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## THESIS / DISSERTATION SUBMISSION

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**TOWARDS FORMULATING A MANAGEMENT MODEL TO  
ENHANCE INCLUSIVITY AT A TEACHER TRAINING  
COLLEGE**

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**Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements in respect of  
the doctoral degree with specialisation in Higher  
Education Studies in the department of Curriculum  
Studies in the faculty of Education at the University of the  
Free State.**

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**Co-supervisor: Dr. G. CHIMBI**

*Inspiring  
excellence,  
transforming  
lives through  
quality,  
impact, and  
care.*

*Inspiring excellence, transforming lives  
through quality, impact, and care.*

## DECLARATION

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I, Ncube Nozinhle, declare that the thesis, “Towards formulating a management model to enhance inclusivity at a teacher training college in Zimbabwe” handed in for the qualification of Doctor of Philosophy with specialisation in Higher Education Studies at the University of the Free State, is my independent work and that I have not previously submitted the same work for a qualification at or in any other university.

I also declare that no work of other scholars has been used without the means of proper citation and that all the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged using complete references.

I hereby cede copyright to the University of the Free State

NOZINHLE NCUBE

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ncube".

Date: 30/07/24

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## DEDICATION

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To all the housemaids who have worked tirelessly to provide for your families and improve their lives, this research is dedicated to you. It is my hope that it will serve as a reminder that there is always the possibility for a better life, regardless of one's current circumstances because this is where I am coming from, I know the challenges that you go through as housemaids. Let us not be comfortable in that post, move on. I never thought a housemaid can become a PhD holder, I thank the hard times I have been through which made me think, that was not my post. From humble beginnings to great achievements, may you all continue to strive for excellence and reach for the stars.

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## ABSTRACT

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The aim of this study was to formulate a management model to enhance inclusive education at a teacher training college in Zimbabwe. Throughout the world student teachers with disabilities face many barriers in teachers' training colleges and other higher education institutions. People with disabilities constitute some of the poorest economically and are socially excluded and marginalized. In Zimbabwe, people with disabilities constitute about 7% of the population, yet they make up 20% of the poorest people at the national level. The purpose of this study was to explore the barriers to academic and social inclusion faced by students with disabilities at a teacher training college in Zimbabwe. The objectives were to determine the challenges faced by student teachers with disabilities at tertiary institutions, explore policies on students with disabilities at tertiary institutions and suggest possible strategies that could be adopted to overcome these challenges.

The study is located in critical emancipatory research (CER) and adopted the transformative paradigm. Qualitative research methods, specifically participatory action research (PAR), were employed. The study used purposive sampling which is synonymous with qualitative research. The target population comprised all students with disabilities at a teacher's training college in Zimbabwe. Research instruments were triangulated by using interviews and focus group discussions. Qualitative data analysis was done through the thematic analysis of responses from both lecturers and students.

The study revealed that there was no inclusive education policy at national level as well as in teachers' training colleges in Zimbabwe, only circulars were in place. The study also found that students with disabilities had some barriers on physical access to different places at the college under study. The study also established that staff's lack of competencies was one of the major barriers that hindered the implementation of inclusive education in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe. There was no effective inclusive policy in teacher training colleges that could promote the implementation of inclusive practices. Stigma and discrimination among students and staff regarding students with disabilities was also prevalent. The rigid curriculum was another major barrier against the implementation of inclusive education in teacher training

colleges in Zimbabwe. The study also revealed that there was a lack of funding to purchase equipment and assistive devices for students with disabilities.

The study recommended that the inclusive management model should consider easy accessibility to all places that are currently inaccessible to students with disabilities. The other recommendation was that staff members ought to be trained on inclusive education through workshops and staff development programmes. There is a need to review syllabi in order to accommodate students with disabilities, especially in practical subjects. The study also recommended that there was need to have a working policy for inclusivity in teacher training colleges so as to implement inclusive practices.

**Key words:** social and academic inclusion, students with disabilities, stigma, discrimination, barriers, management model, policy

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AFDO	Australian Federation of Disability
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CER	Critical Emancipatory Research
CTEMD	Centre for Teacher Education and Material Development
CT	Critical Theory
IE	Inclusive Education
MHTEISTD	Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education Innovation Science and Technology Development
MOPSE	Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
SADBE	South African Department of Basic Education
TP	Transformative Paradigm
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Funds
US	United States
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **THE PROBLEM AND ITS CONTEXT**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter incorporates the background to the study, research interest/problem, theoretical framework, research questions, research aim and objectives, research design and methodology, sampling and data collection. The chapter also outlines the processes of data analysis, interpretation, reporting and quality assurance, value of the proposed study and closes with the definition of terms.

### **1.2 Background to the study**

Inclusion requires accommodating all students with various needs and cultures within the mainstreams of the education system. UNESCO (1994: viii) describes inclusion as the process of integrating students with special education needs into the least restrictive environments as required by the United Nations declarations that give all children the right to receive appropriate education. Hyde et al (2006:416) argue that inclusion is often described as the outcome of a process of providing for social and personal learning needs of all students including those with special needs. Mwamwenda (2013:477) states that, inclusion advocates for schools should seek out, welcome, nurture, respect and educate all students regardless of their gender, physical, intellectual, social, economic, emotional, linguistic or HIV/AIDS status. Inclusive education as defined by Swart et al., (2002:176) is the practice of including everyone irrespective of talent, disability, socio-economic background, or cultural origin in supportive mainstream schools and classrooms where all student needs are met. Chimhenga (2014:1) asserts that, inclusive education means that all students in a school regardless of their strengths, weakness or disabilities in any area become part of the school community. In other words, inclusive education is a process of strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners (UNESCO, 2009:9) while inclusive schools should respond to the diverse needs of their children, accommodating all styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all (Chimhenga, 2014:1).

Globally, Zaki and Ismail (2021) researched on inclusive education for special needs students in higher education from the perspective of faculty members; and found that, more awareness programmes should be organised to minimise the gap among faculty in their treatment of towards special needs students and their non-disabled peers. Elsewhere, Papadataki et al.,

(2022) examined perceived knowledge and attitudes of faculty members towards inclusive education for students with disabilities, at Greek University and found that, many participants perceived that offering support to students with disabilities would create avenues for exploitation. Riswari et al., (2022) researched on, the management gaps towards inclusive education implementation at higher education institutions in Indonesia which are still not open to the implementation of policies that support inclusive education and the admission of students with disabilities.

In Tanzania, Kabuta (2014) examined the problems faced by students with physical disabilities in higher learning institutions and found that teaching and learning materials, as well as special schemes and there was trained staff, were lacking or inadequate and no funding or scholarship for students with physical disabilities. The recommendation was that the government and other stakeholders should take special considerations and actions in order to accommodate students with physical disabilities in higher learning institutions. Maotoana (2014) researched on the challenges experienced by students with physical disabilities at a higher institution in the Republic of South Africa and found that there was lack of infrastructure, no support, discrimination from peers and staff, and lack of policy, among others and recommended that students must be provided with proper amenities such as laptops and wheelchairs which would help them find the environment less challenging.

The implementation of inclusive education is marred by various challenges in teachers' training colleges in Zimbabwe. There seems to be no specific strategy to ensure that the diverse range of student problems are addressed effectively and efficiently. Students with disabilities constitute 10% of the total student population in Zimbabwe (Chikwature et al., 2016:2) and their challenges are seldom addressed. Providing inclusive education is a human rights issue at a global level; according to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2006). Chikwature et al. (2016:1), Luthuli and Wood (2019) and Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020) agree that there are no policies in place to guide the implementation of inclusive education at teachers' training colleges of Zimbabwe, in spite of a range of Circulars and Acts that speak of inclusion, for instance; Secretary's Circular No. P36 of 1990 and No. 2 of 2000, The Disabled Persons Act of Zimbabwe of 1996, and Director's Circular No. 7 of 2005. Secretary's Circular No. 7 of 2014 indicates that one of the objectives of inclusive education is to strengthen inclusiveness in the provision of additional support to students with disabilities or other special needs (Chikwature et al., 2016). The National Disability Policy (Zimbabwe Government, 2021:47) asserts that, "[A]n inclusive education system of

appropriate standards, at all levels, as well as lifelong learning for person with disabilities of all gender affiliations, must be ensured". In spite of the good intentions of these Circulars and Acts, challenges still confront the implementation of inclusive education at teachers' training colleges in Zimbabwe, hence, the need for a strategy to address these challenges.

Various studies have been done on inclusive education in Zimbabwe. For example, Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020) investigated the extent to which inclusive education was being implemented in teachers' training colleges in Zimbabwe and found that the curricula of these colleges were rigid and did not cater for individual needs. In addition, students with disabilities were not adequately catered for, thereby affecting inclusive practices. Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020) recommended that the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education Innovation, Science and Development (MHTEISTD) and the Centre for Teacher Education, and Materials Development (CTEMD) should ensure that there was some standardisation in the way teachers' colleges implemented inclusive education and the revision of the curriculum so that it becomes flexible to meet the individual needs of learners. Consequently, I realised that there was still a great deal of work ahead to implement inclusive education in teachers' training colleges; as students with disabilities were not catered for, and the curriculum was meant to cater for able-bodied students.

The importance of understanding how different groups perceive the challenges and benefits of incorporating inclusive practices in teacher training colleges is crucial for preparing future educators to effectively support diverse learners in the lecture rooms. Chikwature et al. (2016) explored the views of principals, lecturers and students at teachers' training colleges regarding the incorporation of inclusive education in the teacher education curriculum. The study found that principals were clear on what inclusive education is, though only a few lecturers had a comprehensive understanding of inclusive education. Another finding was that there were no policies in place to guide the implementation of inclusive education in the teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe although there are a range of policies which speak of inclusion. Chikwature et al., (2016) recommended there need for regular staff development for the college communities on the concept of inclusive education as well as the college academic boards responsible for the crafting of policies that will facilitate the implementation of inclusive education curriculum. Existing literature shows that the majority of lecturers, who happen to be the implementers of inclusive education, are not conversant with inclusive education; as a result, students with disabilities continue to be disadvantaged.

Sibanda (2018:808-815) examined challenges militating against the implementation of

inclusive education in Zimbabwe and found that there was lack of adequate resources, inaccessibility of schools, cultural stereotypes, negative societal attitudes and curriculum inaccessibility. Sibanda (2018:814) recommended the need to allocate a specific budget for the implementation of inclusive education. Additionally, to intensifying the teaching of inclusive education modules to pre-service teachers and all in-service practising teachers and having regular staff development in inclusive practices should be a mandate for each education district in the country. In addition, Sibanda (2018:814) further recommended the need to standardise the training of inclusive education and or specialist teachers in colleges and universities. There was also a need to re-designate special schools to become resource centres for inclusive education and, lastly, motivate for researches that focus on the removal of barriers to inclusive education. I concur with Sibanda's (2018:815) conclusion that the major causes of the many challenges affecting Zimbabwe on the implementation of inclusive education were a lack of political will, unclear policies, and lack of funding.

Chimhenga (2014:1) focussed on the assessment of the factors affecting the implementation of inclusive education for children with learning disabilities in Zimbabwean primary schools. His findings were that, primary schools did not have material resources to implement inclusive education for children with learning disabilities. Stakeholders had negative attitudes towards the implementation of inclusive education for children with learning disabilities and there was no inclusive education policy for the implementation of inclusive education for children with learning disabilities (Chimhenga, 2014:8). Lastly, school teachers in primary schools lacked training in the implementation of inclusive education for children with learning disabilities in Zimbabwe. Chimhenga (2014:8) recommended the implementation of inclusive education for children with learning disabilities in primary schools would be improved through the professional preparation and training of Zimbabwean school which teachers, the availability of trained teachers, the provision of resources and the formulation of mandatory policies and legislation for the implementation of inclusive education.

After considering these studies, I noticed a number of challenges that students with disabilities face in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe. I also realised that previous studies did not focus on formulating strategies that can enhance the effectiveness of inclusivity at teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe. The previous studies seem not to have considered that it would take time to implement inclusive education in Zimbabwe (Luthuli and Wood, 2020), as the country lacks resources and the political will to implement inclusive education (Sibanda, 2018). In light of existing literature, this study makes a unique contribution to knowledge because the

international trends in education are in favour of an inclusive approach to education (Mathopa, 2007). There seems to be no specific management model that refers to the diverse problems faced by students with disabilities and which addresses these problems effectively and efficiently. Not much literature has documented strategies to enhance inclusivity at tertiary level. As a lecturer at a teacher's training college in Zimbabwe the study filled the gap that has not yet been fully addressed by other scholars, which makes it unique. This research topic aligned with current educational trends and practices, and it is anticipated that the findings will be cascaded to sister colleges, which will see the practice of inclusive education getting institutionalised in Zimbabwe's teacher education colleges.

### **1.3 Research problem**

The background to the study has revealed that there is no inclusive education policy at national level as well as in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. This is a major impediment to the implementation of inclusive education as currently only Circulars and Acts are used. I noted with concern the problems caused by the absence of an inclusive education management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education at a selected teachers' training college in Zimbabwe.

Students with disabilities encounter various obstacles when pursuing education at higher and tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe. These challenges encompass attitudinal, social, academic and professional development barriers, as well as the integration of students into society (Hlatywayo and Mapolisa, 2020; Cook, Cameron and Tanersley, 2007). The experiences of these students highlight the need for comprehensive support systems and inclusive policies within the educational framework to ensure equitable access to education and opportunities for personal and professional growth (Ainscow, 2020:7-16). These students often confront attitudinal barriers that stem from societal perceptions and attitudes towards disabilities (Hlatywayo and Mapolisa, 2022:110). In addition, these negative attitudes can manifest in the form of discrimination, prejudice and stereotypes, which can significantly impact the educational experiences and opportunities available to those who are discriminated (Butler, Holloway, Marriott and Goncu, 2017:59-72). Additionally, social barriers such as lack of inclusive infrastructure and support systems, further compound the challenges faced by students with disabilities in higher and tertiary institutions (Rath, 2022).

Cerna et al., (2021) are of the view that, the academic and professional development of students

with disabilities is often hindered by a lack of tailored support and accommodation. In addition, access to appropriate learning materials, assistive technologies, and specialised educational support services is crucial for ensuring that these students can fully engage with their academic pursuits and develop the necessary skills for their chosen professions. The integration of students with disabilities into society is a multifaceted issue that encompasses social inclusion, employment opportunities, and the dismantling of systemic barriers that limit their full participation in various aspects of community life (Cabautan, 2024). In short, addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach that involves collaboration between educational institutions, government bodies and relevant stakeholders to foster an inclusive and supportive environment for students with disabilities.

Elaborating further on the challenges faced by students with disabilities in higher and tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe, it is imperative to consider additional dimensions that contribute to their experiences. Further research and scholarly works shed light on the multifaceted nature of these challenges and underscore the importance of comprehensive interventions to address the needs of these students. According to Evans et al., (2017), the accessibility and availability of educational resources and support services tailored to suit the diverse needs of students with disabilities play a crucial role in their academic success. This encompasses not only physical accessibility to facilities and learning materials but also the provision of specialised support services, such as counselling, accommodation arrangements, and adaptive technologies, to ensure that these students can fully engage in their educational pursuits (Ainscow, 2020). It is clear, therefore, that the challenges faced by students with disabilities in higher and tertiary institutions in Zimbabwe are complex and multifaceted. Addressing these challenges involves a concerted efforts to dismantle attitudinal, social, academic and professional barriers while promoting the full integration of students with disabilities into society. By recognising and actively addressing these issues, educational institutions and policymakers can work towards creating an inclusive and equitable educational landscape that empowers all students to achieve their full potential.

Relating the problem to practice and teaching controversial topics in Zimbabwe, research indicates that while policies for inclusive education exist, there is often a gap between these policies and their implementation in practice. In a study by Mutepfa, Mpfu and Chataika (2007) highlights the historical and contemporary influences on disability education in Zimbabwe, emphasizing the need to reconceptualise practices from a perspective that considers power, knowledge and social differences. This suggests that educators in teacher training colleges must be equipped not only with theoretical knowledge but also with practical

strategies to address the diverse needs of students. In teaching controversial topics Mpofu and Molosiwa (2020) argue that inclusive education becomes even more complex as lecturers must navigate sensitive issues while ensuring that all students feel safe and included. Mpofu and Molosiwa (2020) further highlight that, a review of the implementation of inclusive education in Zimbabwe points out various challenges and opportunities that educators face, including the need for training and resources to effectively engage with controversial subjects. Mpofu (2022) posits that, understanding the perceptions of both lecturers and parents regarding inclusive education is crucial in the sense that there are varying opinions on how well inclusive practices are being implemented which can affect the teaching of controversial topics. In essence, engaging with these perspectives can help educators tailor their approaches to better meet the needs of their students and the community (Mpofu and Molosiwa, 2020). In summary, addressing the problem of inclusive education in Zimbabwe requires a strong focus on practical implementation and the ability to teach controversial topics sensitively. By influencing community values like Ubuntu and understanding the challenges faced by educators, a creation of a more inclusive educational environment that benefits all learners can be introduced. The current study therefore focuses on formulating a management model to enhance inclusivity at a teacher training college in Zimbabwe.

#### **1.4 Theoretical Framework**

The study is located in critical emancipatory research (CER) which was originally developed by Jürgen Habermas in 1981 (Held, 1983). The critical emancipatory research does not merely seek to study and understand society, but rather to critique and transform society (Patton, 2002), which is the reason why I used this theory. Groat and Wang (2001) argue that, the emancipatory research paradigm emerged as a response to a growing discomfort with dominant research paradigms and procedures. Groat and Wang (2001) further argue that emancipatory research is an umbrella term that includes several research streams that include critical theory based on, feminist, race-specific, participatory and transformative research. In essence, the emancipatory research paradigm is seen as a process of producing knowledge that can be of benefit to disadvantaged people and its key aim is to empower its research subjects (Noel, 2016:457).

According to Francis (2018:iv) emancipatory research actually came from the disability community and was born out of the motto, ‘nothing about us, without us.’ This was political action that aimed to move the control of the research into the hands of the community being

researched (Noel, 2016:457) in this case, formulating a management model to enhance the inclusion of persons living with disabilities in teachers training colleges in Zimbabwe. It is evidenced that the emancipatory research paradigm has been widely adopted in certain research areas such as feminism and disability, and the paradigm is also associated with a critical and transformative stance (Noel, 2016) that has gained traction in these specific fields, reflecting a commitment to challenging power structures and promoting social justice. This is one of the major reasons why I used this paradigm.

Another important aspect according to Dube and Hlalele, (2018:16) various assumptions are made in relation to the origins of critical emancipatory research where scholars agree that it is an offshoot of the critical theory of the Frankfurt school, which arose in Germany in 1923 and which was later developed by Jurgen Habermas. McKernan (2013:417-433) believes that critical theory was first hinted by Emmanuel Kant, a German philosopher, in 1771. Dube and Hlalele (2018:17) further argue that, despite disagreements about who mooted the idea, CER is generally traced to the Frankfurt school for “social research established in 1923 at the University of Frankfurt and, in particular to the works of Habermas, who was influenced by Marxist perspective on economic and social question (Schmidt, 2011).” Dube (2019:2) further posits that, CER attempts to engage scholars in critical examination, and to challenge exploitative conditions in every sphere where these conditions may appear. In this research, exploitation is seen as taking unfair advantage of students with disabilities at teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe in situations where the curriculum is not inclusive.

Ledwith (2007:597-611) posits that, an emancipatory methodology emerging from a participatory paradigm, seeks to identify and change the root sources of oppression. It engages with the causes, not the symptoms of oppression. In essence, critical emancipatory research is founded on an anti-oppression ideology where respect, dignity, mutuality and reciprocity provide an ideological lens through which every stage of its process is framed (Ledwith, 2007). In addition, Held (1983: in Ivey, 1986) prescribes closeness between the researcher and the researched. Mahlomaholo (2009) asserts that good CER is empowering, changing people’s lives and station in life, liberating them from not-so-useful practices and thoughts and meeting the needs of a real-life situation. According to (McGregor, 2017) the criteria for quality in CER include advancing the agenda for equity in all its forms and advocating social justice, peace, freedom and hope. Nkoane (2013:99) posits that, critical theory has its ‘philosophical roots in several traditions such as Marx’s (2000) analysis of socio-economic conditions and class structure, Haberman’s (1979) notion of emancipatory knowledge and Freire’s (1970) transformative and emancipatory pedagogy and this makes it a strong reason why I engaged

the CER in this study.

In inclusive education, emancipatory research is about the demystification of the structures and processes which create disability, and the establishment of a workable dialogue between the research community and people with disabilities (Barnes, 2006). In this case, CER was relevant in this study as I managed to demystify structures that are against inclusive education in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe. Weng and Clark (2018:81-101) assert that, Habermas developed CER to enhance the participation of other sectors of society, which would otherwise be excluded from participating in decision-making especially where educational issues are concerned; in this case, on the implementation of inclusive education in teacher training colleges.

Dube and Hlalele (2018:76) argue that relations framed in CER can contribute to achieving desired change, and it is expected that the CER framework guided the development of a management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education, which is the motive of this research. CER guides researchers to be analytical, to search for deeper meanings and to consider all sides of the presented problem (Mahlomaholo, 2009:224-237). CER has an agenda to critique and challenge; to transform and empower. It is geared towards social justice and enhances the principles of democracy (Nkoane, 2012:99). In short, the CER framework was relevant to the current study because it helped me to understand the perceptions of participants who provided data, and the deep underlying feelings of the society in which the participants are living.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The main question of the study was:

How can a management model be developed to enhance inclusive education in a teacher training college in Zimbabwe?

The secondary research questions were:

- a) What are the barriers to academic and social inclusion students with disabilities face at the college?
- b) Which inclusive practices do tertiary institutions implement to achieve the successful integration of students with disabilities at a teacher's training college?
- c) What are the indicators of the success of a strategy to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe?

## **1.6 Research aim and objectives**

### **Aim**

The aim of this study was to formulate a management model to enhance inclusive education at a teachers training college.

### **Objectives**

The objectives of this study were to:

- (a) Determine the major barriers to academic and social inclusion faced by students with disabilities at a teacher training college;
- (b) Explore how tertiary institutions implement inclusive practices for the successful integration of students with disabilities at a teacher's training college; and
- (c) Establish the indicators of the success of a strategy to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe.

## **1.7 Value of the study**

The study is expected to improve the lives of students with disabilities at teachers' training colleges in Zimbabwe through the application of the proposed management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education. The information that will be gathered for developing the intervention strategy to address the concerns of students with disabilities will be vital to sister colleges, policymakers, service providers, administrators and the general public. The study will be useful to new researchers on inclusive education.

## **1.8 Limitations of the study**

The current study was conducted at a single teacher training college, and the sample was limited to one specialist lecturer, 8 SRC members and 10 students with disabilities and one administrator. The researcher could have included all the secondary teacher training colleges, but due to financial constraints, the study was only carried out at one secondary teacher training college. Eight out of ten of the participants with different disabilities were on teaching practice, which meant that this group had its sessions once a month. The bus fares for these participants were rather expensive, as the researcher was sponsoring their transportation to and from their destinations.

## **1.9 Delimitations of the study**

The study aimed to develop a management model to promote inclusivity at a teacher training college in Zimbabwe. The research took place in the Bulawayo region of Zimbabwe, and the

specific college was selected because it is where the researcher is employed and regularly interacts with numerous students seeking counselling sessions due to their disabilities. The duration of the study was 3 years, from May 2021 to July 2024.

### **1.9.1 Research paradigm**

The study adopted the transformative paradigm, through which I recognised the value of applying language to systematic research practices that are less common and/or marginalised in established research environments (Phelps, 2021:204-215). This research is unique, because some researchers in inclusive education used the interpretivism paradigm, in for example, Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020), Majoko (2019) and Mohajan (2018), but I chose the transformative paradigm, as it is informed by critical theory and it can challenge myths and empower people to change society radically (Chilisa, 2011). The transformative paradigm also emphasises the role of the people involved in the research who, instead of waiting to be emancipated, will participate in research and processes that will lead to personal and social transformation (Mertens, 2012). The intention is to show that the 10 students with disabilities, 8 students without disabilities from the SRC, 1 specialist lecturer and 1 administrator who participated in this research were able to see themselves as transformed human beings who have been liberated, thereby assuming new academic identities (Mahlomaholo, 2009:224-237).

### **1.9.2 Research approach**

This study adopted a qualitative method, as it was descriptive in nature. The major advantage was that it enabled the researcher to understand the participants' personal experiences. The participants comprised of 10 students with disabilities, 8 students from SRC, 1 specialist lecturer and 1 administrator. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) assert that a qualitative research approach produces data that consists of words in the form of rich verbal descriptions, rather than numbers. This helped me to remain considerate to new ideas, issues and influences that emerged from the study, as I did not use numbers often.

### **1.9.3 Research design**

In this research, I utilised the participatory action research (PAR) approach to generate data, as it aligns with and supports CER. Using participatory action research (PAR) in this study was beneficial for several reasons. Vaughn and Jacquez (2020) contend that, PAR involves a

cyclical progression of action research and collaborative evaluation, designed to enhance cogenerative learning among the participants, thereby promoting a more inclusive and engaging research process. Vaughn and Jacquez (2020) further state that PAR provided an inclusive understanding of engagement and emancipatory work, aiming to empower and engage individuals, which aligns with goals of inclusive education. In the same vein, Ayaya, Makoelle and van der Merwe (2020) argue that, this approach also supports the involvement of people with disabilities in the research process, further contributing to the inclusivity of the education system. As a result, utilising PAR in this study would help build a more inclusive education and promoting equal access to education for all learners.

#### **1.9.4 Research site**

The study was conducted at a secondary school teacher training college in Zimbabwe. This institution, established by the government, has been at the forefront of developing programmes for training practical and foreign language educators. The college's curriculum continuously adapts to align with the requirements of the education sector and national objectives. At its inception, this college achieved the distinction of being the first to be granted Associate status by the University of Zimbabwe and its predecessors.

#### **1.9.5 Target population**

In this study the target population were students with different disabilities who are in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe. In line with Retief and Letsosa (2018) in the context of inclusive education in Zimbabwe, the target population encompassed individuals with diverse abilities and needs, this included but not limited to persons with disabilities, who make up a significant portion of the global population. The study sample in this study comprised 10 students with disabilities, 8 students from the Students' Representative Committee (SRC), 1 specialist lecturer and 1 administrator. In this study, purposive sampling was used and involved the selection of specific individuals or groups based on a predetermined set of criteria (Robinson, 2014). According to Mujar et al., (2024:26-35) this method allows researchers to effectively target and include individuals who fit a particular profile, aligning with the specific objectives of the study. Mujar et al (2024:26- 35) further articulates that, in contrast to random sampling, where individuals are chosen purely by chance, purposive sampling enables researchers to reject individuals who do not fit the desired profile when creating the sample. Campbell et al., (2020:652- 661) are of the view that, it is important to note that purposive sampling is not suitable for all research studies and should be used cautiously, as the sample is not randomly selected. The criteria used to select participants in purposive sampling are

intentionally established to ensure that the chosen individuals possess the relevant attributes or experiences that are essential for addressing the research questions (Campbell et al, 2020). The reason for involving these participants was that they were key informants and information was gathered on their experiences and perceptions of inclusive education at the teacher training institution.

### **1.10 Data collection**

In this study, data was collected through focus group discussions and interviews. Focus group discussions are a type of in-depth interview accomplished in a group (Gibson, 2017:237-241). In focus group discussions, investigators interview people with common qualities or experiences in order to elicit ideas, thoughts and perceptions about a particular subject or certain issues associated with an area of interest (Robson, 2006). Focus group discussions are an inexpensive and quick way of acquiring valuable data (Heary and Hennessy, 2002:47-57). Participants were given a chance to reflect on or react to the viewpoints of others, with which they might have disagreed or which they were be unaware of. The total number of participants was 20, which included 10 students with disabilities, 8 students from the students' representative committee, 1 specialist lecturer and 1 administrator. I had the opportunity to ask questions, which produced more information than individual interviews would have produced.

#### **1.10.1 Semi-structured interviews**

In addition to focus group discussions, this study also used face-to-face semi-structured interviews and 2 participants were interviewed. These included the administrator and the specialist teacher who were the key informants in this study. The semi-structured interviews ad an advantage over other types of interviews because views were gathered even from participants who might not have disabilities themselves, but who might have witnessed the experiences of students with disabilities (Lather, 2006). During interviews, I had the opportunity to observe participants' reactions to questions, which differs from the method used in questionnaires, where participants record their responses in writing.

### **1.11 Data analysis, interpretation, reporting and quality assurance**

Data was analysed through thematic analysis which involved a search for themes that emerged which were as important to the study (Mayaba, 2008). I wanted to identify major themes that were important in relation to the particular topic and research questions being explored (Braun and Clarke, 2018:57-71). I identified the themes by rereading the data and recognising the patterns within the data (Mayaba, 2008). I used thematic analysis, because it was a flexible method that enabled me to focus on data in different ways (Mojtaba and Sherrill, 2019).

Regarding thematic analysis, Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2013:92-99) conclude that a theme is a red thread of underlying meanings, with which similar pieces of data can be tied together and by which one may answer the question, “why?”

## **1.12 LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS**

**Chapter 1:** Introduction to the study, an overview of the study, research aim and objectives, research approach, critical discourse analysis and value of the study.

**Chapter 2:** Theoretical framing, critical emancipatory research, its origins and development from critical theory to critical emancipatory research and principles of CER. Reflection of CER and definition of operational terms.

**Chapter 3:** Review of related literature, conceptualization inclusive education, definition of inclusive education by governments and researchers, brief historical background of inclusive education, success stories of successful implementation of inclusive education.

**Chapter 4:** Participatory action research, its origins, development and principles. PAR as an approach, definition and importance, the strength of PAR, weaknesses of PAR as an approach to generating data, processes and steps of generating data.

**Chapter 5:** Data presentation, analysis, discussion and interpretation. Barriers to academic and social inclusion faced by students with disabilities at a teacher training college, indicators of success of a management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education.

**Chapter 6:** Presentation of the proposed management model and discussion of findings, synthesis of findings, modern and social model, the management model and its strengths.

**Chapter 7:** Conclusion, summary, findings and recommendations, limitations of the study and the final word.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: CRITICAL EMANCIPATION RESEARCH**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The present study sought to formulate a management model to enhance inclusivity at a teacher training college. This chapter focuses on the theoretical framework which is informed this study. Critical Emancipatory Research (CER) is postulated within the extensive Critical Theory (CT). This chapter looked into the origins of the theory from the Frankfurt School of social science, its developments and concepts and how it relates to inclusivity.

#### **2.2 The origins of critical theory**

Critical theory has roots in a strand of thought which is often traced back to the enlightenment and connected to the writings of Kant, Hegel and Marx (Devetak, 2018). In the twentieth century, CT became most closely associated with a distinct body of thought known as the Frankfurt School (Jay, 1973:27-44). CT acquired a renewed potency in which the term CT came to be used as the emblem of a philosophy which questions modern social and political life through a method of immanent critique which is in the work of Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Hebert Marause, Erich Fromm, Leo and Axel Honneth (Devetak, 2018:27-44). McKernan (2013:424) believe that CT was first raised by Emmanuel Kant, a German philosopher in 1871 while, McLaughlin (1999:109) is of the view that, the development of CT is attributed to a “Marxist think tank founded by a wealthy son of a German millionaire, Mr. Weil, who helped the Frankfurt School to create an innovative brand of philosophical oriented social science.”

In addition to the above, Nkoane (2013:99) agrees that CT has its philosophical roots in several traditions such as Marx’s analysis of socio-economic conditions and class structure, Habermas’s notion of emancipatory knowledge and Freire’s transformative and emancipatory pedagogy.” Elaborating on the history of the CT, Garlitz and Zompetti (2021) posit that, in the Neo-Kantianism that reigned in German academic institutions in the late ninetieth century and early twentieth century, Kant’s critical philosophy was reapplied to what was called the “human sciences” and social sciences, by its south western school of scholars. Garlitz and Zompetti further argue that, this marked the beginnings of theory construction of a critical nature in a modern disciplinary context, and it can be considered critical because it marked one

of the first concerted efforts at problematizing the way power operates in the structural and discursive constructs of the society.

Conceptualizing on the history of CT, Held (1983) articulates that, CT became a key element in the formation and self-understanding of the New Left. Many of those committed to the new radical protest movements which characterised the struggles against imperialism found in the works of this ‘school’ an intriguing interpretation of Marxist theory and on emphasis on issues and problems that had rarely been explored by more orthodox approaches to Marxism. The writings of the critical theorists have been the subject of continuing controversy, especially around their theoretical and political merits despite the break-up and repression of the movements (Held, 1999). There are a lot of disagreements about who raised the idea CT. According to Schmidt, (2007:51) it is generally traced to the Frankfurt School for Social Research which was established in 1923 at the University of Frankfurt and, in particular, to the works of Habermas who was influenced by the Marxist perspective on economic and social questions.” With this in mind, Devetak (2018), is of the view that, essential to the Frankfurt School’s critical theory was a concern to comprehend the central features of contextualizing society by understanding its historical and social development, and tracing contradictions in the present which may open up the possibility of transcending contemporary society and its built-in pathologies and forms of domination.

In the same vein, Horkheimer (1972:206) says, CT intended, not simply to eliminate one or the other forms of abuse, but to analyse the underlying social structures which result in these abuses with the intention of overcoming them. According to Murphy (2013), Karl Marx is of the view that, philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it. The issue here is that, this normative interest in identifying immanent possibilities for social transformation is a defining characteristic of a line of thought which extends, at least, from Kant, through Marx, to contemporary critical theorists such as Habermas and Honneth (Devetak, 2018). With this in mind, Horkheimer (1972:223) further argues that, “[T]his intention to analyse the possibilities of realizing emancipation in the modern world entailed critical analyses of both obstructions to, and intrinsic tendencies towards, the rational organization of human activity.”

In today’s era, Habermas is one of the best-known critical theorists, and he finds his way among the foregoing foundational issues by way of his epistemology about human interests, and the knowledge, medium, and science associated with each (AECT, 2001). In conceptualizing Habermas’ epistemology Carr and Kemmis (1986: 136) schematize it in Table

2.1 below:

**Table 2.1 Extracted from Carr and Kemmis (1986: 136)**

<b>Interest</b>	<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Science</b>
Technical	Instrumental (casual explanation)	Work	Empirical— analytical or natural sciences
Practical	Practical (understanding)	Language	Hermeneutic or interpretive sciences
Emancipatory	Emancipatory Reflection	Power	Critical Sciences

Summarizing Habermas’ thinking about the sciences and the interests Ingram and Ingram (1991: xxx) argue that;

The empirical-analytic sciences incorporate an objectifying experimental method that constitutes nature as a lawful system of interconnected facts. The critical social sciences incorporate a reflective method that combines both objectifying (casual explanatory) and interpretive procedures in determining which social regularities are invariant and which are not. The critique of ideology refines a prescientific mode of critical self-examination necessitated by an emancipatory interest in achieving freedom from domination.

This is relevant in my study because critical social sciences help individuals understand how their aims and purposes are subordinated to technical and practical interests such as science and technology and how critical sciences help people act to relieve oppression (Ingram and Ingram, 1991). In other words, the critical theorists were concerned not only with disclaiming rationality, science, and the technical altogether but rather with returning them to balance with other aspects of life, such as moral perspectives (AECT, 2001). To fully internalize the

developments of CT towards CER, I further discuss the various phases of the Frankfurt School. According to Schussler (1986: 65-66 and Given 2008:175), the phases were named after directors who led the school through different historical settings and geographical locations. The following section focuses on the Grunberg era of the Frankfurt School from, 1923 to 1929.

The focus of the Frankfurt School during the third phase was to answer questions which lay within the embedded structures of society (Dube, 2016:14). The programme was wide and varied ranging from an examination of fascism, capitalism, mass psychology and mass culturalism (Lybeck, 2011:169-185). On the other view, Horkheimer looked outward to society because his primary concern was with justice and a just society; while Adorno stayed within the philosophy because he was interested in issues of truth (Alway, 1992) like the difference in sensibilities. This difference in the interests that guided their work may well have had a stimulating effect on their collaborative and individual efforts. Nonetheless Brincat (2011:218-245) postulates that:

“Horkheimer and Adorno’s approach to CT, no matter how critical it was for the adoption of the physical sciences to the analysis of social life.... Instead of an appreciation of movements of emancipation outside the west, limiting the horizon of possibility under a non-reflexive Euro-centric gaze.”

Elaborating on the above sentiments, Fuchs (2018:265-281) claims that in 1971, under Horkheimer’s leadership, members of the Institute were able to address a wide variety of economic, social, political and aesthetic topics ranging from empirical analysis to philosophical theorization. In support, Brittain (2015:259-280) is of the view that, the school wanted to advance an “interdisciplinary study of society that incorporated the disciplines of philosophy, sociology, psychology, economics, political theory and subsequently music and culture more generally.” In conclusion, Dube (2016:19) argues that this period was a time for the expansion of CT given the post-war conducive environment where Frankfurt Scholars could theorize on social issues. The post-war period is important in my study in the sense that it created an environment for the development of CT. New researchers began to come out in order to enhance the growth of CT, because of the peaceful environment in the school.

In human need, reason and fear Horkheimer (1972) concurs that, like Marx, Horkheimer and Adorno believed that what people are and how their needs and desires are organized changes

throughout history and thus can be determined only through reference to their social context. According to Alway (1995), Horkheimer and Adorno's presentation of the triumph of instrumental reason as the seemingly inevitable consequence of the struggle to dominate nature certainly lends credence to Friedman's interpretation by highlighting the national control of nature or the exercise of instrumental reason, which is a central theme in their work. Griffiths (2007), equally agrees by pointing out that this aligns with the argument put forth by Horkheimer and Adorno, who contended that the triumph of instrumental reason was the main achievement of the enlightenment. Horkheimer (2013) argues in 'Eclipse of Reason' that, "[I]f one were to speak of a disease of reason, this disease should be understood not as having stricken reason at some historical moment, but as being inseparable from the nature of reason in civilization as we have known it so far."

It is noted, however that Horkheimer stops short of attributing the disease of reason to the nature of reason itself when he adds the qualification: "in civilization as we have known it so far." Alway (1995) believes that, in the 'Dialectic', fear is the most elemental aspect of Horkheimer and Adorno's conception of what it means to be human in the sense that fear initiates the struggle to dominate nature, activates the capacity for rational thought and fuels the growth of knowledge and the expansion of control over inner and outer nature. Alway (1995:38) further articulates that, fear cripples the mind and distorts the process of the species' self-actualization. It is the inability of humankind to face the truth of its fear that has brought it to the point where disaster is triumphant. This is relevant in my study in the sense that, students with disabilities fail to choose subjects of their choice especially practical subjects as lecturers' fear that they will fail to do certain tasks given to them because of their condition, hence the need of formulating a management model which will cater for such students.

The following section is more focused on Habermas who had an instrumental thinking in introducing the concept of emancipation and communicative action for this study. This study is located in critical emancipatory research (CER) which was originally developed by Jurgen Habermas.

### **2.2.1 Habermas's concept of communicative action; from critical theory to critical emancipatory research**

Jurgen Habermas is well known not only for his prolific writings pertaining to CT, but also his revolutionary perspectives on human emancipation in the modern capitalist society (Hairon, Goh and Lin, 2014:370-386). In addition, Gordon (2013:176) highlights that, Habermas first

came to prominence in the 1950s and 1960s as a fierce critic of post-war Germany's conservative ideological consensus. He further argues that Habermas is an intellectual committed, both in theory and practice, to retrieving the promises of the Enlightenment after its catastrophic implosion during the middle decades of the twentieth century. On another note Alway (1995:9) postulates that Habermas is regarded as the leading 'second-generation' critical theorist who identifies his work with that of the Frankfurt School and more generally with the Marxian project. However, he has also changed the terms of analysis and discussion. According to Bolton (2005:4-5), Habermas is also known as an academic who is systematically immersed in the thought of philosophers and social scientists who preceded him and for extensive use of sociology and Anglo-American philosophy in his work. On the emphasis on Habermas's life, Hairon (2017:1-18) concurs that, Habermas is a German philosopher and social theorist whose prolific writings cover a wide range of topics centering on and defending the Enlightenment goal of political emancipation that is, the freedom of human beings in modern societies.

Scholars like Kellner (1993:43-60) note that by the early 1970s, the greatest philosophers of the first cohort of CT were deceased or were not formulating important new ideas. On another note, Dube (2016) argues that thinkers like Habermas then stepped up to advance the cause of CT to CER. How (2003:105) is of the view that Habermas sought to overcome what he saw as the weakness of Horkheimer, Arduino and Maraise's work, especially the "too individualized notion of the subject and their Marxist view of history." CER emanated from the context of the struggle of the working class, as an instrument of the envisioned Marxian revolutionary knowledge and action associated with the need for justice in society (Curplus, 2013:12). Demirovic (2013:1) suggests that CER attempts to engage scholars in critical examination, and to challenge exploitative conditions in every sphere where these conditions may appear. In same vein, Ledwith (2007) posits that, an emancipatory methodology, emerging from a participatory paradigm, seeks to identify and change the root sources of oppression and engages with the causes, not the symptoms, of oppression. In addition, Carrette and Keller (1999:21-43) aver that CER is an offshoot of Critical Theory associated with Frankfurt School in Germany in the late 1920s.

In the context of research Ledwith (2007) is of the view that CER, is founded on an anti-oppression ideology, meaning that respect, dignity, mutuality and reciprocity provide the ideological lens through which every stage of its process is framed, while at the same time committing to identifying and challenging unequal power relations within its process. Rowan

(1981:38) postulates that, participants in research are to “be as open to change as the subjects are encouraged to be, only they are now more like co-researchers than like conventional subjects.” In addition, Opie (1992) observes that, all participants act in the interests of the whole and this begins in everyday realities, and is a mutual process of discovery “where the researcher and the researched both contribute to the expansion of the other’s knowledge. Ledwith (2007) further articulates that CER is rooted in dialogue, attempting to work with, not on, people, and intends its process to be empowering for all involved. Therefore, CER is committed to collective action for social change.

According to Held (1999), the CER of Habermas “aims to further the self-understanding of social groups capable of transforming society.” In essence, Postone (1993:248) is of the view that, “Habermas tries to provide the basis for the theoretical change to a paradigm of intersubjectivity by developing the concepts of communicative reason and action.” Emphasizing the concept of marginalised groups Ntanyoma and Helen (2021:374-403) concurs that, giving voice to marginalised groups by recognising them as participants or co-researchers can largely prevent the issue of questionable findings. The use of CER can prevent not only present, but also past experiences. Wang, Torrisi-Steele and Hansman (2019:234-257) observe that Habermas developed CER to enhance the participation of other sectors of society, who would otherwise not participate in decision-making especially where educational issues are concerned.

CER promotes equality and equity in all their forms, advocates for social justice, freedom, peace and team spirit and changes people’s hearts and minds (Foulger, 2010:135-152). This study will contribute to knowledge because it sought to come up with a model that will help to improve the quality education for students with disability in a teacher training college. I have chosen CER in this study in light of the observation by Mahlomaholo and Nkoane (2002:69-84) that, in CER the researcher and the participants are interested in transforming their social stations to foster and advance democracy, liberation, equity and social justice in a manner that meets the methodological expectations of both the researcher and the participant. Mahlomaholo (2009:224-237) postulates that, CER allows the researcher to interpret other people’s interpretations and make sense of and work towards fulfilling people through a democratic process, such as collective engagement. Furthermore, Dube (2016:21) alludes to the notion that, Habermas adds an important dimension to CER, where the ultimate goal is an improvement of human conditions. In engaging CER in my study, I want to improve human conditions for marginalised students at a teacher training college where all students in the

college regardless of their strengths, weaknesses or disabilities have become part of the college community. Providing inclusive education is a human rights issue at a global level as supported by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which dates back to 2006 and intends to protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities (United Nations, 2006). Therefore, I am of the view that, formulating a management model ‘should aim at improving the human conditions, where the values of love, peace, inclusion and acceptable of difference are highly prioritized’ (Dube, 2016:21).

Section 2.2 covered the origins of critical theory and then I looked at the three phases of the Frankfurt School and how each phase contributed crucially to CER as theory. Habermas’ concept of communicative action from critical theory to critical emancipatory research, was also discussed including and how its relevance to inclusivity. The next section will discuss the relevance of CER in studies that focus on marginalised people and those living with disabilities in this case, students at a teacher training college.

