

**THE EFFICACY OF SERVICES PROVIDED TO LEARNERS WITH INTELLECTUAL  
CHALLENGES BY MINISTRY OF EDUCATION. A CASE STUDY OF RATIDZO  
SCHOOL. MASVINGO**

**Bindura University of Science and Technology**



**A dissertation report submitted to the department of Social Work, Bindura University of  
Science Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Bachelor of Social Work  
Honors degree.**

**Supervised by**

**Dr MANGWIRO**

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
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SOCIAL WORK**

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## DEDICATION

To my beautiful mother, Moreblessing Tarupuwa. I will literally do anything under the sun just so I can make you proud and to my angel in heaven Tyler, with great love comes great pain. I miss you every day

## ABSTRACT

*For quite a long time, students living with intellectual disabilities were denied the opportunity to access quality and efficient education due to discrimination and stigmatisation that is associated with mental disabilities in most African societies and third world countries. However, due to the Declaration of human rights, all children deserve a shot at education despite their incapability. This study sought to analyse the efficacy of the services provided by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to learners with Intellectual challenges. A case study of Ratidzo School in Masvingo. Its objectives were to find out the rights and needs of students with intellectual challenges, to list services made available by the Ministry of Education and to analyse the efficacy of services offered by MOPSE to learners with Intellectual Challenges. The population of the study was made of students with intellectual disabilities from Ratidzo school and the key informants from Ratidzo school. Data was collected and analysed using the qualitative research method. Findings from the study indicated that the Ministry of Education provides a variety of services which learners with mental challenges benefit from and the government of Zimbabwe has managed to cover a gap in the education system as it has shown great improvements in special needs education. However, the Ministry of Education sometimes gets confronted by different challenges which affect their service delivery. The study thus came up with a number of recommendations to the Ministry of Education of Zimbabwe to improve these challenge with the major recommendations being educating the society about intellectual disabilities for it to be more accepted in the society*

## ACRONYMS

BEAM- Basic Education Assistance Module

ID- Intellectual Disability

MOPSE- Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education

HRBA- Human Rights Based Approach

UNCRC- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child



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# CHAPTER ONE

## 1.1 Introduction and background

Universally, learners with special needs have historically experienced discrimination in and out of the education system. Factually, people with special needs were often left in hospitals or asylums that provided little to no education. According to Tremblay (2007), the Greek and Roman philosophy believed that disability was a punishment of the gods. Due to this philosophy, some were tossed off cliffs to drown, while others were shackled and left on the hills to perish. If a child was born with a disability, fathers had the right to end the child's life. Overall, individuals with special needs were ridiculed for deformities and their unique behavior. Jean Marc Itard, a French physician and educator was one of the first educators to assert that using special teaching techniques may be helpful in educating students with exceptional needs, as noted by Rieser and Mason (1992). Seguin's educational endeavor hassled the importance of giving learners with special needs a mix of physical and mental work to help them become independent and self-reliant by presenting them with a range of cognitive and physical challenges. Tremblay (2007) claims that following World War 2, a special education system was established that was structured differently than the regular curriculum.

Regionally, most African societies had no formal special education services during the colonial era to speak of and if they existed they were too expensive for the blacks hence only the whites could afford them. According to J.S. Mbiti (1969), Africans are notoriously religious people and relate all aspects of their lives to the super natural realm therefore, people with mental and physical disabilities were considered to be outcasts as it was and still is considered as a punishment from the ancestral world hence people living with disabilities were referred as outcasts. The African Child Policy Forum (ACPF), (2011) claims that the world is becoming less

tolerant of behaviors that exclude and discriminate against people with disabilities as a result of rising understanding and awareness of universal human rights. Disability is one of the least evident but most essential aspect in educational marginalization, according to UNESCO's 2009 report. Access to education will do more than anything else to alter society's perception of disabilities. According to the ACPF (2011), eighty percent of the projected 140 million out-of-school children worldwide, the majority of whom are females and children living with disabilities, reside in Africa. The fact that many disabilities in Africa are linked to poverty, inadequate nutrition and a lack of access to necessities is what most clearly separates them from disabilities in other countries. With time, efforts were created concerning the inclusion of learners living with disabilities and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) its General Comment No. 9 and the UNCRPD (United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) all have requirements that guarantee the right to educational opportunities. However, even though most African countries have many different human rights treaties that advocate the freedom to education of learners with special needs, relevant legal provisions that support these are mostly rudimentary and more theory than practical.

According to Peresuh and Barcham (1998), up until its independence, Zimbabwe had no national policy on Special Education. The education of children with special needs was provided by charitable organisations, churches and humanitarian groups such as the Jairos Jiri Association. the Council for the Blind saw education for children living with disabilities as more like a religious and moral duty than a right. Peresuh and Barcham (1998) argue that there were only 20 special schools in Zimbabwe in 1980 and these schools were primarily supported by church contributions and fundraising efforts for charities. To add on, these special schools lacked

specially educated teachers who were trained qualified. Following independence in 1980, Csapo (1986) states that the government put the idea of universal primary education into action, reopened schools that had been shut down by the war, made basic education free and encourage adult learning. Csapo (1986) also states that the Zimbabwe National Disability Survey reported that there were many people that were left with disabilities due to the war. According to the Ministry of Education Report (1996), in Zimbabwe, special needs education caters for young people with four special main types of disabilities that are cognitive, visual, hearing and physical.

When Zimbabwe's educational system first began, students with special needs always experienced discrimination, segregation and sometimes enjoyed zero involvement in the Education system. However, every Zimbabwean legal citizen and permanent resident is entitled to basic education, this is according to Chapter 4 Part 2 Section 75 of the Zimbabwean Constitution (2013). Peresuh and Bercham (1998) also state that since Zimbabwe gained its independence, more special schools were created. Special schools for students with visual and hearing impairments were the first to be built, following those with intellectual and physical disabilities. Due to the traditional beliefs in Zimbabwe which associate disability as a fixed characteristic, it enabled the introduction of special schools to be considered ideal as it made sense to separate educational systems. According to Mushoriwa (2001), the special needs education in Zimbabwe is more integrational than inclusive. Integration and inclusion are different in that integration requires the learner to adapt to the demands of the school whereas for inclusion the school is required to adjust for the learner.

The Learner Welfare Department under MOPSE which provides mental services and special needs education focuses on aiding all students to access the educational facilities available in

order to achieve their individual best through a range of support services. Therefore, the purpose of the research will be to assess the efficacy of services being provided by MOPSE to learners with special needs.

## 1.2 Statement of the problem

According to WHO (2011), there is an increase in the failure of learners with special needs to obtain minimum expected Ordinary level subjects that are required to obtain self-sustenance jobs. Failure to get quality education often results in the exclusion of people living with disabilities in the job sector. Integrated education is creditable as it promotes social inclusion and achieving of equal opportunities for students living with disabilities. The Zimbabwean government, through MOPSE is committed towards providing high-quality schooling for learners with special needs as a priority as they have been discriminated for a very long time in the past in education system. Therefore, The MOPSE has a subdivision named the Psychological Services, Special Needs and Learner Welfare Department that focusses on empowering all students living with or without disabilities to be able to get admittance in educational institutions in order to achieve their individual best. These three pillars each serve a specific purpose. For instance, learner welfare ensures that all schools adhere to the rules for providing a safe space for students that is hygienic and learner conducive environment for students. It also coordinates effectively with different stakeholders in order to ensure the success of social security nets and school health programs. The psychological services pillar puts emphasis on providing schools with psycho-educational assessment, intervention and monitoring and evaluation programs. It also focuses on operation of school-based screening for the childhood identification of mental challenges and supporting learners with unmet cognitive needs. The department focuses on

providing guidance and counselling services to individuals, groups of learners in all schools. The Special Needs pillar organizes the endowment of excellent special education program for the advantage of learners with special needs. It also focuses on development to mainstream teachers that are able to meet the needs of learners with special needs at the same time addressing their inclusive academic talents through active cooperation with school inspections done by the Ministry in safeguarding quality teaching and learning in special schools, RUs (Resource Units), special classes and inclusive mainstream settings for the advantage of acknowledged learners living with disabilities. This study seeks to and investigate on the effectiveness of services being provided MOPSE to learners with special needs at Ratidzo Zimcare Trust School.

### 1.3 Aim

The study's primary goal is to assess the effectiveness and shortcomings of the services provided to students with special needs by MOPSE in Zimbabwe

### **Objectives**

- To find out the rights and needs of students with intellectual challenges
- To list the services made available by MOPSE
- To analyze the efficacy of services offered by MOPSE to learners with intellectual challenges

### 1.4 Research questions

- To what extent are the services offered by MOPSE beneficial to learners with intellectual challenges?



