CHAPTER ONE- THE FOUNDATIONS AND JUSTIFICATIONS FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Inclusive education is one of the most contemporary issues in the education field. This book focuses on the inclusive education in Zimbabwe's teachers' colleges thus identifies current practices, gaps and suggest strategies for inclusivity. This chapter focuses on the background to the problem and outlines the statement of the problem. The purpose of the book is stated in this chapter and the research question. Furthermore, the chapter gives the significance of inclusivity in education to various stakeholders. The limitations experienced in the production of the book are also described in this chapter. Key terms are also defined in this chapter.

While working as a lecturer at a teachers' college that trains primary school teachers, the researcher noted that inclusive education is a topical issue that should be adopted. Many students with disabilities have been enrolled in colleges as a way of complying with the Government standards and expectations regarding the philosophy of inclusivity. These students are part of the mainstream classes and receive instruction alongside their peers without disabilities. Despite the enrolment of students with various disabilities, colleges seem to be experiencing challenges in trying to meet all the educational needs of students with disabilities. For example, lectures are being delivered in different modes, but it might not have been adequately established through research as to whether the delivery modes being used for the execution are in sync with disability-friendly formats. The curriculum seems to fall short in catering to students with disabilities. There is also a question of lecturer qualifications that should be investigated to establish if they satisfy the job requirements. The extent to that lecturers are equipped to handle students with different impairments also needs to be effectively established. Recently, at the teachers' college where the researcher works, students with hearing

impairments are being enrolled and the problem of communication was noted. This motivated the author to develop an interest in producing this book on Inclusive Education issues in teachers' colleges, hence, the production of this book.

In addition, the researcher observed that resources relevant to the diverse needs of the students seemed to be scarce in the colleges. The provision of more resources and assistive technology seemed to have been overlooked. In addition, there seemed to be a lack of supportfrom the college leaders especially when it comes to providing resources and equipment for students. From experience, it was observed that there seemed to be negative attitudes towards enrolling students with disabilities by the lecturing and non-lecturing staff members. They seemed to feel that they were being overburdened by having to put more effort into trying to meet the needs of students with disabilities. According to Toutain (2019), students with disabilities in higher education face several barriers to accessing accommodations, including a lack of awareness or understanding of disability laws and available services, stigma associated with disclosing disabilities, insufficient institutional support, and inadequate training for faculty and staff in handling accommodation requests. These challenges often create a disconnect between students' needs and the resources meant to support their academic success, making it difficult for students to fully engage in their educational experience. The researcher's personal experience observing these challenges has motivated them to explore the topic in greater detail. This provides a rationale for conducting the study, but also highlights the importance of relying on broader, well-cited research to ensure the findings are not isolated to one college.

The researcher also noted that there seemed to be a few students with disabilities in Teachers' colleges. Generally, the level of education achieved is higher among individuals without a disability (MoHCC & UNICEF, 2015). According to Cullinan *et al* (2010), people with

disabilities are less likely to attend school, thus experience reduced employment opportunities and decreased productivity in adulthood. In Zimbabwe, UNICEF (2013) reveals that literacy among people with disabilities is lower than that of people without disabilities. Children with disabilities remain one of the main groups around the world that continues to be excluded from education, and those that do attend school are more likely to be excluded in the classroom and to drop out (UNESCO, 2015). Children with disabilities have lower attendance rates in school than other children without disabilities (WHO & World Bank, 2011). UNICEF (2016) conducted a study from December 2014 and August 2015 and established that one-third of the 58 million children who are out of school globally are children with disabilities (UNICEF, 2016). The figures show that children with disabilities are less likely to access education compared to their peers without disabilities. This automatically affects the number of persons with disabilities that reach tertiary education. Ministry of Health and Child Care (MoHCC) and UNICEF (2013), in their survey on living conditions of people with disabilities in Zimbabwe, noted that many people with disabilities (83%) did not study for as long as they had planned to due to disability-related circumstances. In addition, the survey noted that in Zimbabwe 42.8% of children with disabilities who entered formal education did not complete primary education as compared to 37% of children without disabilities. Furthermore, a total of 18.5% of individuals with disabilities reach Form 4 (O'Level) as compared to 24.4% of individuals without disabilities (MoHCC & UNICEF, 2015). These statistics support the findings by Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2011) that postulated that individuals with disabilities are less likely to complete their secondary education than their peers who do not have disabilities. As such, when few students with disabilities complete secondary education, this has a direct implication on the enrolment figures of people with disabilities (People with disabilities) in tertiary institutions, teachers' colleges being included, across the nation.

The latest global disability statistics available to date are given by WHO and World Bank (2011). It states that about 15% of the world's populations are people with disabilities. Considering the 2012 Zimbabwean Census which was 13 061 239 according to the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (2013), this implies that there could be nearly 2 million people with disabilities in Zimbabwe. It, therefore, should follow that at least 15% of students in teachers' colleges should have some form of impairment. However, a comprehensive disability survey by MoHCC and UNICEF (2013) in Zimbabwe found out that less than 2% of persons with disabilities reach college-level (tertiary education). In addition, Zimbabwe State Report on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (2017, p. 61) noted that 1.1% of students with disabilities were enrolled in teacher education institutions by term two of 2015. This is obtaining even though 18% of learners with disabilities had completed their Ordinary Level studies. This percentage is far from being representative of the population of people with disabilities despite others being enrolled in other tertiary institutions and others did not proceed to tertiary education. Comparatively, 15.5% attained tertiary education within the European Union as of 2011, with some countries such as the United Kingdom recording about 55% (Eurostat, 2014). In the European Union, the percentage had risen to 27% by 2013 (Academic Network of European Social and Disability Experts (ANED), 2013). However, Morley and Croft (2011) opine that there is little information on the representation of students in higher education in many countries, despite many countries having ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in 2006. Article 31 of the UNCRPD compels states to gather statistics that assist in identifying and addressing barriers faced by disabled people in exercising their rights, including the right to accessing education (UN, 2006).

