

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The previous chapter focused on data presentation, analysis, interpretation and discussion. This chapter summarises the major findings from the four research questions. Basing on the major findings, the conclusions were drawn in this chapter. Furthermore, the chapter outlines the key recommendations of the study as deduced from the findings and conclusions.

The major findings of the study are expressed with regards to the themes derived from research questions as set in Chapter 1.

The study established ten key major findings on inclusive education practices in teachers' colleges.

- Firstly, it revealed that inclusive education was being implemented in teachers' colleges as per ministry requirement, but with variations. The practices differ from college to college, probably, depending on attitudes towards inclusive education and availability resources.
- Secondly, the study established that participants and key informants had a clear understanding of what inclusive education entails. They understood the concept of inclusive education and its focus on including everyone and ensuring that they participate effectively. However, it was also unearthed that some participants thought that inclusive education was more focused on People with disabilities, yet there are other vulnerable groups like those living with HIV and AIDS who need attention.
- Thirdly, it was revealed that there were no clear procedures on enrolment of People with disabilities. There were no special considerations for People with disabilities such that they had to go through the same selection process of enrolling in a teachers' college. They needed to have basic qualifications and were

considered once they met the expected criteria. In the same vein, the study established that only College B encouraged people with disabilities to apply in their college advertisement for prospective students. The study further established that in as much as colleges would want to include students with disabilities, they might be limited by lack of facilities and infrastructure. It was further discovered that colleges did not have clear statistics of the number of students with disabilities on training and those that had graduated. It was revealed that the population of students with disabilities is underrepresented in teachers' colleges. Further, it was noted that the types of disabilities were physical in various forms, visual and hearing impairments and albinism. Most cases of disability were mild to moderate and few were severe and profound visual and hearing impairment cases.

- Fourthly, the study found out that the curriculum in teachers' college was rigid and did not cater for individual differences. College programmes as influenced by the curriculum were congested with many activities and would not allow for special programmes with students with disabilities. All students had to go through the same curriculum despite their differences. It was up to the lecturers to plan their lectures to accommodate the students with disabilities. Also, it was established that inclusive education was offered as a topic under Psychology in Theory of Education (TOE), Professional studies and in National and Strategic Studies (NASS) and there was the practical experience during the teacher training course. It was found out that some participants were satisfied with the curriculum to the extent that they felt that the student teachers were fully equipped to manage mild cases in inclusive classes.
- The fifth finding was that while the students with disabilities appreciated being in the same class with those without disabilities, lecturers used their traditional instructional methods that did not accommodate students with various special needs. Some students

could not cope with the speed at which lecturers dictated notes.

- Finding number six revealed that assessment was the same for all students. Students did the same assignments and were marked on an equal basis. However, it was noted that some lecturers were lenient at times to accommodate students with special needs. It was further revealed that the DTE accommodated students with special needs if they were notified of their needs beforehand.
- The seventh finding is that some students with disabilities were not discriminated and were satisfied with their treatment. Some noted that the treatment by other students changed after the principal of the college had addressed them on the need to accept those varied abilities. However, it was also established that some participants felt that they were being discriminated by their colleagues at some point.
- The eighth finding showed that although adjustments were being made to the college infrastructure, the physical environment was not accessible to students with disabilities. Also, it was established that the social environment was not conducive and prevented students with disabilities from disclosing their status for fear of being stigmatised.
- The ninth revelation was that there were no adequate resources to meet the needs of students with disabilities in teachers' colleges. This was evidenced by the lack of resource units in colleges.
- Lastly, it was unearthed that the teachers' colleges were riding on MHTEISTD instructions as determined by the statutes and frameworks to that the government subscribe to. As a result, there was no uniformity and accountability to the implementation of teachers' colleges.

Findings on perceptions of participants and key informants towards inclusive education

On perceptions of participants toward inclusive education, six major

findings were brought up.