### **2.3 Critical Emancipatory Research and its relevance to disability**

Looking at the relevance of CER, in researches that involve disabled and marginalised students, Danieli and Woodhams (2004) argue that, ultimately, an emancipatory paradigm may serve to undermine the generation of knowledge that can be used by disabled people for self-emancipation. Barnes and Mercer (1997) observe that since the early 1990s there has been a great deal of methodological debate amongst researchers of disability, on the purpose of disability research, what should be researched, who should do it and how it should be conducted. It is against this background that Danieli and Woodhams (2005:281) postulates that, many of the contributors to these debates have drawn on feminist methodological writings on gender to advocate emancipatory research as an alternative to positivistic research and have argued that emancipatory research is the most appropriate methodology for disability research. To further stress this point, Danieli and Woodhams (2005:282) note that:

[...] it is important to distinguish between the political demands of disability movement and the process of researching disability. This distinction is important because those who advocate emancipatory research tend to have a clearly articulated political position, i.e. that the existing material and social conditions of particular groups are oppressive and should be changed. Within the methodological debates, those who take such a position argue that the lack of change is closely related to the epistemological

and ontological assumptions made by those researching on disability. Thus, whilst political, epistemological and ontological assumptions are analytically distinct, when advocating emancipatory research, the political and methodological aspects are often conflated.

These sentiments emphasise the importance of distinguishing between the political demands of disability movement and the process of researching disability. It highlights that those advocating for emancipatory research typically have a clearly articulated political position, asserting that the existing material and social conditions of particular groups are oppressive and should be changed. According to Danieli and Woodhams (2005:284) there is critical need to separate the political demands of the disability movement from the research process, while highlighting the potential impact of political, epistemological and ontological assumptions on the effectiveness of emancipatory research within the field of disability. This insight is quite relevant to my study in understanding the complexities and nuances involved in conducting research while maintaining a distinction between political advocacy and the research process.

According to Beckett (2004), there is, for example, evidence to suggest that those researchers who do not adopt an emancipatory methodology are likely to be identified, in part, as responsible for producing knowledge which perpetuates the oppression of the disabled people and that their work is unlikely to be unwelcome in some forums. Emancipatory research is a research perspective of producing knowledge that can be of benefit to disadvantaged people and is an umbrella term that can include many streams of critical theory- based research such as feminist, disability, race and gender theory (Noel, 2016). Danieli and Woodhams (2004:281-296) are of the view that, emancipatory research is seen first and foremost as a process of producing knowledge which will be of benefit to oppressed people; and this is a political outcome. Feminists argued that have additionally argued that, “[R]esearch should contribute to women’s liberation through producing knowledge that can be used by women themselves” (Acker, Barry and Esseveld, 1983:423).

For persons with disabilities, research requires, according to Barnes and Mercer, (1997) “the establishment of a workable dialogue between the research community and disabled people in order to facilitate the latter’s empowerment.” Danieli and Woodhams (2005:281-296) further argue that, it should expose and confront the various ways in which oppression is maintained,

not only in relation to research findings but also within the research process itself. Elaborating on CER, Groat et al., (2019) assert that, CER emerged as response to a growing discomfort with dominant research paradigms and procedures and it is an umbrella term that encompasses several research streams including CT-based, feminist, race-specific, participatory and transformative research. Mertens (2023) describes what some authors call emancipatory research as transformative research and says that “emancipatory research actually came from the disability community, and was born out of the motto ‘nothing for us, without us,’ a political action that aimed to move the control of the research into the hands of the community being researched.” Danieli and Woodhams (2005) elaborate that, some of the key principles of this research paradigm are openness, participation, accountability, empowerment and reciprocity. In addition, Patton (2002) is of the view that this paradigm has been widely adopted in certain research areas such as feminism and disability. “Other terms that are linked to CER are ‘orientation qualitative inquiry and critical inquiry. Noel (2016) articulates that, regardless of its name, this research paradigm recognizes the historical imbalance in research and knowledge production that favours the ‘elite’ and disadvantages many others. Patton (2002) justifies this research paradigm by pointing out that:

The root problem in all fields is that the majority of humankind was excluded from education and the making of knowledge, and the dominant few not only defined themselves as the inclusive kind of human, but also as the norm and the ideal.... Their notion of who was human was both exclusive and hierarchical.

The point of view cited above highlights the issue of exclusion and hierarchy in the context of education and knowledge creation. It speaks of how certain groups of people have historically been marginalised and excluded from participating in the generation of knowledge, leading to a narrow and biased understanding of what it means to be human. Linking the above sentiments with disability, we can see how individuals with disabilities have often been excluded from educational opportunities and the process of knowledge creation. For quite some time, the dominant few, who were able-bodied individuals, defined themselves as the norm and ideal, while those with disabilities were seen as the ‘other’ or not fully human. This exclusion led to a lack of representation of the experiences and perspectives of people with disabilities in various fields, including academia, science, literature and the arts. In addition, the hierarchical nature of this exclusion is evident in the way certain individuals were deemed more ‘worthy’ of education and participation in knowledge creation, while others were relegated to the margins. Furthermore, the hierarchy perpetuated stigma and discrimination

against people with disabilities, reinforcing the notion that they were somehow less human or less capable of contributing to society. This is relevant to my study in the sense that the disadvantaged, marginalised and disabled students have been excluded in quite a number of activities in the college setup.

## **2.4 Principles of critical emancipatory research**

This section highlights principles of CER dating back to the history of the Frankfurt School, and it will show its relevance to this study. According to Dube and Hlalele (2018) relations framed in CER can contribute to achieving desired change. In addition, it is expected that the CER framework guided the development of a management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education, which was the motive of this research. The first principle to be discussed is the improvement of human lives.

### **2.4.1 CER aims at improving human lives**

In addition, Nkoane (2012:393:400) further articulates that, CER, has its philosophical roots in several traditions, including Marx's analysis of socio-economic conditions and class structures Habermas's notion of emancipating knowledge, and Freire's transformative and emancipatory pedagogy. CER has an agenda to critique and challenge various aspects that include the current state of affairs, systems and norms to bring about positive change and improvement. CER aims to transform and empower different entities including the transformation and empowerment of the federal workforce, individuals, young people and Africa as a continent, it is geared towards social justice and enhances the principles of democracy (Nkoane, 2012). According to Patton (2002) CER seeks not only to study and understand society, but rather to critique and transform society. Wodak (2004:185) argues that, CER's purpose is to analyse the power relations of dominance, discrimination and control and all these can be manifested in language.

In addition, Ngwenyama (1990:3) observes that "CER's focus is on general theoretical problems as well as specific investigation of concrete problems of contemporary social organization." This is seconded by Dube (2016:30) who argues that, CER as a school of thought aims at improving human lives or conditions. In the same vein, Wyk (2013) is of the view that, CER aims to weave people with disabilities back into the fabric of society, thread by thread, theory by theory, and to bring disability perspectives and voices into the curriculum and simultaneously increase the participation of people with disabilities' participation in

society. This principle is relevant in my study on improving human conditions in the sense that, the CER framework will help me to understand the perceptions of participants on inclusivity, the deep underlying feelings of the society in which the participants are located and the language used to describe marginalized people (Mahali and Swartz, 2018:1-10). In the following section, the elimination of false consciousness will be discussed.

#### **2.4.2 CER and elimination of false consciousness**

As alluded to by McKernan (2013:417-433) the elimination of false consciousness is traced back to the work of Foucault and Freirean critical pedagogy, which states that ideology must allow individuals and groups to critique and resist oppressive regimes of power, thereby eliminating false consciousness. The principle attempts to expose and question hegemony, and traditional power assumptions held about relationships, groups, communities, societies and organisations to promote social change (Given, 2008:140). Thompson (2015) defines false consciousness as a way of thinking that prevents people from perceiving the true nature of their social or economic situation. In the context of CER, Hirzalla and van Zoonen (2017) define false consciousness as a concept originally defined by Karl Marx which describes a state in which individuals are unaware of the true nature of their social and economic conditions. This lack of awareness can lead individuals to act in ways that are contrary to their own interests, perpetuating existing power dynamics and inequalities. For that reason, the elimination of false consciousness is another principle of CER that guided this research. According to McKernan (2014:423) ideology must critique to eliminate false consciousness allowing individuals and groups to critique and resist oppressive regimes of power.

The above sentiment is in line with Dube's (2016:31) position: "I hold the view that CER attempts to eliminate the false consciousness that which oppresses people and dehumanizes them cannot be critiqued and challenged." This is more so in line with marginalised students and students with disabilities in teacher training colleges. Highlighting on oppression Jemal (2022:1-16) states that for Freire, oppression amounted to dehumanisation for both the oppressed and the oppressor. Freire (2000) determined that it was necessary for people to think critically about oppressive realities and challenge inequitable social conditions to reclaim their humanity. This process involves recognising the impact of systemic injustice, questioning dominant narratives, and advocating for meaningful change (Freire, 2000). In line with the elimination of false consciousness Prilleltensky (1996:307-324) asserts that, 'this is the process whereby people achieve an illuminating awareness both of the socio-economic and cultural

circumstances that shape their lives and their capacity to transform that reality.’ This is consonant with an empowerment process, an active, participatory process through which individuals and groups gain greater control over their identities and lives, protect human rights and reduce social injustice (Rappaport, 2020; Maton, 2008 and Peters and Peterson, 2019). According to Chen (2019:251) CER views “knowledge as a result of power relations and questions constantly the legitimacy of all forms of knowledge with the intention of eliminating false consciousness.” The strategy of the CER, as highlighted by Alvesson (1992:436) is to ‘challenge any forms of knowledge and practices that serve to sustain the illusion of autonomy and to replace the illusion with a structure of social relations in which autonomy in guise of individualism is transformed from a pillar of bourgeois ideology into a practical reality. Fattah (2015:43) is of the view that, the most incisive critique developed by of the Frankfurt School was aimed at the enlightenment project which totally failed in the anthropological paradox, which was the effort of the modern people to liberate themselves from the shackles of myth or theology which, taken for granted has been rationalised as humanity and nature itself.

Adding on the elimination of false consciousness, Finkelstein (2001:4) further argues that, “[O]ur society is built on a competitive market foundation and it is this social system which disables us.” Seconding this notion, Barnes and Sheldon (2007:233) posits that, ‘the first thing you need to do when talking about disability today is to clarify your terms, and this immediately gets you into the realm of theory’ further eliminating false consciousness. According to Barnes (2014) this is not to deny ‘culture’ as a potential source of disablement, nor is it to eschew the effects of the human psyche in moderating social intercourse. Watson (2019) describes disability as “something imposed on top of our impairments, by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society.” Disabled people are therefore an oppressed group in society and as a result elimination of false consciousness must be applied. Chen (2019:251) argues that, when educators fail to critique false consciousness, they are in danger of aiding the reproduction of power relations and cultural identities that exist in society. In addition, Lindsey, Sheilds and Stajduhar (1999:1241) are of the view that CER scholars believe that current credence systems are treated as truths by the dominant class and act as barriers to conscious action towards freedom. I then conclude that, the myths and misconceptions about disability which make people with disabilities vulnerable to oppression within a society must be challenged, so that a democratic society is created for the improvement of human conditions (Dube, 2016:31). The next section discusses another principle of CER namely sustainable social transformation which is also relevant to this study.

### **2.4.3 CER and sustainable social transformation**

Concerning principle of sustainable social transformation Dube and Hlalele (2018:74) posit that the Frankfurt Scholars were committed to ensuring that oppressive social structures were challenged and replaced with emancipatory structures that have respect for humanity. Brooke (2002:49) is of the view that social transformation, not only pictures, insufficiencies in society but also encourages reflection upon and liberation from any shortfalls igniting a desirable change. McLaren (2005:263) posits that, CER endeavours to label reality, express the functioning of social systems and determine the organization and definition of issues, all with the aim of effecting positive change. Dube (2016:31) articulates that, right from the inception of CER, under the turmoil of the Weimar Republic, the Frankfurt scholars sought to transform society through theory and practice. Supporting this notion Kreber (2023: 3) argues that CER “aims at praxis whereby the insights gained through critical reflection are used to effect change or improve the action.” In the same vein Mahlomaholo and Nkoane (2012:70) observe in CER the researcher and participants are interested in transforming their social stations to foster and advance democracy, liberation, equity and social justice in a manner that meets the methodological expectations of both the researcher and the participant. Nkoane (2012:393) further articulates that this position by saying that CER wants to liberate or transform and change the subaltern status of the participants and encourages the researcher to become an empathetic listener, who is courageous, compassionate about the plight of the marginalised, and is closer to the participants to the extent of becoming one of them. In light of the above, the sustainable social transformation sought by CER believes in transformation for the better, a lessening of the ‘human condition or emancipation and does so by providing a better self-understanding of the social agents who aims at transformation (Peters, 2007:98). Education in Zimbabwean teacher’s colleges should be “transformed into an all-inclusive pedagogy that addresses the diverse needs of the learner” (Dube, 2016). Below, I discuss the fourth principle of CER which is the promotion of social justice.

### **2.4.4 CER and promotion of social justice**

Social justice is another principle of CER, it concerns quality in the distribution of an education service, and the nature of the service itself and the consequences for society through time (Connell, 2012:681). On the other hand, Traitler (2015: 88) asserts that, ‘social justice in the context of CER means including the privileges of those quietened (marginalised students in the college curriculum) to declare for themselves mending knowledge that has been overlooked

and shattered. Analysing and questioning Fraser's theory of social justice Mladenov (2016) postulates that, disability has consistently been marginalised by critical theorists and social activists alike. Davis (2002: 147) raised a point about the side-lining of disability and lamented the widespread assumption that disability, does not constitute "a serious category of oppression; contrasting the progressives' indignation with racism and sexism to their indifference towards ableism."

According to Mladenov (2016) Fraser has meticulously explored injustices of gender, class, race and sexuality, but has so far hardly ever mentioned disability. Berube (2005:568-576) highlights this omission of Fraser's and insists on the importance of making disability central to theories of egalitarian social justice. Fraser (2018) posits that, social justice means 'parity of participation' and that this normative standard has been central for disability campaigning and thought. Arguing further on social justice Mladenov (2016) asserts that, a society is just only when it enables all of its adult members to interact with each other as peers, and this necessarily includes disabled people.

In the context of CER and promotion of social justice Khan (2017) is of the view that, as an organisation, 'we are working to integrate consciousness about people with disabilities, including physical, sensory, intellectual, or psychosocial impairments, in all our work much as how gender is approached. "According to Nkoane (2010: 113-114) social justice maintain a particular focus on the critical pedagogy principles of dialogue and dialectic voice. Dube (2016:32) is of the view that CER, seeks to abolish social injustice. The exclusion of students with disabilities in the college curriculum is a complex issue that requires careful consideration and nuanced understanding, as they are not catered for when it comes to practical assessments. As a result, social justice must be practiced in teacher training colleges. In the next section I discuss CER and the principle of emancipation.

#### **2.4.5 CER and the principle of emancipation**

The principle of emancipation is another cause of concern when discussing issues of CER. As previously highlighted, CER, according to Nkoane (2012), has an agenda to critique and challenge, to transform and empower. It is geared towards social justice and enhances the principles of democracy. It is believed that Habermas developed CER to enhance the participation of other members of society, who would otherwise not participate in decision-making, especially where educational issues are concerned (Dube and Hlalele, 2018:74). On

the other hand, Scotland (2012: 13) postulates that CER seeks to emancipate the disempowered. Giving history on the origins of emancipation, Biesta (2017:52) asserts that, “emancipation stems from legal authority of the pater families-the father of the family.” This is seconded by Gur-Ze’ev (2005:55) who states that, “the emancipatory impetus is particularly prominent in the critical tradition and approaches where the aim of education is conceived as emancipating students from oppressive practices and structures in the name of social and human freedom.”

Demirovic (2013:9) argues that, “the goal of emancipation is not to create an impartial society or an additional form of state but to look for different ways to organize social collaboration on a worldwide scale. According to Dyson et al., (2009:31) emancipation seeks out the constructions of the oppressors and makes possible emancipatory action which transformed the oppressive relationships of the groups involved. In addition, “it has long been argued traditional research in the social sciences has mirrored and perpetuated the power relationships experienced by oppressed people in their day-to-day lives” (Barnes and Sheldon, 2007). It is against this notion that, the emancipatory paradigm is concerned with making disability research more relevant to the discussion of the aims and goals of emancipation as raised by Barnes (2006) who states that emancipation is concerned with the systematic demystification of the structures and processes which create disability and the establishment of a workable dialogue between the research community and people with disabilities in order to facilitate the latter’s empowerment. This paradigm aims to ensure that disability research is aligned with the broader goal of social emancipation.

Moreover, the objective of emancipation is to enhance the empowerment of persons with disabilities (WBP, 2017). Dube (2016) postulates that, emancipation is also possible through the empowerment of marginalised groups. In addition, Stahl (2011) states that, “[T]he emancipatory aims to contribute to the promotion of emancipation, aligning with the broader goal of social emancipation and aiming to change the world and liberate the oppressed, thus encouraging critical researchers to pursue those matters that are professed to be unfair and where change is a prerequisite. In addition to emancipation WBP (2017) is of the view that, the basic principles identified in Freire’s theoretical background are that, the poor and marginalised are able to analyse their own realities and empowerment is necessary in order to develop analytical skills. Oliver (1997) is of the view that the emancipatory research developed in the 1990s is a step forward and a progress from the participatory frame toward the liberation of marginalised groups from their condition of oppression and struggle.

As a result, emancipation is strongly linked to the empowerment processes, as the self-awareness is a key condition for the achievement of equal opportunities and participation in the decision-making mechanisms of society (WBP, 2017). WBP further articulates that, the emancipatory approach and its theoretical background fully promotes democratic practices in the social, economic and political fields, helping marginalised groups to engage themselves in the debate over strategy and process for social changes. In the same vein, Dube (2016) asserts that, when empowerment has taken place, emancipation then eliminates “situations that limit freedom once these barriers have been dissolved, people can control the direction of their own lives” (Ryan, 1998:260). In conclusion, according to Madison (2005:210), CER, is ‘the science which wants to free man from all unnecessary domination’ through emancipation, where individuals or marginalized groups can express themselves in a democratic society and in the curriculum.

## **2.5 The models of disability**

In context of inclusive education, different types of models of disability play a crucial role in shaping various perceptions and approaches. The two primary models are the medical model and the social model of disability. Attitudes towards disability affect the way people think and behave towards people with disabilities. These also impact the outcomes for people with disabilities in the way they are treated and able to participate in society. The attitudes people with disabilities experience inevitably affect the way they interact with others. The section below discusses the two types of models of disability.

### **2.5.1 Medical Model of Disability**

The medical model views disability as a personal tragedy or medical problem that needs to be fixed or cured. It focuses on the individual’s impairments and typically leads to a focus on medical interventions and treatments (Retief and Latsosa, 2018). In the context of inclusive education, the medical model may lead to a focus on ways of accommodating individual impairments rather than addressing systemic barriers to inclusion. According to Olkin (1999:26):

Disability is seen as a medical problem that resides in the individual, it is a defect in or failure of a bodily system as such is inherently abnormal and pathological. The goals of intervention are cure, amelioration (i.e the adjustment of the person with the disability to the condition and to the

environment). Persons with disabilities are expected to avail themselves of the variety of services offered to them and to spend time in the role of patient or learner being helped by trained professionals.

The sentiment above reflects the traditional medical model of disability. In this model, disability is viewed as a personal health issue that stems from an individual's impairment or difference. It emphasises that disability is located within the individual as a result of bodily defect or failure. According to Retief and Letsosa (2018) this perspective often characterises disabilities as abnormal or pathological conditions that require medical intervention for cure or amelioration. The goals of intervention within this framework are focussed on attempting to cure or lessen the impact of the disability. The emphasis is on fixing the individual's impairment or minimising its effects through medical or therapeutic means. In addition, Degener (2017) is of the view that, individuals with disabilities are often expected to engage with various services and professionals, positioning themselves in the role of patient or learner who is being assisted by trained experts. This perspective has been critiqued for its narrow focus on the individual's impairment and its failure to address the broader societal and environmental factors that can contribute to the experience of disability. Kofi (2013) asserts that, this model can lead to the stigmatisation of people with disabilities, as it places the responsibility for their condition solely on their individual bodies rather than considering the social, cultural and structural barriers they may face.

The principles of CER which were covered in this section include, the improvement of human conditions, elimination of false consciousness, sustainable social transformation and promotion of social justice. The principle of emancipation was the last to be discussed. These principles are relevant to my study in the sense that they will be used to interrogate various issues related to inclusion or lack thereof.

### **2.5.2 Social Model of Disability**

In contrast, the social model of disability emphasises that disability is not just a medical issue but also a social construct where it highlights how societal barriers, attitudes, and structures can disable individuals (Degener, 2017). In the context of inclusive education, Retief and Letsosa (2018) is of the view that the social model calls for addressing environmental and attitudinal barriers to ensure equal access and participation for all students, regardless of their abilities. UPIAS (1976:3) in Retief and Letsosa (2018) argues that;

“Disability is a situation, caused by social conditions, which requires for its elimination, (a) that no one aspect such as incomes, mobility or institutions is treated in isolation, (b) that people with disabilities should, with the advice and help of others, assume control over their own lives, and (c) that professionals, experts and others who seek to help must be committed to promoting such control by people with disabilities.”

The above sentiments emphasise the approach to addressing disability as a situation caused by various conditions and the necessary steps for its elimination. According to UPIAS (1976 in Retief and Letsosa, 2018) the sentiments outline the three key principles mainly (a) comprehensive approach, where disability is caused by conditions, and its elimination requires addressing various aspects such as incomes, mobility and institutions. No single aspect should be treated in isolation, (b) empowerment of people with disabilities, people with disabilities should take control over their own lives with the advice and help of others. This highlights the importance of empowering people with disabilities to actively participate in decision-making regarding their lives, (c) commitment of professionals and experts and others involved in helping people with disabilities: these must be committed to promoting the control and autonomy of people with disabilities. This underscores the need for a supportive and empowering approach from those providing assistance. The quotation above reflects a holistic and empowering perspective on addressing disability, emphasising the multifaceted nature of the challenges faced by people with disabilities and the importance of their active involvement in decision-making processes.

### **2.5.3 Relevance to inclusive education**

Understanding these models is crucial for creating inclusive educational environments. By embracing the social model, educators and policymakers can focus on removing barriers to learning and participation, promoting universal design, and fostering a culture of acceptance and accommodation (Kwari, 2021). This approach goes beyond accommodating individual impairments to creating an inclusive and accessible learning environment for all students. Maguvhe and Masuku (2021) are of the view that, inclusive education systems and policies that align with the social model of disability can lead to more equitable and empowering educational experiences for students with disabilities. By recognising and addressing

societal barriers, inclusive education can promote diversity, equity and belonging for all students. According to Kwari (2021), these models of disability are essential for shaping inclusive education practices and policies, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive in educational settings.

However, there are some implications of medical and social models in education settings. According to Rieser (2001) the medical model is not very helpful in accommodating the students' diversity: instead, it will find fault by focusing attention on impairments and seeking to segregate the student if what is accepted as 'normal' is not achieved. On the other hand, the social model values all students by welcoming diversity, strengths and identifying needs and barriers to develop solutions (Rieser, 2001). For that reason, Keenan (2006) says that, the social model of disability roots disability in the community, not in person. The social model, according to Graham (2008) encourages society to make reasonable adjustments and remove barriers within a service, employment or process.

## **2.6 Aim and objectives of the study and critical emancipatory research**

The aim of this study was to formulate a management model to institute inclusive education at a teachers' training college. The following objectives consolidate this study; (a) determine the major barriers to academic and social inclusion faced by students with disabilities at a teacher training college; (b) explore how tertiary institutions implement inclusive practices for the successful integration of students with disabilities at a teacher's training college; and (c) discuss the indicators of success of a management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe.

I used CER principles in order to develop a management model to enhance inclusivity at a teacher training college in Zimbabwe. The critical emancipatory research principles are rooted in the idea of emancipation which is focused on removing people from oppression. The four principles include reflexivity, critique, action and dialogue (Greene, 1998). According to Nkoane (2012), the principle of reflexivity refers to the idea that researchers should be aware of their own biases and assumptions and critically examine how this influences their research. The principle of critique encourages researchers to question and challenge the status quo, and identify and resist power dynamics that perpetuate oppression (Mahlomaholo, 2009). The principle of action calls for researchers to work towards creating positive change and not passively observe or describe the world. Lastly, the principle of dialogues is central to critical emancipatory research, and refers to the idea that research should be conducted in collaboration

with people who are directly affected by the issue being studied (Mahlomaholo, 2009:224-237). As a researcher I should actively listen to and learn from the selected participants rather than simply tell them what to do. Dialogue is based on mutual respect and equality and it empowers the people who are most impacted by a study.

Dube's (2016:39) experience of CER is that it enabled I and the team to be equal partners in the intellectual journey of generating possible solutions to address the problems of a monothetic curriculum." This suggests that the process of CER has facilitated an environment where both the researcher and the team are regarded as equal contributors in a research aimed at developing potential solutions to address the issues associated with a monothetic curriculum. One of the key features of CER is that it views the researcher and the participants as equal partners, (Nkoane, 2012). Equal partners in research refer to a collaborative relationship where everyone involved shares a pursuit of common goals and interests. It also implies a shared commitment to the research endeavour, with each partner contributing actively and equally to the process. In essence, both the researcher and participants are considered experts, with valuable knowledge and perspectives to share, hence the research process is co-created, with input from both the researcher and the participants. In this research CER, encouraged me to reflect on the assumptions and biases that I had before and I managed to consider how these might influence my research and this assisted me to be self-aware and ethical in my work. Working together as an inclusive team CER challenged us to take action and work for positive change rather than simply observing and documenting the findings. The management model helped in coming up with best solutions. Lastly, CER emphasises the importance of dialogue and collaboration (Dube, 2016) which assisted me in building trust and relationships with the team that I worked with, as a result I was empowered and motivated during this study. The management model to be formulated is premised on the beliefs that the barriers to academic and social inclusion can be attended to if teacher training colleges follow the steps raised by the inclusive team.

The first objective of this study was to determine the major barriers to academic and social inclusion faced by students with disabilities at a teacher training college in Zimbabwe. In response to this objective, I realised that one of the biggest barriers to academic and social inclusion faced by students with disabilities in a teacher training college was the lack of accessibility in the learning environment, as most of the places in the college were not designed for students with disabilities and did not offer them accessibility to participate fully in their education thereby hindering transformation, social justice and emancipation (Dube, 2016). The

management model seeks to attend to these barriers so that the students with disabilities are included in tertiary colleges. The second objective explored how tertiary institutions implement inclusive practices for the successful integration of students with disabilities at a teacher training college. CER in conjunction with the management model, can play a key role in helping tertiary institutions implement more inclusive practices. Firstly, by encouraging self-reflection and critical analysis CER can help institutions identify their own biases and assumptions around disability. Engaging the management model can help to foster collaboration and dialogue between students with disabilities and staff which is essential for creating a truly inclusive environment (Hlatywayo and Mapolisa. 2022:106). In addition, CER can help institutions develop stronger partnerships with organisations that support students with disabilities. The third objective discussed the indicators of success of a management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education in a teacher training college in Zimbabwe. Some indicators of success could include the following:

- an increase in the number of students with disabilities who enrol in the college and complete their training.
- the development and implementation of accessible policies, procedures and practices.
- an increase in the number of lecturers who have received training on inclusive practices.
- the availability of resources and support services for students with disabilities.
- increased dialogues and collaboration between students and staff.
- increased partnerships with organisations that support students with disabilities.

## **2.7 Position of the researcher and coresearchers**

In CER, the researcher and co-researchers take a participatory and collaborative role, unlike in the traditional research model where the researcher is the expert and the participants are simply subjects (Martin et al., 2019). CER recognises that everyone involved in research has valuable knowledge and experiences to contribute. In this way the researcher and coresearchers work together to shape the research process and learn from each other. This approach is based on principles of equality, mutual respect and empowerment (Nkoane, 2012). Dube (2016) is of the view that the principles of CER and transformative paradigm, value coresearchers as equal to the researcher. Using the principles of CER and participatory action research (PAR), the power of the researcher is reduced while that of the co-researchers is increased. According to Martin et al (2019) PAR methodologies support vulnerable communities to authentically

contribute their voices and solutions to complex problems that impact them. In this study co-researchers are free to say out their views concerning the barriers they face in the college under study.

## **2.8 Transformative paradigm and CER**

CER falls under/within the transformative paradigm (TP). I discuss more on transformative paradigm and CER in this section. Mertens (2005) is of the view that, participatory action research, Marxism, feminism, racial and ethnic minorities and persons with disabilities are some of the fall under the transformative paradigm. The TP is a research paradigm that focuses on understanding and changing social realities. It is rooted in the idea that knowledge is socially constructed and that our understanding of the world is shaped by our experiences and perspectives (Mertens, 2007). Mertens further articulates that TP emphasises the importance of understanding the power dynamics and inequalities that exist in society and working to transform them through social action. According to (Romm, 2020) transformative paradigm is a concept that encompasses the CER approach and it is based on the idea that research can be a tool for social change, rather than simply a way to generate new knowledge. In other words, researchers and coresearchers are not only concerned with gathering data and making findings but also with promoting social transformation. This can also include efforts to address issues of inequality, injustice and oppression (Mertens, 2007). Traditional research approaches like the biomedical perspective, segregation and individual deficits and defect-oriented literature reviews often view disability as a ‘problem’ that needs to be fixed, or a ‘condition’ that needs to be cured (Uromi and Mazagwa, 2014). However, in this study, TP and CER recognise that disability is a natural part of the human experience and that people with disabilities have valuable perspectives to share. The transformative paradigm and CER value the voices of people with disabilities and recognizes their agency and ability to contribute to research (Kikabhai, 2018). The main premise of in this study was that the transformative paradigm and CER focus on creating positive social change for students with disabilities in a teacher training college rather than just studying them.

In summing up this section, I want to reiterate that I have chosen, the transformative paradigm and CER because these are powerful approaches that can be used to understand and address the experiences of students with disabilities in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe. Through centering the voices and perspectives of people with disabilities, these approaches can help to challenge traditional research methods and develop more inclusive and empowering ways of

understanding and supporting students with disabilities. The transformative paradigm and CER offer valuable frameworks for promoting inclusive education by addressing systemic inequalities and empowering marginalised groups within educational settings. In support, Romm (2020) is of the view that, in addressing systemic inequalities, the transformative paradigm, drawing on critical and emancipatory theories, provides a holistic approach to understanding and challenging systemic inequalities within educational systems. In seeking empower marginalised groups, Romm (2020) posits CER aligns with the transformative paradigm, emphasises the empowerment of marginalised individuals and communities within educational contexts. This approach seeks to dismantle oppressive structures and create spaces where all individuals, regardless of background or identity, can actively participate and thrive within the educational environment. In the same vein, Held (2019) postulates that, in challenging dominant narratives, both the transformative paradigm and CER challenge dominant narratives and perspectives that perpetuate exclusion and marginalization within educational settings by critically examining existing power dynamics and knowledge systems. These approaches pave the way for more inclusive and diverse educational practices that honour multiple perspectives and experiences (Held, 2019).

### **2.8.1 Transformative paradigm and methodology**

The transformative paradigm (TP) and methodology are significant frameworks in research, particularly in research that focuses on inequality and social justice issues (Mertens, 2012). According to Marvette (2017), the transformative paradigm directly addresses the politics in research by confronting social oppression at various levels. Pursuing the same line of thought Mertens (2012) is of the view that, the transformative paradigm is associated with philosophical assumptions that provide a framework for addressing inequality and injustice in society. Kawuli (2012) also posits that researchers who adopt the transformative paradigm view research as a moral and political activity that requires them to choose and commit themselves. Jackson et al., (2018) postulate that the transformative paradigm is a research framework that centres the experiences of marginalised individuals. Mertens (2005) is of the view that, methodologically, the transformative paradigm not only leads us to reframe the understanding of our worldviews but also to understand that subsequent methodological decisions need to be reframed as well. According to Omodan (2020), the transformative paradigm is associated with qualitative research methodology and is focused on addressing social issues through a lens of social justice and equality. In addition, TP involves a commitment to confronting social oppression and prioritises the voices of marginalized

individuals (Omodon, 2020). In the same vein, Cornish et al., (2023) postulate that, PAR is an approach to research that prioritizes the value of experiential knowledge for tackling social problems. PAR is viewed as a generative paradigm that aligns with the transformative goals of addressing social issues and promoting radical relationality.

Summing up the concepts of TP and PAR, Mertens (2012) argues that the transformative paradigm and participatory action research share a common goal of addressing social issues and promoting social change. Omodan (2020) also opines that, the TP provides a philosophical and methodological focus for research that aligns with the principles of participatory action research. Before collecting data for this study, I needed to gain an understanding of the daily lives of people with disabilities and their interactions within the community in order to elicit meaningful and fruitful responses.

## **2.9 Reflection on the use of CER**

In this section, I focus on the strengths, weaknesses of CER;

### **2.9.1 Strengths of CER**

This study focuses on the barriers of academic and social inclusion for students with disabilities at a teacher training college and coming up with a management model to enhance inclusivity. One of the strengths of CER in my study is its emphasis on participation and empowerment (Dube and Hlalele, 2018:76). CER values the expertise of people with disabilities and sees them as active participants in research rather than passive subjects. According to Uromi and Mazagwa (2014), this approach also recognises the importance of context, and how disability is experienced differently depending on the social, political and economic factors at play. Mertens (2012) is of the view that CER also has a strong ethical framework, emphasizing the need for respect, dignity and social justice for people with disabilities. In addition, Foulger (2010) argues that, CER promotes equality and equity in all its forms, advocates for social justice, freedom, peace and team spirit, and changes people's hearts and minds, are some of the considered strengths in this study.

### **2.9.2 Challenges in engaging CER in research**

Dube (2016) postulates that, every theory has its weaknesses. Likewise, CER potentially poses a threat to society because of its emphasis on radical change of oppressive societal structures. Another challenge is that it can be difficult to obtain funding for this kind of research as it often requires more time and resources than traditional research approaches.

## **2.10 Definition of operational terms**

This section defines the operational terms that are frequently used in this study:

### **2.10.1 Inclusive education**

This is an education system that includes all students and welcomes and supports them to learn, whoever they are and whatever they are and whatever their abilities or requirements (UNICEF, 2017). Bui et al., (2010) define inclusive education as a situation where all students, regardless of any challenges they may have, are placed in age-appropriate general education classes that are in their own neighbourhood schools do receive high-quality instruction, interventions and supports that enable them to meet success in the core curriculum.

### **2.10.2 Students with disabilities**

In this study students with disabilities are students identified with some form of physical or mental impairment that limits them to perform on one or more major life activities. Michael and Oboegbulem (2013) asserts that, students with disabilities are any student who has a condition or impairment that affects their ability to participate fully in the educational environment.

### **2.10.3 Policy**

A policy in study is a guideline, rules, regulations, laws, principles or directions. In addition, a policy is a set of principles, guidelines, and/or rules that are used to guide decision-making and action. Policies can be developed at the individual, organisational, or governmental level and they can be either 'formal' or 'informal.' In an educational context policies can guide everything from how schools are funded to how students with disabilities are supported.

### **2.10.4 Barriers to inclusion**

In this study, barriers to inclusion are not necessarily caused by a person's disability, but by the way that society is structured. For example, a student with a physical disability may not be able to participate in a class because the building is not wheelchair accessible.

### **2.10.5 Stigma**

Stigma in this study refers to the negative attitudes, beliefs and stereotypes that society holds about people with disabilities. These stigmas can lead to discrimination and exclusion and they can have a powerful effect on a person's self-esteem and confidence. Stigma can also prevent people from seeking the support and services they need, out of fear of being judged.

### **2.10.6 Discrimination**

In this study, discrimination is the unfair or unequal treatment of a person or group based on their disability. Discrimination can also be subtle, such as when a person with a disability is not included in social activities or is ignored or overlooked.

### **2.10.7 Inclusion**

Inclusion is a process in which schools, communities, local authorities and government strive to reduce barriers to participation and learning for all citizens (Farrell, 2010).

### **2.11 Summary**

This chapter has covered the theoretical framework, which is the critical emancipatory research to formulate a management model to enhance inclusivity at a teacher's training college in Zimbabwe. The next chapter focuses on the review of related literature.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter outlined the theoretical framework towards inclusivity. This chapter reviews related literature on the implementation of inclusive education and the formulation of management model at teacher training colleges globally, on the African continent and in Zimbabwe. The inclusion of students with disabilities in teacher training colleges is becoming increasingly important in many countries around the world, (UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) (UNCRPD, 2006). While inclusive education is often seen as a means of promoting academic and social inclusion for all students, students with disabilities still face many barriers in accessing education and participating fully in college life. This is evidenced by the UNICEF report (2014), which estimates that 90 percent of children with disabilities in low-income countries have never received any form of education. In addition, once enrolled, students with disabilities are more likely to drop out of school than students without disabilities (Hayes and Bulat, 2017). This literature review explores the current state of knowledge on the barriers to academic and social inclusion faced by students with disabilities, how academic institutions, implement inclusive practices for the successful integration of students with disabilities and the indicators of success of a management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education at educational institutions. The review draws on a range of sources, including academic research, policy documents, and reports from international organisations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

#### **3.2 Conceptualisation inclusive education**

##### **3.2.1 Comparing Definitions of Inclusive Education by International Organizations**

Inclusive education has been an important topic in education policy and practice in recent years. International organizations such as UNESCO, governments and researchers play different roles in policy formulation and implementation for inclusive education. International organisations such as UNESCO play a crucial role in promoting the inclusive education discourse by setting standards and guidelines for inclusive education, providing technical assistance to countries and monitoring progress towards inclusive education (UNESCO, 2017). For example, UNESCO's (2019) "Education for All" initiative aims to ensure that all children, particularly those from marginalised groups, have access to quality education. UNESCO also

provides technical assistance to countries to help them develop inclusive education policies and practices.

As far as governments are concerned, the United Nations (2006) propounds that they are responsible for the formulation and implementation of policies and practices that promote inclusivity so that it may be executed within their jurisdictions. The European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (2017) stipulates that this includes ensuring that schools are accessible to all students, providing adequate resources to support inclusive education and training teachers to work with students with disabilities and those from marginalised groups. Governments also play a crucial role in monitoring progress towards inclusive education and making policy adjustments as needed. According to Avramidis and Bayliss (2000), Booth and Ainscow (2011), Mittler (2000) and Slee (2011) researchers play a critical role in informing policy and practice on inclusive education. They conduct empirical studies to identify challenges that societies face, like the barriers that prevent students from marginalised groups from accessing quality education and develop interventions to address these barriers. Researchers also evaluate the effectiveness of inclusive education policies and practices and provide recommendations on how to improve them. It is this thrust that this section covers various definitions by the various stakeholder groups on the concept of inclusive education.

### **3.2.2 Inclusive education defined**

UNESCO (2009) defines inclusive education as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing their participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion from education. This definition emphasises the importance of addressing the diverse needs of all learners, increasing their participation, and reducing exclusion. The European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (EASNIE, 2020) defines inclusive education as the education of all learners, regardless of their abilities, disabilities, ethnicity, gender, language, religion, sexual orientation, or other characteristics, in mainstream schools and classrooms, with support to enable their full participation and ensure their academic and social success. This definition centralises the education of all learners, regardless of their characteristics, with support for their full participation and success. The World Bank (2018) defines inclusive education as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures, and communities, and reducing exclusion from education and from within education. This definition emphasises the importance of addressing the diverse needs of all

learners, increasing their participation, and reducing exclusion both from education and within education. The definitions of inclusive education offered by UNESCO (2009), the EASNIE (2020), and the W.B. (2018) share many similarities but also differ in certain aspects. A common position among these definitions is the importance of addressing the diverse needs of all learners, increasing their participation, and reducing exclusion. All three definitions recognise the importance of providing equal opportunities for all learners, regardless of their background, ability, or disability. They also all emphasise the significance of addressing the social, cultural, and environmental barriers that prevent learners from participating fully in education.

However, there are also some notable differences among the definitions. While the UNESCO (2009) definition emphasizes reducing exclusion from education, the EASNIE (2020) definition highlights support for full participation and success. The World Bank (2018) definition on the other hand emphasises reducing exclusion both from education and within education, which acknowledges that exclusion can occur not only in the broader society but also within educational settings. While these three definitions of inclusive education differ in certain aspects, they share a common perspective on the importance of addressing the diverse needs of all learners, increasing their participation, and reducing exclusion. These definitions highlight the need for equal opportunities for all learners, regardless of their background, ability, or disability, and recognise the importance of addressing social, cultural, and environmental barriers that prevent learners from participating fully in education (UNESCO, 2009; EASNIE, 2020 and W.B, 2020).

### **3.2.3 Comparing Definitions of Inclusive Education by Governments**

In addition to these international organisations, many governments and researchers have proffered their own definitions of inclusive education. A typical example is the Government of Alberta (GoA, 2017) which defines inclusive education as a way of thinking and acting that demonstrates acceptance of, and belonging for, all students. Inclusive education values diversity and the unique contributions each student brings to the classroom. It is a way of thinking and acting that allows every individual to feel valued and respected. This definition emphasises acceptance, belonging, diversity, and respect. The South African Department of Basic Education (SADBE, 2019) defines inclusive education as a whole school approach to the education and development of all learners, regardless of differences in their abilities,

disabilities or socio-economic backgrounds. This definition highlights the importance of addressing the diverse needs of all learners, increasing their participation, and reducing exclusion. The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (2020) adopted the UNESCO definition of inclusive education as a process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. Notably, this definition emphasises the importance of addressing the diverse needs of all learners, increasing their participation, and reducing exclusion and responding to diversity of needs. The definitions of inclusive education propounded by the GoA (2017), the Government of South Africa, Department of Basic Education (SADBE, 2019), and the Zimbabwe's MOPSE share many similarities but also differ in certain aspects.

Commonalities among these definitions include the importance of addressing the diverse needs of all learners, increasing their participation, and reducing exclusion. All three definitions highlight the significance of providing equal opportunities for all learners, regardless of their background, ability, or disability. Notable, also is the fact that the three definitions emphasise the importance of addressing the social, cultural, and environmental barriers that prevent learners from participating fully in education (GoA, 2017: SADBE, 2019) and MOPSE, (2020). However, there are also some dissimilarities among the definitions in that, while the GoA (2017) definition underscores such aspects as acceptance, belonging, diversity and respect, the DBE (2019 MOPSE (n.d.) definitions emphasize addressing the diverse needs of learners and reducing exclusion. Overall, while these three definitions of inclusive education differ in certain aspects, they share a common position on the importance of addressing the diverse needs of all learners, increasing their participation, and reducing exclusion. These definitions highlight the need for equal opportunities for all learners, regardless of their background, ability, or disability, and recognise the importance of addressing social, cultural, and environmental barriers that prevent learners from participating fully in education (GoA, 2017: DBE, 2019 and MOPSE, n.d).

### **3.2.4 Comparing Definition of Inclusive Education by Researchers**

Swart, Engelbrecht, Ellof and Pettipher (2002) define inclusive education as a process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all learners through increasing their participation in learning, cultures, and communities, and reducing exclusion from education. This definition highlights the importance of addressing the diverse needs of all learners,

increasing their participation, and reducing exclusion. Kirschner (2015) defines inclusive education as a pedagogical approach that aims to provide all learners, regardless of their background, ability, or disability, with equal opportunities to achieve their potential and participate in all aspects of school life. This definition emphasises the importance of equal opportunities and participation for all learners. Chimhenga (2016) defines inclusive education as a way of thinking and acting that demonstrates acceptance of, and belonging for, all learners. Inclusive education values diversity and the unique contributions each student brings to the classroom. It is a way of thinking and acting that allows every individual to feel valued and respected" (p. 61). This definition emphasises acceptance, belonging, diversity, and respect. The definitions of inclusive education offered by Swart et al. (2002), Kirschner (2015), and Chimhenga (2016) share some similarities but also differ in certain aspects. One of the commonalities among these definitions is the importance of addressing the diverse needs of all learners and providing equal opportunities for all learners, regardless of their background, ability, or disability. They all recognise the importance of addressing social, cultural, and environmental barriers that prevent learners from participating fully in education. However, there are also some differences among the definitions. Swart et al., (2002) and Kirschner (2015) focus more on the process of addressing the diverse needs of all learners, increasing participation, and reducing exclusion, while Chimhenga (2016) emphasizes the values of acceptance, belonging, diversity, and respect. Overall, while these three definitions of inclusive education differ in certain aspects, they share commonalities on the importance of addressing the diverse needs of all learners, providing equal opportunities, and addressing social, cultural, and environmental barriers. They also emphasise the need for acceptance, belonging, diversity, and respect in educational settings.