Zimbabwe State Report on CRPD (2017, p. 60) highlighted the number of people with disabilities enrolled in higher and tertiary institutions in

Zimbabwe in 2014. The following institutions were studies and brought the following statistics as shown in Table 1.1 in the next page.

Table 1:1: Students with disabilities enrolled in higher and tertiary institutions in 2014 (Zimbabwe State Report on CRPD, 2017, p. 60)

Institution	Male	Female	Total
Midlands State University	20	7	27
University of Zimbabwe	90	57	147
Zimbabwe Open University	11	13	24
Harare Institute of Technology	2	2	4
Bindura University of Science Education	6	5	11
Women's University in Africa	1	5	6
United College of Education	2	2	4
Marymount Teachers' College	12	19	31
Harare Polytechnic	10	5	15
Seke Teachers' College	8	10	18
Hillside Teachers' College	2	0	2
Danhiko Project	45	16	61
Morgan ZINTEC College	12	18	30
Masvingo Polytechnic	1	2	3
Gweru Polytechnic	4	1	5
Mutare Teachers' College	13	18	31
Kushinga Phikelela Polytechnic	1	0	1
Bulawayo Polytechnic	5	7	12
J. M. Nkomo Polytechnic	14	5	19
Masvingo Teachers' College	9	11	20
Bondolfi Teachers' College	3	70	73
Nyadire Teachers' College	3	0	3
Total	**341**	**206**	**547**

Table 1.1 shows the number of students with disabilities enrolled in some teachers' colleges,polytechnic colleges and universities that were very low considering the enrolments in these institutions. It was these low enrolmentfigures that gave the researcher the impetus to embark on this book, that sought to explore possible ways by that teachers' colleges could be more inclusive.

The MoHCC and UNICEF (2013) survey also found out that among the reasons for failure to enrol in tertiary institutions are disability-related factors and the inaccessibility of educational institutions. Studies by Ngwenya (2016) and Chiparaushe (2011) show that there is generally low enrolment among students with disabilities in tertiary institutions. These researchers postulated the main reasons as related to curricula inaccessibility, lack of support and negative attitudes. This shows that tertiary institutions, teachers' colleges included, could be lagging in terms of disability inclusion. According to Yusuf *et al*. (2009, p. 110), in Morley and Croft (2011), more work should be done to ensure that participation is not just a question of "a flood of students into increasingly dysfunctional institutions". However, data by Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) (2014) in the United Kingdom showed that the percentage of disabled studentsin Higher Education appears to have increased in recent years though it is not possible to know if this reflects a genuine increase in participation. Equality and social inclusion are not just about quantitative representation (Morley & Croft, 2011). Thus, higher education institutions should go further than admitting more students with disabilities.

Inclusive education is a contemporary issue in Zimbabwe and the world over. It is a current educational philosophy and a global trend that is meant to make education accessible to all people (Ahmed *et al*., 2012). It is a standard that all educational managers should uphold for effective rolling out of all-encompassing educational programmes. The

concept of inclusive education is anchored on the philosophy of Education for All people regardless of their individual needs and nature (UNESCO, 2009; Ainscow, 2010). Inclusive education is both a human rights and social justice issue that many societies are embracing as a way of meeting the demands of the cross-section of the society (UNESCO, 2009; UN, 2006). There are many policies, frameworks and conventions that have been signed by the international community that inform inclusive education. These include, but are not limited to,

☐ Sustainable Development Goals (2015);
☐ Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of SustainableDevelopment Goal 4 (2015);
☐ United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007);
☐ United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) (UN, 2006); Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999);
☐ Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on special needs education (1994);
☐ The World Declaration on Education for All, adopted in Jomtien, Thailand (1990);
☐ The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

Zimbabwe is a signatory to many of these international policies and conventions to thatinclusive education is an obligation. As a result, the Zimbabwe Education system has to adopt the principle of inclusive education.

America has embraced inclusive education as determined by international statutes and conventions. Mclesckey and Waldro (2015) note that, in the United States of America, the principle that No Child Should Be Left Behind that was passed in 2001 made it mandatory for schools and colleges to accommodate students with disabilities. According to Johnson (2014), the No Child Left behind Act (NCLB,

2002) and several other federal initiatives serve as evidence of America's commitment to improving outcomes for students with disabilities. Johnson (2014)'s study was focused on the strategies to capacitate secondary school teachers in America with competencies to manage students with special needs in inclusive settings. Paradoxically, the situation on the job market stands in contrast to the compulsive practices of promoting meaningful inclusion within the school environment as college and school graduates with disabilities experience greater difficulty assimilating into the mainstream workforce (Brooke *et al*., 2009 cited by Johnson, 2014).

Mclesckey and Waldro (2015) conducted a study on the role of leadership in inclusive education in the United States of American schools. The researchers noted that effective leadership played an important role in the development of an inclusive school. In addition, the study also noted that while it might be easy to develop inclusive schools, it is not easy to implement inclusive education. There is difference between enrolling all students in the mainstream and inclusion. As such, there seemed to be a gap between the theory and the practice, and, the reality and the ideal of inclusive education. Another study was conducted by Walker (2012) on the attitudes of teachers on the inclusion of students with disabilities in Chicago where it emerged that factors such as experience, professional development and administrative support contribute to the attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education. While the above studies were conducted in schools, they inform about inclusive practices in the education system that could translate to teachers' colleges.

