 in Temeke Municipality in Dar es Salaam region when the Ministry of Education, the Salvation Army and UNESCO conducted a pilot study (Mbwambo, 2015). Currently, inclusive education schools are found in all regions across Tanzania.

According to Mbwambo (2015) the history of inclusive education is divided into four phases which are, the phase of segregation, extermination, and total isolation of people with disabilities in all aspects of life. In the first phase, people with disabilities all over the world did not have access to education at all. The second phase is the institutionalization phase. In this phase, institutions to accommodate persons with disabilities were formed in the Western World. The third phase was about integration and mainstreaming. Integration means the inclusion of people with disabilities in regular settings for a particular period based on their skills. On the other hand, mainstreaming means that children with disabilities have a little time for networking with their non-disabled peers as they attend special classes for most time of the day. The fourth and last stage is the stage of transition from integration to inclusion (Mbwambo, 2015). Inclusive education which was discussed in this study is therefore, the one that commences from the fourth stage.

Othman (2015) considers inclusive education as an act of integrating learners with special needs into the general education classes and that it is primarily for social purposes. He further notes that inclusive education entails all activities which ensure the integration of students physically, instructionally, and socially irrespective of their disabilities. Inclusive education brings diverse learners, families, educators, and the community members together to create school and their social institutions based on acceptance and belongingness to the community.

Possi and Milinga (2017) argue that inclusive education is basically a broader field of special education. It challenges the previous forms of special education and its practices. Carrington (1999) maintains that special education has failed to provide educational for all learners. The history of special education has progressed from the separation and integration or mainstreaming to inclusion with a new inventiveness in special needs education which deliberates people with special needs within a wider viewpoint. Inclusive education is, therefore, a holistic, contemporary, and up to date mechanism of accommodating children with special needs in the regular education systems.

Possi and Milinga (2017) assert that inclusive education is a method in which all children can partake in general education programs. They add that inclusive education is a social equity and is fundamentally a social construction viewpoint in which students with disabilities get socially accommodated by all school community members. Inclusive education transmits the rudiments of mainstreaming, integration, normalization, least restrictive environment, deinstitutionalization, and regular education ingenuities.

Tanzania National Strategy for Inclusive Education (2018-2021) states that the core aim of inclusive education is to enhance the human right access to education as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by recognizing diversity as the main characteristic of humanity. Education, as a human right, must be attained by all individuals regardless of their differences. Persons with disabilities have no exception when it comes to education. And indeed, education should not be discriminative. It should be inclusive to accommodate the children with disabilities in the social structures to enable them to get integrated in society for their own and national development.

UNICEF (2018) asserts that inclusive education is a key factor for the attainment of a quality education. In other words, there can never be quality education without inclusive education. UNICEF adds that quality education can only be attained when the education systems embrace diversity and allows every child, including children with disabilities (CWDs) to study together receiving inclusive quality education that provides them with the learning required for life.

According to Open Society Foundation (2019), inclusive education provides better quality education for all children as it embraces diversity and socialisation among the children with different backgrounds. Inclusive education helps teachers to train children on how to interact with the external World outside their families. This enhances social relationship and interactions. Open Society Foundation adds that inclusive education enhance respect and understanding among children with diverse abilities and backgrounds as they play, socialize, and learn together. Mwambo (2015) and Possi and Milinga (2017) have stipulated the challenges facing inclusive education in Tanzania. They point out that some of the challenges include insufficient funds to implement inclusive education policies, insufficient teaching and learning facilities, absence of support services, lack of supportive infrastructure and lack of properly trained personnel. They further note that stigmatization, physical punishment and nuisance and exclusion by teachers and students and other members of the community are serious challenges facing inclusivity in education in the country.

Several scholars have put forward some suggestions to improve the implementation of inclusive education in Tanzania. Mbwambo (2015) suggests that the ministry of education should provide inclusive education courses to all teachers. They also recommend that inclusive education should be accommodated in the teachers' training curriculum so that all teachers get inclusive education knowledge which they can apply in their schools. Also, they suggest that policy makers should formulate adequate policies and regulations to accommodate the need for implementation of quality education in the country. Furthermore, they recommend that the central government should allocate enough budget to the ministry of education so that the needs for inclusive education can be met. Lastly, they suggest that since parents should play a vital role in the provision of their children education, they should always be supportive to the teachers. This will motivate teachers to teach the children with special needs with commitment. This study therefore sets out to assess the level of efficiency of the implementation of inclusive education in Karagwe district Tanzania since it is so far not known.