- What challenges confront students with psychological challenges in the educational system of Zimbabwe?
- Explore the needs of learners with intellectual challenges and how best the educational system can meet those needs

### 1.5 Assumptions

The researcher assumes that despite the general knowledge that learners with special needs tend to have their right to quality education often abused, MOPSE have not been putting efforts to integrate learners with special needs. The services being offered by MOPSE to students with exceptional needs allow learners with special needs to reach their highest potentials as they cater for the in and out of school needs of students living with disabilities. The Ministry of education collaborates with relevant stakeholders from PVOs and state organizations like the Department of Social Development in order to deliver quality services to their clients

### 1.6 Significance of the study

Peoples living with disabilities are often subjected to stigma and discrimination as they are a vulnerable group that lives amongst a society which culturally has a negative attitude towards disabilities and impairments. Therefore, the study seeks to shed a light on the services provided by the MOPSE to students with special needs and to deeply analyze the level of efficiency of these services. This would then call for the researcher's role as an aspiring Social Worker to critically analyze the services being provided and their shortfalls and to advocate amendment of school policies so as to address any gray areas concerning the treatment of pupils with special needs in and out of the school environment in an effort to integrate them successfully so as to guarantee them a brighter future. The study will produce data which will aid policymakers in

developing regulations that close the gaps created by the services provided by the MOPSE. In carrying out this research, the researcher will acquire research skills which will also benefit the researcher to have an improved appreciation of the requirements of learners with special needs in an educational setting. As a result, the study will produce knowledge that could be helpful to other social workers and university students or anyone in need of a broader knowledge on the efficiency of services that the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education are offering learners with special needs.

### 1.7 Limitations of the Study

Limitations are potential weaknesses which usually are out of the researcher's control. Therefore, these are shortcomings of a study. The study faced limitations of not gathering quality information from the learners with mental challenges as the mental challenges might act as hindrance to proper communication during the face to face in-depth interviews.

### 1.8 Delimitations of the Study

The research will be conducted in Masvingo at Ratidzo ZIMCARE Trust. The school is less than 5km away from the District offices of the Ministry of Education. The researcher chose Ratidzo School as it is a special school for mentally challenged learners. The school has a high rate enrolment in the district for learners with mental challenges. Discrimination and stigma learners with intellectual challenges face in and out of school.

## 1.9 Definition of terms

### Efficacy

- The beneficial effects of a program under optimal conditions of delivery (Greenberg 2004)

### Intellectual disability

- AAIDD (2019) states that intellectual disability is a condition marked by severe impairments in intellectual functioning as well as adaptive behavior which includes many daily social and practical disabilities

## Proposed Chapter Outline

### Chapter 1: Background for the Study

In this chapter, a summary of the whole study and the study's history are included. Along with the problem statement, study justification and the objectives for the whole study.

### Chapter 2: Literature review

The chapter reviews studies done by other scholars concerning the same topic and also consist of Theoretical frameworks are found in this chapter

### Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Design

the research methodology, sampling and data gathering methods to be utilised in the study as well as data analysis are found in this chapter.

## Chapter 4: Data analysis, interpretation and discussion of findings

The analysis and interpretation of findings of data will be presented in this chapter.

## Chapter 5: Summary, conclusions, recommendations and areas for further research

Conclusions are drawn from recommendations for future researchers, policy makers and the government

### 1.10 Chapter Summary

Chapter one presents the overall research view overview outlining the study's historical context, research problem, statement of the problem, purpose, the research questions and objectives. The chapter also provides the delimitations and limitations of the study and outlines what the rest of the chapters will consist of.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the review of the literature on the efficacy of services being provided by the MOPSE to learners with special needs and providing scholarly evidence that has been conducted before by other researchers. According to Kabir (2016), reading, analysing, assessing and summarising academic texts regarding a particular topic is the process of doing a literature review. Therefore, the main purpose of this chapter is to synthesise and analyse the arguments of others. The chapter is going to begin with describing explaining on the theoretical framework of the study then followed by a review on the literature.

### 2.1 Theoretical framework

According to Stewart (2011), a theory is a supposition or system of ideas intended to explain something. Therefore, Sekaran (2016) argues that a theoretical framework can be explained as the abstract model of the relationship between several aspects or things that have been

determined to be significant for the study area. Hence a theoretical framework is that which supports a theory of a study and clarifies why the research problem being investigated exists. Infringement of rights of people living with special needs has resulted in the many calamities in their day to day lives, therefore this study is going to make use of the (HRBA) Human Rights Based Approach to explain the problem under study.

## 2.2 The Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA)

The study adopts the HRBA to education in the study which gives a deeper understanding on how MOPSE is catering and advocating for the rights of learners in the education system in Zimbabwe. The goal of the HRBA to education is to ensure that all children receive a quality education which acknowledges and endorses their right to dignity and most favorable development. (UNICEF 2007). The HRBA to education for all was introduced by UNICEF as a cooperative project between UNICEF's education department and its human rights division. The HRBA promotes recognition of human rights and helps the government in achieving their human rights obligations. It guarantees that each child has the chance to receive an education that respects and supports their right to dignity and healthy development. According to Fortin (2003), the HRBA is a "touchstone" for young people throughout the world as it provides a benchmark and standards across all phases of their lives.

Since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, education has been explicitly acknowledged as a human right but however wasn't applied to learners with intense special needs like intellectual challenges. The HRBA is the most suitable attitude for this study as most children with intellectual challenges were neglected access to education for quite an elongated period of time but due to Human rights that argue that all children deserves access to quality education, their rights were finally recognized. The HRBA to special education relies on

the right to education to direct and organize all aspects of learning, from educational policies to the learning environment as well as the human rights principles of nondiscrimination, impartiality, accountability and transparency.

UNICEF (2007) argues that the empowerment of all people is acknowledged as a necessary strategy and a goal in the HRBA, hence focus is put on promoting possibilities for kids with special needs. According to Pimentel (2006), a rights based attitude to education necessitates acknowledgement of the human of all people and offers all learners education as an entitlement rather as a privilege and does not exempt any learner of the learning process towards the fulfilment of their deserving beneficial education. Therefore, the human rights based approach focuses on mindful and systematic enhancement of human rights in all aspects of life.

### 2.3 Relevance of the theory to the study

Since the 1948 passage of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, education has been explicitly acknowledged as a human right. Therefore, education's primary goals are to improve human rights respect, encourage everyone's personal growth and prepare people to partake fully in an independent community. Therefore, relating to the efficacy of services offered to learners with intellectual challenges by the ministry of Education, it is of vital cause to look at the children's rights and how they address the issue of inclusive education to learners with all kinds of special needs. The HRBA to education emphasizes on the recognition of individual rights towards achieving quality and accessible education for all.

The HRBA to education is highly relevant to this study as it acts as a commitment to abolish discrimination at all levels of education and to pave standards as well as to develop better educational services. In most societies, people living with disabilities are often subjected to

stigma and discrimination as they are a vulnerable group that lives amongst a society which culturally has a negative attitude towards disabilities and impairments. Therefore, the HRBA to education is highly efficient to this research as it believes that through providing efficient and quality education to young people with intellectual challenges it lessens or eliminates discriminatory activities in and out of school environment as they are educated and can develop themselves.

Learners with intellectual challenges are often excluded in social activities due to in capabilities caused by the mental challenges therefore the HRBA is relevant to the research as it works hand in hand with the UNCRC (United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child) (1989) which believes in the principle of the right of development of the child to the maximum possible extent. This principle ensures that learners are acknowledged as active representatives hence education is intended to stimulate and respect their rights hence the relevance of this theory to the study.

The HRBA to education is appropriate to this study as it contributes to positive social transformations. Historically, people with mental issues were regarded as cursed or a result of a misfortune and they were underserving of any efficient form of education. According to UNICEF (2007), children with special needs and other stakeholders are empowered by the HRBA to education that upholds human constitutional rights and it serves as an important step in efforts to bring about social justice for all, especially for people with disabilities whose rights have long been disregarded. This highlights the relevance of the HRBA to special needs education.



## 2.4 TO ARGUE ON THE GLOBAL CONCEPT ON SERVICES OFFERED TO LEARNERS WITH INTELLECTUAL CHALLENGES

Globally, learners with intellectual challenges are recognized as those with difficulty cognitive processing times, issues with communication and social skills, challenges with the sequential processing of information and others. According to McGuire (2006), the UNCRC (1989), and UNESCO (1994) have guided states to seek and create solutions for organizing special schools and education for all. The AAIDD (2015) states that the internationally accepted definition of cognitive impairment is a condition marked by serious limits in both cognitive functioning and adaptive behavior which includes all daily social and practical abilities. Historically, many cultures and societies across the world recognized any form of disability as a result of witchcraft and dark magic hence most people living with disabilities were considered as outcasts and cursed. However, in this new era of the HRBA to education, countries all over the world seek to achieve a positive attitude towards intellectual disabilities. Rillota and Nettelbeck (2007) states that positive attitudes influence the success of inclusive education. For example, in China, Siperstein (2011) states that most adolescents had a negative attitude towards the competence of learners with intellectual challenges. He further argues that people should be given opportunities to interact and witness the competence of students with intellectual disabilities and inclusion of intellectually challenged students in non-academic classes is the beginning. Memisvic and Hodzic (2011) further prove the importance of attitude in special needs education as they examined Bosnia and Herzegovina's special needs teachers' attitude to be positive and concerned. This kind of attitude towards learners with intellectual difficulties is key towards achieving effective inclusive education. According to Hammond (2010), in the United States of America, learners with moderate intellectual challenges receive technological education.