What can, however, be said about the definitions given above is that not all definitions of inclusive education are comprehensive. Some definitions may focus solely on the physical accessibility of learning environments, while others may emphasise the importance of diversity without addressing the need for support and accommodations of learners with disabilities. A good example is the MOPSE (2020) definition of inclusive education as a process of identifying and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing their participation in learning, cultures, and communities, and reducing exclusion from education. Clearly the definition focuses on physical accessibility of learning environments without addressing the need for support. Similarly, the SADBE (2019) definition which views inclusive education as a whole school approach to the education and development of all learners,

regardless of differences in their abilities, disabilities or socio-economic backgrounds, fails to address the need for support which emphasising physical accessibility. While the above definitions may capture some aspects of inclusive education the ultimate test for definitions of inclusive education is comparing the individual definitions, especially by governments, against the UNESCO (2005) policy paper “Education for all: The Quality Imperative which emphasises that inclusive education should be based on the key tenets of inclusivity, namely, autonomy, privacy, accessibility, and freedom.

### **3.2.5 Key tenets of inclusivity namely autonomy, privacy, accessibility, and freedom**

As already alluded to by UNESCO (2005) inclusive education is an approach to education that aims to ensure that all students, regardless of their background, ability, or disability, are able to participate fully in the learning environment. The goal of inclusive education is to create a learning environment that is accessible to everyone, where diversity is celebrated, and where all learners feel valued and supported. Inclusive education involves creating a culture and environment that is responsive to the diverse needs of learners, and ensures that all learners are provided with the necessary support and accommodation to enable them to participate fully in learning. This section applies the acid test by subjecting the definition of the GoA, 2017; DBE, 2019 and MOPSE to the key tenets of inclusive education.

### **3.2.6 Subjecting different definitions of inclusive education to the key tenets of inclusive education**

The GoA’s (2021) definition of inclusive education is a way of thinking and acting that demonstrates universal acceptance of, and belonging for, all students. Inclusive education creates a learning environment where all students feel that they are valued members of the school community (GoA, 2021). According to UNESCO (2009), inclusive education should be guided by four key tenets, which are autonomy, privacy, accessibility, and freedom. Autonomy, according to Benson (2011) refers to the idea that learners should have control over their own learning, including what, how, and where they learn. Privacy according to UNESCO (2009) refers to the right of learners to have their personal information protected and to be able to learn in a safe and secure environment. Accessibility refers to the need for education to be physically and financially accessible to all learners, regardless of their individual circumstances. Finally, freedom refers to the right of learners to express themselves and their opinions freely, without fear of discrimination or reprisal.

When evaluated against these four tenets, the GoA's (2021) definition of inclusive education appears to align well with the UNESCO (2009) policy guidelines. The focus on creating a learning environment where all students feel valued suggests a commitment to learner autonomy, as learners' individual needs and perspectives should be taken into account in order to create a sense of belonging. The mention of a safe and inclusive learning environment also implies a commitment to privacy, as learners should be able to learn in an environment that is free from discrimination or harassment. Notably, the same definition also notes that inclusive education is a way of thinking and acting, an aspect that can be said to imply a commitment to accessibility. Inclusive education is not just about accommodating individual learners, but about creating a culture of inclusion that values diversity and promotes universal acceptance. The mention of creating a learning environment where all students feel valued suggests a commitment to freedom of expression, since learners should be able to express themselves and their opinions without fear of discrimination or reprisal. Overall, therefore, the GoA (2021) definition on inclusive education appears to align well with the UNESCO (2009) policy guidelines in terms of autonomy, privacy, accessibility, and freedom.

The SADBE (2019) defines inclusive education as a way of thinking and acting that demonstrates acceptance of diversity and recognises the value of each individual, irrespective of ability, and seeks to provide the best possible learning environment for all learners. When evaluated against these four tenets, the SADBE's definition of inclusive education appears to align well with the UNESCO (2009) policy guidelines. The focus on acceptance of diversity and recognition of the value of each individual suggests a commitment to learner autonomy, as learners' individual needs and perspectives are acknowledged and valued. The emphasis on providing the best possible learning environment for all learners suggests a commitment to accessibility, as education should be accessible to all learners, regardless of their individual circumstances. The mention of a safe and secure learning environment implies a commitment to privacy, as learners should be able to learn in an environment that is free from discrimination or harassment. In the final analysis, the emphasis on recognising the value of each individual and providing the best possible learning environment for all learners suggests a commitment to freedom of expression, as learners should be able to express themselves and their opinions freely, without fear of discrimination or reprisal. Given the analysis above the SADBE's definition of inclusive education appears to align well with the UNESCO (2009) policy guidelines.

Zimbabwe's Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education defines inclusive education, as "a process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education." (Cadena International Development Projects, 2020). This definition can be evaluated against the UNESCO (2009) policy guidelines for inclusive education.

Subjecting the MOPSE definition of inclusive education to the UNESCO (2009) policy guidelines test reveals that the focus on addressing and responding to the diverse needs of learners suggests a commitment to learner autonomy, as learners' individual needs and preferences should be taken into account when designing and implementing educational programmes. The goal of reducing exclusion within and from education also implies a commitment to accessibility, as barriers to participation in education should be identified and eliminated. However, the MOPSE (n.d) definition does not explicitly address privacy or freedom. While it is reasonable to assume that the Ministry is committed to providing safe and secure learning environments for all learners, this is not explicitly stated in the definition provided. Similarly, while the goal of increasing participation in learning and cultures suggests a commitment to freedom of expression, this is not specifically mentioned in the definition. It can therefore be said that the Zimbabwe's definition of inclusive education appears to align well with the UNESCO (2009: 2011) policy guidelines in terms of autonomy and accessibility, but does not explicitly address privacy or freedom. Thus, for purposes of this study the definition that will be used is the UNESCO (2009) definition, which asserts that inclusive education is a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education.

### **3.3 Literature review**

This section gives a brief historical background of the inclusive education debate, then delves onto barriers to academic and social inclusion faced by students with disabilities. The United Nations Education Scientific Organization (UNESCO, 2002) propounds that the debate on inclusive education has been a topic of discussion in the education sector globally for over half a century. Inclusive education is a concept that promotes the integration of students with disabilities or special needs into mainstream schools. According to the United States, Department of Education (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2021) the concept of inclusive education has its roots in the disability rights movement, which emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. The

concept of inclusive education was first introduced in developed countries such as the United States and Canada in the 1970s (UNESCO, 2002). The introduction of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in the United States in 1975 was a significant milestone in the history of inclusive education. IDEA mandated that all children with disabilities should have access to a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment possible. This law paved the way for the integration of children with disabilities into mainstream schools (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2021).

According to van Vloten of the British Columbia News (n.d), in Canada, the Special Education Policy was introduced in the 1980s to promote inclusive education. This policy aimed to provide children with special needs with access to the same education programmes as their peers (Inclusion Canada, 2020). The policy emphasized the importance of providing individualised education plans for children with special needs to ensure that they received the necessary support to succeed in school.

For UNESCO (1999), the concept of inclusive education emerged in the 1990s, with the World Conference on Education for All which was held in Jomtien, Thailand. The conference emphasised the importance of providing education for all children, including those with disabilities. The conference recognised that children with disabilities had been excluded from the education system and called for the integration of these children into mainstream schools. UNESCO (1994) further points out that, in 1994, the Salamanca Declaration was adopted at the World Conference on Special Needs Education in Salamanca, Spain. The declaration emphasised the need to provide education for all children, including those with disabilities. The declaration called for the integration of children with disabilities into mainstream schools and the provision of appropriate support to ensure their success. In underdeveloped countries, the concept of inclusive education has been slow to take hold. Many of these countries lack the infrastructure and resources to provide education for all children, including those with disabilities. However, there have been some positive developments in recent years.

In 2015, the United Nations adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which included a goal to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all. This goal recognised the importance of providing education for all children, including those with disabilities, and called for the integration of these children into mainstream schools. Overall, the concept of inclusive education has evolved over the years, from its roots in the disability rights movement to its global implementation today. UNESCO (1994) observes that the Salamanca Declaration

and the Jomtien conferences were significant milestones in the history of inclusive education, emphasising the need to provide education for all children, including those with disabilities. According to the United Nations (UN, 2015) the implementation of inclusive education has been more successful in developed countries than in developing and underdeveloped countries, but there have been positive developments in recent years. The adoption of the SDGs in 2015 was a significant step towards ensuring inclusive education for all children globally. According to the Salamanca Statement (1994), all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have. In the same vein, Mwamwenda (2013:477) is of the view that, “schools should seek out, welcome, nurture, respect and educate all children regardless of their gender, physical, intellectual, social, economic, emotional and, linguistic ability or HIV/AIDS.” In summary, the emphasis of implementing inclusive education is underscored by the acknowledgement of the barriers faced by students with disabilities worldwide and the value of inclusive education in higher education is emphasized as a gateway to economic opportunity and a means of supporting millions of students from diverse backgrounds in accessing social mobility and economic advancement (Save The Children, 2016).

### **3.3.1 Zimbabwe Debate on the Inclusive Education discourse**

According to the UNESCO (2002), during the pre-independence era, Zimbabwe had a segregated education system with separated schools for students of different races and abilities. In concurring, Devlinger (1998) observes that the education system was designed to cater to the needs of the white minority, while the majority of the black population had limited access to education. Mpofu et al., (2007) propound that after Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980, the government made significant efforts to promote inclusive education. The Education Act of 1987 was introduced, which aimed to provide education for all children, including those with disabilities. Act 5/1987 Part ii elaborates that every child has to be educated (compulsory education) and that, every child in Zimbabwe has the right to school education. Furthermore, Act 5/1987 highlights that, no child in Zimbabwe shall be refused admission to any school. The act provided for the establishment of special schools and classes for students with disabilities and the integration of these students into mainstream schools. Mwamwenda (2013:477) argues that inclusion advocates that schools should seek out, welcome, nurture, respect and educate all children regardless of their gender, physical, intellectual, social, economic, emotional and linguistic abilities or HIV/AIDS. The above sentiments underscore the fundamental principle that every child should be valued and provided with equal

opportunities for learning and growth, irrespective of their individual differences and circumstances. In the context of education, this quotation highlights the imperative schools to create an environment that embraces diversity and supports the holistic development of every child, ensuring that they are not only included but also actively supported and empowered to thrive within the educational setting. In line with Mwamwenda (2013), the Education Act aligns with the global discussions on inclusive education, which emphasise the importance of adapting the curriculum to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities, ensuring that they have equal access to education (Hlatywayo and Mapolisa, 2020). Additionally, the Education Act also underscores the proactive focus on providing adequate support within the educational environment, including school-based mental health services, to create safe, inclusive and supportive spaces for all students. The Education Act, allows the recognition of the rights of children with challenges or disabilities to equal educational opportunities. Samkange (1990), confirms that, the In addition, Chimhenga (2014) argues that the value of inclusive education is highlighted by the active participation of students and their parents in setting learning goals and decisions that affect the students.

In 1992, the Zimbabwe National Commission for UNESCO launched the Education for All (EFA) initiative, which aimed to promote inclusive education in Zimbabwe. The initiative focused on improving access to education for all children, including those with disabilities, and the provision of appropriate support to ensure their success. In 1994, Zimbabwe signed the Salamanca Declaration at the World Conference on Special Needs Education in Salamanca, Spain. The declaration emphasised the need to provide education for all children, including those with disabilities, and called for the integration of these children into mainstream schools. Article 56 of the 2013 Zimbabwe Constitution recognises the right to education of ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious groups, persons with disabilities and women, youth and children and asserts that a person is treated in a discriminatory manner he or she is subjected directly or indirectly to a condition, restriction or disability to which other people are not subjected. Despite the efforts made to promote inclusive education in Zimbabwe, there are still significant challenges. Many schools lack the necessary infrastructure and resources to provide education for students with disabilities. There is also a shortage of trained teachers who can provide appropriate support to students with disabilities. In recent years, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (2014) has reported that there have been some positive developments in Zimbabwe's education system as in 2014 the government launched the Inclusive Education Policy, which aimed to promote inclusive education in all schools across

the country. The policy emphasised the need to provide appropriate support to students with disabilities and the integration of these students into mainstream schools. The Inclusive Education Policy was launched for all schools across the country but this did not cater for teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe, as Luthuli and Wood (2019) and Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020) agree that, there are no policies in place to guide the implementation of inclusive education at teachers' training colleges of Zimbabwe.

### **3.3.2 Empirical Studies on Barriers to Academic and Social Inclusion**

A study in America by Shogren and Shaw (2016) found that students with disabilities often have limited access to the general education curriculum, which can lead to poor academic achievement. Another study by Rose et al. (2012) found that students with disabilities were more likely to be bullied and discriminated against than their peers without disabilities. A study by Heflin and Alaimo (2007) found that students with disabilities often struggle with social skills and need additional support to develop these skills. Another study done in South Africa by Mutanga (2017) states that, one of the greatest challenges faced by students with disabilities within higher education is physical access to different educational structures. A study by Tugli, Zungu, Goon and Anyawu (2013:356-364) at a rural based university in South Africa highlighted that, participating students complained of the challenges pertaining to facilities, student support material and physical access within the university environment. In the same vein, Mutanga (2017) postulates that twenty-eight students affirmed that the physical environment constituted a great barrier to their learning and more than half maintained that the physical environment made them vulnerable or unsafe. In line with the sentiments above, UN (2015) is of the view that physical accessibility as applied to education means that all colleges must be within safe physical reach and they must be accessible for persons with disabilities, both in terms of getting to the college and moving around within the college building and all facilities. In addition, educational institutions and programmes must be accessible to persons with disabilities, without discrimination (UN. 2015).

A study carried by Luthuli and Wood (2020) in one of the teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe revealed that the physical environment of the college robs students of authority, dignity and privacy. In the study, Luthuli and Wood (2019:1360) observe that it is difficult for wheelchair users, blind students and those with cerebral palsy, which meant that their stumbling and falling on the pathways was embarrassing and forcing them to ask for assistance from able-bodied counterparts, leading to loss of autonomy. The aspect of loss of autonomy is supported by Farrell (2004) who asserts that, the physical environment is not welcoming for students with

mobility challenges. The study by Luthuli and Wood further revealed that students also experienced barriers to autonomy due to lack of ramps on entrances to their rooms in the hostels, classrooms and in the college hall (Luthuli and Wood, 2019:1362). As a result, they could not get in or out of their rooms unless there was someone to assist them. According to Stein (2007) The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities highlights that it is a prerequisite that persons with disabilities be afforded individual autonomy to decide on and direct their own affairs and is paramount for ensuring individual autonomy (UN, 2009).

According to a study conducted by Engelbrecht and De Beer (2014) in South Africa, students with physical disabilities who experienced constrained access to higher education institutions agreed with Buthelezi's (2014) findings on the challenges faced by students with disabilities in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions. Buthelezi (2014) found that students with physical disabilities faced accessibility constraints when trying to access the library and parking spaces. Engelbrecht and De Beer's (2014) study supports this by providing further evidence that students with disabilities are not being adequately taken care of. Buthelezi's findings confirm the need for greater attention to be paid to accessibility issues in TVET institutions, which is consistent with the findings of Engelbrecht and De Beer.

Mutanga (2017) also revealed in his study that toilets were inaccessible which is the most common problem wheelchair users consistently had experienced. They had to travel further and for longer periods between lecture theatres in all the faculties studied to access those facilities. The conclusion was that the inaccessibility of the buildings limits the full integration of students who use wheelchairs in campus life (Mutanga, 2020). Accessibility, as defined by Lusinsky et al., (2003), should be understood in terms of access to buildings and the added time and distance travelled by a student in each faculty.

The inaccessibility of buildings on campus can have significant negative impacts on students with disabilities, particularly those who use wheelchairs (Matanga, 2020). It can limit their ability to fully participate in campus life, including attending classes, accessing facilities such as restrooms and laboratories, and interacting with peers and faculty members. This can make it difficult for students with disabilities to fully engage with their academic studies and can also have negative consequences for their social and emotional well-being (National Council on Disability, 2003). In addition, the United Nations (2006) notes that having to travel further and for longer periods of time to access necessary facilities can be physically exhausting and time-consuming, which can further exacerbate the challenges faced by students with

disabilities. Overall, the inaccessibility of buildings on campus can create significant barriers for students with disabilities and limit their ability to achieve their full potential.

In addition to physical barriers Luthuli and Wood (2019) also highlight that female students with disabilities also experienced a challenge in opening sanitary bins to dispose of their pads, especially where they needed to press a pedal with one foot to open the sanitary bin. Thus, female wheelchair users whose legs are paralyzed, are not able to do this seemingly a simple task. Freedom refers to the ability to choose to apply one's will without any physical or mental duress (Sourgens, 2015). The frustration expressed by the student, according to Luthuli and Wood (2020) points to lack of privacy and freedom induced by a lack of autonomy. In addition, privacy, according to Sourgens (2015) refers to a sphere in which an individual has complete authority to exclude others. Luthuli and Wood (2020) highlight that laundry facilities at the college did not accommodate wheelchair users because the washing basins in the laundry rooms are too deep and too high for them to be able to do their laundry well. This is also unfriendly to wheelchair users because Luthuli and Wood (2019) further observed that after laundering their clothes in buckets, wheelchair users are unable to hang their clothes, including intimate clothes, because of the height of the drying lines.

In a study carried out by Masuga and Maoto (2021) at the University of Venda and the University of Limpopo, the researchers noted the absence of elevators for students with disabilities to be able to access some learning facilities on campus. Besides, most surfaces in the campus were not smooth for the use of equipment such as wheelchairs. This added to the multitude of physical barriers on campus. On a similar note, Nel et. al., (2015) investigated those students with physical disabilities at the University of Limpopo and discovered that, the students indicated the inadequacy of the university's infrastructure and facilities as a primary barrier to learning. In the Middle East, Algolaylt et al., (2023) conducted a study with the Jordanian University and revealed that, students with disabilities expressed their perspectives about accessibility and accommodation at the university and students reported that the University environment lacks essential accessible services. One student with a physical disability highlighted that: one cannot go to the third floor if they are a wheelchair user and that the university was huge and students with physical disabilities needed transportation to move from the College of Science to the College of Pharmacy. In their study on the access and participation of students with disabilities at the University of Seville in Spain Batanero, Ruendo and Cerero (2022) revealed that in terms of infrastructure, architectural or infrastructural barriers are the most common access barriers for students with disabilities. The

reason was that the institutional facilities were mostly old buildings therefore their spaces are not adapted to the needs of students with disabilities. Maotoana (2014) asserts that, students reported their concerns about physical barriers within the university environment which are not readily identified by non-disabled students however, little gets changed. In addition, Kabuta (2014) articulates that, the major challenge among physically disabled students to access higher education in Tanzania is lack of accessible infrastructure which includes supported classrooms, laboratories, libraries, washrooms, dining halls or rooms and sports and games space.

### **3.3.3 Success stories of successful implementation of inclusive education in developed countries**

This section covers the success stories in the implementation of inclusive education in developed countries, developing countries and in Sub-Saharan Africa as well as empirical studies. In the context of developed countries, Nieminen, Klemola, and Vehkakoski (2016) examined the development and outcomes of inclusive education in Finland. The researchers found that a strong and motivated political commitment has contributed to the success of inclusive education in Finland, which has led to several positive outcomes and a deliberately well-developed support system as well as a focus on teacher training and profession development. Nieminen et al (2016) also narrate positive outcomes in the form of, improved academic outcomes for students with disabilities. It was further observed that students with disabilities who had undertaken their studies in inclusive settings achieved better academic outcomes than those who had been educated in segregated settings. Besides, achieving increased social interaction and participation by disabled learners, improved inclusive education had also provided much better opportunities for students with disabilities to interact and participate in the same activities as their peers without disabilities. Overall, the study suggests that inclusive education has been highly successful in Finland and has led to positive outcomes for students with disabilities and their peers without disabilities.

In a related context, Lawrence, Kozleski and Mainzer (2019) investigated the outcomes of inclusive education in Canadian schools. Precisely, the authors explored the perceptions of teachers, parents, and students towards inclusive education, as well as the academic and social outcomes for students with and without disabilities. The study found that while there were challenges in implementing inclusive education, such as lack of training and resources, the overall outcomes for students with disabilities were positive. These students showed academic progress and improved social relationships with their peers. Additionally, the study found that

inclusive education had a positive impact on the attitudes and behaviours of students without disabilities towards their peers with disabilities. Overall, it can be said that the study provided evidence in support of inclusive education in Canadian schools and highlighted the importance of continuing to invest in resources and training to support its implementation.

Elsewhere, on the Indian sub-continent Sharma and Singal (2014) explored the policy frameworks and legislative provisions for inclusive education in India, and examined the challenges and opportunities for its implementation. The study revealed that, while there have been significant policy initiatives to promote inclusive education in India, there were still significant challenges to its implementation. Some of these challenges included inadequate infrastructure, lack of trained personnel, and negative attitudes towards disability. The study also highlighted the need for a more coordinated approach to inclusive education, with greater involvement of parents and communities. Overall, however, the study provided insights into the complexities of implementing inclusive education in a country undergoing significant political and social changes. The authors call for a more comprehensive and sustained effort to promote inclusive education in India, with a focus on building capacity and changing attitudes towards disability.

Again, in another developing country, Brazil, Ferreira, Lopes and Oliveira (2019) explored the perceptions of teachers, parents, and students towards inclusive education, as well as the academic and social outcomes for students with and without disabilities. The study revealed that while there were challenges in implementing inclusive education in Brazil, such as lack of resources and training, the overall outcomes for students with disabilities were positive. These students showed academic progress and improved social relationships with their peers. Additionally, the study found that inclusive education had had a positive impact on the attitudes and behaviours of students without disabilities towards their peers with disabilities. Largely, what could be said is that the study provided evidence in support of inclusive education in Brazil as well as highlighting the importance of continuing to invest in resources and training to support its implementation.

In Southern Africa, Engelbrecht, Green, and Naicker (2014) explored the historical and ideological underpinnings of inclusive education in South Africa and globally, while also examining the challenges and opportunities for its implementation. The study revealed that while there has been significant progress in promoting inclusive education in South Africa and globally, there are still significant challenges hindering its implementation. These challenges

include inadequate infrastructure, lack of trained personnel, and negative attitudes towards disability. The study also highlighted the need for a more coordinated approach to inclusive education, with greater involvement of parents and communities. Notably, the study provides insights into the complexities of implementing inclusive education in South Africa and globally.

In Kenya, Ndambuki (2006:239) explored the perceptions of teachers, parents, and students towards inclusive education, as well as the academic and social outcomes for students with and without disabilities. The study found that while there are challenges to implementing inclusive education in Kenya, such as lack of resources and training, the overall outcomes for students with disabilities were positive. These students showed academic progress and improved social relationships with their peers. Additionally, the study found that inclusive education overall, had a positive impact on the attitudes and behaviours of students without disabilities towards their peers with disabilities. Notably, the study provides evidence in support of inclusive education in Kenya while also highlighting the importance of continuing to invest in resources and training to support its implementation. While the implementation of inclusive education has shown positive outcomes for students with disabilities in various countries around the world, there is still work to be done to address the challenges that hinder its implementation. Continued research and investment are needed to support the successful implementation of inclusive education and to ensure that all students have access to high- quality education.

### **3.4 Barriers to academic and social inclusion faced by students with disabilities.**

#### **3.4.1 Physical access barriers**

According to Kalyanpur and Harry (2012), the barriers to academic and social inclusion are the factors that limit the ability of students with disabilities to participate fully in educational activities and interact with their peers. These barriers can be physical, social, or attitudinal which can prevent students with disabilities from accessing educational opportunities and achieving their full potential. Similarly, Kim, Paul, and Imrie, (2015) refer to physical barriers as obstacles that prevent students with disabilities from accessing educational facilities and participating fully in educational activities. Examples of physical barriers include inaccessible buildings, classrooms, and playgrounds, as well as inaccessible technology and the lack of assistive devices. These barriers can limit the ability of students with disabilities to participate fully in academic and social activities.

Pijl, Frostad and Flem (2011) define social barriers as the attitudes and behaviours of others that prevent students with disabilities from participating fully in academic and social activities. Examples of social barriers include negative attitudes and stereotypes towards students with disabilities, bullying and discrimination, and the lack of social skills (Pijl et al., 2011). These barriers can prevent students with disabilities from forming social connections and participating fully in social activities. Physical barriers such as inaccessible buildings and technology, and lack of assistive devices, as well as social barriers such as negative attitudes and stereotypes, bullying and discrimination, and lack of social skills, can limit the ability of students with disabilities to participate fully in academic and social activities. It is important for schools to address these barriers and provide appropriate support to ensure the academic and social inclusion of students with disabilities.

### **3.4.2 Reduced opportunities for academic inclusion for students with disabilities.**

The second barrier for students with disabilities in higher education are the reduced opportunities for academic inclusion. It is for this reason that Shruti and Singal (2021) argue that, inclusive education has grown as an international movement, not only support students with disabilities, but to promote equitable access, success and participation in education for all. On the other hand, Jaafar et al.,(2019) argue that, there are many issues and challenges experienced by students with disabilities in higher education despite the efforts made by the government. Some of the difficulties faced by students with disabilities are due to their institutions conventional criteria, such as fitness to perform duties (Jaafar, et al, 2019). Terzi and Altin (2014) suggest that inclusive education must be seen as a platform for well-being, educational equity and the realisation of the capabilities of these students According to Jaafar et al (2019) the pledge to leave no one behind is one of the initiatives that have been highlighted in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). One of the goals aims to advance inclusive development for all. However, societies will not be able to achieve these SDGs without the full involvement of everyone including with persons with disabilities. Mokaleng and Mowes (2020) are of the view that teachers find it challenging to deal with students with disabilities due to lack of resources in institutions which do not cater for all students' needs, Zabeli et al., (2021) confirm that, the number of such students with special needs in higher education has increased.

In a similar study, Kioko and Makoelle (2014), emphasise that there is a need to abandon the current use of rigid curriculum and formal examination systems since they prevent inclusive teaching and learning. This means that the authors suggest that a more flexible and

individualised approach to curriculum and assessment is needed to support the education of all students, regardless of their abilities or backgrounds. The authors further propose that a curriculum that is adaptable to the needs of individual students and focuses on developing skills and competencies, rather than just acquiring knowledge, will promote more inclusive teaching and learning. In their view, this approach will allow teachers to tailor their instruction to the needs of each student and provide a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. While the authors' argument is valid, it is important to consider the broader context of inclusive education and the multiple factors that contribute to its successful implementation. Loreman, Deppeler and Harvey (2005) recommend further research and analysis to fully understand the complexities of inclusive education and to develop effective strategies for promoting inclusive teaching and learning. Further, it is important to note that curriculum and examination systems are not the only factors that affect inclusive teaching and learning. As postulated by Florian and Black-Hawkins, (2011), other factors, such as teacher training and attitudes towards disability, also play a significant role in the successful implementation of inclusive education. Additionally, while the authors suggest that a more flexible and individualised approach to curriculum and assessment is needed to promote inclusive education, they do not provide specific recommendations for how this can be achieved. UNESCO (2017) posits that it is important to consider the practical implications of implementing a more flexible curriculum and assessment system, including the resources and training required to support teachers in adapting their instruction to the needs of individual students.

Majoko (2018) observes that students with special needs experience various barriers to higher education such as physical barriers, difficult access to facilities, poor support or lack of facilitation services within the university, lack of funding for additional support, barriers related to a rigid curriculum and inappropriate teaching and assessment methods. The highlighted issues in Majoko's (2018) argument should be considered as barriers to higher education for students with special needs because they restrict access to facilities, limit financial support, hinder academic progress, and reduce the availability of support services. By addressing these barriers, universities can create more inclusive learning environments that provide equal opportunities for all students to succeed in higher education. Sibanda (2018) is of the view that, the current global trend in the education of students with disabilities is skewed towards the embracing of the philosophy of inclusion. This trend is premised on the assumption that inclusion is the only realistic means of achieving education for all. In addition, Sibanda (2018) further postulates that, inclusive education is ideally concerned with presence, equity,

fairness, participation, diversity and access with regards to educational provisions. Morina (2017) laments that the implementation of inclusion principles and practical involvement of students with special needs in higher education remains a persistent challenge at the global, national and institutional level. In addition, there are various learning experiences of students with special needs in higher education.

Samkange (2013:953-963) reminds us that, the inclusive education movement, which is a system of education pushing for the right to education for all learners, is gaining attention in the international community as a system of education that advocates for the right to education for all learners. The inclusive education movement is seen as an approach that seeks to provide equal educational opportunities for all students, regardless of their abilities, backgrounds, or circumstances. The statement suggests that there is a growing recognition in the international community of the importance of inclusive education and its potential to promote social justice, human rights, and sustainable development.

Jenjekwa, Rutoro and Runyowa (2013) argue that, the absence of a vibrant inclusive education practice in teacher education is a major gap which might lead to a challenge in cascading inclusive education in Zimbabwean institutions. The implication of this statement is that there is need for teacher education programmes in Zimbabwe to incorporate inclusive education practices into their curricula. This can be achieved by providing teachers with training and professional development opportunities that focus on inclusive education, as well as by incorporating inclusive education principles into the design and delivery of teacher education programmes. By doing so, teacher education programmes can play a crucial role in ensuring that teachers are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to create inclusive learning environments that meet the needs of all learners, including those with disabilities. Chikwature et al (2016) revealed that there are inconsistencies in the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. This has created a lot of confusion and challenges of implementation. These challenges include,

1. Poor infrastructure: Many teachers colleges in Zimbabwe lack the necessary infrastructure to support inclusive education. This infrastructure includes accessible buildings, assistive technology, and specialized learning materials.

2. Limited resources: Teachers colleges face limited resources, including funding and staffing, which can make it difficult to provide the necessary support and accommodations for students with special needs.

3. Lack of training: Teachers colleges may not provide adequate training for teachers on how to implement inclusive education practices, which can lead to confusion and inconsistent implementation.

4. Negative attitudes towards disability: Negative attitudes towards disability and a lack of awareness about inclusive education can create barriers to the successful implementation of inclusive education practices.

5. Inconsistent policies: Inconsistent policies and guidelines regarding inclusive education in teachers' colleges can create confusion and uncertainty among teachers and students (Chikwature et al, 2016).

The point is, these challenges can make it difficult to effectively implement inclusive education in teachers colleges in Zimbabwe, and may limit the opportunities for students with special needs to receive a quality education. Addressing these challenges will require a multi-faceted approach that includes providing resources and infrastructure, offering training and professional development opportunities, promoting positive attitudes towards disability, and developing clear and consistent policies and guidelines for inclusive education. The point that Chikwature et al (2016) are putting across is that failure to implement inclusive education practices in teacher education programs means that teachers produced in these programs may lack the skills, knowledge, and competencies to effectively teach in inclusive settings. In other words, if teachers are not trained in inclusive education practices during their teacher education programmes, they may not have the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively teach students with diverse learning needs, including students with disabilities. In other words, the assertion by Chikwature et al's (2016) highlights the importance of inclusive education in teacher education programmes, which can help to ensure that teachers are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and competencies necessary to create inclusive learning environments and meet the needs of all learners. Inclusive education practices in teacher education programmes can include training on how to adapt teaching methods and materials to meet the needs of diverse learners, how to create inclusive classroom environments, and how to provide appropriate accommodations and support to students with disabilities.

### **3.4.3 Lack of inclusive policies in higher education in teacher training colleges**

While Zimbabwe embraced inclusive education as a concept in 1994, Luthuli and Wood (2019) point out that, the country's Higher Education sector does not have a specific policy around

inclusive education. This lack of a specific policy around inclusive practices in Zimbabwe's higher education sector has several effects, including:

1. Limited awareness and understanding: Chireshe et al (2016) observe that without a specific policy around inclusive practices, there may be limited awareness and understanding among faculty and staff about the principles of inclusive education and how to implement them effectively.

2. Inconsistent implementation: The lack of a specific policy can lead to inconsistent implementation of inclusive practices across different departments and institutions, which can create confusion and barriers for students with disabilities (Chikwature et al, 2010).

3. Limited resources: Without a specific policy, there may be limited resources and funding allocated to support the implementation of inclusive practices in higher education institutions.

4. Limited accountability: The absence of a specific policy can make it difficult to hold institutions accountable for ensuring that they are providing a supportive and inclusive learning environment for all students (Mupedziswa, and Mutsindikwa, 2019).

Overall, these researchers, namely, Chireshe et al., (2016); Chikwature et al (2016); Luthuli and Wood (2019) and Mupedziswa and Mutsindikwa (2019), support the idea that the lack of a specific policy around inclusive practices in Zimbabwe's higher education sector can have negative effects on students with disabilities. The effects include limited awareness and understanding, inconsistent implementation, limited resources, and limited accountability. They highlight the need for clear and consistent policy guidelines, training and professional development opportunities for faculty and staff, and adequate resources to support the implementation of inclusive practices in higher education institutions. To address these challenges, Luthuli and Wood (2019) recommend the development of a specific policy around inclusive practices in the higher education sector in Zimbabwe, which can provide a framework for the implementation of inclusive practices and ensure that all students have equal access to education.

Consequently, because of the lack of a clear policy, any barriers to inclusion that become apparent are treated on an ad-hoc basis, or are included as sub-sections of other relevant policies (Luthuli and Wood, 2019). The implications for this are that, this ad hoc approach to the implementation of inclusive education can have negative consequences for students with disabilities in teacher training colleges, as they may face barriers to accessing the support and accommodation they need to succeed. To address these challenges, Luthuli and Wood (2019) recommend the development of a specific policy on inclusive education in Zimbabwe's higher education sector, which can provide a framework for addressing barriers to inclusion and ensuring that all students have equal access to education. In addition to what Jenjekwa et al., (2013) presented, Chikwature et al., (2016) carried out a study in Zimbabwe and their findings revealed that, currently there is no national policy or local policies to guide the implementation of inclusive education in many countries, Zimbabwe included. This lack of a specific policy around inclusive practices in Zimbabwe's higher education sector can have negative effects on students with disabilities, including limited awareness and understanding, inconsistent implementation, limited resources, and limited accountability. They highlight the need for clear and consistent policy guidance, training and professional development opportunities for faculty and staff, and adequate resources to support the implementation of inclusive practices in higher education institutions.

In another study by Sibanda (2018), it has been observed that Zimbabwe has laws and policies directed at inclusivity but these policies lacked clarity on the enactment of procedures to achieve this, in Section 83 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Number 20 of 2013 has the following provision: "The state must take appropriate measures, within the limits of the resources available to it, to ensure that persons with disabilities realize their full potential including measures to provide special facilities for their education." The problem of this policy provision is that it is ambiguous and advocates for special facilities instead of inclusivity (Sibanda, 2018) and only if resources are available. In another study by Chimhenga (2014), the researcher highlighted that in spite of the existence of, the Education Act of 1987 and, The Secretary's Circular minute No. P36 of 1990, Zimbabwe's education sector does not have an inclusive education specific policy even though it has inclusive education related Acts like the, The Zimbabwe Constitution, Zimbabwe Disabled Persons Act of 1996, (Chimhenga, 2014) which advocates for the non-discrimination of people with disabilities (Chireshe, 2013; Mpfu et al., 2007).

According to Walton et al (2019) despite inclusive education's foundation in the discourses of human rights, educational equity and social justice, and the various international and country policies promoting inclusive education, its implementation across and within countries has been uneven and this results in varying levels of inclusivity. It is now difficult for teacher education institutions in Zimbabwe to implement inclusive education in their institutions because of lack of a specified policy. Mafa (2012) also brings into light that while a lot has been said about inclusion even in supplementary policies, there were no comprehensive strategies for enforcement. This can hinder the effective implementation of inclusive education policies, and limit the opportunities for students with disabilities to receive a quality education. Sibanda (2018:808-815) argues that what the Zimbabwe Education system's needs for inclusive education to succeed are clear enforceable laws and policies that specify not only the guidelines but the exact procedures and how associated resources will be provided. In their study Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020) assert that, although there seemed to be lack of a specific inclusive education policy or legislation in Zimbabwe there are various policies in place that support, promote and guide the inclusion of students with disabilities. These are, but not limited to Secretary's Circular No. P36 of 1990, The Disabled Person's Act of Zimbabwe of 1996, The Secretary's Circular No. 2 of 2000, The Director's Circular No. 24 of 2001 and The Director's Circular No. 7 of 2005 and Section 27 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013), (Hlatywayo and Mapolisa, 2020). According to the UNESCO (2015) policies on inclusive education would include the following:

1. Clear definitions and principles: The UNESCO Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education (2015) provide clear definitions of inclusive education and outline the principles that underpin it, such as the importance of creating a supportive and accessible learning environment for all students.
2. Accessible infrastructure and resources: The study by Chireshe, Chireshe, and Gudyanga (2016) on the implementation of inclusive education policy in Zimbabwe highlights the importance of ensuring that the physical infrastructure and resources of educational institutions are accessible to students with disabilities.
3. Professional development and training: The study by Chikwature, Zengeya, and Gudyanga (2016) on the implementation of inclusive education in Zimbabwe's teacher education programmes emphasises the need for professional development and training opportunities for teachers to effectively implement inclusive education practices.

4. Accommodations and support: The study by Mupedziswa and Mutsindikwa (2019) on the implementation of inclusive education policy in Zimbabwe highlights the importance of providing accommodations and support services to students with disabilities to ensure that they have equal access to education.

5. Monitoring and evaluation: The study by Kalyanpur and Harry (2012) on the evaluation of inclusive education programmes emphasises the importance of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of inclusive education practices to ensure that they are effective and that all students, including those with disabilities, are able to achieve their full potential.

These sources and studies support the components of a policy on inclusive education that can positively affect students with disabilities, including clear definitions and principles, accessible infrastructure and resources, professional development and training, accommodations and support, and monitoring and evaluation. A study by Allday, Neilsen-Gatti and Hudson (2013) revealed that in the United States of America (USA), teacher education has although few, programmes on disabilities that provide courses on characteristics of disabilities and how they are managed. If these programmes were available in Zimbabwe, they would help students with disabilities to use college facilities that are currently inaccessible. In another study Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020) revealed that there seemed to be no clear inclusive education policy on what is to be done in teachers' colleges which might affect the implementation of Inclusive Education in teachers' colleges as the colleges lack cohesion. The two observations of Allday, Neilsen-Gatti and Hudson (2013) and Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020) are related in that they both pertain to the provision of education to students with disabilities in Zimbabwe. The first observation suggests that teacher education programmes in the USA offer courses on managing disabilities, which could be helpful in coming up with clear programmes on inclusive education in Zimbabwe. The second statement, on the other hand, highlights the lack of a clear inclusive education policy in Zimbabwean teacher colleges, which could hinder the implementation of inclusive education for students with disabilities. In their study on the, 'challenges faced in the implementation of inclusive education in teacher s colleges in Zimbabwe. Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2022) found that there seemed to be no clear inclusive education policy on what is to be done in teacher training colleges. Inclusive education policies are crucial for ensuring that all students have access to quality education, regardless of their abilities or backgrounds.

However, the lack of clear policies can become a major barrier to the implementation of inclusive education. For example, Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020) found that the lack of a clear inclusive education policy in Zimbabwean teachers colleges has hindered the implementation of inclusive education for students with disabilities. Without clear guidelines and standards, teachers may not have the necessary training or resources to effectively support students with disabilities in the classroom. This highlights the importance of developing and implementing clear policies that address the needs of all students, including those with disabilities. Such policies should provide guidance on teacher training and support, curriculum development, and the provision of necessary accommodations and resources. By doing so, inclusive education can become a reality for all students, which is the motive of this study.

#### **3.4.4 Staff Competencies**

According to Kusuma and Ramadevi (2013) teacher competency is the ability to plan, control and facilitate interaction in the classroom that is appropriate to the activity and which takes into account the different needs and abilities of students. This statement by Kusuma and Ramadevi (2013) is generally consistent with the broader concept of effective teaching. However, the statement is somewhat limited in that it focuses primarily on classroom management and interaction, while neglecting other important aspects of teacher competency, such as subject matter knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, assessment and evaluation, and cultural competence (Kusuma and Ramadevi, 2013). While classroom management and interaction skills are certainly important components of effective teaching, a more comprehensive understanding of teacher competency would necessarily include these other dimensions as well. For example, teachers must have a strong content knowledge in the subject area they are teaching in order to effectively convey information to students. They must also have an understanding of how to assess student learning and provide feedback, as well as have the ability to work effectively with diverse student populations. Overall, while Kusuma and Ramadevi's (2013) statement regarding teacher competency is a useful starting point for considering effective teaching, it should be viewed as only one aspect of a broader framework for understanding what it means to be a competent and effective teacher.

Researchers (Florina, 2009; Friend and Bursack, 2012; Lynch, et al., 2011) reveal that competent lecturers simultaneously translate theory into practice and consider the learner population and the socio-cultural contexts in which teaching and learning take place. Some lecturers lack competences that include the knowledge and skills of teaching strategies and approaches that meet the needs of all students in regular classrooms (Ainscow and Goldrick,

2010; Florian, 2009; Forlin and Sin, 2010, Hornby, 2010). Similarly, Majoko (2019) is of the view that, lecturers need competences in professional knowledge, assessment, instructional techniques and behaviour management to include students with disabilities in the regular classroom. In their recent study again, Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2022) observe that with regard to human resources, participants established that there was a shortage of lecturers in teachers' colleges and having a large lecturer-student ratio was an indicator of a shortage of lecturers with the appropriate competencies. While the study did not specify which competencies were lacking, it could be inferred that they refer to the competencies needed to effectively implement inclusive education policies and practices, such as knowledge of special education and disability rights, the ability to design and adapt curriculum to meet diverse needs, and skills in collaboration and communication with families and other professionals. Indeed, the shortage of lecturers with competencies could affect the implementation of inclusive education because it is the lecturers who are the key implementers of inclusive education (Hlatywayo and Mapolisa, 2022).

The study carried out by Musengi and Mukhopadhyay (2012) revealed that many Zimbabwean principals at Zimbabwean teachers' colleges objected to the inclusion of students with sensory disabilities in the same classes as students without disabilities. Chimhenga (2014) highlights that, the principals in the study mentioned above were arguing that most of their staff were not trained and so would not be able to meet the needs of such learners. In the same vein, a study conducted by Kuyini and Desai (2007, 2008) revealed that teachers had limited knowledge of Inclusive Education. The limited knowledge of teachers regarding inclusive education identified by Kuyini and Desai (2007, 2008) had significant impacts on the implementation of inclusive education. Specifically, the study by Kuyini and Desai (2008) found that teachers' lack of knowledge led to inadequate support for students with disabilities, resulting in lower academic achievement and increased exclusion from the classroom. The study also found that teachers' limited knowledge and negative attitudes towards inclusive education led to a lack of confidence in implementing inclusive practices, resulting in a reluctance to include students with disabilities in the classroom.

According to Majoko (2019) the researchers cited above also found that, several teachers utilised adaptive teaching strategies in their delivery of lessons in regular classrooms. Flecha and Soler, (2013); Florian, (2012) and Naicker, (2009) postulate that the success of inclusive education depends on adequate knowledge and skills of teachers. In addition, Allday, Neilsen-Gatti and Hudson, (2013), Berry (2010); Forlin and Sin, (2010); Kim and Rouse (2011) are of

the view that lecturers are required to simultaneously meet the needs of typically developing students and those of their peers with special needs in regular classrooms.

Berry, (2010); Donnelly and Watkins (2011); Fletcher and Soler (2013); and Florian (2012) posit that, lecturers require, among other aptitudes, collaboration, competences that can help them harness their own problem-solving and creative thinking as they share ideas with peers, because students with special needs require a diversity of teaching approaches. Roiwendran, Athira and Elavaras (2020) are of the view that teachers are not adequately trained and lack competencies to practice inclusive education across the globe. Maotoana (2014) also agrees that the lack of trained teachers, appropriate teaching materials and an unwillingness to include disabled students in lecture rooms where able-bodied students, are predominantly accommodated limits access to education for millions of blind and physically disabled students. In their findings Chikwature et al (2016) revealed that, lecturers were not fully trained on inclusive education. The solutions needed included staff development, or having more lecturers trained on inclusivity. One of the recommendations by Sibanda (2018) on the implementation of the inclusive education in Zimbabwe is that there is need to intensify the teaching of inclusive education modules to pre-service teacher trainees and in-service all practicing teachers. This means that, most lecturers in teacher training colleges need to be trained on inclusivity. In a study in Australia by Walton et al. (2019), the researchers posit that, one of the key barriers to Inclusive Education identified by the participants was the lack of suitable education and training for the teachers to effectively support their learners on the autism spectrum, also known as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The study found that the lack of suitable education and training for teachers was a key barrier to the implementation of inclusive education for students with ASD in Australia. In another study by Mwangi and Orodho (2014) in Uganda, it was revealed that according to inclusive policy, schools are grouped into clusters of 15 to 20, and each of the clusters has a special needs education coordinator who oversees the implementation of inclusive practices. This shows that there is lack of trained personnel as one specialist teacher cannot be assigned to a cluster of 15 to 20 schools. If things were normal each school must have their own specialist teachers which is also a problem in teacher training colleges. Put differently, this statement suggests that in a fully functioning education system, each school would ideally have its own specialist teachers to support the inclusion of students with special needs. However, the lack of trained personnel is a barrier to this ideal situation. In other words, the current situation in Uganda, as described by Mwangi and Orodho (2014), is not ideal, and the existing policy of grouping schools into

clusters with one special needs education coordinator per cluster is a compromise due to the shortage of trained personnel. The statement also highlights the challenges faced by teacher training colleges in preparing teachers who have the necessary knowledge and skills to support students with special needs in their schools.