Al-Banna and Aziz (2014) define teaching strategy as a generalized plan for a lesson including structure, instructional objectives, and an outline of planned tactics necessary to implement the strategies.

Inclusive teaching strategies refer to any number of teaching approaches which address students' needs with a variety of learning modalities, backgrounds, and abilities (Cornell University, n.d). Inclusive teaching and learning refer to processes which accommodate diverse needs of students with different abilities (Fournier, n.d). More precisely, inclusive education is the creation of teaching and learning environment which ensures that all students are well accommodated in the teaching and learning processes and the general education system.

Fournier (n.d.) notes that inclusive education includes diverse content, materials and ideas and inclusive environment. This means that the teachers must make sure that they communicate clearly with the students in class. The teachers should make sure that their voices are heard by students with hearing problems and their writings on the chalkboard are big enough to be seen by students with visual disorders. In this regard, a teacher must create an environment for the students to think on how to solve different social and economic problems facing their communities. Similarly, this strategy is supported by Wanjohi (2010) who argues that the road to true learning is thinking.

Another strategy, according to Fournier (nd), is the creation of quality access to instruction and assistance. Students with special needs need quality instruction and assistance to enable them to learn. This is because they take much time and effort to learn compared to their counterparts without disorders.

The last approach is to gather and use feedback to refine and improve one's techniques. As a teacher one must make sure that he/she always gets feedback from his/her students on how one teaches. This will ensure that one rectifies any challenges observed to accommodate all students' needs.

According to Vogel (2016), inclusive education can be emphasized under mainly five strategies. Vogel insists that students with special and exceptional needs are presently being placed in inclusive learning environments more frequently than before. An inclusive education teacher needs to understand the strengths and weaknesses of his or her students to plan and meet their needs. Vogel gives an example of preferential sitting whereby a student should sit with peers one can easily communicate with. This will strengthen social skills as compared to when they are sitting in front of the class where one will not feel comfortable during the teaching and learning processes.

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Inclusive education teacher should implement universal design for teaching (Vogel, 2016). This means that the teacher should value the capabilities of every student. Learning process should be engaging and accessible to learners with different strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, the teacher should impart important life and social skills. Lessons including communication skills, reading time from an analogy clock, writing a simple letter, and note taking and study skills should be inculcated.

Pushpa, Maithly, and Umapathi (2018) advise that inclusive education teachers should always cooperate and collaborate with peers on teaching and lesson planning to foster their professional development. This helps teachers to learn from each other and enable them to teach in a more rewarding manner. An inclusive education teacher should always monitor the behavioural changes of his/her students to assess their learning progress. Vogel (2016) maintains that a successful inclusive classroom depends on having control and management of one's classroom. It is vital to have plainly communicated prospects and goals that all students can access. Therefore, the classroom setting should be made to suit various students' needs. Most of the inclusive education teachers use peer tutoring, small group exercise, drawing, using locally available low-cost materials, role play and storytelling method in teaching inclusive classrooms (Pushpa, Maithly, Umapathi, 2018).

These strategies subsidise to a general inclusive learning atmosphere in which students feel accommodated. The benefits of inclusive teaching are many. For instance, instructors can unite and engage with various students to ensure they are equipped to handle challenging situations that can arise; when a contentious material is discussed, students link with course materials that are pertinent to them, feel contented in the classroom setting to share their ideas and questions, and are more likely to be successful through activities that support their nature of disabilities (Cornel University, n.d.).

An inclusive education teacher must always ask himself/herself the following questions before selecting a teaching and learning methodology/strategy: "How might your own cultural-bound assumptions influence your interactions with students? How might the backgrounds and experiences of your students influence their motivation, engagement, and learning in your classroom? How can you modify course materials, activities, assignments, and/or exams to be more accessible to all students in your class?" (Cornel University, n.d.).

Inclusive education practices have four dimensions which should be adhered to during the teaching and learning processes, which are the framing, relational, didactic, and organizational dimensions (Molbaek, 2017). About the framing dimension, he meant that the classroom should have classroom management tools, rules, and procedures. These rules should be visible and understood by every student. The relational dimension states that good communication is very important for inclusive education. Teachers should have profound competence skills to enable students with special needs capture what the teacher is teaching. The teacher should therefore have the skills to accommodate the communication needs of all students in an inclusive classroom. Good communication will accelerate good relationship between the teacher and students in an inclusive classroom, hence, enhancing teaching and learning processes.