Hammond (2010) argues that technology can be useful in teaching several life skills as technological skills are an important area of life skills and video modelling is very effective in teaching learners with adequate intellectual disabilities. However, such inclusive education is difficult to achieve in under developed countries like Afghanistan, Cambodia and Chad as it is costly and they cannot afford certain technologies. According to Cooney (2006), students with intellectual disabilities in mainstream schools experience more stigmatised treatment than those in segregated schools. Therefore, the background status of the student with an intellectual disability affects the quality of inclusive education.

#### 2.4.1 To argue on the regional concept of services offered to learners with intellectual challenges

According to J. S Mbiti (1969), Africans are notoriously religious people and every aspect of their lives is linked to the supernatural realm and that is the same situation with disabilities in most African societies. Up to date, mental disabilities are still associated with African beliefs like “kutanda botso”. In Zimbabwe people believe that if you assault one’s mother one can get mentally deranged and this is considered as a punishment from the ancestors hence the negative attitude given to those with mental illnesses. People with intellectual challenges in Africa are often neglected as active participants of the society and decisions that concern their lives are done on their behalf. Due to their unique behaviors, they are often stigmatized. According to the World Bank (2011), youngsters with exceptional needs are often denied admission to education, particularly in third world countries like Ghana. In Ghana, learners with intellectual disabilities record the lowest school enrollment rate (WHO 2011). In middle income countries like Mozambique, adult participants without any disabilities have controlled researches on inclusive education whilst ignoring the children with intellectual disabilities as they are the biggest

participants. According to Messiou (2002), studies show that high-income countries in the Southern African region like Botswana and Morocco utilize children's voices in inclusive setting and this is efficient as it reveals that learners with intellectual challenges often experience marginalization which has a negative impact on their mental stability. According to James and James (2004), the UNCRPD (United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities), among other international human rights instruments, has recognized children's rights to voice their opinions and participate in society in matters that concern them. Therefore, together with the Sustainable Development Goals, the main emphasis is to provide quality and equitable inclusive education for all children.

#### 2.4.2 Local services offered to learners with intellectual challenges

After Zimbabwe got its independence in 1980, the education system improved and most blacks that were denied access to education during the colonial era got educated but that was not the issue with special education. There were no special schools that catered for black people with mental illnesses or any other disability and if they were there, black people could not afford them as they were too expensive. Due to the African beliefs that mental illnesses were associated with witchcrafts and bad luck, attitude towards people with mental illness in Zimbabwe was largely negative and they were shunned and considered as outcasts. Presuh and Barcham (1998) states that Students with special needs mainly got education from charity organizations and churches. According to the Secretary's Circular No 36 (1990), the Ministry of education introduced special classes in ordinary schools for students with slight or severe mental challenges. According to Mushoriwa (2001), Zimbabwe offers integration rather than inclusive education to learners with special needs. Integration education is whereby the learner adjust to the already existing setting of education whilst inclusive education is whereby the education system caters for the needs of

the learner. This is noted by resource rooms and special class within ordinary schools. However, the government also cooperated with churches towards building of schools for the mentally challenged like Ratidzo school in Masvingo by ZIMCARE TRUST and Ruvimbo Special School. In order for a child to be enrolled in schools for the mentally challenged, one has to be assessed by the District's school psychologist and they will determine whether the child will be enrolled in a special class at an ordinary school or they should be enrolled at a special school

#### 2.5.0 The global view of the rights and needs of learners with intellectual challenges

According to the World Conference on Education for All (1990), the number of children excluded from school most of them have special needs. This revealed the greatest calamity children with special needs experienced which is exclusion. All member nations were required by the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities to provide education for children with disabilities in 1993. According to UNESCO (1994), all member states' ordinary schools should accommodate and provide education for all regardless of their physical or intellectual abilities. UNCRC (1997), claimed that all states should review and amend laws that affected children with special needs. The Convention on the Rights of people with disabilities went into effect in 2008 and international law was formed regarding inclusive education. The AAIDD (2018) states that all learners living with intellectual challenges should receive a free applicable communal education which includes fair education, determined goals, inspiring objectives, the right to progress with education and access to general education curriculum that is age appropriate. This assertion can be achieved in developed countries as most developing countries do not have the funding to offer free education. All of this aims to uphold the worldwide right of children with intellectual disabilities to an education. According to

UNICEF (2012), learners with special needs also have the right to be active participants and take part in choices and decisions that influence their lives. The World Bank (2005), also adds that students living with disabilities are contributors to the society and educating them is a great investment. Therefore, this means that educating young people with disabilities in this case those living with intellectual challenges reduces future dependence as lesser people will be dependent on social welfare. However, achieving inclusive education in third world countries is still a great hustle as there are not enough qualified special needs teachers and the states cannot cater for all due to lack of funds and resources.

#### 2.5.1 The regional view of the rights and needs of learners with intellectual challenges

Through the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals which believes in the concept of leaving no one behind and according to the SDG number 4, the Sub Saharan African region affirms that there should be equal access to education for all and vocational training for people living with disabilities. In the Sub-Saharan Africa, achieving inclusive education is still quite a challenge as most of learners with intellectual challenges learn less due to lack of inclusive education programs and policies and this often result in school drop outs. According to USAID (2020), Countries throughout Sub-Saharan Africa ratify the UNCPRD and the UNCRC through committing to inclusive education. The World Bank also states that it is their priority to make educational investments for young students with disabilities. However, regardless of education being referred to as a basic right, the GPE (2018) argues that in Sub-Saharan Africa, state governments, bilateral and multilateral development agencies are only beginning to put an emphasis on ensuring education for learners with special needs. This therefore means that learners with special needs were neglected and abused for quite a long time. Most countries in

the Sub-Saharan countries are still developing countries and most citizens are poor and cannot afford basic education hence most learners with intellectual fail to exercise their right to an education that meets their needs and assist them in full participation in society. According to USAID (2020), in Kenya, 33.3 percent of learners with special needs drop out every year. This is often because of discrimination, abuse, poverty and lack of adaptive or inclusive teaching practices and in Sub-Saharan Africa it could be because of cultural practices.

#### 2.5.2 To observe the local concept on the rights and needs of learners with intellectual challenges

All Zimbabwean legal residents have a right to a basic education as stated in Chapter 2 Section 75 of the Zimbabwean Constitution. All organizations of the government, are required to acknowledge the rights of people with physical or mental disabilities, corresponding to section 22 of the same chapter. The Sustainable development goal number 4 argues that learners with special needs deserve an education that is beneficial to them. According to Wodon (2014), Zimbabwe just like any other Sub-Saharan African country ratifies international education conventions like Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, the United Nations Convention on the Right of Children with Disabilities. This demonstrates that Zimbabwe as a state acknowledges the right of students with special needs to an education. According to the Global Education Monitoring Report (2020), Zimbabwe is one of the countries that are making progressive strides towards assisting learners with special needs. However, disability remains a huge challenge in Zimbabwe and this was noticed by the Annual Education Statistic report (2019) as the magnitudes of learners with ID are 42.14 % in primary level and 33.62 % in secondary level. The right to

access quality education for learners with intellectual challenges in Zimbabwe faced many obstacles. According to Sibanda (2018), unreachability of schools, lack of resources and lack of political will power affected special needs education in Zimbabwe. However, it is of vital cause to also applaud the MOPSE for taking long strides in meeting educational rights for learners with intellectual challenges through building of special schools for the mentally challenged like the Ratidzo School in Masvingo and assisting those who can't afford to pay tuition fees through government programs like Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM).

#### 2.6.0 To support the global concept of the efficacy of services offered to learners with intellectual challenges

Learners with intellectual challenges receive a plethora of services of Ministries of education in their countries and many other bilateral and multilateral agencies. According to Thompson (2020), intellectual functioning issues include difficulties in problem solving, effective communication and learning. Therefore, services offered to learners with intellectual challenges are psycho-social support, psychological assessment, speech therapy and financial resources.

##### **1. Efficacy of psycho-social support**

According to UNCRC (2013), every child has the right to live, develop and have their needs met for their physical, emotional and social well-being. UNICEF (2020), states that globally mental health disorders among children and adolescents are far more prevalent than before making suicide the fourth leading cause of death among young people. Without upkeep and sustenance, young people living with intellectual challenges often feel neglected and it affects their well-being. According to Freeman (2006), children with special needs and their care givers are vulnerable to stress therefore during the course of childhood and adolescents, learners with

intellectual challenges can be assisted with psycho-social support like building of resilience and this can be done through parent involvement in their child's emotional and material needs. Psycho-social support offered to learners with intellectual challenges can be in form of interaction with others, counselling and policies that protect them from abuse and discrimination. Therefore, these are effective as they reduce stress and promote child development and promote the feeling of belonging. However, low income countries across the world cannot afford certain psychosocial support programs due to lack of resources and funding.