- Firstly, it was revealed that the participants and key informants were positive about inclusive education in teachers' colleges as a human rights issue and as a step towards reducing stigma and discrimination.
- Secondly, it was found out that the perceptions of the lecturers depended on the level of knowledge and competence they had on disability issues. Those who were knowledgeable about inclusive education had positive perceptions while those who were not knowledgeable had negative perceptions.
- The third finding revealed that some key informants were happy to be included which makes them feel being part of the society. They explained that inclusive education boosted their self-esteem and confidence. It was also noted that lecturers and college managers were comfortable with including mild cases of disabilities where the individuals were easy to manage.
- The fourth finding revealed that the attitudes and perceptions of principals were changing for the better because of the workshops they were now attending. However, it was noted that failure to avail necessary resources by college principals was due to negative perceptions towards inclusive education.
- Fifthly, it was established that some administrators perceived the acquisition of assistive devices and other resources as a waste of resources since they are used by a few students with disabilities.
- Lastly, it was unearthed that participants perceived inclusive education positively, but, communities did not accept and accommodate graduate teachers with disabilities.

Findings on challenges obtaining in implementing inclusive education in teachers' colleges.

The book revealed challenges that impede the implementation of inclusive education. These were noted under subheadings; absence of

inclusive education policy, shortage of resources, lack of funding, lack of skilled personnel, attitudes of college personnel, inaccessible environment, rigid curriculum, work overload by lecturers, stigma and discrimination and lack of information by students with disabilities.

Absence of inclusive education policy;

- The book revealed that there was no Inclusive Education Policy that guided the teachers' colleges from the MHTEISTD. Teachers' colleges were riding on other statutory instruments and circulars on education for students with disabilities that were not specific to inclusive education.

Shortage of resources;

- The book established that the shortage of resources affected the implementation of inclusive education in the teachers' colleges. Participants and key informants revealed that resources were not adequate in teachers' colleges. These include financial, material, infrastructure and human resources. There were no assistive devices, books in various prints, user-friendly computers, software and furniture to suit students with diverse needs.

Lack of funding;

- The book revealed that the (MHTEISTD) does not provide financial support to cushion teachers' colleges in acquiring some equipment and assistive devices which are expensive and beyond reach.
- It was also unveiled that students with disabilities had financial challenges. The study revealed that students with disabilities funded their tuition and it was a difficult task because many students with disabilities were from poor backgrounds and were notable to pay for their tuition and other learning materials as required by the college. It was further revealed that it was

because of poverty that many students with disabilities failed to proceed to teachers' colleges.

Lack of skilled personnel;

- Firstly, it was revealed that there were not enough lecturers in teachers' colleges that resulted in high lecture-student ratio.
- Secondly, it was established that lecturers were not skilled and competent to manage inclusive classes. They lacked knowledge and hence, would not want to have such students. It was further found out that lecturers did not get any formal training during their training and as such, they lacked the relevant knowledge and skills in managing such students and this may have impeded the implementation of inclusive education.

Attitudes of college personnel;

- The book established that the college administrators had some negative attitudes toward inclusive education when they did not want to enrol students with disabilities and when they could not purchase some equipment for students with disabilities.
- It was also revealed that despite other lecturers being positive, some had negative attitudes towards inclusive education. It was also established that lecturers felt that enrolling students with disabilities was like adding a burden to them that they could not bear.

Inaccessible environment;

- It was found out that the physical environment was partially accessible to students with disabilities despite the efforts being done by college managers to adjust the environment to make it suitable to students with disabilities.
- It was further revealed that the social environment was hostile. This was evidenced when students with invisible disabilities failed to register their impairments with the college authorities. It was

also shown when students with disabilities failed to complain about any challenges they could be facing in the college.

Rigid curriculum;

- The book unearthed that despite special examination allowances by DTE, the curriculum in teachers' colleges was rigid and not adequately accommodating the diversity among students.

Work overload by lecturers;

- it also established that there were work-related challenges that were associated with how lecturers conducted their duties. It was unveiled that lecturers were overwhelmed by their duties of supervision, assessment, lecturing and others to the extent that they did not have time to attend to the needs of students with disabilities. Also, the lecturer-student ratio was too high to the extent that there was no catering for individual differences. Also, there were many mass lectures that made it difficult for lecturers to give individual attention to students.
- The book established that three hierarchical structures of the ministry posed a challenge. Therefore, teachers' colleges were using a top-down approach to the implementation of inclusive education. As a result, implementers lacked commitment and a sense of ownership of the inclusive programmes.

Stigma and discrimination;

- Stigma and discrimination were found to be one of the challenges that students with disabilities encountered. It was revealed that in as much as the students were treated equally in teachers' colleges, there was still some stigma and discrimination.