The didactic dimension is all about a teacher's knowledge and capacities in professionally managing an inclusive education classroom. It entails the teacher's knowledge about the subject, teaching competence and knowledge about the students' different learning capacities. The focus of this dimension is the ability of teachers to ensure students' participation in the teaching and learning processes. The last dimension is the organizational dimension. This dimension emphasizes the role of the school leader in building an inclusive culture in the school which

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ensures participation of all stakeholders including the students, parents, and teachers among others.

However, it should be noted that participation is a key focus of all dimensions to ensure the attainment of inclusive education. Also, organizational dimension seems to play a crucial part in the execution of inclusive education as it communicates the fact that inclusive teaching strategies do not only apply in the classroom but also must be visible through the school culture in general and the structural setting where different agendas are presented (Molbaek, 2017). Generally, the teaching and learning strategies in inclusive education should accommodate diversity and special needs of all students in and out of classroom setting.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by behaviourism theory was established by John Broadus, Watson Burrhus, and Frederic Skinner in 19<sup>th</sup> Century. These psychologists sought to focus on observable, quantifiable events, and behaviours. They claimed that science ought to consider only apparent indicators. They helped make psychology more relevant by viewing that it might be precisely measured and understood, and it was not just grounded on sentiments. Watson and Skinner supposed that if given a group of infants, the way they raised them and the environment they put them in would be the eventual decisive factor for how they behaved, but not the influence of their parents or genetics.

Western Governors University (2020) asserts that Behaviourism is a prevalent concept that emphasises on how students learn. Behaviourism focuses on the impression that all behaviours are learned through interaction with the environment. The theory states that behaviours are learnt from the context and that inborn factors have quite little impact on one's behaviour.

Behaviourists argue that learning takes places when there is a change in behaviour. They also assert that one's behaviour occurs when consequences are allied with stimuli and response and is maintained by reinforcement. Al-Shammari, Faulkner, and Forlin (2019) asserts that the key principle of behaviourism that support education are that behaviour is learned. Behaviour is governed by the context in which it transpires, hence, teaching and learning can be equated to changing behaviour. Also, behaviour is governed by what follows actions and is observable.

Behaviourism theory is related to the best practices in inclusive education because the classrooms conditions are the basis of functional behavioural analysis. This theory is very applicable in inclusive education because we have witnessed a lot of biases against the vulnerable students in accessing education services. The root cause of this has been reported to be the negative attitude of the society towards children with disabilities or those from the marginalized population. This is in line with the findings by Liliane Foundation (n.d.) which argues that about 65 million school-aged children in developing countries have disabilities, out of which 50 per cent are out of school.

In addition, in places like Asia, Africa and Latin America where poverty is high, less than 10 per cent of children with disabilities have never been in a classroom. In fact, even those children with disabilities that are in school, are less likely to stay or are being promoted. Children with disabilities are similarly often excepted from mainstream education. Nevertheless, a disability of a child is not the main barrier to education. The utmost barriers include the attitudes of people in society (Liliane foundation (n.d); Possi and Millinga (2017), Mbwambo (2005). In this regard, to achieve inclusive education, we need a total change of the behaviour and total cultural set ups and beliefs of the entire society.

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## Methodology

### Research Approach and Research Design

#### Research Approach

A research approach is defined by Grover (2015) as the procedures of research that encompasses the steps from wide assumptions to data collection analysis and interpretation. This study applied mixed method approach whereby qualitative and quantitative techniques were used to study the same phenomena, from data collection to analysis stages. Grover (2015) points out that mixed research approach entails measurement, numbers, words, and images. The researcher opted for this approach because it helped him to explore knowledge from both qualitative and quantitative sources using observation, interviews, and questionnaires respectively. Not only that but also mixed method approach helped the researcher to be competent in conducting both quantitative and qualitative studies.

#### Research Design

A research design is defined as the general plan that chooses to tackle the problem which needs incorporation of diverse components of the study in a coherent and logical way which ensures to solve the problem under study in an effective way (Grover, 2015). According to Kothari (2004), a research design refers to the conceptual structure and decisions regarding what, how much, when, where, and by what means a research study will be conducted. This means that a research design is the blueprint of how research will be conducted.

