



# Transnational Research on Inclusive Education in Institutions in Africa: The Preparedness of Educators: The Case of Cameroon

Report compiled by:  
**Emeritus Professor T.M.S. Tchombe,**  
UNESCO Chair SEN/IE  
University of Buea





# Transnational Research on Inclusive Education in Institutions in Africa: The Preparedness of Educators: The Case of Cameroon

## Research Team

**Professor Therese Mungah Shalo Tchombe** : Principal investigator

- Dr. Endeley Nalova Margaret
- Dr. Mboshi Sarah
- Mrs. Ruhama Luma
- Mr. John Essose
- Ms. Melem Linda
- Mr. Lambert Leinyuy
- Mr. Shouibou Abdoulai
- Mr. Ndzetar Emmanuel
- Mr. Nana Célestin: Statistician
- Dr. Joseph Lo-oh

Additional editing by Julius Che Tita, Emmanuel Yenshu & Thomas Ndamé.  
With appreciation for project funding from Teacher Task Force UNESCO Paris

© UNESCO Chair, University of Buea, 2014  
Published by  
The UNESCO Chair  
The Faculty of Education  
The University of Buea  
P.O. Box 63, Buea  
S.W. Region, Cameroon

ISBN 9956-26-068-1

**Produced by  
BUKHUM Communications  
P. O. 604 Limbe  
Tel: +237 70791111**



***Respect for differences and a commitment to building friendships and community to the benefit of every one***

***Newton and Wilson (2003), state that many of the most effect approaches to developing respect and differences and for combatting social exclusion draw on “intentional building of relationships”***

# Contents

<b>Research Team</b> .....	<b>P 1</b>
<b>Contents</b> .....	<b>P 4</b>
<b>List of Tables</b> .....	<b>P 5</b>
<b>List of Figures</b> .....	<b>P 6</b>
<b>Acronyms</b> .....	<b>P 7</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>P 8</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>P 9</b>
<b>Background</b> .....	<b>P 12</b>
<b>Objectives of Study</b> .....	<b>P 21</b>
<b>Significance of the Study</b> .....	<b>P 21</b>
<b>Scope/Delimitation</b> .....	<b>P 21</b>
<b>Research Method</b> .....	<b>P 22</b>
<b>Findings</b> .....	<b>P 27</b>
<b>Objective 1: Policy gaps and ameliorated for best practices in Cameroon</b> .....	<b>P 27</b>
<b>Objective 2: The Nature of Inclusive Practices in Institutions being Studies</b> .....	<b>P 30</b>
<b>Objective 3: Core Values and Competences, Indicators and Measures for Training and Evaluation</b> .....	<b>P 45</b>
<b>Objective 4: Identify Perceived Challenges for Inclusive Education</b> .....	<b>P 51</b>
<b>Objective 5: Research in Inclusive Education and the Need to Establish Network for Collaborative Research and Build Capacity in Qualitative Research for Inclusion</b> .....	<b>P 55</b>
<b>Discussion</b> .....	<b>P 56</b>
<b>Conclusions</b> .....	<b>P 58</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> .....	<b>P 59</b>
<b>References</b> .....	<b>P 62</b>
<b>Appendices</b> .....	<b>P 64</b>

## List of Tables

Table 1: Reliability Analysis for Classroom Observations.....	P 24
Table 2: Sample Flow Table.....	P 25
Table 3: Types of Disabilities: Distribution by School Level.....	P 30
Table 4: Relational Analysis of Expected Characteristics of Teacher’s Inclusive Profile .....	P 46
Table 5: Relational Analysis of Inclusive Practices from the Perspectives of Humans, Technical and Management Skills .....	P 48
Table 6: Interaction in Primary Schools: Distribution by Location.....	P 49
Table 7: Understanding of Inclusive Practices: Distribution by Institution, Category, Sex, Age, Level of Education.....	P 51
Table 8: Perceptions and Practices in Inclusive Classroom: Lecturers’ and Teachers’ Perspectives Distributed by Background Information.....	P 52
Table 9: Teachers’ Perception of In-service Training and Impact on Competences .....	P 53

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Map of Cameroon with its Ten Regions.....	P 22
Figure 2: Conceptual Diagram of Policy Gaps and Orientation for Best Practices in Cameroon .....	P 29
Figure 3: Perceptions of the Levels of Inclusive Education Practices .....	P 33
Figure 4: Disabled Pupils/Students' Perceptions of Inclusive Practices: by School Level .....	P 36
Figure 5: Disabled Pupils/Students' Perceptions of Inclusive Practices: by Age .....	P 37
Figure 6: Disabled Pupils/Students' Perceptions of Inclusive Practices: by Location .....	P 38
Figure 7: Disabled Pupils/Students' Perceptions of Inclusive Practices: by Gender .....	P 39
Figure 8: Social Values of Inclusive Practices; Collaborative Works with Peers by School Level, Age, Setting types, Learners' Gender, and Teachers' Gender .....	P 40
Figure 9: Social Values of Inclusive Practices in Construction of Friendship .....	P 41
Figure 10: Teachers; Inculcating Social Support Values towards Learners with Special Needs .....	P 41
Figure 11: Conceptual Diagram of Parental Perceptions towards Inclusion and Cultural Attitudes towards Disability and Impairment .....	P 41
Figure 12: Indicators of an Enabling Classroom Physical Environment and Inclusive Practices: Distribution by School Level .....	P 45
Figure 13: Core Values and Competences used by Practicing Teachers and University Lecturers: Facilitating and Hindering Factors .....	P 47
Figure 14: Schematic Presentation of the Nature of Inclusive Practices in Cameroon .....	P 50
Figure 15: The Significance of both Academic and Professional Qualifications for Inclusive Education Practice .....	P 51
Figure 16: Distribution of Teachers who had attended in-service Workshops on Special Needs Education by School Levels .....	P 54
Figure 17: Perceptions and Practices in Inclusive Classroom by Lectures and Teachers; Perspectives .....	P 54
Figure 18: Teacher Preparation: Issues to be Considered .....	P 61

## Appendices

Appendix 1: Policy issues distribution by institution level.....	P 62
Appendix 2: Academic and Professional Qualifications; the basis for Inclusive Education .....	P 62
Appendix 3: Challenges for Teacher Educators and Teacher Education.....	P 63
Appendix 4: Teacher's Perceptions of in-service- Training and the impact on Competences .....	P 64
Appendix 5: Factors impacting Teachers' Competences.....	P 65



## Acronyms

<b>AOIE:</b>	African Organisation for Inclusive Education
<b>CE:</b>	Center
<b>CRC:</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>ICF:</b>	International Classifications of Functioning Disability and Health
<b>ICIDH:</b>	International Classification of Disability, Impairment and Handicap
<b>LT:</b>	Littoral
<b>NJCIE:</b>	New Jersey Coalition for Inclusive Education.
<b>PWD:</b>	Persons with Disabilities
<b>SPSS:</b>	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
<b>SW:</b>	South West
<b>UN:</b>	United Nations
<b>UNESCO:</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
<b>WHO:</b>	World Health Organisation



## Acknowledgements

This study was commissioned and funded by Teacher Task Force, UNESCO Paris, who signed a contract with the University of Buea as the site for this transnational research with four other African Countries. The UNESCO Chair of the University of Buea, and the Transnational Research Team (Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Nigeria and Togo) wish to thank the Teacher Task Force, UNESCO Paris for encouraging this collaborative effort, which hopefully would eventually lead to the creation of an African Organisation for Inclusive Education (AOIE).

I thank the Minister of Higher Education, His Excellency Professor Jacques Fame Ndong, for his interest in the Chair's activities. I am grateful to the Vice-Chancellor Professor Nalova Lyonga, who has always encouraged collaborative efforts in inclusive education since the creation of the UNESCO Chair at the University of Buea. The Director/Representative of UNESCO Regional in Yaoundé has been a motivating force in the Chair's engagements. I also wish to thank the Minister of Basic Education, Mme Adija Youssouf, who, from the inception of the Chair, has keenly followed its activities in threefold capacity as representative of the Goodwill Ambassador, First Lady of Cameroon Madam Chantal Biya, Cameroon's representation in UNESCO and above all as Minister of Basic Education. Her sense of direction to institute inclusive education is highly commendable. I acknowledge the Minister of Social Affairs, Madam Catherine bakang Mbock for her keen interest to ensure that persons with special needs receive appropriate services.

I thank Professor George Epah Fonkeng for translating the research instruments. For participation during the data collection, I thank all the Regional Delegates, Divisional and Sub-divisional delegates, Pedagogic Inspectors, Teacher Educators, Teachers and Head teachers and Principals of all the levels of education and pupils/students in the South West, Center and Littoral regions of Cameroon. Despite their tight schedules, they were willing to share their unlimited views during the data collection process. I also wish to acknowledge the contribution of the Teachers of the Government Teachers' Training College in Buea. I thank all parents of pupils with special needs education and pupils with and without disabilities for participating in this research. I acknowledge all the researchers and assistant researchers who collected data for the study: Dr Margaret Endeley, Dr Sarah Mboshi, Mrs Ruhama Luma, Mr John Essose, Mr Lambert Leinyuy, Ms Linda Mellen, Mr. Emmanuel Tani and Mr. Shaibu. I am indebted to Dr Joseph Lo-oh for engaging in the review of related literature. I thank Mr. Nana Célestin and his team for processing and analyzing the data.

My gratitude extends to all the administrative staff namely Mr. George Fossoh, Emmanuel Wirimum, Mirabel Nguéfac Azung and Ivo Akosso for their administrative support. To all whose names are not mentioned although they have contributed in one way or the other to this piece of research, I say thank you. I thank those who accepted to edit the work in their various related capacities.

## Executive Summary

Current trends in education resonating the importance of inclusive practices is characterized by valuing all, respect for differences, and enabling the full participation of all learners including addressing a sense of belonging for all. This study sets out to investigate the preparedness of educational institutions in Africa: The Case of Cameroon, to address the above characteristics in its policy, curriculum process in terms of pedagogical practices, assessment, infrastructure and the training of teachers and lecturers. Seven research objectives guided the study. They enabled the analysis of policy to:

- identify gaps and make suggestions for amelioration
- find out the nature of inclusive practices in the institutions being studied
- identify the existence of core values and competences used by practicing teachers and university lecturers;
- develop indicators as measures for training and evaluation
- find out disabled and non-disabled pupils' and students' perceptions of inclusion; find out parental perceptions of inclusive education;
- identify the status of research in inclusive education and establish networks for collaborative research and build capacity in qualitative research for inclusion; establish South-South and North-South partnership in inclusive practices.

On this account, the research reviewed most international conventions ratified by the Cameroon government on the rights and access to education for all. These provided the basis for policy documents on rights and needs to enhance and sustain access. The theoretical framework based on the social model was adopted because it does not disenfranchise those persons living with disabilities. The social model adopts democratic values of social justice, embodies beliefs and principles that every learner has a fundamental right to learn with psychosocial support to meet different needs.

A mixed research design was used in this study with a triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data to determine the preparedness of Cameroon institutions for inclusive education. The study adopted an exploratory approach, employing several data collection techniques: questionnaire, observation, interview and review of documents. The questionnaire

**Inclusion is a journey with a clear direction and purpose: equality of opportunity for all children and young people**

**The Council for Disabled Children (CDC) (2008:6) believes that the factors crucial to the development of inclusion:**

- **Welcome for all disabled children, secure relationships and support for families when they are in need;**
- **Respect for the difference and a commitment to building friendships and community to benefit everyone;**
- **Equality of access to play, learning, leisure and all aspects of life**
- **Active participation of children and their families in decision-making;**
- **Proactive approach to identifying and removing barriers;**
- **Timely access to information and to people with empowering attitudes, supportive skills and expertise.**

was used to sample the opinions and perceptions of a cross section of lecturers, teachers, inspectors, pupils/students disabled and non-disabled and parents. Classroom observation was used to identify teachers' pedagogical competences and guiding values and infrastructure. Three out of the ten regions of Cameroon constituted the study area. These were the South West, the Littoral and the Centre regions. The towns where data were collected were Buea, Kumba, Yaoundé and Kribi. The total sample of the study was 327 and the institutional sample was 36.

Quantitative and qualitative data from the research was analysed. Highlights from the findings demonstrated that in the regular institutions studied, there were pupils and students with various types of disabilities and the infrastructures were not disability friendly. Perceptions of the main actors illustrated a degree of unawareness of the existence of policy and of its impact on practice. Reviewing of policy showed gaps and limitations in its scope.

The implementation of the policies was not effective. From the review of policy and data collected, it was observed that although the laws addressed issues of Special Education, they were found to be limited in many ways, as concerns the institution of inclusive education and its practices. The limitations were evident in the exclusive focus of the laws on the protection and welfare of persons with disabilities. Besides, it made provision only for certain persons with disabilities while ignoring other vulnerable groups, especially those experiencing other forms of disadvantages. To fully address the issue of inclusion, the policy ought to have included strategies that would encourage full participation of pupil/student diversity in all aspect of education. A major policy gap is the absence of orientation towards a new curriculum for inclusive education, including all issues to enhance the implementation of such curriculum including teachers' education.

Perceptions of administrators and teachers at primary and secondary levels including university institutions pointed out fascinating and challenging factors. Though supportive attitudes towards inclusive education existed, it was evident that these practitioners were not well equipped to manage inclusion. Even in-service training and organization of seminars and workshops on inclusive education that could be of help, were not held regularly. So the poor understanding of inclusive practices was the function of poor understanding of the specific principles and

skills required for inclusive practices. On this account, there is no doubt that teachers would lack initiative at school level to support learners with special needs and those in disadvantaged situations. The non-involvement of teachers, parents and learners with special needs in the definition of policies posed serious problems. On this account, problems found were in the areas of inadequacy of material resources and personnel, inadequacy of educational programmes and the need to train teachers and curriculum developers. Strategies for creating awareness were found in the University of Buea where degree programmes (B.Ed., M.Ed. & Ph.D. in Special Education) are being offered at all levels. Even persons with disabilities were among the teaching staff.

Some pupils and students with special needs were happy being in a regular school. It was realized that the pleasure of being in a regular school increased with school level, as many of the disabled expressed this satisfaction in secondary school level. Appreciation for being in regular schools varied as a function of age, level of education, gender and location. Teachers made efforts to encourage all pupils/students to participate in all classroom activities and give them individual attention. They also encouraged them to make friends with non-disabled peers. The point that female teachers were more caring than male was underscored. On the other hand, the majority of pupils/students with special needs believed that their teachers did not pay special attention to them in the classroom. This rate of dissatisfaction was higher in secondary schools, especially with male educators. Almost half of the students complained of being isolated and stigmatised. In relation to these indicators, male participants were as dissatisfied as female participants but the phenomenon was more pronounced in classrooms handled by male educators, in primary than in secondary school, in rural and urban areas than in semi-urban areas, and among younger than older pupils/students.

Classroom observations were carried out in 54 classrooms at all levels of the school system. All the indicators to measure teachers' inclusive profile were found to be insignificant. The observations support the argument that, in Cameroon, the institutions are not prepared for inclusive education. Teachers were not prepared, to engage in differentiated teaching. They lacked the skills and competences to address classroom diversity and even manage the inadequate

physical environment of classroom. Though the environment was not enabling, the teachers lacked skills for the use of appropriate teaching strategies. Those with the least pedagogical competences were found at the tertiary (university) level.

It was also observed that teachers' performance was highly associated with classroom environment. The issue of inadequate inclusive teacher profile stems from the fact that teacher education faces many challenges towards the development of a teacher's inclusive profile. Teacher educators themselves are not even aware of the critical issues surrounding teacher quality in terms of core values that guide inclusive practices and their competence in managing and orchestrating inclusive administrative and pedagogic competences. Relational analysis indicated significant associations between school levels and implementation of inclusive practices whereby the effective implementation of inclusive practices decreased with an increase in the level of education.

These findings underscored the need for the establishment of an effective network for collaborative research and capacity building in qualitative research for inclusion. In every aspect on the implementation of inclusive education in Cameroon, there is need for research to be carried out for instance on attitudes of stakeholders, peers, pupils/students, teachers and parents. Other concerns to be considered are the curriculum, new assessment strategies, adapted environment and qualified personnel. It was observed that a code for practice to support needs identification and provide relevant support services in mainstream was crucial. Some emerging recommendations focused on policy reform and teacher education on their generic pedagogical competences and meta-profile, including collaborative research and networking for capacity building.

The social model has therefore, replaced the individual or medical model which, according to Hales (1996), considers people with special needs to be visible only as patients, clients, or welfare/ charity cases under the control of medical or other disability-related professionals, and the invalidity of the individual as the course of disability. Therefore, social model was considered to be liberating by some persons living with disabilities (Giddens & Griffiths, 2006). However the extent to which governments claims to employ the principles of social model to help remove barriers to enable full participation of persons with disabilities is debatable.

**Inclusive education is not only concerned with learners with impairments but with overcoming the barriers to the learning and participation experienced by all learners vulnerable to exclusion from full educational participation (UNESCO, 2005). Inclusive education demands the balancing of multiple values such as social acceptance, experiencing equality, individuality, social inclusion, practicability and tolerance (Norwich, 1966, 2000).**



## Background

### Conceptualising Inclusive Education

Africans have always functioned within an inclusive culture, where people value human dignity and where everyone in a family setting and in the community is expected to participate in all activities.

Interdependence characterizes African cultural principles where communal engagements are highly encouraged including caring and providing a social support system. As evident in the African context, the concept of inclusion is not limited to any special category of persons as is the case in Eurocentric perspectives. Each child, person, disabled or non-disabled grows up connected. From the African perspective, inclusion is a continuous process of bringing all together in the family, the community, age group, tribal groups, rural youths group and so on. Through such practices each person or child is given a sense of belonging, the opportunity to participate, contribute, control and to be someone that shares with others. These practices, though not prescribed in policy statements, are effective because every person understands them and the implementation process remains a joint venture for the good of members of the community. With contemporary society, things are changing. As testified by Brendtro and others (1990), "inclusion is not a new concept but something that operated very effectively before culture became economically and culturally driven by material things and social mobility leading to the decline of family and community life" (Topping & Maloney, 2005: 5). Inclusive education is about values and principles and about the kind of society and kind of education that we value (Evans & Lunt, 2005).

Zimba's (2010) review of current educational policies and practices on the inclusion-exclusion paradigm: with reference to Namibian Educational system, emphasized that Inclusive Education is about why, how, when, where and the consequences of educating all learners. It involves the politics of recognition and is concerned with the serious issue of who is included and who is excluded within education and society in general.

Among UNESCO's many declarations and definitions of the concept inclusion, this report employs UNESCO's 2005 holistic definition that sees inclusive education as: "a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies with

a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children". Inclusive education is a major strategy to achieve education for all because it is an approach that looks into how to transform educational systems and other learning environments in order to respond to the diversity of learners. Four principles emerging from these held view are:

"Firstly, as a process, inclusion is a never-ending activity of looking for better ways of responding to diversity in learning contexts. Secondly, inclusion is about the on-going identification and removal of barriers to learning. Thirdly, inclusion is about the presence in learning sites, participation and achievement of all learners. Fourthly, inclusion places particular emphasis on those groups of learners who may be at risk of marginalization, exclusion or underachievement. Inclusive education therefore is not only concerned with learners with impairments but with overcoming the barriers to the learning and participation experienced by all learners vulnerable to exclusion from full educational participation".

This broadened conceptualization of inclusive education was articulated in the meeting at the forty-eighth session of the UNESCO International Conference on Education, held in Geneva in November 2008, where it was acknowledged that "inclusive education is 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" (UNESCO, 2009, p.126).

To achieve the goals of inclusive education therefore, Booth and Ainscow (2002) addressed three dimensions of inclusive education. These are culture, policies and practices. All of these are directly related to types of classroom interactive practices and students and pupils' degree and quality of participation. From the aforementioned, how prepared is the Cameroon education system to embrace inclusion as concerns human resources, policy, physical plant and practice?

### Conceptualizing "Special Schools" and "Mainstream Schools"

A special school is designed specifically for children with special educational needs. This is the case of schools run by the Ministry of Social Affairs. They usually have smaller classes and specialist

interventions. They take several forms; it may be a school that takes children of a broad range of special needs or could be very specialized. Such specialized schools admit children with autistic spectrum disorders, those who are high functioning or those with severe autistic difficulties. However, mainstream school caters for all children, including those with special educational needs (e.g. schools run by Ministry of Basic Education in Cameroon). It demands the balancing of multiple values such as social acceptance, experiencing equality, individuality, social inclusion, practicability and tolerance (Norwich, 1966, 2000).

As observed, Cameroon is still lagging behind in having appropriate statistics and in the identification of disability in terms of testing. Testing is crucial and complex because of its potentials for referral, intervention and rehabilitation when necessary, since pupils/students in need of special education due to a particular disability may still have different levels of ability in different areas (Tchombe, 2004).

### **Theoretical Perspectives and the Main Model**

The term disability is used in this study as any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being. This definition reflects the idea that to a large extent, disability is a social construct. This study's emphasis was on the social model, which proposes that people can be disabled by a lack of resources to meet their needs. It addresses issues such as the under-estimation of the potentials of persons with disabilities to contribute to society and add economic value to society, if given equal rights and equally suitable facilities and opportunities as others. A fundamental aspect of the social model concerns equality. The struggle for equality is often compared to the struggles of other socially marginalized groups. Equal rights empower and encourage the ability to make decisions and provide the opportunity to live life to the fullest. The social model of disability often focuses on changes required in society. The social adapted model therefore points to the fact that although a person's disability poses some limitations in an able-bodied society, oftentimes the surrounding society and environment are more limiting than the disability itself.

Abraham Maslow (1970), in his discussion of a hierarchy of human needs, pointed out that belongingness was an essential and prerequisite

human need that had to be met before one could ever achieve a sense of self-worth. Belongingness, which is having a social context, is a requisite for the development of self-esteem and self-confidence. That is why Maslow situated self-esteem above belongingness in his hierarchy. Without a social context in which to validate a person's perceived worth, self-worth is not internalized. The fundamental principle of inclusive education is the valuing of diversity within the human community. Every person has a contribution to offer to the world. The ways in which persons with disabilities can contribute to the world may be less apparent. When inclusive education is fully embraced, we abandon the idea that children have to become "normal" in order to contribute to the world. Conflict and poverty continue to cause high rates of disability in the less developed world (Schneider et al., 2007). But every country conducts census on the number of disabled persons in their country differently which may be on cultural differences, different disability definitions and different methods of data collection.

### **International Declarations, the Basis for Policy Issues**

The right to education is at the heart of the Education for All (EFA) programme as UNESCO's priority. It responds to the constitutional mandate of the organization, that of ensuring "full and equal opportunities for education for all" (Zimba, 2006). Typically, policy relevant to Inclusive Education begins with a declaration (e.g., the Salamanca Statement) or convention (e.g., Convention on the Rights of the Child) and follows with a Framework for Action or Implementation Handbook (Peters, 2003). In between declarations and frameworks lies a broad terrain of policy/practice critical to implementing inclusive education. Policy development in relation to individuals with disabilities faces challenges to avoid fragmented, uneven, and difficult-to-access services; and inclusive education may be implemented at different levels, embrace different goals, and be based on different motives, reflect different classifications of special education needs, and provide services in different contexts (Peters, 2003). All children do not only have the right to learn, as set forth in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC); all children can learn, without regard to their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or other conditions. Furthermore, while all children can learn, they may not all learn the same things at the same time, and with the same rhythm or results, but this is

generally considered normal and acceptable. In order to take care of these challenges, it is generally agreed that schools need strong inclusive policies and philosophies to support the rights of all children to participate in an inclusive way (Bunch, 1999; Lupart, 2002; Special Education Review Committee, 2000). According to Raymond (1995), the tenets of a positive inclusive philosophy include the fact that every learner has the right to participate in all aspects of school life with support to individual needs provided through classroom-modification of regular curriculum. Inclusive practices, therefore exceed attendance in regular school but include the basic values of participation, friendship and interaction, thus, giving a sense of belonging and connectedness.

African governments, in response to global initiatives, have undertaken measures to ensure the educational rights of children irrespective of disabilities. There are several other United Nations human rights treaties and declarations which provide for the right to education (UN 1948, UNESCO 1990). It is an overarching right: the human right to education is in itself indispensable for the exercise of other human rights. Its main attributes are:

- Universal access to primary education free and compulsory for all;
- Accessibility to secondary education in its different forms as well as technical and vocational education which should be made generally available;
- Capacity-based access to higher education;
- Opportunities for continuing education and literacy programmes and lifelong learning;
- Minimum international standards of quality education and of the teaching profession.

### **Action Programme Specifically for Disabled Persons**

The World Programme of Action concerning Persons with Disabilities introduced the concept of equal opportunities and equal access to society when it was adopted in 1982. The global decade (1983-1992) for disabled persons, however, did not bring about any improvement to the quality of life for persons with disability in Africa. Yet, the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for persons with Disabilities, adopted in 1993, strongly reaffirmed the principles of inclusive policies, plans and activities by stating that, the needs and concerns of persons with disabilities should be incorporated into general development plans and not be treated separately (UN, 1993). Consequently, the world conference on special

needs education in Salamanca in 1994 reiterated the Jomtien 1990 Declaration on Education for all. The Salamanca Conference's conclusion stresses that "Special Needs Education –an issue of equal concern to countries of the North and the South –cannot advance in isolation". The Statement called on all governments to adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise. It should be noted, however, that neither the Salamanca Statement nor the Convention explicitly stated that all children with special educational needs should be educated in fully inclusive settings at all levels of the education system. Nor do they explicitly exclude such an interpretation. In other words, there is a degree of ambiguity regarding the intentions of both documents with regard to the meaning of inclusion.

More recently, in December 2006, the 61st session of the United Nations General Assembly confirmed a Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons, which included a significant commitment to inclusive education. The second goal of the Millennium Development Goals aims at achieving universal primary education by 2015; children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary school. In this light, efforts have been and continue to be made towards having a complete and wholesome education that includes all classes and categories of children. In responding to this assertion, Cameroon would be adhering to the declaration of World Education Forum in Dakar (2000, par.6), that "education is a fundamental human right. It is the key for sustainable development, peace and stability within and among countries, and thus an indispensable means for effective participation in societies and economies of the twenty-first century, which are affected by rapid globalization."

### **Cameroon's Journey towards an Inclusive Education Policy**

The Cameroon government has undertaken measures to ensure the educational rights of children and particularly those with disabilities before 1983 when the first law officially offered the possibility for permitted children with disabilities to attend regular schools. A small number of such children were accepted in mission schools and were taught alongside other children. After independence in 1961, the education of persons with disabilities was mostly provided in specialized centres. Only a few of such persons attended regular primary schools. Between



1972 and 1975 there were five centers offering special education in Cameroon. These schools were all found in Yaoundé and managed by religious groups. The Ministry of Social Affairs, created in 1975, was charged with the responsibility of overseeing the wellbeing of persons with disabilities and the very old. Approved privately owned special schools in all the regions of the country receive yearly subventions from the State to serve persons with disabilities (PWDs).

Laws and legislations have been established to improve on access to education and equality issues relating to persons with disabilities and others in disadvantaged situations. For example about three majors laws have been propulgated. They are Law N°.83/013 of 21st July 1983 relating to the protection of handicapped persons followed by its text of application put in place in 1990. Measures were undertaken in 1998 after the Education Forum of 1995 to promote the educational rights of children and particularly those with disabilities. On this account Law N° 98/004 of 14th April 1998 laying down guidelines for education in Cameroon was promulgated and in section 6, it states that, the State shall guarantee the right of every child to education. In most recent times a very important law was enacted. Law No. 2010/002/Of 13 April 2010 addressing the protection and welfare of persons with disabilities in Cameroon. The decree among many issues emphasized the provision of special education, psychosocial support, socio-economic integration, medical prevention and access to employment, infrastructure, housing and transport for persons with disabilities. This led the responsible ministries to undertake collaborative actions through joint legislations for action. For example circular letter, No. 86/L/1656/MINEDUC/CTZ of January 1986 instructed school administrators to facilitate the admission of children with disabilities. This may be difficult with severe cases of disability, if the school is not equipped in human, material and physical resources to cater for these needs. In 2005, 11th October, a circular letter signed by the Minister of Secondary Education gave instructions on the management of visually impaired and hard of hearing students in the organization of public and class examinations. He emphasized the importance of making available Braille and sign language specialists. Only the brailing of examination is in practice. The absence of the use of sign language in all public examinations remains a critical problem

In 2006 2nd August both the Ministers of Secondary Education and Social Affairs sent a circular relating to

**Inclusive education is about changing and transforming education systems to accommodate all learners, regardless of their strengths or weaknesses.**

**Inclusive practice draws it principles from valuing differences.**

**Problem faced by teachers and educators is the lack of conceptual clarity with concepts such as mainstreaming, integration, inclusive education, special needs education and special education needs among others.**



the admission of handicapped children and children of handicapped parents in secondary schools. These children were exempted from paying parent/students dues. In addition, a joint circular letter No. 283/07/LC/MINSEC/MINAS of 14th August 2007 relative to the identification of children with disabilities and others born of parents with disabilities Encouraged the enrollment of these children in government colleges and their participation in official exams. According to this circular letter, only children in government colleges were identified. The implication here is that other such categories of children who attended private and lay private schools were not identified or given special considerations in official examinations. In addition to this, the circular limits consideration only to the physically impaired, the visually impaired and the hard of hearing. For example, the problems of street children are enormous yet strategies for supporting them are still limited (Tchombe, Tarpeh & Mopoi, 2001).

The Ministries of Higher Education and Social Affairs on 8th July 2008 reinforced the improvement of the condition and support offered to disabled students in State Universities such as the amelioration of examination conditions for students with disabilities the provision of psychosocial supports through the availability of structures for guidance and counseling, giving priority to disabled students for any job, receiving prizes of excellence and improving on the infrastructure and sport equipment. In these laws and legislations there is a complete lack of information on the concept of inclusive education in Cameroon making it difficult to address the way forward to achieve the goals of Education for All initiative, thus having implications for practice and research.

By 2011, Cameroon had signed but not ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol; The International Disability Alliance (IDA). Cameroon's poverty reduction strategy paper (IMF, 2010) spelt out the government's continued establishment of specialized structures for persons with disabilities in order to reduce their dependence through easing access to buildings as well as financial support. However, Nsameng and Tchombe (2011) argue that, despite the drafting of a practical guide on persons with disabilities, access to infrastructure and buildings that are open to public use and the creation of partnerships to enhance the attendance of children with disabilities, still has a long way for actual realization.

Review of research literature from the European Agency for Inclusive Education provides a very rich orientation for the African perspectives (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2009, 2011, 2012). The most challenging and critical aspects of inclusive education development include: (1) learner access, retention and drop-out rates; (2) finding, identifying, and encouraging children to go to school; (3) students socio-economic status (4) attitudes toward SEN and students with disabilities; (5) teachers' working conditions (6) flexible, adaptive and functional life-skills curriculum relevant to students' lives. Other challenging factors to be considered are school climate, collaboration, support, and integrated services and teacher training. Meanwhile outcomes of inclusive education are often illusive and difficult to measure.

Student's achievement tests of content knowledge provide only one indicator of impact, and are not

strongly linked to success in adult life, nor do they provide a measure of creative and analytical problem-solving skills needed for survival. The challenge is to measure success in terms of broad indicators of outcomes and impact. Research suggests that inclusive education programmes should also look for improvements in terms of contextual factors (individual, family, community organization, and government). The reports of the Working Partners, with their country-based reviews and the findings of the international literature review (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2009, 2011 & 2012), point to at least five groups of variables that seem to be effective for inclusive education practices. These are:

- Co-operative teaching/co-teaching/team teaching;
- Co-operative learning/peer tutoring;
- Individual planning;
- Collaborative problem solving;
- Heterogeneous grouping/flexible instruction/differentiation;

Evidently, a more differentiated approach in education is necessary and effective when dealing with a diversity of pupils in the classroom. Targeted goals, alternative routes for learning, flexible instruction and the abundance of homogenous ways of grouping enhance inclusive education. Other factors are contextual for effective classroom practices. These are school organization, external support services, policy, financial conditions, teacher training and attitudes. But the issues of large class sizes, examination dominated curriculum continue to pose serious problems.

### **Inclusive teaching pedagogy, core values and competencies**

Inclusion largely depends on teachers' attitudes towards pupils with special needs and on the resources available to them. In quite a number of studies, the attitude of teachers towards educating pupils with special needs has been identified as a decisive factor in making schools more inclusive (Meijer, 2001, 2003). The different types of resources available to teachers can be deduced from the microeconomics of teaching (Brown & Saks, 1980; Gerber & Semmel, 1985). The use of the term "resources" refers not only to teaching methods and materials but also to time available for instruction and to the knowledge and skills of teachers acquired through training and experiences. All these resources can be used when handling differences in classrooms.

Successful pedagogy for all children hardly differs from inclusive education, (Wetzel, Moser, Brejcha et al. 1999, Wehmeyer & Agran, 2006; Weinert, 1997).) identified the following as key variables of teaching quality, classroom management, problem-solving teaching, clear structure, time efficiency, individual support, variability and social climate. According to them, compared to traditional classes, inclusive settings show a much higher level of individualization, where work is done in a less teacher-centered, achievement-oriented way (with reference to the social climate) and more support-oriented way. Best practices for inclusion are based on the principles that all children attend age appropriate regular classrooms in their local schools, receive a curriculum relevant to their needs, and benefit from cooperation and collaboration among home, school and community (The Roeher Institute, 2004). This may not be applicable to all contexts as most African classrooms are not homogenous in age. The principles below provide eleven categories of best practice that can be of value. These are:

1. School learning environment that holds positive expectations and opportunities for all students;
2. Collaborative planning among administration, students, teachers, parents, and community partners;
3. An administration that provides an enabling and empowering school environment for all students;
4. School environment that enables and expounds the importance of social responsibility, including the celebration of difference;
5. Inclusion of students and parents in the planning of curriculum to students with disabilities, and the accommodation of individual strengths and needs;
6. Availability of support programmes and services (e.g. counselors, health and social service workers, educational assistants) that meet the needs of students with disabilities;
7. Use by teachers of a range and variety of instructional and assessment practices in order to "accommodate various learning preferences;
8. Transition planning that involves all stakeholders in the life of a particular student (i.e. receiving teachers and administrators, counsellors, parents and others)
9. Partnerships between the school, the student's family, and the greater community;
10. Innovative system and staff growth through evaluation and professional development;
11. Accountability, both to students/parents and all educational administrative levels. (The Roeher Institute, 2004)

## Profile of inclusive teachers

Based on extensive reviews and research, the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education has identified four core values in the profile of inclusive education teachers (Watkins (Ed), 2012). These values include:

- **Valuing the learner**, where learner difference is considered as a resource and an asset in education. Accordingly, valuing learner diversity is characterized by competencies in the conceptions of inclusive education and the teacher's view of learner difference. These should have implications for teachers' attitudes and beliefs towards inclusive practices. Teachers' competence in the domain emerges from comprehensive knowledge and understanding as well as critical skills and abilities. But above all teachers' context-specific understanding of inclusive education and learner difference is of vital importance. It is only through this that they can begin to effectively value the learner, no matter her/his status, thus practicing inclusion.
- **Supporting all learners**, whereby teachers have high expectations for all learners' achievements. Two major areas of competences are required; the promotion of the academic, social and emotional learning of all learners and the employment of effective teaching approaches in heterogeneous classes.
- **Working with others**, where collaboration and teamwork are essential approaches for all teachers working harmoniously with parents and other stakeholders for the achievement of ensuring quality access to all.
- **Continuing personal professional development:** It is extremely important for teachers continuing professional development knowing that teaching is a learning activity and teachers take responsibility for their lifelong learning. This should permit teachers to develop the attitude of becoming critically reflective in helping all children achieve learning processes than on learning outcomes.

## Opportunities and barriers in inclusive educational practice

The benefits of inclusive education to persons with/without special needs and to inclusive schools are manifold (NJCIE, 2010):

Academically, we find that the Individual Education Programmes (IEP's) of students with disabilities who are placed in general education classrooms, contain more academic objectives, improved quality of the curricular content, and more references to best

practices than IEP's developed for students in segregated settings. Again, students in an inclusive school demonstrate "significantly superior gains on several scales, including reading, vocabulary, total reading and language, with a marginally significant effect on reading comprehension".

Socially, we find that when compared to students in segregated settings, students with disabilities who are full time members of general education classrooms show significantly higher levels of engagement in school activities, higher levels of participation in integrated school environments and initiate and engage in social interactions with peers and adults to a greater degree. Meanwhile students with disabilities in inclusive placements have had more frequent interactions and larger, more durable networks of peers without disabilities.

## Policy Concerns for African Institutions

As concerns policy on inclusion, Lutfiyya and Wallegghem (2002) comment that government policies that refer to establishing rights but which do not provide the means of enforcing them are not only meaningless, but also dishonest as they give the impression that there are rights, when in fact, there are none. This reflects the situation in Cameroon. The transience of special education policies and of public governance policies in general, is manifested not only in jurisdictions that lack a strong legislative base, but also in jurisdictions that report a poor correlation between educational policy and practice (The Roeher Institute, 2004). Deaf students in Cameroon's institutions are facing a major set back because of the lack of sign language interpreters during public examinations. The unpreparedness of teachers in Cameroon is because teacher training in some cases focuses on curricular subjects rather than generic pedagogical skills, capacity for critical thinking and creativity (Topping & Maloney, 2005). Teachers do cite lack of resources as a barrier to quality mainstreaming of pupils with special education needs but do not know exactly what type of resources they are referring to. Of course, in Cameroon, there are barriers like the lack of experts and appropriate physical space, overcrowded classrooms, lack of human space, inappropriate curricular activities for pupils at risk and disadvantages, contradictions in Government policy, poor liaison with parents and other stakeholders.

## The Role of African Universities and Research

According to Crawford and Porter (2004), university-based teacher education programmes can develop



curricula that prepare teachers for diversity and inclusion in regular classrooms. They can insist that all students meet basic competency standards on inclusive practices in order to graduate. They can provide ongoing professional development for teachers (e.g., in-service) and leadership training on inclusion for teachers and school administrators at all levels. They also posit that universities can conduct research on inclusive school and classroom practices, advocate for evidence-based practice and establish incentives for new researchers to place a focus on issues of inclusion in education. The programmes can facilitate critical discourse and engage in partnerships with ministries of education, teacher associations, parent and professional groups and other universities. This is even very possible as universities have a key role to play in diffusing knowledge about current research on inclusive education, translating the research and other knowledge into readily accessible language and formats for practical use in schools and classrooms. University school partnership is inevitable and this is not given much attention in Cameroon.

From the literature on Inclusive Education practices in the North and South, nine critical issues have been identified which could foster the future of research and research institutions in Africa and the south in particular. The issues include decentralization; finance and resource allocation; access and participation; pre-service teacher training and in-service professional development; universal human rights and inclusive education policy and legislation; school restructuring and whole-school reform; identification and placement; assessment, accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness; and building capacity and sustainability (Peters, 2003). The incentive/disincentive descriptions and specific policy implications for each issue do however rest on the premise that Inclusive Education, as defined in the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action, should be the guiding principle for the development of Education for All and for implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

### **Access and Participation**

Access and participation refer to physical access (buildings) academic/programmes access (to curriculum and instruction through adaptations and supports), social access (to peers), and economic access (to affordable schooling). Physical integration in schools does not equal or ensure participation. For participation to be meaningful, factors such as a school climate that values diversity, a safe and supportive environment, and positive attitudes, are

essential components of participation that have been identified in the literature (Peters, 2003). Access and participation are feasible when: universal design promotes physical, social, academic, technological, and economic access as a comprehensive total package for all learners; conditions internal to schools as well as external. Conditions affecting access and participation are addressed together. Because they are integral to programme development, planning, implementation and evaluation. By contrast, negative attitudes create barriers to access and participation. When different standards of participation and access are applied to different learners and/or when standards relating to accessibility do not exist, access and participation are not considered until after programmes have been designed and buildings have been constructed. Broad definitions of access and participation should be considered in IE policies and practices. Physical access to school buildings is an essential pre-requisite. Further, promoting physical access to buildings without addressing the various barriers that make school practically inaccessible will not be effective.

### **Training and Professional Development of Teachers**

There is overwhelming evidence that training and professional development are central to IE practice in countries of the North and South. The review has highlighted exemplary training programmes and provided detailed descriptions of factors that promote effective training, as well as challenges and barriers:

#### **Positive Approach**

Teacher education should be based on an integrated programme so they can learn innovative child-centered strategies to teach diverse range of abilities, as well as strategies that promote active student learning and adaptations to meet individual student needs. It is important that in training, teachers learn curriculum development strategies that encompass broad common goals; facilitate flexible structure; provide alternative/multiple assessments based on individual progress. The programmes should address cultural/religious/linguistic diversity of learners and content, knowledge and skills that are relevant to learners' lived experiences. Teacher training should provide hands-on experiences and opportunities for critical reflection that is continuous with on-going feedback and support in classrooms situation.



## Barriers

A critical barrier is when training focuses on individual “generic” deficits and categories of disability. For teachers to change their way of teaching, their working conditions should be changed providing them with manageable class sizes and resources. School administrators must also be trained so they do not hinder teacher reform rather than facilitate or support it. (Peters 2003)

Policies that would encourage building bridges between pre-service and in-service training through school-university collaborations, hold the possibility of contributing effective short and long-term solutions to teachers’ development. Also, departments of special and general education at university and colleges of education levels should offer inclusive skills and strategies in training programmes especially with the increasing numbers of children with special needs and the trend toward IE. Specialists will always be needed to teach specific skills to the small minority of SEN students; e.g., the deaf, blind and deaf-blind students, and learners with severe multiple impairments. The implications for future policy point to policy/practice that support embedded teacher training. This training should bridge school-university, special and general education programmes, and utilize the expertise of special education faculty to provide problem-solving and critical-reflective generic skills that all teachers need to effectively teach diverse learners in ordinary (IE) classroom (Peters, 2003).

## Restructuring Schools

Again, the literature stresses that IE is a guiding philosophy enacted through inclusive policy/practice that requires comprehensive school restructuring. This restructuring, it is argued, should be supported by changes in beliefs, methods and resource allocations

at all levels of educational systems and governance (Peters, 2003). School restructuring and whole-school reform would manifest when IE principles and practices are considered as driving reform as well as integral to reform, and not an add-on programme; diversity and individual differences as well as similarities are recognized and valued, not ‘tolerated’ or ‘accepted’. Diversity becomes a common denominator, not an individual numerator; new roles and responsibilities are clearly identified, and all staff systematically prepared for these new roles and provided with adequate supports; individualized education is considered a universal right and not a special education need. Inclusive Education (IE) is conceptualized as a place, not a service. Most students with special education needs experience learning difficulties that are related to the environment, rather than an innate characteristic.

## Assessment

Assessment issues constitute one of the most significant challenges for inclusive education and student assessments have been tied to school effectiveness in problematic ways. There is need to find out how to measure individual progress with clear standards and benchmarks that will offer different forms of assessment, giving each child a chance to excel. Both formative and summative forms should be employed to inform and facilitate teaching and learning. Broad conceptions of student outcomes include mastery of academic skills as well as self-esteem and independent living skills needed for active participation in society as adults. Standardized achievement test scores cannot therefore be used as the sole indicator of success.



## Objectives of the Study

### General objective

The general objective of the study sets out to identify the preparedness of educators in Cameroon's education institutions to address IE.

### Specific Objectives

1. To identify gaps in policy and how this can be improved.
2. To find out the nature of inclusive practices in the institutions being studied.

3. To identify the existence of core values and competences used by practicing teachers and university lecturers and develop indicators as measures for training and evaluation.

4. To find out disabled and non-disabled pupils/students perceptions of inclusion

5. To find out parental perceptions of inclusion education

6. To identify the status of research in inclusive education and establish networks for collaborative research.

## Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is the creation of awareness on the need to identify characteristics required for preparedness to embrace inclusive education practices. Discussion on gaps in policy, inclusive practices and perception of stakeholders such as parents, educational administrators, university lecturers, learners and educators should provoke reactions for the review of existing policies to make them more functional and inform strategies for inclusive practices. As a transnational study in five African countries, it will permit the sharing of best practices and encourage collaborative research.

## Scope/Delimitation

This study is limited to regular schools in Cameroon at the level of the centralized service of the ministry, decentralized services at the regional, divisional and sub-divisional levels and regular schools where inclusive processes are expected to be experienced. The institutions in rural and urban areas were focused on, for firsthand experiences of how inclusive practices are understood and implemented. The major concern was on policy, practices, curricula, human resource, infrastructure and other barriers because these would affect the quality process. The study covered three regions out of ten, notably the Center, Littoral and South West. The content area was inclusive practices. The main actors were the educational administrators at all levels of education, school administrators, educators, learners with special needs and their parents.



## Method

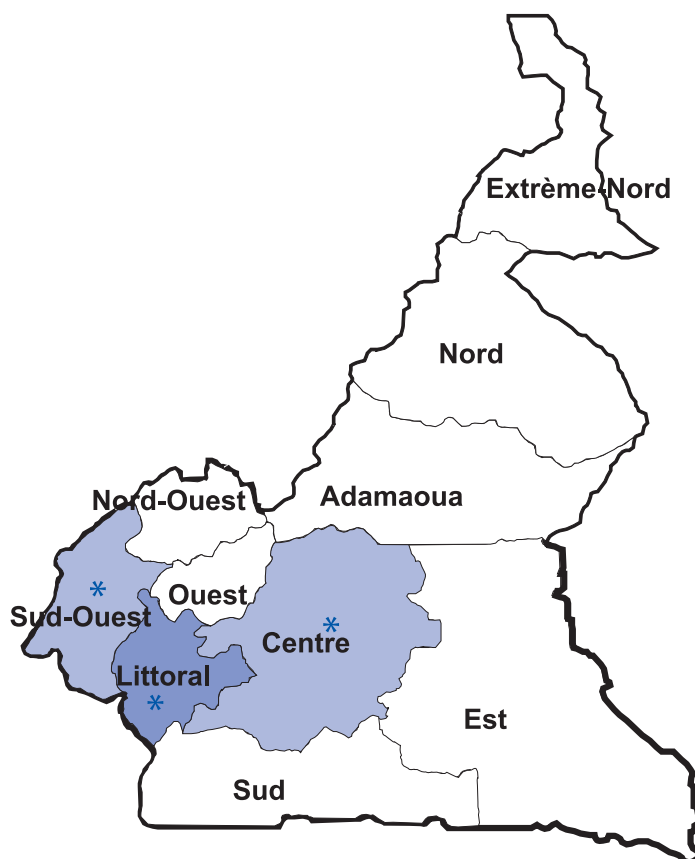
### Research design

The descriptive survey was used because the main purpose of the study was to present a situational analysis of inclusive education through assessing inclusive practices in regular institutions at all levels of education having persons with special needs. The essence was also to make a general assessment of policy implications in inclusive education practices in Cameroon. The design employed was appropriate because it involves collecting and analyzing data from a sample of people considered to be a representation of the population (Amin, 2005). It was equally important that the study be stratified because perceptions and views of the various categories of educators were appraised comparatively. The perception of learners and parents of learners with special needs were also assessed. Methodological triangulation approach involving the use of both quantitative and qualitative instruments for data collection, namely, questionnaires, observation and interviews was employed. Review of policy documents was conducted. The questionnaire was used to sample a cross section of opinions on inclusive practices at all levels of education. The observation of the nature of infrastructure and material resources of different institutions including the quality and availability of pedagogical support materials was conducted. Interview was used for regional pedagogic inspectors, Heads of Department and Deans, education administrators and other stakeholders in central and decentralized services.

### Study area

Cameroon has a population of about, 19,958,351. (UN, 2009). The study sites were purposefully selected from three out of the ten regions of Cameroon. These regions are Center (CE), Littoral (LT), and the South West (SW), each with geographical, cultural, social and economic diversity. The sample included regional delegates of state ministries, including those of basic education and secondary education in whom this study was interested. From each administrative region selected, four to six schools made up of regular schools, in urban and rural locations and public and private-owned institutions were selected. The SW is the seventh most populated region with a population of 1,384,286 inhabitants and the Centre is the third thickly populated in the country with a population of 1,904,142 inhabitants (National Institute of Statistics, 2010). The population of Cameroon is a conglomerate of many ethnic groups, comprising the native

population and a significant proportion of immigrants from countries in the sub-regions, particularly Nigeria, Chad, and Gabon. The native populations comprise a variety of ethno-linguistic and cultural groups.



**Figure 1:** Map of Cameroon with its 10 Regions

Source: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2012](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2012)

The World Bank Report (2008) estimates that of 650 million disabled persons in the world 80 million are in Africa. WHO (2011) estimates that Cameroon records approximately 1,600,000 PWDs, which is about 8% (WHO, 2011) of its population. WHO (2011) states that among all the other disabilities, there are more than 6000 visually impaired persons in Cameroon. Statistics collected by the Ministry of Social Affairs (2010) on disabilities in 47 institutions offering special education in the ten regions of Cameroon, registered 3,892 institutional based persons with disabilities, 1,552 physically handicapped, 883 hard of hearing, 281 visually impaired, 106 mentally disabled and 1,070 mixed of visually impaired, autistics, hard of hearing, etc.



## Population

The population of the study included regular classrooms in all levels of education, educators, and school administrators, inspectors, educational administrators at both decentralized and central levels with particular reference to top officials in the Ministries of Basic Education, secondary education and higher education.

## Sample and sampling procedure

The main sampling strategies were purposive and convenience. Thirty-six regular institutions cutting across all the levels of education were involved in the study. Table 2 presents the sample; made up of primary school teachers, secondary school teachers, university lecturers, educational administrator basic education; educational administrators secondary education; educational administrators higher education' parents of learners with special needs; pupils/students with special needs; regular pupils/students, school and classroom observations at all levels and educational administrators at central level. At central level, one Inspector General in the Ministry of Basic Education and one inspector each of the ministries of Secondary Education, Higher Education and a Sub-Director in the Ministry of Social Affairs were involved. The convenience sampling technique was used to select teachers.

## Instrumentation

The comprehensive documentary review of inclusive education policies, programmes and practices in Cameroon offered insight into policy issues. In this wise, state policies and legislation were reviewed in order to establish any perspectives or indicators for effective inclusive practices in Cameroon schools. This desktop study informed the construction of the instruments (questionnaire, interviews and checklists for observations). The study made use of both quantitative and qualitative instruments for data collection. All instruments were translated into French.

### A) Questionnaire for University Lecturers and Teachers

This questionnaire made of both open and closed ended questions was divided into two broad sections.

- **Section I:** This section solicited lecturers' and teachers' demographic information in relation to country, institution, gender, age, professional experience and educational qualifications.

- **Section II:** This section addressed perceptions and practices in an inclusive classroom. This section was divided into further subsections according to some preselected categories and items. Items 7-9 were open ended questions while the rest of the items followed a two point scale closed ended questions by which respondents were required to either agree (AG) or disagree (DG) to the items. These preselected categories and the corresponding items are described below.

- Identification of persons with disabilities and knowledge of inclusive Education: Items 7-9.
- Policy Issues: Items 10-14.
- School Administration (Pedagogic Inspectors): items 15-18
- Challenges for Teacher Education to develop a Teacher's inclusive Profile: items 19 – 34
- In-service Training: items 35 – 38
- Teachers' Competences: items 39 – 55

### B) Questionnaire for Parents (of children with disabilities or SEN)

This questionnaire was structured in two sections. Section A solicited the personal information of parents in relation to zone, age, sex, profession, status, number of children and level of education. Section B consisted of nine open ended questions that dealt with Parents' perception on inclusion.

### C) Interview Guide for Pupils/Students with Disabilities

This interview guide was equally divided into two sections. Section A was concerned with the personal data of pupils/students in relation to name of school, zone, class, age, and gender, gender of class teacher and nature of disability or special educational need. Section B composed of eleven questions that solicited pupils' and/or students' perceptions on inclusion.

### D) Interview Guide for Principals and Headmasters

This interview guide was divided into three main sections with corresponding questions.

- Knowledge of Inclusion: questions 1-3
- Understanding Persons with Special Education Needs: questions 4-9

c) Existing policies on Inclusive Education and implementation: questions 10-18

**E) Interview Guide for Teacher Educators, Policy and Decision Makers**

This interview guide was divided into five sections comprising

- a) Perception of inclusion: items 1-4
- b) Existing infrastructure/material resources available: items 5 – 9
- c) Assessment of existing human resources available: items 10-14
- d) Evaluation of educational programmes: items 15-18
- e) Constraints on inclusive education institutions: items 19-21

**F) Classroom Observation Guide for the Physical Environment and Inclusive Practices**

This observation guide was divided into five sections by which the observer was expected to indicate whether the facilities were of no existence (0), inadequate (1), and adequate (3)

The five sections and the corresponding items included

- a) Adequacy of Physical environment of classroom: items 1-4

b) Enabling Environment: items 5-15

c) Differentiated Teaching to address diversity: items 16-27

d) Appropriate Teaching Strategies: items 28-39

e) Rating the Teacher’s inclusive: items 40-64

**Validation of Instruments**

The instruments used, were validated in two phases; that is face validity and content validity in order to ensure reliability of the instruments. The instruments were pilot tested in 2 non-participating schools (that is, Catholic School Mutengene in Tiko Sub-Division and Government Practicing Primary School Molyko in Buea Sub-Division). Reliability analysis was performed to appreciate the consistency of response-patterns notably for classroom observations.

**Reliability analysis**

Table 1 below indicates that all the components had strong reliability coefficients with Cronbach’s Alpha greater than 0.6 (Nana, 2012) in all cases. The internal consistency criterion therefore was not violated and observation data were then validated.

**Table 1: Reliability analysis for classroom observations**

Predictive components of inclusive practices in classroom	Cronbach’s Alpha	Number of items	N	% valid
Adequacy of physical environment of classroom	0.619	4	53	98.1
Enabling environment	0.882	11	47	87.0
Differentiated teaching to address diversity	0.812	12	50	92.6
Appropriate teaching strategies	0.798	12	49	90.7
Rating the teacher’s inclusive profile	0.887	30	38	70.4
Overall classroom observation	0.951	69	32	59.3

## Administration of Instruments

Copies of the questionnaires, interview guides, and observation guide were administered to some selected respondents by a group of carefully selected and trained researchers using the self-delivery technique. Data were collected over a period of one

week (10 days). The researchers took the disposition to ensure that respondents understood the questions to ensure the collection of relevant and appropriate data, Table 2 presents the state of data collected.

**Table 2: Sample flow table**

Nature of Investigation	Return	Expected	Coverage rate
Primary School Teachers	70	80	87.5%
Secondary School Teachers	61	80	76.3%
University Lecturers	25	30	83.3%
Educational Administrator Basic Education	33	25	132%
Educational Administrators Secondary Education	10	25	40%
Educational Administrators Higher Education	3	10	30%
Parents of learners with special needs	20	30	66.7%
Pupils/students with special needs	8	20	40%
Pupils/Students without special needs	12	20	60%
School and Classroom Observations primary	35	30	60%
School and Classroom Observations secondary	34	30	113.3%
School and Classroom Observations tertiary	10	10	100.0%
Educational administrators at central level	4	10 (at least 1 per ministry: basic education, secondary education, higher education and social affairs)	- Quantitative coverage (40%) - Qualitative coverage (100%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>81,8%</b>
<b>Total number of institutions</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>120%</b>

## Data Processing & Analysis

A triangulation of quantitative and qualitative techniques of analysis was used to analyse the data. In this respect, a descriptive statistics was used to analyse quantitative data, while content analysis was used to analyse qualitative data. Also a documentary review of existing legislation and policies was done. Since the questionnaire was a combination of both qualitative (open questions) and quantitative data, systematic steps for cleaning up of the data was taken. An analytical guide was developed based on the indicators of the study to answer the objectives.

## Content analysis and pre-coding

The data analysis included a well-demarcated phase labeled content analysis and pre-coding (Nana, 2012). The codes were defined as variables for data entry in Epi Info 6.04d (CDC, 2001). The descriptions of the codes were now used as variable labels in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Standard version, Release 17.0 (SPSS Inc. 2008). Data was later analyzed using the following approaches: For categorical variables such as sex, setting type or school type, descriptive statistics presented the distribution of subjects between and within subsets using frequencies and proportions, and

more specifically Multiple Response Analysis for multiple-responses question (with possibility for more than one response to a single question, Nana, 2012). Measures of association between variables were carried out using Chi-Square test of independence or of equality of proportions for nominal vs nominal and nominal vs ordinal variables. As for continuous variables such as number of pupils with disabilities, Case Summary Statistics was used to present the measurements of central tendencies and dispersions. Results were presented using statistical tables and charts. All statistics are discussed at the 0.05 significant level ( $\alpha=0.05$ ).

### **Ethical Considerations**

In conducting this study, the following ethical issues were considered to protect the interest of the subjects participants.

- The consent of the respondents who participated in the study was sought by visiting the central ministries, decentralized structures and schools concerned. A detailed explanation of the purpose of the study and all the procedures that were to take place was

revealed to them. It should be noted that informed consent letters were not sent to the participants due to cultural considerations. Visiting someone and explaining to him your intentions is more likely to yield fruits than sending a letter to the person concerned. In the Cameroonian culture, talking to someone directly is a show of respect to his personality. No force was used on the participants to take part in the study and they were allowed the chance to withdraw whenever they wished.

- The issue of confidentiality was raised and discussed with officials of centralized and decentralized services, head teachers and teachers. This was in order to build a bridge of trust between the authorities, teachers and the research team. To strengthen the issue of confidentiality the names of all the participants in the study were not considered and have not been mentioned anywhere in the study.

- Deception was avoided on the part of the research team by not telling the participants lies or promising material or financial benefits.



## Findings

The findings of the study are presented based on each objective. Both qualitative and descriptive information are presented to explain and justify the findings.

### Objective 1: Policy gaps and improvement for best practices in Cameroon

From review of policy documents and data collected, it is observed that Law No 83/12 and Law No 2010/002 of April 2010 are limited in many ways as concerns the creation of inclusive education and its practices in the education systems of Cameroon. This justifies the great concern for institutional preparedness because the existing laws make provision only for persons with disabilities. Provisions for the education of children with other special education needs like orphans, gender, street children, ethnic minorities, language barriers, those of disaffection and exclusion, children at risk and others are not mentioned in the text (difficulties and disadvantaged). These laws are not inclusive and some of the legislations are difficult to implement. The decree No 90/1516 of 26 November relating to the protection of the wellbeing of persons with disabilities in Cameroon addressed the modalities for applying the law as stipulated in article 1 that “the education of handicapped children and adolescents is assured in the regular schools and in centers for special education”. Article 2 of the same decree says precisely that “children with hard of hearing, visual impairment and mental disabilities will benefit from special education that will permit them to register in regular schools” (i.e those constituting the group with disabilities).

The directives in the two articles are not clear as regular and special education centers are mentioned without specifications on how access is to be managed in the two settings and how inclusion is to be managed in time, space, human and material resources including the curricular and teacher factors. The policy gaps are the absences of orientations on implementation strategies in regular schooling process. Preparedness was only limited to some structural information not process oriented. By process, the reference is about inclusive processes in teaching, learning and assessment which should be embedded in an inclusive curriculum and prescribe in policy and legislation. Even Law No. 98/004 of 14th April 1998 on Education Guidance in Cameroon laying down guidelines for education, grants “equal opportunities without discrimination of gender, political, philosophical and religious opinions, socio-cultural, linguistic or geographical origin....”

**Principals of some public secondary schools stated clearly that, “We do not have any policy on inclusive education but we have policy that protects and meets the needs of persons with disability”. Even heads of some primary schools also said, “No idea about policies”. An school administrator said, “I have not seen a document on that”.**

**Perceptions of the main actors illustrated a degree of unawareness of the existence of policy and of its impact on practice. Reviewing of policy showed gaps and limitations in its scope.**

**The laws focus more on the protection and welfare of persons with certain types of disabilities, while ignoring other vulnerable groups, especially those experiencing other forms of disadvantages and difficulties.**



### Evidence of the absences of preparedness through policy gaps from qualitative data:

To confirm the findings, principals of some public secondary schools visited stated clearly that, “We do not have any policy on inclusive education but we have policy that protects and meets the needs of persons with disability”. Even heads of some primary schools also said, “No idea about policies”. A school administrator said, “I have not seen a document on that”. Some headmasters of French speaking sub-system stated that, “The policy of inclusive education exists, but who applies it? The partners are not usually consulted” (*La politique sur l'éducation inclusive existe bel et bien, mais qui l'applique alors? Les partenaires ne sont pas toujours consultés*).

These educators feel that policy is not orienting inclusive practices. “It is true that the strategies and programmes are not actually adapted to the real needs of the children. The programmes at different levels continue to marginalize pupils and students. It functions by merging both regular and special education (*C'est vrai que les stratégies et les programmes actuellement ne sont pas adaptés au regard des enfants à besoin réelle. Les programmes à*

*divers niveau continuant à marginaliser, ils fonctionnant en marge du système normal avec les programmes spéciaux*) ».

Policy is not implemented and some issues raised to support the assertion are: «because the law is not applicable, it is useless to know them, this is why in Cameroon when elaborating a law, the concerns of the educators must be sought and considered. What is clear is that the policy concerns all the levels of education systems, but to say the truth, no opportunity to put it in place is available. (*«Puisque les lois ne s'appliquent pas, inutile de les connaître, est ce qu'au Cameroon quand on élabore une loi, on tient compte des concernés ou des éducateurs, Ce qui est là c'est que la politique concerne tous les niveaux du système éducatif, mai pour dire vrai, aucune opportunité de la mise en œuvre n'est disponible*) »). Lack of real preparedness can be supported from participants' views that there is the need for policy reforms for better orientations on strategies for implementation of inclusion. Policy issues raised are more administrative than pedagogical, as a result, the policy does not orient even teacher education. Figure 2 below summaries these gaps and provide suggestions of what should be in place as evidence of preparedness.



*Great strides for inclusion even in university games were many students with disabilities are participating with great success*

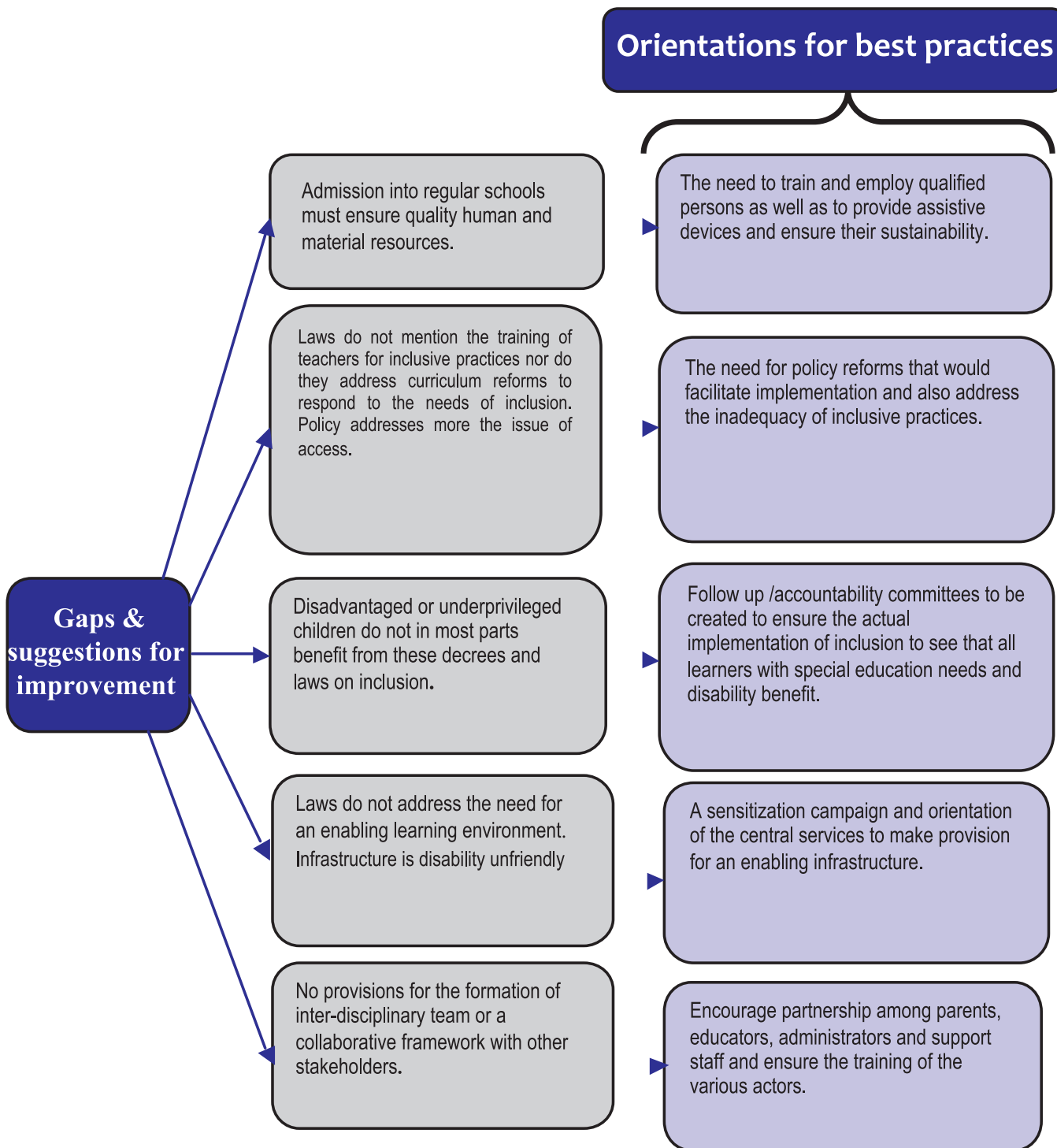


Figure 2: Conceptual diagram of policy gaps and orientation for best practices in Cameroon

## Objective 2: The nature of inclusive practices in institutions being studied

Characterization of inclusive practices as perceived by pupils and students with and without disability. The analysis of the data further controlled for age, location of the school (rural, semi-urban and urban), gender of disabled students and that of their regular peers. The findings are found in Figures 4, 5, 6 & 7. From the analysis of the practices on inclusion as perceived by disabled pupils/students themselves and their non-disabled peers, the following conclusions are discussed below as functions of age, location and gender of student/pupils.

### Types of disabilities

The dominant types of impairments mentioned were learning disabilities, hearing and visual difficulties, language disorder and physical disability. This distribution did not differ significantly among the three levels of education as presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Types of Disabilities: distribution by school level**

Types of impairments		Institution category				
			Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	Total
Attention deficit hyperactive disorder	N	16	10	03	29	
	%	10,9%	8,8%	7,0%	9,6%	
Autism spectrum	N	8	2	6	16	
	%	5,4%	1,8%	14,0%	5,3%	
Language disorders	N	32	20	7	59	
	%	21,8%	17,7%	16Di,3%	19,5%	
Learning disabilities	N	33	31	8	72	
	%	22,4%	27,4%	18,6%	23,8%	
Physical disabilities	N	25	23	8	56	
	%	17,0%	20,4%	18,6%	18,5%	
Hearing and visual difficulty	N	33	27	11	71	
	%	22,4%	23,9%	25,6%	23,4%	
Total		N	147	113	43	303
		%	48,5%	37,3%	14,2%	100,0%

### Characterisation of inclusive practices as perceived by administrators and Pedagogic Inspectors at primary, secondary and university levels

School administrators and inspectors through open ended questions, highlighted broad range of learners with special needs in addition to those with disabilities such as those who are disadvantaged or underprivileged. For this reason they stated that *“Inclusion is a form of education where children with and without disabilities study in the same class”*. As concerns, the question on the proportion of disability

and special education needs found in the class, the identification of the different groups found in Table 3 is an indication that teachers and educators are aware of their existence in regular classroom settings.

The issue regarding the attitudes of the school towards persons with special needs was raised; classroom teachers, administrators and other educators at all levels had both positive and negative views. Many said *“it was good, acceptable and cordial”*. Heads of institutions of regular schools said, *“The schools and teachers demonstrate attitudes of*



acceptance. But at the level of students, “We do not know because their attitude varies”. School Administrators in a regular schools said, “We are very conscious of the seating positions for these pupils and so give them special consideration. They are encouraged to sit in front”. Head Teachers of French sub-system regular schools said, “Those with poor sight sit in front rows with their Braille and for most of the time, the teachers ensures that they understand well (*La malvoyante par exemple EST au premier banc avec SA machine et puis la plus part des enseignants se rassurent qu’elle comprend bien*)”.

Concerning institutional support for effective teaching, head teachers and special educators in a regular schools stated, “In-service seminars are often organized”. In some cases they indicated that “We invite special educators to talk to teachers”. Further views were obtained from six school administrators who said clearly, “There is nothing done and they do not have any initiative”. To affirm this, the head teachers of regular schools said, “We are not really doing anything at the level of the school because any order we implement comes from the delegation of education”. However principals of secondary schools said, “At individual levels, we give them gifts, but the school cannot do anything as far as pedagogy is concerned because changes can only be done at the level of the delegation”.

Although school administrators think much is not done, some efforts are being made as postulated by other heads and principals who said, “Teachers organize extra classes”. The principal of a secondary school talked of “paying attention”. The Headmaster of a French sub-system school said, “Classrooms with disabled children are on the ground floor” (*Toutes les classes’ où il y a les enfants handicaps sont en bas*).

Another Headmaster of a French sub-system said, “Most teachers have learnt and accepted that each child is a unique person based on gender and different from others, even if they are all in Cameroon, the pedagogy of integration is just a formality” (*Aussi, les collègues enseignants ont tout appris et l’intègre que chaque enfant est unique à son genre et différent de l’autre même si dans l’ensemble du Cameroun, la pédagogies d’intégration est juste une formalité*).

Teachers’ perception of inclusive education was raised, the general consensus was that it is partial and this is highlighted by the headmasters and special educators in regular schools who said, “Not all

teachers are aware”. Others said, “The majority of teachers are aware”. But school administrators posited that they are “only partially aware and difficulties are handled for all students in the same manner”. Views vary because when the issue of the level of inclusive education was raised 12 institutions indicated “very poor”. Most argued that they could not talk about inclusive education in Cameroon because it did not really exist.

At this juncture the educators seem to be proposing enhancing strategies for inclusive programme. They reiterated the need to ensure the collaboration of schools with families of persons with special education needs. Four head teachers of French speaking schools said: “We think madam that you should encourage dialogue with children having special education needs; you should use an approach centered on the person, the family of all children, that is, the need to elaborate realistic strategies in collaboration with the families (*‘Nous pensons madame qu’il faut instaurer un dialogue avec les enfants à besoins spécifique; il faut utiliser une approche centre sur la personne) la famille pour tous les enfants. Il s’agit d’élaborer les stratégies réalistes en collaboration avec les familles*) ». “Develop a strategy with parents of children—our programmes are designed in ways that do not consider pupils’ handicap (*Développer une stratégie avec les parents des enfants...nos programmes sont conçues de telle manière que l’élève handicapé ne se sent pas concerné*) ».

Some of the difficulties experienced in implementing inclusive education as mentioned by headmasters of 8 schools are lack of resources. In addition they said, “No specialists, no resources but we have such children. The materials and equipment are not there to facilitate learning for both the normal and the disabled”. Lack of professionals and adequate knowledge were pronounced by 10 head teachers including the absence of specialists. They went on to state that “Infrastructure for persons with disability is very expensive”. Yet some administrators of the university said, “we have never heard of inclusive education in the university, because the amphitheatres and lecture halls are poorly constructed such that those who have tricycles cannot easily get in. (*Moi, je n’ai jamais été au courant que l’éducation inclusive existe à l’Université, puisque les salles de classes (amphi) sont mal construites de telle sorte que les camarades qui avaient les tricyclettes ne s’en sortaient pas facilement*)”.



**i) Perceptions of All Educators in Primary and Secondary levels of Education, classified under facilitating, hindering & sustainability indicators:**

The findings of the study illustrated that majority (55%) of educators and teachers interviewed, did not seem to have knowledge of inclusion. This is very unsatisfactory in a context where inclusive practices are expected to be understood and implemented by all educators. But eighty-five percent (85%) of the teachers attested good acceptance of learners with special needs in their institutions and this is backed by the presence of the major categories of pupils/students with impairments in regular schools which does not necessarily mean inclusion. Somehow in theory, supportive attitudes toward inclusive education exists, even with the absence of clear knowledge. In-service training and organization of seminars and workshops which could have been of value for teacher development towards inclusive education are very limited in content and frequency.

**Hindering Factors**

The findings demonstrated the impact of poor understanding of the principles of inclusion. Roughly 45% of educators and teachers could not give a good definition of inclusion. Only 35% of them could attempt defining the type of inclusion practiced in their respective institutions, 20% did not respond and all of

them could not clearly differentiate among the various types of inclusion. Only 30% of the teachers were aware of the needs of learners with special needs. Sixty percent (60%) indicated that the level of inclusive education practices is poor. Inadequacies were identified in many areas such as material resources, personnel, educational programmes, the absence of qualified teachers and curriculum developers. This accounts for the lack of concrete initiative at school level to support learners with special needs.

All in all, the inadequate orientations from policies coupled with the inadequate involvement of stakeholders in the conception of policies and the non-involvement of parents and learners with special needs in the definition of policies constituted major obstacles. The issue of marginalization was indicated by educational administrators who said, “We sensitize other children to be conscious of the difficulties of others, we do all these to overcome marginalization” (*Nous sensibilisons les autres enfants à prendre conscience des difficultés des autres, nous faisons tout pour vaincre la marginalization*)

**Sustainability indicators:**

To sustain the spirit of inclusion the findings supported the need for positive attitude toward inclusive

education and partnership with other stakeholders. It was also observed that the different institutions made efforts to give the pupils/ students with special needs a sense of belonging, ensuring that they are respected and given any necessary support required.

**ii) Perceptions of university lecturers & administrators classified under facilitating, hindering & sustainability indicators**

Generally, university lecturers and administrators were not effectively acquainted with the policy of inclusion, though some acknowledged the implementation of inclusive practices in their institutions.

**Facilitating factors:**

As facilitating factors students with disability are admitted in the university and some universities (e, g University of Buea) has resources center to support students, learning. Seminars and workshop on inclusive learning are organized. There exist an African journal of special education (AJOSE). Persons living with disabilities are recruitment to teach and assume administrative duties. There is increase awareness of the Knowledge of the general principles of inclusion. There is improvement in the area of visual impairment with the use of braille. The diversity of types of impairments from both sexes in the university environment has been found to range from visually impaired, hearing impaired, physical impaired,

slow learners, the elderly, those under peer pressure, mentally retarded, health impairment (diabetes, sickle cells), and students from disadvantaged homes.

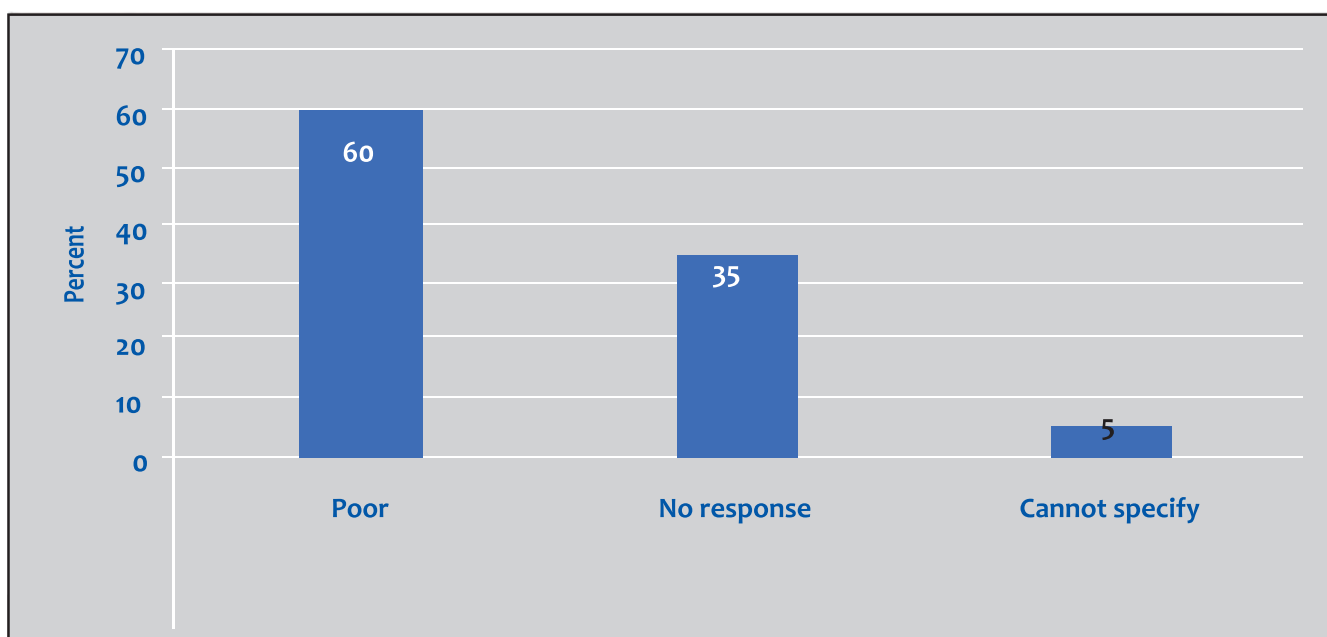
**Hindering factors:**

Some of the negative factors were the unfriendly school environment, inadequate assistive devices and poor acquaintance with policies on inclusive education.

**Sustainable Factors**

The University of Buea offers programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels in special education. Partnerships with stakeholders exist. On the whole the attitude toward inclusive education is very supportive.

But from findings below, a majority of educators (60%) generally perceived the level of inclusive education practices as poor. It is also important to realize that almost 40% of these educators could not really appraise this indicator (see figure 3 below). The conclusion drawn is that the level of understanding and awareness of inclusive education in Cameroon’s education institutions needs to improve.



**Figure 3: Perceptions of the level of inclusive education practices**

### **Characterization of inclusive practices as perceived by pupils and students with and without disability**

The analysis of the data further controlled for age, location of the school (rural, semi-urban and urban), gender of disabled students and that of their regular peers. The findings are found in Figures 4, 5, 6 & 7. From the analysis of the practices on inclusion as perceived by disabled pupils/students themselves and their non-disabled peers, the following conclusions are discussed below as functions of age, location and gender of student/pupils.

#### **Appreciation of being in regular schools by Pupils/Students with disabilities**

Based on age (Figure 5), the analysis illustrated that pupils/students living with disabilities, below 12 years old appreciated being in the regular schools less (44.4%) than those above 13 years old (72.7%). But as concerns location of the school (Figure 6), the rural pupils/students living with disabilities also appreciated being in regular schools less (50%) than semi-urban and urban who appreciated the access more (66.7%). Analysis based on gender of pupils/students with disabilities (Figure 7), male pupils/students (70%) said they liked their presence in their present schools more so than female pupils /students (50%). But interestingly enough, only 50% of their male normal peers as against 80% female normal peers indicated they liked their schools. This suggests that they are happy being in the same school and class with persons with disability. This underscores the relational caring nature of females.

#### **Access to facilitating material resources to enhance learning**

Analysis of access to facilitating material resources to enhance learning, based on age illustrated below average responses from all age groups; pupils/students below 12 years old (42.9%) and those above 13 years old (30%). But as concerns location of the school, only very few rural pupils/students (12.5%) indicated they have access to enhancing material resources but the semi-urban recorded the highest acceptance (66.7%) while only 33.3% urban indicated such access. Analysis based on gender of pupils /students with disabilities (Figure 6), recorded below average reaction; males (37.5%) and females (33.3%). But interestingly enough, their female peers (75%) said they have the necessary materials to enhance their learning but males recorded 0%.

#### **Teacher Individual attention with special education needs pupils/students**

An examination of teachers' individual attention towards special education needs pupils/students showed that based on age, 55.6% of the below 12 years old responded having individual teacher attention but as concerned the above 13 years old, only 30% said they are given individual attention. In the case of school location, the findings showed below average responses for both rural pupils/students (37.5%) and semi-urban (33.3%) illustrating the inadequacy of teacher individual attention towards their disabled pupils. However 60% urban pupils/students indicated they are given individual attention in class. Analysis based on gender of pupils /students with disabilities, showed more males (55.6%) than females (30%) acknowledging that they are given individual attention. But as observed more female peers without disabilities (50%) than male peers (33.3%) said their teachers give them individual attention.

#### **School/Parent Collaboration**

School/Parent collaboration was examined to find out, how parents collaborate with their child's class and head teachers. The findings illustrated that based on age for both age brackets only 25% indicated school/parent collaboration. Location of the school demonstrated disparity in response where rural, (12.5%) and urban, (20%) responses were well below average but semi-urban showed there is (66.7%) collaboration between schools and parents. As concerns gender of pupils/students with disabilities, the findings showed that less than average males (33.3%) than females (14.3%) acknowledged some existence of school/ parent collaboration. But interestingly as observed, only female peers without disabilities (50%) said there is school/parent collaboration. Males recorded 0%.

#### **Teachers' encouragement of disabled students to make friends with peers without disabilities**

Concerning the indicator of encouraging positive socialization with peers based on age, the analysis illustrated that 88.9% pupils/students below 12 years old and 63.6% of the above 13 years old agreed that their teachers encouraged them to socialize with their peers and make friends. As concerns location of the schools, the rural pupils/students recorded 100% approval, while 50% semi-urban and 66.7% urban said their teachers encourage them to make friends with peers without disabilities. Analysis based on gender of pupils and students with disabilities,



demonstrated 70% male and 80% female confirmed that their teachers encouraged them to make friends. But, 83.3% male and only 20% female peers without disabilities attested being encouraged to make friends. In one of the rural Government secondary schools in the North West Region, a feeder school to one of the special school (SAJOCA); a center for treating and caring for persons with disabilities students are trained to manage and support their peers with disability.

#### Encouragement of peer classroom collaboration

The main issue here is whether pupils/students with disabilities are given the opportunity to interact in class. The findings based on age (Figure 5) illustrated that more pupils/students below 12 years old (88.9%) indicated more than the above 13 years old, (72.7%) that they have opportunities to collaborate in class. But as concerns location of the school (Figure 6), the rural pupils/students (75%); semi-urban (100%) and urban (66.7%) at varying degrees indicated that they are given the opportunity to collaborate in class. Analysis based on gender of pupils/ students with disabilities; illustrated males 70% and females 90% agreeing that they are given the opportunity to collaborate and learn in class. Even normal female peers (80%) and male peers (66.7%) also indicated significantly that they have the opportunity to collaborate with one another.

#### Experiencing stigmatization and discrimination

This indicator is very sensitive and the findings from the analysis based on age showed that 55.6% pupils/students below 12 years old and 45.5% of those above 13 years old stated that they experienced negative reactions from teachers and peers which result in stigmatization and isolation. It seems location of the school, demonstrated different experiences. Negative reactions seem to be experienced more in rural (75%) and urban (50%) settings than semi-urban were only 16.7% pupils /students indicated discrimination. Analysis based on gender of pupils and students with disabilities illustrated parity between males (50%) and females (50%) regarding negative experiences. As concerns analysis based on peers more males (83.3%) and only 20% females stated they are being discriminated upon.

Figure 4 illustrated more positive reactions from primary school pupils with more teachers giving individual attention (50%). In primary schools also, pupils are encouraged more (87.5%) to make friend and have the opportunity to learn and interact with

**Inclusive education is added value to social development. It provides opportunities for both children living with disabilities and those without to live in harmony, understanding and respecting differences**

every member of the class (87.5%). Yet it was also clear that some pupils (62.5%) experienced negative attitudes and stigmatization. In figure 4, as observed, more primary pupils (75%), below 12 years of age (66.7%), urban (80%), female (50%) and more female teachers (100%) socialize more and positively with children with special education needs. Figure 4 demonstrated that special needs children (89.5%) make friends with pupils with or without special education needs.

Pupils/students (disabled) stated that negative factors hinder effective practice of inclusion because of poor teacher-parents relationship. They added that generally, female educators collaborate more with their parents. However it was observed that parents from semi-urban areas seemed to collaborate more with teachers than those from rural and urban areas. Moreover, disabled pupils and students from semi-urban areas complained less about the inadequacy of the use of didactic materials by teachers. However, the majority of pupils/students with special needs believed that their teachers don't pay special attention to them in the classroom. This dissatisfaction was higher in secondary school and with male educators. So almost 50% complained of being isolated and stigmatised. Males were found to be more dissatisfied than females. The phenomenon was more pronounced in classrooms handled by male educators, in primary than in secondary school. This problem was also observed in rural and urban areas than in semi-urban areas the younger ones complaining more.

Figures 4, 5, 6 and 7 have highlighted pupils/students with disabilities' perceptions about inclusive practices based on school, age location and gender.

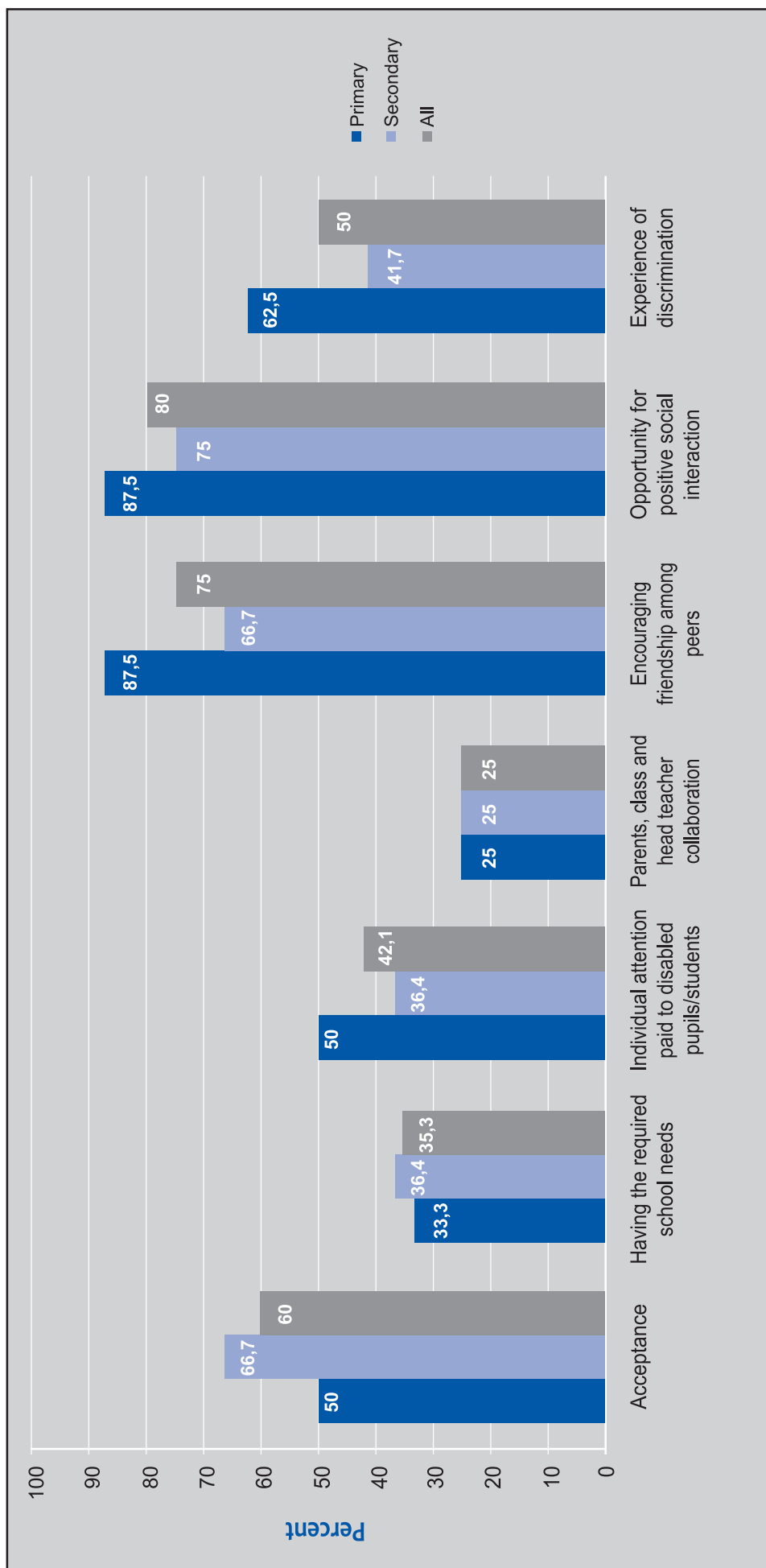


Figure 4: Disabled Pupils/students' perceptions of inclusive practices by school level: Indicators of inclusive practices

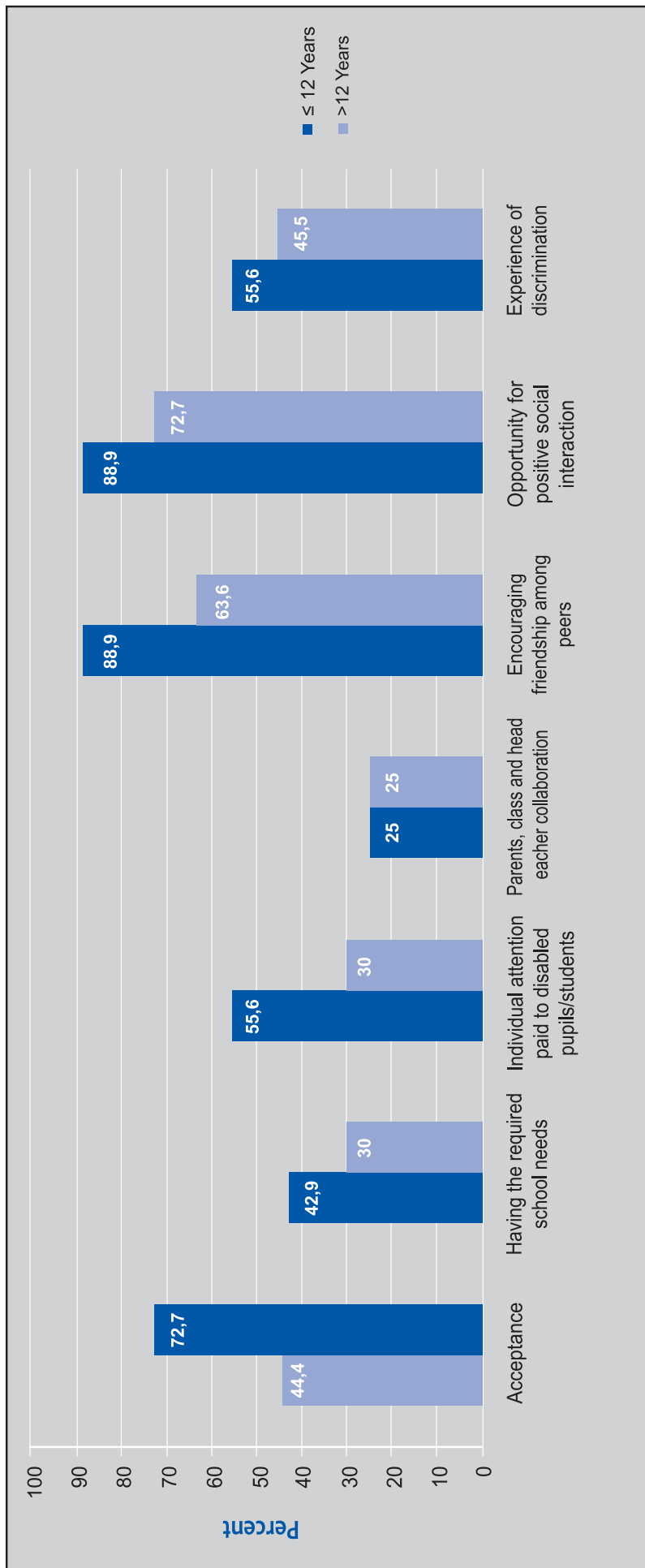


Figure 5: Disabled Pupils/students' perceptions of inclusive practices by age : Indicators of inclusive practices

“Because teachers’ beliefs and attitudes towards special needs education are very important for successful inclusive education, it is important for them to understand the underlying philosophy. This should enable them to be prepared to deal with learners in a manner that is in keeping with this philosophy. Inclusive education requires teachers to be well trained in ways that will permit them to address the individual needs of the individual” (Zimba, Mowes, & Naanda, 2006:41)

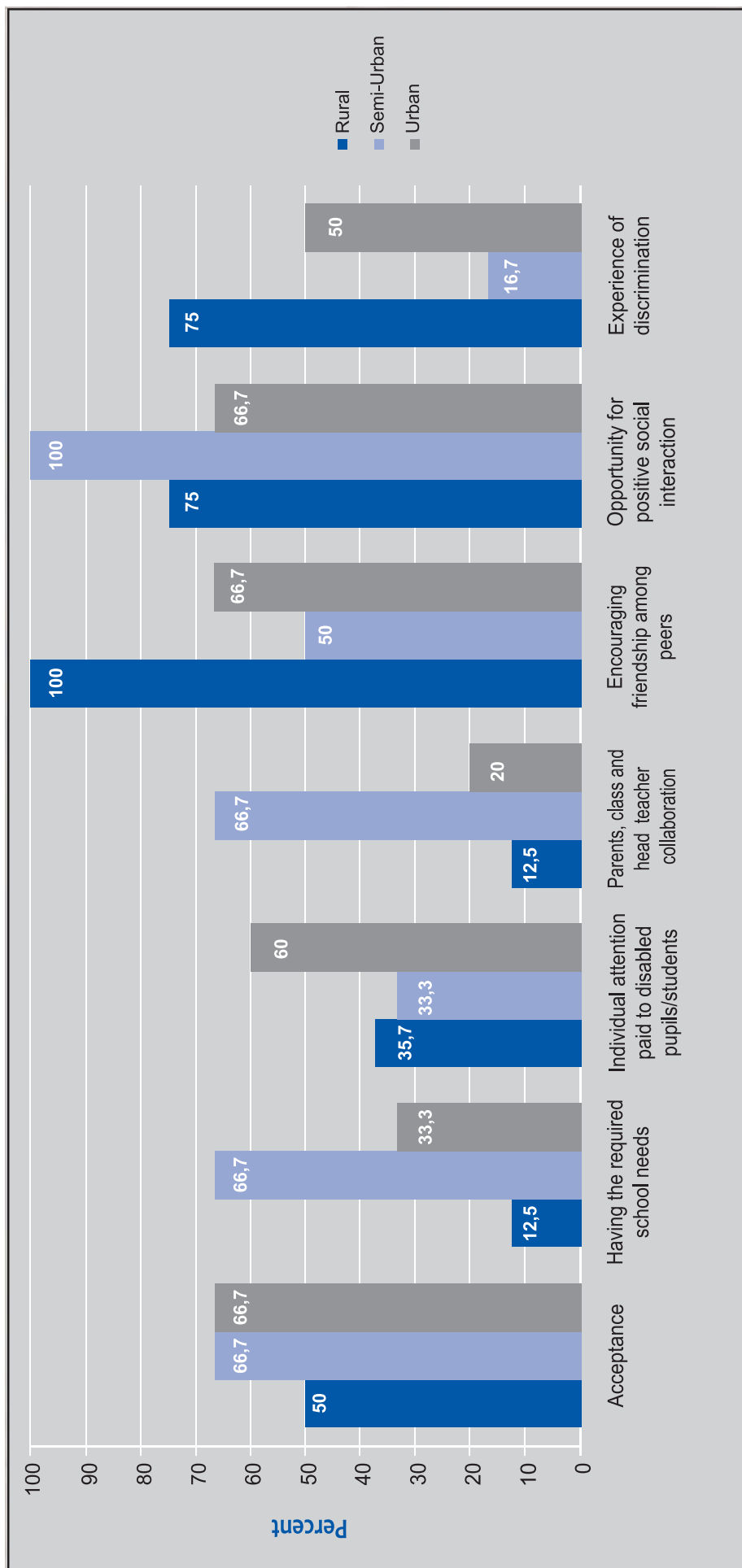


Figure 6: Disabled pupils/students perceptions of inclusive practices: by locations - Indicators of inclusive practices



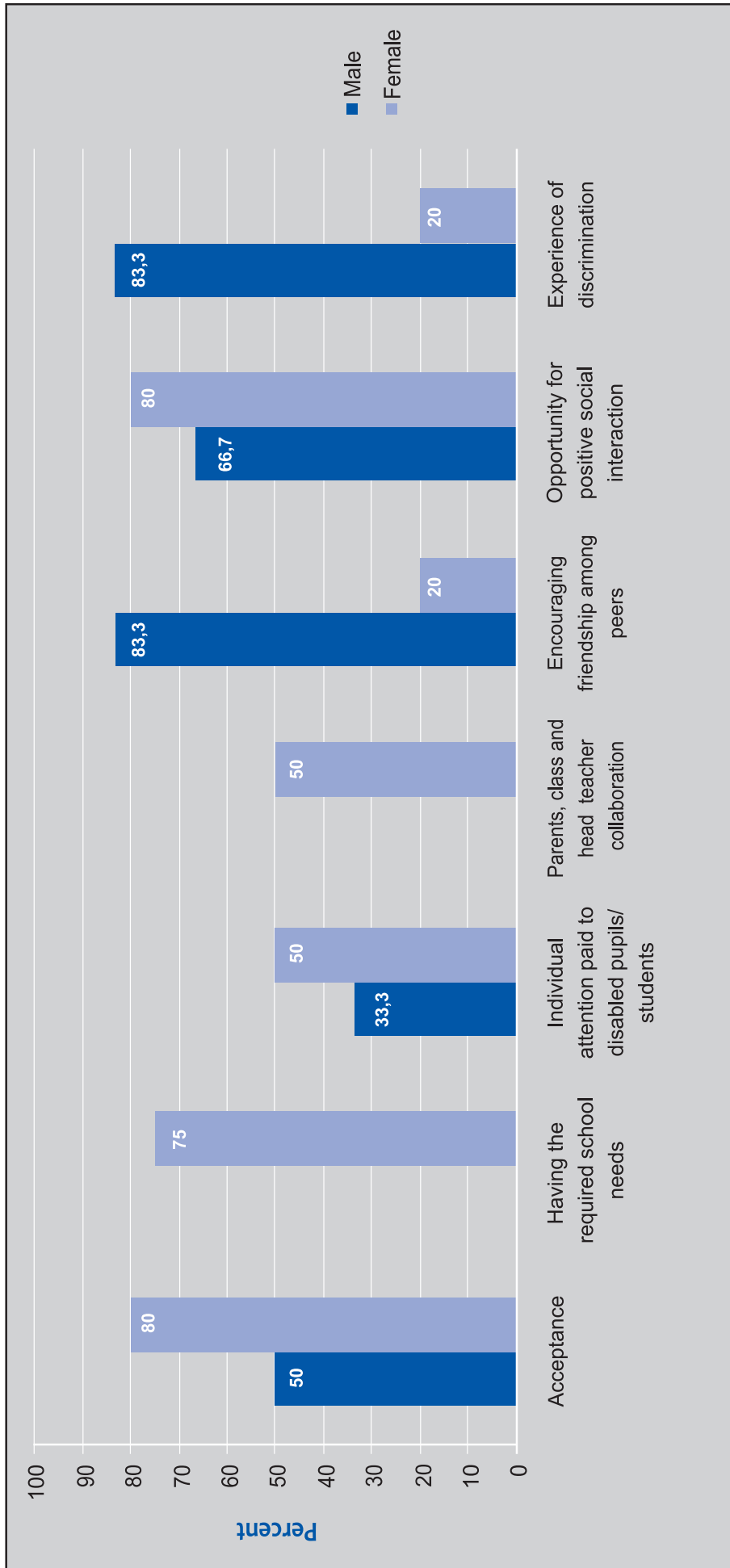


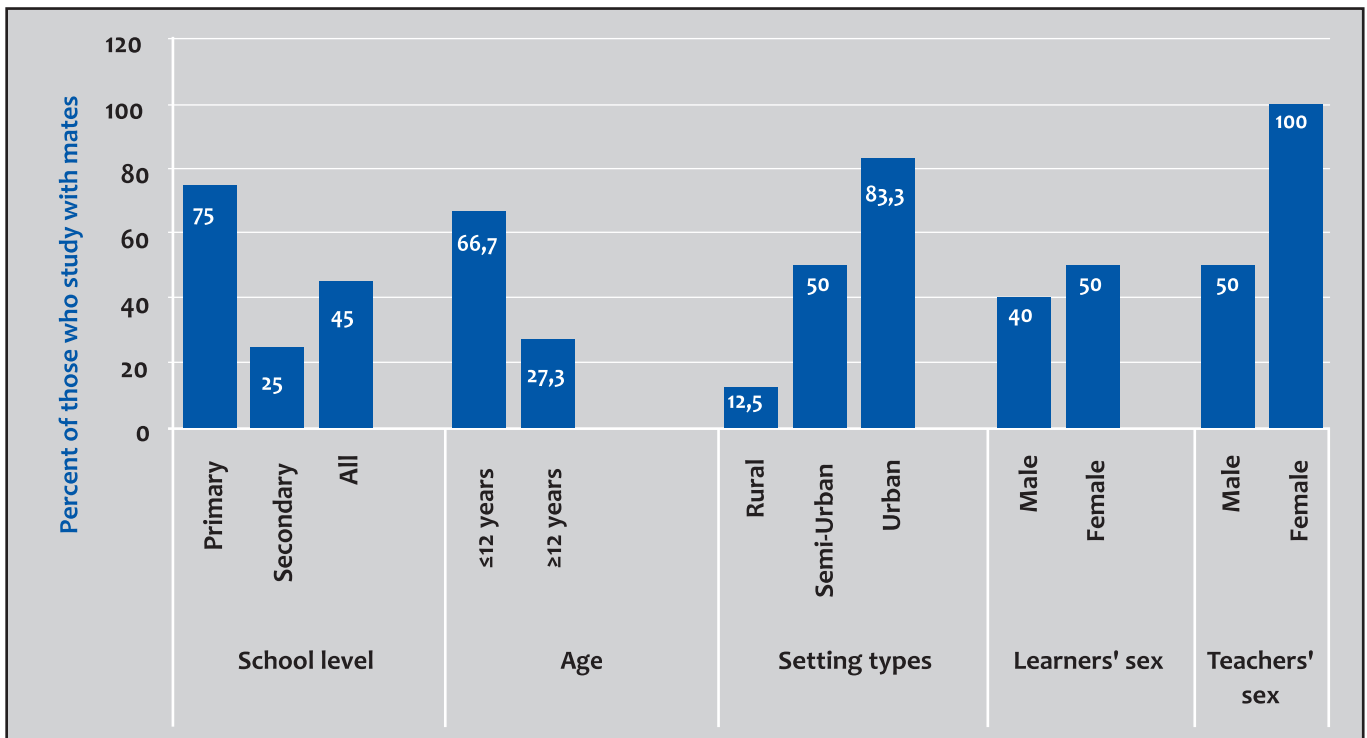
Figure 7: Disabled pupils/students' perceptions of inclusive practices by gender - Indicators of inclusive practices

In figure 8 certain characteristics are found to be favourable in enabling inclusive behaviours. For example, pupils/students in unfavourable conditions in primary schools engage in group work more with their regular peers (75%). Even pupils below 12years (66.7%) and those found in semi-urban (50%) and urban (83.3%) settings and females (50%), work more with peers without disabilities. In figure 9 the evidence is clear that these pupils make friends with both students with and without disability (89.5%). Besides, friendship is seen to be an important factor in an inclusive class were peers of all the groups of children found in a class try to work together and provide each other support giving a sense of belonging. Figures 8 ,9 and 10 illustrate this well.

**Effective teaching for inclusive education practices include**

- Co-operative teaching/co-teaching/team teaching;
- Co-operative learning/peer tutoring;
- Individual planning;
- Collaborative problem solving;
- Heterogeneous grouping/flexible instruction/differentiation;

**When dealing with a class of diversity employ a more differentiated approach in education where teaching is flexible, focusing on children’s’ creativity and the abundance of homogenous ways of grouping enhance inclusive practices.**



**Figure 8: Social Values of inclusive practices; collaborative works with peers by school level; age, setting types, learners’ gender and teachers’ gender**

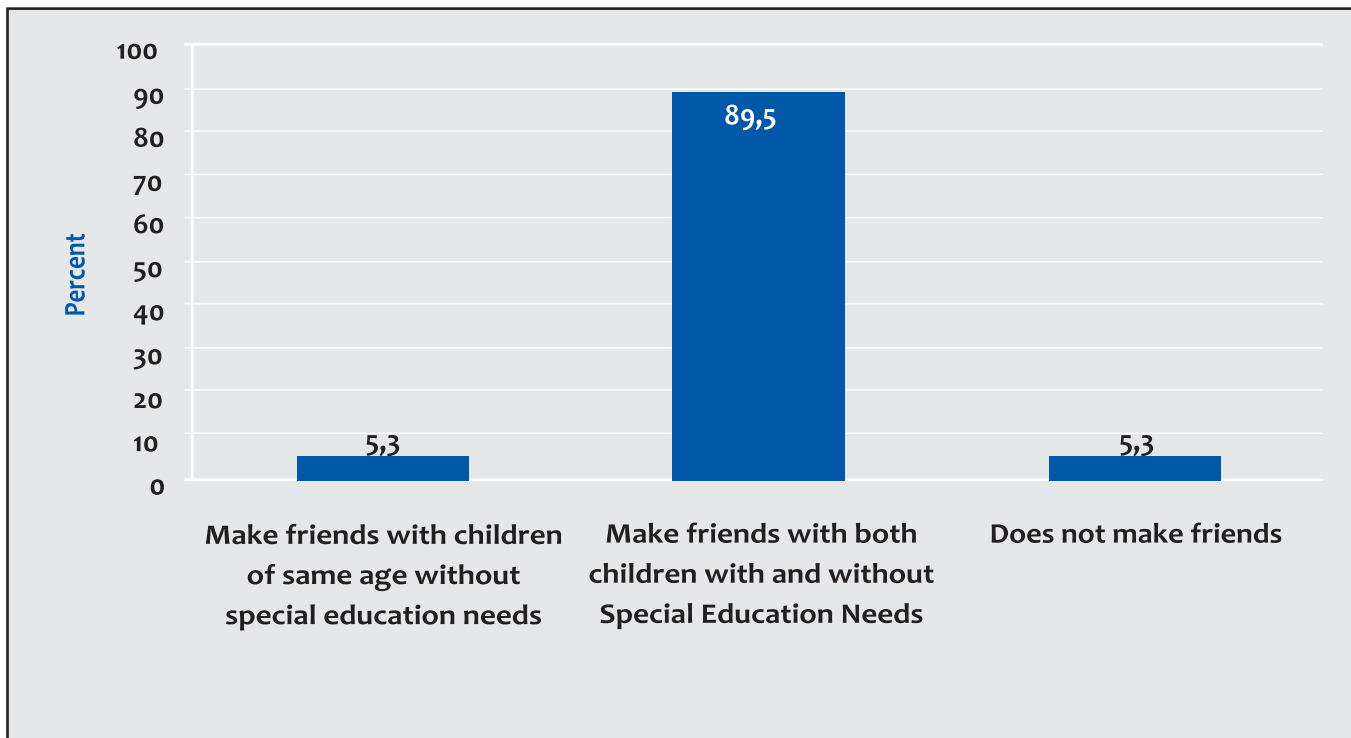


Figure 9: Social values of inclusive practices in construction of friendship

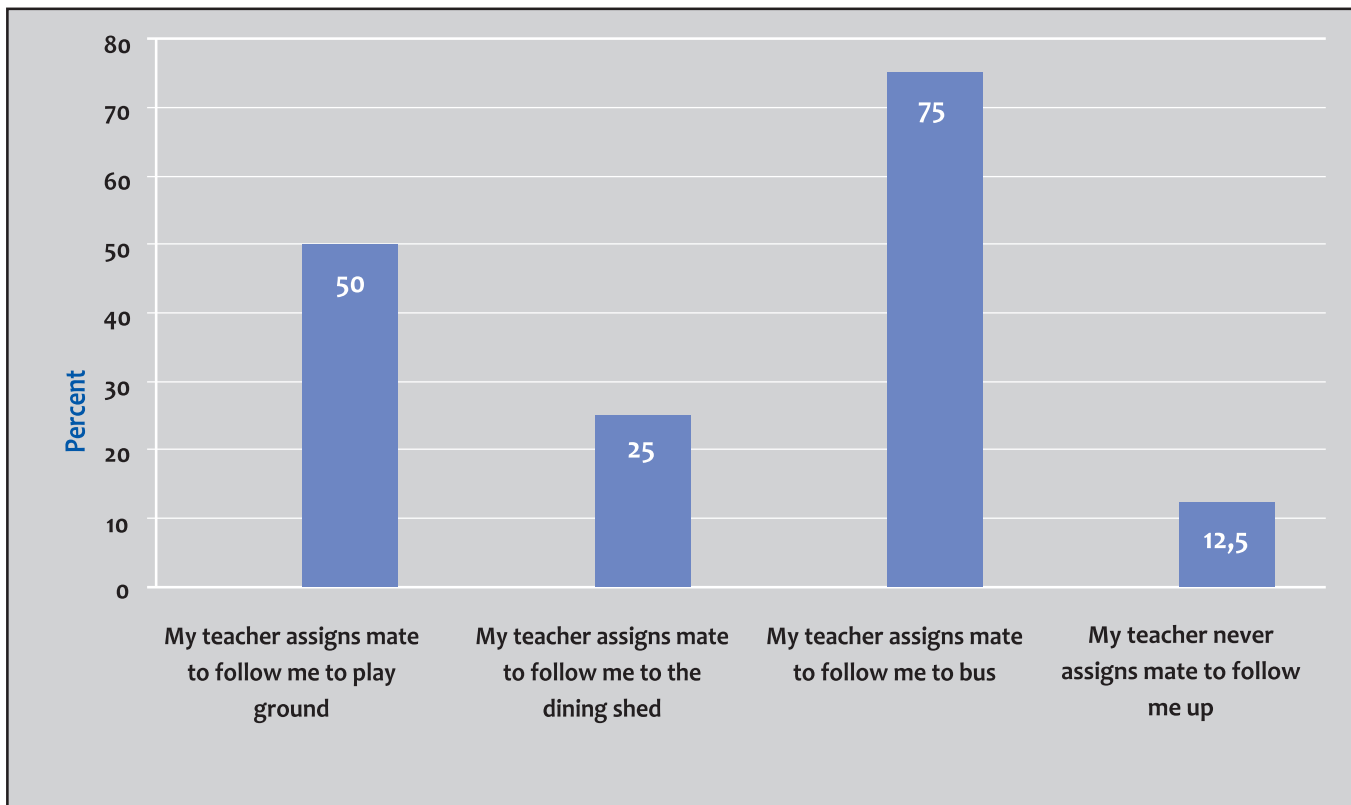


Figure 10: Teachers' Inculcating social support values towards learners with special needs  
 N.B.: The highlight of Figure. 10 is that teachers encourage peers to support their disabled peers by assigning them with the responsibility to accompany them to the playground (50%) and to take a taxi/bus or walk home (75%).

## Parental perceptions of inclusion and cultural attitudes towards disability

Parental perceptions on inclusion was sorted, a summary of the findings are presented below under the headings facilitating and hindering factors.

### Facilitating factors:

Adherence to inclusion was perceived through parental expression of happiness and optimism about how their children are coping positively in regular schools. Some excerpts are presented as illustrated: "...gives him the courage not to feel as an outcast in life." "It encourages him and he is self-confident" [Rural adult single male, university level with 1 child, working as business man].

"It is a very good thing that my child is placed in a regular school, I am very happy about it", "I think he is very happy because of the opportunity he has gotten". "Yes of course, I am very satisfied with the decision I made because of the sudden improvement in his studies" [Rural adult male, married with 15 children, primary school level working as farmer].

"Elle se sent épanouie avec ses frères" ("She feels fulfilled with her brothers") [Adult female, single with two children, secondary school level working as care giver].

"Since he came here he has evolved very much. "He plays with his friends as if he sees and these friends do not behave as if he has any problem" («Depuis qu'il est ici il a trop évolué, il joue avec ses amis come s'il voyait et ses amis non plus ne font pas comme s'il avait un problème», [Urban married female with 4 children working as teacher].

"He plays with his friends" ("Elle s'amuse bien avec ses camarades") [Urban adult female, single with 4 children, secondary school level working as nurse].

Perceived academic improvement was portrayed by an indicator such as coping successfully, whereby parents strongly believed that their children are coping well academically in a regular school. They affirmed with statement such as: "He is very okay because he competes with normal children and this helps him to bring the best out of himself" [Adult single female of university level, with 2 children working as teacher]. "Perfect because he is always first". ("Parfaite car elle est toujours première de sa classe" [Urban single young female, primary school level, care giver].

### Other parents expressed their positive opinions:

"I am very happy with the support his teacher gives him" ("Oui je suis vraiment satisfait de l'encadrement de son enseignant" [Adult female, single with two children, secondary school level working as care giver].

"In fact, I can rejoice, for the fact that he feels a sense of self-esteem as an achievement" (« De prime à bord je pourrais me rejouir ceci d'autant plus que, le fait qu'il comprend qu'il se découvre est un objectif») [Semi-urban adult male, with 4 children, secondary school level working as taximan].

"Before I was transferred here, he was in a special center and like to stay away from others; but here, he is getting used to others' ways" («Oui parce que avant que je ne soit affecté ici il était dans un centre spécialisé et il aimait rester dans son coin, mai ici il s'adapte à la réalité des autres») [Urban married female with 4 children working as teacher]. As concerns teacher-parents relationship, majority of parents believed that effective communication between them and the teachers were of great contribution to the success of inclusion.

### Hindering factors:

Lack of effective knowledge of inclusion was seen as an obstacle. Though parents had an idea of the general principle that governs inclusion, they could not clearly explain inclusion. Poor parent-teacher relationship was also a constraining factor. Though the majority of parents expressed satisfaction in relation to the communication between them and teachers, a good number of them (36%) were not at all satisfied.

Some parents were seen to be Skeptical. A parent expressed that, "Being a dumb/deaf, he/she can't cope with academic demands" [Rural adult single female). Cases of skepticism were observed only with 2 parents. Another parent said, "Generally less implicated, he asks for affection that is lacking" ("Moins impliqué dans un sens général; il reclame une certaine affection qui perd sa place") [Semi-urban adult male].

From the analysis, sustainability indicators were identified as suggested by 10 parents out of 11. These are:

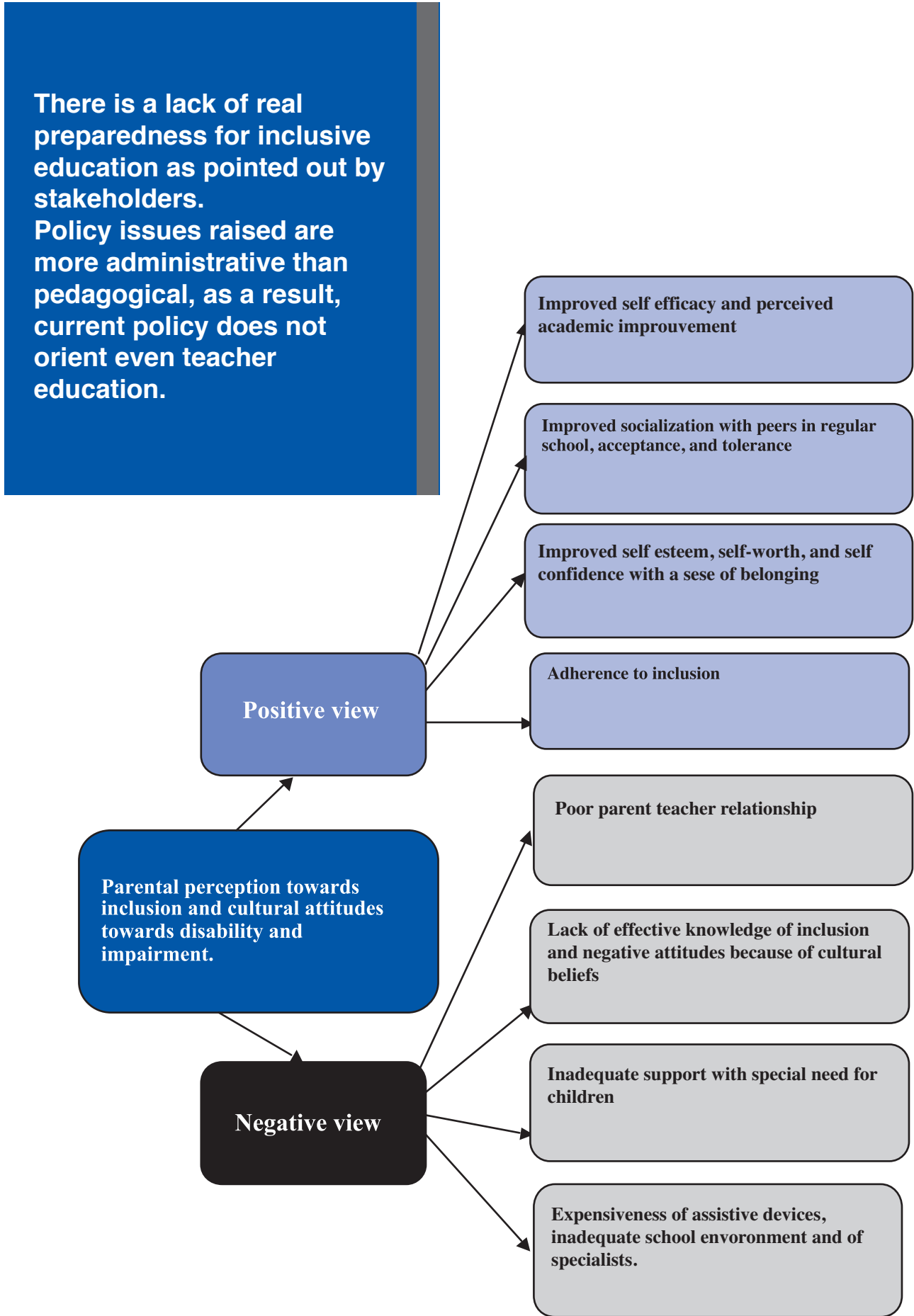
(i) Support for inclusion, (ii) Trained personnel/

specialists, (iii) Positioning of children in the classroom, (iv) Improving the school environment by making it more adequate to the persons with special needs, (v) Reducing cost of assistive technology, (vi) Motivation of personnel, (vii) Census, (viii) Child involvement in decision-making, (ix) Integration of pupils or students with special needs in co-curricular activities, (x) Legalizing braille, (xi) Support to people with special needs, (xii) Good management of funds, (xiii) Good teacher-student relationship, (xiv) Disabled-friendly environment, (xv) Equal right to education and (xvi) Employing/training more specialists. See figure 11 for conceptual diagram on positive and negative parental perceptions on inclusion.

**Teachers' attitudes towards pupils with special needs in regular classrooms have been identified as the decisive factor in making schools more inclusive (Meijer, 2001, 2003). Perceptions of administrators and teachers at primary and secondary levels including university institutions pointed out challenging factors when dealing with a class of diversity.**

**To fully address the issue of inclusion, policy should address strategies that would encourage full participation of pupil/student diversity in all aspect of education. A major policy gap is the absence of orientation towards a new curriculum for inclusive education, including all issues to enhance the implementation of such curriculum including teachers' education.**





**Figure 11:** Conceptual diagram of parental perceptions towards inclusion and cultural attitudes towards disability and impairment

## Objective 3: Core values and competences, indicators and measures for training and evaluation

### Characterization of inclusive practices from classroom observations

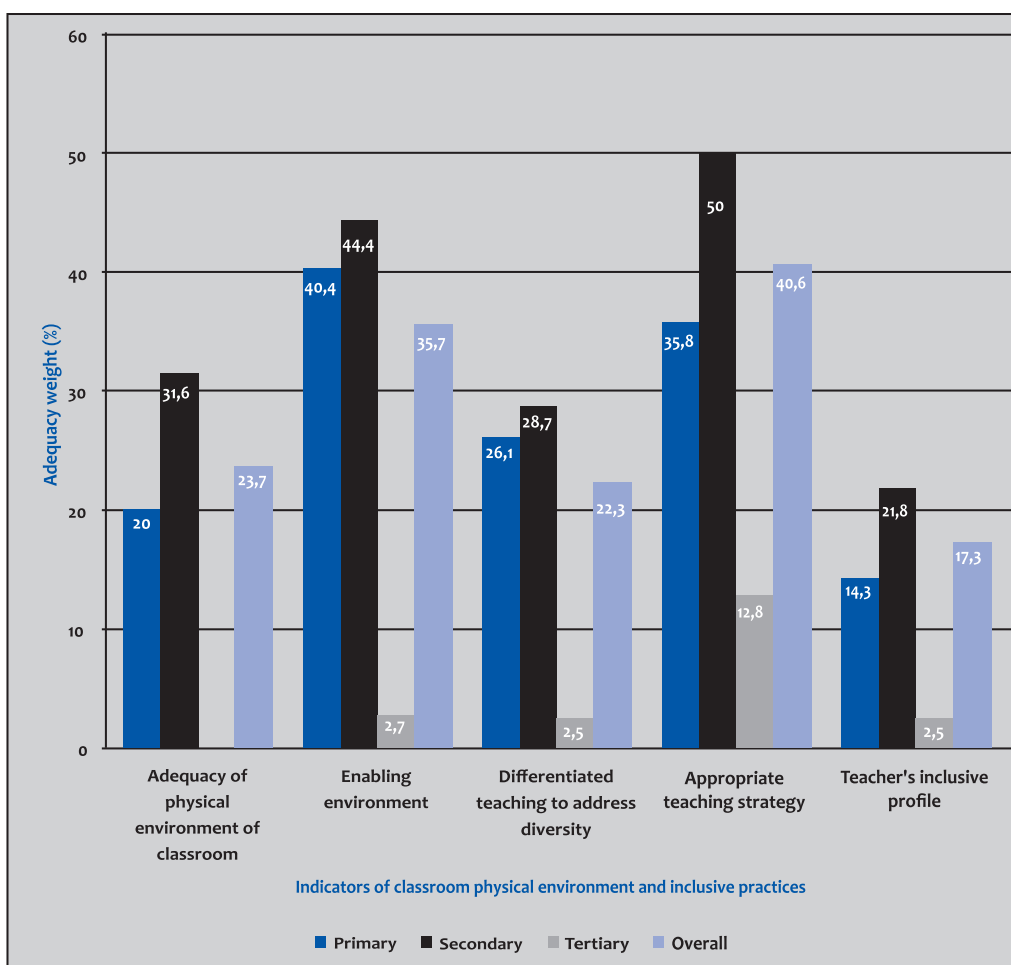
Classroom observations were carried out in 54 classrooms at all levels of the national school system. Detailed analyses are found in figure 12 and tables 4, 5 and 6. These revealed overall, that the indicators of inclusive practices were scored below average:

- Teachers' inclusive profile (17.3%).
- Differentiated teaching to address diversity (22.3%).
- Adequacy of physical environment of classroom (23.7%).
- Enabling environment (35.7%).
- Appropriate teaching strategy (40.6%).

The scores of these indicators were the least satisfactory in tertiary (university) level. Secondary schools had performed best for all the indicators though their weights were generally below average

except for appropriate teaching strategy which scored 50%.

Relational analysis indicated significant associations between school levels and implementation of inclusive practices whereby the effective implementation of inclusive practices decreased as we go higher in education as presented graphically on Figure 12, and Tables 4 and 5. It is, however, important to note that the negative sign of this association was more evident at University level. Generally, correlation between school level and inclusive practices indicated negative correlations, implying that the performance of these indicators decreases as we move from basic education to secondary and tertiary levels. It was also observed that teachers' performance was highly associated with classroom environment (Table 4).



**Figure 12:** Indicators of an enabling classroom physical environment and inclusive practices: Distribution by school level.

**Table 4: Relational analysis of expected characteristics of Teacher's Inclusive Profile**

Institution Category	R	P-value	N
<b>The ethics of teaching and Moral contract seen as Core values (predictor)</b>			
Respect for each students	-0,325	0,018	53
Encourage students' active participation	-0.494	0,000	54
Encourage students to ask questions	-0.527	0,000	54
Makes students feel comfortable	-0.459	0,001	52
Encourage self-competition	-0.529	0,000	53
Helping students to use their strength	-0.418	0,002	54
Evaluation based on student's strength	-0.281	0,039	54
Individual attention	-0.285	0.037	54
<b>Imaginative and creativity skills; teachers' pedagogic competences (Predictor)</b>			
Use of flexible time requirements	-0.347	0.010	54
Use enrichment activities	-0.360	0.008	53
Embraces students differences and uses them as learning tools	-0.373	0.006	53
Demonstrating skills to attend to advanced students	-0.295	0,034	52
Demonstrating skills and strategies to handle differentiated needs based on readiness interest and learning styles	-0.422	0.002	53

**Total number of observations=54**

Table 4 illustrates possible predictors of the ethics and moral contract that could constitute component of teacher inclusive profile. As observed, importance is given to teachers' skill that enhances self-competition, encourage students to ask questions and active participation. Teachers' moral responsibility to make students comfortable, help students to use their strength are important as enabling mechanism. Furthermore other teacher responsibility is in demonstrating skills and strategies to handle differentiated needs based on readiness interest and learning styles strength. In doing these, the teacher is illustrating commitment in addressing each student in the classroom. If teachers can also embrace students differences and use them as learning tools this demonstrates a degree of teachers' moral implication in students' success. Other predictors though with lower correlational value still has a degree of impact that is of values that must be considered, such as respect for each students, use of enrichment activities and use of flexible time requirements.

**The ill preparedness of teachers is because teacher training, in some cases, focuses on curricular subject rather than generic pedagogical skills, capacity for critical thinking and creativity (Topping & Maloney 2005). From this study, teachers indicated their lack of resources as barrier to quality mainstreaming of pupils with special educational needs but they do not know exactly what type of resources they are referring to.**

**Reform Teach Education and Training for inclusive Education by inculcating EU-Africa Tuning's (2012) the four important factors relevant for teacher preparation; Knowledge and Understanding, (2) Practice and skills, (3) Values and ethics, and (4) Interpersonal skills and the four core values of the EU Agency for Special Education(2011,2012) relating to teaching and learning necessary for the Teacher Inclusive Profile such as; Valuing learner diversity; Supporting all learners by setting high expectations for each; Working with others; and continuing personal professional development. The core values are associated with areas of competences such as attitudes, knowledge and skills. These rich orientations can be built in teacher education programmes.**

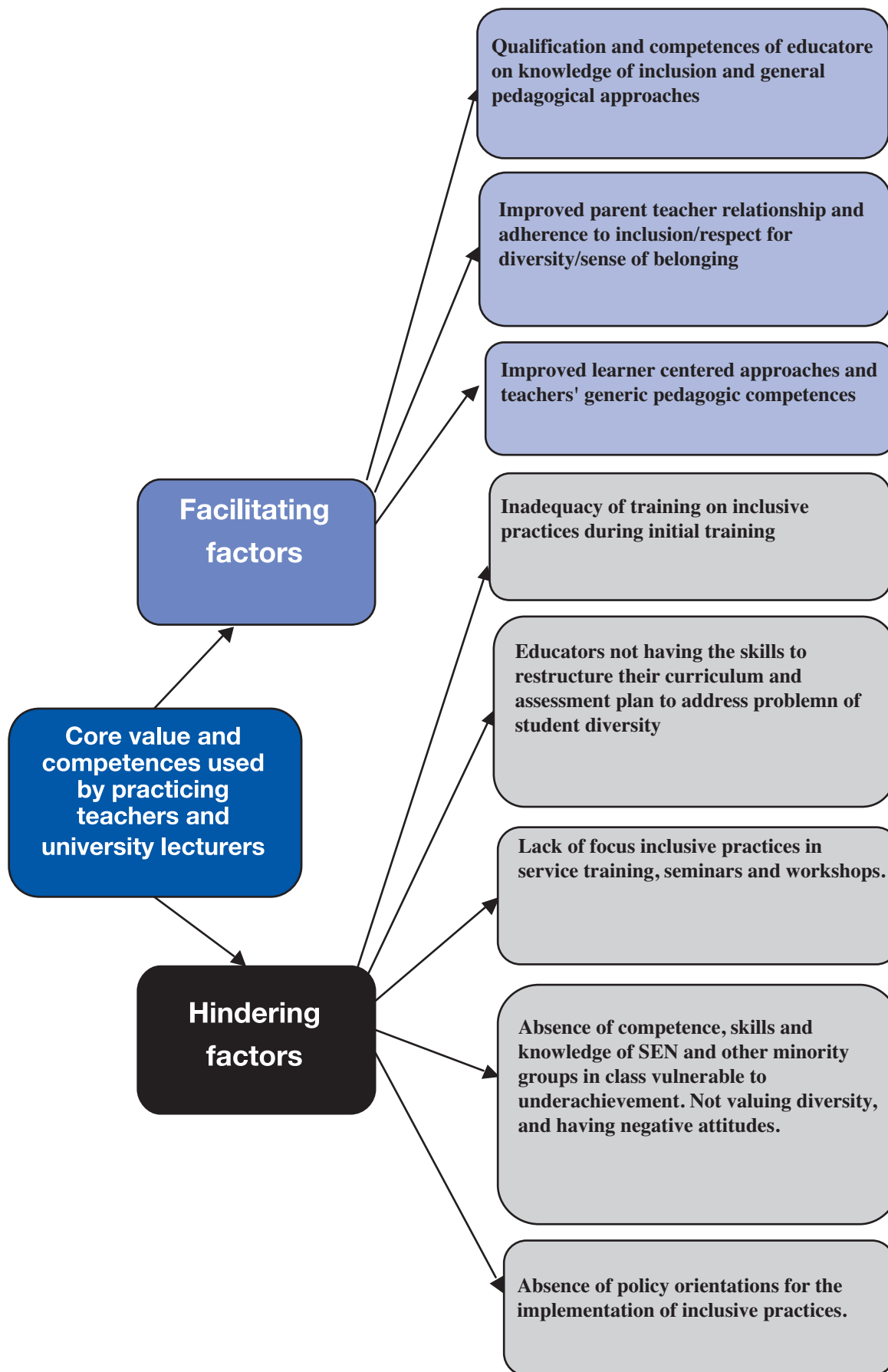


Figure 13: Core values and competences used by practicing teachers and university lecturers

Other aspects illustrating human, technical and management skills for inclusive practices are found in table 5. These though exemplify the constituent of the nature inclusive practices as illustrated in figure 14 to an extent complement the core values and competences in inclusive practices.

**Table 5: relational Analysis of inclusive Practices from the perspectives of Human, Technical and Management Skills**

Human skills in a holistic pedagogy that is learner centered (predictor)			
Appropriate seating arrangement	0.540	0.000 ***	54
Clear rules and routines	0.293	0.033 *	53
Individual needs addressed	0.271	0.050 *	53
Sensitivity to diversity needs	0.334	0.015 *	53
Recognition of each student’s strength and successes	0.419	0.002 **	54
Makes students feel comfortable	0.330	0.017 *	52
Enabling students to belong and connect	0.376	0.008 ***	49
Helping students to use their strength	0.329	0.019 *	54
Promote independence by structuring academic lesson and social activities that focus on students’ full participation	0.359	0.008 ***	54
Technical Skills for effective inclusive pedagogy, encouraging learners’ contributions (Predictor)			
Use variety of materials	0.310	0.027 *	51
Use peer- peer tutoring	0.534	0.000 ***	54
Students communicate with teachers and peers	0.373	0.006 **	54
Encourage students’creativity	0.525	0.000 ***	54
Ask content questions	0.447	0.001 ***	54
Use cooperative learning	0.397	0.003 ***	54
Enable students to demonstrate knowledge in a variety of ways	0.324	0.021 *	51
Students engage in problem solving	0.451	0.001 ***	53
Good communication skills	0.307	0.027 *	52
Works with other colleagues and parents	0.301	0.032 *	51
Knowledge of content material of inclusive practices	0.280	0.044 *	52
Embraces students differences and using them as learning tools	0.360	0.008 ***	53
Facilitate social interaction and create a safe learning environment for all students	0.354	0.009 ***	53
Management Learning Skills (predictor)			
Plan opportunities for nurturing friendship supportive behaviour and positive role models	0.339	0.013 *	53
Evidence of proactive lesson preparation to respond to diverse learning needs	0.450	0.001 ***	53
Integrating strategies and techniques to meet students’ needs	0.358	0.008 ***	53
Varying teaching strategies and using techniques of effective transitions and linkages of ideas	0.355	0.010 **	52
Using technological devices if this exists	0.348	0.012 *	52

Total number of observations=54

\* correlation is significant at the 0.05 level  
 \*\* correlation is significant at the 0.01 level  
 \*\*\* correlation is significant at the 0.001 level

Table 5 presents three components of the skills expected of teachers in an inclusive settings. These are human, technical and management skills.

**Human skills**

Classroom seating arrangements is vitally important for an inclusive classroom setting. As example, the seating position of a visually impaired child determines the nature and frequency of teacher

student contact. In the same manner recognition of each student’s strength and success is a motivating element for that students. Other factors of great importance are enabling students to belong and connect, promote students’ independence, sensitive to diversity needs, make students feel comfortable and enable them to use their strength. Furthermore the human space is vitally important for managing the classroom.



**Technical skills**

Technical skills reflect teachers’ pedagogical strategies, focusing on encouraging students to be actively engaged in their learning. Under this rubric the findings illustrated that teachers’ use of peer- peer tutoring contributes to students’ increased participation and this same effect is realized when teachers encourage students to be creative, engage in problem solving and ask content questions. The use of cooperative learning is also very valuable including the facilitation of social interaction and creation of a safe learning environment for all students among others.

**Management skills for enhancing learning**

The findings among many issues illustrate the importance for the integration of strategies and techniques to meet students’ different needs. Varying teaching strategies and using techniques for effective transitions and linkages of ideas are valuable skills. It is observed that there is need for planned

opportunities for nurturing friendship, supportive behaviours and nurturing positive role models. How a teacher manages classroom space for effective pedagogic activities, particularly in the context of large class size, is a common phenomenon. Of importance is managing space in ways that permits classroom individual and group contacts in accepting all, giving a chance to all and giving a sense of belonging through establishing interpersonal relationships and respect. The broad range of skills mentioned above has implications for inclusion. The strategies illustrated, highlight what teachers do, not only to increase participation but also to improve and promote self-esteem and self-efficacy. The significance of the correlations illustrates that each time a learner is encouraged to contribute and for each contribution made, the learner’s perception of self is enhanced positively.

**Table 6: Interaction in Primary School: Distribution by Location**

Interaction in school (agree or disagree)	Location(n and % of those who termed indicators as agree)		N
	Urban	Rural	
Teaching learning activities is participatory	11(84.6%)	10(100.0%)	21(91.3%)
There is interaction between boys and girls	13(100.0%)	9(90.0%)	22(95.7%)
There is interaction between children with special needs and those without special needs	11(84.6%)	7(87.5%)	18(85.7%)
There is interaction between people of different cultural backgrounds	13(100.0%)	8(80.0%)	21(91.3%)
There is interaction between children of different family background	13(100.0%)	9(90.0%)	22(95.7%)
Aggregated score (MRS)	61(95.3%)	43(91.5%)	104(93.7%)

From table 6 above there is evidence of interaction at all levels demonstrating that every students in class has equal opportunity to participate and contribute.

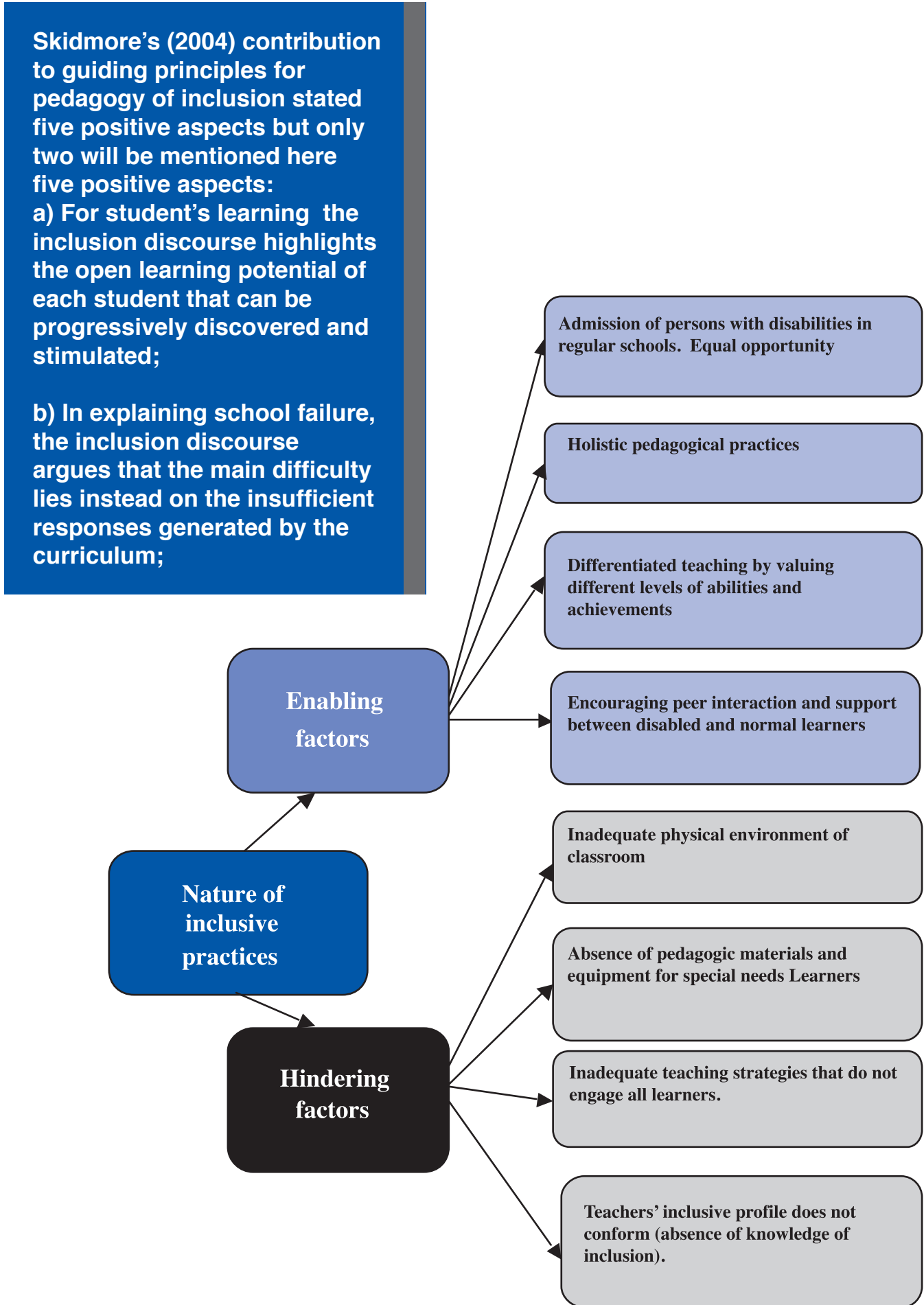


Figure 14: Schematic presentation of the nature of inclusive practices in Cameroon

## Objective 4: Identify Perceived Challenges for Inclusive Education

Findings from the views of practicing teachers and university lecturers and Inspectors based on demographic information illustrated critical challenges for policy issues, the development of teachers' inclusive profile and in-service training. Within predictive components identified, the critical indicators are highlighted on Figures 13 and 14, and Tables 4, 5 and 6.

practices. School administrators stated that, "All teachers in school take responsibility for all students' learning, with appropriate resources and opportunities for professional development". This indicator was the least satisfactory among the four indicators, with a weight of 54.5%. (See Appendix 2).

Out of the twenty indicators that made this component, twelve had weights below 50% namely: "Teacher educators are equipped with knowledge of SEN and disability" (11.5%); "Teacher educators are equipped with knowledge of challenging behaviour" (17.9%); "Teacher educators are equipped with the knowledge of diverse ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious groups" (28.2%); "Teacher educators are equipped with knowledge of more abled learners" (19.2%); "Teacher educators are equipped with knowledge on other minority groups in class vulnerable to underachievement" (0.0%); "Teacher education inculcates in teachers core values and virtues that depicts their profile to be attuned to inclusive principles and practices"(45.5%); "Teacher education courses address issues for inclusion (e.g. specialist

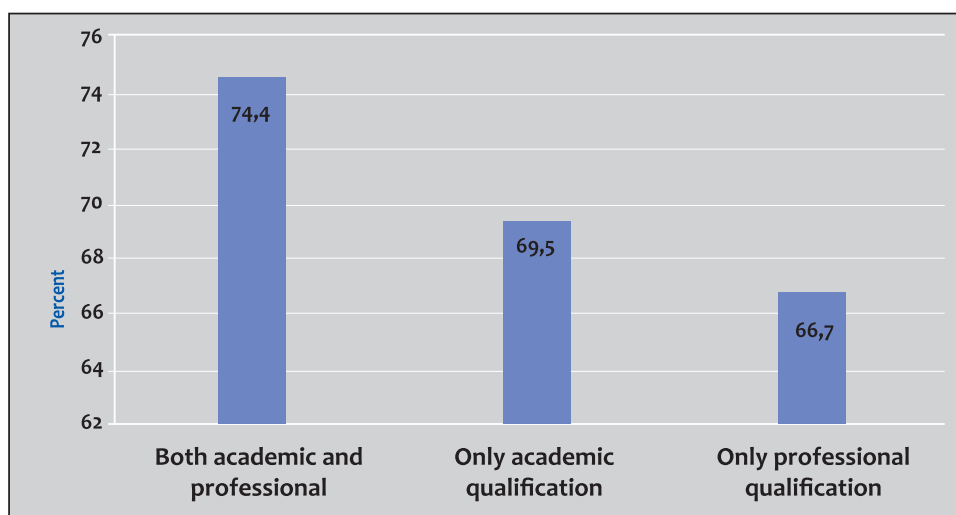
**Table 7: Understanding of inclusive practices: distribution by institution category, sex, age and level of education**

Independent variable	Categories	Good understanding of inclusive education	N
Institution category	Primary	44(76.6)	59
	Secondary	26(63.4)	41
	Tertiary	9(81.8)	11
Sex	Male	35(67.3)	52
	Female	44(74.6)	59
Age	20-25	15(65.2)	23
	26-35	47(77.0)	61
	36	17(65.4)	26
Level of education	Secondary	53(68.8%)	77
	Higher	26(76.5%)	34
<b>Total</b>		<b>79(71.2)</b>	<b>111</b>

### Policy issues and understanding of inclusive practices:

The absence of inclusive practices in policy was the only indicator with weight below 50% (48.1%) among the five indicators of this component. Since there wasThe findings below suggest that there is some basic evidence of understanding of inclusion though not enough to impact practice as presented on table 7.

Although all the actors claim to have good understanding of inclusive education, as evident in table 7, this does not imply understanding of inclusive



**Figure 15: The Significance of both Academic and professional qualifications for inclusive education Practice**

content on the needs of learners with Special Education Needs (SEN)/other minority groups, inclusive practice, pedagogy, curriculum and assessment issues, etc.)” (39.7%); “Teacher Education or university pedagogy addresses competences for inclusive practices” (37.2%); “Teacher education programmes provide subject specialist teachers with skills relating to inclusive and/or special needs education, equality and diversity”(43.6%); “Teacher training/university pedagogy provides lecturers/teachers with skills relating to inclusive and/or special needs education, equality and diversity” (42.9%); “Teacher development focuses on attitudes and values to support inclusive

practices” (43.6%); “Content and processes to develop inclusive practice within initial teacher education are quality assured” (39.7%). These findings demonstrate well enough the need to ensure that teacher educators have the appropriate training to be able to train teachers with inclusive profile for the school system at all levels. Table 8. illustrates the challenges experienced in practice by lecturers and teachers based on some basic demographic information. (See Appendix 3).

**Table 8: Perceptions and practices in inclusive classroom: lecturers and teachers’ perspectives distributed by background information**

Independent indicators		Policy issues (n and % of satisfied)		School administration (n and % of satisfied)		Challenges for teacher education to develop teacher’s inclusive profile (n and % of satisfied)	
		n (%) MRS	N	n (%) MRS	N	n (%) MRS	N
Sex	Male	199 (67.2%)	296	199 (67.2%)	296	513 (34.7%)	1480
	Female	188 (45.9%)	410	197 (60.1%)	328	687 (41.9%)	1640
Level of education	Secondary	224 (46.2%)	485	241 (62.1%)	388	790 (40.7%)	1940
	Higher	149 (50.5%)	295	155 (65.7%)	236	410 (34.7%)	1180
Age	20 - 25	75 (46.9%)	160	86 (67.2%)	128	270 (42.2%)	640
	26 - 35	203 (49.5%)	410	206 (62.8%)	328	624 (38.0%)	1640
	36+	93 (45.4%)	205	102 (62.2%)	164	295 (36.0%)	820
School level	Primary	177 (50.6%)	350	167 (59.6%)	280	546 (39.0%)	1400
	Secondary	130 (42.6%)	305	158 (64.8%)	244	475 (38.9%)	1220
	Tertiary	66 (52.8%)	125	71 (71.0%)	100	179 (35.8%)	500
Type of qualification	Both academic and professional qualification	179 (65.1%)	275	146 (66.4%)	220	516 (46.9%)	1100
	Only academic qualification	186 (44.3%)	420	211 (62.8%)	336	766 (45.6%)	1680
	Only professional qualification	49 (57.6%)	85	39 (57.4%)	68	127 (37.4)	340
Total		414 (53.1%)	780	396 (63.5%)	624	149 (45.2%)	3120

It is a truism that initial teacher education lays just the foundation for teacher formation. The major part of the task for continuous capacity building to address changing times, new trends and development in education is the responsibility of in-service education. Teachers' perceptions on this account was sought and the findings are presented in table 9.

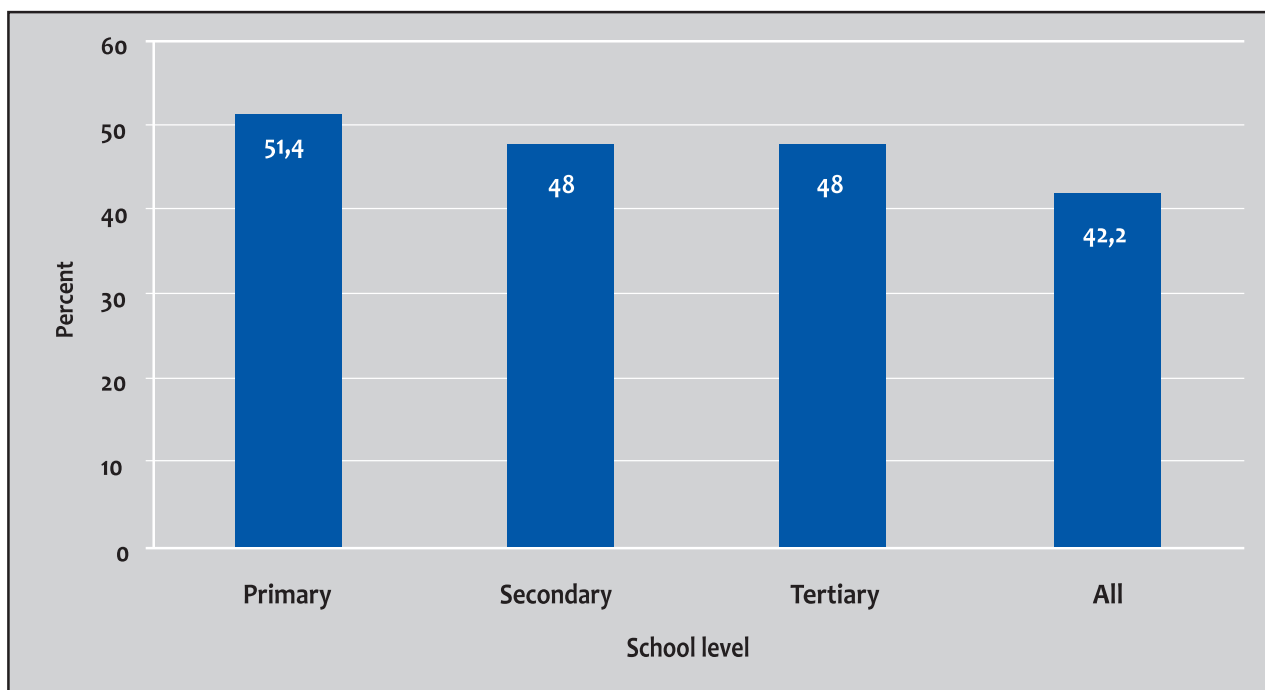
**Table 9: Teachers' Perceptions of In-service Training and Impact on Competences**

Independent indicators		In-service training (n and % of satisfied)		Competences (n and % of satisfied)	
		n (%) MRS	N	n (%) MRS	N
Sex	Male	83 (27.0%)	307	881 (70.0%)	1258
	Female	130 (30.1%)	432	1037 (74.4%)	1394
Level of education	Secondary	134 (29.1%)	461	1189 (72.1%)	1649
	Higher	79 (28.4%)	278	729 (72.7%)	1003
Age	20 - 25	48 (29.6%)	162	380 (69.9%)	544
	26 - 35	110 (28.2%)	390	133 (74.1%)	1394
	36+	53 (28.8%)	184	499 (71.6%)	697
School level	Primary	108 (30.6%)	353	806 (67.7%)	1190
	Secondary	55 (22.3%)	247	803 (77.4%)	1037
	Tertiary	50 (36.0%)	139	309 (72.7%)	425
Type of qualification	Both academic and professional qualification	84 (29.6%)	284	692 (74.0%)	935
	Only academic qualification	117 (29.9%)	391	1020 (71.4%)	1428
	Only professional qualification	12 (18.8%)	64	206 (71.3%)	289
Total		213 (28.8%)	739	1918 (72.3%)	2652

In-service training is considered as an enhancing instrument to improve on teachers' inclusive skill. Out of the eleven indicators that made up the inservice training, seven had weights above 50% namely: "The workshop attended was designed to address issues concerning attention difficulties" (16.7%); "The workshop attended was designed to address issues concerning emotional needs" (13.9%); "The workshop attended was designed to address issues concerning behavioural needs/difficulties" (19.4%); "The workshop attended was designed to address issues concerning

multiple intelligence" (5.6%); "The workshop attended was designed to address issues concerning gender" (8.6%); "The workshop attended was designed to address issues concerning language barriers" (2.8%); "The workshop attended was designed to address issues concerning nomadic, pygmies etc." (0.0%); "Generally, only roughly 42,2% of the educators sampled at all levels of the national education system had attended any in-service training as presented in figure 15.



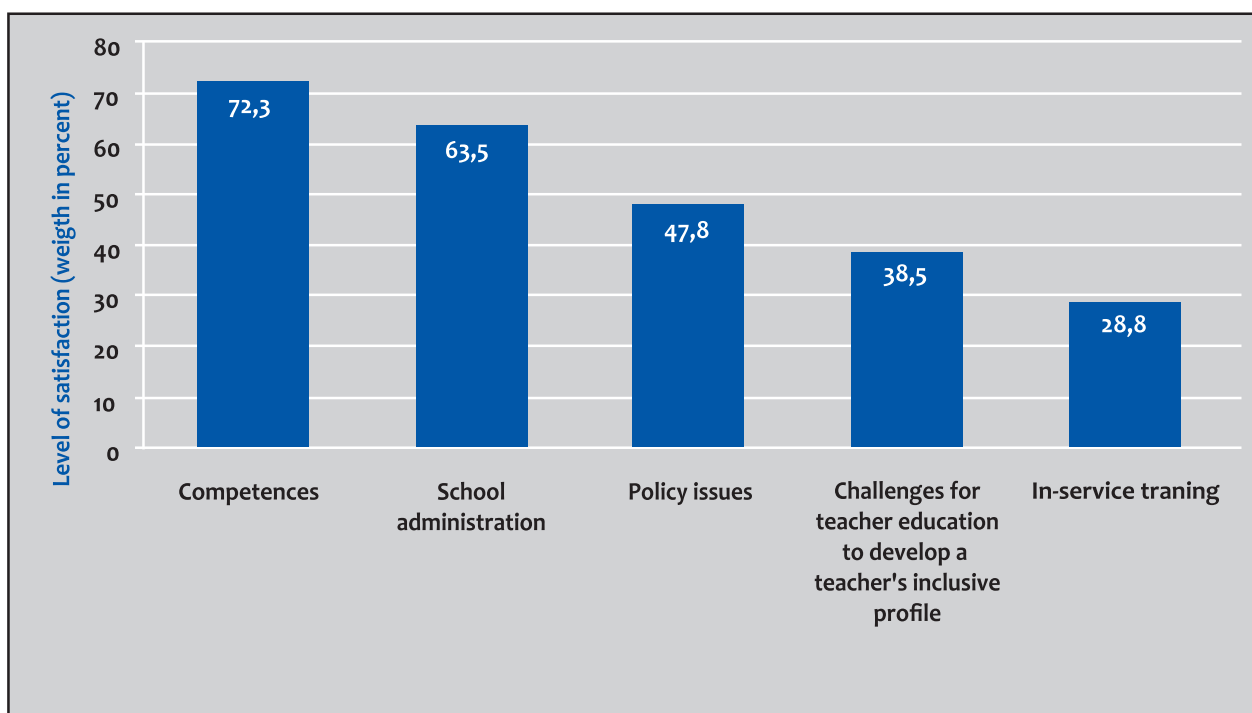


**Figure 16:** Distribution of teachers who had attended an in-service workshop on special needs students by school level

Educators’ qualification does have implications on their understanding of inclusion and its practices. As observed from the findings, 74.4% of sampled educators had both academic and professional qualifications, 69.5% only academic qualification and 66.7% only professional qualifications. Therefore, the assumption is that understanding of inclusive practices would depend largely on educators’ academic and professional qualifications. Such knowledge background should also impact on teachers’ competence. (See Appendix 4)

**Competence:**

‘Teachers’ skills to restructure their curriculum and assessment arrangement for a wider group of students’ were the least satisfactory indicators among the 17 indicators that made up this component with a weight of 60.3%. Generally, the competence of the educators was perceived as satisfactory with an aggregate score of 72.3% as presented in figure 16, which is in line with the results of inservice training component



**Figure 17:** Perceptions and practices in inclusive classroom: lecturers and teachers’ perspectives

## **Objective 5: Research in inclusive education and the need to establish network for collaborative research and build capacity in qualitative research for inclusion**

From this study there was evidence of a gap in research on inclusive education in all its parameters and even on the adequacy of policy addressing research. The findings underscored the need for the establishment of an effective network for collaborative research and capacity building in qualitative research for inclusion especially in the following areas identified in the study:

- Parental attitude towards education of children with special needs with regards to gender/sex.
- Teachers' attitudes towards pupils/students with special needs with regards to gender/sex.
- In every aspect on the implementation of inclusive education in Cameroon, there is need for research on the perceptions and attitude of stakeholders, peers, teachers, parents and, curriculum issues, adapted environment, need for personnel and also on the need for proper assessment.

**c) Regarding school response to students' expectations, the inclusion discourse emphasizes the need of reforming the curriculum and of implementing a crosscutting pedagogy in the school;**

**d) Basic theory of teachers' expertise for inclusion highlights the active participation of the students in the learning process.**

**e) Concerning curriculum model for inclusion, the emphasize is on the need for a common curriculum for all students.**



## Discussion

This study demonstrated adequately that Cameroon is not yet prepared to embrace inclusive education even though some efforts are being made to this effect. The Nature of inclusive education practices in the institutions studied in Cameroon illustrated variations based on practitioners' perceptions and opinions. In the study by Mutepefa, Mpofu, & Chataika, (2007) successful inclusion in school context results in students' and their families' participation in the regular activities of the school community while meeting their unique needs, as well as contributing to the development of the school community. Since policy on inclusive education in Cameroon is lopsided the issue of participation in all activities to enhance inclusion by all stakeholders is still to be well defined. The emerging critical issues from the present study are centered more around classroom practices, teacher education, parental involvement, infrastructure, curriculum and policy. These issues influence the quality of inclusive education.

Teachers were able to identify children with different types of disabilities in their classrooms. This study finds support in similar study in Lesotho (Mariga, & Phachaka, 1993) that reported the existence of children with special educational needs, the types of disabilities, attitudes of teacher, pupils and parents and facilities available to these learners. The findings have also problematized the policy of integrating children with disabilities into the education system as emanating from the voices of the pupils that suffer negative attitudes from others.

There is need for clarity and lucidity to the concept of inclusion in education. In some if not most cases dealing with inclusive education, the discourses are limited within narrow premises. However, this study finds support from Topping and Maloney's' (2005) extended understanding of inclusion by discussing issues of race, social disadvantage, gender, and other factors illustrating that inclusion is not limited only to those living with disabilities. Though this sounded positive, being able to define inclusion from a broader perspectives and having just knowledge of inclusion is not enough to ensure inclusive practices from a professional perspective. Exhibiting supportive attitudes and encouraging peer support including acceptance and respect need to be accompanied by appropriate pedagogical skills, and competences in managing inclusive classrooms for effective learning outcomes.

From the analysis of policy and legislation including reactions from administrators and teachers, it was

clear that policies are silent on the concept of inclusive education. When there are lapses in policy in terms of clarity on various concepts, implementation is not effective. This situation could have been averted with an analysis of the realities that exist to guide policy and implementation. An understanding of the meaning of inclusive education is necessary for the type of expectations required for effective inclusive practices. However, as observed, there is a complete lack of data describing inclusive education in Cameroon. Generally, data on practices, difficulties and even perspectives is extremely sparse and unreliable. Such data should permit one to speculate in areas where technical supports are needed from stakeholders. Without being sure of how these would support and enhance the Education for All initiative, support received is not put into effective use. When clarity of what is required for the effective functioning of inclusive education is lacking, confusion emerges as to which Ministry or Ministries should be responsible to initiate and manage inclusive education. From the findings teachers even reported they are not supposed to initiate new pedagogic practices as such initiative must come from the delegation. Evidently, this illustrates the absence of preparedness not only in resources but also in how responsibilities are shared in policy statements.

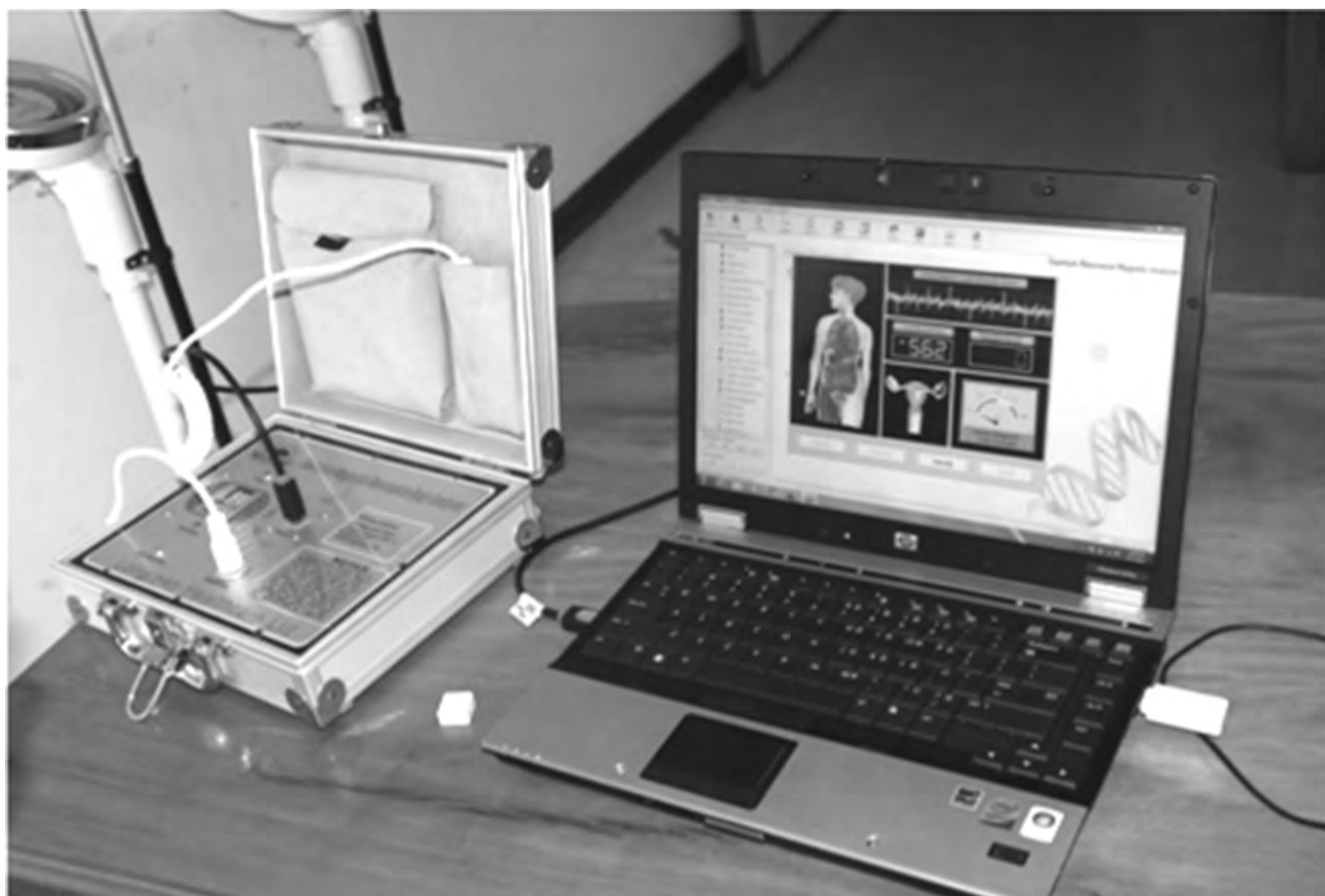
Furthermore, though the policies mentioned that all children with disabilities should be admitted in schools, there are limitations in specifications, orienting practices that make efforts to implement such policies difficult. Lutfiyya and Wallegghem (2002), provided information putting the situation into perspective by arguing that government policies that refer to establishing rights but which do not provide the means of enforcing them are not only meaningless, but also dishonest as they give the impression that there are rights, when in fact, there are none. Meanwhile, Wolff (2003) noted that students with disabilities have been moved into regular classrooms without ensuring adequate teacher training or support. The flexibility of policy allows other students to remain in segregated settings, if it is decided that inclusion in a regular setting cannot meet their educational needs. The ill preparedness of teachers is because teacher training, in some cases, focuses on curricular subject rather than generic pedagogical skills, capacity for critical thinking and creativity (Topping & Maloney 2005). From this study, teachers indicated their lack of resources as barrier to quality mainstreaming of pupils with special educational needs but they do not

know exactly what type of resources they are referring to. Of course in Cameroon context, there are barriers arising from lack of experts and appropriate physical space, overcrowded classrooms, inappropriate curricular activities for pupils at risk and disadvantages, contradicting Government policy, poor liaison between parents and the community.

To fully address the issues that can lead to the identification that a country is prepared for inclusion, policy on inclusion ought to be talking on the following: (1) teacher factor in terms of the required skills and competences; (2) curriculum issues and new ways of assessing; (3) attitudes toward SEN/SNE and students with disabilities; (4) infrastructure and others. Process can be seen in principles of learner centered approach, school climate, collaboration and support. To determine the outcomes of such approach should not be limited to only academic achievement.

Outcomes of inclusive education are often illusive and difficult to measure. Student's achievement in tests of content knowledge provide only one indicator of impact, and are not strongly linked to success in adult life, nor do they provide measures for creative and analytical problem-solving skills needed for survival.

This study was able to identify areas of teachers' competences, skills and held values which provide valuable information for policy reforms, new legislation for practices in schools and for training and educating teachers at both initial and in-service levels. There was enough evidence to illustrate the perceived benefits of inclusion that had psychosocial implications. Moreover, the study illustrated the importance to have trained teacher Educators



## Conclusions

The fundamental principle of Inclusive Education is that all children should have the opportunity to learn together. Diversity remains a common characteristic in all classrooms where strength, and differences and not deficit should be at the base of education practices. It is the fundamental responsibility of all those who teach and of all those who support teachers to build on children's strength, to believe in all children's capacity to learn, and to uphold their right to learn. We must eradicate the divide between special schools and regular schools except in situations where this cannot be avoided. Inclusive Education is cost-effective, financially and psychologically. Moreover, the costs of exclusion are high in terms of lost productivity, lost human potential, lost health and wellbeing.

There is an urgent need for policy reforms that address critical issues of capacity, infrastructure, pedagogical practices and the sensitization of parents and other actors of the importance of inclusion. As the findings clearly demonstrated, poor understanding of policy and poor policy orientation delay progress. These are some of the reasons why there was evidence of lack of concrete initiative at school level to support learners with special needs as teachers were not really aware of these needs. Initial training programmes for teachers cannot adequately prepare them for inclusive practices. If pupils and students with special needs and their parents who are the beneficiaries of inclusion underscored the positive psychological and social benefits of inclusion, such expressed satisfaction should motivate decision-makers and all educators at various levels to encourage investment in inclusive education.

While many countries seem to be committed to inclusive education in their rhetoric, their legislation and policies, practices often fall short. Reasons for the policy-practice gaps in inclusive education are manifold: including barriers arising from societal values and beliefs; economic factors; lack of measures to ensure compliance with policies; the dispersion of responsibility for education; strict adherence to traditional practices among teachers, teacher educators and educational researchers; parental resistance; lack of skills among teachers; rigid curricula that are dominantly examination oriented; inadequate educational infrastructures particularly in rural and remote areas and large class sizes. Another major challenge is the top-down introduction of inclusive education without adequate preparation of schools and communities. Cultural

**There is an urgent need for policy reforms that address critical issues of capacity, infrastructure, pedagogical practices and the sensitization of parents and other actors of the importance of inclusion**

values and beliefs including even the economic status of the country influences how the concept of inclusive education is perceived and embraced. A synthesis of pedagogical research conducted by Nind and Wearmouth (2006) highlighted that: All the teaching approaches studied involved an understanding of the pupil as an active agent in the construction of personal knowledge and of all the pupils as capable of learning. They also imply that the learning environment plays a key role as pupils learn through social interactions.



## Recommendations

From the above discussion, there is need for reforms in current policy to make it inclusive. This includes addressing all the critical elements of inclusive education practices without limiting it only to the provision of financial support and to children living with disabilities but also putting in place available resources to enhance practice and extending the scope of the concept to embrace all other groups of children in difficult and disadvantaged situations. In reforming the policy, there should be consultations with all stakeholders including parents and learners with special needs. Other than qualified and competent teachers, there should be well-trained pedagogic inspectors, support personnel, school psychologists, and curriculum specialists to design an inclusive curriculum that addresses specifically inclusive practices. With differences, children need to learn in a variety of ways. Copying from the chalkboard is a common phenomenon, yet one of the least effective ways for children to learn. Teaching children with diverse backgrounds and abilities is a challenge, so there is need to understand how to teach in such situations.

From the study, it is clear that intuitive teachers and university lecturers have core values and competences. It is important that these issues form part of teacher education programmes at both the initial and in-service training levels. Some of such indicators as measures for training and evaluation could include: classroom organizational values; the ethics of teaching and moral contract; imaginative and creativity skills and teachers' pedagogic competences. These should form part of the foundation courses in teacher education, directing pedagogic design and assessing learning outcomes. There should be a strong practice-based training for student-teachers to practice the new holistic approach that is learner centered. The mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the identified indicators of skills, competences and values in inclusive practice should be made available.

There was evidence of discrimination and stigmatization. Teachers should encourage the strategies of peer support, triangulated classroom discussions, group work and collaborative work. Through Parent Teacher Associations, parents and schools should develop a strong communication network. Hopefully, this transnational study will opened up a channel for sharing ideas, conducting collaborative research and establishing South-South and North-South partnerships in inclusive practices. In summary, teachers' attitudes, available instruction

time, the knowledge and skills of teachers, teaching methods and materials seem to be important prerequisites for special needs education within mainstream settings. In-service training and organization of seminars and workshops on inclusive education should be encouraged.

In order to establish effective local, national and international network of cooperation in inclusive research/practice, practical teacher training institutions, researching higher education institutions and practicing mainstream schools should collaborate with civil bodies (community organizations) like NGOs that sensitize schools' stakeholders on disability awareness, SEN and human rights-based education issues.

Staff pre-/in-service training should be designed to target different areas of competences in SEN generic/specialist courses which may include: audiology, sign language and braille, early childhood education and development, adult education and literacy, multi-agency services, SEN/inclusive education management at school level, talented/gifted education, and bilingual special education, those with learning barriers, gender among others. These specialist services are useful in supporting inclusive education in school settings and the national education system. Besides that, mainstream schools with inclusive initiative should design exchange programmes for students/staff and collaborate with neighboring specialized institutions who can support them in the management of students with SEN/disabilities.

Government should address policy reforms to ensure and guarantee the real implementation of inclusive education in Cameroon. Besides, Government needs to provide an assessment frame to be used in identifying special educational needs and a code of practice to guide mainstream schools and practitioners on different modes of inclusive education services. Inclusion is essentially a principled, rights-based approach to education underpinned by a number of central values;

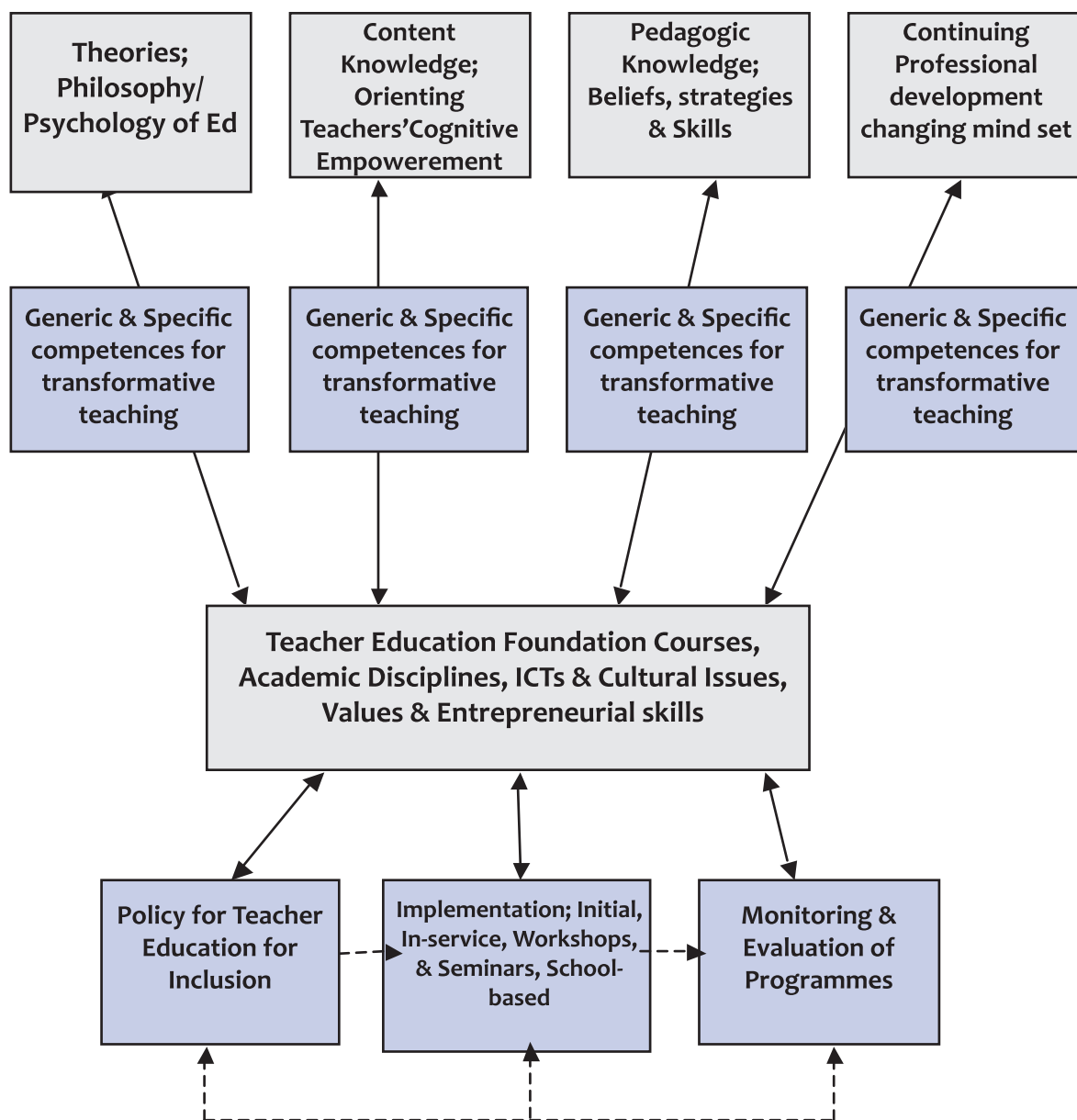
In considering teacher profile for inclusive practices, there is an urgent need for practical and conceptual understanding of inclusion from pedagogical perspective. The critical question for reflection is what competences do teachers need to manage an inclusive classroom. The EU Agency for Special Education Needs identified four core values relating to

**The major challenge is how to translate competences and skills to be developed in action during teacher preparation and which theoretical framework would best guide the process**

teaching and learning which have been very enlightening since they are associated with areas of teachers' competences as discussed above. Each competence requires certain attitude/belief, knowledge and skills. The Africa Tuning project came up with generic and specific competences for teachers. In this report ideas and inspiration drawn from this two enriching projects will be used to propose a teacher preparation programme for inclusive teachers. Teacher preparation must address both the generic and specific competences to enable them be able to address inclusive pedagogical practices. The education foundation courses especially philosophy, psychology and sociology of Education are embedded with relevant knowledge and understanding (Shulman, 1987) for effective pedagogical practices. Tuning in Yaoundé 2012 captured four important factors relevant for teacher preparation; Knowledge and Understanding, (2) Practice and skills, (3) Values and ethics, and (4) Interpersonal skills. These could be seen in the same light as EU who mentioned four core values relating to teaching and learning necessary for the Teacher Inclusive Profile such as;; Valuing learner diversity; Supporting all learners by setting high expectations for each; Working with others; and continuing personal professional development. The core values are associated with areas of competences such as

attitudes, knowledge and skills. With these rich orientations from Tuning Africa and EU how can these be built in teacher education programmes. Figure 17 present some orientations to help with the restructuring process. The major guiding theories are Vygotsky's social constructivism, Bandura's social learning theory, Maslow and Carl Roger, s humanistic, Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, Bruner and Piaget's constructivism. Another theoretical strand to draw from is Dewey's Philosophical and Educational Psychology theories, Rousseau, Plato, Froebel including Bloom's educational taxonomy among others. These would provide the pedagogical principles and knowledge of the learners. The academic discipline should be taught to impact the students from two dimensions; pedagogically and academically to develop their mind. What is most important is how teachers are prepared to be critical and reflective, to be analytic, creative and innovative assuring that the prescriptions of government reflect in the school realities while ensuring quality learning outcomes.





**Figure 18: Teacher Preparation : Issued to be considered**

The above figure draws inspiration from the findings of EU/Agency for Special Education (2012) & Tuning-Africa (2013) on teacher education. These addressed beliefs/attitudes (cognitive), knowledge (academic/pedagogic), skills and above all competences in managing curriculum and pedagogic processes in a cultural context of diversity. The big question is how the education disciplines are addressing teachers' pedagogic skills and competences in training and how are the academic disciplines catering for teachers' cognitive and personal development to cope with the challenges of an inclusive setting?

Therefore, the issues of great concern are how we prepare teachers as reflective practitioners and seeing initial teacher education as a foundation for on-going professional learning and development. Take the example of educating and training teachers to teach

Arts or Music in an inclusive classroom in a primary school. These two disciplines do have therapeutic functions. This means that besides the implication for cognitive development and other skills, they can permit the different categories (disabilities, differences and disadvantages) of children to express themselves in specific ways, yet achieving the common goal of self-expression, flexibility and creativity. To achieve these goals, it is important that teachers understand the structure of the disciplines, they are called upon to teach, to fully embrace the pedagogic ways of knowing the disciplines and teach them. This should have great implications for quality teaching. *The major challenge now is how to translate competences and skills to be developed in action during teacher preparation and which theoretical framework would best guide the process for inclusive practices.*

## References

- Amin, M. E. (2005). *Social science research: Conception, methodology & analysis*. Kampala, Makerere University Printery.
- Booth, T. and Ainscow, M. (2002) *The Index for Inclusion*, 2nd edition. Bristol: Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education.
- Brendtro, L. K., Brokenleg, M. and Van Bockern, S. (1990) The circle of courage, in *Reclaiming Youth At Risk: Our Hope for the Future*. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service.
- Brown B., W., & Saks, D., H. (1981). The Microeconomics of Schooling, Chapter 5: *Review Research in Education January, 9*: 217-254,
- Bunch, G. (1999). *Inclusion: How to. Essential classroom strategies*. Toronto: Inclusion Press.
- Council for Disabled Children (CDC), (2008). *Inclusive policy*, London: National Children's Bureau
- Crawford, C., & Porter, G. L. (2004). *Supporting teachers: A foundation for advancing inclusive education*. Toronto: The Roeher Institute.
- European Commission (2009) *Strategic framework for education and training*. Brussels: European Commission. Electronic source available online at: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc28\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc28_en.htm)
- European Commission, DG-Education and Culture (2010) *Improving Teacher Quality: the EU Agenda*. Document prepared by Holdsworth, P., summarising the priorities for improving Teacher Education that were defined by Ministers of Education in the Council Conclusions of November 2007, 2008 and 2009
- European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2011). *Teacher Education for Inclusion across Europe – Challenges and Opportunities*. Odense, Denmark: European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education.
- European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2012). *Profile of Inclusive Teachers*. Odense, Denmark: European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education.
- Evans J. & Lunt I. (2002) Inclusive education: Are there limits? *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 17 (1), 1-14.
- Gerber, M.M. & Semmel, M.I. (1985). The microeconomics of referral and reintegration: towards a new paradigm of special evaluation, *Studies in Education Evaluation*, 11;13-29
- Giddens, A., & Griffiths, S., (2006), *Sociology*, Cambridge: Polity Press
- Hales, G ed. (1996), **Beyond Disability: Towards an Enabling Society**, London: Sage
- Lutfiyya, Z.M., and Van Wallegghem, J. (2002). Educational provisions for students with exceptional learning needs. *Exceptionality Education Canada*, 11 (2&3), 79-98.
- Lupart, J. (2002). Meeting the educational needs of exceptional learners in Alberta. *Exceptionality Education Canada*, 11(2, 3), 55-70.
- Mariga, L. & Phachaka, L. (1993) Integrating Children with Special Needs into regular Primary Schools in Lesotho: Report of a feasibility study. Sponsored by UNICEF.
- Meijer, C. (2001), *Inclusive education and effective classroom practices. Literature review*, European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education. As of 30 March 2013: <http://www.european-agency.org/publications/ereports/inclusive-education-andeffective-classroom-practice/IECP-Literature-Review.pdf>
- Meijer, C. (2003), *Inclusive education and effective classroom practices. Summary report*, European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education. As of 30 March 2013: <https://www.european-agency.org/publications/ereports/inclusive-education-andclassroom-practices/iecp-en.pdf>
- Maslow, A. H. (1970). *Religions, values, and peak experiences*. New York: Penguin. (Original work published 1964)
- Mpofu, E.; Shumba, A.; Maluwa-Banda, D.; Mivenyi, Y.J.; Muller, K., Tchombe, T. & Teferra, T. (2007). Special Education in Sub-Saharan Africa. In C.R. Reynolds & E. Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, (1986). *What Teacher's Needs: Study of Mainstreaming*. Saskatoon, SK: Author.
- Mutepfa, M. M., Mpofu, E. & Chataika, T. (2007) Inclusive Education in Zimbabwe: Policy, Curriculum, Practice, Family, and Teacher Education Issues. *Childhood Education*, 83, 342-347.
- Nana, C. (2012). *Research Methods and Applied Statistics: Beginners and Advanced Learners*. Buea: GOOAHEAD.
- National Institute of Statistics .(2010). Yaounde
- Newton, C. & Wilson, D. (2003). Creating Circles of Friends: a peer support and inclusion workbook. Inclusive Solutions, 49 Northcliffe Ave., Nottingham, NG3 6DA
- Nind, M. & Wearmouth, J. (2006). Including children with special educational needs in The mainstream classrooms: implications for pedagogy from a systematic review. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs* 6 (3), 116-124.
- NJCIE (2010). New Jersey Coalition for Inclusive Education. ,Norwich, Norwich, B. (1996). *Special Needs Education, Inclusive Education or Just Education for All?* Institute of Education, London: University of London.
- Norwich, B. (2002), *LEA Inclusion trends in England 1991-2001*, Bristol: CSIE
- Nsamenang, A.B., & Tchombe, M.S.T. (2011) (Eds). *Handbook of African Educational Theories and Practices, A Generative Teacher Education Curriculum*, Yaounde: Presses universitaires d' Afrique
- Peters, S.J. (2003) *Inclusive Education: Achieving Education for All by Including those with Disabilities and Special Educational Needs*. Washington D.C.: World Bank 2003.
- Raymond, H. (1995). *Inclusive education: Stories and strategies for success*. Available: <http://www.ualberta.ca/~jpdasddc/inclusion/raymond/index.html>
- The Roeher Institute. (2004). Inclusive policy and practice in education: *Best practices for students with disabilities*. Roeher Institute, April Edition
- Schneider, B., Carnoy, M., Kilpatrick, J., Schmidt, W. H., & Shavelson, R. J. (2007). *Estimating causal effects using experimental and observational designs*. Washington, DC: American Education Research Association.
- Shulman, L., S., (1987). *Knowledge and Teaching Foundations of*



- New Reforms, *Harvard Education Review* 57:1-22.
- Tchombe, M.T. & Kassa R, (2006). Community Psychology: The case of Cameroon. *Journal of Psychology in Africa, South*, Vol. 16 (2) pp167-172.
- Tchombe, M.T. (2008), Understanding Normality in Child Development: The Premise for Identifying Developments: *African Journal of Special Education* Vol, No. 1 pp.33-46.
- Tchombe, T.M., Tarpeh, E., Mopoi, N. (2001), Street Children in Cameroon, Problems and Perspectives. *Journal of Psychology in Africa, South of the Sahara, the Caribbean and Afro-Latin America*. Vol. II, No. 2 pp 101-123.
- Tchombe, T.M,S (2004). *Psychological Parameters*, Yaounde: Presses Universitaires d' Afrique
- Topping, K. & Maloney, S. (2005) *The Routledge Falmer Reader in Inclusive Education*. London. Routledge Falmer.
- United Nations (1948). Universal declaration of human rights. Retrieved March 30, 2005, from [www.un.org/documents/ga/res](http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res).
- United Nations (1993). United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (A/C.3/48/L.3, 1 October 1993). New York: United Nations.
- UNESCO, (1990). *Education for All*, Jomtien, Thailand, Paris: UNESCO
- UNESCO (1994) *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*. Paris, UNESCO,
- UNESCO (1994). Final Report: World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality, Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO, (2000). *The Dakar Framework for Action on Inclusive Education*, Dakar.
- UNESCO (2005). *Guidelines for Inclusion. Ensuring Access to Education for All*. Paris, UNESCO.
- United Nations. (2001). *Report on the Child in Cameroon*, Geneva: UNHCHR
- United Nations. (2006). *Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities*. New York:
- United Nations Education Scientific Cultural Organisation. (2004). *Changing teaching practices: Using curriculum differentiation to respond to students' diversity*. Paris: UNESCO.
- United Nations Education Scientific Cultural Organisation. (2005). *Guidelines for inclusion: Ensuring access to education for all*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO-IBE (2008) *Conclusions and recommendations of the 48th session of the International Conference on Education*. Geneva, Switzerland. UNESCO IBE.ED/BIE/ CONFINTED 48/5
- United Nations Education Science and Culture Organization (UNESCO) (2009) *Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education*, Paris: UNESCO
- Watkins, A., ((Ed). *European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education* (2012) *Profile of Inclusive Teachers*, Odense, Denmark: European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education.
- Wehmeyer, M.L., & Agran, M. (2006) Promoting access to the general curriculum for students with significant cognitive disabilities. In D.M. Browder & F. Spooner (Eds.), *Teaching language arts, math, and science to students with significant cognitive disabilities* (pp. 15–37). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.
- Weinert F.: *Entwicklung im Grundschulalter*, Weinheim 1997
- Wetzel G., Moser M., Brejcha H., Riedler H., Weiss S (1999). Kinder mit Auffälligkeiten - Studie zu Rahmenbedingungen und Praxis des Unterrichts in Volksschulklassen, in: *Erziehung und Unterricht* 1999/10, S. 672-685
- Wolff, J. (2003). The policy, but not the practice, of "inclusion." New York: GothamGazette.com. Available:<http://www.gothamgazette.com/article/education/20030106/6/44> .
- WHO (1980). *International classification of disability impairment and handicap ICIDH*. Geneva.
- WHO (2001). *International classifications of functioning ICF*. Geneva.
- World Health Organisation (2011) *World Report on Disability*. Geneva: Switzerland. WHO
- Yuh, E. and Shey, P. (2008). The education of persons with special needs in Cameroon: A historical perspective. *African Journal of Special Education*, 1(1) 27-31
- Zimba, R, F., Mowes, A., D., Naanda. A., N.,(2006). *Inclusive Education in Namibia*, Pretoria: Van Schaik
- Zimba, R.F (2010) . Review of Current Educational Policy and Practices on the Inclusion-Exclusion Paraddigm: The Namibian Education System: Key Note presented at the International Workshop on Inclusive Education in Higher Education, University o Buea, Cameroon , 26-29 May, 2010
- UN (2001). *Report on the Child in Cameroon*. Geneva : UNHCHR
- United Nations (1948). Universal declaration of human rights. Retrieved March 30, 2005, from [www.un.org/documents/ga/res](http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res).
- United Nations (ed.) (2006) *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. New York: United Nations
- UNICEF and UNESCO (2007) *A Human Rights-Based Approach to Education for All: A framework for the realization of children's right to education and rights within education*. UNICEF, New York and UNESCO, Paris



# Appendix

**Appendix 1: Policy issues distribution by institution level**

**Table 10: Policy issues distribution by institution level**

Policy issues	Primary level			Secondary level			Tertiary level			Total
	Agree	I don't know	Total	Agree	I don't know	Total	Agree	I don't know	Total	
Policies on inclusion exist	43(61.4%)	6(8.6%)	70(100.0%)	35(57.4%)	2(3.3%)	61(100.0%)	16(64.0%)	1(4.0%)	25(100.0%)	94 (60.3%)
Policy on inclusion is inadequate	34(48.6%)	7(10.0%)	70(100.0%)	29(47.5%)	7(11.5%)	61(100.0%)	18(72.0%)	2(8.0%)	25(100.0%)	81 (51.9%)
Policy on inclusion is administratively implemented	42(60.0%)	7(10.0%)	70(100.0%)	24(39.3%)	7(11.5%)	61(100.0%)	14(56.0%)	3(12.0%)	25(100.0%)	80 (51.3%)
Policy on inclusion does not address inclusive pedagogical practices.	37(52.9%)	6(8.6%)	70(100.0%)	25(41.0%)	7(11.5%)	61(100.0%)	13(52.0%)	3(12.0%)	25(100.0%)	75 (48.1%)
Policy does not orient teacher education for inclusion.	43(61.4%)	9(12.9%)	70(100.0%)	28(45.9%)	9(14.8%)	61(100.0%)	13(52.0%)	3(12.0%)	25(100.0%)	84 (53.8%)
Aggregated score (MRA)	177(50.8%)	35(10.0%)	350(44.9%)	130(42.6%)	32(10.5%)	305(39.1%)	66(52.8%)	12(9.6%)	125(16%)	

**Appendix 2: Academic and Professional Qualifications; the basis for Inclusive Education**

**Table 11: Academic and Professional Qualification the basis for Inclusive Education**

Items	Both academic and professional qualification			Only academic qualification			Only professional qualification			Total
	Agree	I don't know	Total	Agree	I don't know	Total	Agree	I don't know	Total	
School Administration										
All teachers in a school take responsibility for all students learning, with appropriate resources and opportunities for professional development.	30 (54.5%)	0 (00%)	55 (100.0%)	46 (54.8%)	4 (4.8%)	84 (100.0%)	9 (52.9%)	1 (5.9%)	17 (100.0%)	85 (54.5%)
Educational institutions have the belief that students with disabilities should be included in ordinary classrooms whether or not they can meet traditional curriculum standards.	35 (63.6%)	0 (00%)	55 (100.0%)	52 (60.7%)	4 (4.8%)	84 (100%)	8 (47.1%)	0 (00%)	17 (100%)	94 (60.3%)
Developing successful practices for inclusion demands attention to the detail of school and classroom interaction that expose the values inherent in the situation.	39 (70.9%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	55 (65.5%)	5 (6.0%)	84 (100%)	11 (64.7%)	2 (11.8%)	17 (100%)	105 (67.3%)
Schools have the responsibility to adapt and change in order to accommodate all students.	42 (76.4%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	59 (70.2%)	4 (4.8%)	84 (100%)	11 (64.7%)	2 (11.8%)	17 (100%)	112 (71.8%)
Aggregated score (MRA)	146 (66.4%)	2 (0.9%)	220 (100.0%)	211 (62.8%)	17 (5.1%)	336 (100.0%)	39 (57.4%)	5 (7.4%)	68 (100.0%)	

**Appendix 3: Challenges for Teacher Educators and Teacher Education**

Table, 12: Challenges for Teacher Educators and Teacher Education

Challenges	Both academic and professional qualification			Only academic qualification			Only professional qualification			Total
	Agree	I don't know	Total	Agree	I don't know	Total	Agree	I don't know	Total	
Teacher educators are not trained for inclusive practices.	18 (32.7%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	22 (26.2%)	4 (4.8%)	84 (100%)	5 (29.4%)	0 (0%)	17 (100%)	106 (67.9%)
Teacher educators are equipped with knowledge of SEN and disability	4 (7.3%)	40 (72.7%)	55 (100%)	14 (16.7%)	53 (63.1%)	84 (100%)	0 (0%)	14 (82.4%)	17 (100%)	18 (11.5%)
Challenging behaviour	9 (16.4%)	33 (60.0%)	55 (100%)	17 (20.2%)	42 (50.0%)	84 (100%)	2 (11.8%)	14 (82.4%)	17 (100%)	28 (17.9%)
Diverse ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious groups	17 (30.9%)	26 (47.3%)	55 (100%)	23 (27.4%)	39 (46.4%)	84 (100%)	4 (23.5%)	6 (35.3%)	17 (100%)	44 (28.2%)
More able learners	9 (16.4%)	40 (72.7%)	55 (100%)	18 (21.4%)	51 (60.7%)	84 (100%)	3 (17.6%)	11 (64.7%)	17 (100%)	30 (19.2%)
Other minority groups in class vulnerable to underachievement	0 (0%)	55 (100%)	55 (100%)	0 (0%)	84 (100%)	84 (100%)	0 (0%)	17 (100%)	17 (100%)	0 (0.0%)
Teacher education programmes do not address student teachers profile as an inclusive teacher.	18 (32.7%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	30 (35.7%)	3 (3.6%)	84 (100%)	5 (29.4%)	2 (11.8%)	17 (100%)	97 (62.2%)
Teacher education inculcates in teachers core values and virtues that depicts their profile to be attuned to inclusive principles and practices.	29 (52.7%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	34 (40.5%)	5 (6.0%)	84 (100%)	8 (47.1%)	1 (5.9%)	17 (100%)	71 (45.5%)
Teacher education courses do address issues of inclusion e.g. specialist content on the needs of learners with Special Education Needs SEN and other minority groups, inclusive practice, pedagogy, curriculum and assessment issues, etc.	26 (47.3%)	0 (0%)	55 (100%)	33 (39.3%)	4 (4.8%)	84 (100%)	3 (17.6%)	2 (11.8%)	17 (100%)	62 (39.7%)
Teacher education develops student teachers collaborative practices by enabling them to work with parents and or agencies outside school, support services and professionals from other disciplines.	33 (60%)	0 (0%)	55 (100%)	45 (53.6%)	5 (6.0%)	84 (100%)	8 (47.1%)	1 (5.9%)	17 (100%)	86 (55.1%)
Teacher education or university pedagogy addresses competences for inclusion.	24 (43.6%)	0 (0%)	55 (100%)	31 (36.9%)	5 (6.0%)	84 (100%)	3 (17.6%)	3 (17.6%)	17 (100%)	58 (37.2%)
Teacher education programmes provide subject specialist teachers with skills relating to inclusive and or special needs education, equality and diversity.	30 (54.5%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	34 (40.5%)	5 (6.0%)	84 (100%)	4 (23.5%)	2 (11.8%)	17 (100%)	68 (43.6%)
University pedagogy provides lecturers with skills relating to inclusive and or special needs education, equality and diversity.	27 (49.1%)	0 (0%)	55 (100%)	35 (41.7%)	5 (6.0%)	84 (100%)	5 (29.4%)	2 (11.8%)	17 (100%)	67 (42.9%)
Teacher development focuses on attitudes and values to support inclusive practices.	26 (47.3%)	0 (0%)	55 (100%)	37 (44.0%)	4 (4.8%)	84 (100%)	5 (29.4%)	3 (17.6%)	17 (100%)	68 (43.6%)
Teaching practice and practical experiences are organised, supervised and followed up.	36 (65.5%)	0 (0%)	55 (100%)	65 (77.4%)	5 (6.0%)	84 (100%)	11 (64.7%)	3 (17.6%)	17 (100%)	112 (71.8%)
Duration for practice is inadequate.	25 (45.5%)	0 (0%)	55 (100%)	23 (27.4%)	6 (7.1%)	84 (100%)	8 (47.1%)	2 (11.8%)	17 (100%)	92 (59.0%)
Content and processes to develop inclusive practice within initial teacher education are quality assured.	27 (49.1%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	33 (39.3%)	6 (7.1%)	84 (100%)	2 (11.8%)	3 (17.6%)	17 (100%)	62 (39.7%)
Student teachers are not given the competence necessary for inclusive practices.	15 (27.3%)	2 (3.6%)	55 (100%)	21 (25.0%)	4 (4.8%)	84 (100%)	5 (29.4%)	0 (0%)	17 (100%)	109 (69.9%)
Inclusive classrooms should have more time spent in interactive discourse and less time spent in solitary seatwork.	42 (76.4%)	0 (0%)	55 (100%)	67 (79.8%)	5 (6.0%)	84 (100%)	14 (82.4%)	1 (5.9%)	17 (100%)	123 (78.8%)
Most instruction occurs during interactive discourse with students rather than during extended lecture presentations.	37 (67.9%)	2 (3.6%)	55 (100%)	57 (67.9%)	5 (6.0%)	84 (100%)	14 (82.4%)	0 (0%)	17 (100%)	108 (69.2%)
Aggregated score (MRA)	516 (46.9%)	203 (18.5%)	1100 (100.0%)	766 (45.6%)	340 (20.2%)	1680 (100.0%)	127 (37.4%)	87 (25.6%)	340 (100.0%)	

**Appendix 4: Teacher’s Perceptions of in-service- Training and the impact on Competences**

Table, 13: Teacher’s Perceptions of in-service- Training and the impact on Competences

Items	Both academic and professional qualification			Only academic qualification			Only professional qualification			Total
	Agree	I don't know	Total	Agree	I don't know	Total	Agree	I don't know	Total	
<b>In-service Training</b>										
In-servicing workshops on special needs students are organised for teachers.	30 (54.5%)	0 (00%)	55 (100%)	33 (39.3%)	7 (8.3%)	84 (100.0%)	6 (35.3%)	1 (5.9%)	17 (100.0%)	69 (44.2%)
These workshops focus specifically on inclusive classrooms.	19 (34.5%)	3 (5.5%)	55 (100%)	27 (32.1%)	5 (6%)	84 (100.0%)	2 (11.8%)	2 (11.8%)	17 (100.0%)	48 (30.8%)
I attended professional development courses in the area of special education within inclusive classrooms.	22 (40.7%)	2 (3.7%)	54 (100%)	29 (35.8%)	0 (00%)	81 (100.0%)	2 (12.5%)	1 (6.3%)	16 (100.0%)	53 (35.1%)
The workshop or workshops attended was or were designed for learning strategies in assisting students in the inclusive classroom: With varying learning styles.	6 (75.0%)	1 (12.5%)	8 (100%)	13 (81.3%)	1 (6.3%)	16 (100.0%)	0 (00%)	0 (00%)	0 (00%)	19 (79.2%)
With attention difficulties.	2 (12.5%)	13 (81.3%)	16 (100%)	4 (22.2%)	14 (77.8%)	18 (100.0%)	0 (00%)	2 (100%)	2 (100.0%)	6 (16.7%)
With emotional needs.	1 (6.3%)	13 (81.3%)	16 (100%)	3 (16.7%)	15 (83.3%)	18 (100.0%)	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	2 (100.0%)	5 (13.9%)
Behavioural needs/difficulties.	3 (18.8%)	13 (81.3%)	16 (100%)	3 (16.7%)	15 (83.3%)	18 (100.0%)	1 (50%)	1 (50%)	2 (100.0%)	7 (19.4%)
According to their multiple intelligences	0 (00%)	14 (87.5%)	16 (100%)	2 (11.1%)	16 (88.9%)	18 (100.0%)	0 (00%)	2 (100%)	2 (100.0%)	2 (5.6%)
Gender	1 (6.3%)	14 (87.5%)	16 (100%)	2 (11.1%)	16 (88.9%)	18 (100.0%)	0 (00%)	2 (100%)	2 (100.0%)	3 (8.3%)
Language barriers	0 (00%)	16 (100%)	16 (100%)	1 (5.6%)	17 (94.4%)	18 (100.0%)	0 (00%)	2 (100%)	2 (100.0%)	1 (2.8%)
Nomadic/pygmies etc.	0 (00%)	16 (100%)	16 (100%)	0 (00%)	18 (100%)	18 (100.0%)	0 (00%)	2 (100%)	2 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Aggregated score (MRA)	84 (29.6%)	105 (37.0%)	284 (38.4%)	117 (29.9%)	124 (31.7%)	391 (52.9%)	12 (18.8%)	16 (25.0%)	64 (8.7%)	

Out of the eleven indicators that made up the in-service-training component, only the indicator indicating the conduciveness of the training in relation to inclusive practices requirements “The workshop or workshops attended was or were designed for learning strategies in assisting students in the inclusive classroom: With varying learning styles” had weight above 50% notably 79.2%. This therefore reveals that the theoretical perspective of inclusive practices is not the problem but the implementation process of these in practices is the critical elements. See appendices 1, 2, 3, 4&5. This is why theoretically the study identifies from aggregate score that educators’ competences were perceived as satisfactory in theory.

**Appendix 5: Factors impacting Teachers' Competences**

Table, 14: Factors impacting Teachers' Competences:

Factors	Both academic and professional qualification			Only academic qualification			Only professional qualification			Total
	Agree	I don't know	Total	Agree	I don't know	Total	Agree	I don't know	Total	
Develop content during lessons, to connect with and build on the students' prior knowledge and experiences, including their home cultures.	40 (72.7%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	52 (61.9%)	4 (4.8%)	84 (100%)	14 (82.4%)	0 (00%)	17 (100%)	106 (67.9%)
Have the skills to restructure their curriculum and assessment arrangements to represent a wider group of students.	30 (54.5%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	54 (64.3%)	6 (7.1%)	84 (100%)	10 (58.8%)	1 (5.9%)	17 (100%)	94 (60.3%)
Have the ability to establish and maintain collaborative relationships with parents and encourage their active involvement in their children's learning.	41 (74.5%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	60 (71.4%)	4 (4.8%)	84 (100%)	13 (76.5%)	0 (00%)	17 (100%)	114 (73.1%)
Promote learning by introducing activities that emphasises on what students will learn from them.	43 (78.2%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	69 (82.1%)	4 (4.8%)	84 (100%)	15 (88.2%)	0 (00%)	17 (100%)	127 (81.4%)
Treat mistakes as natural parts of the learning process.	43 (78.2%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	61 (72.6%)	4 (4.8%)	84 (100%)	14 (82.4%)	1 (5.9%)	17 (100%)	118 (75.6%)
Approach management as a process of establishing an effective learning environment rather than emphasising roles as disciplinarians.	33 (60%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	52 (61.9%)	4 (4.8%)	84 (100%)	11 (64.7%)	2 (11.8%)	17 (100%)	96 (61.5%)
Use management techniques that elicit students' cooperation and sustain their engagements in activities.	41 (74.5%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	61 (72.6%)	4 (4.8%)	84 (100%)	10 (58.8%)	2 (11.8%)	17 (100%)	112 (71.8%)
Create a positive classroom climate implied by the principle of a learning community.	45 (81.8%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	61 (72.6%)	4 (4.8%)	84 (100%)	15 (88.2%)	1 (5.9%)	17 (100%)	121 (77.6%)
Articulate clear expectations concerning classroom behaviour in general and participation in lessons and learning activities in particular.	41 (74.5%)	0 (00%)	55 (100%)	56 (66.7%)	5 (6.0%)	84 (100%)	14 (82.4%)	1 (5.9%)	17 (100%)	111 (71.2%)
Inculcate the students' procedures that foster productive engagement during activities and smooth transitions between them, and follow through with any needed clues.	43 (78.2%)	0 (00%)	55 (100%)	58 (69.0%)	6 (7.1%)	84 (100%)	13 (76.5%)	1 (5.9%)	17 (100%)	114 (73.1%)
Convey a sense of the purposefulness of schooling and the importance of getting the most out of time spent in school.	38 (69.1%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	59 (70.2%)	5 (6.0%)	84 (100%)	11 (64.7%)	3 (17.6%)	17 (100%)	108 (69.2%)
Plan activities and assignments that stimulate variety of challenges, to help students' engagements and minimise disruptions due to boredom or distraction.	39 (70.9%)	0 (00%)	55 (100%)	61 (72.6%)	4 (4.8%)	84 (100%)	11 (64.7%)	3 (17.6%)	17 (100%)	111 (71.2%)
Model and instruct students in general study skills and learning strategies such as rehearsals, elaboration, organisation, comprehension, monitoring, and affect monitoring.	40 (72.7%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	56 (66.7%)	6 (7.1%)	84 (100%)	10 (58.8%)	2 (11.8%)	17 (100%)	106 (67.9%)
Ask questions or make comments that help all students to monitor and reflect on their learning for both content being learned and the strategies being used to process the content and solve problems.	41 (74.5%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	66 (78.6%)	6 (7.1%)	84 (100%)	13 (76.5%)	2 (11.8%)	17 (100%)	120 (76.9%)
Remove barriers to learning and allow full participation of students in school activities	47 (85.5%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	67 (79.8%)	6 (7.1%)	84 (100%)	13 (76.5%)	1 (5.9%)	17 (100%)	127 (81.4%)
Develop a range of teaching strategies to include a full range of students in their school and in their community.	44 (80.0%)	1 (1.8%)	55 (100%)	65 (77.4%)	7 (8.3%)	84 (100%)	9 (52.9%)	3 (17.6%)	17 (100%)	118 (75.6%)
Build on experience beyond the school.	43 (78.2%)	2 (3.6%)	55 (100%)	62 (73.8%)	7 (8.3%)	84 (100%)	10 (58.8%)	3 (17.6%)	17 (100%)	115 (73.7%)
Aggregated score (MRA)	692 (74.0%)	15 (1.6%)	935 (35.3%)	1020 (71.4%)	86 (6.0%)	1428 (53.8%)	206 (71.3%)	26 (9.0%)	289 (100.0%)	

$\chi^2=2.06$ ;  $df=2$ ;  $P=0.357$