Lack of information by students with disabilities;

- The book revealed that there was a lack of information from students with disabilities. It was discovered that students with

disabilities lacked a lot of information concerning where to get services and how to get them. They also lacked information on their rights and as a result, were not empowered to challenge the college system or to complain against any malpractices.

- It was further revealed that a communication barrier was affecting students with hearing impairment. It was noted that due to language and speech barriers, students with hearing impairment failed to communicate with other lecturers and students.

Findings on strategies to enhance inclusivity in teachers' colleges;

In line with strategies to enhance inclusivity in teachers' colleges, eleven major findings were established.

- Firstly, it was revealed that there was a need to provide relevant resources and assistive devices to support students with disabilities in colleges. It was noted that there was a need to provide relevant software, computers, books and assistive devices that were relevant for students with disabilities.
- Secondly, it was suggested that there should be involvement of multi-stakeholders such as government, parents or guardians of students with disabilities, students with disabilities, organisations working with people with disabilities in dealing with such students. Also, it was revealed that partnerships and interaction among teachers' college personnel enabled sharing of ideas on disability issues and how to manage such to improve their practices. Teachers' college managers could consult each other on inclusive practices
- The third finding was related to enrolment. It was established that the enrolment process should ensure that more students with disabilities are enrolled and given preferences when they want to enrol in teachers' colleges. Furthermore, it was revealed that the selection committee at the college should involve people with interest in inclusive practices so that they might help in the selection process to ensure that such students are given a chance to

enrol in teachers' colleges.

- Fourthly, it was found out that lecturers, managers and non-lecturing staff needed to be trained regularly on inclusive education through staff development programmes and workshops. Also, participants revealed training in Sign Language and Braille could equip student teachers with practical skills. Nevertheless, it was discovered that recruiting some lecturers and staff with disabilities would provide role models to students with disabilities in teachers' colleges.
- Fifthly, it was unearthed that there was a need to co-ordinate inclusive programmes in colleges. This could be done by having inclusive education teams of people who have a better understanding of the needs of students with disabilities. The study further revealed that a link person in the form of a patron through whom students with disabilities link with the administrators and managers would help in improving servicedelivery.
- Awareness campaigns came up as the sixth finding. It was revealed that awareness campaigns could be used to reach out to many people in society. People with disabilities could be reached through awareness campaigns to make them aware of the opportunities that they could explore. It was noted that the MHTEISTD could take advantage of large gatherings such as graduation ceremonies to reach out to many people on disability issues. This might help to reduce the stigma and discrimination associated with disabilities. Hence, the leadership of the country should be involved in making people aware of inclusive education and how it benefits society.
- The seventh finding relates to creating a conducive environment. It was established that adapting the infrastructure was a strategy to suit the needs of all students. Ramps, passageway, doorways, shatter glasses should be constructed to support students with disabilities and make the environment accessible. Also, it was noted that the social environment should be friendly to allow

students with disabilities to interact freely and disclose their disabilities.

- Finding number eight focused on attitudes of personnel in teachers' colleges. The participants revealed that a change of attitudes by stakeholders was central in ensuring the effectiveness of inclusive education in teachers' colleges. It was established that both principals and lecturers should have a positive attitude towards including students with disabilities. It was noted that such a change of attitude would improve the availing of resources towards inclusive education and the increase in the number of students with disabilities in teachers' colleges. Also, it was noted that the attitudes of students with disabilities should also change.
- The ninth finding was that on policy issues. The study found out the availability of a national policy on inclusive education would enhance inclusivity in teachers' colleges. It was established despite other provisions and legal frameworks on disability, the emphasis was on a National Inclusive Education Policy that would guide inclusive education practices in teachers' colleges. It was further established that it was from the national policies that colleges would draw their college policies, mission statements, vision and values that were in line with inclusivity.
- The tenth finding unveiled that there was a need for an inclusive curriculum that caters for individual differences. It was noted that the curriculum should not be content-based, but should have practical experiences. It was also indicated that the curriculum should start from Early Childhood Development (ECD) level up to higher and tertiary education. Furthermore, it was noted that the curriculum should cater for students' uniqueness as individuals by allowing students to complete the course in their period. The study also established various methods of assessment such as project methods, oral assessments, field trips, peer teaching, group work, presentations and practical assessment depending on the student needs.

- Lastly, it was established that the gender aspect should be included in inclusive education, and, disability studies.

Basing on the findings above, the study noted the following conclusions that were based on themes derived from research questions guiding the study.