This study applied convergent parallel research design. Parlindungan (2018) defines convergent parallel design as a mixed method research design which intends to collect both qualitative and quantitative data in one phase. By using the convergent parallel research design, the researcher concurrently collected data in one phase. Then, the collected data were analysed separately, compared, and combined. The researcher used convergent parallel research design because it is time convenient. This is because; convergent parallel design allowed the researcher to apply both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods in concurrently one phase.

#### Area of the Study

This research was carried out in Karagwe District of Kagera region in Tanzania. The researcher selected Karagwe district as a study area because the district is already implementing inclusive education. Also, other studies on inclusive education were done in other regions of Tanzania including Dar es salaam, Dodoma, and Mbeya. This study therefore was done in Karagwe district to assess the implementation of inclusive education in the rural and peripheral district of Karagwe. This helped the researcher to understand how inclusive education is implemented in rural-peripheral regions of Tanzania.

#### Sampling procedures and Sample Size

The researcher applied two sampling techniques both purposive and simple random sampling to select the study respondents. The researcher applied purposive sampling technique to select the respondents due to their roles in implementing the inclusive education policy in Karagwe District. Purposive sampling technique was also used to select the four inclusive public primary schools under this study, because they are the schools already implementing the inclusive

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education in the district. Other respondents were sampled by simple random sampling technique. This study had a sample size of sixty respondents.

### Data collection Methods

This study employed both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. The methods included questionnaires for quantitative data and interviews and observations for qualitative data. The quantitative findings were later analysed by the help of SPSS and presented in figure. Qualitative data were analysed using thematic analysis.

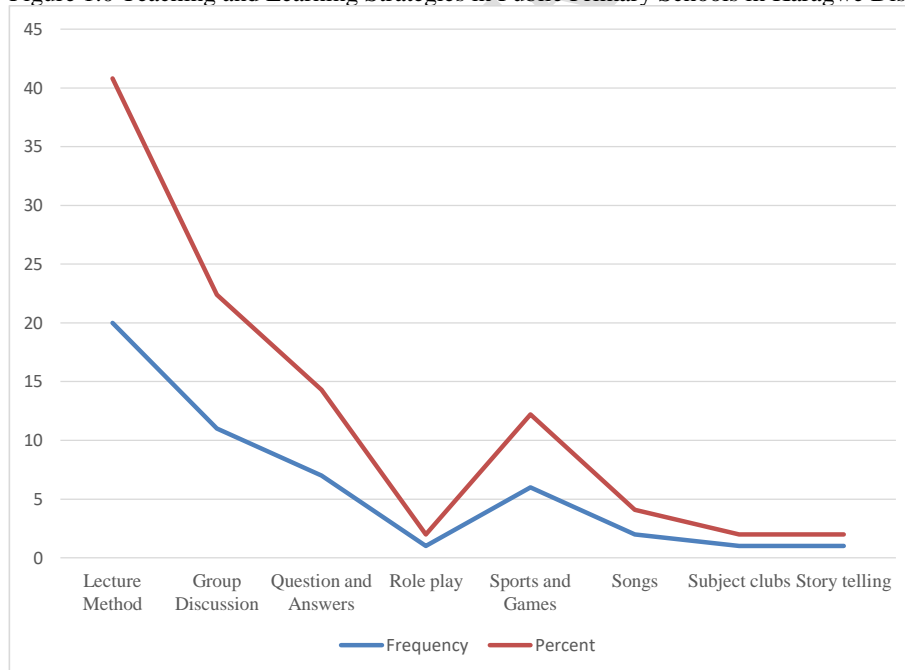
### Results and Discussion

#### Teaching and Learning Strategies in Inclusive Public Primary Schools in Karagwe District

In this objective, the study intended to explore the teaching and learning strategies implemented by teachers in inclusive public primary schools in Karagwe district Tanzania. The findings revealed that several teaching and learning approaches that are applied by the teachers in the inclusive public primary schools in Karagwe district Tanzania. Figure 1 presents the teaching and learning strategies mentioned by the teachers. They include lecturer method, group discussion, questions and answers, role play, sports and games, songs, subject club, and storytelling.

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Figure 1.0 Teaching and Learning Strategies in Public Primary Schools in Karagwe District



Source: Field data, 2021

According to Figure 1, 41 per cent of the teachers use lecture method, group discussion and question and answers. The findings above imply that teachers in inclusive public primary schools in Karagwe district to a large extent apply non participatory teaching strategies in teaching inclusive classes.