## **2. Efficacy of Speech therapy**

Intellectual disabilities cause communication problems as the mentally challenged child find it difficult to communicate with others properly. A speech disorder is whereby one has difficulty producing sounds of speech necessary to communicate effectively with others. Therefore, learners with intellectual challenges are offered speech therapy where they are assisted to attain their communication potentials and improve language skills. Speech therapy also include building of eye contact, expanding individual's vocabulary, incorporation of visual cues like gestures and appropriate social etiquettes and standards. Globally, speech therapy has been considered highly efficient in assisting learners with intellectual needs as it assists them in being 'heard' and to also become active participants in the society.

## **3. Efficacy of psychological assessments/ evaluation**

According to American Psychology Assessment (2020), psychological assessment is mainly concerned with empirical research that is relevant to assessments conducted in the broad field of clinical psychology. Before a child with intellectual challenges gets enrolled in a special school, psychological assessments are done so as to diagnose the child and they determine



the levels of the mental illness. According to UNICEF (2021), there are nine types of psychological tests and these are intelligence, personality, attitude, achievement, aptitude, neuropsychological, vocational and direct observation tests. Psychological assessments assist in identifying causes of symptoms and to provide a basis for developing a treatment plan that suits them. Globally, psychological assessments have played a huge role in providing quality education that meets the needs of learners with intellectual challenges as they provide what a child specifically needs and is lacking in order to meet their greatest potential.

#### 2.6.1 To support the regional concept of the efficacy of services offered to learners with intellectual challenges

According to Samboma (2021), the Sub-Saharan African Region is one of the least developed region with a larger population of individuals living with intellectual disabilities. In this region, disability is more of a taboo or curse and people living with mental disabilities often receive negative attitudes from the society. According to United Nations (2011), a third of the sixty-one million children out of school globally have disabilities and most of them live in the Sub-Saharan Africa. Hills (2007), argues that due to the negative attitudes given to children with intellectual challenges, it affects their self-esteem and increases their vulnerability to stress. Therefore, being socially excluded and isolated may also increase anxiety and feeling useless in the society. To address difficulties faced by learners with intellectual disabilities these countries in the Sub-Saharan African region offer social skill training, psycho-social support, psychological assessments and financial assistance although minimum.

##### **1. Efficacy of social skill training**

According to Karra (2013), social skills are defined as a set of skills used for interaction with others and these skills include sharing, taking turns and allowing others to talk without interrupting. These can be verbal or nonverbal. According to the early findings of Strain (1984), children with intellectual challenges initiate fewer social interactions and demonstrate fewer responses when talking to peers and this results in difficulty in making friendships. Examples of social skill training are drama, sporting games, painting and many others. Social skills training for learners with intellectual disabilities is important as it helps in developing strong and positive peer relationships and become active members in the society.

## **2. Efficacy of psycho-social support**

Africans living with intellectual disabilities receive the highest negative attitudes as it is associated with religious beliefs, witch craft and dark magic. According to UNICEF Uganda (2007), psychosocial support can be offered in forms of schooling, activating social networks in age friendly environments and care and support from one's family and support. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the Maputo Protocol recognizes the right of children with disabilities to live free from violence and discrimination. The African Charter on the Rights and welfare of the child also recognizes the needs of the physical and mental development of every child as well as the rights of children with special needs to special measures of protection, allocation of resources and access to public services.

### [2.6.2 To support the local concept on the efficacy of services offered to learners with intellectual challenges](#)

Mandepa (2013) argues that, in Zimbabwe 1.9% of the populace are people living with disabilities and a quarter of these people are living with mental disabilities with thirty percent of them being children. The amended Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013) states that all children with

intellectual disabilities should be included in regular schools. Manolipa (2013) also states that the Constitution of Zimbabwe affirms the registration of learners with Intellectual challenges in ordinary schools and should have fair access to education just like any other learners attending normal schools. Learners with intellectual challenges in Zimbabwe receive quality inclusive education. According to Chimonyo (2011), an inclusive learning environment promotes all children from abuse while celebrating differences and stimulating learning for all including learners with special needs. Children with Intellectual incapacities can learn with other competent children as long as their differences are given an attention. In Zimbabwe, inclusive education proves to be efficient as there are special classes for children with mental challenges and they receive quality lessons just as those in ordinary classes. The Ministry of Education of Zimbabwe also offers financial assistance to learners with intellectual challenges through programs like the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM), which assist those who cannot afford school fees. However, according to Lang (2007), there are less than two thousand trained teachers in special needs education which postulates that most teachers for these special classes are not trained and this puts children with intellectual disabilities at risk of verbal and emotional abuse. Also, in Zimbabwe, special schools for the mentally challenged are far from reach and most learners cannot afford to reach them due to poverty. Therefore, the government of Zimbabwe should promote training for qualified special needs teachers and to also build infrastructures that are accessible to all.

## 2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

The above chapter concentrated on the literature review on the efficacy of services provided by the MOPSE to learners with intellectual challenges. The chapter began by describing and explaining the theoretical framework of the study, after that the chapter focused on literature concerning services provided to learners with intellectual challenges. The chapter then reviewed

the literature and it also looked at the Global, regional and local concepts on how these services are being delivered.

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Introduction

According to Creswell (2014), the manner of appreciating a social or human problem through methodology involves constructing an intricate, comprehensive picture using words to report the in-depth perspectives of informants and is carried out in a natural environment. Therefore, research methodology is a process that outlines the progression from generalizations to specific approaches through data gathering and analysis. In this study, the student engaged qualitative research method. Dreieck (2020), alludes that qualitative research is based on reality and compromises personal viewpoints of the population under study. In qualitative research, the data is gathered through multiple sources such as interviews and observations. This research is conducted where the participants resides or for example in this study the boarding school. The natural setting is important as it is the place where the participants encounters the problem under study in order to obtain up-close information. The researcher chose the qualitative research methodology due to its ability to offer responses provided by participants. The interviews, observations and documents provided by the qualitative research are all open-ended forms of data where participants are able to share data freely.

### 3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is an organised and systematic procedure meant for collecting, interpreting and analysing data during research. (Creswell 2007). According to McCaig (2010), a research design can be used as a general method for discovering solutions to problems. Therefore, it describes how the researcher of the study investigated the problem and the connection to achievable empirical research. The researcher utilised the descriptive research design to collect data. According to Calderon (2006), the goal of descriptive study design is to gather, analyse, classify and tabulate data on processes and patterns in order to generate accurate interpretations of the data, either with or without the use of statistical tools. Therefore, the descriptive research design which targets to acquire information to analytically describe a situation or a problem. Henceforth, the descriptive design enabled the researcher to gain an in depth appreciation of the services learners with intellectual challenges get from the Ministry and also the short comes.

### 3.3 POPULATION UNDER STUDY

Target populace is generally the populace in which the researcher seeks to focus on. According to Gupta (2010), population under study is simply all objects and participants that are available for inquiry in the course of the study. Therefore, population under study is the subject of the study. This research's population under study were learners with intellectual challenges at Ratidzo ZIMCARE Trust School in Masvingo and the school authority

### 3.4 SAMPLE STUDY

Sample size refers to the number of people that are going to participate or be part of the study. According to Crouch and Hudson (2002), a sample size is a small number of participants that are selected from a big group of people for testing and assumption that the sample is an accurate and fair representation of the entire population. Therefore, the sample size of this study was total of

(15) participants. Of the 15 participants, 10 will be learners from Ratidzo ZIMCARE Trust hence 5 girls and 5 boys from grade seven class as they are the ones who can possibly participate in the interviews. The researcher also interviewed 5 key informants which were the school head, two teachers, social worker and the boarding master.

### 3.5 SAMPLING METHODS

Sampling is the statistical procedure of choosing a portion of an interest population in order to make observations and statistical conclusion about that study. This entails selection of a part to represent the whole. This study utilised the purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling is a sampling strategy in which the researcher uses their own discretion in selecting participants from the population. Purposive sampling groups participants according to preselected criteria relevant to a research question. For example, in this study learners with intellectual challenges. A variety of non-probability sampling techniques are referred to as “purposeful sampling”, in which participants are chosen because they possess qualities the researcher is looking for. Purposive sampling is cost-effective and at the same time, time-effective

### 3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The researcher conducted in-depth face to face interviews to the learners with special needs, key informants like the school teachers and school head. In-depth interviews are direct and involves one on one engagement with individual participants. Each Interview lasted for 20 minutes and the researcher recorded using a mobile phone and a note book for taking down notes. The interviews were done in a setting where the participants are comfortable therefore the interviews took place at Ratidzo school playing grounds for learners. For the key informants, the interviews took place in their offices and classrooms. The researcher chose the playing grounds for interviews as it is a place associated with happiness and playing hence the participant will be comfortable. In-depth face to face interviews are important as they can establish good

relationships that result in trusting each other with participants to make them feel more comfortable hence produced more insightful responses especially on delicate topics. The researcher also conducted face to face interviews with key informants which were the school head and the teachers. Interviewing key informants was important as they supplemented the information the researcher obtained from the learners.

### 3.7 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

A research instrument is a device used to gather, quantify and evaluate information relevant to the research subject. Creswell (2012), alludes that research instrument is an evaluating, monitoring and recording data device. In the study, the researcher used interview guides as a research instrument. Interview guides are important when conducting interviews as they steer conversations towards the topics under investigation. (Kennedy 2006). The researcher made use of two different interview guides, one for the learners and one for key informants. The interview guides consisted of unstructured questions for all participants. Personal open-ended questions in interview guides enable participants to express their opinions and thoughts about, in this case on the services they are receiving from the Ministry of Education. The interview guide for key informants was important as it added on information that might have been omitted by learners.

### 3.8 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

Data is collected systematically when performing research to ensure the validity of the study. The student made use of a letter from Bindura University of Science Education which allowed the Ministry of Education, the school and those in authority to give her permission to carry out her research in a certain area of her study. The researcher also wrote a letter to explain her research activities and how those activities will be conducted in the school.

### 3.9 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

In order to get a better understanding of a phenomenon, researchers do a data analysis which is the systematic search and organisation of the interview transcript, observation notes and other non-contextual materials they acquire after conducting their interviews. The researcher employed thematic data analysis in the study. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), a technique for assessing qualitative data called thematic analysis involves searching across data sets to find, examine and report recurring themes. When conducting thematic data analysis, it is important to note the following steps which are familiarization, coding, generation of themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and writing up.

The steps are as follows:

- **Familiarization:** Gaining familiarity with the data is referred to as familiarization. That is a complete overview of everything that was gathered before individual things were analysed. This could entail listening to the audio and transcribing it, reading the text and taking initial notes and generally familiarizing yourself with the data. Therefore, the researcher followed these steps by listening to the voice recordings she recorded repeatedly during the interviews
- **Coding:** coding is the process of underlining portions of text, typically phrases or sentences to create labels or codes that can be used to quickly summarize the information they contain. Therefore, the researcher coded the information she got from the voice recordings after listening to them
- **Generating themes:** finding patterns in the codes that have been established and begin to develop themes by looking over codes. Themes are typically more expansive than codes.



Therefore, the researcher identified patterns among the codes and generated themes that relate to intellectual challenges

- **Reviewing themes:** it's time to review all of the themes that were found in order to see whether they can all be grouped into one category and still match the data
- **Finalise themes:** the process of reviewing, improving, labelling and finalizing themes begins with this stage of the data analysis process. Its critical to acknowledge that just though the researcher proceeds to the next stage, this won't exclude her from returning to the topics and revising them. Finalizing themes entails stating precisely what the themes are made of and describing them in that way.

Lastly is the write-up where the final analysis and description of findings are written down. The write up showed a description that offers a clear and coherent account on how the researcher deduces their data and reasons behind theme selection.

Therefore, the researcher followed these steps by repeatedly listening to the voice recordings that she obtained during the interviews then afterwards coded the information into possible themes which are the requirements of learners with intellectual challenges, the services they need and level of efficiency of the services.

The researcher made use of the above stages to analyse her data as each stage critically examines all the data the researcher gets from the interviews until she came up with the final write-up. Therefore, in line with this study, the major goal of thematic analysis is to identify codes and create themes based on the data collected for each question in accordance with the effectiveness of services the Ministry of Education is providing learners with mental challenges at Ratidzo ZIMCARE Trust School.

### 3.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Limitations are potential weaknesses which usually are out of the student's control. Therefore, these are shortcomings of the study. The study faced limitations of not gathering quality information from the learners with mental challenges as the mental challenges acted as hindrance to proper communication during the face to face in-depth interviews as some of the students were easily distracted or could not concentrate during the interviews

### 3.11 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research was conducted in Masvingo at Ratidzo ZIMCARE Trust. The school is less than 5km away from the District offices of the Ministry of Education. The researcher chose Ratidzo as it is a special school for mentally challenged learners. The school has a high rate enrolment in the district for learners with mental challenges. Discrimination, stigma, verbal abuse and lack of financial resources are some of the problems learners with intellectual challenges face in and out of school.

### 3.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

A collection of principles that direct the research designs and practices serve as the researchers' guidance when performing a study and these are referred to as ethical considerations. As a result, ethical considerations were taken to precedence in the research, and the following ethical considerations were used in the following research:

#### 3.12.1 INFORMED CONSENT

When conducting research, informed consent is the most important ethical issue. According to Swanson and Betensky (2015), researchers make use of consent forms in order to ensure confidentiality and the protection of participants' rights. Gaining informed consent involves a clear explanation of the purpose of the study to the participant, all the procedures for piloting the

study and the nature of the study. According to Burns (2005), participants are shielded by informed consent against physical pain, discomfort, psychological harm, invasions of privacy and threats to their dignity. By adhering to this code of conduct, the researcher was able to forge deep bonds of trust with participants by establishing essential channels of communication. Therefore, in order to uphold this ethic, the researcher ensured that all participants were aware of their rights and by so doing, they all signed the informed consent form which was proof and evidence that the participants agreed to participate knowingly. Therefore, informed consent is very important as it allows participants to knowledgeably partake.

#### 3.12.2 CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY

Confidentiality is when the researcher does not disclose important information to anyone.

When conducting research, researchers should employ methods of keeping their participants' information and identities confidential. For example, records should be kept safe through password protected files, encryption and even locking drawers and doors. Information reviewed during interviews should be kept private. Anonymity is a condition in which the identity of individual subjects is not known to researchers. According to ANA (1998), anonymity is secure when the subject's identity cannot be linked to their individual comments. Therefore, to respect the clients' confidentiality and privacy, the researcher made use of pseudo name.

#### 3.12.3 RIGHT TO WITHDRAW

According to Schaefer and Wertheimer (2016), the right to withdraw seeks to safeguard study participants from being unable to protect themselves, information imbalance, unwanted physical intrusion and inherent risks. The right to withdraw means that the partakers have the right to drop out of the research any time they wish to. This means that participants can discontinue any time

they wish to. This idea means that participants will not be coerced into participating. The researcher informed the participants that they can pull out from the activity whenever they wish to do so

#### 3.12.4 Reliability and Validity

Reliability refers to the uniformity of results which means that can the results be reproduced under the same conditions. According to Kothari (2014), reliability refers to the measure of the degree to which a research produces the same results in repeated trails. Validity refers to the accuracy of the measure meaning to say does the results epitomize what they are supposed to measure. Therefore, the research instrument was examined by the supervisor before going into the field and the instruments were constructed according to the research under study so as to ensure validity.

#### 3.13 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined and vindicated the researcher's choice of the numerous research methods, techniques and tools that were utilised in the study. The chapter then focused on the research design and approach adopted in the study that is the case study. Furthermore, the chapter presented the population under study, sample size, sampling strategy and the data collection plan.

## CHAPTER 4

### DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This subdivision contains data that was collected from the study. The chapter scrutinises, presents and interprets the information that was attained from research participants at Ratidzo School in Masvingo through the use of interviews. To illustrate the themes that emerged from the study clearly, the data is shown tables and descriptions. The following research question served as a guide for the study: the efficacy of services provided to children with intellectual challenges by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary education.

#### 4.1 Demographic information of respondents

This unit displays the participants' demographic information. In the research study, the information is crucial as it aids in the data elucidation and the creation of conclusion from data results.

##### 4.1.1 Demographic of the total respondents

**Table 1 Total Respondents**

<b>PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>Intended</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Total</b>
Learners with	10	10	10

intellectual challenges			
Key informants	5	5	5
Total	15	15	15

The above table number 1 reviews that the total number of people that participated in the research study were 15. The table shows that the study intended to interview 10 participants with intellectual challenges and the number of people that were actually interviewed were 10. The table also shows that the study intended to interview 5 key informants and the number of key informants that were actually interviewed were also 5. Therefore, the overall figure of intended participants was 15 and the complete number of actual participants were 15 also which means there was a 100% outcome. The researcher managed to interview learners with intellectual challenges as well as the key informants which were the school head, senior master and three teachers. The targeted number for the interviews was successfully achieved

4.1.2 AGE RANGE OF LEARNERS WITH INTELLECTUAL CHALLENGES

AGE RANGE YEARS	TOTAL
10 -15	6
16-20	4
TOTAL	10

The above table explains the age range of learners with intellectual challenges that participated in the research. The age range was from 10 years to 20 years because the researcher saw it fit that from this age she will be able to obtain quality information. From 10 years to 15, the research had 6 participants and from 16 - 20 years the research had 4 participants making an overall of 10 participants with intellectual challenges. The majority of the respondents were from ages 10-15

years and the least was from 16-20 years. The researcher chose 20 years as maximum age range because learners with intellectual challenges develop slower than those in ordinary schools

## 4.2 QUALITATIVE DATA PRESENTATION

The major objective of this study was to explore the efficacy of the services provided to learners with intellectual challenges by the MOPSE. The researcher managed to get the necessary information through semi structured interviews with learners with intellectual challenges and key informants using two interview schedule guides one for the learners and the other for key informants. The data was collected using notes and voice recording for easy retrieval. Ten learners were interviewed from Ratidzo School using purposive sampling method where learners were selected based on those that had better speech coherence and from the seventh grade. The key informants were also selected using the purposive sampling method where the researcher specifically chose to interview the school head, senior master and three teachers. The data was coded into different themes using thematic analysis. These themes are discussed and described below using three research objectives.

### 4.3 The rights and needs of learners with intellectual challenges

Under this theme, the researcher was able to come up with four sub-themes which were reviewed by both key informants and the learners which are the rights and needs of learners with intellectual challenges and these are mentioned below.

#### 4.3.1 The right to quality education

Two key informants reviewed that most children living with mental challenges often feel neglected in the education system as most cannot afford to pay for special education offered at special schools. Intellectual disabilities carry stigmas and discriminations that all emit from exclusion from schools. Due to expensive fees in special schools, one of the respondents

indicated that they were able to start going to school at the age of ten after a donor visited their village and offered assistance. During the interview, one of the learner respondents reviewed that;

*“kana mwedzi uri mutete, hanzvadzi yababa vangu inonditi ndinopenga nenjere saka kutambisa mari kundiendesa kuchikoro*

The above statement shows the belief that some backward Shona cultures still believe that children with mental disabilities are crazy and it’s a waste of money taking them to school. Therefore, the study found out that young learners with intellectual disabilities have the right to quality education that will assist them in life after school.

#### 4.3.2 The right to dignity, equality and worth

Some of the participants (2 key informants) were able to identify the right to dignity and worth as one of the many rights of learners with intellectual challenges. One key informant noted that

*“tinozama zvikuru kubata vana vedu zvine ruremekedzo sevamwe vana vasina chavakaremara nekuti vanhuwo vane kodzero dzavo dzizere”*

This statement by the key informant means that learners at Ratidzo school are treated by dignity and equality despite living with an intellectual disability. In Zimbabwe students with different levels of mental challenges are allowed to learn in the same environment and share the same learning resources and are taught by teachers that treat them with dignity, equality and worth. However, the respondents also argued that their right to be treated with dignity and worth is often violated as in the community and at home they are given degrading names like ZIMCARES. Such terms are derogatory as they are associated with evil spirits and curses in the



African culture. Therefore, it affects their worth in the society at large. One of the learner participants mentioned that:

*“Patinoenda kuma sports kune zvimwe zvikoro tinoona vamwe vachititiza vachiti tiri ma ZIMCARE kana kuti mapenzi”*

This statement by the learners show that outside their school, Ratidzo school learners still experience discrimination as emotionally abusive words are used towards them.

#### 4.3.3 The right to be protected from any form of abuse

Most key informant participants reviewed that children with intellectual challenges have the need to be shielded from all types of abuse just as any other child and the abuse can be in form of emotional, physical and sexual. The key informant respondents reviewed that children with intellectual challenges require a lot of patience when dealing with as their progress is quite slow hence they are prone to physical and emotional abuse as the teacher might get frustrated and might end up giving them a beating (corporal punishment) or say harsh words. One of the key informants stated that;

*“Vana vedu vanotoda moyo murefu nekuchengetedzwa nekuti ukasatodaro unogona kuora moyo ugopedzisira wava kuvarova zvinopedzisira wava kutotsimbikidza kodzero dzavo”*

The above statement by the key informant shows that the teachers acknowledge that there is need to have patience when dealing with children with intellectual disabilities in order to avoid infringing their right to be protected from any form of abuse. Also, the girls are prone to sexual abuse as their bodies may develop faster than their minds and aren't able to consent or deny anything. Save the Children (2004) states that almost 87.4 % of girls living with incapacities had

been sexually abused and 48% of them were intellectually challenged. Therefore, the researcher found out that children with mental challenges deserve to be protected. In support of this, the respondents also state that in special schools meant for the mentally challenged, there is less usage of belittling language like ZIMCARES. They also reviewed that all the staff that work with mentally challenged are qualified hence cases of emotional and physical abuse are very low.

#### 4.3.4 The right to gender equality

One of the participants acknowledged that most girls from rural areas with intellectual challenges rarely get a chance to access quality education as some are impregnated and never get the opportunity to be enrolled in special schools which leaves the boy child only benefiting and some come from backward societies that still believe in educating the boy child only. Therefore, gender equality is an issue. However, respondents at Ratidzo school reviewed that the school does not enrol learners based on gender as both boys and girls are given an equal opportunity to enrol. However, they reviewed some get impregnated when they go back home during holidays. One of the respondents mentioned that:

*“Vamwe tinotozofona vasina kudzoka kubva kuma holiday tozonzwa kuti vave nepamuviri vakatonoorwa”*

this means that the teachers sometimes do a follow up after students don't come back from school holidays only to find out that they have been impregnated and got married

#### 4.4 Services provided by the MOPSE to learners with Intellectual challenges

The researcher managed to address this objective by asking both the key informants and learners the kind of services offered by the MOPSE to learners with intellectual challenges. Respondents

were asked how efficient these services were and their level of consistency. The services are presented below.

#### 4.4.1 Child assessment

The respondents stated that the Ministry of Education offers assessments to all children with special needs be it hearing, speech, visual and intellectual before enrolling them in a special school. In this study, the Ministry offers intellectual assessment to all children with mental challenges. The process of psychological assessment involves combining data from several sources, including tests of normal and unusual personalities, tests of talents and IQ as well as information from personal interviews. Intellectual disability comes in different severities as some are mild and others too severe. The respondents reviewed that the Ministry of education offers free psychological assessments. One of the key informant respondent stated that,

*“We are not allowed to enroll a child that has not performed their psychological assessment by the Ministry of Education psychologist because these determine which kind of mental illness the child has and how best we can assist them.”*

The respondent reviewed that psychologists are the ones that determine the levels of disabilities and what kind of institution the child can be enrolled and it is mandatory for a child with intellectual challenges to get psychological assessment by qualified and referenced psychologists before getting enrolled in any special school.

#### 4.4.2 BEAM assistance

The respondents reviewed that the Ministry of education also assists learners with Basic Education Assistance Module services that help learners that are financially challenged to pay

for their school fees. One of the key informant respondent noted that special schools are known to be more expensive compared to ordinary ones and in most Zimbabwean poor societies they face financial challenges that make it difficult to afford special schools. They reviewed that the Ministry of education plays a huge role in making sure that no child stays at home due to lack of financial resources. For example, in 2022, the Ministry of Education improved their beneficiary numbers by applying the pro rata strategy whereby number of beneficiaries is determined by the total school enrolment. The respondents added on to say that many learners greatly benefit from the assistance.

#### 4.4.3 Psychosocial support

One of the learner respondents also reviewed that they get invited to seminars like Guidance and Counselling Seminars and quizzes that are hosted by the Ministry of Education with other ordinary schools. This shows that the Ministry offers psychosocial support to learners with mental challenges. Psycho social support refers to assistance provided to address a person's mental, emotional, social and spiritual requirements. One of the key informant respondent also stated that,

*“The Ministry of primary and secondary education provides psychosocial support to learners with intellectual challenges here at Ratidzo school as the Ministry also host campaigns here at Ratidzo like the Drug Awareness Campaign where they were taught about effects of drug abuse by qualified personnel who understands people with mental challenges.”*

One of the key informant respondents also stated that Ministry of Education offers psycho social support in forms of counselling. Intellectual challenges cause stress, frustrations, anxiety and sometimes depression to the learner with mental disability and their families therefore, they

stated that counselling services are provided to both learners and guardians of children with all kinds of special needs free of charge.

#### 4.5.0 the efficacy of services provided by the MOPSE to learners with intellectual challenges

This section explores the efficacy of the above mentioned services which are BEAM services, psychological assessments and psycho social support to learners that are mentally challenged. To understand this objective, respondents were asked if they benefitted from these services. Therefore, below is a clear explanation as to what extent these services are efficient.

#### 4.5.1 Efficacy of Psychological assessments

According to information given by respondents during the study, psychological assessments done by the Ministry's school psychologists are highly efficient because they determine the level of severity of the mental illness of the young learner. One of the key informant respondent reviewed that at Ratidzo school, they accept learners with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities and those with more severe cases are taken to other institutions like Ngomahuru. therefore, psychological assessments are crucial as they determine which institution the learner will benefit the most and will have their needs met.

Adding to that, psychological assessments were reviewed to be highly efficient to learners with intellectual disabilities as it helps in identifying the learners IQ levels which are important when educating a child with such special needs. For example, the respondent stated that severity of intellectual disability can be borderline which is IQ ranging from 84 to 71, mild (IQ70 -55), moderate (IQ54 to 35). These measurements of IQ help the teacher when trying to place a child with mental illnesses as there are academic and skills training classes.

However, one of the respondents reviewed that these assessments might cause discrimination to learners with mental instabilities as some are considered able to carry out academic education whilst some are not. In some cases, the IQ of the learners might be low but can still carry out academic activities hence the chances of the child to participate in academic activities are limited.

#### 4.5.2 Efficacy of BEAM services

The Basic Education Assistance Module was introduced by the government of Zimbabwe as a way of offering assistance to all children that have financial problems. The respondents reviewed that Beam has been very efficient in assisting less fortunate learners as special schools are known to be very expensive. Due to the means testing that is done during selection of the BEAM beneficiaries, those that are most deserving are the ones that benefit and it deals away with nepotism and corruption as the beneficiaries are selected by the community where the child comes from. However, means testing has also disadvantaged other learners who might benefit as they could be less fortunate too just that there are more who are deserving.

The key informant respondent also reviewed that as much as beneficial the BEAM program is to learners at Ratidzo school, sometimes there is delay in payments and by the time the payments are done they are affected by inflation which affects the school.

#### 4.5.3 Efficacy of Psychosocial Support

According to the learner respondents at Ratidzo school, psychosocial support is one of the services they are offered by the Ministry of Education. They reviewed that psychosocial support is highly efficient as it allows them to participate in sports, games and are offered free counselling for both the learner and their parent. Allowing students to participate in extracurricular activities

despite their disabilities helps with boosting confidence, relieves stress and offer the spirit of acceptance.

The key informant respondents reviewed that Psychosocial support offered by the Ministry of Education in forms of counselling session is highly efficient especially before and after visiting the psychologist for assessment. This is when the child gets diagnosed with a mental illness. Both the child and the parent get counselling in order to accept the situation. Counselling also help with self-realization and lessens stress.

However, they reviewed that at the District office, there is only one counsellor and this often results in overwhelming work load which affects their service delivery and it is often difficult to get a counselling session as it requires making an appointment and on most cases they are fully booked. This results in most parents offering not to attend these counselling sessions.

#### 4.6 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The research focused on analysing the efficacy of services provided by MOPSE to learners with intellectual challenges using Ratidzo School for the intellectually challenged as a case study. The research was directed by three objectives which are; to find out the rights and needs of learners with intellectual challenges, to identify the services provided by the Ministry of education to learners with mental challenges and to analyse the efficacy of the services that are provided by the Ministry of education. The researcher managed to interview ten learners with intellectual disabilities with ages ranging from 10-20 years. Five key informants from the school were also interviewed using open ended interviews. The research was guided by the objectives in order to discuss the findings.

To get a better understanding of issues to do with intellectual challenges and the education system, the researcher made use of the HRBA in this study. According to Pimentel (2006), a rights based approach to education requires respect for every individual and offers all learners education as an entitlement and does not exempt any learner of the opportunity. This means that the HRBA promotes access to education, quality services and views learners with intellectual challenges as deserving of the educational opportunity. According to the Human rights based approach, the duty bearers should be responsible in making conditions favorable such that learners with intellectual challenges are able to access quality special education that benefits them the most. The study revealed that the services provided by the Ministry of education to learners with intellectual disabilities can be considered very efficient.

The research found out that learners with intellectual challenges have special needs but they have rights just as any child with or without disabilities have. These rights include the right to quality education, the right to dignity, equality and worth, the right to be protected from any form of abuse and the right to gender equality. The UNCRC (1989), argues that every child despite disabilities must have equal opportunities to quality education. Also in line with this finding, historically learners with intellectual challenges were denied the opportunity to enjoy their rights and were victims of inhumane cultural practices and discriminations therefore, the Human Rights Based approach acts as a responsibility to reduce discrimination at all levels of education and to set principles as well as to develop a better quality of education. Therefore, the above discussion reviews that rights and needs of learners with intellectual challenges are currently recognized and respected by the Ministry of primary and secondary education.



After identifying rights and needs of learners with intellectual challenges, the study also found out challenges the children with intellectual disabilities are confronted with. Some of the challenges is low self-esteem which is a result of failures that are accompanied by the mental illness. Self-esteem is defined as a positive self-perception and the conviction that one is deserving of the love and respect of others. Bong and Skaalvik (2003) supports this assertion as they argue that intellectual or mental disabilities to disturbs children's self-perception as they are often referred to as depressed or introverted. This is due to past experiences whereby they have been rejected and stigmatised. the study also found that celebration of the child's strengths can help deal away with low self-esteem as it helps in making them know that despite their disabilities, their strengths are also recognized.

Adding to the above challenges, the research also found that children with intellectual challenges are also victims of bullying. The learners experience both physical (hitting, kicking, pushing etc.) and emotional (name calling, teasing and insulting) bullying. The research found out the learners mostly experience these kinds of bullying in the communities they come from and for those that walk to school they experience it in the roads. Bullying according to Farrington (1993), is the persistent psychological or physical persecution of a weaker individual by a stronger one. Dickson, Emerson and Hatton (2005, support this study as they argue that there is a high frequency of bullying in adolescents with mental challenges compared to their peers without any disability. Morrison and Furlong (1994) agrees with the finding of this study as they argue that the reason why bullying persists in students with disabilities is due to lack of individual abilities that are valued in the peer group such as cleverness, physical appearance and physical abilities and talents.

The research also found that the Ministry of primary and Secondary Education provides services like psychological assessments, financial aid through services like the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) and psychosocial services like, awareness campaigns, counselling services and sporting activities. Although the Ministry faces different challenges towards delivering these services to the learners with intellectual challenges, the research found that learners with mental challenges benefit largely from these services as they are able to get financial support, psychological assessments and inclusive services like sports with other schools. The research also found out that the services are highly efficient and are able to address the necessities of students with intellectual challenges at the same time providing quality and efficient education. Levine (2004) supports this finding as he argues that learners with Intellectual disabilities (ID) in most European countries receive services like academic tutoring, medical services for diagnosis or evaluation, occupational and speech therapy and mental health services. He also argues that early identification and assessment of disabilities is also offered for free to learners. AAIDD (2018), also support this research's finding through their published statement on education that argues that children with intellectual disabilities must be given a free applicable public education that includes fair assessments, aspiring goals, challenging objectives and the right to develop.

It is of great importance to acknowledge the shortcomings of the study. The study aimed at obtaining information from learners with intellectual challenges. This task was quite challenging as most of the students the researcher interviewed had difficulties with speech coherences and they were easily distracted during the interviews hence the interviews ended up taking longer

than scheduled. Fortunately, the researcher managed to obtain more information from the key informants.

#### 4.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter focused on presenting, analysing and interpreting the results of the whole study. The chapter began with presenting the demographic information of the respondents, age range of learners with intellectual challenges that participated in the study. The chapter also focused on the outcomes of the study concerning how efficient the services provided by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education are to learners with ID. It also addressed the challenges that the learners are confronted with.

## CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the research on evaluating the effectiveness of the services offered by MOPSE to students with intellectual disabilities a case study of Ratidzo School in Masvingo, with allusion to the research objectives and the data presented in chapter four. Additionally, it outlines the significant recommendations and also the conclusion of the study.

### 5.1 Summary

The study wanted to look at the analysis of the services that children with mental challenges at Ratidzo school receive from the Ministry of Education. The research study was guided by the following objectives; to find out the rights and needs of children with intellectual disabilities, to identify the services provided by MOPSE, to analyze the efficacy of the services provided by the

Ministry of Education. The study made use of the Human rights based approach as its theoretical framework which explains a deeper understanding on how the MOPSE is catering and advocating for the rights of learners in the education system in Zimbabwe. The HRBA (human rights based approach) gives a background on the history of education of learners with intellectual challenges as they were denied the right to quality education for quite a long time. Therefore, the HRBA promotes consciousness of human rights and helps the government of Zimbabwe in achieving their human rights commitments as it guarantees all children should have an opportunity to excellent education that respects and encourages his or her right to dignity and prime development. The learners with intellectual challenges respondents (ten) were sampled using purposive sampling method whereby the researcher specifically chose grade seven learners as they were the ones that were more mature and able to provide the researcher with requested information and for the key informants (five), the researcher also applied purposive sampling method. For data collection, the researcher conducted face to face in-depth interviews with both the learners with intellectual challenges and the key informants. For data presentation and analysis, the researcher applied qualitative method.

#### 5.1.1 The rights and needs of learners with Intellectual Disabilities (ID)

The research brought out that the rights and needs of learners with mental challenges are the right to quality education whereby the research found out that historically and currently in backward societies, learners with intellectual challenges were denied access to quality education as they were considered retarded and unfit for academic environments. This plight was due to the negative attitudes associated with all sorts of disabilities. The right to dignity equality and worthy, the right to be protected from any form of abuse and the right to gender quality are also

some of the rights for young people living with intellectual disabilities that were revealed by the study. The study found out that these rights and needs of learners with intellectual challenges are being respected and addressed as learners are given a chance to academic education despite their mental challenges and gender, the students are sheltered from sexual, emotional and physical abuse where the learners are called by derogatory names that affects their emotional health. However, the study also found that in the communities where the children comes from and live, they still experience emotional abuse where they are called by derogatory names like “mapenzi” or ZIMCARES and this in turn affects their self-esteem and focus at school.

### 5.1.2 Services provided by the MOPSE to learners with ID

The study brought out child assessment, financial assistance through programs like BEAM for the less fortunate and psychosocial support as the main services provided by the Ministry of Education to learners with intellectual challenges. The study findings indicate that on child assessment, the child with intellectual challenges gets free assessment with a psychologist provided by the Ministry who then diagnose the child with a diagnosis which is efficient when trying to design a learning plan for the learner. Under psychosocial support, the study revealed that the Ministry provides drug awareness campaigns, career guidance services and counselling services to both the learner and the guardian.

### 5.1.3 Efficacy of BEAM services, Psychological assessments and Psychological Assessments

The study brought out that the financial assistance given by the Ministry of Education is efficient to a greater extent as special education is quite expensive and most families living under the current Zimbabwe’s economic crisis cannot afford putting their child with special needs through school. Therefore, the Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) has allowed many children to go to school at Ratidzo School. The study also found out that not all students benefit from

these services and there is use of means testing for the beneficiaries which looks for the poorest among the poor. The study also found out that the government sometimes delay with payments for the BEAM beneficiaries which affects the school as by the time payments are made the funds will have been affected by inflation.

#### 5.1.4 Challenges faced by learners with intellectual challenges

The study found out that learners with intellectual challenges are confronted by a myriad of challenges which are low self-esteem which is a result of failures that are accompanied by the mental illness. The study indicated that the most significant challenge faced by learners in special schools is lack of funding and resources. The study found out that the Ministry sometimes omit payments due to lack of funding or too many beneficiaries that aren't meeting the budget. Another challenge that was revealed by the study was the discrimination, stigmatisation and bullying that is experienced by the learners with intellectual disabilities. The study found out that the discriminations and bullying are all because mental disabilities is associated with witch craft by most cultures in Zimbabwe

## 5.2 CONCLUSION

Conclusively, learners with intellectual challenges at Ratidzo school benefit a variety of services from the Ministry of Education. The study brought out the following conclusions;

The study concluded that learners with intellectual disabilities in Zimbabwe benefit largely from the services provided by the Ministry of Education as it covers a huge gap between the quality of education that was offered to the intellectually challenged during the colonial era which could be considered as non-existent with the current one where learners with intellectual disabilities are actually given an opportunity to enrol in special schools. This can be considered as a great

achievement by the government of Zimbabwe as it is adhering to the UDHR (Universal Declaration of Human Rights) of 1948 which regards education to be a human right for all.

The study also concluded that despite quality education, there is a variety of services provided by the Ministry of education to learners with intellectual studies which are psychosocial activities, financial aid and psychological assessments. However, despite the challenges the Ministry of education face towards delivering these services, the students have been benefitting greatly.

In addition, the study also concluded that Learners with intellectual disabilities often experience challenges when trying to access some of the services provided by the Ministry of Education like BEAM services. In order for one to qualify for Beam services, one's guardian has to apply for the services and after the applications have been sent, the community selection team then conduct a means testing process where they try to identify who is more deserving of the services. This procedure disadvantages those that are also poor just that there are other people that are more deserving than them. However, it is important to note that means testing is efficient as it deals away with issues of corruption and nepotism during selection of the BEAM beneficiaries.

The research brought to light that children with intellectual challenges still experience discrimination, stigmatisation and bullying. Although the school and the Ministry of education works hard on dealing away with such derogating practices, it has proved to be difficult as these children come from different societies of which some are still ignorant on issues to do with disabilities as they associate them with witchcrafts and bad omens.

The study also concluded that the Ministry of Education lacks enough funding which affects the effectiveness of its service delivery. This came as a result that there are fewer special schools compared to ordinary schools which results in over enrolment which results in over working the

available special needs teachers and in return affects the quality of education they offer to these learners.

### 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- The community need to be educated on intellectual Disabilities (id) so as to lessen situations whereby children experience discrimination, stigmatisation and bullying all because they are mentally challenged especially those communities in rural areas
- The Ministry of Education should provide social workers at special schools in order to ensure the special children are receiving resources that enable them to get the quality education they deserve.
- The government of Zimbabwe should collaborate more with NGOs that focus on Intellectual disabilities
- The government to build more Special schools to balance with ordinary schools.

### 5.4 Chapter Summary

This Chapter provides a summary of the research findings, offered a conclusion and recommendations pertaining to the services provided by the Ministry of education to learners with intellectual challenges. The chapter highlighted a summary on the rights and needs of learners, the services provided, the efficacy of the services and the challenges faced towards delivering the services. The chapter also recommended education of the community in order to lessen issues like discrimination towards the mentally challenged children and also the need for the government to improve on the budget allocated to special needs education and for it to collaborate with non- Governmental organisations that deal with Intellectual Disability.



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## **ANNEXURE A**

### **CONSENT FORM**

Greetings, my name is Vongai Chivamba. I am a student from Bindura University of Science Education registration number B1954156, studying Social Work. I am conducting a study titled: **The efficacy of services being provided by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to learners with special needs. A case study of Ratidzo ZimCARE Trust School in Masvingo.**

**For the Participant**

The study has been described to me in a language that I understand and freely and voluntarily agree to participate. My questions about the study have been answered. I understand that my identity will remain anonymous, I have the right to withdraw from the study anytime, my participation will not negatively affect me in any way and that the participation may not directly benefit me. I also agree that the researcher can audio record the conversation.

Participant's signature: .....

Date: .....

## **ANNEXURE B**

### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR LEARNERS AT RATIDZO HIGH SCHOOL**

#### **Biographical information**

1. How old are you?

2. Do you know how to read?
3. Do you know how to write?
4. Do you play any sports?
5. Are you a boarder or day scholar?
6. Do you have any siblings?

**SECTION A: To identify the services provided by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary education**

1. What are the services being provided to your school by the Ministry of Education?
2. Do you know how to read and write?
3. Does the school provide sanitary ware?
4. Do you have any school projects? If yes, do you participate?
5. Do you participate in any sporting or extra-curricular activities?

**SECTION B: To explore the challenges faced by learners with intellectual challenges in the education system in Zimbabwe**

6. What are the challenges you are experiencing as a learner with special needs at school and at home
7. Have you ever been send home due to lack of school fees?
8. Have you ever experienced any discrimination or stigmatization in the society

**SECTION C: To find out the rights and needs of learners with intellectual challenges and how best the education system can address them.**

9. What are your needs as a learner with special needs in order for education to be more inclusive for you

10. What can you recommend for the Ministry of Education to address challenges faced by learners with special needs in the education system

**ANNEXURE C**

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR KEY INFORMANTS**

**Biographical Information**

1. What is your name
2. What is your position at Ratidzo?
3. How long have you been working with learners with intellectual challenges?

**SECTION A: To identify the services provided by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary education**

1. What are the services provided by the Ministry of education to learners with intellectual challenges?
2. Can you commend on the provision of Sanitary ware by the Ministry of Education?
3. What percentage of the school enrollment can you say is literate?
4. How beneficial are the school projects to the learners?
5. What kind of sporting/ extra-curricular activities does the school provide?
6. How do the school assist learners who are failing to pay school fees?

**SECTION B: To explore the challenges faced by learners with intellectual challenges in the education system in Zimbabwe**

7. What are the challenges faced by the learners with intellectual challenges in the education system of Zimbabwe
8. Any challenges with BEAM payments
9. Can you commend on the sanitary ware provision

**SECTION C: To find out the rights and needs of learners with intellectual challenges and how best the education system can address them.**

10. As the school head/ teacher/ social worker, what can you recommend in order for education to be more inclusive for learners with special needs?



All communications should be addressed to  
"The Secretary for Primary & Secondary  
Education  
Telephone: 794895  
Telegraphic address : "EDUCATION"



Reference: C/426/3  
Ministry of Primary and  
Secondary Education  
P.O Box CY 121  
Causeway  
**HARARE**

26 January 2023

Vingai Chivamba  
Bindura University of Science and Technology  
P. O. Box 1020  
Bindura

**RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT A RESEARCH IN MASVINGO: MASVINGO DISTRICT: RATIDZO SCHOOL**

Reference is made to your application to carry out research from the above-mention district school on the research title:

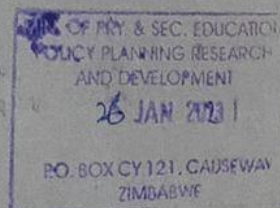
**"THE EFFICACY OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE MINISTRY OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TO LEARNERS WITH INTELLECTUAL CHALLENGES: A CASE STUDY OF RATIDZO SCHOOL IN MASVINGO"**

Permission is hereby granted. However, you are required to liaise with the Provincial Education Director Masvingo Province, who is responsible for the school which you want to involve in your research. You should ensure that your research work does not disrupt the school's normal operations. Where students are involved, parental consent is required.

You are also required to provide a copy of our final report to the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "L. D. Mkwala".

**L. D. Mkwala**  
**Deputy Director: Innovation and Development**  
**For: SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**



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