Conclusions made on inclusive practices in teachers' colleges;

Eight conclusions were derived from the findings on inclusive practices in teachers' colleges as follows;

- Firstly, the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges was marred by non-uniformity as evidenced by variations in terms of how inclusive education was being implemented in teachers' colleges. This was influenced partly by the absence of Inclusive Education Policy by the MHTEISTD. This affected the implementation of inclusive education as there was no accountability and clear monitoring procedures.
- Secondly, the general understanding of what inclusive education entailed in teachers' colleges helped in proclaiming positive perceptions toward the concept.
- Thirdly, 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.
- The fifth conclusion is that inclusivity of teachers' colleges was affected by traditional instructional methods that were used by lecturers and the same assessment procedures were not very inclusive and might not be appropriate to other students with special needs thereby affecting inclusivity of teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe.
- Measures such as providing braille examination paper, large print and time allowances, special examination arrangements for students with disabilities including extra time and separate examination venues made by DTE were a necessary step towards

inclusivity in teachers' colleges.

- Despite equal treatment, students with disabilities still had their special needs depending on the type of disability that teachers' colleges were failing to meet.
- Despite strides by college leaders to accommodate students with disabilities in terms of amenities and tuition, the physical environment and the infrastructure was not accessible by all students.
- Due to lack of resources, implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges of Zimbabwe was restricted to social inclusion.

Conclusions made on perceptions of participants on inclusive education

Findings on perceptions of participants and key informants led to five conclusions;

- Positive perceptions towards inclusive education as a human right and to reduce stigma and discrimination provide a necessary condition for inclusive education in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe.
- Because of negative attitudes exhibited by some lecturers and administrators towards disability, the conditions were still not ripe for the implementation of inclusive education on teachers' colleges of Zimbabwe.
- Some lecturers still believed in institutionalising disabilities as evidenced by those who might have wanted SWDs in the teachers' colleges to transfer to colleges that had the mandate to train special needs teachers.
- Lecturers and managers were comfortable with including mild cases of disabilities and not severe and profound cases therefore some students with disabilities remain segregated.
- There were perceived benefits to inclusion such as students learning from each other and, reducing stigma and discrimination

and creating a conducive social environment in teachers' colleges.

Conclusions made on challenges affecting the implementation of inclusive education

Conclusions on this section were made basing on the findings established on challenges affecting the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges.

- The absence of the inclusive education policy from the MHTEISTD affected the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe.
- Because of a rigid curriculum, teachers' colleges were not able to adequately accommodate diversity and this affected the implementation of inclusive education
- The hierarchical structure of the Ministry might have paved the way for a top-down approach that posed as a challenge in implementing inclusive education.
- The implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges was affected by lack of financial support from the MHTEISTD and government for the acquisition of relevant resources and assistive devices. Students with disabilities faced financial challenges when they failed to pay for their tuition and materials required.
- Shortage of financial, material, infrastructure and human resources greatly affected the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. Assuch, colleges had failed to establish resource centres.
- The partially accessible physical environment resulted in teachers' colleges failing to accommodate all students thus affecting the implementation of inclusive education. Also, the hostile social environment affected inclusive practices to some extent. Stigmatisation and discrimination still made the social environment hostile for students with disabilities.
- Due to negative perceptions by administrators that perceived

enrolment of SWDs as a waste of resources, there were few students with disabilities in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe.

- Due to lack of skills and knowledge on inclusive education and disability by the lecturers, students with disabilities were not adequately catered for in teachers' colleges thus, affecting their professional development.
- The work overload by lecturers at teachers' colleges impedes the implementation of inclusive education to the extent that there was no time to attend to individual needs of students.
- Lack of information by students with disabilities on their rights and services that they could get made students with disabilities susceptible and less empowered.
- Failure to use Sign Language by lecturers and other students presented communication barriers for students with hearing impairment in teachers' colleges. SWDs with hearing impairment were the most affected in colleges when they faced communication barriers. Hence, students with hearing impairment were placed and not adequately included in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe.

Conclusions made on strategies to enhance inclusivity in teachers' colleges

From the findings established on the strategies to enhance inclusivity, it could be concluded that:

- Provision of adequate resources in terms of computers, books, software, assistive devices and furniture enhanced the implementation of inclusive education.
- Involvement of stakeholders was significant in the implementation of inclusive education. They all had valuable input towards successful implementation.
- Clear enrolment procedures are important in ensuring that there was an increase in the number of students with disabilities in colleges so that they were adequately represented. Also, clear

record-keeping on statistics of students with disabilities in colleges is essential for monitoring and evaluation process.