Besides the United States of America, Asia has responded accordingly to the need for Inclusive education. In Asia, the emphasis on inclusive education called for teachers' colleges to restructure their teacher training programmes (Forlin, 2010). The process of restructuring teacher education programmes, however, resulted in inconsistencies

between the Governments, structures and practices of teacher education programmes (Forlin, 2010). Feng *et al.* (2012) note that there are guidelines for implementing inclusion in teacher education in China as highlighted in the *Outline of the National Plan for Medium and Long-Term Education Reform and Development (2010-2020).* In their study on challenges of inclusive education in teacher education, Feng *et al.* (2012) establish the necessary practices and coping strategies for achieving inclusive education. The study focused on two tertiary institutions in China and adopted mixed methodology and questionnaires to gather data from a purposefully selected sample. The researchers further noted that challenges to inclusive education emanated from national and cultural factors. It established that in as much as there was a need to reform teacher education to produce teachers for inclusive education, the educators in tertiary institutions were not adequately skilled to achieve the intended goal. They noted that there was a need to capacity build educators in tertiary institutions to enhance their skills in developing teachers who are inclusive.

In Saudi Arabia, Abdulaziz (2014) conducted a study that explored the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and experiences of parents, teachers and principals regarding the inclusion of deaf students. The investigator found out that teachers had positive attitudes and had made classrooms inclusive but lack of support from principals derailed the achievement of the targeted goal. Furthermore, the study noted that parents lacked knowledge about inclusive education hence, this affected its effectiveness. Without proper awareness, parents were unable to fully support or advocate for their children's specific needs, which, in turn, hindered the implementation and success of inclusive practices in educational settings. The scholar highlighted lack of resources and insufficient facilities, lack of training and collaboration among school staff and between staff and parents of children with

hearing impairments as factors militating against the implementation of inclusive education.

Alhammadi (2014) conducted a study on the challenges faced by students with visual impairment in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in the higher education sector. The study was based on the autobiographical account of the researcher and case studies from universities in UAE. It was noted that there was a lack of co-operation among various stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education, policymakers, universities, and Departments of Disability Studies in universities. According to the research, this has resulted in the absence of an educational plan that was inclusive for students with visual impairment in UAE. Alhammadi (2014) conducted a study that was aimed at exploring educational challenges that are faced by students with visual impairment in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) higher education institutions by using lived experience of these students. The lived experiences would help to determine the extent of accessibility in the social, physical and educational environment for students with visual impairment in UAE universities. Using autobiographies and interviews from cases of students with visual impairment to gather data, the study established various challenges such as educational challenges (accessing information, classroom accommodation), on-campus challenges, social challenges (cultural and attitudinal challenges), personal challenges (level of visual impairment), and lack of supportive legislature and shortage of resources.

In line with inclusive education, India passed legislation known as "The Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Act of 1995", that emphasises the inclusion and full participation of children with disabilities in regular schools (Das *et al*., 2013). According to the Act, all barriers that prevented students with disabilities from participating in regular schools had to be removed and instructional practices that catered for students with disabilities had to be put in place. Das *et al*. (2013) note that teachers felt that the inclusion of students with disabilities in

regular classes would affect their traditional methods of teaching. The study recommended the need to equip teachers with relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes to manage inclusive classes.

Another study by Chowdhury and Hasan (2013) explored the perception of primary school teachers and school heads about the effectiveness of training programmes on inclusive education in Bangladesh. Using qualitative methods and the descriptive survey, the study established that most primary school teachers were not convinced with the training on inclusive education. As such, they doubted the effectiveness of the training that the teachers got. The teachers argued that there were high enrolment figures in the educational institutions in Bangladesh such that there was no room to give special care to a child with disabilities. This study clearly indicated that there was still much to be done to the education system in Bangladesh to implement inclusive education effectively.

Australia has responded positively to the call for inclusive education. Hitch *et al*. (2015) undertook a study to enhance the inclusive practices of Australian universities. Using a mixed methodology approach, with a desktop audit and a survey to collect data through questionnaires, the study established a range of activities undertaken by universities to enhance inclusive teaching. The researchers established that (34, 21%), a third of Australian universities had embraced inclusive education in their policies (Hitch *et al.*, 2015). Furthermore, the researchers found out that the levels of understanding of inclusive education were inconsistent in universities and there were variances in services provided. The study concluded that this could have been because there were no clear policies and procedures that guided inclusive education in the universities. This could be the same scenario that Zimbabwe teachers' colleges could be experiencing in implementing inclusive education.

Fossey *et al.* (2017) also carried out a study on perspectives of students with disabilities and disability service staff on the implementation of inclusive education in tertiary institutions in Australia. The researchers used interviews and recommended that disability services must be treated as human rights issues and not general issues of care and concern. According to the study, such an approach would enhance the full participation of people with disabilities without disadvantaging them. Furthermore, Fossey *et al.*, (2017) reveal that it was difficult to create a learning support plan and implement adjustments in institutions. The researchers established that students with disabilities showed that they received different forms of assistance from the staff members who showed a lack of knowledge on the disability services available. According to the study, the gap between students and staff made it difficult to negotiate reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities. Therefore, this showed that the staff members seemed to have challenges in meeting the needs of students with disabilities.

