



# Implementation of Inclusive Education Interventions in Secondary Schools in Temeke District, Tanzania

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**Abstract:** *The implementation of Inclusive education interventions focuses on eliminating barriers in accessing education among learners with disabilities and ensuring their full participation in teaching and learning in schools. However, the implementation of inclusive education in secondary school is still facing significant challenges that require attention. This study examined the implementation of inclusive education interventions in four secondary schools. The study involved 88 respondents. Purposive sampling technique was used to obtain the respondents. The study targeted teachers and students involved in teaching and learning in secondary schools. Other respondents included Heads of School and educational officials. A descriptive case study design with a qualitative research approach was employed. Data were collected using in- depth interviews, open – ended questionnaire survey and documentary review methods. Major findings showed that there were improvements in interventions implemented to improve teaching and learning environment for learners with disabilities and in the provision of education and training programmes for teachers' capacity building. However, there were limitations in the availability of financial and human resources, digital technologies and assistive devices for teaching and learning. The study calls for participation and collaboration of various educational stakeholders to expedite the implementation of inclusive education interventions targeted for the achievement of educational outcomes among learners with disabilities.*

**Keywords:** *Inclusive Education, inclusive interventions, teaching and learning, secondary schools, Tanzania.*

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## 1. Introduction

The implementation of inclusive education in schools is among the interventions that aim to reduce stigma and promote empowerment among children with disabilities (Saran et al., 2020). Inclusive educational interventions advocate for the provision of learning environment that allows every learner to progress at their own pace of development in a classroom. Despite the value of inclusive education, individuals with disabilities were found to be lagging behind in educational outcomes such as years of schooling, school completion and literacy rates compared to their peers without disabilities. Overall, there is a marked difference in terms of educational attainment between

children without disability and those with disabilities (UNESCO, 2020b).

It is argued that effective interventions aim to improve educational outcomes of individuals with disabilities. This can be done through the provision of necessary skills in teaching and learning in schools. These intervention target to improve learners' attendance and the monitoring of the enrolment of learners with disabilities (Hurt et. al, 2021). Other interventions include accessibility to build environment and learning materials including building ramps and developing inclusive information technology infrastructure which aim to improve physical accessibility of educational places. Others include educational service development interventions, which target programmes and

policies that focus on professional development for capacity building. Inclusive interventions also focus on learning social environment and social inclusion which targets to improve quality and inclusiveness of the learning social environment, and to reduce stigma (Hurt et. al, 2021).

Inclusive education is also considered as a legal right established by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2008). In addition, Sustainable Development Goal 4 calls for ensuring an inclusive and equitable quality education. Likewise, according to the UN Convention on the Rights of persons with disability, the right to inclusive education encompasses a transformation in culture, policy and practice in all educational environments to accommodate differing requirements and identities of individual students, and commitment to remove the barriers that impede that possibility (United Nations, 1990; UNESCO, 2020a).

The African Union Agenda 2063 focuses on ensuring quality and well-being of all citizens, the provision of social security and the protection for all including persons with disabilities. Also, the 2030 Agenda for SDG's call for the inclusion of persons with disabilities and the advancement of their rights in all national programmes (National Bureau of Statistics & Office of the Chief Government Statistics, 2025). Likewise, the National Strategy for Inclusive Education emphasize the promotion of safe, friendly and supportive educational environment to ensure positive educational outcomes in both formal and non-forma education levels. The study aimed to examine the inclusive education interventions implemented in schools for learners with special needs. The study, therefore, sought to answer the following question: How do schools implement inclusive education interventions for learners with special needs?

## 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Inclusive education provides an opportunity for a learning environment where children with disabilities are educated together with learners without disabilities. However, evidence for the effectiveness of inclusive education interventions has not been well established. There are still gaps in educational outcomes and attainment among learners with special needs (Walid & Luez, 2018). Moreover, there are limitations in the implementation and provision of inclusive education in schools. Some of the limitations include inadequate resources, inadequate experience among teachers and inadequate financing for the inclusion in schools (UNESCO, 2020b; Nazar et al., 2018).

Efforts and initiatives are made by the Government of Tanzania in the management of inclusive education (URT, 1977; IDS, 2020; UNPDPD, 2021; URT, 2025a). The Tanzania vision 2025 on disability and the National policy on PWD's emphasize on inclusive and equitable societies. It calls to ensure that education systems are accessible and inclusive for all students (The United Republic of Tanzania, 2004; URT, 2025b). Likewise, the National Strategy for Inclusive Education intended to improve school systems and learning environment and to ensure improved educational outcomes in secondary schools for children with disabilities (URT, 2021). However, there are shortfalls in the implementation of interventions for inclusive education in secondary schools. Evidence shows that there is inadequacy financing for inclusion in schools due to limited resources. Also, the usage of assistive devices among people with disabilities is still as low as less than 2 per cent except for persons with albinism (20.2%). In addition, there are limited digital technologies that can be used to assist Persons with Disabilities (PWD's) in teaching and learning. Recent data show that, 11.2 per cent of the total population aged 7 years and above have some form of disabilities (NBS & OCGS, 2025). This study examined inclusive education interventions in secondary schools. The study focused on interventions that aimed to improve teaching and learning and educational outcomes among learners with disabilities. This study is significant as it contributes to knowledge in inclusive education and it also helps to inform policies related to the implementation of inclusive education in schools.

## 2. Literature Review

This section presents a review of theoretical and empirical literature on inclusive education interventions for teaching and learning in schools.

### 2.1 Theoretical Framework

The study is guided by social constructivist theory which focuses on the constructions of knowledge and how individuals make perceptions and interpretations of activities and actions. It views the construction of knowledge as constantly changing (Rapp & Corral Granados, 2021). The theory encourages learning through different experiences in an environment and through pedagogical approaches that encourage student-student interaction, cooperation and learning that focus on student activity. It explains how learning occurs in line with subjectivity and interaction. Hence, it guides students into understanding their role in a social group, how to behave based on their understanding and subjective process (Akpan & Beard, 2016; Larison, 2022). The theory was used in this study to explain interventions that focus on learners and interactive instructional learning for effective

teaching and learning that allows sharing of new knowledge and experiences. It also informs facilitation and targets teacher's role in teaching and learning for learners with disabilities.

## **2.2 Empirical Literature Review**

### **2.2.1 Interventions for the implementation of Inclusive Education in Secondary Schools**

Inclusive interventions focus on eliminating barriers from accessing education, health, and other social services and to ensure participation of individuals with disabilities in all aspects of life (UNICEF, 2022). There are different interventions that help in addressing challenges experienced in school settings. Some of them include, education and training programmes for teachers, improvement of learning environment, curriculum and pedagogy improvement, Social and community support awareness and non-discrimination. Inclusive education in this study means education that does not exclude anyone in terms of disability and any other barriers that prevent a child from accessing, participating and engaging in education (Hurt et. al., 2021).

#### ***Education and Training for Teachers***

Teacher quality is an important factor that determine students' performance. Teachers contribute to students' learning and their well-being. They are expected to have appropriate skills and knowledge for administering inclusion in the classroom. Thus, imparting knowledge and skills for inclusive education among teachers is of paramount importance (Kisanga, 2019; Losioki & Ngowoko, 2024). Teachers need awareness of critical aspects on student centred learning intervention. This kind of intervention considers learning as essential for creating conditions needed by people with special needs in order to support their learning. Interventions can therefore be designed to target teachers' knowledge and skills development, and the promotion of interactive learning environment that encourage active participation in a process that emphasizes discovery, building awareness and attitude change (Snelling & Fingal, 2020).

#### ***Improvement of Learning Environment***

Scholars argue that the education environment and the way schools are structured and function can determine how learning is conducted, and how teachers and students interact with learners with disabilities (Possi & Milinga, 2017; Mizunoya, et al 2018). Hence, interventions for the improvement of educational outcomes is meant to ensure that learning environment has adequate infrastructure to be accessible to people with disabilities and the provision of learning materials is of paramount importance. Thus,

investments and strengthening the usage of assistive devices, digital technologies and infrastructure improvement can provide solutions and efficiency in teaching and learning (NBS & OCGS, 2025). Moreover, teachers and peers are trained and supported to create inclusive space for teaching and learning among learners with disabilities (Garira, 2020). Therefore, an improved learning environment help to address problems affecting PWD's. Also, training for teachers to support diverse learning needs of PWD's is considered important.

#### ***Social Support for lifelong learning***

Students with disabilities have inadequate social interaction skills and fewer interactions with peers in the classroom. Interventions that focus on promoting a sense of friendship, safety, belonging and protection are emphasized. Also, awareness raising on non - discrimination practices and stigma reduction can ensure that learners with special needs get the support from peer groups and community members. In addition, building a sense of responsibility, satisfaction and pride is integrated in different activities such as teaching and learning in classrooms, playing games and singing and in extracurricular activities (Giordano, et. al., 2019).

#### ***Curriculum and Pedagogy Improvement***

Curriculum implementation at school level determines how the needs of students can be addressed. Flexibility in curriculum delivery is emphasized in order to help students with special needs to receive appropriate support (OECD, 2019a). Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are encouraged as they provide the adaptation of the curriculum to address students' needs. The adaptation can be done through accommodation and modification. Accommodation help students to access and cover the same curriculum. For example, time and duration to cover specific curriculum can consider students with special needs. Modifications can allow changes of assignments or the curriculum to make it easier for students with special needs to be graded or assessed under standards which are different from those of other students (OECD, 2019a).

Moreover, interventions can also be through teaching and assessment approaches. Different pedagogies play an important role in teaching and learning. They have positive impacts and serve various students' needs. These include small group approaches and individual instruction. These approaches help to support learners with special needs (Mezzanotte, 2020). The assessment can alienate students from the education system. Hence, the assessment is to be designed without bias for certain groups of learners. Equitable assessment can be developed at a system level and validity and reliability of assessments are emphasized. Sufficient and flexible assessments are considered

important in meeting the needs of all students (OECD, 2019b).

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 The Area and Design of the Study

The study was conducted in Temeke District in Dar –es – Salaam region. The district was selected purposively as it has both urban and rural settings (URT, 2022). The study employed a descriptive case study design and a qualitative research approach.

#### 3.2 Target Population

The study involved 88 respondents including 40 secondary school teachers and 48 respondents including, Heads of Secondary School, Education Officers, teachers, and students selected purposefully in four secondary schools, two (2) public and two (2) private in Temeke. Purposive sampling technique was used to obtain respondents. Teachers, and students were involved in the study because they participate in teaching and learning process in schools. Also, Educational Officers and Heads of School were involved in the study based on their respective positions in school management roles. Data sources were both primary and secondary.

#### 3.3 Methods of Data Collection

Different methods were used to collect data from the respondents. First, open – ended questionnaire survey was used to collect data from teachers regarding interventions for inclusive education for learners with disabilities. Second, in depth interviews were conducted to key informants where by Education Officers, Heads of School, and selected teachers and students were interviewed. A total of 35 interviews were conducted. Each interview took 30 to 40 minutes. Data collection was stopped after reaching data saturation where the respondents repeated same ideas (Saunders et. al., 2018). Third, documentary review of various documents was done from both written and electronic materials such as policy documents and government publications. This method provided useful and relevant information.

#### 3.4 Data Analysis

Qualitative data obtained from the research study was coded and organized into key themes according to the objectives of the study. Content analysis was used to analyse data. Summary of the information that was obtained from the respondents was interpreted to get the findings and general study conclusions.

### 3.5 Ethical Considerations

In order to ensure ethical considerations in this study, the research was registered and a research clearance was obtained from The Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy Authority to conduct a study in Temeke District, Dar es Salaam. The study ensured confidentiality, and obtained consent for respondents' voluntary participation. The researchers ensured that data were collected in a conducive environment and confidentiality was observed.

### 4. Results and Discussion

The following section presents the study findings and discussion.

#### 4.1 Study Findings

##### **Inclusive Education Interventions for Learners with Disabilities**

The study findings show that different interventions were employed in the implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools. These included: The improvement of teaching and learning environment, education and training programmes for capacity building, awareness raising and non- discriminatory practices, and curriculum and pedagogy improvement.

##### ***Improvement of Teaching and Learning Environment***

Findings show that there were activities that were implemented in the improvement of teaching and learning environment for learners with disabilities. The new classes and laboratories in some of the schools allowed accessibility for learners with special needs. However, findings show further that there were inadequacies of assistive devices and some other equipment for learners with disabilities as reported by this Educational Officer.

*Teaching and learning environment keep on improving. There were newly built classrooms facilities that considered the needs for learners with disabilities in terms of their accessibility. Our intention is to have a friendly learning environment to all learners. However, we have inadequate learning aid and devices for learners with disabilities (Educational Officer aged 46 years).*

The findings showed further that despite the inadequacy of learning devices there were commitments in improving classrooms facilities to ensure a conducive and friendly learning environment for all learners.

Findings obtained from students show that physically impaired learners in schools B and A can access some of the classes on wheel chairs. However, the availability of learning assistive devices (technology) was reported to be a challenge among learners in the four schools. These findings suggest that availability of assistive devices for teaching and learning was a big challenge that compromised effective learning for learners with various kinds of disabilities. For example, the reading and vision aids can allow learners to use digital displays for large font size and the devices that can assist learners in writing and motor skills.

### ***Education and Training Programmes for Capacity Building***

Findings show that there were inclusive interventions that targeted to strengthen capacity building for teachers, as reported by this Head of School:

*Inclusive education interventions are implemented through continuous professional development and training for teachers. For example, teachers in our school used to attend seminars and in service training programmes. This kind of education and training helps them to increase skills and competences, for teaching and learning in inclusive education classes (Head of School B).*

Moreover, even though training was provided for teachers, the study findings showed that the provision of in service training and seminars for teachers appeared inadequate in some of the schools. One of the teachers aged 49, had this to say:

*The provision of seminars related to the implementation of inclusive education is inadequate. Some of us have not attended such seminars recently. It is important to increase knowledge, skills and new techniques when teaching in inclusive education classes (The teacher, School D).*

These findings suggest further that induction courses on inclusive education for new teachers and seminars and training programmes on inclusive education for secondary school teachers were inadequate.

### ***Curriculum and Pedagogy Improvement***

Findings show that the implementation of curriculum was done accordingly. There were daily teaching and learning activities guided in the syllabus and articulated in the lesson plans. Also, there were follow ups for the implementation of inclusive education activities (teaching and learning, and the assessment). These were done at

schools, and they were further reported in other higher levels. Hence, the school enrolment, student's attendance, drop outs, performance and achievements and school completion were captured and reported. However, there were challenges in the teaching and learning as reported by a Teacher aged 52 years:

*Currently, we are using the same curriculum and syllabuses in secondary schools to guide teaching and learning for all learners in inclusive education classes. However, we emphasize for additional time arrangements to help students with disabilities including those with hearing and vision impairment to cope with teaching and learning activities in the classrooms (The teacher, School C).*

These findings show that the implementation of the curriculum content and the assessment were reported to be the same for all students. Extra time is suggested to enable learners with special needs to have complete coverage of the curriculum content. This has implications in education outcomes of the learners with disabilities

### ***Awareness and non- discriminatory interventions***

Findings show that there were interventions that targeted to improving the context in which inclusive education is provided. This included addressing issues related to stigma and discrimination that can impede the effectiveness of inclusive education in schools. One Head of School had this to say:

*It is true that discrimination towards individuals with disabilities exists in society and even in schools. We play the role to raise awareness among students and all members of school community to change negative attitudes towards learners and individuals with disabilities. We encourage provision of social support at different levels including families and communities (The head of School B).*

These findings suggest that there were commitments in addressing discrimination practices and attitudes in schools and the society that can limit access and participation of learners with disabilities in inclusive education.

## **4.2 Discussion of Findings**

Regarding the improvement of teaching and learning environment, findings have shown that the construction and rehabilitation of school infrastructure was done in some schools to improve accessibility for learners with disabilities. Scholars argue that inclusive education has positive outcomes among learners with disabilities in the improved learning environment. Also, students with

disability learn successfully and perform better in interactive learning environment. Furthermore, the learning environment maximizes students learning opportunities and achievements (Donohoo & Katz, 2017; Carter et al., 2024; Mbazi, et. al., 2025). In addition, more teaching and learning and academic opportunities were reported in inclusive education settings including learner - centred, and supportive environment (Del'Anna et. al., 2020; Tah, 2025). Hence, the provision of an inclusive environment in the delivery of skills, and availability of teaching and learning materials and devices can ensure efficiency and effective inclusive education for all learners.

Regarding education and training programmes for capacity building, findings suggest that the provision of teacher training is important in schools because it allows access to relevant information. Teachers who believe in their self-capacity and competence become more active and efficient in teaching and learning (Donohoo & Katz, 2017; Tah, 2025; Lindner, et. al., 2026). Hence, interventions can focus on building teachers' knowledge and skills. Moreover, findings showed further that capacity building is required for effectiveness in teaching and learning in inclusive education classes and in other interactions within and outside the classroom. Findings suggest further that there can be pedagogical barriers that limit the transmission of information and skills from teachers to learners. This calls for interventions for capacity building on teacher training on inclusive education. According to Garira (2020), educators in inclusive education classes are trained and supported to create inclusive space for teaching and learning among learners with disabilities.

Findings suggest further that the implementation of curriculum content and the assessment in inclusive education classes was the same to all students. Findings suggest that there were intervention areas that required arrangements that allow flexibility in school timetable to enable learners with disabilities to participate in inclusive education classroom. Furthermore, awareness on non - discrimination practices and stigma reduction can enable learners with special needs to get the support from peer groups and community members (Giordano, et. al, 2019; Aftab et. al., 2024).

### **4.3 Implications for Policy and Practice**

The study contributes to informing inclusive education policies through advocating for improvements in inclusive education interventions which target to enhancing learning outcomes for learners with disabilities. The study shows improvement achieved at the school level and the existing shortfalls in the implementation of inclusive education interventions at a secondary school level. The study further highlights areas that need strengthening in the implementation of inclusive education interventions

including financial resources for the provision of inclusive education in schools, pedagogical delivery skills and competencies among teachers in inclusive education classes. Furthermore, the study calls for the continued emphasis in addressing discrimination and negative social attitudes towards learners with disabilities in school context and communities. Thus, the study disseminates knowledge in the implementation of inclusive education and the realization of education outcomes for all learners.

## **5. Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **5.1 Conclusion**

The study examined inclusive education interventions for improving the teaching and learning and educational outcomes among learners with disabilities in secondary schools. Findings have shown some improvements in the teaching and learning environment for learners with disabilities. This includes classes which consider accessibility for learners with special needs. However, assistive devices for teaching and learning among learners with various types of disabilities including deaf- blindness, physical impairments and visual impairment were inadequate.

Findings also showed that some inclusive education interventions targeted at strengthening the capacity building for teachers. However, the provision of in service training and seminars for teachers was reported to be inadequate in some of the schools. Findings showed further that there were interventions that targeted to improving the context in which inclusive education is provided. These targeted in addressing discrimination practices and attitudes against students with disabilities in schools and community at large.

### **5.2 Recommendations**

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations are suggested to improve inclusive education interventions in schools:

1. Inclusive interventions should ensure that children with disabilities have inclusive environment and access to learning resources and social support that help schools to increase inclusivity and teachers' capacity building through training.
2. The study emphasizes improvement in training for teachers in order to equip them with knowledge and instructional skills for inclusive classes and with practical experiences for teaching learners with disabilities.

3. Participation of and collaborations with various educational stakeholders are necessary in ensuring the achievement of educational outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

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