In a study investigating inclusive education implementation gaps in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020) found that there was shortage of financial, material, infrastructure and human resources which greatly affected the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe." In their findings, the shortage of trained lecturers in special needs education in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. Mokaleng and Mowes (2020) highlighted that, for inclusive education policies and programmes to work effectively in Namibia the country required effective, inclusive leadership, thus emphasising the importance of leadership on the implementation of inclusive education policies. This demonstrates the lack of trained leadership in the implementation of inclusive education. In addition, in another study, Mokaleng and Mowes, (2020), 85 of the teachers (94.4%) were of the view that in order for inclusion to succeed teachers must receive in-service training in educating learners with special educational needs. In another study, on the issues of access and participation of students with disabilities in higher education, Batanero, Ruenda and Cerens (2022) revealed that the lack of preparation of teachers to use a methodology that promotes inclusion in the classroom according to the needs of their students stands out, and the results coincided with other studies that have been carried out on the lack of teacher training to cater for these students in higher education (Nrrante, Baranova and Stramkale, 2021). With more confident and skilled teachers, the inclusive education programme will have a positive impact on the awareness of the community (Kusuma and Ramadeni, 2013).

### **3.4.5 Lack of Funding**

Teaching inclusive education needs resources such as funds in order to facilitate its implementation. Majoko (2018) posits that students with special needs experience various barriers to higher education such as diverse as physical barriers, difficult access to facilities, poor support or lack of facilitation services within the university, lack of funding for additional support, difficulties or other barriers related to a rigid curriculum and, inappropriate teaching and implementation of inclusive education. Sibanda (2018) argues that, the successful implementation of inclusive education actually requires less expensive resources as compared to those that are required for parallel education systems, such as special education. Sibanda (2018) further highlights that, due to socio-economic challenges, many developing countries

are experiencing a serious challenge of lack of resources in implementing inclusive education. In another study, these limited resources are identified in the form of financial, human, infrastructural and material resources. Such limited resources have also provided a major challenge in the implementation of inclusive practices in Zimbabwe (Chimhenga (2016). Similarly, Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020) identified lack of funds to purchase assistive devices and other equipment as another challenge that was encountered in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe in their quest to implement inclusive education. In the similar manner, this was the challenge with Inclusive Education in Zimbabwe. In their findings, Mokalery and Mowes (2020) revealed that, the unavailability of resources can influence teachers' ability to implement inclusive education.

In a study on "the challenges experienced by students with physical disability" Maotoana (2014) argues that lack of trained teachers, inappropriate teaching materials and an unwillingness to include disabled students in lecture rooms while accommodating predominantly able-bodied students, limits access to education for millions of blind and physically disabled students. This implies that these disabled students miss classes since they are not able to access classrooms. In another recent study, Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2022) added that shortage of financial, material, infrastructure and human resources greatly affected the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. In another study on inclusive education practices in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe, Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020) revealed that, there was lack of facilities like resource centres in all the three colleges, with no assistive devices in the colleges that force students to bring their own devices and resources and worked with what they had though it was not enough. The study also revealed that, computers had general software that are not specific for students with disabilities (Hlatywayo and Mapolisa, 2020). This has significant implications for the implementation of inclusive education in these colleges, as it suggests that students with disabilities may not have access to the necessary technology and software to support their learning. Inclusive education requires that all students have equal access to educational resources, including technology. However, if computers in teacher colleges are not equipped with specialized software that is designed to support students with disabilities, this could create significant barriers to their participation in the classroom and access to information. Clearly, the findings of this study by Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020) highlight the need for teacher colleges in Zimbabwe to prioritise the acquisition of specialised software that is designed to support students with

disabilities. By doing so, they can ensure that all students have equal access to technology and are able to fully participate in the learning process.

In another study Algolaylat et al (2023) revealed that, the lack of assistive technology is one of the most critical challenges facing inclusive education practices for students with disabilities at X university, as students indicated that there were challenges related to lack of assistive technology at the university. Students with visual impairments also indicated their need for supportive technologies such as large screens in their classrooms, while students with auditory impairments see visual aids as essential for learning and mobility. Majoko (2018) and Zabeli et al (2020) posit that, students with special needs experience various barriers to higher education such as physical barriers, difficult access to facilities, poor support or lack of facilitation services within the university, lack of funding for additional support, difficulties or other barriers related to rigid curriculum and inappropriate teaching and implementation of inclusive education.

In their studies Opini, (2012); Alsalem and Doush, (2018), Dreyer (2021) and Joshi and Bouck (2015) revealed that, students had difficulties of access to material resources, since in most cases these are not adapted to their needs or were not enough limited. In their studies, Travers et. al (2014) found that, even with the willingness of staff, institutions reported difficulties in carrying out corrective plans without what they considered to be the necessary resources and support in place. The study further revealed that, there was, at the studied institutions lack of support services including lack of coordination between services, lack of support for the transition of students between the different stages of education, inadequate home school liaison, shortage of dual language, inadequate resources, financial constraints, including the lack of sports facilities in schools and local In another study by Sharma and Vlcek (2021) it was revealed that in contrast, funding for students with additional needs in the United States is significantly more complex. Despite multiple legal bases, funding assigned to support students with a disability is distributed through various models based on locality and additional qualifying criteria. Ebersold and Meijer (2016) articulate that, a recent review of inclusive education in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEECIS) region found that Albania, Serbia, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine all mention the lack of financial guidelines and limited funds to mainstream institutions as key factors inhibiting the implementation of inclusive education. Research by Wray (2011) on, 'Disabled learners and higher education: on barriers and enablers to success in inclusive education,' revealed that, students were given loans for their studies, but they complained about the system

of applying for loans and the hold ups and difficulties they had experienced in receiving the money. In a recent study Nketsia and Ngwenya (2016) reported a shortage of resources which was linked to lack of funding. The study revealed that, 'there were no adequate resources for students with disabilities. They provide for their resources like any other student, including like paying fees and acquiring the resources that they need were not available. This is supported by Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2022) who in their study, who argue that, there was a shortage of resources to effectively implement inclusive education in various institutions. This is evidenced by the failure to establish resource centres by the three colleges. The study also revealed that, the computers in the library were not user friendly and the seating position while using the computer or while reading affects them as they could be pitched too high for a student with disability to view them.

### **3.4.6 Rigid Curriculum**

The issue of a rigid curriculum is one of the many challenges in teacher training colleges. According to Fisher, Sax and Rodifer (2016) a rigid curriculum is a fixed set of learning objectives, content, and assessments that all students are expected to master at the same pace and in the same way, without regard for individual differences in learning styles, abilities, or interests. Fisher et al (2016) and Tomlinson (2014) suggests that a rigid curriculum can be a barrier to inclusion, as it may not accommodate the diverse needs and abilities of all students. In their study Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020), found that due to the rigid curriculum in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe, students with disabilities were not adequately catered for thereby affecting the implementation of inclusive education. Mpu and Adu (2021) revealed that the type of education received by learners with disabilities is of very poor quality, in fact, they did not consider themselves as receiving any education. For Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2022) another challenge is the rigid curriculum which is not flexible and inclusive, hence can limit the ability of educators to meet the diverse learning needs of students. The study cited above also revealed that, curriculum is the same for all students. Zwane (2016) posits that, failure by the curriculum to be flexible and inclusive might not meet the needs of the students with diverse needs, not all people are the same and that should be considered in the curriculum.

According to Mazuruse, Nyagadza and Makoni (2021) the degree to which learners can be well-educated is directly correlated to a system of personnel preparation that results in a qualified workforce so that every student has highly skilled and competent teachers and administrators. The statement by Mazuruse et al (2021) suggests that the quality of education that learners receive is directly linked to the quality of the personnel who are responsible for

delivering it. Specifically, it argues that a well-educated student body is contingent on having a qualified and competent workforce of teachers and administrators who are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to effectively support student learning. In other words, if one wants to ensure that every student receives high-quality education, they need to invest in a system of personnel preparation that prioritises the recruitment, training, and ongoing professional development of highly skilled and competent educators and administrators. This idea is supported by Goldhaber, and Walch (2021) and McKee, & O'Brien, (2021) which has consistently shown that teacher quality is one of the most important factors influencing student achievement. In addition, Majoko (2019) is of the view that it is best to adapt the regular school curriculum to suit the needs of the respective students. This, according to Tomlinson (2014) can be done by using assessments to identify students' strengths, needs, and interests, providing flexible learning opportunities, using a variety of instructional strategies and providing ongoing support and feedback. Indeed, by implementing these strategies, Wormeli (2017) asserts that educators can adapt the regular school curriculum to suit the needs of individual students, and create a more inclusive and equitable learning environment that promotes student engagement, achievement, and well-being.

In their study, Algolaylat et. al (2023) discovered that the, physical environment, lack of modifications, and lack of support were other major educational obstacle faced by students with disabilities, especially concerning examinations, access to information curriculum and accessibility. The issue of curriculum is one of the many challenges in the study cited above. Bunch (2014) underscores the above view by pointing out that one way in which the curriculum can be a challenge for students with disabilities is through its lack of flexibility and responsiveness to diverse learning needs. Traditional curricula may not be designed to accommodate the specific needs and learning styles of students with disabilities, which can make it difficult for them to access and engage with the material. Shogren et al., (2017) give an example where that a curriculum that is heavily reliant on the written text may be inaccessible to students with visual impairments or dyslexia, unless accommodations such as Braille or audio versions are provided. Additionally, the lack of support and modifications in the curriculum can further exacerbate these challenges. Without adequate support and accommodations, students with disabilities may struggle to keep up with their peers and may not receive the necessary instruction and resources to achieve their full potential. These authors, among others, support the view that traditional curricula may not be well-suited to the

diverse learning needs of students with disabilities, and that educators must be willing to adapt and modify the curriculum to meet these needs.

In their study, Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020) found that due to the rigid curriculum in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe, students with disabilities were not adequately catered for, thereby affecting the implementation of Inclusive Education. Another curriculum challenge was raised in the study carried out by Masoga and Maoto (2021:238-244) where they revealed that visually impaired students came to their offices to be assisted with reformulating their research proposals. They lucidly declined because they felt that it would be unethical and plagiaristic because it entailed, writing down, on their behalf and in the absence of their writing apparatus.' Students with special needs experience various barriers to higher education that are as diverse as physical barriers, difficult access to facilities, poor support or lack of facilitation services within the university, lack of funding for additional support difficulties or other barriers related to rigid curriculum, inappropriate teaching and assessment methods (Majoko: 2018). The study by Masogo and Maoto shows that the problem of a rigid curriculum is not only rampant in teacher training colleges but also in universities. In the study carried out by Travers et. al (2014) the findings revealed that the differentiation of curriculum content was one of the major challenges in the implementation of inclusive education. Lynch and Simpson, (2013) underscores that point by pointing out that differentiation of curriculum content refers to the process of modifying the content, materials, and activities of the curriculum to meet the unique learning needs and strengths of individual students. Tomlinson (2014) observes that this can involve providing additional support or resources for students who are struggling, or providing more challenging work for students who are excelling. However, implementing differentiated instruction can be challenging, especially in classrooms with diverse student populations, limited resources, and varying levels of teacher expertise. One challenge in differentiating curriculum content is identifying the specific needs and strengths of individual students. This requires ongoing assessment and observation, as well as a deep understanding of the principles of universal design for learning (UDL) and differentiated instruction.

In their finding Fernandez-Batanero (2022) revealed that the lack of preparation of teachers to use a methodology that promotes inclusion in the classroom is a significant barrier to the implementation of inclusive education. This finding underscores the importance of providing teachers with the necessary training and resources to effectively support students with disabilities in the classroom. Furthermore, the finding highlights the importance of institutional management in supporting inclusive education. Students with disabilities require access to a

range of services and accommodations to support their learning, such as assistive technology, accessible facilities, and specialized support services. If these services are not available or are scarce, it can create significant barriers for students with disabilities to fully participate in the academic environment. Another study by Heiman et al (2017) found that the difficulties in coping with academic skills using ICT, was also a major barrier in curriculum. On the other hand. In the same vein, Motiswe (2012) is of the view that a rigid and inflexible curriculum which does not allow for individual differences can lead to learning breakdown. Put differently this suggests that a curriculum that is strict and does not take into account the unique learning needs and styles of individual students may result in a breakdown of the learning process. Smith (2019) labels it, a one-size-fits-all approach to education may not be effective for all learners and may hinder their ability to learn and succeed. The negative effects on education include aspects such as lack of relevance of subject content, lack of appropriate learning materials, resources and assistive devices, inflexible styles of teaching and classroom management and inappropriate ways of assessing learning (Motiswe : 2012).

These negative effects noted by Motiswe (2012) can have significant implications for the implementation of inclusive education in practice. For my study on enhancing the implementation of inclusive education, these findings suggest several areas that could be targeted for improvement. Firstly, it is important to ensure that subject content is relevant and appropriate for all students, including those with disabilities (Muthusamy, and Ling, 2017). This may require modifications to curriculum and instructional materials to ensure that they are accessible and inclusive for all learners. Secondly, providing appropriate learning materials, resources, and assistive devices can also help to support the inclusion of students with disabilities. This may involve investing in specialized equipment, software, or other technologies that can help to facilitate learning for students with different needs. Additionally, Erickson & Koppenhaver (2020) hold the view that promoting flexible teaching styles and classroom management can help to create a more inclusive learning environment. This may involve providing training and support to teachers on how to accommodate different learning styles and needs, as well as fostering a culture of flexibility and adaptability in the classroom (Graham, , and Kelly, 2018) Overall, Karsenti, and Collin (2013) posit that assessment practices should be reviewed to ensure that they are inclusive and appropriate for students with disabilities. This may involve exploring alternative assessment methods and accommodations to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to demonstrate their learning.

According to Zwane and Malale (2018) pedagogical and curriculum factors, inappropriate assessment procedures, teacher training barriers to effective teaching and learning, unqualified and under-qualified teachers, lack of support for teachers and inappropriate teaching and learning methods and support are some of the barriers in the implementation of inclusive education in institutions that impact negatively to students with disabilities. Rigid curriculum does not affect teacher's colleges only but also in schools where college students do their teaching practice. Villegas (2021) articulates that a rigid curriculum that does not allow for experimentation or the use of different teaching methods, or that does not recognise different styles of learning, is one of the barriers in the implementation of inclusive education in institutions. Schuelka (2018) is of the view that the barriers to inclusive education include inadequacies in policy and legal support, pedagogical techniques, flexible curricula and cultural attitudes.

In a study in Europe, Buldginaite et al., (2016) highlighted that, a curriculum that is too rigid, centralised and fails to reflect the diversity of the targeted students can have a negative impact on the learning process. This illustrates that, a one-size-fits-all approach to education may not effectively cater to the diverse needs, backgrounds, and learning styles of students, potentially hindering their overall learning experience and outcomes. In another study in Namibia, Mokaleng and Mowes (2020) are of the view that, since the teachers need to complete the curriculum within a certain time frame, it could be a challenge to accommodate students with special educational needs while struggling to complete the curriculum on time. This presents a significant challenge, as the varied learning requirements of students with special needs may require additional time and resources that are not always readily available within the constraints of the established curriculum. In another study Ludago (2020) found that institutions face limitations when it comes to providing a flexible curriculum that caters to the individual needs of learners as they are exposed to the same examinations and the teachers' inability to diversify the curriculum to suit individual learner's needs. In addition to the findings, it was revealed by Ludago (2020) that teachers have inability to communicate in a medium of instruction which the learner understands like Sign Language and Braille reading and writing, which also contributes to rigid curriculum. In addition, Dua and Dua (2017) showed that their China's curriculum is unable to meet the needs of a wide range of different learners as the curriculum is centrally designed and rigid, with little flexibility for local adaptations. Bhat (2017) articulates that, rigidity in curriculum does not allow the special

students to go at par in learning with the non-disabled ones and no special curriculum is here to fulfil the diverse needs of special students.

### **3.4.7 Stigma, discrimination and attitude**

In order to understand how attitude, stigma and discrimination affect inclusive education, it is prudent to define the terms. Stigma is an attribute that conveys devalued stereotypes (Clair, 2018) while discrimination against someone involves to excluding that person from the full enjoyment of their political, civic, economic, social or cultural rights and freedoms (Schramm, 2015). Attitude, according De Boer and Minnaert (2011) represents relatively stable knowledge, emotions and reactions regarding people, phenomena and situations. Gilson and Dymond (2012) in their study “Barriers impacting students with disabilities at Hong Kong university found out that an attitudinal barrier which was identified by staff at the institution used to be present at Hong Kong university but was less so at the time of the study described by the lecturers as more difficult to help than the students with milder disabilities. In agreement with the study cited above Mokaleng and Mowes (2020) provided evidence that the majority of teachers were of the idea that there was a lack of support for teachers, which enhanced negative attitudes towards inclusive education. Cassady (2011) is of the view that these negative attitudes of teachers can have a detrimental impact on student learning and may impede the success of inclusive education.

Other researchers like Zulu, (2007); Newton, Cambridge and Hunter-Johnson (2014) are of the view that, teachers’ negative attitudes are due to a lack of knowledge and skills, as well as a lack of training and insufficient support. Similarly, the studies of Al-Zyodi (2008); Cambridge and Hunter-Johnson (2014) revealed in their study that the severity and nature of the disabling condition, together with lack of skills, influenced teachers’ attitudes towards working with students with disabilities. To concur with the study, Parveen and Qounsar (2018:64-68) agree that, the majority of the teachers felt that the biggest challenge in dealing with students with disabilities is the lack of knowledge and the skills they require to understand these students’ behavioural needs. As a result, many students with disabilities experience frustration with their tertiary education experiences which arises from negative peer attitudes, physical barriers on campus and lack of appropriate services and support (Maotoona (2014). Maotoona (2014) further articulate that, the successful integration of tertiary students with disabilities requires positive institutional attitudes which begins at top management level and filters through faculties and departments. Without such a holistic attitudinal change the student with a disability is usually socially isolated from others and is at risk of developing

psychological or emotional problems because of peer rejection or neglect (Gorter, 2009). Pursuing a similar line of thought Fichten et al. (2018) are of the view that, tertiary students without disabilities are more uncomfortable interacting with peers with disabilities than with peers without disabilities, while students with disabilities are more comfortable interacting with peers with similar disabilities. Avramidis (2012) postulates that, another problem is stigma and embarrassment perpetrated by other learners, primarily characterised by laughing and name-calling. While UNESCO (2003) notes that negative attitudes led to inadequate provisions of resources to adapt to the environment and Central to the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe are the attitudes of the lecturers. According to Wanderi (2015) there is a significant relationship between teachers' attitudes and their environment. Case 5 of Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2022) revealed that the college personnel have negative attitudes and lack understanding of inclusive education. They claim to be untrained to handle students with disabilities, and some lecturers are unable to use technology to cater for students with disabilities. This poses a problem as technological advancement is essential in the 21st century, and failure to keep up renders the technology ineffective. Only a few lecturers, mainly from the ICT department, use the interactive whiteboard provided.

In the same discussion of was about the sentiments that brought up the issue of technology literacy and the ability to handle students with diverse needs, Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2022) provided another case (Case 7) in which a participant commented on serious negative attitudes by highlighting that; the lecturers have negative attitudes towards students with disabilities. When a student on a wheelchair comes to inquire about enrolment, some turn them away and refer them to Danhiko (in Harare) where other people with disabilities. However, participants the speaker believes that students with disabilities should be allowed to enrol in their college where they can mix and mingle with others. Some lecturers even express that they will give problems and the speaker, who is interested in Paralympics, was once unable to attend games in Bulawayo because the organizers claimed that people with disabilities would cause problems in transportation. The speaker believes that this attitude shows a lack of understanding of the challenges faced by people with disabilities and that partial visual impairment, for example, does not necessarily mean that a person cannot walk.

The two cases highlight the attitudes of staff members towards students with disabilities in higher and tertiary education at one college in Mutare, Zimbabwe. Such negativity might be attributed to societal and cultural values that an individual has been exposed to in relation to

disabilities (Hlatywayo and Mapolisa, 2022:105-117). With regards to the attributes of academic staff, students had mixed reactions. Some reported positive attitudes, while others had bad experiences (Matshedisho (2010). Mutanga and Walker (2017) posit that, knowing how and why staff behave the way they do is an important area of inquiry that needs further exploration.

The National Joint Committee (2022) states that, in some cases of disability, discrimination in higher education is simply a matter of access. Some of the necessary accommodations are relatively simple like creating access for those who use wheelchairs by installing ramps and lifts or allowing recording of classroom sessions for those with learning disabilities or for those who are visually impaired. In another case the European Agency for Development in Social Needs Education (EASDNE) (2010) identified discrimination against students with disabilities. The EASDNE's Educating and Training by 2020 initiative aimed to reform teacher education practices by producing teachers who could implement inclusive practices in schools. However, EASPD (2011) acknowledged that in some European countries, the teacher education curriculum still separates mainstream and special school sectors by creating different training regimes for teachers. Furthermore, the issue of inclusive education is compounded by the fact that teacher education curriculum in some European countries still separates mainstream and special school sectors, creating different training for teachers. This encourages separation, despite the fact that inclusive education should start during teacher training, opine Hlatywayo and Mapolisa, (2020:2501). Additionally, Sibanda (2018) notes that the lack of political will to make the school environment fully accessible to all students with disabilities is rooted in cultural stereotypes and negative attitudes towards disability, which in turn reflect poor or lack of implementation of inclusive education. On the other hand, Frankel, Gold and Ajodhia-Andrews (2010) state that, to successfully implement inclusion, educators and other stakeholders must have, among other factors positive attitudes. Cultural attitudes and stereotypes about the education of students with disabilities and parents' attitudes toward sending their children with disabilities to mainstream schools are some of the reasons some parents believed that it was not economically feasible to send their children with disabilities to mainstream schools at the expense of the non-disabled children (Sibanda, 2018). The sentiments highlighted above prove beyond doubt the negative attitudes parents also have towards their children with disabilities.

It is also noted by Mwangi and Orodho (2014) that socio-cultural factors contribute to the negative attitudes towards the inclusion of students with disabilities. These socio-cultural

factors are rooted in cultural beliefs and values that blame disability on ancestral sins and other misdeeds (Sibanda, 2018). Jackson and Mupedzisa (1988) postulate that in Zimbabwe, such beliefs are perpetuated by a traditional perspective that attributes disability to family sin, witchcraft and angered ancestors. This leads to parents, families and the children with disabilities being blamed and discriminated against. The negative attitudes of some administrators, teachers, parents and students were the greatest barrier to inclusive education in Zimbabwe in a study by Mafa, (2012) while in their study, Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2022) identified stigma and discrimination as some of the challenges faced by students with disabilities. In their Case 6, Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2022) highlighted that;

‘Discrimination from various groups in the college, some are discriminating and others are not.... Here it’s a big institution, some people do not hide their feelings, and they do not act out but show you that they don’t want you. So, you are forced to stay alone .... Sometimes you are left out by some students especially in group work.... Other lecturers can call other students and leave me...’

From the sentiments above show how discrimination, stigma and attitude affect students with disabilities. This is seconded by Ramakuela and Maluleke (2011) in their study where students with disabilities feel rejected by other students without disabilities, staff and the institution at large. In addition, Algolaylat et al, (2023) found that the attitudes of teachers and the absence of social support at the university under study were crucial challenges experienced by students with disabilities in that university.

The issue of stigma, discrimination and attitude is also revealed in Luthuli and Wood (2018) who conclude that social and cultural influences have a strong bearing on people’s perceptions of disability and persons with disabilities. Luthuli and Wood (2020) further articulate that in the dominant local languages of Zimbabwe, Shona and Ndebele, the terms for impairment and disability are ‘Hurema’ (in Shona) and ‘Ubulima’ (in Ndebele). These terms, according to Luthuli and Wood (2018), are synonymous with ‘idiocy’ or ‘idiot’. To refer to a person with disability as ‘chirema’ and ‘isilima’ respectively, (the prefix ‘chi’ in Shona and ‘isi’ in Ndebele) denotes a thing or object. This is total stigma done by able-bodied people who are often ironically blind to disability stigma in Zimbabwe. This is confirmed by Makworo and Dube (2017) who in their study, ‘Culture, religion and disability in Zimbabwe: A case of the Apostolic sect’ cite the Apostolic sect who view the birth of a disabled child as a curse while

Chireshe (2019:223-228) made findings that people with disabilities are a burden on those without and are often helpless and dependent. The Shona and Ndebele terms cited earlier may be more encompassing and reflect a more social model of disability, which acknowledges the role of societal barriers in disabling individuals rather than viewing disability it as solely a medical condition (Luthuli and Wood, 2019).. From a linguistic perspective, the use of these terms highlights the importance of understanding the nuances and cultural meanings of language when working with individuals with disabilities in Zimbabwe. Bell (2007) argues that members of the dominant group are socialised into internalising oppressive norms, values and beliefs without realising that they are oppressors. The discriminate isolation and segregation experienced by people with disabilities, according to Luthuli and Wood (2018), are not caused by the disability as such, but result from other people's prejudice due to internalised institutionalised ableism (Griffin, Peter and Smith, 2007). It is crucial for service providers, educators, and researchers to be aware of the local language and its usage to communicate effectively with individuals with disabilities and ensure that their needs are met (Mukwembi and Chireshe (2020). Additionally, this observation also emphasises the need for culturally and linguistically appropriate materials and resources to be developed and use at teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe to promote inclusivity and accessibility for all individuals, regardless of their abilities.

### **3.4.8 Medical and Social Model of Thinking in Colleges**

It is acknowledged that the challenge of implementing inclusive education in colleges is initiated by the focus on students with special education needs, which is the medical model of disability (Ntombela, 2019). Inclusivity is a crucial consideration in both medical and social models to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their backgrounds or identities receive equal access to care and support (Kwari, 2021). Rieser and O' Mahony (2002) propounds that the medical model of disability views disability as an individual problem that needs to be fixed or cured. This model focuses on the medical diagnosis and treatment of impairments, with the goal of enabling individuals to conform to the norms of society. The medical model often emphasises the limitations and deficits of individuals with disabilities, and may lead to stigmatisation and discrimination. In contrast, Shakespeare (2014) asserts that the social model of disability views disability as a result of societal barriers that prevent individuals with impairments from fully participating in society. This model acknowledges that disability is a complex and multifaceted experience that is influenced by social, cultural, and environmental factors. The social model seeks to remove barriers and promote inclusion and accessibility for

individuals with disabilities, with the goal of enabling them to fully participate in society. Following the line of thought of Rieser and Mahony (2002) the illustrations on the table 3.1 below highlight the difference between the medical and social model of thinking;

**Table 3.1 Medical and Social Model of Thinking in Colleges**

Medical Model Thinking	Social Model Thinking
-People who are disabled are not capable of doing things on their own and cannot think for themselves or make decisions.	-People with disabilities need to be valued as they act responsibly if given a chance to socialize and be accommodated as all other social beings.
-Always diagnosed as being incompetent and suffer exclusion.	-Strengths are the main focus and needs to be further developed once identified.
-Impairment becomes the main focus of attention instead of looking at the education system as a problem.	-Inclusive education policy was designed to cater for disabled learners.
-SIAS programme (Screening Identification Assessment and Support) for early intervention was designed.	-Relevant resource is made available to access ordinary schools that would assist learners that need high level, of support (e.g. interpreter for Sign Language or Braille for blind students, Specialists educators to be employed that would teach these learners.
-Dual system of education that would separate special needs learners from learners without disabilities.	-Training for all staff members including support staff and senior management to equip them with the skills of understanding and implementing of Erasmus Without Paper (EWP) <sup>6</sup> .
-Ordinary needs that would support learners with special education needs were put on hold and there was no support.	-Relationships within the college environment are encouraged since there is low intake of learners with disabilities.
-Entry examinations were too rigid and did not accommodate special needs learners. These learners ended up suffering exclusion as they fail these exam entries.	-Diversity in class during teaching and learning is welcomed to promote inclusion and cater for the diverse needs of all learners.
-Society is not capacitated or trained on disability, therefore exclusionary practices remain unchanged.	-Society revolves around the learner with disabilities and support is given to these learners in all angles.

**Adapted from Rieser and O'Mahony 2002**

Clarifying the above table, Meltz, Herman and Pillay (2014) are of the view that the dominant understandings of inclusion of people with disabilities are derived from the medical model which is instilled in normative discourse. Ntombela (2019) argues that in such normative discourse, tolerance rather than the inclusion of learners with disabilities is promoted while the social model of disability is of the view that, difficulties and disabilities should not mean disadvantaging and giving less equal access and minimum participation in both education and society. Moratorium in education and society could be possible through practicing and implementing inclusive education (Ntombela, 2019). Wood (2019) argue that, the basic premise is that a person with disabilities has problems and impairments must be remediated in some way. Milton (2012) and Wood (2019) agree with Breakey (2006) that the medical model views disability as a problem that is within the individual and seeks to cure or compensate for what is wrong with them. In essence, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD, 2006) acknowledge that barriers set by society result in disability and affects people with impairments to fully and equally participate in society. Some researchers concur with the idea of being different by stating that, it does not mean being abnormal or defective (Bogdashina, 2016). Being different allows educators to celebrate diversity and embrace different learning styles from their learners. While concurring with this view, Kwari (2021) further argues that the social model advocates are of the view that society's lack of support and adaptation, stereotyping, stigmatising and prejudices disabled individuals.

### **3.5 The implementation of inclusive practices for successful integration of students with disabilities in tertiary institutions.**

The shift towards inclusive education reflects a contemporary educational philosophy aimed at ensuring access to learning for every individual, as highlighted by (Ahmmed, Sharma and Deppeler, 2012). Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2022) postulate that it is a standard which all educational managers should uphold for the effective rolling out of all-encompassing educational programmes. In essence, inclusive education is a matter of instructional practice and meaningful social integration and not just physical placement (Hailey, Love and Horn, 2019). According to Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2022), Zimbabwe is a signatory to the various international conventions and agreements that guide inclusive education and as such teachers' colleges are enrolling students with disabilities as a way of complying with the national and internal policies.

In their study, Mafa and Mathiba (2013) found that the lecturers were not quite adept at implementing inclusive education due to a number of factors such as lack of knowledge and skills and lack of clear policies that guide inclusive education programmes. In addition, Phiri (2013) found that inclusive education in tertiary institutions was not supported by proper attitudes, motivation and services within the institutions. In the studies of Mafa and Mathiba, (2013) Phiri, (2013); and Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2022), it was revealed that the teachers lacked, the capacity to manage students with disabilities in their institutions. The implication being that there are skills and knowledge gaps that must be filled by teacher training colleges to ensure the successful implementation of inclusive education in the nation (Hlatywayo and Mapolisa, 2022).

According to Anastasiou and Bantekas (2023) people with disabilities have been discriminated against in many ways, including their participation in education. That fact has been recognised in the United States (e.g. the Americans with Disabilities Act or ADA of 1990) and internationally (e.g. The Convention on The Rights of Persons with Disabilities or CRPD adopted by United Nations in 2006). Kauffman et al., (2023) argue that, an increasing presence of students with disabilities (SWD) in higher education has been observed in various countries. Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020) revealed that students with disabilities were enrolled in teachers' colleges though there were no clear enrolment procedures. Further, the curriculum in teachers colleges was rigid and did not cater for individual needs like a situation where a student with albinism preferred to take a plunge and swim in an indoor swimming pool while the college only had one outdoor swimming pool that was exposed to the weather elements that may be hostile to his/her skin. Their major conclusions were that inclusive practices in teaches' colleges in Zimbabwe were marred with non-uniformity as evidenced in the implementation process (Hlatywayo and Mapolisa, 2020). In line with the above, their study also concluded that due to the rigid curriculum and shortage of resources in teachers colleges in Zimbabwe, students with disabilities were not adequately catered for thereby affecting inclusive practices.

According to Hadjidakou and Hartas (2008) and Gebrehiwot (2015), there seemed to be have little research on the prevalence and experiences of students with disability and special needs in institutions of higher learning in Zimbabwe. Luthuli and Wood (2018); Chikwature et al., (2016) and Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020) agree that, teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe are currently enrolling students with disabilities, yet the implementation of inclusive education might not be standardised due to the absence of policy guidelines in the higher education

sector. In another study by Chikwature et al., (2016) principals were clear on what inclusive education is and only a few lecturers had a comprehensive understanding on inclusive education. Their study also revealed that principals, lecturers and students have a positive attitude towards inclusive education even though there is currently no national policy or local policies to guide the implementation of inclusive education in the higher education sector. Chireshe (2013) is of the view that teachers who are properly trained in inclusive education practice have the skills, knowledge and competence to be able to run an inclusive system in the general system of education, though they are very few. Chikwature et al., (2016) highlight the issue of infrastructure, where principals felt that it was very important and colleges were gradually attending to it. They pointed out that their colleges are old institutions which still create mobility problems for physically challenged individuals and those in wheelchairs.

Concerning marginalisation and discrimination Macleod and Cebuta (2009), Madraga (2007) and Musasa, Goronga and Tafangombe (2013) assert that students with disabilities have historically been marginalised and discriminated against in higher education and the world over. In the Zimbabwean context, Jenjekwa, Rutoro and Runyowa (2013), Majoko, (2017) and Phiri (2013) articulate that, students with disabilities are learners with visual impairments including blindness, intellectual disabilities, hearing impairments including deafness, speech or language impairments, orthopaedic impairments, traumatic brain injuries, health impairments, autism, emotional disturbances and specific learning disabilities. These continue to face discrimination and marginalisation in the implementation of educational policy.

In essence, Chataika (2008) and Majoko (2005) are of the view that, prior to the attainment of political independence from Great Britain in 1980, most black, Indian and coloured students with disabilities were excluded from higher education because of the racist colonial regime. Majoko (2017) and Mutsvanga and Mapuranga (2014) postulate that, since the passing of the Zimbabwe Education Act of 1987 as revised in 2006, The Zimbabwe Constitution Amendment Number 20 of 2013 Section 75, and The Disabled Persons Act of Zimbabwe of 1996, all students, including those with disabilities, have a fundamental right to education. In addition, Chikwature et al., (2016) and Majoko (2013) are of the view that, the above policies and legislation safeguard equity and equality of educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities in compliance with civil rights movements as expressed in international human rights instruments. In a study by Majoko (2018), it was found that the failure of lecturers to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities due to their large numbers in lecture rooms barred these students from participating in learning. Stressing a similar line of thought

Gibson (2012) and Majoko (2013) argue that the lack of teaching staff awareness of the different needs of students with disabilities is a barrier to the participation of students with disabilities in higher education institutions. For Chataika (2008) and Hopkins (2011) students with disabilities in higher education institutions continuously request reasonable adjustments including slides or lecture notes prior to the lecture, or permission to record lecturers.

Mortimore (2013) highlights that this kind of support is not usually provided by the institutions. Commenting on such challenges Chikwature et al., (2016), Majoko (2005) and Mortimore (2013) postulate that such barriers interfere with full inclusive teaching and learning of students with disabilities and disadvantages them in comparison to their typically developing peers. In his study, Majoko (2018) found that most lecturers lack information and knowledge on inclusive education including curriculum differentiation. Majoko (2018) further asserts that the lecturers lack competences and skills of using assistive devices such as Perkins and reading Braille and the ability to effect simple adjustments to a hearing aid when it is making noise. Studies by Liasidou (2014) and Mafa (2013) revealed that the segregation of students with disabilities from peers without disabilities during examinations is a stigmatising provision since it identifies students with disabilities as different from their peers without disabilities. In their studies, Chikwature et al., (2016) and Jenjekwa et al., (2013) found that there were attitudinal barriers that included negative attitudes of students without disabilities towards those with disabilities and disabling practices and attitudes of higher education institutions staff. In addition, Majoko (2018) revealed that the lack of training of lecturers in inclusive education including curriculum differentiation and the use of assistive devices impeded the participation of students with disabilities in learning since they were not afforded a befitting pedagogical context and environment in response to their needs. Furthermore, the lack of training of teachers in diverse teaching methods also hampered the participation of students with disabilities in learning as the teachers could not deliver the curriculum in response to the unique learning modalities of these students (Majoko, 2018).

In another study, Mortimore (2013) revealed that the failure by lecturers to provide lecture notes and slides before their presentations hindered the participation in learning of students with disabilities. The failure of lecturers to provide lecture notes and slides before their presentation can hinder the participation of students with disabilities in several ways. Firstly, students with visual impairments may have difficulty following the lecture if they are not provided with materials in advance. This can lead to a lack of understanding of the content and hinder their ability to participate in class discussions and activities. Secondly, students with

hearing impairments may have difficulty following the lecture if they are not provided with captions or transcripts of the lecture materials. This can also lead to a lack of understanding of the content and hinder their ability to participate in class activities. Overall, students with learning disabilities may benefit from having access to lecture materials in advance, as it allows them to review the content at their own pace and in a manner that suits their learning style.

Research studies have shown that the provision of lecture notes and slides in advance can be beneficial for students with disabilities. For example, a study by Kapperman et al. (2017) found that students with hearing impairments who received lecture notes and slides in advance had higher grades and better attendance compared to those who did not receive the materials in advance. Additionally, a study by Gormley and Bolas (2014) found that students with learning disabilities who received lecture materials in advance were able to better prepare for classes and participate more fully in class discussions.

One of the participants in Majoko's (2018) study highlighted that;

Lecturers refuse to give us (students with disabilities) lecture handouts and notes before their presentations. Most of them feel that giving us lecture handouts and notes in advance interferes with our motivation and commitment to participate in their presentations. We cannot cope with the presented content and catch up with our counterparts without disabilities because we use different learning strategies.

The statement reveals that lecturers are of the erroneous view that, providing lack of lecture hand-outs and notes to students with disabilities in advance of their presentations pre-empt such presentations and demotivates students with disabilities. However, such a perception hinders the participation of these students in learning (Majoko, 2018). This is proving to be a critical factor in the delays in the implementation of inclusive practices for the successful integration of students with disabilities in higher and tertiary institutions. In terms of disclosure, students with disabilities feel they cannot keep on disclosing their residual sight to lecturers lest they be stigmatised against as disability is an indicator of bad omen (Majoko, 2018). According to Algolaylat et al., (2023) the lack of inclusive education practices like the implementation of viable inclusive education policies constituted significant academic barriers for students with disabilities.

Internationally, the research of Zaki and Ismail (2021) in Malaysia revealed that, the Ministry of Education launched inclusive OKU or Disability Inclusion Policy in November 2018, and

the guideline has been distributed to all twenty (20) Public Higher Education Institutions in Malaysia. According to Zaki and Ismail (2021), Malaysia Public High Education is encouraged to provide a disability support office and an inclusive campus environment by 2025. In another international study by Gordon, Reid and Petocz (2010) it was found that, some educators perceived inclusive education as irrelevant to the context of teaching while others addressed it through a deficit model. Some actively utilised diversity as an essential resource in their teaching. Rowe, Muchatuta and Wood (2009) are of the view that the perception that learners should be required to fit into a mono-cultural education system with a fixed curriculum irrespective of their background may underpin current practice.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, Sibanda (2018) argues that, due to socio-economic challenges, many developing countries are experiencing a serious challenge of lack of resources in implementing inclusive education. In addition, Bornman and Rose (2010) highlighted that the general lack of support and resources contributes significantly to the poor implementation of inclusive education in many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Chimhenga (2016) identified limited resources in the form of human, financial, infrastructural and material resources as the major challenge in implementing inclusive practices in Zimbabwe. In the same vein, Mwangi and Orodho (2014) found that the lack of resources such as instructional materials impacted negatively on the implementation of inclusive education. These are some of the problems in the implementation of inclusive practices in higher education. The next section discusses the indicators of success of the formulation of a management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe.

### **3.6 Indicators of the success of a management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe.**

#### **3.6.1 Enrolment Process**

According to Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020), enrolment is considered an important practice of inclusive education in teachers' colleges. They argue that without enrolling students who should be part of the inclusive system, there can be no inclusive education in teachers' colleges. Similarly, Algolaylat et al., (2023) concur that although the registration procedures at X University are entirely online, the students expressed some problems related to the registration of some courses. They also faced challenges with the administrative procedures, such as following up on their paperwork, especially in the financial department. Conversely, however, Chikwature et al (2016) show that in terms of enrolling students from diverse backgrounds,

the two principals under their study, were able to articulate an array of successes which included issues of enrolment of students from diverse backgrounds. In their findings, Luthuli and Wood (2020) concluded that, “Anything for us without us, is against us.” This is a common slogan used by activists to emphasise the importance of including marginalised groups in decision-making processes that affect them. When Luthuli and Wood (2020) cite this quote in the context of college students, they may be highlighting the students' desire for greater inclusion and representation in decisions that affect their education and well-being. From another angle, Luthuli and Wood (2019:1362) may be pointing out that policies or programmes designed to benefit college students may be ineffective or even harmful if they are developed without the input and perspectives of the students themselves. The quote underscores the need to include the voices and experiences of those who are affected by policies and programmes in order to create solutions that are more effective, equitable and just. This highlights that there is a need to enrol more students with disabilities and those coming from diverse backgrounds in teacher training colleges as highlighted by the participants in the study by Luthuli and Wood: “[A]s students with disabilities we cannot say someone without a disability can stand for us, or can stand maybe for our rights,” (Luthuli and Wood, 2019:1363). Internationally, Tiwari, Das and Sharma (2015) in Delhi, India, state that, disadvantaged students have increasingly accessed education through inclusive education and in this regard, inclusion has become a main educational policy in many countries. This shift towards inclusive education reflects a broader commitment to providing equitable educational opportunities for all students, regardless of their backgrounds or abilities.

### **3.6.2 Stigma, Discrimination and Policies**

Reducing stigma and discrimination and promoting inclusivity in teacher training colleges is crucial for creating an environment that embraces diversity and provides equal opportunities for all students (Hlatywayo and Mapolisa, 2022). When stigma and discrimination are reduced and policies developed, inclusive education will be positively impacted. Luthuli and Wood (2019) agree that minimising stigma and discrimination in teacher training colleges towards students with disabilities requires concerted efforts and a commitment to creating an inclusive environment. Thus, conducting regular disability awareness and sensitisation programmes for all members of the college community, including students, faculty and staff is one way of promoting disability awareness and stigmatisation (Smythe, Adelson and Polack, 2020). In addition, Pure et al., (2018) postulate that the sensitization programmes can include workshops, seminars, guest speaker series and interactive activities that aim to challenge stereotypes,

increase understanding and foster empathy towards individuals with disabilities. Implementing these into practice would increase effectiveness in the implementation of inclusive education. Similarly, Rothwerder (2020) articulates that, there is need to develop and implement inclusive policies that explicitly address discrimination and promote equal opportunities for students with disabilities and ensure that these policies are communicated effectively and are accessible to everyone. Achieving that is actually an indicator of success. Chikwature et al., (2016) agree with Rothwerder (2020) that, inclusive practices must be incorporated in areas such as admissions, curriculum development, teaching methodologies and assessment procedures.

### **3.6.3 Accessibility and Accommodation**

Luthuli and Wood (2020) argue that institutions must ensure that the physical infrastructure of the college is accessible to students with disabilities including providing ramps, elevators, accessible washrooms and other necessary accommodations. All of these need to be implemented as policies of accessibility of resources by all students including the ones with disabilities. Additionally, colleges have to offer reasonable accommodations such as assistive technologies, accessible materials, note-taking support and extended time for examinations to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities (Chikwature et al., (2016). The implementation of these would serve as indicators that colleges have successfully considered students with disabilities without discrimination. Chikwature et al., (2016), Mueller and Peck (2019) Luthuli and Wood (2019), Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2022) all agree that public spaces and transportation systems should be designed to be accessible and inclusive for students with disabilities. In addition, they emphasise the importance of ensuring that medical facilities, equipment, and information are physically accessible to individuals with disabilities. This can be achieved by providing wheelchair ramps, sign language interpreters and accessible formats for students with visual impairments.