Inclusive education has also been embraced in Europe. According to the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (EASDNE) (2010), European countries responded to the philosophy of inclusive education by strengthening the policy on political co-operation in Education and Training by 2020. This was a framework for co-operation promoting equity and social coercion in priority areas including education. The framework reinforced more inclusive methods and practices in teacher education. The idea was that the success of inclusive education must be anchored on reform on teacher education practices to produce teachers who could implement inclusive practices in educational institutions (EADSNE, 2010).

According to OECD (2011), despite the availability of policies that guided students' access totertiary education, there were still challenges that students with disabilities faced in OECD countries (Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Ireland, Norway and the United States).

These challenges were related to the specific individual needs of the student. Despite the policies, the students with disabilities needed family support in terms of resources. The study by OECD (2011) noted that lack of adequate support for students with disabilities in tertiary institutions created situations that might affect their social and professional development and have negative implications on their inclusion into the society at large. It was further established that students with disabilities in Europe have very high chances of facing challenges in completing their studies due to lack of resources (OECD, 2011). As a result, this could affect their employment opportunities despite having had easy access to tertiary institutions.

Africa was no exception in the adoption of inclusive education as many African countries became signatories to the conventions and agreements on inclusive education. Resultantly, governments across the continent are working to restructure and reform their education systems in line with international, regional and national inclusive education policies.

Another study conducted by Moh (2013) investigated the attitudes and concerns of faculty lecturers towards inclusive education in Libyan universities. The study aimed to explore how philosophy, policy, curriculum, and teaching methods influenced inclusive education practices. Moh (2013) found that the integration of inclusive philosophies and policies, along with a curriculum designed to accommodate diverse learners, and effective teaching methods, were key determinants of successful inclusive education. The study highlighted the importance of aligning these factors to create a supportive learning environment for all students, including those with disabilities.

In Ethiopia in Amhara Regional State, Bishaw (2013) investigated inclusive teaching of students with visual impairment in the English

Language to Grade 5-8, (Second Cycle) students. Using a mixed methodology, the findings showed that both the students with visual impairment and the teachers had a positive attitude towards inclusion, but teachers' qualifications, training and experience were found to be affecting the inclusion of the students with visual impairment. It was also found out that although the teachers claimed to be involved in inclusive education, the reality in the teaching and learning experiences on the ground contradicted the purported inclusivity in the practical teaching of students with visual impairment.

Another study was conducted by Gebrehiwot (2015) on the learning experiences of students with visual impairment in Ethiopian Higher Education Institutions. Gebrehiwot (2015) established that students with visual impairment had limited access to assistive devices and curricular materials that positively responded to their needs. The scholar also found out that assessment practices and treatment were unfair to students with visual impairment. The study established that students with visual impairment were not assigned to the departments of their choice and interest and that the curricula were not flexible and did not address their needs. It was further established that there was limited assistive technology devices and there was limited access to curricular materials in friendly formats. Further, the study by Gebrehiwot (2015) established that the environment was unfriendly to students with visual impairment, with limited and disorganised support from the institution and the instructors. The study highlighted the lack of accessible resources, insufficient accommodations, and minimal institutional support structures as key barriers, which contributed to the challenges faced by students with visual impairments in navigating the academic environment effectively.

Elsewhere, Muyungu (2015) conducted a study in Tanzania focusing on the methods used to prepare student teachers to become inclusive educators. The study examined the training strategies and pedagogical

approaches employed to equip future teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to accommodate diverse learners. Muyungu (2015) found that while efforts were made to incorporate inclusive education practices into teacher training programmes, there were gaps in practical application and support, limiting the effectiveness of these efforts in preparing student teachers for real-world inclusive teaching environments. The study also found out that most student teachers in Tanzania were not knowledgeable about the practices of inclusive education and therefore were not confident enough to manage children with various disabilities in their classrooms. The author attributed this to the traditional methods of teaching that were used as defined by the curriculum. Such traditional methods of teaching could have been exclusive and not accommodating the diverse needs of students.

Another study was conducted by Nketsia (2016) on how teachers' colleges in Ghana prepared teachers for inclusive education. Nketsia (2016) conducted a study on how teachers' colleges in Ghana prepared future educators for inclusive education. The study explored the curriculum, teaching methods, and training practices used to equip teachers with the skills needed to support diverse learners in inclusive settings. Nketsia (2016) found that although inclusive education was integrated into teacher training programs, the emphasis was often more theoretical than practical. This limited the trainees' ability to effectively implement inclusive practices in the classroom, highlighting the need for more hands-on training and better institutional support to fully prepare teachers for inclusive education. In addition, Nketsia (2016) found out that, notwithstanding the fact that teachers were introduced to inclusive education and inclusive methods of teaching, a few felt competent to teach children with disabilities. Only a few teachers showed that they had acquired the relevant skills, values and principles to manage an inclusive class from teacher education. Nketsia (2016) also notes that Ghana was not ready for inclusive

education due to factors such as inadequate facilities, resources, inadequate teacher training, lack of political will and societal attitudes. In Nigeria, Lagos, Adeniyi *et al*. (2015) investigated the determinants of inclusive education in schools. Using the quantitative methodology and the survey research design, these investigators revealed that materials, manpower, positive attitudes, experience and qualifications of personnel are vital in the effective implementation of inclusive education. The authors recommended the recruitment of skilled professionals for inclusive education.

South Africa has not been left out in trying to achieve inclusive education. The Governmentof South Africa instituted the White Paper 6 in 2001, among other initiatives, meant to guide the implementation of inclusive education (Makoelle & Malindi, 2015). The White Paper 6 was meant to remove all discriminatory practices in the education system with the hope of creating an integrated education system for all learners including those with disabilities. Mahlo (2011) further studied the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa and noted that one of the main challenges facing the implementation of inclusive education was the attitude of the teachers. This was due to the lack of training of teachers in handling children with diverse needs. The author also noted that while there were good policies on paper in South Africa, in practice, they were not effectively implemented.