Also, the researcher had an opportunity to collect qualitative data in this objective regarding the teaching and learning strategies in inclusive public primary schools in Karagwe district. This study further discovered that participatory teaching and learning strategies are rarely applied in inclusive public primary schools in Karagwe district. This data concurs with the data obtained by the researcher through observation in which in many classrooms he visited, teachers applied non participatory teaching and learning strategies.

The reasons for not applying the participatory teaching and learning strategies are three which are overcrowded classrooms, lack of inclusive education skills among the teachers and lack of inclusive infrastructures in the schools. A discussion of the three major teaching and learning strategies applied in the inclusive public primary schools in Karagwe district is presented here under.

### **Lecture Method**

This study aimed at exploring the application of lecture method in public primary schools in Karagwe district in relation to the implementation of inclusive education. Discussion of the lecture method is presented using the themes as follows.

### **Reasons for the Application of Lecture Method**

The teachers that the researcher interviewed on why lecture method was highly applied in inclusive public primary school in Karagwe district had various reasons. One teacher when commenting on why lecture method was highly applied by teachers in inclusive public primary schools in Karagwe district argued that lecture method is friendly to their environment as they do not have enough inclusive teaching and learning resources at his school (Head teacher 2, September 2021). Another respondent said, “Our classrooms are overcrowded; therefore, lecture method minimizes movements and interactions in the classes, and this brings harmony” (Head teacher 3, September 2021).

Another head teacher said, “Lecture method is very appropriate for me because it saves time and resources. By using lecture method, I can finish my lesson plan, scheme or work and syllabus as per the time set unlike other strategies” (Head teacher 1, September 2021). Lastly the PDEO asserted: I think lecture method is very appropriate this time than ever before. Due to COVID 19 pandemic, lecture method minimises interactions and in so doing it minimises the spread of the disease. I therefore recommend it to be used at most in this time of uncertainties (DPEO, September 2021).

The data from the field, implies that lecture method is highly applied by teachers in the inclusive public primary schools in Karagwe district due to major three reasons. The reasons are overcrowded classrooms, insufficient inclusive teaching and learning resources and the COVID 19 pandemic. The study findings concur with Paschal, Pacho and Adewoyin (2022); Kapur (2020) who argues that in lecture method, the students are provided with avenues to sharpen their social skills. This happens because communication is done in a more efficient manner. Therefore, lecture method enhances inclusion if at all social skills are enhanced.

Furthermore, in most public primary schools, the number of students in classes is large. Hence, the lecture method is favourable to impart knowledge and understanding in terms of lesson plans

to large number of students. Therefore, lecture method is appropriately applied in overcrowded classrooms or classes with bigger number of students (Kaur, 2011).

### **Lecture method and inclusive education**

The interviewed teachers said that they apply lecture method especially when there are many students in a class. They added that lecture method saves time. This is a convenient strategy for the teachers in Karagwe district because all the inclusive schools visited by the researcher were overcrowded. Due to this situation, the teachers used the lecture method to save time and accommodate the nature of the classes.

The study findings concur with Chaula (2014) who argues that lecture method is applied in inclusive education, however, recommend that lecture method should be applied in schools with many children and in a mixed method strategy. That is, it should be applied together with other strategies to avoid students' boredom. This study found out that lecture method is appropriate in the inclusive school in Karagwe district as it saves time and resources.

### **Group Discussion**

The study data indicate that group discussion strategy is the second largely applied strategy by teachers in public primary schools in Karagwe district. The discussion of this strategy is presented here under.

#### **Reasons for the application of Group Discussion**

Respondents had various views concerning the application of the group discussion teaching and learning strategy. The views are presented here under.

One teacher had this to say on why he prefers group discussion:

“Groups discussion helps to enhance cooperation and socializations among students. It indeed embraces diversity among children, as children with disability and those without a disability can sit together and share ideas concerning a certain phenomenon” (Head teacher 2, September 2021).

Other teachers argued that they like using group discussion because it aids them to recognise their pupils in a better way. They said by applying group discussion, they can easily measure the abilities that the children have out of the academics but also the socialisation part of life.