- Teachers' college staff members required adequate and constant training on inclusive education so that they understood diversity and improve their performance.
- Established inclusive education teams in colleges might help in the co-ordination of inclusive education programmes.
- Awareness campaigns on inclusive education were important in reaching People with disabilities, and, the community at large. This would reduce stigma and discrimination and ensure that students with disabilities were able to value themselves and also improves community acceptance of teachers with disabilities.
- The conducive physical and social environment were central to effective inclusive education.
- Change of attitudes by implementers and stakeholders was central in ensuring the effectiveness of inclusive education in teachers' colleges. Both the managers and lecturers should have positive attitudes towards including students with disabilities. Students with disabilities should have positive attitudes and avoid being negative all the time.
- A national and ministerial policy on inclusive education was imperative as derived from international states and frameworks.
- An inclusive curriculum that was based on practical experience was central in implementing inclusive education. The lecturing methods and the assessment criteria should be inclusive to cater for diversity among students.
- Disability and gender were linked and related and therefore should be considered.

This section was based on recommendations that were derived from the findings and conclusions of the book. These were made under the major themes as derived from the research questions guiding the study
Recommendations on inclusive practices in teachers' colleges

The following recommendations were derived from the conclusions made on inclusive practices;

- The MHTEISTD should ensure that there is some level of standardisation in the way that teachers' colleges implement inclusive education. This could be done through an established policy or guidelines.
- Teachers' college administrators should have clear enrolment procedures to ensure the increase proportional to the representation of students with disabilities in colleges. They should establish a quota system when enrolling students with disabilities. The college managers should ensure that college advertisements encourage People with disabilities to apply.
- College lecturers and administrators should offer a practical approach to inclusive education that includes practical skills and practical attachment in an inclusive school.
- The MHTEISTD and the DTE should revise the curriculum so that it becomes flexible in terms of assessment to meet the diverse needs of students.
- Lecturers should adopt interactive and collaborative methods of instruction and adapting assessment criteria that meet the needs of all students.
- College administrators should improve infrastructure adjustments to make the physical environment accessible by all students that the MHTEISTD should monitor.
- College administrators should embark on various avenues and projects and network with Non-Governmental Organisations so that they avail resources that were necessary for inclusive education to be successful.

Recommendations on perceptions of participants toward inclusive education. On perceptions, the book recommends that:

- The MHTEISTD should provide opportunities for workshops and staff development programmes for lecturers and administrators to

equip them with relevant skills and attitudes towards inclusive education. These could be done on a rotational basis to ensure that all lecturers are equipped with inclusive education skills and attitudes.

- College administrators should ensure mission statements, visions and values are aligned to their perceptions on inclusivity.
- The MHTEISTD, through various departments, must conscientise communities so that they develop positive perceptions towards inclusive education.

Recommendations on challenges in implementing inclusive education in teachers' colleges

Basing on the findings and conclusions made on challenges in implementing inclusive education, the following recommendations were made;

- The MHTEISTD and teachers' colleges' administrators should have a budget to support inclusive education in teachers' colleges. They could liaise with NGOs and other organisations that could assist them with various resources. Teachers' colleges can introduce an inclusive education levy to help in funding inclusive education in institutions.
- The MHTEISTD should have a flexible structure to accommodate ideas from the implementers of inclusive education in teachers' colleges.
- College administrators and lecturers should speed up the process of establishing resource centres so that they support inclusive education programmes.
- The MHTEISTD should employ more lecturers so that lecturers are not overburdened by many duties and to reduce the lecturer-student ratio. This would enable lecturers to give individual attention to students.
- College administrators should orient SWDs so that they become

confident and participate in all activities.

- Teachers' colleges should provide practical training to college personnel in Sign Language and Braille so that they can accommodate those students with hearing and visual impairment respectively.
- Teachers' colleges should have patrons for students with disabilities whom they relate to and interact with. This would enhance their representation in decision-making processes of the colleges.
- Government through the MHTEISTD should provide grants to help students with disabilities to pay their tuition fees and other services at teachers' colleges.