Like all other nations, Zimbabwe is working towards inclusive education. The principle of Education for All had been adopted in Zimbabwe since the country attained independence in 1980 and continued to guide the education system. Furthermore, the Zimbabwe Education Act of 1987 as amended in 1996 and 2006 respectively states that every child has the right to access education at the nearest school. Part II, Section 4, Sub-section 2b of the Education Act clearly states that every child must not be discriminated against by the imposition of onerous terms and conditions on the grounds of

race, disability, tribe, place of origin, national origin, political opinions, colour, creed or gender. This supports the concept of inclusion in mainstream school. All students including those with disabilities have a fundamental right to education (Mutsvanga & Mapuranga, 2014). In the same perspective with the Education Act of Zimbabwe, the Nziramasanga Commission (1999) recommends an inclusive education system at all levels. The philosophy of inclusive education has been extended to all levels of education from ECD up to Tertiary and Higher Education. In light of various positive legal developments, as noted above, towards inclusivity in the education system, this study sought to assess the efficacy of the implementation process of inclusive education specifically in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe.

With regards to inclusivity within the educational environment, Zimbabwe is also guided by Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 4, that aims, "To ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all." As such, laws and statutes have been aligned to these agreements and conventions. With regards to the law, the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No.20) Act (2013) provides for equal treatment, without discrimination of every citizen. Chapter 1 Section 22 of the Constitution refers specifically to persons with disabilities where the state and all institutions are obliged to treat such persons with respect and dignity and help them achieve their full potential.

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 learners with disabilities (Deluca *et al.*, 2014). Beside the Zimbabwe Education Act, some other policies include:
☐ The Disabled Persons Act of Zimbabwe of 1996.
☐ Secretary's Circular No. 2 of 2000, on the inclusion of learners with

albinism with reference to meaningful inclusion in schooling and outdoor activities.

☐ Director's Circular No. 24 of 2001 that focuses on examination procedures for candidates with sensory disabilities. The circular provides for braille transcription of examination scripts and sign language interpretation for learners with visual impairment. In addition, it provides for additional time to write examinations and

☐ Director's Circular No. 7 of 2005, that gives guidelines for the inclusion of learnerswith disabilities in all school competitions.

These policy instruments and legislation are influential in guiding the inclusion of learners with disabilities in the education system. They are meant to safeguard equity and equality of educational opportunities for people with disabilities in compliance with civil rights movements as derived from international instruments (Chikwature *et al*., 2016).It is however unfortunate that they are mainly focusing on primary and secondary schools andseemed to be silent on higher and tertiary levels of education. Zimbabwe currently lacks a specific inclusive education policy, instead relying on the broader Education Act, various circulars, and international frameworks to guide inclusive practices in the educational system. The absence of a dedicated policy presents challenges for the implementation of inclusive education, as it leads to inconsistencies in understanding and applying inclusive practices across different institutions. While the Education Act provides a general legal framework, the lack of detailed guidelines can hinder effective support for students with disabilities. Furthermore, reliance on circulars and international frameworks may not always be fully integrated into local practices, resulting in gaps between policy intentions and actual implementation. Hence, this motivated me to undertake a study on the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges.

In a study conducted by Mafa (2012) on challenges of implementing inclusive education in the Zimbabwean education system, teachers noted that it was difficult for them to handle inclusive classes effectively due to lack of specific skills such as using Braille and Sign Language. They added that planning and organising lessons and activities for inclusiveclasses increased the burden they already had in relation to workloads. These findings showed that teacher training colleges had not responded adequately to inclusive education. Another study by Mafa and Makuba (2013) sought to investigate the extent to which inclusive education was being mainstreamed in teacher education. They investigated the challenges faced by lecturers in mainstreaming inclusion and made suggestions on strategies to be adopted to enhance the mainstreaming of inclusion in teacher education programmes. The researchers found out that the lecturers were not quite implementing inclusive education due to many factors such as lack of knowledge, skill and lack of clear policies that guide inclusive education in teacher education programmes. Their study was carried out on one primary teacher training college while this book focused on three teacher training colleges. In another study, Phiri (2013) conducted a study in Zimbabwe entitled *Voice, Disability and Inclusion* that was a case study focusing on students' narratives on the services they were provided at the higher education level. The study revealed that inclusive education at a higher education level was not supported by proper attitudes, motivation and services. The study was focused on a university while the book focused on teachers' colleges.

It seemed as if there is limited research on inclusive education in tertiary and higher education; teachers' colleges being included. In Cyprus, there seemed to have little research on the prevalence and experiences of students with disabilities and special needs in institutions of higher learning (Hadjikakou & Hartas, 2008). It could be noted that the studies conducted worldwide (Abdulaziz, 2014; Bishaw, 2013; Mclesckey & Waldro, 2015; Walker 2012) on inclusive education

showed that they were mainly focused on the primary, secondary schools and universities and less on teacher training colleges and other tertiary institutions. Those that focused on teacher education placed emphasis on strategies to produce an inclusive teacher (Mafa & Makuba, 2013; Muyungu, 2015; Nketsia, 2016; Phiri, 2013; Sithole & Mafa, 2017), yet this study focuses on the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges. The major task was to find out how inclusive the teachers' colleges were. Hence, the focus was on the holistic inclusivity in terms of the subject curricula, environment, infrastructure, attitudes and skills. Studies that focused on the attitudes of teachers on inclusive education in primary and secondary schools (Chowdhury & Hasan 2013; Das *et al.*, 2013; Mahlo, 2011; Walker, 2012) only solicited data about the perceptions of practising teachers, lecturers and student teachers without disabilities. As such, the voice of students with disabilities was silent and yet the learner is the most important stakeholder when it comes to inclusive education. Therefore, this study intended to contribute to the discourse of inclusive education by including these previous "forgotten" voices of the students with disabilities as key participants.

Various studies were conducted on inclusive education in universities (Alhammadi, 2014; Gebrehiwot, 2015; Hitch *et al.*, 2015; Moh, 2013). Universities have different curriculum and orientation from teachers' colleges. The study by Fossey *et al.* (2017) was conducted in tertiary institutions in general that includes vocational training centres. The findings from the book could be more specific to the inclusive practices in teachers' colleges. Other studies (Alhammadi; 2014; Gebrehiwot, 2015) had a limited scope by focusing on a specific disability. Such studies might have been limited by focusing on students with visual impairment. In light of that, this research adopted a holistic approach to the question of disabilities rather than be confined to a specific type of impairment. It focused on students with various impairments (such as Physical, visual, hearing and albinism) to come

up with a divergent view on the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges Zimbabwe.

A methodological gap was also noticed from the various studies that were consulted. The study by Alhammadi (2014) was based on his/her autobiographical account as a student with visual impairment. Other studies were done using the mixed and quantitative methodology to gather views from participants with regard to inclusive education (Adeniyi *et al.*, 2015, Bishaw, 2013, Hitch *et al.*, 2015). On the other hand, the study by Moh (2013) adopted positivism philosophy, quantitative approach, and descriptive analysis to study inclusive practices in universities. To address methodological gap, the researcher found it imperative to employ qualitative techniques. This explains why this study has solely used the qualitative approach and in-depth interviews in that participants were probed and prompted about their perceptions of inclusive education.

The findings from most studies revealed that teachers lacked the capacity to manage students with disabilities. This implies that there are knowledge and skills gaps that must be filled by teacher training colleges to ensure the successful implementation of inclusive education in the nation. This perceived knowledge and skills gaps as espoused by the consulted scholars (Mafa, 2012; Mafa & Makuba; 2013, Muyungu; 2015) guided the focus of the book whose thrust is on implementation of inclusive education at three teacher training colleges in the Harare Metropolitan Province in Zimbabwe with specific reference to students with disabilities. It is anticipated that this book might unveil findings that are in sync with educational dynamics.

Given this background, the researcher deemed it necessary to conduct a study on the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges to suggest possible ways to enhance its effectiveness in teachers' colleges.

Statement of the Problem - Teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe have started enrolling students with disabilities; however, the implementation of inclusive education may not be standardized due to the absence of policy guidelines. This situation raises concerns that student-teachers with disabilities may be physically placed in programs without being fully included in the educational process, which could adversely affect their development as professional teachers. Research indicates that inclusive education practices are primarily concentrated at the primary and secondary school levels, with limited studies conducted on the inclusivity of teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe (Davis, 2017; Ainscow & Miles, 2008). Therefore, the study sought to answer the main research question that is; "How is the implementation of inclusive education obtaining in Zimbabwe teachers' colleges?"

Purpose of the Study - The study aimed at exploring the management and implementation of inclusive education in Zimbabwe's teachers' colleges with regards to its current practices, challenges and strategies for inclusivity.

Research Questions - The following four research questions guided the study;
1. To what extent is inclusive education practised in Zimbabwe's teachers' colleges?
2. How do teachers' college administrators, lecturers and students perceive inclusiveeducation?
3. How do challenges with respect to the implementation of inclusive education manifest themselves in the Zimbabwean teachers' colleges?
4. How best could teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe implement inclusive education in teacher training?

Research Objectives - The following research objectives guided the study;
☐ To determine the extent to which inclusive education is being

practised in Zimbabwe'steachers' colleges.

- ☐ To assess the perceptions of college administrators, lecturers and students towardsinclusive education.
- ☐ To explore challenges that are manifesting in the implementation of inclusiveeducation in teachers' colleges.
- ☐ To examine possible ways by that the implementation of inclusive education could be enhanced in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe.

In writing the book, the researcher had three assumptions.

Firstly, it was assumed that inclusive education is being implemented in the three teachers' colleges.

Secondly, it was also assumed that the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development (MHTEISTD) would authorise the researcher entry into the research sites that are the teachers' colleges.

Lastly, the researcher assumed that the college leaders would allow entry into the colleges and avail relevant data on inclusive strategies in teachers' colleges.

Significance of the Study - The findings from the study were expected to be useful to the following:

Policymakers - The findings could help policymakers to provide clear strategies that enhance successful management and implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges. It also anticipated that the findings could help the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development (MHTEISTD) and service providers better coordinate the implementation of inclusive education in teacher training colleges as a contemporary policy.

Teachers' colleges' managers/ administrators - The book could help

administrators of teacher training colleges in successful management and implementation of inclusive education through identifying their weakness and suggesting ways to improve on them. The findings might help colleges to reduce discrimination of persons basing on disability, gender, creed, status, race or any basis.

Student teachers

The book might also benefit student teachers with and without disabilities if proper strategies are implemented. They might acquire relevant skills, attitudes and values that are necessary for an inclusive setting and implement these when they graduate from colleges. For students with disabilities, the study could benefit them greatly because it brings out findings that would be based on their experiences and as a result, enhance their professional development. The study might recognise their contribution and help enforce the philosophy of persons with disabilities that according to Charlton (1998) dictates that 'nothing for the disabled without the disabled'.

Community

The findings could benefit the community through increased enrolment of people with disabilities who might become role models in society. These role models might help communities to demystify the stigma related to disability. Communities have a duty to ensure that all people are treated equally so that every individual would feel the agency in the development process of the society. It is also the duty of the community to help people living with disabilities to achieve their full potential.

The School learners - The learners might benefit immensely from the findings of the study. Once teachers have been exposed to an inclusive setting during training, they are likely to be effective in implementing inclusive education in schools. The students might benefit from the positive attitudes that the teacher would have

towards learners with disabilities, and this enhances a conducive social environment for the learners.

Body of knowledge - The book proposed a framework that would be applicable to the Zimbabwean teachers' colleges. This might guide inclusive practices in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. The study provided additional literature to the area of inclusive education in Teachers' colleges.

The researcher - The researcher was enriched in terms of knowledge concerning inclusive education and its practices. The use of the qualitative methodology enabled the researcher to infer from the participants more knowledge. Through reviewing related literature, the researcher gained knowledge of inclusive education practices from a global perspective. With the successful completion of the study, I have contributed to the body of knowledge and awarded a doctoral degree. This enhanced my career and professional development prospects.

The unit of analysis in this study was three teacher training colleges in Harare Metropolitan Province of Zimbabwe. The researcher explored perceptions of students, lecturers and administrators/leaders on the extent to that inclusive education is being implemented. The study was meant to unveil strategies for enhancing the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges of Zimbabwe. In conducting the study, the researcher was guided by the social model of disability that was propounded by Mike Oliver (1983; 1986), Ecological model by Bronfenbrenner (1979; 1994) and the Social Learning Theory by Albert Bandura (1977). While inclusive education refers to the inclusion of people of various backgrounds and needs, this study focused on the inclusion of persons with disabilities. The interpretivist paradigm, and qualitative methodology were adopted for the study. The research method for the study was multiple case studies. NVivo software of

qualitative data analysis and thematic analysis was used to analyse and interpret data gathered. The book was written from 2017 to 2019.
Limitations of the Book

The book had five limitations. Firstly, some of the participants did not honour appointments. To mitigate the effects of this situation, there was preliminary contact with the participants in that the purpose of the research was explained and confidentiality regarding their responses guaranteed. In addition, the researcher was in constant contact with the participants to reschedule the interviews.

Secondly, in some cases, college programmes were so rigid and stringent, hence, affecting the effective involvement of participants. In this case, the goodwill of the college administrators greatly contributed to the availing of some time for students with and without disabilities to participate in the book.

Thirdly, the issue of people with disabilities is associated with some stigma and discrimination by the Zimbabwean society. To this end, students with disabilities were hesitant to participate effectively in the book. To solve this, the researcher had to clearly explain the purpose of the book to the students with disabilities and how the findings would benefit them. The researcher showed genuineness to the students with disabilities to gain their confidence.

Fourthly, the use of interviews, direct observations and data analysis generated large volumes of data that were strenuous and difficult to organise and analyse. As such, the researcher used NVivo data analysis software and thematic analysis methods to manage complex and large volumes of data gathered. The software assisted in codifying the data. Furthermore, since the qualitative methods are prone to bias in interpretation, the researcher tried to be as objective as possible.

Lastly, participants were drawn from college administrators, lecturers and students without disabilities and students with disabilities. To some extent, this affected the trustworthiness of findings because the book would have involved other participants such as teachers who had completed their courses and were already teaching in schools. To reduce the associated risk, in-depth face-to-face interviews were conducted with the participants and were corroborated with direct observations and document analysis.

Definition of Key Terms:

Inclusive education: According to UNESCO (2003), inclusive education is a process of addressing and responding to the needs of all learners by increasing their participation in educational institutions and communities and reducing discrimination in education. UNESCO (2008, p. 3) defines inclusive education as, an ongoing process aimed at offering quality education for all while respecting diversity and the different needs and abilities, characteristics and learning expectations of the students and communities, eliminating all forms of discrimination. Another definition by Giffen (2011) cited in Westwood (2013) says that inclusive education is a process of teaching students with disabilities in the same class with students without disabilities and not placing them in special classes or schools. In line with this book, inclusive education is a process of including and responding to the needs of people with various impairments in the regular colleges and classes so that they learn together with their peers without disabilities and participate effectively. Vukovic (2012) adds that inclusive education is about embracing a reflective practice and a welcoming attitude in addition to varying teaching methods, to provide all students with engaging, challenging and relevant learning activities in a cognitively, emotionally and physically safe and barrier-free environment. It also involves institutions adapting and accommodating all students with different special needs so that they are not left out of the teaching and learning process. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies that are

appropriate for all individuals and age range. (UNESCO, 2017). It emerges from the conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children. The concept of inclusive education is derived from the philosophy of Inclusion.

Inclusion: UNESCO (2003b) defines inclusion as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all children, youth and adults through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing and eliminating exclusion within and from education. Inclusion involves practices that ensure that the backgrounds of different groups or individuals are culturally and socially accepted, welcomed and equally treated (Global Diversity Practice, 2017). According to Miller and Katz (2002), inclusion refers to a sense of belonging, a feeling of being respected and valued for who you are and a feeling of having support and commitment from others so that one can do and achieve their best. Therefore, inclusion is a process of ensuring that all the diverse needs of various people are catered for ina safe environment that is accommodative in all aspects. It focuses on valuing and appreciating all individuals, providing equal access and opportunities and removing barriers and discrimination to participation (UNESCO, 2014). Inclusion is a universal human right aimed at embracing all people, despite their race, gender, disability or other attributes that can be perceived as different (UNESCO, 2009; UN, 2006). It means that all people, regardless of their abilities, or creed have the right to access services in the community. It is from the philosophy of inclusion that there is inclusive education.