### **3.6.4 Inclusive language and representation**

In his medical and social models, Kwari (2021) is of the view that using inclusive language and imagery that respects and acknowledges diverse identities creates an inclusive environment that values and affirms individuals of all backgrounds. Bugdashina (2016) advise that institutions should recognise that individuals have multiple social identities that represent them such as race, gender, sexuality and disability and that these identities intersect and influence their experiences and needs. Similarly, Retief (2018) argues that considering intersectionalism helps to understand the unique challenges faced by individuals at the crossroads of different marginalized identities, as it acknowledges the complex interactions between

various forms of oppression and discrimination. The interaction must also include positive feedback and satisfaction whereby, according to Kwari (2021), institutions should conduct surveys or interviews with students who can provide valuable insights into their experiences with the enrolment process. Positive feedback and high levels of student satisfaction can indicate the success of the strategy in creating an inclusive and supportive enrolment process. By monitoring these indicators, teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe can assess the success of their strategies to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education during the enrolment process. Regular evaluation and feedback from stakeholders can also help identify areas of improvement and inform future enhancements to the strategy.

### **3.6.5 Accessibility in Teacher Training Colleges**

The inclusion of students with disabilities in teacher training colleges requires the creation of an accessible environment. The provision of accessible infrastructure, transportation systems, and medical facilities are essential for ensuring that students with disabilities can fully participate in the learning process. Research by Chikwature et al., (2016) highlights the importance of providing assistive technology, sign language interpreters, and accessible formats for visually impaired students. In addition, Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2022) emphasise the need for teacher training colleges to provide training to staff on disability issues and to ensure that all students have equal access to educational resources.

### **3.6.6 Inclusivity in Curriculum Development**

Curriculum development is a critical aspect of enhancing inclusivity in teacher training colleges. Researchers such as Luthuli and Wood (2020) have highlighted the need for teacher training colleges to develop curricula that are inclusive of students with disabilities. This requires the integration of disability-related content like special education services, inclusive teaching, addressing disability in the general curriculum, creating inclusive learning and a supportive learning environment into the curriculum and providing training to teachers on how to teach students with disabilities effectively.

### **3.6.7 Leadership and Management**

Effective leadership and management are essential for the development and implementation of a management model to enhance inclusivity in teacher training colleges. As highlighted by Mueller and Peck (2019), the development of policies and procedures that promote inclusivity requires the involvement of all stakeholders, including students, staff and community members. In addition, effective communication, collaboration, and consultation with

stakeholders are crucial for the successful implementation of a management model. Overall, the development of a management model to enhance inclusivity in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe requires a holistic approach that considers accessibility, curriculum development, and effective leadership and management. The literature review highlights the need for teacher training colleges to provide an accessible environment, integrate disability-related content into the curriculum, and involve all stakeholders in the development and implementation of policies and procedures that promote inclusivity. Chapter 4 focuses on participatory research which in the approach used to bring out data through in fraternising with core-researchers.

### **3.7 Summary**

Chapter 3 focused on the review of related literature on the barriers to academic and social inclusion faced by students with disabilities at teacher training colleges. It also focused on how tertiary institutions implement inclusive practices for the successful integration of students with disabilities. Furthermore, it discussed the indicators of the success of a management model that will enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe. The next chapter focuses on the research design and methodology.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Chapter 4 focuses on the Participatory Action Research which is a research design that involves collaboration between researcher and the community or stakeholders being studied. The first section of this chapter provides a deeper appreciation of PAR. The second section then portrays the process of generating the data that was analysed in chapter 5. In essence, this chapter highlights how the originated data was scrutinized together with the coresearchers. The motion of the core-searchers and their credentials were discussed in this chapter. The aim and objectives of the study are highlighted below in order to fully understand the methodological approach used.

##### **4.1.1 Aim and Objectives of the study**

The aim of the study is to develop a management model to enhance inclusivity at a teacher's training college in Zimbabwe. The objectives of this study will be to:

- Determine the major barriers to academic and social inclusion faced by students with disabilities at a teacher training college;
- Explore how tertiary institutions implement inclusive practices for the successful integration of students with disabilities at a teacher training college; and
- Discuss the indicators of the success of a management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe.

##### **4.1.2 Research questions**

The main research question reinforcing this study is, how can a management model be developed to enhance inclusive education in a teacher training college in Zimbabwe? The research questions are as follows; what barriers to academic and social inclusion do students with disabilities face at the college? Which inclusive practices do tertiary institutions implement to achieve the successful integration of students with disabilities at a teacher training college? Lastly, what are the indicators of the success of a management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe?

The Participatory Action Research approach and the questions guiding this study to originate data with the core-searchers were adhered to. The next section discusses PAR as an approach to the generation of data in this study.

## **4.2 Participatory Action Research as an approach to generating data.**

PAR was used as an approach to generate data in this study. To satisfactorily visualize PAR, the origins, definition and benefits of PAR are discussed in detail. Asuquo and Etowa (2016) are of the view that, PAR is an approach to generating data that involves collaboration between researchers and the participants of a study. PAR aims to empower the participants by involving them in the research process, allowing them to contribute their knowledge and experiences and actively participate in decision-making (Bradbury, 2015). In addition, Stringer (2007) propounds that PAR is a research approach that actively involves participants in the research process.

### **4.2.1 Origins of Participatory Action Research (PAR)**

Esau (2013) argues that PAR is not a new idea but originates from the pioneering work of Kurt Lewin in 1948. The Taristock Institute of the 1940s and subsequent formulations of PAR have in common the idea that research and action must be done ‘with’ people and not ‘on’ or ‘for’ people (McIntyre, 2007; Chevalier & Buckles, 2013; Reason & Bradbury, 2001; Swantz, 2008). Ward and Walter (2021) agree with Esau (2013) that, the term ‘action research’ was coined in 1946 by Kurt Lewin to describe a spiral action of research aimed at problem solving. According to Walker (1993), community involvement was important for Lewin who was, writing and working after World War 11, and who he saw participatory action research as a tool for bring about democracy in post-war countries. Stringer (2019) narrates that, Kurt Lewin was a German-American social psychologist who is often considered the founder of action research. Lewin’s work focussed on addressing social issues and promoting social change through a cyclical process of action and reflection and his idea laid the ground work for the action-oriented nature of PAR (Whyte, 1991). According to Bradbury (2015), PAR has its roots in various social and educational movements and theories. While it is a challenge to pinpoint a single origin, PAR draws on several key influences.

### **4.2.2 Research Design**

Research design is the overall plan for connecting the conceptual research problems to the pertinent and achievable empirical research (Asenahabi, 2019). This definition emphasises the importance of connecting research challenges to relevant and achievable phenomena. Creswell

(2014) defines research design as an inquiry which provides a specific direction for procedures in research. A research design is a systematic elucidation of the whole research process that includes methods and techniques, starting from the planning of research, execution (data collection), analysis and the drawing of a logical conclusion based on the results obtained (Akhtar, 2016). From the definitions given above I conclude that, a research design is a framework developed by a research team to find an answer/solution to a problem. This study adopted a participatory action research (PAR) which is discussed in detail in the following sections.

#### **4.2.2.1 PAR as an approach: Definition and importance**

Cornish et al. (2023) define PAR as a qualitative research methodology in which researchers and participants collaborating to understand social issues and take actions to bring about social change. PAR, according to Baum, MacDougall and Smith (2006), is a research approach that involves collaboration between researchers and the community being studied and it aims to empower community members and generate knowledge that can lead to positive social change. Cornish (2023) further articulates that PAR emphasises active participation, collective decision-making and the integration of research and action. The two definitions given above emphasises the importance of active participation and collaboration of community members in the research process, which is the motive of this study. Stringer (2014) and Tanner et al. (2021) define PAR as an approach that emphasises the importance of involving those affected by the research in all stages, including problem identification, data collection, analysis and decision-making processes. PAR typically involves multiple cycles of reflection, action and evaluation and encourages the co-creation of knowledge, empowering participants to have a voice in shaping the research agenda and outcomes (Cornish, 2023). Notably, this definition emphasises the importance of community involvement and active participation.

Bradbury (2015) defines Participatory Action Research as a participatory democratic process concerned with developing practical knowledge in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes. In addition, Participatory Action Research (PAR) refers to a research method, typically concerned with organisational self-assessment, in which the subjects of the study “participate with the professional researcher throughout the research process, from the initial design to the final presentation of the results and discussion of their action implications” (Whyte, 1989). Participatory action researchers have an emancipatory interest in improving human welfare by using methods of reflection and action (Murray and Ozanne, 2014). Mash (2014) recognises

that (PAR) is embedded within the Transformative Emancipatory-Critical Paradigm (TECP) in the sense that this paradigm is characterized by a critical, emancipatory and transformative worldview that seeks to challenge existing power structures and promote social change (Farians et al., 2017). Participatory action research provides opportunities for developing processes with people rather than for people (McIntyre, 2007). It places emphasis on people's lived experiences, individual and social change, the construction of knowledge and the notion of action as a legitimate mode of knowing, thereby taking the realm of knowledge into the field of practice (Tandon and Farrell 2006).

The term "action research" refers to investigations of strategies or principles that can explain or improve a situation and "participatory" emphasises the participation of stakeholders in the research process. The concepts of participation and action form the basis of the method, that is, research should be more than just finding out; research should also involve an action component that seeks to engender positive change and a participatory process that requires the equal and collaborative involvement of the "community of research interest" (Walter, 2009). Stakeholders are needed to ensure that the 'outside' research professionals do not misconstrue or render meaningless the collected information due to their lack of first-hand knowledge of the situation (or due to not being 'members' of the socio-cultural group). Stakeholder presence in the research process also ensures that the resulting action steps are 'owned' by the stakeholders, that there is "greater consensus for change" (Reason & Bradbury, 2001).

The aim of PAR is to produce knowledge and action directly useful to a group of people through research, adult education or socio-political action. The second aim is to empower people at a second and deeper level through the process of constructing and using their own knowledge (Reason and Bradbury, 2001). The problem-solving focus in participatory action research means that this research approach has practical outcomes and positive change. Participatory action research is collaborative research involving the community of research interest with the research objective of producing practical outcomes that are workable. According to Cornish et al. (2023), PAR is committed research due to its emphasis on emancipatory, engaged scholarship and the commitment to effect social change (Farian et al. (2017). The commitment of the community of interest enables the research project to access community understanding, knowledge and collective memory. In addition, this approach involves active participation and collaboration with the members of communities affected by the research, striving to make a positive impact and promoting democratic processes (Baum, MacDougall and Smith, 2006).

Action researchers and qualitative researchers taking an emancipatory-liberatory framework often evaluate research based on whether it has stimulated action that will improve education or enhance the lives of persons with little power. However, since in participatory action research stakeholders fully participate in research, it means there is no one taking the lead in the research. Thus, group involvement and democratic processes may lead to competing research agendas. This can occur due to the diverse perspectives, interests and priorities of the participants involved in the research process. Redman-MacLare et al. (2014) are of the view that, when different stakeholders bring their unique viewpoints and objectives to the table, it can result in the emergence of conflicting research priorities within the collaborative framework of PAR. Also, categorising a group with a shared interest or problem as a ‘community’ does not automatically result in a consensus on what the problem is and how it might best be addressed. Moreover, in participatory action research, the research process has no timeline, that is, it has no set end date (Baum et al., 2006). This then makes it difficult to determine when the research is complete, as the focus is often an ongoing engagement, collaboration, and action within the community or organisation being studied. The question then becomes: how do we know when a problem is resolved, or when the process become ineffectual? Participatory action research has been strongly criticised by other social researchers. According to Walter (2009), these criticisms tend to focus on how its participation, democracy and external ownership aspects can greatly reduce the validity of the research and the rigour of the methods used. Questions of whether participatory action research methods lead to good, scientific, valid, reliable and, usable research outcomes also proffered.

Borda (1987) defines PAR, as a research approach that involves collaboration between researchers and the community being studied. In PAR, the goal is not only to produce but also to bring about social change and empower the participants (Whyte, 1991). According to Borda (1987), Stringer (2014), Cornish, 2023; Tanner et al. (2021) and Cornish (2023) PAR is often used in social sciences, community development, education and other fields where researchers and practitioners aim to address real-world problems and improve the lives of individuals and communities. McIntyre (2008), Brydon-Miller and Maguire (2009) and Torre (2009) point out that PAR is a methodology that emerged largely from the Global South to challenge the imperialism of western science and societies. In other words, this approach seeks to address the dominance of Western perspectives and methodologies in research and knowledge production, particularly within the context of social sciences and community-based research (Brydon et al, 2009). Commonalities among these definitions include the importance of the

active involvement of participants in the research process, collaboration between researchers and the community being studied, empowering community members and generating knowledge that can lead to positive social change.

#### **4.2.2.2 The strengths of PAR in research**

Participatory Action Research offers several benefits that distinguish it from traditional research approaches. PAR has the potential to produce more meaningful and transformative research outcomes by actively involving those affected by the research, promoting social change and fostering empowerment and collaboration. PAR enhances the research and problem-solving skills of participants, enabling them to take an active role in addressing the challenges they face (Bywater, 2014). All these benefits assisted the smooth running of this study as I made sure I focused on the empowerment of the participants who also owned the research. Relevant and contextualised knowledge were adhered to. I also focused on the collaboration and co-learning of both the researcher and the participants. Additionally, I adhered to the principles of social change and action for marginalised groups and conditions within communities, ethical considerations for respect of autonomy, cultural sensitivity and justice and sustainability and long-term impact. The next section looks at the limitations of PAR.

#### **4.2.2.3 Weakness of PAR as an approach to generating data**

PAR has its strengths in generating data as highlighted in the previous section. It however has its own weaknesses in generating data. According to Walter (2009) one of the weaknesses of PAR is that, it has no research leader the group involvement and democratic process may lead to competing agendas. The author might see it as a weakness but I differ with him in that when the group participation and democracy are adhered to, there is a high likelihood that the research will respond to the problems under investigation (Dube, 2016). Depending on the sample size, the research can take longer than expected because everyone has a voice in the analysis (Walter, 2009). Already as alluded to by Walter (2009), in PAR, more participants mean more data to analyse, which can be another factor that leads to an in extended research period. Naturally, it gets more challenging to analyse the information if the amount of data is larger. In that regard, I made sure that we remained focussed, had targets to meet adhered to due dates set.

My conclusion is that, based on Walter's (2009) perspective, employing PAR in this study as a method for gathering data represents dedicated research. The involvement of the community of interest allowed the research project to tap into the community's knowledge, understanding and collective memory. In the same vein, Khanlou and Peter (2005) are of the view that, the community's locus of control leads to the identification of problems that are important to the community, rather than being diagnosed from an external perspective. PAR as transformative research which is influenced by CER put value on the co-researchers as the knowledgeable people who have the potential to contribute to the formulation of a management model that, in this case, sought to enhance inclusivity in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe.

### **4.3 Research paradigm**

A research paradigm is a method, model or pattern for conducting research. It is a set of ideas, beliefs or understandings within which theories and practices can function (Kankam, 2019). According to Younas and Parsons (2019), a research paradigm is an integrated cluster of substantive concepts, variables and problems attached with corresponding methodological approaches and tools. Blanche, Blanche, and Durrheim (2006) define a research paradigm as an all-encompassing system of practice and thinking which helps define the nature of a particular research idea and highlight those things taken for granted about the social world the researcher is studying and the appropriate and correct ways of studying it. According to Yilmaz (2013), the term paradigm refers to a research culture with a set of beliefs, values and assumptions that a community of researchers has in common regarding the nature and conduct of research (Yilmaz, 2013). In other words, a research paradigm refers to a framework or perspective within which research is conducted. It encompasses the researcher's worldview, beliefs, assumptions and methods employed in a particular field of study (Blanche et. al (2006). In, essence, it provides a foundation for understanding and conducting research.

In this study, a transformative emancipatory paradigm (TEP) was used to shape the methodology and research design so as to reveal and improve the lived experiences of students with disabilities at the tertiary institution. TEP focused on creating new knowledge by transforming or changing the world in which the research was embedded and reflecting critically on what was learnt in the process. Participants in the research study under the TEP were not objects to be measured, but were rather participating subjects in action, where understanding of self, others and their world were the basis of enquiry. According to Quin (2012), "engaging in a process that changes the world requires to change one's own position

in the world”. Changing “one’s own position in the world” enabled participants in this study to become active in positively changing the world. Mertens (2007) states that the “transformative emancipatory ontology assumption holds that there are diversities of viewpoints with regard to many social realities but these viewpoints need to be placed within political, cultural, historical, and economic value system to understand the basis for the differences.” The transformative paradigm also emphasises the role of the people involved in the research, and instead of being emancipated, the researcher should work together with participants to achieve personal and social transformation (Mertens, 2012). According to Mahlomaholo (2009) the intention is to show that the participants in the research are able to see themselves as transformed human beings who have been liberated and have assumed, in this case, new academic identities. Dube (2016) is of the view that transformative research involves a dynamic interplay between reflection and action, between knowing and doing.

Transformative emancipatory research is aimed at raising awareness of injustice and correcting the way knowledge has been used to ensure the passivity of the socially vulnerable (Baert and Shipman, 2013). Mertens and Wilson (2019) and Mertens (2023) encourage social science researchers to design their studies so that they contribute to transformative change to increase social, economic and environmental justice. Mertens (2022a) again posits that, a transformative lens incorporates the understanding that ethical practice is inclusive in a culturally responsive manner with members of marginalised and vulnerable populations in ways that challenge the existing power structure. In this study I chose to use transformative research paradigm because it has the potential to generate profound societal impact by addressing critical issues, and in this case, the lack of inclusivity in teachers’ colleges in Zimbabwe.

Inclusive education is the practice of including everyone irrespective of talent, disability, socio-economic background, or cultural origin in supportive mainstream schools and classrooms where all student needs are met (Swart et al., 2002). However, in spite -of the above developments, Zimbabwe does not have an inclusive education specific policy even though it has inclusive education related policies like the Zimbabwe Disabled Persons Act of 1996 which advocates for the non-discrimination of people with disabilities (Chireshe, 2013; Mpofu 2007). Mpofu et al., (2007). Mpofu et al. (2007) state that due to the lack of legislation specifically supporting inclusive education, it is difficult for tertiary institution to implement the structures and procedures and gather resources necessary for successful inclusion. Epistemologically, the transformative emancipatory research emphasises the importance of an

interactive relationship between the researcher and the participants and the impact of social and historical factors that influence them. Mertens (Ibid: 99) holds that the “interaction between the researchers and the participants is essential and requires a level of trust and understanding to accurately represent viewpoints of all groups fairly.” The transformative methodology is directed to raise the awareness of participants and interrogate accepted injustice and discrimination.

#### **4.3.1 Qualitative approach**

The qualitative approach attempts to study the everyday life of different groups of people and communities in their natural setting. Qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter by attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). According to Domegan and Fleming (2007), qualitative research aims to explore and to discover issues about the problem on hand, because very little is known about the problem. There is usually uncertainty about the dimensions and characteristics of the problem. It uses ‘soft’ data to get ‘rich’ data.

According to Myers (2009), qualitative research is designed to help researchers understand people, and the social and cultural contexts within which they live. Such studies allow the complexities and differences of worlds-under-study to be explored and represented (Philip, 1998:267). In addition, the author further highlights that qualitative research focuses on the meanings of experiences by exploring how people defined, described and metaphorically made sense of these experiences. In the same vein, Khan (2014) is of the view that qualitative research is most appropriate when the researcher wants to become more familiar with the phenomenon of interest, to achieve a deep understanding of how people think about a topic and to describe in great detail the perspectives of the research participants. According to Silverman (2010), a qualitative perspective assumes that knowledge is constructed through communication and interaction; as such, knowledge is not “out there” but within the perceptions and interpretations of the individual. The above definitions emphasise that the goal is to understand, in depth, the viewpoint of research participants and to realise that all understanding is constructed. From this understanding, it was expected that different research participants in this study were going to have different interpretations of their own experiences and the social systems within which they interact.

Interviews and focus group discussions are the qualitative data instruments that were used to collect data from participants in their natural settings. The other reason for using these instruments is that, expressions and experiences of the participants were easily understood even when there was little or no information about them, in line with the advice of Leedy and Ormrod (2014:141). Daniel (2016) is of the view that qualitative research often leads to the identification of new themes, patterns or theories that were not previously anticipated, allowing for the development of fresh insights. Following the same line of thought, Khan (2014) propounds that qualitative research methods enable researchers to establish personal connections with participants, fostering trust and openness that can lead to more authentic and in-depth data. This emphasis on personal connections is particularly valuable in the context of qualitative research, where the exploration of individuals' experiences, perspectives, and emotions is central to the research process (Riese, 2019). In addition, Austin and Sutton (2014) postulate that, by engaging in methods such as in-depth interviews and focus groups, researchers can create a space for meaningful dialogue and interaction with participants. This in turn, allows for the development of rapport and trust, which are essential for participants to feel comfortable to share their experiences and insights openly.

#### **4.3.2 Population**

Shukla (2020) defines a population as any collection of specific groups of human beings or of non-human entities such as objects, educational institutions, time units, geographical area, prices of wheat or salaries drawn by individuals; in short, a list of elements from which a sample may be drawn. According to Banerjee and Chaudhury (2010), a population represents the larger target group from which a sample is drawn and inferences are made. Similarly, Thacker (2019) defines population in research as the entire group of individuals or objects that the researcher is interested in studying. This encompasses the full set of individuals, objects or events that possess the characteristics of interest to the researcher. In other words, population is a set of all the units which possess variable characteristic under study and for which findings of the research can be generalised Shukla (2020). In this research, the intended population for this study were the students with different disabilities in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe. The main reason why I focused on the target population was that students with different disabilities face quite a number of challenges as they train in different institutions.

### **4.3.3 Sample**

A sample is a small part of a large population which is thought to be representative of a larger population (Grafstrom and Schelin, 2014). Any statements made about the sample should be true for the entire population. Sampling is the procedure of picking a precise number of individuals from a defined group to accomplish a research study (Levy and Lemeshow, 2013). This sample is a representative subset of individuals who potentially share the same characteristics as a large population, and the results of the research can be generalised. Prioritizing the description of human behaviour in a particular social context over concerns of generalising to a broader population prompts qualitative researchers to employ non-random sampling techniques.

Purposive sampling is a sampling technique in which specific types of people are identified because they can provide the desired information, either because they are the only ones who have it, or they conform to some criteria set by the researcher (Bougie & Sekaran, 2019). Purposeful samples comprise of people with a particular attribute, and are often designed to arbitrarily include equal representation of groups that may not be equally represented in society (Kenny, Lowe, Hassan, Bacchus, Njorege, Dagadu and Cislighi. 2022).

My study sample which comprised 10 students with different disabilities, 8 students without disabilities from the SRC, 1 male administrator, and 1 male specialist lecturer was drawn from X teachers' college. Purposive sampling was used in this study, and the criteria used sought to create a gender balance where 5 males and 5 females represented students with different disabilities, 4 males and 4 females from SRC represented students without disabilities and 2 males, 1 being an administrator and 1 being a specialist lecturer, represented staff. The age of the participants representing the students with different disabilities and those without disabilities ranged from 21-38years and for the staff members the range was between 52-57years. Purposive sampling moves away from any random form of sampling and strategies to make sure that specific kinds of cases of those that could possibly be included are part of the final sample in the research study (Campbell et al., 2020). In this study, X teachers College was conveniently selected because it was strategically a low-cost study site which made it relatively easy for the researcher to use in collect data from the available participants.

When employing purposive sampling in research, the selection of participants is deliberate and specific, aimed at targeting individuals who possess particular characteristics or experiences relevant to the research question (Klar and Leeper, 2019). In purpose sampling, according to

Ritchie, Lewis and Elam (2013), one should identify specific criteria and, use deliberate selection which must be relevant to the research question as a result purposive sampling was used to select 10 students with different disabilities, 8 students without disabilities from the Student Representative Committee, one specialist lecturer and one administrator.

#### **4.4 Instruments**

Two questions should guide the data - collection process, according to Guba and Lincoln (1994). This quotation emphasizes the importance of guiding questions in the data collection process. In order to reach the aim of this study, focus group discussions and interviews were administered to participants in order to collect relevant data. The following section discusses the value of focus group discussions and interviews to this study.

##### **4.4.1 Focus group discussion**

A focus group is a form of group interview in which participants respond to a set of questions that express similar and differing views and discuss them amongst the group. As a form of qualitative data collection method (Krueger, 2002), focus groups usually consist of 6 to 12 participants led by a facilitator. Focus groups are undoubtedly valuable when in-depth information is needed “about how people think about an issue – their reasoning about why things are as they are, why they hold the views they do” (Krueger, 2014). Focus group discussions have the benefit to reveal the evolution of perceptions in a social context. This means that the perceptions of an individual in isolation may be different from perceptions that develop in a social context. Hence, in this study, 10 students with different disabilities constituted their own group and discussed their own experiences and 8 students without disabilities constituted their own group. The students have had similar experiences and were known to have a professional concern about the knowledge of the issues involved. The intention was to have students interact with each other and be willing to listen to each other and perhaps to reach consensus about some aspects of the topic disagreed about others. Additionally, this afforded them the opportunity to air out their opinions about the issues which seemed to be interesting or important to them. The researcher became less of an interviewer, but more of a moderator or facilitator (Bell and Waters, 2018).

##### **4.4.2 Semi-structured interviews**

Semi-structured interviews enable participants, be they interviewers or interviewees, to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2018). The semi-structured interview is a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multi-sensory channels to be used:

verbal, oral and auditory. The order of the interview may be controlled while still giving space for spontaneity, and the interviewer can press not only for complete answers but also for responses about complex and deep issues (Rowley, 2012). The interview is a constructed rather than naturally occurring situation, and this renders it different from an everyday conversation. Therefore, the researcher in this study had an obligation to set up, and abide by, the different ‘rules of the game’ in an interview. In this study, 2 staff members 1 administrator and 1 specialist lecturer were interviewed. These were the key informants as the administrator was the principal of college X and the specialist lecturer was the one who manned the inclusivity resource centre in that particular college.

#### **4.5 Processes and steps of generating data**

##### **4.5.1 Description of research site**

The study site was a secondary teachers’ college located in the Bulawayo Metropolitan Province in Zimbabwe. It offers various programmes and courses for aspiring teachers. It is a government institution that provides teacher education for students who wish to be secondary school teachers. The name of the college is X Teachers College. The mandate of X Teachers College was to develop quality teachers for the lower and upper secondary schools in the country specialising in Science, Mathematics, Commercials, Practical subjects, Languages and Humanities. It was the first college to be accorded Associate Status by the University of Zimbabwe and its predecessors. This was done at the inception of the college. Prospective students with relevant qualifications can apply to train as secondary teachers.

##### **4.5.2 Selection of co-researchers**

After sending invitations to X Teachers’ College, the administration, specialist lecturer, SRC and students with different various disabilities, co-researchers were selected. The invitations outlined the study’s title, aim and objectives (refer to appendix 6) to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research and how their involvement could help address inclusivity challenges. The details were crafted to appeal to the pertinent administrator, lecturer, and students. While some students showed initial interest, a few delayed their response, prompting me to follow up physically in their lecture rooms. Co-researchers who expressed their willingness to participate in the study signed consent forms, ensuring that their involvement was voluntary and aligned with the ethical principles guiding the research. Given the research’s emphasis on inclusive education, it was crucial to involve coresearchers with a keen interest in inclusivity issues. Supporting this approach and the use of participatory action research

Edlmann and Grobbelaar (2021) contend that engaging the beneficiaries offers a platform for sharing insights and experiences, as well as addressing shared challenges and solutions. The study included 10 students with diverse disabilities, 8 students without disabilities, 1 specialist lecturer and 1 administrator. The students without disabilities were affiliated with the SRC and were enrolled in various subjects at the college being examined. Upon responding to the invitation, the co-researchers were convened for an introductory meeting to acquaint themselves with each other. During this initial gathering, it was decided to develop a management model aimed at bolstering inclusivity within a teacher training college. Additionally, it was agreed that the two groups of students would conduct their focus group discussions separately, while the administrator and specialist lecturer were interviewed individually.

#### 4.5.3 Credentials of the co-researchers

The following are the credentials of co-researchers. To protect their identities of the co-researchers' pseudonyms were used. The co-researchers were invited officially after receiving the ethical clearance from the University of Free State. Some of the students with different disabilities were on Teaching Practice and some had just completed their diploma awaiting graduation.

**Table 4.1 Credentials of Administrators**

Name	Position Held
Sibalukhulu	Sibalukhulu is an administrator who is the Principal of X Teachers College. He is the key informant with relevant information needed concerning inclusivity at the college.
Butholabo	Butholabo is the only specialist lecturer who is in-charge of Inclusive Education and responsible for the Inclusive Education Resource Centre (IERC).

**Table 4.2 Students with different disabilities**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
Guzu	Guzu is one the students with a physical disability, specialising in Physical Education.
Zhilos	Zhilos is one of the students who is visually impaired and is specialising in IsiNdebele and English.
Mkhaya	Mkhaya is one of the students who has a physical disability and is specialising in Geography and History.
Spondoki	Spondoki is one of the students with physical disability and uses a wheelchair. Specialising in Mathematics.
Mthombo	Mthombo is one of the students with a physical disability and specialises in History and IsiNdebele.
Ginyane	Ginyane is one of the students with a physical disability uses crushes and is specialising in Art.
Lelethu	Lelethu is one of the students who is visually impaired and is specializing in IsiNdebele and English.
Galele	Galele is one of the students with a physical disability who is specialising in Music and English.
Rudon	Rudon is one of the students with hearing impairment and is specialising in History and Geography.
Gidza	Gidza is one of the students with hearing impairment and is specialising in Agriculture.

**Table 4.3 Student Representative Committee (SRC)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
Gerries	Gerris is the SRC President specialising in Physical Education.
Ntonono	Ntonono is one of the SRC committee members who is a needy student specialising in sciences.
Charris	Charris is one of the SRC members who is specialising in French and English.
Ntosh	Ntosh is the secretary for the SRC who is specialising in Business Studies
Tebza	Tebza is the entertainment officer in the SRC who is specialising in English and Tjikalanga.
Qhubas	Qhubas is a committee member in the SRC specialising in English and ChiVhenda.
Sqintii	Sqintii is the Treasurer of the SRC who is specialising in Tonga and English.
Nyama	Nyama is the Public Relations Officer in the SRC specialising in Physical Education.

## **4.6 Stages and process of data generation**

This portion outlines the collaborative efforts of the team in collecting data that aligns with the study's goal and objectives. The team utilised focus group discussions and interviews to gather data. The following section details the various stages of data collection, highlighting the specific areas the team addressed in developing a management model to promote inclusivity at a teacher training college in Zimbabwe.

### **4.6.1 Stage 1: Planning and Design**

The planning and design stage is crucial as it sets the foundation for the entire research process. During this phase, the researcher worked closely with the coresearchers to identify the research objectives, develop a research plan and design the data collection methods. The emphasis was on ensuring that the research is participatory, inclusive and aligned with the needs and perspectives of the community (US Food and Drug Administration, 2011). The initial stage played a crucial role in gaining a comprehensive understanding of the prominent issue at hand, which revolved around the inadequacy of the efforts made to in promote inclusivity at a teacher training college. This inadequacy specifically pertained to addressing the needs of students with disabilities.

The initial team meeting served as the cornerstone for the research endeavour, establishing the guidelines for effective interpersonal dynamics essential to the research's success. Coresearchers collaboratively formulated ground rules, particularly pertaining to those engaged in separate focus group discussions, to govern their interactions. These rules encompassed aspects such as respecting individuals' viewpoints, actively listening, and responding as guided by the team leader. During the initial meeting with the team, several key objectives were accomplished. Firstly, the researcher collaborated with the coresearchers to identify research goals and objectives. Subsequently, they meticulously designed data collection instruments and methods, ensuring their cultural sensitivity and inclusivity. Thirdly, the team established a collaborative framework, clearly defining the roles of all involved parties. Lastly, they developed a comprehensive plan for the subsequent stages of the research process, encompassing data collection, analysis, and action implementation.

### **4.6.2 Stage 2: Data generation**

In the context of PAR, the second stage involved data generation. This is a critical phase that includes the collection of information and insights essential for the research process. During this stage, the focus is on employing a variety of methods to gather data that accurately reflect

the experiences, perspectives and needs of the community involved. According to Kornbluh (2015), building trust and rapport with the community is a key focus during the data generation stage. Thus, the researcher should prioritise establishing meaningful connections and open communication channels with community members. This involves engaging in ongoing dialogue, actively listening to co-researchers and demonstrating respect for their knowledge and experiences. In addition, the research approached the data generated during this stage with a critical lens, acknowledging the potential for power dynamics and biases. In collaboration, the team interpreted and analysed the data in a manner that reflected the diverse perspectives within the college under study. James, Milenkiewicz and Bucknam (2007) are of the view that, by prioritising inclusive data collection methods, fostering trust and open communication, and critically engaging with the data, the research team ensures that the data generation stage in PAR sets the foundation for a research process that is truly participatory and responsive to the community's needs and aspirations. In this study, PAR prioritised inclusive data collection methods to ensure that the research process reflected the diversity and perspectives of the college being studied. This involved actively involving coresearchers in the data collection process and ensuring that the methods used were accessible and respectful of diverse voices and experiences.

#### **4.6.3 Stage 3: Barriers to academic and social inclusion faced by students with disabilities**

In response to the initial objective of the study, the team, in their separate focus group discussions and separate interviews, deliberated on the diverse obstacles to academic and social integration encountered by students with disabilities at the college under examination. These barriers were categorised into environmental, social and systemic factors. The foremost barrier to inclusivity in teacher training colleges was the lack of knowledge and skills among lecturers to create an inclusive environment. This lack of knowledge and skills also included staff competencies. It is important for educators to have the necessary knowledge and skills to foster an inclusive learning environment. In summary, the barriers that came up during the discussions in separate sessions included physical obstacles that impede access, the imperative for academic inclusion to accommodate diverse learning needs, the absence of inclusive policies, inadequate staff competences in fostering inclusive environments, limited funding, inflexible curriculum structures, stigma and discrimination, as well as the influence of the medical and social model of thinking in the college under study. Overcoming these barriers necessitates comprehensive efforts to address physical accessibility, enhance staff training,

revise policies, and cultivate a more inclusive and supportive educational culture through coming up with a management model by the team.

#### **4.6.4 Stage 4. Inclusive practices done by tertiary institutions to implement the successful integration of students with disabilities at a teacher training college.**

The team noted that, teacher training colleges are enrolling students with disabilities not only to comply with national and internal policies, but also to foster a more inclusive learning environment. While students with disabilities are being enrolled, there are limitations on their enrolment in all subjects, and the implementation of inclusive education remains restricted. In interview sessions, it was raised that inclusive policies at the national level are still in the draft stage, and facilities in the college under study have not been adequately adjusted to meet the unique needs of these students. Additionally, the Student Representative Committee is open to all students, including those with disabilities.

#### **4.6.5 Stage 5: Indicators of the success of a management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe.**

The indicators of success for a management model aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of inclusive education in teacher training colleges encompass several key aspects that were raised by the team through the focus group discussions and interviews. These include the development of an educational mission that prioritises the academic success and well-being of each student, the provision of sufficient support and training for staff members and establishment of inclusive college environments with equitable outcomes for all students. Additionally, the team discussed the ongoing mentoring and training of education officials and college administrators on issues related to inclusive education as crucial indicators of success. In addition, the ability of higher education teacher preparation programmes to increase the effectiveness of educators in fulfilling their duties, particularly in promoting inclusive practices, was an important aspect of a successful management model for enhancing inclusive education in teacher training colleges.

#### **4.6.6 Stage 6: Formulation of inclusive management model in teacher training colleges**

After conducting focus group discussions and interviews, the team developed a management model that integrated the feedback received. The insights gathered from these discussions and interviews were utilised to create a management model. The team emphasised three key factors: environmental, social and systemic considerations. The team's belief was that by addressing these issues in teacher training colleges, inclusive practices would be implemented. Furthermore, inclusive education would be directed towards enhancing human conditions, eliminating false consciousness, facilitating social transformation, promoting social justice and empowering students with disabilities in teacher training colleges.

#### **4.6.7 Stage 7: Wrapping up the research**

At the final meeting, they took time to reflect on the journey that took approximately eight months, marked by various challenges and commitments that were beyond our control. During this last meeting, I seized the opportunity to express my deep appreciation to the team for their unwavering support in ensuring the success of this research endeavour. I openly acknowledged that the team's knowledge and expertise surpassed my initial expectations. Additionally, certain issues that were raised prompted a shift in my perspective regarding students with disabilities. The journey proved to be truly transformative, highlighting the potential for inclusivity when individuals engage in dialogue guided by the principles of CER. Throughout the research process, the team's understanding of inclusive education issues evolved, leading to a reduction in prejudices as we learned from one another.

#### **4.6.8 Stage 8: Minute-taking and recordings**

In order to comprehensively capture all research details and accurately reflect the happenings of this study, a co-researcher was designated to attend each meeting and conduct separate group discussions to document the key points raised. Every stage was meticulously recorded to guarantee meticulous thorough data capture. The next session focuses on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) which is the approach I used in chapter 5 to analyse the actual data produced through PAR. I have delved into its historical context, exploring its application at three levels for data analysis: the textual, discursive and social practice levels.

#### **4.7 Critical discourse analysis technique for data analysis**

Critical discourse analysis (CDA), according to Janks (2006:329), “stems from a critical theory of language which sees the use of language as a form of social practice.” This illustrates the foundation of CDA which is rooted in a critical theory of language, emphasising that language is not merely a means of communication, but rather a fundamental aspect of social practice and interaction. Mogoshoa (2014) is of the view that, CDA views discourse, whether in speech, writing or other forms of communication, as a reflection and constituent of social practices. In the same vein, Blommaert and Bulcaen (2000) state that CDA underscores the idea that language is not neutral, but rather embedded within and shaped by the social, cultural and political context. In addition, Janks (2006:329) further postulates that, “What is useful about the approach is that it enables the analyst to focus on the signifiers that make up the text, the specific linguistic selections, their juxtapositioning, their sequence and their layout.” To shed more light on CDA, Dube (2016) asserts that CDA is a theoretical approach to studying the role of language in a society that originated within linguistics but has found widespread application across the social sciences. In the same vein, Roger (2011:1) is of the view that, “CDA addresses disparities in educational sites, practices and systems, with appreciation for the fact that the world is characterised by inequality.” Janks (2006) also sees, CDA as seeking to uncover the ways in which language use contributes to the construction and perpetuation of power relations, ideologies and social inequalities within society. In addition, Dube (2016) contends that the CDA perspective aligns with the broader critical theory tradition, which critically examines social structures and practices, aiming to reveal and challenge underlying power dynamics and injustices.

In a similar perspective, Ramanathan and Hoon (2015) argue that the integration of language and social practice within CDA underscores the interconnectedness of language and society, emphasising that language is not only a means of communication, but also a site where social practices, power dynamics and ideologies are enacted and reproduced. In this study, I chose the CDA approach for the following reasons. Firstly, CDA allowed the researcher to identify and analyse the ideological influences present in existing discourse, providing insights into how language was used to perpetuate and challenge dominant ideologies concerning disability. Lastly, by examining the ways in which language constructs and reflects social reality, CDA enabled the researcher to explore the potential for social change through discourse. In essence, CDA provided the researcher with a framework to critically analyse language and its

relationship with power, thereby shedding light on how language was used to shape and influence various aspects of society, including, in this case, disability.

#### **4.7.1 Origins of critical discourse analysis**

CDA is a multidisciplinary approach to the study of discourse that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s (Wodak, 2015). It is rooted in critical linguistics, semiotics and sociolinguistics, and it draws on various theoretical frameworks, including Marxism, post-structuralism and critical theory (Achugar, 2017). Given (2008) postulates that CDA was disseminated through the works of European linguists during the late 1980s, mainly Norman Fairclough, Ruth Wodak and Teun van Dijk. This emphasises the pivotal roles played by these scholars in the dissemination and advancement of CDA. In addition, Ahmadvand (2011) also contends that, the origins of CDA can be traced back to the works of scholars such as Norman Fairclough, Teun, A van Dijk and Ruth Wodak who played pivotal roles in shaping and advancing this field. These scholars are therefore highlighted as key figures who significantly shaped and progressed the field of CDA. On another note, the development of CDA was influenced by the broader intellectual and social movements of the time, including the rise of critical theory and the Frankfurt school, various ideologies and social structures (Dijk, 1997). In addition, Achugar (2017) is of the view that the critical perspective laid the foundation for CDAs focus on uncovering and challenging power imbalances and social injustices through the analysis of language use and discourse. The movement of CDA's according to Liu and Guo (2016), began in 1992 at a meeting in Amsterdam. Despite its diversity, CDA scholars commonly view language as a crucial element, in the construction and maintenance of power relations.

Huckins, Andrus and Lemon (2012) argue that the rise of CDA is closely linked to critical linguistics (CL). According to these scholars, CDA emerged in connection with the principles and perspectives of CL, which emphasises the relationship between language and power dynamics. This viewpoint suggests that the theoretical framework and foundational principles of CL significantly influenced the development and evolution of CDA. Liu and Guo (2016) contend that, this perspective highlights the interconnectedness of CDA and CL, emphasising the influence of CL in the emergence and growth of CDA. I have observed three distinct schools of thought regarding the emergence of CDA the conference in Amsterdam, CDA's evolution from CL, and its association with scholars such as Marx and Gramsci. Drawing from these perspectives, it is posited that CDA developed under the influence of Marxism, as it shares the objective of exposing oppressive structures in society as depicted in texts, akin to the aims of Marxism. This viewpoint underscores the multifaceted influences and

underpinnings of CDA, reflecting its connection to pivotal events, theoretical frameworks and influential scholars.

In summary, CDA contributed to inclusive education by shedding light on power dynamics within educational policies, aiding in the understanding of diverse needs among students, and providing a credentialing framework for educators working in inclusive settings. Dube (2016) is of the view that, CDA and CER seek to improve human conditions by solving problems that confront people in society. Dube (2016) further contends that, CDA justifies PAR as an approach for generating data since both seek to fight for the disadvantaged members of the society. Similarly, van Dijk (2001) asserts that the experiences and opinions of disadvantaged members must be taken seriously, and the struggle against inequality must be supported. The relationship between CDA justifies PAR as an approach for generating data since both seek to fight for the disadvantaged members of society.

#### **4.7.1.1 Analysis at text level**

Text analysis involves some analytical practices such as identifying whether the writer's choice of vocabulary and grammar affects meaning (Hazaea and Alzubi, 2017). In addition, Fairclough (1992:110-112) posits that a CDA analysis of a text should pass through the three stages of description, interpretation of the relationship between text and interaction and an explanation of the relationship between interaction and social context. Similarly, van Dijk (1997:29) notes that, "[T]ext and talk in many ways signal their contextual relevance, and therefore context structures need to be observed and analysed in detail also as possible consequences of discourse, settings and their communicative and social roles." This illustrates the significance of contextual analysis in understanding the implications of language use. The statement by van Dijk underscores the idea that both written and spoken communication are deeply intertwined with their surroundings and contexts and as a result, it is crucial to meticulously examine and interpret the contextual structures. In CDA, according to Janks (1997) the examination of texts and talk goes beyond the surface level, content to uncover the underlying power dynamics, ideologies and social constructs embedded within language use. To shed more light, Hazaea and Alzubi (2017) are of the view that by closely analysing the contextual relevance and structures, CDA aims to reveal how language reflects and perpetuates societal norms and inequalities, shedding light on the broader implications of discourse within specific settings and social roles. Mogashoa (2014) reveals that, through text CDA emphasises the need to consider not only the explicit meanings conveyed through text and talk but also the implicit implications and the broader societal and cultural influences that shape

communication. In this study, in the context of inclusive education, the analysis at text level played a crucial role in understanding and promoting the principles of inclusivity within educational settings. By examining the linguistic and semiotic features of educational texts, policies and strategies, it becomes possible to uncover how inclusive education is addressed and implemented at various levels.

#### **4.7.1.2 Analysis at discursive level**

Luo (2023) advises that discursive level analysis involves examining the details of conversation, such as turn-taking, the structure of discourse and use of language to convey meaning and power dynamics. In addition, van Dijk (1998) postulates that analysis at the discursive level seeks to maintain and reproduce the status quo within specific social, political and historical contexts. This observation suggests that at the discursive level, there is an effort to uphold and perpetuate the existing state of affairs within specific social, political and historical contexts. It further implies that the way language and communication are used serves to maintain the prevailing power structures and norms within society (Corradetti, 2012). Furthermore Luo (2019) contends that, this idea raised by Corradetti (2012) aligns with CDA, which views discourse as not only reflecting but also actively contributing to the maintenance of the status quo within various societal domains. Similarly, Celikates and Flynn (2023) assert that at the discursive level the emphasis is on how language and communication practices can sustain and reproduce established power dynamics and societal hierarchies. In essence, Luo (2023) notes that, the discursive level, through its linguistic and communicative mechanisms, is seen as a tool for reinforcing and perpetuating the prevailing social, political and historical conditions, thereby contributing to the preservation of the existing power structures and norms within society. In summary, at a discursive level, the manner in which education is discussed and framed can significantly influence the approach to inclusive education. Also, the discourse surrounding inclusive education can shape policies, practices and societal attitudes towards diversity and inclusion within educational settings.

#### **4.7.1.3 Analysis at social practice level**

To delve into the analysis at the social practice level of CDA, I adopted the approach as advocated by Fairclough (1992) who says that CDA views language as a form of social practice and emphasised the examination of discourse within its broader social context. On the same note, Lin (2014) is of the view that CDA seeks to uncover the ways in which language use reflects and shapes social structures, power relations and ideologies. Fairclough's critical discourse analysis provides a comprehensive model that enables research at micro-mesa and

macro-levels, aligning with the understanding of language as a social practice (Moussou and Allaybe, 2018). CDA regards discourse as a form of social practice, emphasising the importance of considering the context of language use within several interactions (Lin, 2014). In addition, Golbasi (2017) is of the view that, the CDA perspective underscores the crucial role of language in constructing and perpetuating social practices and power dynamics. In the social function of language in according to Amoussou and Allaybe (2018) CDA involves making descriptions of linguistic properties to reveal the ideologies embedded within discourse. This approach aims to uncover the ways in which language reflects and reinforces social ideologies and power structures. In addition, Fairclough (2013) contends that, CDA is linked to various components such as social structure, social event, social practice and orders of discourse. This interconnectedness underscores the importance of understanding language within the within the broader context of social practices and structures.

In summary, I have opted to conduct data analysis using CDA due to the compelling evidence on the link between social practice and CER which is evident in the way critical theory provides a specific interpretation of Marxist philosophy with a focus on social emancipation and the detection of societal pathologies (Corradett. 2014). Noel (2016) notes that, critical theory-based research encompasses various streams such as feminist, disability, race and gender theory, all of which contribute to an emancipatory research paradigm. Additionally, this type of research combines philosophy and social reality, emphasising the critical analysis of social structures and practices (Anorld, 2015). In the following section the researcher focuses on ethical considerations.

#### **4.8 Ethical consideration**

Arifin (2018) is of the view that ethical considerations in qualitative research are crucial to ensure the protection and well-being of participants. This research was carried out in an ethical manner by adhering to the principles of informed consent, anonymity, avoiding harm to participants and confidentiality (Chimhenga, 2014). In this study, the researcher ensured that the rights and welfare of all the participants were observed. While Flemming (2018) is of the view that research ethics is about being clear about the nature of the agreement you have entered into with your research subjects or contacts. Ethical research involves getting the informed consent of those you are going to interview, question, observe or take materials from. It involves reaching agreements about the uses of this data, and how its analysis will be reported and disseminated (Arifin, 2018). Additionally, it is about keeping to such agreements

when they have been reached (Blaxter, Hughes, and Tight, 2006). The ethical issues were emphasised in order to protect the rights of the researcher and the respondents. The following are the ethical principles the researcher adhered to while conducting this research:

#### **4.8.1 Permission to conduct research**

I applied for permission to conduct research from the Faculty of Education at the University of Free State and my ethical clearance number is UFS-HSD2023/1292. I applied for permission to administer the research from the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education Innovation, Science and Technology Development (MHTEISTD) in Zimbabwe and I was granted to do research at X Teachers College and the acceptance letter in appendix 1.

#### **4.8.2 Informed consent**

According to O’Sullivan et al., (2021), informed consent is one of the founding principles of research ethics. Its intent is that human participants can enter research freely (voluntarily) with full information about what it means for them to take part, and that they give consent before they enter the research. In the same vein, Scarduzio, Sheff and Smith (2018) are of the view that in qualitative research, participants’ informed consent is crucial and researchers must provide clear and understandable information about the purpose, procedures, and potential risks and benefits of the study. According to Arifin (2018), co-researchers should have the freedom to choose whether or not to participate, and they should be aware that they can withdraw from the study at any given time without consequences. In addition, Blaxter et al (2006) define informed consent as a document that confirms the fact that the study participants are recruited only after being thoroughly informed about the research process, risks, and benefits, along with other important details of the study like the time of research. The informed consent is generally drafted in the language known to the participants (Arifin, 2018) and the essential contents of informed consent include information the aim of research given in a way that is easily understood even by a layman. It must also brief the person on what is expected from participation in the study (Singh, Vadakedath and Kandi 2023). In this study, participants were given enough information pertaining to the research prior to the administration of the research instruments. This was done by verbally stating the purpose of the study and issues related to the research such as aims, procedures of investigation and possible advantages or disadvantages.

### **4.8.3 Opportunity to withdraw**

The respondents' consent to participate in the research was voluntary, free of any coercion or promises of benefits unlikely to result from participation (McGuinness et al., 2011). Participation was strictly voluntary, with respondents having the freedom to withdraw at any time. This was explained to them before the research commenced. If research participants felt stressed, tired, or otherwise unable to continue the study to completion, there was no implied or stated threat of penalty for withdrawing. The informed consent made it clear what the results of terminating were, even if the probability of withdrawal was low.

### **4.8.4 Confidentiality and anonymity**

On confidentiality, Arifin (2018) stresses that this is another important ethical consideration where researchers must ensure that participants' identities and personal information are protected. Consenting to the above, Fleming (2018) highlights that, using pseudonyms or anonymizing data is recommended to maintain confidentiality. Confidentiality in this research was a promise that made participants not to be identified or presented in identifiable form, while anonymity was a promise that even the researcher was not able to tell which responses came from which respondents' (Sapsford and Abbott 2006). In this study, participants' confidentiality were not compromised, as their details were not used or made to appear in the collection of data. No secret information was divulged since the right of confidentiality of the participants was respected.

### **4.8.5 Protection from harm**

Reducing harm is an ethical principle that researchers should adhere to, researchers should be aware of the potential, emotional or psychological impact of their study on participation and take steps to minimise any potential harm (Yip, Han and Sng, 2016). Further, Barrow, Brannan and Khandhar (2022) articulate that, researchers must implement specific protections to minimise all forms of discomfort and harm to align with the principle of beneficence. Qualitative research study by its nature does not impose a treatment and occurs in a naturalistic setting (Arifin, 2018). As such, the researcher does not have to be concerned about whether or not he or she is doing something harmful to the participants or placing them in a harmful situation. However, in a qualitative research study, the researcher, to varying degrees, becomes involved with the participants (Barrow et al., 2022). The fact that the researcher becomes part of the group or asks certain questions could potentially influence behaviour in a way that produces unwanted or adverse consequences. Protection from harm allowed the researcher to

consider carefully the actions they took with the participants and, wherever possible, provided for ways to deal with unanticipated outcomes (Yip et al., 2016).

#### **4.9 Summary**

Chapter 4 focused on the type of approach that was used to generate data from the participants. PAR was used in this study as it involves marginalised groups, in this case, students with disabilities at a teacher training college. This chapter looked at the steps used in generating data when using PAR, origins of PAR, importance of PAR as an approach, the strengths and weaknesses of PAR, research paradigms, population, instruments, processes and steps of generating data, stages of data collection in PAR, quality of the study, data analysis and finally ethical considerations. Chapter 5 presents the analysis of data that was generated.

## CHAPTER 5

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

#### 5.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 concentrates on data presentation, analysis and interpretation and discussion of the data findings. Data presentation in this chapter emerge from the use of participatory action research (PAR) which was one of the methods for generating data. The generated data responded to the aims and objectives of this study. The technique for analysing data was the critical discourse analysis (CDA). The empirical data was cross-examined in three levels of critical discourse analysis which are text, discursive use of language and social practice. The generation of the data was based on ideas raised in Chapter 3. In addition, the team also built a management model to enhance inclusivity at a teacher training college in Zimbabwe and this is illustrated was shown in detail in chapter 6.

Firstly, I want to bring back the readers' attention to the aim of this study which is to formulate a management model to enhance inclusive education at a teacher training college. The data generated in this chapter responds to the objectives of this study which were:

- To determine the major barriers to academic and social inclusion faced by students with disabilities at a teacher training college;
- To explore how tertiary institutions implement inclusive practices for the successful integration of students with disabilities at a teacher training college; and
- To discuss the indicators of success of a management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe.

The empirical data emanating through PAR sought to respond to the objectives outlined above. The main motive was to formulate a management model to enhance inclusivity at a teacher training college in Zimbabwe. The team involved in the formulation of this model was directed by the aim and the objectives of this study.

## **5.2 Barriers to academic and social inclusion faced by students with disabilities at a teacher training college.**

The section below highlights the barriers to academic and social inclusion faced by students with disabilities as generated by the participants in different segments.

### **5.2.1 Academic and social barriers**

The issue of physical access was raised during data generation as one of the barriers affecting students with disabilities in the college under study. This is supported by literature which states that the barriers can be physical, social or attitudinal and can prevent students with disabilities from accessing educational opportunities and achieving their full potential (see 3.3.1). Existing literature also revealed that physical barriers are obstacles that prevent students with disabilities from accessing educational facilities and fully participating in educational activities (see 3.3.1). Physical and social spaces are active components of maintaining the educational status quo and are material and discursive roadblocks to successfully creating a dual credential programme that focuses on inclusive education (Young, 2011). The team discussed quite a number of barriers to physical access faced by students with disabilities at the college under study. Sibalukhulu and Butholabo highlight their views in light of physical access and social barriers:

*Sibalukhulu: “Other than those on the ground floor, offices are not accessible for students who use wheelchairs as there are no elevators, for example, the Dean’s office is not accessible as it is on the first floor and there are no elevators in the building. This also includes the Teaching Practice (TP) offices which are also on the first floor, yet these are key offices which are frequently visited by students.”*

*Butholabo: “Some major offices like the Dean and TP offices are on the first floor and they are not accessible to students using wheelchairs and some students who are having physical disabilities and it’s affecting their movement.”*

According to Sibalukhulu and Butholabo access to key offices like the Dean and TP offices is a barrier that affects students using wheelchairs, crushes or supported shoes (see 3.3.1). The points raised by Sibalukhulu and Butholabo indicate that students on wheelchairs and those whose movements are affected by their physical disability cannot reach the Dean and TP offices, yet these offices are very crucial to students and are frequently visited by students almost on a daily basis. Sibalukhulu and Butholabo in their separate interviews also further

highlighted some of the physical access barriers that are faced by students with disabilities at the college under study:

*Sibalukhulu: “The height of washing lines is not suitable for students who use wheelchairs. There is need to have washing lines that are at a lower height to enable use by students on wheelchairs and those that are short.”*

*Butholabo: “The outside area in the bursar’s office used for payment is not accessible. This also includes one important area which is the clinic. For wheelchair users the clinic is not easily accessible because it does not have any ramps.”*

Sibalukhulu raised the issue of washing lines’ height which is not suitable for students who use wheelchairs. Sibalukhulu suggested that there is need to have washing lines that are of lower height to enable use by students on wheelchairs and those who are short (see 3.5.3). This shows that the washing lines in hostels were only designed for able-bodied students; as a result there currently no inclusivity in the residence hostels of the college under study. In addition to what has been raised in their interview, Sibalukhulu and Butholabo highlight the following stating other physical barriers that the college have that are affecting students with disabilities:

*Sibalukhulu: “Another barrier is that, some paths where students walk are not even, this also includes in some cases the absence of ramps. Staff members in certain instances park their cars where there are ramps, blocking the way for wheelchair users, this is not good everyone must be educated concerning inclusivity.”*

*Butholabo: “The gym is not accessible for students on wheelchairs and those with physical disabilities. All sporting facilities and Physical Education, academic and practical, and Physical Education facilities should be accessible to learners with disabilities.”*

In their separate interviews Sibalukhulu and Butholabo identified some crucial barriers that were faced by students with disabilities. Another study in United States, Paul (2000) argues that students with disabilities have additional needs attributable to those disabilities, such as living on their own and dealing with the disability in an educational environment. This emphasizes that these students have additional needs that stem from their disabilities, which can significantly impact their educational experiences and overall independence. In essence, issues like the college gym which was constructed in favour of the able-bodied students’ only leaves a lot to be desired when it comes to inclusivity at the college under study.

(see 3.3.7). The agenda of CER is to critique and challenge, to transform and empower (see 2.4.1). CER is geared towards social justice and enhances the principles of democracy (Nkoane, 2012). Butholabo as a specialist is looking at all sporting facilities, and Physical Education (PE), academic and practical subject facilities to ensure that they are accessible to learners with disabilities. In other words, Butholabo seeks to have inclusive education implemented in the college under study so that every student is catered for.

#### **5.2.1.2 Focus Group Discussion with students with disabilities on barriers to academic and social inclusion.**

Two focus group discussions were carried out. The first group comprised students with disabilities and had 10 members and the second group was the SRC which had 8 members. Participants from the first group namely, Guzu, Zhilos, Mkhaya, Spondoki, Mthombo, Ginyane, Lelethu, Galele, Rudon and Gidza highlighted the following academic and social barriers:

*Ginyane: “There are quite a number of barriers we face at college some are academic and other are social. Both of these affect our learning at this college. For example, there are some places that are not accessible like our lecture theatre, the ramp for wheelchair users is there right at the back but the door is always locked, our colleague who uses a wheelchair is always lifted up by some caring students. Personally, I feel her dignity is always lost, being lifted up now and again .... what if they drop her?”*

*Spondoki: “I am a wheelchair user. Socially I have challenge with the facilities in my hostel where I stay, there is only one ramp in the main entrance. The pathways to my room, there is no ramp. The toilets and are not user friendly for wheelchair users, because these were made specifically for able-bodied people. When using the toilet, I ask my friend to assist me because there are no rails and secondly, I cannot close the door while using the toilet. This is affecting me emotionally because there is no privacy and I feel I’m losing my dignity.”*

*Mthombo: My challenge is the Dean and TP offices. These are key offices used by students on a daily basis. It is difficult for me to use the steps to the Dean and TP*

*offices. Sending someone on my behalf is not user friendly as they may fail to express to the Dean or TP office what I want clearly and accurately.”*

*Spondoki: “The issue of washing line is also a challenge as the available washing lines were made specifically for able-bodied persons. All the female hostels are not user friendly, because at times if I wish to go and stay with my friends in other hostel there are no ramps. I cannot even visit them. I feel I’m really, really, really excluded because I don’t even have a social life. At times I regret why I got enrolled in this college, but I came because I specialise in Mathematics. The other college where I could be enrolled is a primary training college and personally, I am a secondary Maths major.”*

The sentiments of Ginyane, Spondoki and Mthombo also refer to academic and social barriers for students with disabilities at the college under study (see 3.3.1 and 3.3.7). The issue of attitude comes out where the ramp to access the lecture theatre is there but the door is always locked. It is difficult to look for the caretaker while the lecture is in progress, leading to students with disabilities missing out on parts of the lectures. Spondoki argued that being lifted up now and again by able bodied students reduces her dignity. According to Imrie (2012), Maning, (2013) and Kim (2015), physical barriers are obstacles that prevent students with disabilities from accessing educational facilities and participating fully in educational activities. On the issue of hostel toilets raised by Spondoki, Dolmage (2012) is of the view that the prevailing culture in higher education is one of ableism, which makes able-bodiedness and able-mindedness compulsory. Luthuli and Wood (2022) further postulate that, ableism positions disability as a problem to be fixed yet excludes students with disabilities from being part of the solution, since they are regarded as less able and less likely to have anything worthwhile to offer. In relation to the sentiments above, Spondoki raised the issue of lack of privacy when using the toilet because the door always remained open because of the wheelchair and absence of rails. There were also, no curtains to close the door which made her lose her dignity. CER, as a school of thought aims at improving human lives or conditions (Dube, 2016) implying that change has to start somewhere to correct these anomalies (see 2.4.1). The discussion continued with Mkhaya, Guzu, Zhilos and Spondoki:

*Mkhaya: “There are three hostels for male students and one hostel has a steep ramp and this ramp is slippery I need to be assisted on my way in and out which means I need to rely on other people for my movement, and it means for us with physical disability we don’t have a choice except to go and stay in that hostel which has also been labelled “ihostel yezilima”...in others words the hostel has been stigmatised to discriminate.”*

*Guzu: "Other barriers also include the swimming pool: it was only designed for able bodied people but not for us as students with disabilities. The washing rooms don't have rails, the entrance and exit in the swimming pool has steep steps. Socially, when you approach a staff member or other senior members concerning your challenges and needs, you end up as if you are nagging them. As a result, we keep quiet and pretend as if everything is ok yet we will be suffering."*

*Zhilos: "Looking at myself as a visually impaired student, academically I'm facing a lot of challenges especially the fact that there is only one specialist lecturer who is supposed to be transcribing Braille for about 2 students or more. After transcribing my work goes back to the subject area where it is supposed to be marked and at times it delays because of pressure that the specialist has because he will be attending to braille transcribing at the same time lecturing other subjects to other students."*

*Spondoki: "Another barrier that I'm facing as a wheelchair user is the issue of bathrooms. We don't have specific bathrooms for wheelchair users. I have to use a common tub for bathing. This is the only tub which is used by most students. For me to have balance, I have to sit down in the tub and this is not healthy as I might get infected by germs and infectious diseases since the majority of able-bodied students use the tub."*

*Guzu: "For students using crutches and supported shoes, the bathrooms and shower rooms are very slippery, there are no rails for supporting our balance and every day when you think of taking a bath you think twice. In each and every hostel there must be specific toilets and bathrooms to cater for every student with disabilities."*

Considering the barriers raised by Zhilos, it is clear that barriers differed from one disability to another. Zhilos is a visually impaired student who uses Braille. Braille needs a lot of transcribing and there is only one specialist lecturer who is able to transcribe. In most cases it is difficult for him to finish all the work that needs transcribing. In some cases he has some work to do besides transcribing. According to Zhilos, one specialist lecturer is not enough (see 3.3.4) as he transcribes and sends it back to the subject area for marking. This causes delays sometimes. This implies that most of the staff members do not have inclusive qualifications which is why there is only one specialist lecturer. There is need to train other lecturers as well or get suitable qualified personnel. Lalor, Madaus and Dukes (2020) are of the view that lack of disability-related competence by college administrators is recognised as a barrier to equal access and success of students with disabilities. In other words, lack of suitable qualified personnel affects the learning of students with disabilities and it affects their performance as well.

Mkhaya highlighted the issue of one hostel having a steep ramp, as a result, there is no freedom of choice for student with disabilities as they are only bound to be in one hostel. The steep ramp is also not safe as it is slippery a wheelchair user cannot use that ramp alone and needs assistance every coming in and going out and this deprives them of their freedom of movement. The hostel has been stigmatised and discriminated (see 3.3.7) as Mkhaya highlighted that is is now called "ihostel yezilima" meaning "hostel for the disabled" which is an insult in

Zimbabwean culture. Clair (2018) defines stigma as an attribute that conveys devalued stereotypes. Similarly, Schramm (2015) is of the view that discrimination against someone is to exclude that person from the full enjoyment of their political, civic, economic, social or cultural rights and freedoms. In this case Mkhaya is of the view that students with disabilities have no choice concerning where to stay because they only have one option. In conceptualising CER, Mahlomaholo (2009) highlights that CER, places value on deep analysis as opposed to generalisations and broad sweeping statements and has the impetus to empower and change people's lives and stations in life, liberating them from less useful practices and thoughts and meeting the needs of real-life situations. This implies that there is need to eradicate all the bad practices done to students with disabilities at the college under study and implement inclusivity.

Spondoki also raised the barrier in bathrooms, where the bathrooms are not user friendly to students on wheelchair. She uses the communal tab in the bathroom in which she has to sit down in order to achieve balance. Hygienically, this is not safe for her health because she might contract infections from other students. There must be special tabs designed for students with disabilities so that they feel included. Guzu highlighted that students using crutches and supported shoes are facing difficulties in using the bathrooms as they have slippery floors and have no rails both in the shower rooms and in the bathrooms where there are tubs. Bathing in the morning and evenings is a big challenge to students with disabilities. There is an urgent need to cater for students with disabilities in the hostel facilities. The discussion continued with Gidza, Lelethu, Galele and Rudon saying out their views on the barriers to academic and social inclusion. Gidza is a student with Hearing Impairment (HI), Lelethu is Visually Impaired (VI), Galele is a student with physical disability and Rudon has HI.

*Gidza: "It is really difficult for me to keep on telling everyone that I have Hearing Impairment challenge, or telling them to speak up. Some are patient but others behave as if I'm not normal. I seriously need an assistive device for this hearing impairment challenge because I'm struggling in my Teaching Practice School. I normally lip-read but at times it is a challenge to keep on looking at people while they talk."*

*Lelethu: "As for me I'm visually impaired as you can see, my most challenging barrier is that I never used braille before, I just went blind recently, now it is difficult for me to write lecture notes unlike my colleague who is using Braille. I was given a recording device but it becomes difficult for me to write assignments or tests as I have to ask someone to write for me while I talk. Currently, a friend is assisting me but she is also a student with other loads on her shoulders."*

*Galele: “It is difficulty to socialise with friends as some feel pity for me and they over sympathise, which is something I don’t like. We cannot even attend the gym as it was meant for able bodied people. We can’t compete in Paralympics because we don’t have assistive devices like wheelchairs for playing basketball. Secondly, we are being stigmatised and discriminated when it comes to academic issues, I remember I scored 92% in one of the MASS subjects and the lecturer and students could not wait to see me as if it was surprising yet there was another able-bodied lady who scored 92% but they never looked at her the issue was myself... I feel that the able bodied see dull people in students with disabilities [...]to them ungani kuyamangalisa ukuthi ngitshaye that mark bona bekhona lathi asikuthandi ukukhangelelwa phansi.”*

*Rudon: “Having hearing impairment is a big challenge because during our study groups there are few individuals who are accommodative; it is difficult to join a group because they have to speak loudly so that you get their points. People tend to run away from us because they know that having us in their group needs them to speak very loudly and perhaps it annoys them that’s why they avoid us. I wish I could get an assistive device to help me hear well than what I’m hearing right now. In addition, even during lectures in most cases when there is no PA system, I can hardly hear what the lecturer will be saying.”*

*Galele: “Another social barrier is about myths and misconceptions. We become victims of abuse as people believe that when you have sexual intercourse with a person with disabilities you might get lucky. At times you think you have found a rightful partner because they pretend to be loving you so much but after sometime they leave you because they got what they wanted. If you propose and you are rejected people tend to laugh at you because they feel that “uthanda abafazi” yet it’s not true, we are also humans, we need to be loved just like anyone else.”*

In these sentiments, there is a lot that shows lack of inclusivity at the college under study. Gidza is facing a big challenge of not having assistive devices for his hearing impairment, and he is finding it difficult to keep on telling people to raise their voices because he cannot get them clearly. In some cases, some do understand but mostly they just ignore him. Gidza feels stigmatised and discriminated socially (see 3.3.7). Lelethu raised another challenge of her being visually impaired with no ability to use Braille. So far, a fellow student is assisting her, but the student also has their own college work to do. According to UNICEF (2017), students with visual disability face a great challenge in their education. Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities states that persons with disabilities have a right to education. As a result, assistive technologies can facilitate the education of students with visual disability.

Galele also raised a crucial point that people with disabilities are concluded to be less gifted academically as the able-bodied students and staff never imagined seeing a student with a disability scoring a distinction. This is stigma and discrimination (see 3.3.7) Galele reported the following:

*“I feel the able-bodied see dull people in students with disabilities [...] to them, ungani kuyamangalisa ukuthi ngitshaye that mark bona bekhona lathi asikuthandi ukukhangelelwa phansi* (“It is as if it’s surprising for me to score that mark yet they are the ones who are supposed to be getting those marks. We also don’t like to be looked down upon”). The lecturers’ negative attitudes are due to lack of training and insufficient support (Zulu, 2007). In CER, there is need to eliminate false consciousness. According to Finkelstein (2001), postulates that, our society is built on a competitive market foundation and it is this social system which disables us (see 2.4.2). This implies that the society that people live in is the one that makes people disabled as well.

Another stigma and discrimination is raised by Rudon who argued that it is difficult to join study groups created by able-bodied students because the plea *“may you kindly raise your voice, I’m not getting you”* annoys able-bodied students as a result, able-bodied students tend to politely move away from the students with hearing impairment. Rudon also suggested if the college could assist her with assistive devices, her participation in college and academic life would improve. Myths and misconceptions about disability are common among able-bodied people and these incorrect assumptions are often triggered by fear, lack of understanding and prejudice (Mark, Wynn Consulting). Galele raised a point that some students believe that when you have sexual intercourse with a person with a disability you get lucky. As a result, most of the people with disabilities have become victims of sexual abuse. Stigma and discrimination arise when they propose love and are rejected. People label them as *“uthanda abafazi”* (“he loves women too much”), yet persons with disabilities also have feelings just like any other person. Dube and Hlalele (2018) are of the view that Frankfurt scholars were committed to ensuring that oppressive social structures were challenged and replaced with emancipatory structures that have respect for humanity (see 2.4.3). People should be educated on disability and respect people with disabilities.

### 5.2.1.2 SRC on barriers to academic and social inclusion.

The second focus group discussion included the following SRC members Gerries, Ntonono, Charries, Ntosh, Tebza, Qhubas, Sqintii and Nyama. The discussion starts with Gerries, Ntonono, Nyama and Charries highlighting that:

*Gerries: “We have a challenge with some of our major offices like the TP and the Dean’s offices, the Vice Principal and the Principal’s offices. The Vice Principal and the Principal’s offices are on the ground floor but they don’t have ramps for easy access to wheelchair users. If someone is using a wheelchair in front of the VP’s office there are benches that are blocking the way to the VP and Principal’s offices. Someone has to be called to remove the benches so that the wheelchair user can access the offices. The Dean and TP offices are situated on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor and there are no elevators and this is a challenge.”*

*Ntonono: “Our hostels are not user friendly to our fellow colleagues who have disabilities. There are 6 hostels on campus, only 2 hostels have ramps. This leaves students with disabilities having no choice except to be accommodated in those 2 hostels. Washing lines are too high for wheelchair users and for those who are very short.”*

*Charries: “I also have a challenge with registry and accounts offices. In most cases you are attended through the window and for wheelchair users this is not user friendly because of the height of the window.”*

*Gerries: “In terms of research, students with visual impairment have a big challenge, they don’t have laptops or smart phones, it is difficult for them to come up with a standard and well researched assignment. Maybe the college can chip in through buying these gadgets for them, in order to assist our fellow brothers and sisters.”*

*Nyama: As a visually impaired student in the SRC, I face a lot of challenges when it comes to ICT assignments, especially when there are practical activities that need to be recorded and submitted online. I don’t have a smart phone as a result I request other students to do that for me of which this is not fair because I can’t measure or know my strength. We really need assistive devices with proper software that can assist the visually impaired. I don’t have a laptop nor do I have a smart phone. Life at this college is sometimes too difficult for me.”*

Gerries the SRC president indicated some challenges especially with very important offices which are not accessible to all students. These include the offices of the Dean, TP, VP and Principal. I deliberately included the SRC as the board that is representing the entire college when it comes to students’ issues. The president highlighted that the VP and the Principal’s offices are not accessible for wheelchair users because they do not have ramps. This needs to

be corrected as all students, regardless of disability or ability must be treated equally and fairly and access the services they need any time. According to the Human Rights Commission (HRC), globally between 2013 and 2017 people with disabilities were marginalised and excluded from full participation in society. In addition, people with disabilities face multiple forms of discrimination in various social spheres, including in respect of access to health care services, employment and education. This implies that even in education, students with disabilities face a lot of challenges and these barriers need to be attended to. Ntonono was of the view that most hostels in the college under study were not user friendly to students with disabilities, in terms of bathrooms, toilets, shower rooms and washing lines. Students on wheelchairs cannot get full access to the facilities in the hostels. Charris also complained about Registry and Accounts offices. In most cases, students use windows for the services but the windows are too high for the wheelchair users and for those who are very short. Academically, students with disabilities, especially those who are visually impaired, face some challenges with assignments that are written online. They sometimes request friends to assist them as alluded to by Nyama. The student felt that he was supposed to do those assignments by himself so that he could see his capabilities or weaknesses. Assistive software is needed for the visually impaired students in order for them to write their own assignments without any assistance.

In the same SRC focus group discussion and Ntosh, Tebza, Qhubas and Sqintii highlighted the following:

*Ntosh: "I am a little bit concerned about our gym, it was built for able bodied students; wheelchair users cannot visit the gym, there are no ramps and the equipment is suitable for the able-bodied persons."*

*Tebza: "I have seen some colleges bringing students with disabilities for Paralympics competitions, but for our college no one seems to be interested in training students with disabilities for Paralympics. They are highly excluded socially especially when it comes to sporting activities. There are no assistive devices like wheelchairs for basketball or volley ball. Why do we enrol such students when we can't even meet their basic needs?"*

*Qhubas: "Socially, there are workshops or college activities done for students at national level, I haven't seen students with disabilities attending those workshops. There must be lack of sensitisation to both students and staff members; everyone is supposed to be involved and catered for be it academically or socially."*

*Sqintii: "Some students laugh at the students with disabilities because once they date someone people tend to follow the relationship so that they see whether it's progressing well. I believe students with disabilities are also human enough to be in relationships just like anyone else. I think there are also some myths and misconceptions because I*

*have heard people saying if you sleep with a person with a disability, you get luckier, but I don't think it's true. I feel they are vulnerable to different sexually transmitted infections."*

The accessibility of the college gymnasium was a cause of concern for Ntosh. The gym was only built for people who are able-bodied and those with disabilities cannot use the gym because there are no ramps and there is no equipment for sporting activities suitable for students with disabilities. According to Hylton (2013), every person has a right to participate in sport. In fact, sport is governed by rules based on equality and society must ensure sufficient access to any necessary resources for people with disabilities. Tebza was also concerned about the college not participating in Paralympics games as some colleges do, yet the college has some students with disabilities. In some cases, issues of attitude also contributed to the lack of participation in Paralympics. As observed by Kochhar and Taymans (2000) some barriers include limited information on issues of disability sport and, lack of funding because of the erroneous belief that disability sport is costly. This is also a form of stigma and discrimination (see 3.3.7).

Qhubas also raised the issue of different workshops and activities that are done at national level and from which students with disabilities are always left behind yet the students can also represent the college. This is another issue that needs to be addressed to enhance inclusive practice. According to Taymans (2000) and McLeskey and Waldron (2000), when students with disabilities are educated with their peers without disabilities they learn age-appropriate social skills by imitating students without disabilities in the environment where they are needed. In essence, when students with disabilities socialise with students without disabilities it makes them gain strength of independence and feel recognised in the society.

Sqintii was more concerned about other students laughing at students with disabilities falling in love. According to Mattila, Uusiautti and Maatta (2017), the way people perceive love is based on the models, stories, rules and rituals that are transmitted to them from previous generations. Sqintii is of the view that when a student with a disability has a partner, people tend to laugh at him/her or making a follow-up on the updates of that relationship as if it is strange for someone with a disability to have a partner. These are myths that must be changed in the society until everyone is regarded the same regardless of disability or ability. The Convention and Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) of 2006, Article number 23 which talks about, respect for home and family, further says, state Parties shall take effective and appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against persons with disabilities in all matters relating to

marriage, family, parenthood and relationships. In essence, persons with disabilities are protected by law when it comes to relationship issues. There is need to educate and sensitise to students and staff members in the college under study. Tebza, Qhubas, Sqintii and Nyama also highlighted the following challenges:

*Tebza: “Personally I feel there is shortage of funding. If funding was available then we could see our resource centre well furnished with all the equipment that is needed, including assistive devices and other sporting equipment for students with disabilities. Maybe our college now needs the government to chip in, especially on the infrastructure and some assistive devices.”*

*Qhubas: “If this Inclusive Education can be Main Study (MS), it means the college will be training students who will be specialising in that area then when it comes to staff competences we will be having more people trained in IE in future and this will be a good move, but currently maybe our lecturers need to be equipped through workshops and short courses so that they are able to control this situation. The more people we have who are advocating for IE the better.”*

*Sqintii: “In one of the lectures for IE I remember the lecturer talking about the medical and social model, where medical model thinking takes persons with disabilities as people who are not capable of doing things on their own; they believe people must be assisted. This is what most people in this college think. Instead let’s use the social model where we can empower students with disabilities and assist them have coping skills and include them in our lectures, hostels and so on...”*

*Nyama: “I personally feel that there are reduced opportunities for academic inclusion for students with disabilities in our college because so far, we are still very far. When we think of students with disabilities coming in their numbers to train as secondary teachers. We don’t have enough resources; we only have one specialist in that area. Let’s give it a trial and see.”*

The other challenges that emanated from the empirical evidence is the issue of shortage of funding where Tebza raised a point that if the college had funds more equipment could have been in place in the resource centre, including assistive devices and many other equipment used by students with disabilities. Tebza even suggested that it now needed the government’s input (see 3.3.5). This is supported by Majoko (2019) who says, “[S]tudents with special needs experience various barriers to higher education that are as diverse as physical, difficult access to facilities, poor support or lack of facilitation services within the university, lack of funding for additional support [...]’ The issue of having IE as a stand-alone subject and having students specialising in it was also raised by Qhubas where he said staff competences (see 3.3.4) can be solved through training more students into IE or lecturers being trained through workshops and doing short courses on IE. At the text level analysis, Sqintii one of the students who did a short course on disability, raised the issue of medical and social models which they were reminded of in one of the lectures by the IE lecturer. She mentions that most people at college level

practice the medical model where they think that people with disabilities people are not capable of doing things on their own and cannot think for themselves or make their own decisions (Mahony, 2016). Sqintii further said that, it is better to use the social model thinking so that students with disabilities are empowered to stand on their own and make their own decisions and the community at large to practice IE. The issue of reduced opportunities was highlighted by Nyama (see 3.3.2) whereby even the college could enrol more students with disabilities. At the moment the college does not have enough resources; as a result, the college is still far from having a vibrant inclusive education.

### **5.3 Inclusive practices implemented to achieve successful integration of students with disabilities at the teacher training college.**

The interview team comprising the administration officer and specialist lecturer positions held separate sessions to discuss the implementation of inclusive practices. During their session, Sibalukhulu and Butholabo highlighted the following:

*Sibalukhulu: “Inclusive policies at National level are still being generated and are still in draft form. The same applies to teacher training colleges and our institution. There is only one specialist in the subject area, and I can safely say the area is not adequately staffed. In terms of enrolment, students with disabilities are encouraged to apply and some entry requirements are waived for them, for example, those who are visually impaired are enrolled even if they do not have Mathematics at ‘O’ Level. Students with disabilities are also catered for in the SRC.*

*Butholabo: “I understand policies at national level are still being drafted and the implementation of inclusive education is limited. Yes, the enrolment is done and they are included but not for all the subjects. Physical Education learners are not catered for and the syllabus for inclusivity in PE is not available and it disadvantages the learners who are now forced to do other subjects they never applied for. The facilities are not adjusted to meet the unique needs of the learners. SRC is open to all including the students with disabilities.”*

The lack of a viable inclusive education policy in institutions is a cause of concern since draft policies are used as working documents (see 3.3.3). Luthuli and Wood (2019) argue that, the country’s higher education sector does not have a specific policy around inclusive education.” This implies that, there are still difficulties when it comes to implementation of inclusive education in higher education. Students with disabilities are encouraged apply at the studied college and Mathematics is waived for the visually impaired. This is a plus to the college and one can conclude that it is a good practice for a start. Butholabo highlighted that in subjects like Physical Education, learners with disabilities are not catered for. The syllabus for PE is not inclusive which has led students with disabilities to drop PE and be forced to do other subjects. This shows that the college under study still has a lot that needs to be done concerning

the implementation of inclusive education. Sibalukhulu and Butholabo further highlighted some of the inclusive practices in the college:

*Sibalukhulu: “Students with disabilities are encouraged to apply and some entry requirements are waived. Some few assistive devices are procured. There is also the establishment of inclusive resource centre. In addition, there is recruitment of appropriately qualified staff.*

*Butholabo: “What I can say concerning the practices done in the college is that there are reduced opportunities for inclusive education and there are no good signs towards this implementation so far. There are no workshops, no adjustment of facilities to meet the unique needs of learners.”*

*Sibalukhulu: “In light of sports, in some sporting disciplines, there are no physical infrastructures to cater for those living with disabilities. The Science and Computer labs are still to be adapted to cater for those living with disabilities. So far there are no reports of stigmatisation and discrimination reported to date.”*

In light of the sentiments above, Sibalukhulu highlighted that a few devices have been procured and there is also an inclusive education resource centre has been established. From the above, one can say that at the college under study has a good start. The encouragement of students to apply is also a positive development as far as inclusive education is concerned. (see 3.3.1). On the other, hand Butholabo was of the view that there are no good signs towards the implementation so far because there are no workshops suitable for students with disabilities and, no adjustment of facilities that meet the unique needs of learners (see 3.3.1). Tossebro (2004) postulates that the absence or presence of factors in a person’s environment that, limit functioning and create disabling scenario. These include a physical environment that is not accessible, lack of relevant assistive technology, negative attitudes of people towards disability or services, systems and policies that are either non-existent or that hinder the involvement of all people with a health condition in all areas of life. These are factors that affect the implementation of inclusive practices in the college under study. Sibalukhulu further highlighted the lack of physical infrastructure to cater for those living with disabilities. The physical infrastructure includes sports facilities, science and computer labs. Kreber (2023) argues that CER aims at praxis whereby the insights gained through critical reflection are used to effect change or improve the action (see 2.4.3). Change that enables the college to cater for the students living with disabilities can only start somewhere.

### **5.3.1 Inclusive Practices with Students with Disabilities**

In the focus group discussion with students with disabilities concerning the implementation of inclusive practices, this is what Zhilos, Mkhaya, Spondoki and Mthombo said:

*Zhilos: “The advert or new intake is quite inclusive as persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply though there are very few who normally turn up.”*

*Mkhaya: “Personally I haven’t seen an inclusive education policy in this college though I have heard of the Convention of Persons with Disabilities and so on [...]”*

*Spondoki: “There is a resource centre in our college for inclusive education, though I haven’t seen equipment for students with disabilities.”*

*Mthombo: “I can simply say the practices are there since we see very few students with disabilities being enrolled at this college. But we need more sensitisation on this inclusivity.”*

What was highlighted in the sentiments above is that inclusive practices are not fully implemented in the college under study. Zhilos highlighted that the advert for new intake encourages people with disabilities to apply though there is poor enrolment. The issue of not having an inclusive policy is also a barrier to the implementation of inclusive education because Mkhaya mentioned that he has never seen an inclusive policy in the college though he has heard of the Conventions of Persons with Disabilities. In other words, due to the lack of an inclusive policy it will take time to have the implementation of inclusive education (see 3.3.3). Spondoki also raised the issue of the inclusive resource centre which and is it not well-equipped in terms of assistive devices and disability equipment that is needed in the resource centre. Mthombo was not fully pleased with about the inclusive practices at the college under study as he said there were very few students with disabilities enrolled at the college even though advert that encouraged persons with disabilities to apply. As the focus group discussion continued Guzu, Ginyane and Lelethu highlighted the following points:

*Guzu: “There is one specialist lecturer who is responsible for students with disabilities. The lecturer has additional work to do, as a result he is overwhelmed and cannot cope well especially when it comes to transcribing the braille.”*

*Ginyane: “Lecturers seem to concentrate more on able bodied students when it comes to sporting activities. With students with disabilities no one seem to be interested in grooming and training us so that we also take part in the Paralympics games. As a result, I can safely say inclusive sporting practices are a non-starter.”*

*Lelethu: “As a visually impaired student I feel there is lack of funding for us in order to have the equipment that we need both in the lecture rooms like smart phones, laptops, desktops and some recorders that will assist us almost on a daily basis as well as in sporting activities that include the sporting facilities and assistive devices used for sport fields.”*

In the case of lack of funding, Lelethu highlighted that there was no funding for the college to buy the equipment that visually impaired students are supposed to be using on daily basis in their learning and a when writing assignments (see 3.3.5). According to Sibanda (2018), the successful implementation of inclusive education requires resources that are in fact not as expensive as those for parallel education systems such as special education. In this case if less

expensive equipment is bought for a start, it could make a difference. Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2002) argue that the shortage of financial material, infrastructure and human resources greatly affected the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. This is in line with what Lelethu raised about lack of funding. In sporting activities Ginyane was of the view that lecturers seem to side-line sporting activities for students with disabilities. Only able-bodied students compete at provincial, national and regional levels yet students with disabilities are not catered for. There are Paralympic games where students with disabilities compete. This also results in stigma and discrimination (see 3.3.7). Lack of resources and qualified personnel is another challenge militating against the inclusive practices in the college under study. Guzu indicated that there is only one specialist lecturer who is over whelmed by the duties assigned to him (see 3.3.5) especially when it comes to transcribing Braille. Because of the amount of pressure on this one specialist lecturer there is need to add more specialist in that department. Galele, Rudon and Gidza also raised the following:

*Galele: "Our curriculum is not user friendly especially with practical subjects versus students with disabilities. I have noticed that there is a female student who was enrolled for PE and later after a period of 6 months she was forced to drop PE and join Art because her physical disability hindered her from doing some practical activities like swimming. I feel the college has to look into all our practical syllabi in order to accommodate students with disabilities especially those who want to do practical subjects. Some cannot do music because they are visually impaired yet they qualify to do that particular subject. Let's seriously look into our curriculum."*

*Rudon: "At times people stigmatize and discriminate us without realising it, for example, it is difficult to join a study group for discussions because once you approach them at times, and they end their discussion and pretend as if the discussion was coming to an end. They do this because of my hearing impairment [...] as I will keep on telling them to raise their voices, I think I'm annoying them. I don't have an assistive device for my hearing impairment. I wish the college could buy me one."*

*Gidza: "Getting lecture notes from other lecturers is a challenge because during their lectures I can hardly hear them, at times it is difficult to lip read them as they will be moving up and down the lecture. When I request for lecture notes they will keep on postponing like "come tomorrow after lunch, I'm on my way out" and tomorrow after lunch you won't find him/her. If you go back again, you will be told "Why didn't you write my notes during my lecture? You not hearing me its not my fault." I just wish the college could assist in buying assistive devices for hearing impairment students. Even currently during my TP it is difficult to understand what the pupils are saying, pupils are not used to raising their voices. During staff meetings I also struggle to get very important information."*

The discussions from Galele, Rudon and Gidza highlighted other dimensions of factors affecting the implementation of inclusive practices. Galele mentioned that the curriculum, especially for practical subjects, is not user friendly to students with disabilities. A student cannot be enrolled in a certain subject only to be informed after six months of studying that the subject to drop that it and register for another practical subject that they do not even qualify for.

(see 3.3.6). The syllabi have to be reviewed in order to accommodate students with disabilities. Fisher and Purcal (2017) and Tomlison (2017) argue that, a rigid curriculum can be a barrier to inclusion, as it may not accommodate the diverse needs and abilities of all students.

Rudon highlighted the challenges of stigma and discrimination. Even where people may not realise that they are stigmatising or discriminating any individual students with disabilities can easily pick that especially, socially where they meet for group discussions and some group members pretend as if the discussions were coming to an end (see 3.3.7). There is need to educate everyone at college in order to implement inclusive practice, socially and academically in the college environment. Another issue raised by Gidza, was that of attitude towards students with hearing impairment, where some lecturers cannot provide lecture notes for students with hearing impairment and keep on postponing and eventually telling them that it is not their fault that they cannot hear properly (see 3.3.7). There is need to seriously educate staff members on inclusivity. Zulu (2014) and Newton, Cambridge and Hunter-Johnson (2014) postulate that, teachers' negative attitudes are due to lack of knowledge and skills, as well as lack of training and sufficient support.

### **5.3.2 Inclusive Practices with SRC**

In the focus group discussion done with SRC, the committee raised the following contributions focusing on inclusive practices done at the teacher training college. Gerries, Ntonono, Charris and Ntosh had the following sentiments:

*Gerries: "As the SRC president I'm more concerned about the under staffing in the inclusive education area. Having one specialist lecturer is really a cause for concern. The specialist lecturer is not a full-time lecturer in that area and he also belongs to another department. Transcribing of the Braille is too much for him, if it is possible to have more than 2 full time lecturers and the subject being a stand-alone it would be taken seriously."*

*Ntonono: "The issue of our college syllabi, especially in music is also a challenge. My fellow colleague who is visually impaired wanted to do Music but because our syllabus is not accommodative enough and as a college we don't have proper equipment for visually impaired student in Music. This is a big challenge. My colleague is now doing IsiNdebele and English because in Music there were lots of diagrams to be drawn and we don't have special equipment for drawing for visually impaired students. Our institution is far behind when it comes to the implementation of inclusive education in practical subjects."*

*Charris: "One practice that we are doing as a college is that of encouraging persons with disabilities to apply. Secondly, students with disabilities are well represented in the SRC a plus to the college."*

*Ntosh: "Our facilities in the hostels are not user friendly. The ablutions, shower rooms,*

*bathrooms, washing lines were made for able-bodied persons. This also include the rooms in some hostels are not accommodative enough especially for wheelchair users as most of our hostels they don't have ramps."*

In light of the sentiments raised, it is quite clear that the department is understaffed; one lecturer cannot attend to the needs of all students with disabilities. Gerries was more concerned as the SRC President of the college under study. One lecturer cannot run the department alone (see 3.3.4). There is need to have some additional qualified members to assist the specialist lecturer. Gerries suggested that the subject could be a stand-alone so that people might take it seriously. The issue of having a rigid curriculum was raised Ntonono where she highlighted that the syllabi for practical subjects are not accommodative enough for students with disabilities (see 3.3.6). Ntonono suggested that there was need to have an accommodative syllabi. In the context of inclusive education, this refers to a curriculum that is designed to meet the diverse needs of all students, including those with disabilities or special educational requirements. Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2022) argue that a rigid curriculum which is not flexible and inclusive, can limit the ability of educators to meet the diverse learning needs of students. In addition, Zwane (2016) postulates that failure by the curriculum to be flexible and inclusive might not meet the needs of the students with diverse needs, not all the people are the same and that should be considered in the curriculum. This implies that the curriculum must include everyone according to their need; so that everyone benefits. People are different because being able bodied in does not mean everyone is able-bodied. According to the Conventions on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), everyone must be respected and treated fairly. In this case the issue of curriculum must be looked into especially where practical subjects are concerned. Charris also raised the point that encouraging persons with disabilities to apply for places at college is a plus to the college because it demonstrates being inclusive. The representation of students with disabilities in the SRC is also a good practice for inclusivity.

Ntosh also noted that facilities in the hostels were not user friendly. These include ablutions, shower rooms, bathrooms and washing lines which were installed only with able-bodied people in mind. The situation needs attention because students using wheelchairs also need that privacy when it comes to using ablutions as they cannot close the doors. It was also highlighted that hostel rooms do not have ramps and it becomes difficult for wheelchair users to enter the rooms on their own. They usually need another person to assist them (see 3.3.1). Kim, Paul and Imrie (2015) refer to physical barriers as obstacles that prevent students with disabilities from accessing educational facilities and participating fully in educational activities. In his research Chataika (2018) in his research discovered that, "[F]or the disabled [...] the issue of

the infrastructure limits enrolment of these students, those people with physical disability look at the physical infrastructure development and say that they are not appropriate.’ This means infrastructure development is also a limitation in the quest to accommodate some of these students with disabilities. Therefore, the concern of hostel facilities must be looked into so as to have more persons with disabilities being enrolled at the college under study.

## **5.4 Indicators of success of a management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education in teacher training colleges.**

### **5.4.1 Interview section of a management model**

The statement “Anything for us without us, is against us” (Luthuli & Wood, 2020) is a common slogan used by activists to emphasise the importance of including marginalised groups in decision-making processes about issues that affect them (see 3.5.1). In team in coming up with a management model, the team focused on the following aspects:

*Sibalukhulu: “The indicators of the success of a management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education in teacher training colleges [...], firstly, a draft of inclusive policies that will be used as working documents must be completed and launched so that colleges might implement inclusive education. Secondly, the success is seen through increasing the number of students with disabilities during enrolment process. This will make colleges identify major gaps that need to be attended to. Thirdly, colleges should ensure that there is suitable physical infrastructure available for students with disabilities. Fourthly, there must be availability of assistive devices cater for students with disabilities so that the pass rate can increase. Lastly, there is need to have additional, suitably qualified lecturers joining Inclusive Education.”*

*Butholabo: “Firstly, I can say, speeding up the draft policy will assist colleges to implement inclusive education. This will also make colleges write their own policies for Inclusive Education. Secondly, IE needs to be seriously considered on the designing and implementation of the curriculum. Thirdly, all subject areas must to infuse courses on inclusivity. Fourthly, government must to offer budgets for inclusive education to work in institutions for students with disabilities. Lastly, our infrastructure needs to be seriously upgraded in order to cater for all our students who have disabilities.*

Sibalukhulu and Butholabo agree on the issue of having an IE policy finalised and launched so that it will also cascade to teacher training colleges where college-based policies are drafted following the Ministry policy (see 3.3.3). Sibalukhulu believes that enrolling more students with disabilities, will make colleges identify the major gaps that need to be corrected and treat them as a matter of urgency (see 3.5.1) Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020) are of the view that

enrolment is considered an important practice of Inclusive Education in teacher training colleges and without enrolling students who should be part of the inclusive system, there can be no inclusive education in teacher training colleges. The same observation was made by Sibalukhulu. By enrolling more students with disabilities the college is able to address some gaps in inclusive education. This is true in the sense that at times a problem is never identified unless there is someone who is affected by that particular problem. The issue of suitable physical infrastructure (see 3.3.1) was also highlighted by Sibalukhulu and Butholabo during an interview on the readiness of the college to implement IE. Sibalukhulu was of the view that cover all the sectors from academic to social life, including sporting equipment will go a long way in enhancing the implementation of inclusive education (see 3.3.5). The absence of adequate qualified lecturers was also a cause for concern. More specialists are needed assist students with disabilities in their college work (see 3.3.4). Butholabo also raised the issue of curriculum where the college should consider having accommodative curriculum (see 3.3.6) that is suitable for any student enrolled at the institution rather than having a rigid curriculum. Another issue was lack of funding (see 3.3.5) where Butholabo was of the view that the government should have a budget strictly for IE so that it could assist colleges to procure important equipment to cater for students with disabilities.

#### **5.4.2 Indicators of the success of a management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe.**

##### **5.4.2.1 Focus Group Discussion with students with disabilities.**

The section starts with Guzu, Zhilos, Mkhaya and Spondoki who highlighted the following sentiments:

*Guzu: “Looking at the practical subjects especially Physical Education, may we have a user-friendly swimming pool with all the facilities suitable for students with disabilities such as rails in shower rooms, reasonable steps in the gymnasium should also cater for students with disabilities because currently it was meant for able bodied persons. I also suggest a management model that can be followed and cater for every student regardless of their conditions, so that everyone is included.*

*Zhilos: “In addition to what has been raised by Guzu, we also need assistive devices like wheelchairs for playing basketball and for us the visually impaired students we need the college to assist us with equipment for learning such as smartphones, laptops, desktops, some recording devices [...] if the ICT department could install software for us learning will be easy...as currently we are suffering. I also second the idea of this management model raised by Guzu.”*

*Mkhaya: “Our curriculum is not user friendly [...] maybe I’m talking about our syllabi that we use especially in practical subjects. Students should be free to train for the subjects that they applied for. A student should be assisted by the college to do subjects that they are not comfortable with because of certain disabilities. May the responsible authority look into this as a matter of urgency. Secondly, coming up with a management model will help students with disabilities, as they will be recognised by the college community, but people need to be schooled on this model.”*

*Spondoki: “The idea of an inclusivity management model is prudent enough especially to someone using a wheelchair like myself. The model will help not myself alone but every student with a disability, in addition to the model I would like the college to look into our hostels, issues of user-friendly toilets, washing lines and ramps. Actually, let’s have all the hostels infrastructure looked into so that students with disabilities may choose the hostels they feel they are comfortable to live in rather than having one option.”*

Guzu suggested that an inclusivity management model be formulated that will cater for students with disabilities in the college under study. The main aim is to create an environment that is supportive, fair, and inclusive for all students and educators. Guzu highlighted the issues of practical subjects, especially PE which uses the swimming pool facilities and the gym. If the college could attend to these issues so that students with disabilities are catered for it will go a long way in enhancing the implementation of inclusive education. Zhilos is of the view that it will be prudent enough if the college also buys assistive devices for competitions in Paralympic games like wheelchairs for basketball (see 3.3.5). Zhilos also highlighted the issue of assistive devices especially for the visually impaired students. These include smart-phones, laptops, desktops, gadgets for recording etc (see 3.3.5). According to Ellis (2016), assistive products and technology are adapted or specially designed for improving the functioning of a person with a disability. These products are a powerful tool that is used to increase independence and improve participation (Funk, 2012). For students with disabilities to enjoy their independence, assistive devices must be available for them and this will improve their learning. The rigid curriculum is also a challenge that needs to be addressed as raised by Mkhaya (see 3.3.6). The syllabi for practical subjects need to be reviewed in order to accommodate students with disabilities. (see 3.3.6). Spondoki looked at the infrastructure of hostels and highlighted the need to attend to all physical barriers for a user-friendly hostel environment right from the ablutions, ramps and washing lines to the bathrooms/ shower rooms.

The discussion of a management model also continued with Mthombo, Ginyane, Lelethu and

Galele sharing the following sentiments too:

*Mthombo: “Personally, I will be happier if the Dean and T.P offices relocate to ground floor because I don’t see our college putting elevators soon. The offices would rather relocate to ground floor so that we are also able to air our views face-to-face than sending someone on my behalf. There is need to formulate a management model as this is ideal for us as students with disabilities. However, everyone in the college community must be conscientised in order to understand the model fully.”*

*Ginyane: “In addition to what Mthombo has alluded to, The Principal’s Office and Vice Principal’s Office must have ramps constructed in order to cater for wheelchair users. The Accounts and Registry offices [...] something must be done concerning their window services because for a wheelchair user those offices are not accessible. I also support the idea of this inclusivity management model; it will be handy using it in the college community.”*

*Lelethu: “The idea of formulating a management model is a brilliant idea this will help especially looking at our college clinic where the pathway is not user friendly for wheelchair users making it is difficult to access the clinic.”*

*Galele: “All the pathways around the college must be user friendly to students with disabilities; ramps must be put everywhere where students move from one point to another. I’m also seconding the idea of formulating an inclusivity management model so as to reduce all these challenges faced by students with disabilities.”*

The two remaining students Rudon and Gidza, also raised the following points:

*Rudon: “I don’t know much about policies but I feel something must be done concerning Inclusive Education policies in teacher training colleges. Let the draft be attended to by the responsible authorities so that it is launched at national level. This will then cascade to teacher training colleges. And also, the issue of a management*

*model, if the two can be followed then this will be easy for the students with disabilities to be recognised.”*

*Gidza: “For the inclusive education to be implemented, I think every student must do this course, let it be a stand-alone subject and be compulsory to every student and examinable. There is also need to educate our staff members and make some daily sensitization to everyone specifically for inclusivity just to avoid stigma and discrimination. As a result, I also support this management model, this will solve our long overdue challenges.”*

Students with disabilities came up with management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education. Mthombo recommended that the offices of the Dean and TP to relocate to the ground floor in order to for students on wheelchairs and those who have some challenges in moving around. Ginyane also recommended the office of the Principal and Vice Principal to have ramps for them to be accessible (see 3.3.1). The college clinic is also a cause for concern where wheelchair users find it difficult to use the pathway to the clinic. Galele is of the view that all the pathways at college need to be attended to since some are not user-friendly for students using wheelchairs. In education settings, successful inclusion results in students and their families participating in the regular activities of the school community while meeting their unique needs, as well as contributing to the college community (Mutepfa, Mpofu and Chataika: 2007). Rudon raised the point of having working policies for IE from the national level down to college level. Gidza suggested that every student must do this course as a compulsory course, let IE needs to be a stand-alone subject and be examinable. Staff members to be educated and sensitized on a daily basis to avoid stigma and discrimination (see 3.3.7).

#### **5.4.2.2 Focus Group Discussion session with SRC**

The discussion started with Gerries, Ntonono, Charris and Ntosh who raised the following sentiments concerning a management model to enhance the effectiveness of IE in teacher training colleges:

*Gerries: “As the SRC President I feel we should have more students with disabilities being enrolled at our college. We will move around in the community reaching out to*

*different communities through campaigns, social media so that people are aware that we also do enrol persons with disabilities. I suggest, to achieve this let's formulate a management model which will assist us to achieve our objectives"*

*Ntonono: "That is a brilliant idea, I second formulating a management model as a group and I am also of the view that we should have more than 2 qualified lecturers for Inclusive Education and this should be a stand-alone subject and it must be examined just like other contemporary subjects."*

*Charris: "This is the time where staff members and other students are to be educated when it comes to inclusive education. More workshops for sensitization and more campaigns to be done to avoid stigma and discrimination. This also includes new intake joining the college. Yes, I agree with our president and Charris, a management is the solution while we wait for the inclusive policy. This model will assist students with disabilities in colleges."*

*Ntosh: "For the visually impaired students I think it will be prudent enough to have some Aides assisting them at college as well as during their teaching practice if funds permit."*

The discussion went on as Tebza, Qhubas, Sqintii and Nyama also suggested formulating a management model and raised the following points;

*Tebza: "As SRC we should look into the issues of access to our key offices The Dean and TP offices must be relocated to ground floor so that every student has easy access to these offices. The college should look into access to hostels as well as Principal and Vice Principal's offices. Ramps must be added for easy access to wheelchair users. A management model is the only solution to all these challenges."*

*Qhubas: "Yes, the idea of formulating a management model is prudent enough because the language that we use for students with disabilities must be user friendly and very accommodative. You just hear them saying "okuyisilima lokhu." This is uncultured and more teachings must be done to avoid stigma and discrimination."*

*Nyama: "I also second this management model. That is step number one and let's have our brothers and sisters also taking part in Paralympic competitions. It then needs sensitising people responsible for sports as well as other staff members to be patrons for students with disabilities. Let's try by all means to be accommodative enough when it comes to students with disabilities. Let us not side line them but let us work together and fight this stigma."*

The SRC raised some crucial ideas on a management model as Gerries, who was the SRC President during the time of study, suggested the issue of mobilising and reaching out to the

community when advertising for a new intake and encouraging persons with disabilities to come and apply (see 3.5.1). She even suggested launching campaigns as well as advertising in the social media so that the message reaches many people. Ntonono suggested that Inclusive Education be a stand-alone subject and be compulsory and examinable so that it can be easily implemented just like any other contemporary subject. Because no one wants to fail an examinable subject. IE as an examinable subject will be taken seriously resulting in more positive results in the implementation of inclusive education. According to Musengi and Chireshe (2012) Zimbabwe has embraced IE and is a signatory to the Salamanca statement and framework for Action on Special Needs Education. In other words, it is possible for Inclusive Education to be a stand-alone subject in higher education as already there is Special Education Needs in schools. Regarding stigma and discrimination, Charris suggested that staff and students need to be educated through sensitisation workshops. Also more IE campaigns to be carried out at college level including among new students. Ntosh was of the view that for the visually impaired students there must be some aides to assist them even during their teaching practice. Singh (2022) argues that, colleges and universities use Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to accommodate visually impaired students by assigning volunteers to help students read, take notes or perform important tasks. In the case of Ntosh's suggestion, volunteers from students can be invited.

Tebza also suggested that key offices be relocated to ground floor for easy access by all students. The offices of the Principal and Vice Principal must also have ramps for easy access by all students especially those on wheelchair. Qhubas was of the view that stigma and discrimination could be minimised through sensitisation, workshops so that the language used must be user-friendly. Using the words and phrases such as 'okuyisilima lokhu' ('this disabled') is a way of insulting a disabled individual (see 3.3.7). Nyama is suggested that students with disabilities should also partake in the Paralympics competition. Staff members should be educated to become Patrons of students with disabilities when it comes to social clubs.

## **5.5 Summary**

The data in this chapter was analysed using CDA focussing on text, discursive and social practice. The analysed data was responding to the aims and objectives of this study. In chapter 6, I focus on the inclusivity management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education at a teacher's training college in Zimbabwe.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **FINDINGS AND THE INCLUSIVITY MANAGEMENT MODEL: ITS INDICATORS OF SUCCESS**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

Chapter six is divided into sections. In the first section, I focus on the findings synthesized from the data developed through PAR. The second section of chapter 6 is the formulation of a management model to enhance inclusivity at a teacher training college in Zimbabwe. The management model was motivated by the findings concerning societal barriers that prevent individuals with impairments from fully participating in society. The management model is based on the Principles of CER (see 2.4). Numerous steps involved in the management model are discussed. Indicators for the successful implementation of inclusive education are discussed at the end of this chapter.

#### **6.2 Research Objectives restated:**

The objectives of this study were to:

- Determine the major barriers to academic and social inclusion faced by students with disabilities at a teacher training college.
- Explore how tertiary institutions implement inclusive practices for the successful integration of students with disabilities at a teacher training college, and
- Discuss the indicators of success of the management model to enhance the effectiveness of Inclusive Education in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe.

#### **6.3 Synthesis of Findings**

This section focuses on the findings that were raised from the interviews, and focus group discussions during the team engagement in the collection of data. The findings are in line with the objectives of the study.

### **6.3.1 Physical Access**

I found that students with disabilities encountered some barriers related to physical access to different places at the college under study. Kim (2015) and Imrie (2012) refer to physical barriers as obstacles that prevent students with disabilities from accessing educational facilities and participating fully in educational activities. In this journey with the team, I discovered that, students on wheelchairs encountered a lot of barriers in the infrastructure of the college. In hostels they experienced challenges when entering their rooms as there were no ramps. Only the main entrance of the hostel had a ramp. I also discovered that the washing lines were too high for students on wheelchairs and those students who are very short. According to Robert and Webster (2022); Dymond, Gilson and Myran (2007) American Post-Secondary students with disability have repeatedly noted that their request for reasonable accommodation under disability anti-discrimination laws are often not implemented in a timely fashion or in an effective manner. This explains that even at international level it is difficult to implement inclusive education especially when it comes to physical barriers in the hostels. The other physical access barriers included the Dean and TP offices which are situated on the first floor. These are key offices that are frequently visited by every student at college. The offices did not have elevators for students on wheelchairs. The offices of the Principal and the Vice Principal were not accessible for students on wheelchairs even the ground does not have ramps. This also include the registry and accounts offices where services are offered through windows. Therefore, it is difficult to access the offices for wheelchair users because of the inaccessible height of the windows. These are some of barriers that hinder accessibility. As a result, one may conclude that these barriers need immediate attention by college authorities so as to implement inclusivity at the teacher training college. This will make life easy for students with disabilities.

### **6.3.2 Reduced Opportunities for academic inclusion for students with disabilities.**

Inclusive education has grown as an international movement to not only support students with disabilities, but to promote equitable access, success and participation in education for all (Walton et al., (2019). Through the journey with the team, I found that there are quite a number of reduced opportunities for academic inclusion for students with disabilities. The team raised the point that there was a low enrolment of students with disabilities who after enrolling would face a lot of challenges in terms of curriculum where syllabi are not user-friendly for such students. In their study Sachs ad Schrelver (2011) found that students with disabilities invested more time to meet the demands of their studies, participated in fewer social and extra-curricular

activities, and used computers and information technology less. This is also in line with what the team raised in the current study, that students with disabilities are excluded in many areas at the college. Some of these exclusions are caused by lack of equipment for learning that is, the absence of assistive devices like smart phones, laptops desktops and wheelchairs for basketball competitions in the Paralympics. Despite the revolution in social and legislative policies on provision of equal opportunities for education and employment for people with disabilities, there is still a long way to go. (American with Disabilities Act, 1990; Canadian Human Rights Act, 1985; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 1997,; Waddington, Quinn and Flynn, 2014; United Nations Convention on The Rights of Person with Disabilities, 2006). I also found that, the absence of a vibrant inclusive education practice in teacher education is a major gap which might lead to a challenge in cascading inclusive education in Zimbabwean institutions (Luthuli and Wood, 2019). If reduced opportunities are attended to then the implementation of inclusive practices in teacher training colleges will be much easier.

### **6.3.3 Lack of inclusive policies in higher education**

One of the major barriers to the implementation of inclusive education is the lack of inclusive policies in higher education in Zimbabwe. The lack of a specific policy around inclusive practices in Zimbabwe's higher education sector had several effects, (see 3.3.3).

In this study I found that this lack of a clear policy also contributed to the lack of implementation of inclusive education at the college under study. There is need for clear and consistent policy guidance, training and professional development opportunities for faculty and staff and adequate resources to support the implementation of inclusive practices in higher education institutions (see 3.3.3) I found that the challenge for lack of IE policies in Zimbabwe's tertiary education institutions has been highlighted by different scholars. Sibanda (2018) says, Zimbabwe enacted Laws and Acts to guide inclusivity but these policies lacked clarity on the enact procedures, in section 83 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Number 20 of 2013 provides that, "[T]he state must take appropriate measures, within the limits of the resources available to it, to ensure that persons with disabilities realize their full potential including measures to provide special facilities for their education." While this amendment advocates for inclusivity, it is not clear how this will be achieved. It also states that the implementation can only be done when there are resources. In essence, the lack of clear policies can become a major barrier to the implementation of inclusive education. I then

conclude that, without clear guidelines and standards, lecturers may not have the necessary training or resources to effectively support students with disabilities. This highlights the importance of developing and implementing clear policies that address the needs of all students, including those with disabilities.

#### **6.3.4 Staff Competencies**

I also found that staff competencies were some of the major barriers that hindered the implementation of inclusive education in teacher training colleges. Teacher competency is the ability to plan, control and facilitate interaction in the classroom that is appropriate to the activity and which takes into account the different needs and abilities of students. I found that there was only one specialist lecturer who was manning the IE section. Most of the lecturers in this college under study are not trained to lecture IE and implement inclusive practices. As a result, one lecturer cannot run the section alone as it was highlighted in the findings that he is always overwhelmed by work especially when it comes to Braille transcription. It is therefore, according to Pit-ten et al., (2018), important to understand the factors associated with teachers' ability and willingness to accommodate students with differing needs in their classrooms so as to facilitate inclusive practices. This then mean that lecturers should have knowledge on inclusivity in order to fully understand the needs of different students with disabilities. Cate et al. (2018) further highlight that, research has demonstrated that both teacher competencies and attitudes have an impact on inclusive teaching. This means that untrained lecturers contribute negatively when it comes to addressing issues of inclusive education. I also found that while classroom management and interaction skills are certainly important components of effective teaching, a more comprehensive understanding of teacher competency would necessarily include the following these dimensions. For example, lecturers must have a strong content knowledge in the subject area they are teaching in order to effectively convey information to students. Cate et al. (2018) are of the view that, the importance of teachers' competence for inclusive practice is evident in its effect on student learning. One of the findings was that lecturers themselves did not understand what inclusivity meant in the sense that when a student with a disability scored a highest mark in an examination, the lecturer acted surprised. This level of thinking on its own shows questionable lecturer competencies when it comes to inclusive education. I then conclude that there is still a long way to go in the implementation of inclusive education. This requires a lot of staff training on inclusive practices.

### **6.3.5 Lack of funding**

I also noted that, teaching inclusive education needed resources such as funds in order to implement it. It was revealed that there was lack of funding to assist in procurement of assistive devices such as smart phones, laptops, desktops and as well as recording devices for students with disabilities. There was shortage of funding to have proper sporting facilities for students with disabilities including proper equipment for various disciplines. Infrastructure was also built with only able-bodied people in mind. Through the management model there is need to look into the issues in the infrastructure that disable student with disabilities and correct such disablement. According to Sibanda (2018) ‘successful implementation of inclusive education requires resources that are nevertheless not expensive as those required for parallel education systems [...]’ This means the equipment that can be bought for a start by institutions is not as expensive as running special needs classes. This observation makes a strong case for inclusive education. Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020) identified lack of funds to purchase assistive devices and other equipment as another challenge that contributes a barrier to the implementation of inclusive education in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe. As a result, the team suggested that it will be prudent enough if the government sets aside budget for the implementation of inclusive education in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe.

### **6.3.6 Rigid Curriculum**

I found that a rigid curriculum is one of the many barriers to the implementation of inclusive practices. According to Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020) a rigid curriculum is a standardised set of learning objectives, content and assessment that all students are expected to master simultaneously, at a uniform pace, and in a uniform manner, without consideration for individual variations in learning styles, abilities or interests. This inflexible approach fails to account for the diverse needs and preferences of learners, potentially hindering their overall engagement and achievement in the educational process. In addition to the sentiments, highlighted above, participants reported that, the curriculum was not inclusive enough especially for practical subjects. I found that another student with physical disabilities was forced to drop one of the practical subjects that she was specializing in and was forced to join another practical subject where she did not qualify because lecturers concerned felt the student would get hurt. If the syllabi are accommodative enough and include every student regardless of their disability then inclusive practices will be implemented easily without hurting students with disabilities. According to Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2020), due to rigid curriculum in teachers’ colleges in Zimbabwe, students with disabilities are not adequately catered for there

by affecting the implementation of inclusive education. I also noted that, due to a rigid curriculum some students with disabilities find it difficult to enrol for the subjects that they qualify for, instead they end up taking any other subjects which is not to their interest. In this view, Motiswe (2012) identifies several barriers to inclusive education. These include the lack of relevance of subject content, lack of appropriate learning materials and resources, inflexible teaching styles and classroom management and an inappropriate assessment practice. I also found that these negative barriers can have significant implications for the implementation of inclusive education practice. The team and I resolved that, if the syllabi could be reviewed that, the college can accommodate students with disabilities.

### **6.3.7 Stigma, discrimination and attitude**

I also noted that stigma, discrimination and attitude were other barriers against the implementation of inclusive education at the teacher training college. According to Clair (2018) stigma is an attribute that conveys devalued stereotypes while discrimination against someone excludes that person from the full enjoyment of their political, civic, economic, social or cultural rights and freedoms (Schramm, 2015). Attitude represents relatively stable knowledge, emotions and reactions regarding people, phenomena and situations (De Boer and Minnaert, 2011). (see 3.3.7). Stigma and discrimination were reported in social situations where a student with a disability fell in love with an able-bodied person the affair was monitored closely by able-bodied students to see whether it would work. Secondly, I found that when a student with disability proposes love and is rejected, he is labelled as “uthanda abafazi” (“loves women too much”). For that reason, students with disabilities felt they were being excluded from the social environment. The other forms of stigma and discrimination involved name-calling, like ‘isilima lesi’ (‘this disabled person’) which is not culturally accommodative, it is actually an insult. There was also the issue of myths and misconceptions, where persons with disabilities were exposed to abuse, where able-bodied people believed that one would get luck by having sexual intercourse with someone with disabilities. After the relationship comes to an end, students with disabilities would feel that felt they have been used and the able-bodied people are just there to play around with their emotions. In this case, it is good to educate the able-bodied about the myths and misconceptions about people with disabilities. This will help reduce the vulnerability of students with disabilities to infections, while at the same time saving them from emotional abuse.

### **6.3.8 Medical and Social Model of Thinking in Colleges**

I also noted that the medical and social model of thinking in colleges was another barrier to the implementation of Inclusive Education in teacher training colleges. I found that people perceive disability in different ways. The issue of medical and social models of thinking in colleges also exists (see 3.38). Rieser and Mahony (2002) are of the view that, the medical model of disability views disability as an individual problem that needs to be fixed or cured. This model focuses on the medical diagnosis and treatment of impairments, with the goal of enabling individuals to conform to the norms of society. In this, the medical model perceive disability as a disease that can be cured yet it is not true. I noted that most people at college as highlighted by the team, practice the medical model of thinking where people with disabilities are perceived as not capable of doing things on their own and lacking the ability to think for themselves or make their own decisions (Rieser and Mahony, 2002). I found that the friends of students on wheelchairs preferred to push them around, as if they were incapable of pushing themselves around. In this essence, I noted that students with disabilities feel as if they are useless people in the community who will always need assistance now and again yet they can manage to do things on their own. I conclude that the college community need a lot of sensitization and training in order to implement inclusive practices. Using the medical model of thinking stigmatises and discriminates against students with disabilities.

### **6.4 The inclusivity management model and its strengths**

The inclusivity management model which was suggested by the participants as appropriate in this study is borrowed from the social model of disability. Martin (2013) says that, the social model of disability views disability as a result of societal barriers that prevent individuals with impairment from fully participating in society. In the same vein, Walton (2023) opines that, the societal model of disability sees disability as a result of the way society is organised, rather than a product of by a person's impairment or differences. The social model then focuses on finding ways of removing barriers that restrict the life choices for disabled people. Walton (2023) further argues that, when barriers are removed, disabled people can be independent and equal in society, with choice and control over their own lives. The Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO) (2018) says that people are disabled by barriers in society, such as buildings not having a ramp or accessible toilets, or people's attitudes, like assuming that people with disability cannot do certain things. According to AEDO (2018) the social

model helps us recognise barriers that make life harder for people with disability, and removing these barriers creates equality and offers people with disability more independence, choice and control.

Figure. 6.1: Proposed inclusivity management model for teacher training colleges



The teacher training college requires an inclusivity management model to address the barriers to inclusivity, especially for students with disabilities (see 3.3.1-8). I strongly propose that these barriers be curbed by the implementation of inclusive practices. My arguments for inclusivity are based on CER, which seeks to transform society especially those oppressive and dehumanising structures of society and curriculum and replace them with the ones that emancipate people (Sinnerbrink, 2012) (see 2.2.4). In addition, CER is founded on an anti-oppression ideology, meaning that respect, dignity, mutuality and reciprocity provide an ideological lens through which every stage of its process is framed, while at the same time committing to identifying and challenging unequal power relations within the process (Ledwith, 2007). Banerjee (2021) and DNS, (2023) agree with AFDO that, the social model frames disability as something that is socially constructed. Disability is created by physical, organizational and attitudinal barriers and these can be changed and eliminated. In addition, Banerjee (2021) further articulates that the, social model gives us a dynamic and positive model that tells us what the problem is and how to fix it. It takes us away from the position of blaming the individual for their shortcoming. It states that, impairment is and always will be, present in every known society, and the only logical position to take, is to plan and organise society in a way that includes, rather than excludes disabled people.

In other words, in the social model of disability, it is the society which disables persons with disabilities in various ways which make them feel as if they are useless. According to Banerjee (2021), disability is something imposed unnecessarily to isolate and exclude individual from full participation in society. In response to of the sentiments outlined above, the management model was formulated and uses CER which seeks not merely to study and understand society, but rather to critique and transform society (Patton, 2002). In the following section, I look at the indicators of success of the management model to enhance the effectiveness of Inclusive Education in teacher training college in Zimbabwe. The indicators of success are discussed briefly indicating how the management model will curb the barriers highlighted.

#### **6.4.1 Enrolment Process**

Enrolment is considered an important practice of inclusive education in teachers' college (Hlatywayo and Mapolisa, 2020). The management model seeks to solve the issue of enrolling less students with disabilities in teacher training colleges. Enrolling more students with disabilities will go a long way in enhancing the implementation of inclusive education. For the college to get more students with disabilities more campaigns, sensitisation programmes and advertising need to be done by the college. For more enrolment to take place key infrastructures

like more ramps need to be constructed. Enrolling more students with disabilities in colleges where they interact with others from diverse backgrounds will enable those without disabilities to appreciate that everyone has unique characteristics and abilities (Raschke and Bronson, 1999; Luthuli and Wood, 2019). Eccles et al (2018) found that there is a lack of understanding regarding what constitutes a disability, and concerns that disclosure will negatively impact the application decision and disadvantage the student are rampant. The result is that some students with disabilities also do not disclose their disability during enrolment. The management model is more concerned with educating the entire community during sensitisation and campaigns for new intakes so that for students with disabilities apply with the full understanding they understand that there is need for them to disclose their disability for the administration to take into cognisance their needs as they join the college.

#### **6.4.2 Stigma, discrimination and policies**

The inclusivity management model seeks to reduce stigma and discrimination and promote inclusivity in teacher training colleges. This is crucial for creating an environment that embraces diversity and provides equal opportunities for all students (Hlatywayo and Mapolisa, 2022). Luthuli and Wood (2020) are of the view that when stigma and discrimination are reduced and policies developed, inclusive education will be positively impacted. Using the management model the college community at large needs to be educated and sensitised on inclusivity. The lecturers need to be trained through workshops and doing short courses. If more lecturers are trained then it means more students will be reached in terms of information dissemination through lectures and workshops. Grimes et al. (2020) warn that because of the real or perceived fear of being stigmatised, many students choose not to disclose their disabilities. According to Eccles et al (2018), fear of disclosure is linked to issues of risk and stigma, that students fear that they will be negatively impacted on and/ or that they will carry 'label' which differentiates them from other students. All this is because of lack of knowledge from the onset. The inclusivity management model will seek to educate both students with disabilities and the able-bodied ones including staff, during orientation as the student are being introduced to the new college environment. The inclusivity management model also pursues to develop and implement inclusive policies that explicitly address discrimination, promote equal opportunities for students with disabilities and ensure that these policies are communicated effectively and are accessible to everyone (May and Bridger, 2010). Chikwature et al (2016) agree with May and Bridger (2010) that, inclusive practices must be incorporated in areas such as admissions, curriculum development, teaching methodologies

and assessment procedures (see 3.5.2).

### **6.4.3 Accessibility and Accommodation**

On the issue of accessibility and accommodation, the management model seeks to improve places that are not accessible especially to wheelchair users. There are some key offices that need to relocate from first floor to ground floor in order to accommodate students with disabilities. Luthuli and Wood (2020) advise that, institutions must ensure that, the physical infrastructure of the college is accessible to students with disabilities including providing ramps, elevators, accessible washrooms and other necessary accommodations (see 3.5.3). In line with this, the management model seeks to highlight all the areas that were raised by the team to be looked into. The offices of Principal and Vice Principal must be equipped with ramps to cater for students using wheelchairs. The windows that are used by the accounts and registry offices to serve students do not accommodate students on wheelchairs. This needs to be attended to. Accessibility to swimming pool, clinic and the gymnasium needs to be improved. These areas were created with able-bodied people in mind. Proper equipment is also needed at the gymnasium for students with disabilities to be catered for, so as to improve the inclusive practices within the college.

Chikwature et al. (2016) stress that, colleges have to offer reasonable accommodations, assistive technologies, accessible materials, note-taking support and extended time for examination to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities. What is being raised by Chikwature et al. is what the management seeks to attend to, especially on the issue of reasonable accommodations. A study by Toutain (2019) revealed that, barriers to accommodations included students' lack of knowledge or awareness of campus resources, the inability to provide appropriate documentation of a disability or offer accommodations students found useful, and the negative reactions of peers and faculty members that students experienced upon their disclosure of a disability or their request to implement an accommodation. In terms of accessibility and accommodation, the team proved that it is feasible for the model to try to solve these issues to accommodate students with disabilities.

### **6.4.4 Inclusive language and representation**

The management model values the issue of inclusive language and representation (see 3.5.4). According to Mitchell (2023) the social model is concerned with using inclusive language and imagery that respects and acknowledges diverse identities, creating an inclusive environment

that values and affirms individuals of all backgrounds. As suggested by to educate able bodied persons on the issue of inclusive language as most able-bodied people use offensive language without knowing. The management model as suggested by the team and I, it is far much better to have workshops, run trainer of trainers' workshop, sensitise to staff and students on inclusivity which also including inclusive language. When lecturers are trained at cluster level, the trained lecturers will then train other members of staff on inclusivity. This means it will become easy to cascade the information to students during lectures while waiting for the subject to be a stand-alone. Magaya (2023) opines that, using gender inclusive language in institutions of learning affirms students whose identity is outside of the societal norm and creates a more inclusive environment for all students. It also demonstrates respect for all students and ensures that all students are accurately represented. In addition, McLeskey et al., (2022) are of the view that being mindful of inclusive language practices is now more important than ever and the promotion of inclusive language practices can help create a welcoming non-biased approach to respectful content generation. Thus, the inclusivity management model seeks to see a warm environment with positive inclusive language practices.

#### **6.4.5 Accessibility in Teacher Training Colleges**

Another indicator of the success of the management model is accessibility in teacher training colleges. The inclusion of students with disabilities in teacher training colleges requires the creation of an accessible environment. According to Barnes (2006), in the last two decades, there has been evidence of progress in making tertiary educational institutions more welcoming to students with disabilities. This proves that even though students with disabilities were enrolled long back but up to now implementation of inclusive practices is still a challenge. While Chikwature et al. (2016) highlights the importance of providing assistive technology, sign language interpreters and accessible formats for visually impaired students. The management model seeks to have more students with disabilities applying and getting enrolled in teacher training colleges. In a study by Aruldas et al. (2023) it was discovered that the barriers to enrolment and regular attendance included poor availability and affordability of transport, safety concerns or school staffs' concerns about students' behaviour being disruptive, while many students' learning was limited by the lack of teacher training and resources for inclusive education. This situation is similar to the one that obtains at the teachers' colleges. The management models will definitely correct the anomalies in accessibility in teacher training colleges.

#### **6.4.6 Inclusivity in Curriculum Development**

The management model seeks to look into detail inclusivity in curriculum development. Questions like, how are inclusive practices done at the college?, and how do you handle students with disabilities?, are there to help in a monitoring the implementation of inclusivity in curriculum development. In teacher training colleges, Luthuli and Wood (2020), highlighted the need for teacher training colleges to develop curricular that are inclusive of students with disabilities. At the college under study the management model seeks to look into the review of some syllabi, especially practical subjects, to accommodate students with disabilities. As a result, curriculum development is a critical aspect of enhancing inclusivity in teacher training colleges (see 3.5.6).

#### **6.4.7 Leadership and Management**

The inclusivity management model values a leader who performs the creative function of following up on laid out goals and policies and persuading the subordinates to work with zeal and confidence (Uthayasuriyan and Kanaga, 2019). Effective leadership and management are essential for the development and implementation of a management model to enhance inclusivity in teacher training colleges (see 3.5.7). Mueller and Peck (2019) highlight that, the development of policies and procedures that promote inclusivity requires involvement of all stakeholders, including students, staff and community members. In addition, Uthayasuriyan and Kanaga (2019) are of the view that the function of a leader is to create and shape the institution on scientific lines and assign the roles appropriate to individual abilities with the view to make its various components geared towards the achievement goals. The major goal of the management model is to evaluate the leadership and management in order to implement inclusivity at a teacher training college. The next chapter shows a management model and the indicators of success.

#### **6.5 Summary**

In this chapter, I focused on the findings from the data generated from the team. I also formulated an inclusivity management model that responds to the indicators of the success of inclusivity at a teacher training college in Zimbabwe. Chapter 7 summarizes all the chapters and giving recommendations in the area of inclusive education for future researchers.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES AND THE FINAL WORD**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter summarizes the key areas and processes of this research. An overview of what has been discussed in each chapter is presented. The chapter also summarizes possible areas for future researchers, educationists from institutions of higher learning, persons with disabilities in higher education offices and advocates or persons with disabilities to either enhance the management with better options that will aid in the implementation of inclusive education in teacher training colleges. My final word will be given at the end of this chapter.

#### **7.2 Summary of chapters**

##### **7.2.1 Chapter 1: The problem and its context**

I introduced chapter 1 to my readers by outlining the aim of the study which was to formulate a management model to enhance the implementation of an inclusive practice at a teacher training college in Zimbabwe. The objectives of the study and the research questions were stated. The background of inclusive education was articulated. I noticed a number of barriers that students with disabilities face in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe. I highlighted that the study will make a unique contribution to knowledge because the international trends in education now follow an inclusive approach to education (Mathopa, 2007). I also introduced to readers critical emancipatory research (CER), participatory action research (PAR) and critical discourse analysis (CDA) in this chapter. The ethical considerations were also discussed at the end of this chapter.

##### **7.2.2 Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework: Critical Emancipatory Research**

In chapter 2, I focused on the conceptual framework which is the foundation of this study. I traced the rise of critical emancipatory research from the critical theory of the Frankfurt school of social sciences in the 1920s. Its developments and concepts and how it relates to inclusivity

were discussed in detail. I noticed that other scholars like Dube and Hlalele (2018) argue that, the mandate of the Frankfurt scholars was clear: it was to change oppressive structures by engaging in research. This is in line with what Wellmar (2014) raised that in order to redress the contested terrain in Europe, and Germany in particular the Frankfurt scholars attempted to collaborate with philosophers, economists and psychoanalysts. I also discussed that some scholars like Wang (2018) articulated that Habermas developed CER to enhance the participation of other sectors of society which would otherwise not participate in decision-making especially where educational issue are concerned. I further discussed CER and its relevance to disability particularly the views of Danieli and Woodhams (2004) argued that, emancipatory paradigm may serve to facilitate the generation of knowledge that can be used by disabled people for self-emancipation.

I also highlighted the principles of CER that were discussed in detail which included, CER's aim in improving human lives Patton (2002) is of the view that, CER seeks not merely to study and understand society, but rather to critique and transform society. I also looked at the second principle, CER and elimination of false consciousness where scholars like Dube (2016) highlights that, "I hold the view that CER attempts to eliminate the false consciousness that which oppresses people and dehumanizes them cannot be critiqued and challenged." The third principle of CER is sustainable social transformation. Brooke (2002) is of the view that, social transformation, not only pictures, insufficiencies in society but also encourages reflection upon and liberation from any shortfalls towards igniting a desirable change. The fourth principle I discussed was CER and promotion of sociable justice Traitler (2015) asserts that social justice in the context of CER means including the privileges of those who have been quietened by society who in this case the marginalized students in the college curriculum, to declare themselves are ending knowledge that has been overlooked and shattered. Lastly, I discussed the CER and principle of emancipation where Nkoane (2012) postulate that CER has an agenda to critique and challenge, to transform and empower, it is geared towards social justice and enhances the principles of democracy. Finally, the above principles were used to interrogate issues in this study and they were also used in many ways.

### **7.2.3 Chapter 3: Review of related literature**

In chapter 3, I reviewed literature related to the implementation of inclusive education through formulating a management model at a teacher training college in Zimbabwe. This chapter tried to respond to the objectives of this study. The first section focused on the barriers to academic and social inclusion faced by students with disabilities at the teacher training college. One of

the barriers that were raised during data collection was the issue of physical access. Kalyanpur and Harry (2012) are of the view that, physical, social or attitudinal barriers are some of the difficulties that prevent students with disabilities from accessing educational opportunities and achieving their full potential. I also focused on the definition of inclusive education from different scholars, where the WB (2018) say inclusive education is a process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion from education and from within education.

One of the barriers raised was also the medical and social model of thinking in colleges. Rieser and 'O' Mahony (2002) argue that the medical model of disability views disability as an individual problem that needs to be fixed or cured. On the other hand, Shakespeare (2014) asserts that, the social model of disability views disability as a result of societal barriers that prevent individuals with impairments from fully participating in society. The second objective of the study focused on inclusive practices that tertiary institutions implement to achieve the successful integration of students with disabilities, particularly focusing on the teacher training college under study. Some of the practices included the, enrolment of persons with disabilities and a waiver of Mathematics given to students who are visually impaired, representation in the SRC and installing infrastructure that provides access to critical space. Some practices in other tertiary institutions were also highlighted where Mafa and Mathiba (2013) in their study found that, the lecturers at the studied institution were not quite adept at implementing inclusive education due to a number of factors such as lack of knowledge, skills and lack of clear policies that guide inclusive education programmes, among others. Internationally, in Malaysia, according to Zaki and Ismail (2021) the Ministry of Education has launched the inclusive OKU or Disability Inclusion Policy in November 2014, and the guideline has been distributed to all twenty (20) Public Higher Education Institutions in Malaysia. The third objective focused on the indicators of the success of a management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education in teacher training colleges. Issues like enrolment, stigma, discrimination and policies, accessibility and accommodations, inclusive language and representation were discussed in detail as part of the management model.

#### **7.2.4 Chapter 4: Research Design and Methodology**

Chapter 4 focused on Participatory Action Research PAR, which was the approach that was used to generate data. This chapter merged the theoretical constructs that were discussed in chapter 3 in order to answer to the research questions. The AIFS (2015) is of the view that PAR is an approach to generating data that involves collaboration between researchers and the participants of the study. PAR can allow for a more inclusive and democratic research process, ensuring that the view and perspectives of the participants are heard and valued. I also focused on critical discourse analysis (CDA). The empirical data was cross-examined in three levels of CDA which are text, discursive and social practice. The CDA was chosen because it is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in social and political theory (van Dijk, 2001). Van Dijk (2001) further argues that with such dissident research, critical discourse analysts take explicit position and thus want to understand, expose and ultimately resist social inequality. In agreement with CDA Dube (2016) says, CDA complements the efforts of CER and PAR to improve the lives of disadvantaged members of the community.