Another head teacher said:

To my views, group discussion is highly applied by teachers in inclusive public primary schools in Karagwe district because it is the best way of practicing inclusion. When children with disabilities and those without disabilities sit together to discuss they become socially and academic linked up. This reduces stigma and enhances confidence among the children with disabilities. (Head teacher 3, September 2021).

This data communicates that group discussion strategy is highly by the teachers in inclusive public primary schools in Karagwe district not only for academic purposes but also for the promotion of the social aspect of life. In fact, the application of group discussion is the actual implementation of inclusive education.

The findings of this study concur with Paschal, Pacho and Adewoyin (2022) who argue that group discussion improve learning because they promote active learning. They add that group discussion is credited due to its promotion of critical thinking, higher order, and deep learning.

Group discussion further enhances critical thinking, language development and inclusion. This is because group discussion involves sharing of idea, supporting ideas, and defending ideas. Therefore, through group discussion a learner experiences different experience and capacities of their fellow students and teachers on how to develop and present one's point (Chaula, 2014).

### **Group Discussion and Inclusive Education**

The researcher got an opportunity to witness the application of group discussion strategy in inclusive classes. The researcher found out that group discussion is a very appropriate teaching strategy in inclusive public primary schools in Karagwe district. The researcher observed that the group discussion strategy brings together children with disabilities and those without disabilities in one table and enhances their socialisation, cooperation, and friendship. The group discussion strategy therefore enhances the implementation of inclusive education.

The teachers also had an opportunity to give their views regarding the group discussion strategy and inclusive education.

One of the teachers had this to say:

“I find group discussion a very appropriate teaching and learning strategy to be applied in inclusive education because it embraces diversity. This is since children with disabilities and those without disabilities practically come together in the learning process” (Head teacher 4, September 2021).

Another head teacher said that:

Group discussion and inclusive education are inseparable as they are two sides of the same coin. Group discussion put inclusive education into practice. It provides an avenue for children with disabilities and those without disabilities to come together to explore academic challenges (Head teacher 2, September 2021).

The teachers' comments and the researcher's observation indicate that group discussion is a very important teaching strategy in inclusive education. This is because it puts inclusive education into practice. Group discussion strategy is applied in the inclusive education because it promotes cooperation among learners. It provides avenue where children with disabilities and those without disabilities can sit together to discuss and learn from each other. Basically, teachers use this method in inclusive context because it involves learners and accommodates learners' diversities.

The group discussion strategy allows a teacher to divide learners in groups and give them a topic to discuss. The learners learn from each other by the help of the teacher. It is a recommended teaching strategy because it promotes cooperation and friendship among the students. Furthermore, group discussion promotes cooperative learning. In fact, cooperative learning embraces inclusion as it allows children with different diversities to study together hence accelerating cooperation, socialisation, and unity (Paschal, Nyoni, and Mkulu 2020); Pollock, Hamann & Wilson (2011). In this regard, group discussion is purely an inclusive strategy as it builds the culture togetherness, participation, cooperation, brotherhood, and inclusion.

#### **Question and Answers**

Study data indicate that question and answers strategy is the third highly applied by teachers in inclusive public primary schools in Karagwe district. The discussion is presented using the themes as follows.

### **Reasons for the Application of Questions and Answers in Inclusive Education**

During the study visits in the public primary school in Karagwe district, the researcher observed that questions and answers was applied by several teachers. When asked on why they prefer this teaching strategy, the teachers had the following to say.

One head teacher argued, “I think questions and answers strategy is highly applied in inclusive public primary schools in Karagwe district because it saves time and resources” (Headteacher 1, September 2021). Another teacher asserted, “I apply question and answers because I can complete a bigger portion of the topic within a shorter time” (Headteacher 2, September 2021). Another head teacher commented, “In my opinion, question and answers strategy is mostly applied in our school because we don’t have sufficient teaching and learning resources”. Finally, another teacher said,

“Question and answers strategy is highly applied in our inclusive public primary school because it is appropriate in our overcrowded classrooms. It does not need more students’ interactions. Therefore, it is apposite to be applied when the students are many”. (Headteacher 3, September 2021).

The teachers’ responses imply that question and answers strategy is highly applied by teachers in public primary schools in Karagwe district because of major three reasons. The first is because it saves time, second is due to overcrowded classrooms and third is due to the scarcity of resources. The findings of this study concur with the study by Chaula (2014) who asserts that questions and answers strategy is applied by many teachers in primary schools in Tanzania. The application of this strategy in inclusive classroom will enable the teacher to give more examples and clear up misperception among the learners.

#### **Question and Answers Strategy and Inclusive Education**

The interviewed teachers had views that question and answer strategy is applied in inclusive education. They add that it saves time and resources as the teachers can use a short time to teach the whole topic.

Through observation it was found that questions and answers method was one of the mostly used methods in inclusive classes. Therefore, it can be argued that questions and answers strategy is the best teaching strategy in inclusive education because it stimulates students thinking capacities. The strategy enables both children with disabilities and those without disabilities to be quick thinkers and problem solvers.

The teachers in the schools where the researcher visited had the following comment regarding the question and answers strategy and inclusive education. One teacher had this to say, “I think question and answers strategy is appropriate for inclusive education because it stimulates thinking capacity for both children with disabilities and those without disabilities” (Teacher 15, September,2021)

Another teacher said,

“Questions and answers strategy is well applied in inclusive education schools because it accommodates all students with different capacities in the same class. Students therefore learn from each other according to how they respond to the questions from the teacher” (Teacher 20, September,2021).

Finally, one head teacher argued,

“I find questions and answers strategy a better fit in inclusive education setting. This is because it saves time and helps learners to be quick thinkers and analyse things timely. It is even more appropriate because of the overcrowded classrooms in inclusive public primary schools in Karagwe district” (Head teacher 4, September,2021).

The researcher observation and the response from the teachers imply that question and answers is an appropriate teaching strategy in inclusive education. This is because it saves time and

develops learners thinking capacities. Thus, Questions and answers is an appropriate strategy for inclusive education. This is because questions and answers strategy stimulate students to seek information on their own, enhance problem solving skills and stimulate students to think deeply and critically as supported by Mandamiyati & Sophya (2017).

### **Challenges Encountered by Teachers in Applying Inclusive Teaching Strategies**

Through observation, the researcher observed that the teachers in public primary schools in Karagwe district Tanzania encounter some challenges in applying inclusive teaching strategies in their schools. The challenges were found to be similar in almost all the schools. The first biggest challenge is the overcrowded classrooms. This situation hinders the application of inclusive teaching and learning strategies because the space doesn't allow the students and teachers to move freely while in class. So, the limited space hinders application of practical interventions in the inclusive classrooms.

Another challenge observed is insufficiency of teaching and learning resources. Most of the visited schools do not have sufficient teaching and learning resources and the teaching aids like modern tools, enough and up to date books, and there is no Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools in the schools. This deters the application of the inclusive teaching and learning strategies.

Furthermore, the researcher observed that the teachers don't have enough understanding of the concept of inclusion. This was observed in one school where the classroom siting plan seemed not to exactly accommodate a child with special needs. The researcher noticed that a child with low vision was seated at the back of the class. This means that the child could not follow the lessons and the teacher could not notice that the child was not following.

Finally, the researcher observed that the teachers in inclusive public primary schools in Karagwe district still have negative attitudes toward disability. This is because the researcher when talking to the teachers he discovered that teachers still contemplate that educating a child with disability is a waste of time and resources. They believe that children with disabilities come to just grow and enhance socialisation skills among the students.

One of the teachers had this to say, "The application of inclusive teaching and learning strategies is challenging. This is because we don't have sufficient teaching and learning resources to accommodate the children diversified needs" (Teacher 10, September, 2021).

Another teacher said,

"The application of inclusive teaching and learning strategies is not easy. This is because most of the teachers don't have technical awareness of inclusive education technicalities. This is basically because they don't study inclusive education course in the teacher training colleges and there are no in-service inclusive education trainings conducted." (Teacher 11, September, 2021)

The data from the field imply that the application of inclusive teaching and learning strategies in inclusive public primary schools in Karagwe district is challenging or not done appropriately. This implies that children with special educational needs in Karagwe district are not learning. They are not learning because the teaching and learning strategies applied at most of the times are non-inclusive. The children with special educational needs cannot learn if they are not fully involved and their diversities are not well accommodated.

The teachers mentioned other challenges which are indiscipline cases, heavy workload demanding more time, teachers' negative attitude toward disabled and the absence of facilities for teachers and learners' low self-esteem among others. The same challenges were presented by Oselo (2015). The study revealed more challenges including insufficient teaching and learning

facilities, absence of support services, stigmatization, physical punishment and harassment and segregation by teachers and students and other members of the community.

### **Suggested Solutions Toward the Practicality of Inclusive Education**

In exploring knowledge about what teachers think are the solutions to the proper implementation of inclusive education. The teachers had different views. For instance, one head teacher said, “In order to enhance the implementation of inclusive education in public primary schools in Karagwe district, all teachers should be trained on inclusive education” (Head teacher 4, September, 2021). One head teacher commented: “The head teacher should be the first to be educated on inclusive education. This is because they are the ones responsible for making sure that educational plans, policies, and strategies are implemented down at the school level” (Head Teacher 1, September 2021).

Another teacher had this to say:

“In order to make the implementation of inclusive education a reality, efforts must be made to make sure that sufficient inclusive teaching and learning materials and resources are available in schools. This should however go hand in hand with the training of the teachers” (Head Teacher 2, September 2021).

The findings imply that the Government of Tanzania has the biggest role to play to make the realisation of inclusive education in public primary schools in the country. It was suggested that the Government of Tanzania should set aside some budget to promote inclusive education in the country. They also added that the school infrastructure should be handy to all children including children with disabilities.

In addition, the Government should implement inclusive education trainings among the teachers to give the skills necessary for them to manage inclusive classrooms effectively (Paschal, 2022 a) (Hamad, 2015). Inclusive education courses should be accommodated in the teachers’ education curriculum to equip the teachers with skills necessary to handle inclusive education in the public schools. Specifically, there is a necessity to have a distinct subject on disability and inclusive education in teacher training courses (Ecoben, 2019). Furthermore, the government is needed to deliver sufficient learning support providers, more special educational needs trainings, and educational resources and in-depth specialisation courses which render specialised practices for implementing the SEN approaches in their classrooms and offering teaching strategies on how to bond theory and practice (Dapudong, 2014).

### **Other Perspectives on Teaching Strategies in Inclusive Education**

Data from the field indicate that there are other teaching strategies applied by teachers in public primary schools in Karagwe. see Figure.1. However, they are not discussed here in detail because they seem to be lowly applied. Unfortunately, the teaching and learning strategies which are lowly applied are the best ones for inclusive education. They are the best because they are more engaging and therefore inclusive.

One teacher argued: “Inclusive education requires teaching and learning strategies which are much engaging and enhancing inclusion” (Head Teacher 3, September 2021). Another teacher had this to say: “Appropriate teaching and learning strategies for inclusive education must be participatory. That is the ones that enhance participation, cooperation, critical thinking, and socialization. Above all it must embrace diversities among the learners” (Head Teacher 4, September 2021).

The findings from the field implies that the mostly applied teaching strategies in inclusive public primary schools in Karagwe district are not purely inclusive. The data also communicates that the implementation of inclusive education in public primary schools in Karagwe district is not

effective. Furthermore, the findings of this study concur with Pushpa, Maithly and Umaphathi (2018) who believe that most of the inclusive education teachers use peer tutoring, small group exercise, drawing, using locally available low-cost materials, role play and storytelling method in teaching inclusive classrooms. The teaching and learning strategies found out by this study are somehow different from those of other scholars. The researcher believes that the difference in findings might be because of differences in cultural settings and location where the two studies were done.

There are several inclusive teaching strategies in the World. However not all strategies can be applied everywhere. The strategies are applied according to the context. That is why this study came up with the strategies which are different from those from other scholars. This is because of the difference in context between Tanzania and other parts of the world where the studies were conducted (Tichá, Abery, Johnstone, Poghosyan & Hunt, 2018).

### **Conclusion**

The study found out that the teachers apply both participatory and non-participatory teaching strategies. The strategies mostly mentioned by the teachers include lecture method, group discussion and questions and answers.

As noted, both participatory and non-participatory teaching and learning strategies are applied by the teachers but the non-participatory strategies are highly applied by most of the teachers. This means that inclusive teaching and learning strategies are hindered by some factors, hence needs of children with special education are not well accommodated. This is because the free education policy in Tanzania, has resulted into massive students' enrolment in public primary schools in the country. The massive enrolment has resulted into overcrowded classrooms. The overcrowded classrooms make it difficult to practice inclusivity of Children with Special Education Needs (CSEN). Again, lack of inclusive education skills among the teachers, makes it difficult to accommodate diversity of children with special needs education using inclusive teaching strategies.

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