Inclusivity- is a noun that describes the quality or state of being inclusive. It refers to the inclusiveness of an organisation such as a Teachers' College.

Strategies for inclusivity: According to the University of Ottawa (2013), inclusive strategies encompass a broad range of best practices that are aimed at minimising the effect of functional limitations and

removing barriers to learning. Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) (2014) add that inclusive strategies enable learners with disabilities to participate in learning experiences on the same basis as learners without disabilities. Inclusive strategies are approaches that address the needs of students with a variety of backgrounds, learning styles and abilities (Cornell University, 2012). Inclusivity is a noun that describes the process by that all students and staff are enabled to access their entitlements and to participate effectively in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, strategies for inclusivity refer to approaches or ways that attempt to meet the needs of various students to achieve an inclusive learning environment in that all students are equally valued.

Teachers' colleges: The Legal Dictionary (2017) defines a college as an institution of education that offers various courses in different disciplines covering two-to-four-year programmes. Teachers' colleges refer to educational institutions that are mandated to impart skills and knowledge to those students who are training to be teachers. It is a tertiary institution that accommodates students who have completed secondary school. It could train primary or secondary school teachers depending on its mandate.

Disability: Disability can be defined relatively and there is no specific definition of disability (UNESCO, 2017; WHO, 2001; WHO & World Bank, 2011). The International Classification of impairments, disabilities and handicaps (ICIDH) (1980) defines disability as any restriction or inability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being, mostly resulting from the impairment. WHO (2001) defines disability as any condition of the body or mind that makes it difficult for the person to do certain activities (activity limitation) and interact with the world around them (participation restrictions).

Concurring, the International Classification of Functioning (ICF) (2001) defines disability in terms of three dimensions that are impairment, activity limitation and participation restriction. Disability refers to difficulties encountered in any or all three areas of functioning. Further, the preamble to the CRPD (2006) defines disability as "an evolving concept …. that results from the "interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others" (UN, 2006). Therefore, disability refers to activity limitation and participation restriction because of the interaction of environmental and personal factors or impairments.

Impairment: International classification of impairments, disabilities and handicaps (ICIDH)(1980) defines impairment as any temporary or permanent loss or abnormality of a body structure or function, whether physiological or psychological. It is a disturbance affecting functions that are essentially mental (memory, consciousness) or sensory, internal organs (heart, kidney), the head, the trunk or the limbs. Impairment is the absence of a significant difference in a person's body stricture or function or mental functioning (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2005). There are structural (related to internal or external parts of the body such as nerve damage) and functional impairments (complete or partial loss of function of a body part such as loss of limps) (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2005). Impairment entails the absence or malfunctioning of a body, sensory or mental part of the body that could be physical, hearing, visual, intellectual or behavioural.

People with disabilities: United Nations (2006, p. 4) posit that people with disabilities include those who have long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments that in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. Persons with disability are those facing activity limitations and participating restrictions that is a result

of the incongruence between features of a person's body in a n d t h e e n v i r o n m e n t that he or she lives (WHO, 2017). Therefore, one could define people with disabilities as those individuals who have various impairments that limit their potential and is also worsened by the society they live in. In the context of this book, people with disabilities refers to people who have challenges such as physical, visual, hearing and that is worsened by the environment they live in.

Chapter 1 conceptualised the book by outlining the background, statement of the problem, research questions and objectives. It also outlined the four research questions on that the book is hinged. In this chapter, the delimitation of the book was highlighted, so were the limitations of the book and the suggestions for reducing them. It is also in this chapter that the definitions of key terms were spelt out.

Chapter 2 reviewed the literature related to this book. This was based on book themes that were derived from research questions that were set in chapter one. The conceptual and theoretical frameworks were also discussed in this chapter. Various views from other authors from journals, articles and published books were utilised to support the book.

Chapter 3 explored the research methodology. It brought out interpretivism as the research philosophy, qualitative methodology and multiple case studies research method. The chapter also described the population of the book, sample and sampling procedure. It examined the instruments that were used and justifies why they were used in the book. The chapter discussed the data collection procedures, data analysis plan and ethical considerations that were observed in the book.

In **Chapter 4,** presented, analysed, interpreted and discussed the results. Qualitative methods were used. The thematic analysis method

and NVivo software were adopted to help present and analyse large volumes of data that were gathered.

Lastly, **Chapter 5** articulated the research summary, conclusions and recommendations for improvements.

The chapter focused on the problem and its setting. The chapter looked at policies guiding inclusive education from a global, regional and national perspective. Research studies conducted elsewhere were examined to establish gaps that could be filled in by the book. The chapter stated the statement of the problem that is to establish the extent to that inclusive education is being implemented in teachers' colleges. Four research questions were set as guiding the book. The chapter identified seven likely beneficiaries of the book as the policymakers, college administrators, student teachers, the researcher, the body of knowledge, school pupils and the community. The chapter delimited the book to teachers' colleges in Harare Metropolitan Province, Zimbabwe. It spelt out that the book would be qualitative and would be guided by three theories. The book had five limitations that the researcher encountered and tried to overcome. Key terms such as inclusive education, teachers' colleges and people with disabilities were defined. The chapter looked at how the book is organised in five chapters. The next chapter focuses on reviewing related literature on the implementation of inclusive education.