#### **7.2.5 Chapter 5: Data presentation, analysis and interpretation of results.**

The chapter concentrated on data presentation, analysis and the interpretation of research findings. The presentation of data in this chapter emerged from the use of participatory action research PAR which was one of the methods for generating data. The data generated in this chapter was responding to the aims and objectives of this study. The technique for analysing data was the critical discourse analysis (CDA). The empirical data was examined in three levels of CDA which are textual, discursive and social practice. The generation of data arose from the ideas raised in chapter 3. The team also built a management model to enhance inclusivity at the teacher training college in Zimbabwe.

#### **7.2.6 Chapter 6: Findings and management model**

In chapter 6, I summarised the various findings emanating from interviews of key informants and focus group discussions from the students with disabilities and from SRC. The key finding was that it was most crucial for the college to enrol more persons with disabilities so as to

implement fully inclusive education. Another important finding was the issue of having a working inclusive education policy so that inclusive practices can be implemented. The second part of this chapter I then formulated the management model with the contributions that came from the team, literature review and best practices of IE from other institutions of higher learning and at international level. The model comes from the 7 indicators of success namely, enrolment, stigma and discrimination, policies, accessibility and accommodations, inclusive language and representation, accessibility in teacher training colleges, inclusivity in curriculum development and leadership management.

### **7.3 Limitations of this study**

Each research or study has got its limitations. In this research I faced some challenges that will require intervention by other researchers who will also carry out a similar study. Theofanidis and Fountouki (2019) postulate that, limitations in any particular study concern potential weaknesses that are usually out of the researcher's control and are closely associated with the chosen research design, funding constraints or other factors. One of the limitations in this study was lack of funding when collecting data. PAR was used as a method of generating data and most of the participants the focus group discussion which comprised students with disabilities were on Teaching Practice and scattered all over the provinces of Zimbabwe. Gathering them together needed funds for their bus fares which I had to provide. This study also was a handle-with-care research as I was dealing with a very sensitive team especially the students with disabilities. The weakness was that during the focus group discussion with them, I realised that I used certain terminologies which were not user friendly with the students with disabilities. According to Hlatywayo and Mapolisa (2022) reducing stigma and discrimination and promoting inclusivity in teacher training colleges is crucial for creating an environment that embraces diversity and provides equal opportunities for all students. My appeal to the next researchers is to kindly take note of the terminology used to persons with disabilities to avoid the stigma and discrimination that might be created unexpectedly.

### **7.4 Recommendations for future work**

In this section, I highlight different areas of research which other future scholars should explore in order to enhance the effectiveness of Inclusive Education in teacher training colleges.

The current study was confined in one secondary teacher training college out of 3 colleges. I recommend that future studies to focus on the 3 secondary teacher training colleges so as to

get a more comprehensive study that will be carried out at national level and possibly formulate different management models to enhance inclusivity in secondary teacher training colleges. This will assist in the implementation of inclusive practices to students with disabilities in secondary teacher training colleges.

The current study did not include representation from other departments that included humanities, sciences, languages and educational foundations as participants for inclusive education in the generation of data. I recommend that future studies include more lecturing staff by having a representative from each department, including and non-lecturing staff as I believe that a college is a community with different departments who also meet and interact with students with disabilities. Another area of consideration in future studies is to add questionnaires in the collection of data as some key informants were not comfortable with the methods that were used in the current study.

### **7.5 The final word**

This study has been an eye opener in my life and I am really humbled by the generosity that I got from all of my participants. I learnt quite a lot during this journey. They say, “knowledge is power,” and for sure I have been empowered by what I gained through this wonderful and educative journey. The current study focused formulating a management model to enhance inclusivity at a teacher training college in Zimbabwe. The journey was an eye opener in my life especially when I interacted with students with disabilities. Getting the responses from the horse’s mouth left me with this feeling of love for humanity, humility and an understanding of on how able-bodied people perceive the lives of persons with disabilities in ways that cause stigma and discrimination. The Participatory Action Research (PAR) was an eye-opener in my journey of education especially with students with disabilities as there was a free atmosphere in a conducive environment which made it easy for them to open up. Seeing the persons with disabilities from afar does not give one the kind of life they are living, but interacting with them gave me more understanding about the experiences of persons with disabilities. During the focus group discussions, I also discovered that if you humble yourself and show respect to persons with disabilities in turn, they also respect you Humbleness and respect were also shown to the other group which was composed of the current SRC as well as the 2 key informants.

From the current study it was revealed that some lecturers were not trained for inclusive education. They lacked knowledge and skills to handle students with disabilities. It was also

established that the curriculum was not accommodative enough to students with disabilities especially in practical subjects. The study also highlighted that there was lack of a vibrant inclusive policy which made it difficult to implement inclusive education in teacher training colleges. The study also revealed that, infrastructure was not good enough for students with disabilities and the college lacked funding which affected the implementation of inclusive education in the teacher training college. The study also revealed that students with disabilities were stigmatised and discriminated against in various forums. Despite all these other negative aspects the Principal, Specialist lecturer and SRC highlighted that persons with disabilities were encouraged to apply so that they are enrolled at the college and a waiver is offered to students who are visually impaired. The students with disabilities are also represented in the SRC. I can conclude that the team and I formulated a management model to enhance inclusivity at a teacher's training college in Zimbabwe. However, other scholars are welcome to improve on this management model.

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## Appendix 1: Acceptance Letter



UNIVERSITY OF THE  
FREE STATE  
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE  
VRYSTAAT  
UNIVERSITHA YA  
FREISTATA

**Matseliso Mokhele Makgalwa**

Associate Professor Director Research and Engaged Scholarship  
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*Inspiring excellence  
Transforming lives*

2020-02-25

2020789448

Dear Ms Ncube

### SELECTION INTO THE DOCTORAL PROGRAMME OF THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION

I am pleased to inform you that you have been selected into the doctoral programme of the Faculty of Education with specialisation in **Higher Education Studies** for 2021. You will receive notice to this effect from Student Academic Services of the University in due course. On receipt of the notification from Student Academic Services, you must please accept the offer online to ensure your admission status. You need to be registered on or before but not than 31 March 2021. There will be a research orientation session in March 2021 that you must attend (information regarding this will be shared at a later stage), as important information will be shared during this session to assist you with your research planning. Should you need any additional information, please contact the Directorate and we will gladly assist you. The Administrator for the programme is Ms. Christa Duvenhage and her contact details are 051 401 3651 or [duvenhagecs@ufs.ac.za](mailto:duvenhagecs@ufs.ac.za).

**The module code you need to register for is: EDHE9100 (thesis) or ECHA9100 (articles)**

**Your assigned promoter is Dr B Dube with contact details [dubeb@ufs.ac.za](mailto:dubeb@ufs.ac.za) and tel number 058 718 5498.**

May you find your postgraduate studies rewarding and intellectually stimulating and we wish you every success for your studies.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Mokhele'.

Prof ML Mokhele Makgalwa

Director Postgraduate Studies

## Appendix 2: Clearance Letter from MHTEISTD

All official communications should be addressed to:  
The Secretary for Higher & Tertiary Education  
Telephones: 795891 5, 796441 9, 730055 9  
Fax Numbers: 792109, 728740, 701957  
E-mail: [thesecretary@mhct.ac.zw](mailto:thesecretary@mhct.ac.zw)  
Telegraphic address: "EDUCATION"



Reference

MINISTRY OF HIGHER AND TERTIARY  
EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND  
TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT  
P. BAG CY 7732  
CAUSEWAY

10 November 2022

Mrs. N. Ncube  
C/o Hillside Teachers College

**RE: AUTHORITY TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH AT HILLSIDE TEACHERS COLLEGE:  
MINISTRY OF HIGHER AND TERTIARY EDUCATION, INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND  
TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT.**

Reference is made to your letter in which you requested for permission to carry out a Research on "**Towards Formulating a Management Model to Enhance Inclusivity at a Teacher's Training College in Zimbabwe: A Case of one Student Teachers' College in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province, Zimbabwe**".

Accordingly, please be advised that the Head of Ministry has granted permission for you to carry out the research.

It is hoped that your research will benefit the Ministry and it would be appreciated if you could supply the office of the Permanent Secretary with a final copy of your study, as the findings would be relevant to the Ministry's strategic planning process.



S. Nyamukonda

**FOR: SECRETARY OF HIGHER AND TERTIARY EDUCATION, INNOVATION,  
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT**

Cc: File

## Appendix 3: Ethical Clearance from UFS



## APPENDICES

### GENERAL/HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (GHREC)

21-Aug-2023

Dear Mrs Nozinhle Ncube

Application Approved

Research Project Title

TOWARDS FORMULATING A MANAGEMENT MODEL TO ENHANCE INCLUSIVITY AT A TEACHER'S TRAINING COLLEGE IN ZIMBABWE

Ethical Clearance number:

UFS-HSD2023/1292

We are pleased to inform you that your application for ethical clearance has been approved. Your ethical clearance is valid for twelve (12) months from the date of issue. We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your study/research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure ethical transparency. Furthermore, you are requested to submit the final report of your study/research project to the ethics office. Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension. Thank you for submitting your proposal for ethical clearance; we wish you the best of luck and success with your research.

Yours sincerely

Dr Adri Du Plessis

Chairperson: General/Human Research Ethics Committee

Adri  
Du  
Plessis

Digitally signed by Adri Du Plessis  
Date: 2023.08.23 18:35:54 +02'00'

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## Appendix 4: Proof of Registration



Telephone +2751 401 9666  
Enquiries Student Academic Services  
Our reference 2020789448  
E-mail [studentadmin@ufs.ac.za](mailto:studentadmin@ufs.ac.za)  
21 October 2021

**PROOF OF REGISTRATION**  
**IT IS HEREBY CERTIFIED THAT**  
**N NCUBE**  
**Campus ID: 2020789448**  
**National ID: CN204704**

is a full-time registered student at the University of the Free State for 2021. The student is registered for the following qualification and modules:

QC798894-Doctor of Philosophy with specialisation in Higher Education Studies					
Module	Class	Year : Session	Description	Campus : Location	Status
EDHE9100	3603	2021 : Year Full	Higher Education Studies Thesis	Qwaqwa Campus : Qwaqwa	Enrolled

*It is your responsibility as student to ensure that the information on this document is correct*

**Last date for cancellation of modules:**

- 31 March 2021: First Semester and Year Modules
- 31 August 2021: Second Semester Modules

## Appendix 5: Confirmation letter for registration

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FREE STATE  
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE  
VRYSTAAT  
YUNIVESITHI YA  
FREISTATA



Tel.: +27 (0) 51 401 9666  
Enquiries: StudentAdmin@ufs.ac.za  
Our Ref.: 2020789448

11 October 2021

**IT IS HEREBY CERTIFIED THAT**

**MS N NCUBE**

**IDENTITY NUMBER: CN204704**

**STUDENT NUMBER: 2020789448**

Is a registered student at the University of the Free State following the **Doctor of Philosophy with specialisation in Higher Education Studies** programme for the 2021 academic year.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A Naidoo', is written over a faint circular stamp.

**MR A NAIDOO**  
**DEPUTY REGISTRAR: STUDENT ACADEMIC SERVICES**



## Appendix 6: Research study information leaflet



### Research study information leaflet and consent form

18/09/2023

Title of the research project

**Towards formulating a management model to enhance inclusivity at a teacher's training college in Zimbabwe.**

Principle investigator / researcher(s) name(s) and contact number(s):

Ncube Nozinhle                      2020789448                      +263 774 700 770

Faculty and Department:

Name of Faculty: Education

Name of Department: Higher Education

Study leader(s) name and contact number:

Prof. Bekithemba Dube (UFS staff member)

+27 76 903 9329/ 0812449242

What is the aim / purpose of the study?

The aim of this study will be to formulate a management model to enhance inclusive education at a teacher's training college in Zimbabwe. The study will develop a framework to enhance inclusive education in teachers' training colleges in Zimbabwe.

Who is doing the research?

My name is Ncube Nozinhle, I am a lecturer at Hillside Teachers College, a secondary teacher training college. I am a registered professional counsellor with the Allied Health Practitioners. The reason why I am doing this study is because I have attended to different students with disabilities complaining about how unfriendly the environment is to them including the curriculum which has led to some feeling unwanted, stigmatised and discriminated by their colleagues and some staff members.

Has the study received ethical approval?

Yes

**Approval number:** UFS-HSD2023/1292

Why are you invited to take part in this research project?

The study will use purposive sampling which is virtually synonymous with qualitative research



(Palys, 2008:697). Purposive sampling involves the researcher using their discretion to select participants to become co-researchers in the study, and due to its non-probability in nature, it is both cost effective and saves time (Black; 2010). The intended population in this study will be ten students with disabilities, eight students without disabilities from the Student Representative Committee (SRC), one specialist lecturer and one administrator. The reason for involving these participants is that they are the key informants and information will be gathered on their experiences and perceptions of inclusive education at a teacher's training college.

### What is the nature of participation in this study?

In this study, data will be collected through focus group discussions and face-to-face semi-structured interviews. These are the secondary research questions:

1. What barriers to academic and social inclusion do students with disabilities face at the college?
2. Which inclusive practices do tertiary institutions implement to achieve the successful integration of students with disabilities at a teacher's training college?
3. What are the indicators of success of a management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe?

### Can the participant withdraw from the study?

The cornerstone of ethical research is 'informed consent' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Participants must be fully informed of what will be asked of them, how the data will be used, and what (if any) consequences there could be (Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018). Participation in this study will remain optional and participants will be informed of the right to withdraw at any stage (Davis & Sutton, 2004). The participants must provide explicit, active, signed consent to taking part with the research, including understanding their rights to access to their information and the right to withdraw at any point (Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018).

### What are the potential benefits of taking part in this study?

The study will develop a framework to enhance inclusive education teachers training colleges in Zimbabwe. The information that will be gathered for developing the intervention of a management model to address the concerns of students with disabilities will be vital to sister colleges, policymakers, service providers, administrators and the general public. The lecturers will have information to make decisions on assisting students with disabilities in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe. The research will be carried out in an ethical manner, the principles of informed consent, anonymity, avoiding harm to participants and confidentiality will be honoured (Chimhenga, 2014).

### What is the anticipated inconvenience of taking part in this study?

It is the responsibility of the researcher to design a project which will not infringe on the rights and safety of the interviewees or respondents (Akaranga & Makau, 2016). They further assert that, the risks related to the research if any, must be well explained to the respondents while conducting the research.

### Will what I say be kept confidential?

It is important that the identity of participants is kept confidential or anonymous and the assurance extend beyond protecting their names to also include avoidance of using self-identifying statements and information (Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018). Ethical guidelines and research protocols all emphasize the importance of using pseudonyms during the research process to safeguard the identities of research participants (Heaton, 2021).

### How will the information be stored and ultimately destroyed?

Hard copies of your answers will be stored by the researcher for a period of five years in a locked cupboard/filing cabinet at work in the researcher's office for future research or academic purposes; electronic information will be stored on a password protected computer. Future use of the stored data will be subject to further Research Ethics Review and approval if applicable. Data will be destroyed after five years through shredding or burning it.

### Will I receive payment or any incentives for participating in this study?

Participants in research are not paid and must be told during the process of informed consent.

### How will the participant be informed of the findings / results of the study?

If you would like to be informed of the final research findings, please contact <Ncube Nozinhle> on <+263 77 470 0770> or fax <ncubenzie74@gmail.com> or website <www.hillside teacherscollege.ac.zw>. The findings are accessible for <open to the public>. Please do not use home telephone numbers. Departmental and/or mobile phone numbers are acceptable. Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact <+263 78 279 9479, hillside.teachers@gmail.com, +263 29 224 1844>. Should you have concerns about the way in which the research has been conducted, you may contact <Dr. B. Dube, +27 76 903 9329, dubeb@ufs.ac.za, 081 2449242>

**Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for participating in this study.**

## Appendix 7: Consent Form



### Consent to participate in this study

I, the undersigned,

\_\_\_\_\_ (participant's full names to be included), (the "Participant")

confirm that I voluntarily agree to participate in the research study referred to as the

-----  
(the "Study") in relation to

\_\_\_\_\_ and which Study is being conducted by

NCUBE NOZINHLE

I, the undersigned Participant, further confirm that-

1. The Researcher has explained the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of my participation in the Study;
2. I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the Study as explained in the attached information sheet;
3. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the Study;
4. I understand that my participation in the Study is entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable);
5. I voluntarily provide the UFS and the Researcher with my personal information and consent to the UFS and the Researcher collecting, disclosing and processing my personal information in order to conduct the Study and any related activities in relation thereto;
6. I hereby acknowledge and confirm that I understand the purpose for which the UFS and the Researcher may collect, store, use, delete, destroy, outsource, transfer or otherwise process, as the context and circumstances may require and as contemplated in terms of POPIA, my personal information as set out herein;
7. I am aware that the findings of the Study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings and that my personal information will be aggregated and deidentified at such stage;
8. I also give the UFS permission to share, without notification, the collected data with other researchers at the UFS or other Higher Education Institutions. This permission is dependent on the same principles of ethical research practices, anonymity/confidentiality, safekeeping of information, and other issues listed above applying.





I, the Participant, agree to the recording of the interview;

Full Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

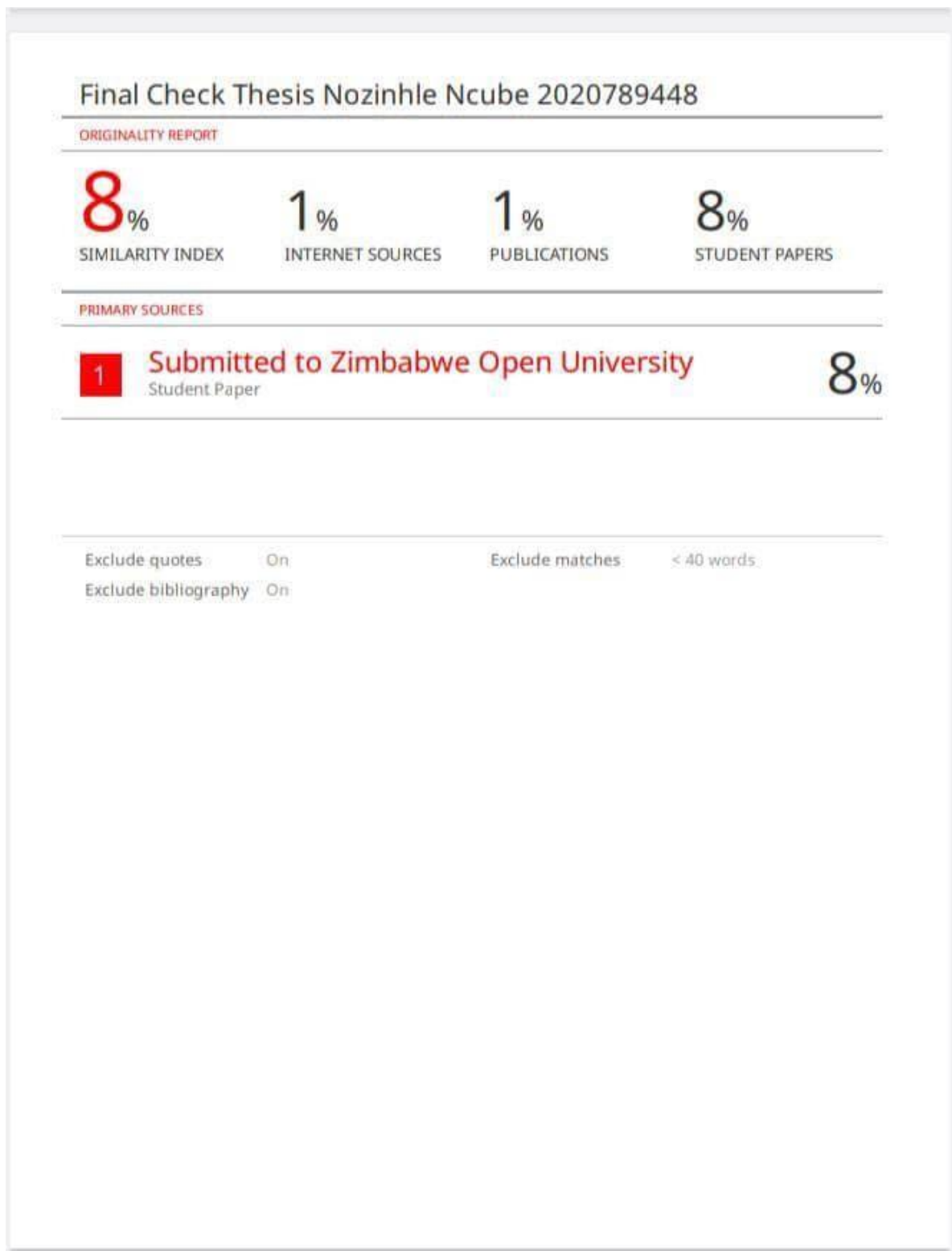
Signature of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name(s) of Researcher(s): NCUBE NOZINHLE

Signature of Researcher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX 8: Final check thesis



## Appendix 9: Digital receipt



### Digital Receipt

This receipt acknowledges that Turnitin received your paper. Below you will find the receipt information regarding your submission.

The first page of your submissions is displayed below.

Submission author:	Nozinhle Ncube
Assignment title:	Turnitin Similarity Check
Submission title:	Final Check Thesis Nozinhle Ncube 2020789448
File name:	Final_Check_Thesis_Nozinhle_Ncube.docx
File size:	4.12M
Page count:	258
Word count:	83,607
Character count:	479,177
Submission date:	23-Jul-2024 12:46PM (UTC+0200)
Submission ID:	2418137560

## Appendix 10: Editorial Certificate

### Chidora Editorial Consultancy

9120 Manyame Park

Chitungwiza

Phone: +263773551391

E-mail: [chidoratanaka@gmail.com](mailto:chidoratanaka@gmail.com)

29 July, 2024

To whom it may concern,

#### Re: Letter of confirmation of language editing

The doctoral thesis, **Towards Formulating a Management Model to Enhance Inclusivity at a Teacher Training College in Zimbabwe** by Nozinhle Ncube was language-edited. Final corrections remain the responsibility of the author.



Tanaka Chidora (PhD in English, University of the Free State)

Co-Chief Editor: *Matatu: Journal of African Culture and*

*Society* Lecturer, Department of Literary Studies, University

of Malawi Email: [tchidora@unima.ac.mw](mailto:tchidora@unima.ac.mw)

## Appendix 11: Minutes for generating data Phase

1

Co-ordinator	Comments from the team
Researcher	<p>My name is Ncube Nozinhle a PhD student from the University of Free State, in the Republic of South Africa. My topic is <b>“Towards formulating a management model to enhance inclusivity at a teacher’ training college in Zimbabwe”</b></p> <p>Thank you very much for agreeing to be part of this research team. We shall be using a method called ‘Participatory Action Research’ where we shall be collecting our data through what is called ‘Focus Group Discussions’ and we will be divided into 2 groups. Group 1 is the group composed of the current SRC and Group 2 is the group which is composed of Students with different disabilities. We also have 2 staff members who will be interviewed one from the administration and one specialist lecturer. Our project will take us about 6 months. May you be patient with me until we finish. Maybe let’s suggest the number of times we can meet for focus group discussions.</p>
Gerries	Personally, I feel maybe once a fortnight and on Wednesdays after lunch that’s when we have a free period since our time table is packed.
Ntonono	I also second what Gerries has raised.
Charries	Seconded.
Guzu	Maybe with us it will be difficult to meet every fortnight, perhaps every month-end it will be fine since some of us are on Teaching Practice. It will cut the costs for us, and I propose we meet on Saturdays from 1000hrs.
Zhilos	That is a great idea because it will be difficult to always seek permission to be away from school during the week.

Mkhaya	I also support the idea. Kodwa nxa kungaba lesiswelo, ngibona angani sesingabona izikolo zingavalwa ukuthi sihlangeane every weekend to cover up for lost time.
Spondoki	Ngumqondo omuhle lowu I second.
Researcher	Thank you very much for your contribution, we shall meet once a fortnight with the SRC on Wednesday after lunch then meet with Students with different disabilities every Saturday of our month-ends to accommodate those on Teaching Practice, then meet every weekend of each holiday. Maybe let's have 2 secretaries who will be taking minutes for us in our groups.
Tebza	I suggest Ntosh from our group, he is our SRC secretary, I don't know what others think?
Qhubas	I second that too, what do you think Ntosh?
Ntosh	No objection, I will do that.
Mthombo	From our side I suggest Galele. He is a fast writer.
Lelethu	I second the suggestion.
Rudon	Seconded madam. I don't know what he thinks.
Galele	It is ok, I will take the minutes from our side.
Researcher	Thank you very much for your commitment. We shall be meeting according to our set days with effect from now.
	Ground rules were set where everyone was to participate and make contributions. Objectives of the meetings were also formulated. The meeting ended at 1530hrs from 1400hrs.

## Phase 2

### Barriers to academic and social inclusion faced by students with disabilities

Students with different disabilities and the Researcher	Responses
<p>Researcher</p> <p>Ginyane:</p> <p>Spondoki:</p> <p>Mthombo:</p> <p>Spondoki</p> <p>Mkhaya:</p>	<p>Welcome to our focus group discussion, our first question is: What barriers to academic and social inclusion do students with disabilities face at the college?</p> <p>There are quite a number of barriers we face at college some are academic and some are social, both of these affect our learning at this college. For example, there are some places that are not accessible like our lecture theatre, the ramp for wheelchair users is there right at the back but the door is always locked, our colleague who uses wheelchair is always lifted up by so caring students. Personally, I feel her dignity is always lost, being lifted up now and again .... what if they drop her?</p> <p>I am a wheelchair user, socially I have challenge with the facilities in my hostel where I stay, there is only one ramp in the main entrance, the pathways to my room, there is no ramp....the toilets are not user friendly for wheelchair users, because these were made specifically for able bodied people. When using the toilet I ask my friend to assist me because there are no rails and secondly I cannot close the door while using the toilet, this is affecting me emotionally because there is no privacy and I feel I'm losing my dignity.</p> <p>My challenge is the Dean and TP offices. These are key offices used by students on a daily basis. It is difficult for me to use the steps to the Dean and TP offices. Sending someone on my behalf is not user friendly as they may fail to express to the Dean or TP office what I want clearly and accurately.</p>

Guzu	<p>The issue of washing line is also a challenge as the available washing lines were made specifically for able bodied persons. All the female hostels are not user friendly, because at times if I wish to go and stay with my friends in other hostel there are no ramps. I cannot even visit them, I feel I'm really, really, really excluded because I don't even have social life. At times I regret why I got enrolled in this college, but I came because I specialise in Mathematics. The other college where I could be enrolled is a primary training college and personally, I am a secondary Maths major.</p>
Zhilos	
Spondoki	<p>There are three hostels for male students and one hostel has a steep ramp and this ramp is slippery I need to be assisted on my way in and out which means I need to rely to other people for my movement, and it means for us with physical disability we don't have a choice except to go and stay in that hostel which has also been labelled "ihotel yezilima"...in others words the hostel has been stigmatized and discriminate.</p>
Guzu	<p>Other barriers also include the swimming pool: it was only designed for able bodied people but not for us as students with disabilities. The washing rooms don't have rails, the entrance and exit in the swimming pool has steep steps. Socially, when you approach a staff member or other senior members concerning your challenges and needs, you end up as if you are nagging them. As a result, we keep quiet and pretend as if everything is ok yet you will be suffering.</p>
Gidza	
Lelethu	<p>Looking at myself as a visually impaired student, academically I'm facing a lot of challenges especially the fact that there is only one specialist lecturer who is supposed to be transcribing braille for about 2 students or more. After transcribing my work goes back to the subject area where it is supposed to be marked and at times it delays because of pressure that he has because he will be attending to braille transcribing at the same time lecturing other subjects to other students.</p>

Galele	<p>Another barrier that I'm facing as a wheelchair user is the issue of bathrooms. We don't have specific bathrooms for wheelchair users. I have to use a common tub for bathing. This is the only tub which is used by most students. For me to gain power I have to sit down in the tub and this is not healthy as I might get infected by germs and infectious diseases since the majority of able bodied students use the tub."</p>
Rudon	<p>For students using crutches and supported shoes, the bathrooms and shower rooms are very slippery, there are no rails for supporting our balance and every day when you think of taking a bath you think twice. In each and every hostel there must be specific toilets and bathrooms to cater for every student with disabilities.</p>
Galele	<p>It is really difficult for me to keep on telling everyone that I have Hearing Impairment challenge, or telling them to speak up "I can't hear you" some are patient but some behave as if I'm normal. I seriously need an assistive device for this hearing impairment challenge because I'm struggling in My Teaching Practice School. I normally lip-read but at times it is a challenge to keep on looking at people while they talk.</p>
Researcher	<p>As for me I'm visually impaired as you can see, my most barrier is that I never used braille before, I just went blind recently, now it is difficult for me to write lecture notes unlike my other fellow who is using braille. I was given a recording device but it becomes difficult for me to write assignments or tests as I have to ask someone to write for me while I talk. Currently, a friend is assisting me but she is also a student with other load on her shoulders.</p> <p>It is difficulty to socialise with friends as some feel pity for me and they over sympathise, which is something I don't like. We cannot even attend the gym as it was meant for able bodied people. We can't compete in Paralympics because</p>

we don't have assistive devices like wheelchairs for playing basketball. Secondly, we are being stigmatised and discriminated when it comes to academic issues, I remember I scored 92% in one of the MASS subjects and the lecturer and students could not wait to see me as if it was surprising yet there was another able-bodied lady who scored 92% but they never looked at her the issue was me... I feel the able bodied see dull people in students with disabilities....to them ungani kuyamangalisa ukuthi ngitshaye that mark bona bekhona lathi asikuthandi ukukhangelelwa phansi.

Having hearing impairment is a big challenge because during our study groups they are few individuals who are very accommodative, it is difficult to join a group because they have to speak loud so that you get their points. People tend to run away from us because they know that having us in their group it needs them to speak very loud and perhaps it annoys them that's why they avoid us. I wish I could get an assistive device to help me hear better than what I'm feeling right now. In addition, even during lectures in most cases when there is no PA system, I can hardly hear what the lecturer will be saying.

Another social barrier is about myths and misconceptions, we become victims of abuse as people believe that when you have sexual intercourse with a person with disabilities you might get lucky. At times you think you have found a rightful partner because they pretend to be loving you so much but after sometime they leave you because they got what they wanted. If you propose and you are rejected people tend to laugh at you because they feel that "uthanda abafazi" yet it's not true, we are also humans, we need to be loved just like anyone else.

Thank you so much for a fruitful discussion and the views shared will meet again in our next session.

<b>SRC and the researcher</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Researcher	It's a good afternoon to you all ladies and gentlemen, it is my pleasure to meet you in our first meeting. Without wasting your time, let's start our focus group discussion. What barriers to academic and social inclusion do students with disabilities face at the college?
Gerries	We have a challenge with some of our major offices like the TP and the Dean's offices, the Vice Principal and the Principal's offices. The Vice Principal and the Principal's offices are on the ground floor but they don't have ramps for easy access to wheelchair users. If someone is using a wheelchair in-front of the VP's office there are benches that are blocking the way to the VP and Principal's offices someone has to be called to remove the benches so that the wheelchair user can access the offices. The Dean and TP offices are situated on the 1 <sup>st</sup> floor and there are no elevators of which this is a challenge.
Ntonono	Our hostels are not user friendly to our fellow colleagues who have disabilities. There are 6 hostels on campus, only 2 hostels have ramps. This leaves students with disabilities having no choice except to be accommodated in those 2 hostels. Washing lines are too high for wheelchair users and for those who are very short.
Charries	I also have a challenge with registry and accounts offices. In most cases you are attended through the window and for wheelchair users this is not user friendly because the height of the window is too high.
Gerries	In terms of research, students with visual impairment have a big challenge, they don't have laptops or smart phones, it is difficult for them to come up with a standard and well researched assignment." Maybe the college can chip in through buying these gadgets for them, in order to assist our fellow brothers and sisters.
Nyama:	As a visually impaired student in the SRC, I face a lot of challenges when it comes to ICT assignments, especially when they are practical activities that need to be recorded and submitted online, I don't have a smart phone as a result I request other students to do that for me of which this is not fair because I can't measure or know my strength. We really need

	assistive devices with proper software that can assist the visually impaired. I don't have a laptop nor do I have a smart phone. Life at this college is sometimes too difficult for me.
Ntosh	I am a little bit concerned about our gym, it was built for able bodied students, wheelchair users cannot visit the gym, there are no ramps and the equipment is suitable for the able bodied persons.
Tebza	I have seen some colleges bringing students with disabilities for Paralympics competitions, but for our college no one seem to be interested in training students with disabilities for Paralympics. They are highly excluded socially especially when it comes to sporting activities. There are no assistive devices like wheelchairs for playing basketball or volley ball, why do we enrol such students when we even fail to meet their basic needs?
Qhubas	Socially, there are workshops or college activities done for students at national level, I haven't seen students with disabilities attending those workshops. There must be lack of sensitization to both students and staff members, everyone is supposed to be involved and catered for be it academically or socially.
Sqintii	Some students laugh at the students with disabilities because once they date someone people tend to follow so that they see whether it's progressing well. I believe students with disabilities are also human enough to be in relationships just like anyone else. I think they are also some myths and misconceptions because I have heard people saying if you sleep with a person with a disability, you get luckier, but I don't think it's true. I feel they are vulnerable to different sexually transmitted infections.
Tebza	Personally, I feel there is shortage of funding, if funding was available then we could see our resource centre well furnished with all the equipment that is needed, including assistive devices and other sporting equipment for students with disabilities maybe our college now need the government to cheap in especially on the infrastructure and some assistive devices needed.

Qhubas	If this Inclusive Education can be Main Study (MS), it means the college will be training students who will be specialising in that area then when it comes to staff competences, we will be having more people trained in IE in future and this will be a good move, but currently maybe our lecturers need to be equipped through workshops and short courses so that they are able to control this situation, the more people we have who are advocating for IE the better.
Sqintii	In one of the lectures for IE I remember the lecturer talking about the medical and social model, where medical model thinking people take persons with disabilities as people who are not capable of doing things on their own, they believe people must be assisted, this is what most people in this college think, instead let's use the social model where we can empower students with disabilities and assist them have coping skills and include them in our lectures, hostels and so on...
Nyama	I personally feel that there are reduced opportunities for academic inclusion with students with disabilities in our college because so far, we are still very far when we think of students with disabilities coming in their numbers to train as secondary teachers. We don't have enough resources even the lecturers we only have one specialist in that area, let's give it a trial.

### Phase 3

#### Inclusive practices implemented to achieve successful integration of students with disabilities at the teacher's training college.

Students with different disabilities and the Researcher	Responses
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Researcher	I would like to welcome all of us to this exciting session. Let's feel free to make contributions all of us. My question for this session: What inclusive practices do tertiary institutions implement to achieve the successful integration of students with disabilities at a teacher's training college?
Zhilos	The advert or new intake is quite inclusive as persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply though there are very few who normally turn up.
Mkhaya	Personally, I haven't seen an inclusive education policy in this college though I have heard of the Convention of Persons with Disabilities and so on..... Spondoki: "There is a resource centre in our college for inclusive education, though I haven't seen equipment for students with disabilities.
Mthombo	I can simply say the practices are there since we see very few students with disabilities being enrolled at this college. But we need more sensitization on this inclusivity.
Guzu	There is one specialist lecturer who is responsible for students with disabilities. The lecturer has another work to do as a result he is overwhelmed and cannot cope well especially when it comes to transcribing the braille.
Ginyane	Lecturers seem to concentrate more on able bodied students when it comes to sporting activities. With students with disabilities no one seem to be interested in grooming and training us so that we also take part in the Paralympics games. As a result, I can safely say inclusive sporting practices are a non-starter.
Lelethu	As a visually impaired student I feel there is lack of funding for us in order to have the equipment that we need both in the lecture rooms like smart phones, laptops, desktops and some recorders that will assist us almost on a daily basis as well as in sporting activities that include the sporting facilities and assistive devices used for sport fields.
Galele	Our curriculum is not user friendly especially with practical subjects versus students with disabilities. I have noticed that there is a female student who was enrolled for PE and later after a period of 6 months she was forced to drop PE and join

	<p>Art because of her physical disability hindered her to do some practical activities like swimming. I feel the college has to look into all our practical syllabi in order to accommodate students with disabilities especial those who want to do practical subjects. Some cannot do music because they are visually impaired yet they qualify to do that particular subject. Let's seriously look into our curriculum.</p>
Rudon	<p>At times people stigmatize and discriminate us without realising it, for example, it is difficult to join a study group for discussions because once you approach them at times, they end their discussion and pretend as if the discussion was coming to an end. They do this because of my hearing impairment...as I will keep on telling them to raise their voices, I think I'm annoying them. I don't have an assistive device for my hearing impairment I wish the college could buy me one."</p>
Gidza	<p>Getting lecture notes from other lecturers is a challenge because during their lectures I can hardly hear them, at times it is difficult to lip read them as they will be moving up and down the lecture. When I request for lecture notes they will keep on postponing like "come tomorrow after lunch I'm on my way out" and tomorrow after lunch you won't find him/her. If you go back again you will be told that "why didn't you write my notes during my lecture, you not hearing me it's not my fault" I just wish the college could assist in buying assistive devices for hearing impairment students. Even currently during my TP it is difficult to understand what the pupils are saying, pupils are now used to raise their voices. During staff meetings I also struggle to get very important information.</p>
<b>SRC and the researcher</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Researcher	<p>It's a good afternoon to you all ladies and gentlemen, let's feel at home and contribute as much as possible. What inclusive practices do tertiary institutions implement to achieve the successful integration of students with disabilities at a teacher's training college?</p>

Gerries	As the SRC president I'm more concerned about the under staffing in the inclusive education area having one specialist lecturer is really a course of concern. The specialist lecturer is not a full-time lecturer in that area, he also belongs to another department. Transcribing of the braille is too much for him, if it is possible to have more than 2 full time lecturers and the subject being a stand-alone it would be taken seriously.
Ntonono	The issue of our college syllabi, especially in music is also a challenge, my fellow colleague who is visually impaired wanted to do Music but because our syllabus is not accommodative enough and we as a college we don't have proper equipment for visually impaired student in Music is a big challenge. My colleague is now doing IsiNdebele and English because in Music there were lot of diagrams to be drawn and we don't have special equipment for drawing for visually impaired students." Our institution is far when it comes to implementation of inclusive education in practical subjects.
Charris	One practice that we are doing as a college is that of encouraging persons with disabilities to apply. Secondly, students with disabilities are well represented in the SRC a plus to the college.
Ntosh	Our facilities in the hostels are not user friendly, the ablutions, shower rooms, bathrooms, washing lines were made for able bodied persons, this also include the rooms in some hostels are not accommodative enough especially for wheelchair users as most of our hostels they don't have ramps.

#### Phase 4

#### Indicators of success of a management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe.

Students with different disabilities and the Researcher	Responses
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Researcher	Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, we meet again as a team and would like us to come up with indicators of success of a management model to enhance the effectiveness of inclusive education in teacher training colleges in Zimbabwe.
Guzu	Looking at the practical subjects especially Physical Education, may we have a user-friendly swimming pool with all the facilities suitable for students with disabilities such as rails in shower rooms, reasonable steps at the gymnasium should also cater for students with disabilities because currently it was meant for able bodied persons. I also suggest a management model that can be followed and cater for every student regardless of their conditions, so that everyone is included.
Zhilos	In addition to what has been raised by Guzu, we also need assistive devices like wheelchairs for playing basketball and for us the visually impaired students we need the college to assist us with equipment for learning such as smartphones, laptops, desktops, some recording devices.so that if the ICT department may put software for us learning will be easy...as currently we are suffering.” I also second the idea of this management model raised by Guzu.
Mkhaya	Our curriculum is not user friendly...maybe I’m talking about our syllabi that we use especially in practical subjects. Students should be free to train for the subjects that they applied for, a student should be assisted by the college to do subjects that they are not comfortable with because of certain disabilities, may the responsible authority look into this as a matter of urgency. Secondly, coming up with a management model will help students with disabilities, as they will be recognised by the college community, but people need to be schooled on this model.
Spondoki	The idea of an inclusivity management model is prudent enough especially to someone using a wheelchair like myself. The model will help not myself alone but every student with a disability, in addition to the model I would like the college to look into our hostels, issues of user-friendly toilets, washing lines and ramps. Actually, let’s have all the hostels infrastructure looked into so that students with disabilities may choose the hostels they feel they are comfortable to live in rather than having one option.

Mthombo	Personally, I will be happier if the Dean and T.P offices relocate to ground floor because I don't see our college putting elevators soon. The offices would rather relocate to ground floor so that we are also able to air our views facially than sending someone on my behalf. There is need to formulate a management model as this is ideal for us as students with disabilities, however everyone in the college community must be conscientised in order to understand the model fully.
Ginyane	In addition to what Mthombo has alluded to, The Principal's Office, Vice Principal's Office must have ramps constructed in order to cater for wheelchair users. The Accounts and Registry offices, something must be done concerning their window services because for a wheelchair user those offices are not accessible. I also support the idea of this inclusivity management model, it will be handy using it in the college community.
Lelethu	The idea of formulating a management model is a brilliant idea this will help especially looking at our college clinic where the pathway is not user friendly for wheelchair users as it is difficult to access the clinic.
Galele	All the pathways around the college must be user friendly to students with disabilities, ramps must be put everywhere where students move from one point to the other. I'm also seconding the idea of formulating an inclusivity management model so as to reduce all these challenges faced by students with disabilities.
Rudon	I don't know much about policies but I feel something must be done concerning Inclusive Education policies in teacher training colleges, let the draft be attended to by the responsible authorities so that it is launched at national level this will then cascade to teacher training colleges. And also, the issue of a management model, if the two can be followed then this will be easy for the students with disabilities to be recognised.
Gidza	For the inclusive education to be implemented, I think every student must do this course, let it be a stand-alone subject and be compulsory to every student and examinable. There is also need to educate our staff members and make some daily sensitization to everyone specifically for inclusivity just to avoid stigma and discrimination. As a result, I also support this management model, this will solve our long overdue challenges.

Researcher	We have come to an end of our research thank you so much to us all, we worked well as a team and thank you for coming up with a management model that will alert the policy makers, administrators and college staff as well, and this will help assist our students with disabilities. I have learnt a lot from you and some of the issues raised was an eye opener to me. This research was not going to be easy without you team. You were such an amazing team and I enjoyed working with you, may God bless you in abundance.
<b>SRC and the researcher</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Gerries:	As the SRC President I feel we should have more students with disabilities being enrolled at our college. We will move around in the community reaching out to different communities through campaigns, social media so that people are aware that we also do enrol persons with disabilities. I suggest, to achieve this let's formulate a management model which will assist us to achieve our objectives.
Ntonono	That is a brilliant idea, I second formulating a management model as a group and I am also of the view that we should have more than 2 qualified lecturers for Inclusive Education and this should be a stand-alone subject and it must be examined just like other contemporary subjects.
Charris	This is the time where staff members and other students are to be educated when it comes to inclusive education. More workshops for sensitization and more campaigns to be done to avoid stigma and discrimination. This also includes new intake joining the college. Yes, I agree with our president and Charris, a management is the solution while we wait for the inclusive policy, this model will assist students with disabilities in colleges.
Ntosh	For the visually impaired students I think it will be prudent enough to have some Aides assisting them at college as well as during their teaching practice if funds permit.
Tebza:	As SRC we should look into the issues of access to our key offices, the Dean and TP offices must be relocated to ground floor so that every student has easy access to these offices. The college should look into access to hostels as well as

	Principal and Vice Principal's offices, ramps must be added for easy access to wheelchair users. A management model is the only solution to all these challenges.
Qhubas	Yes, the idea of formulating a management model is prudent enough because the language that we use for students with disabilities must be user friendly and very accommodative. Some students you just hear them saying "okuyisilima lokhu" this is uncultured and more teachings must be done to avoid stigma and discrimination.
Nyama	I also second this management model that is step number one and let's have our brothers and sisters also taking part in Paralympic competitions. It then needs sensitizing to people responsible for sports as well as other staff members being patrons for students with disabilities. Let's try by all means to be accommodative enough when it comes to students with disabilities, let us not side line them but let us work together and fight this stigma.
Researcher	Thank you very much ladies and gentlemen. Our research has come to an end and I am so grateful for the time we shared together as well as coming up with all these points and formulating a management model. May God bless you in abundance. It was not going to be easy without you and our research was not going to succeed without you. Thank you, ENkosi, Twalumba loko.