Recommendations on strategies to enhance inclusivity in teachers' colleges

On strategies for inclusivity, it was recommended that;

- The MHTEISTD and teachers' colleges should adopt a multidisciplinary approach where various stakeholders (NGOs, parents, People with disabilities, churches, government, and political groups) are involved in the implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges.
- Teachers' colleges could include inclusive education in their strategic planning for effective implementation and monitoring.
- Teachers' colleges should network among themselves and interact so that they learn from each other how best to implement inclusive education.
- The MHTEISTD should set up inclusive education teams to coordinate inclusive education programmes. □ College administrators should set up an inclusive education department that becomes the central point of the implementation process.
- Lecturers could provide hand-outs with lecture notes to students with disabilities before lecture presentation to ensure effective

participation by students with disabilities.

- Teachers' colleges can adopt the Inclusive Teachers' College Framework when implementing inclusive education. The framework was developed from the findings of this study as shown in figure 5.1 on the next page;

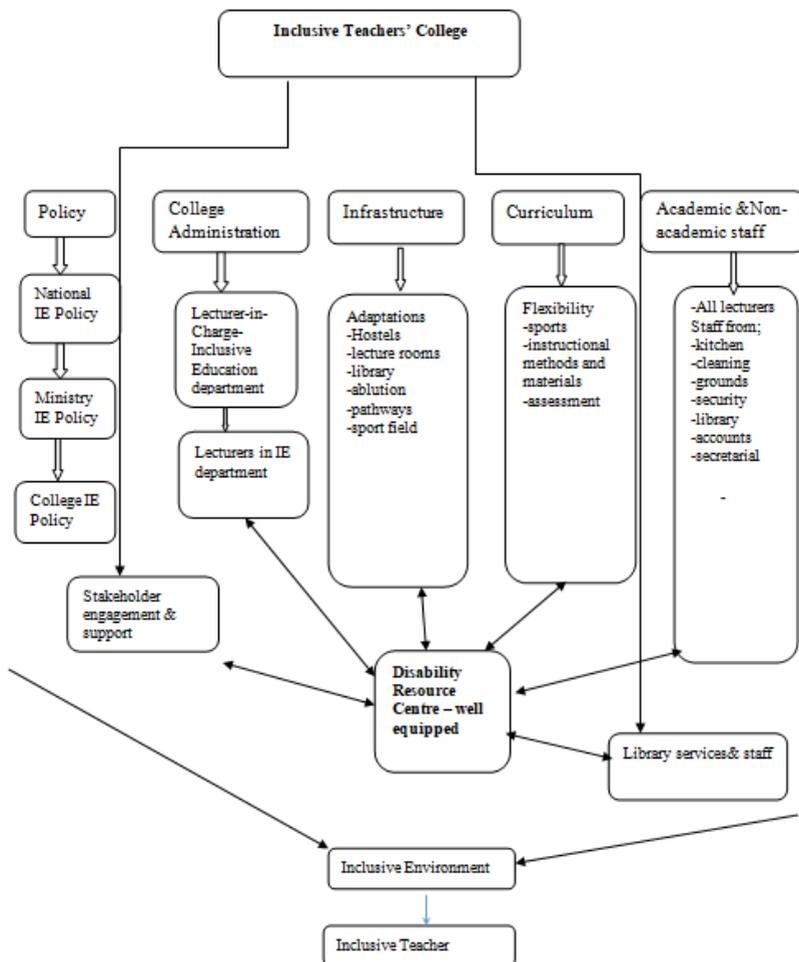


Figure 5.1; Inclusive Teachers' College Framework

The Inclusive Teachers' College Framework shows the factors that guide successful implementation of inclusive education in teachers' colleges. The framework shows that the availability of an Inclusive Education policy at national, and college-level was vital. The support of college administrators was important as they would work directly with the Department of Inclusive Education in the college. Also, the infrastructure, curriculum and library services should be adapted to suit the needs of all students. Other important elements of the framework are the engagement of all staff members (academic and non-academic) and stakeholders. All the factors in the framework are interdependent on the Disability Resource Centre that should be well-equipped. The availability of the said factors results in a conducive inclusive environment that is necessary to produce an inclusive teacher.

Some issues are inconclusive; therefore;

- For further studies, it is recommended that a related study be carried out on a larger scale to include all teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. This book focused on only three teachers' colleges and could be broadened to include all teachers' colleges.
- Further studies could include how gender issues affect disabilities in inclusive settings in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe.