



Teachers perceptions on the causes of indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in inclusive education setting. A case study of Sanyati district in Zimbabwe

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the causes of indiscipline among learners with disabilities in education setting in Sanyati District in Zimbabwe. The researcher examined the causes of indiscipline among learners with disabilities in education setting in Sanyati District in Zimbabwe of the influence of teacher class management skills, teachers attitudes towards learners with disabilities teacher lesson preparation on indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in inclusive education setting. A survey to determine investigate the causes of indiscipline among learners with disabilities in education setting in Sanyati District in Zimbabwe was carried using thirty teachers (15 males, 15 female) from both primary and secondary schools in Sanyati district in Zimbabwe. Measures of central tendencies (mode, percentages) were used to analyse data from the study. The study found out that they were a great influence of teacher class management skills, teacher's attitudes towards learners with disabilities teacher lesson preparation on indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in inclusive education setting in Sanyati District in Zimbabwe. This study recommends in servicing of teachers teaching learners with disabilities in inclusive education to equip them with basic special needs education skills so that they know how to handle such learners in an inclusive education setting.

INTRODUCTION

Indiscipline among learners with disabilities in schools has assumed alarming proportions both in terms of frequency and severity and should be dealt with as a matter of urgency (Burden, 2000). In order to deal with a problem effectively, it is essential to have a clear understanding of the underlying reasons of indiscipline behind the observed misbehavior. The time and energy needed to cope with some disruptive learners can be physically draining and emotionally exhausting. Discipline is one of the basic requirements for successful teaching – learning processing in schools and is one of the subjects of concern for teachers. It is against this background that this research was carried out to investigate the causes of indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in inclusive education.

Indiscipline

Indiscipline is exhibited by students under different forms both within and outside the school premises (Lewis, 1991). Indiscipline ranges from minor misbehavior such as improper dressing, punctuality and not completing homework to severe misconduct like violence against teachers and peers, bullying, damaging property, hooliganism, alcohol and drug abuse and immoral acts (Pane, 2010). Indiscipline in a classroom situation is one of the most challenging part of a teaching job. The best way to respond to learners with disabilities in a classroom is to understand the root cause of indiscipline. (Fields & Fields 2006) argue that no amount of respect, teaching or choice will make discipline effective unless the approach deals with the reasons why the behavior occurred. According to John (2013) learners who come from families where parents are divorced are also under harsh treatment and can act out as a way to deal with fear and frustrations. Peer pressure is another contributing factor because students who are bullied by their peers are also prone to discipline issues in the classroom. Often children who bully others are abused at home, leading to lash out their classmates or teachers (Jenson and Clark, 2004). Perception is another issue, if learners feel you don't like him, or you are not protecting him or supportive of him, he could become a discipline problem (Freire, 2009).

Another issue is that of students who experience successive failures in their studies develop low self-esteem, are demotivated and lose interest. Many of these learners, because of lack of psychological support, react by adopting anti-social behavior and they often have recourse to violence or other forms of indiscipline. What it means is that students who lack attention also adopt a similar stance to draw attention on them. The public premise that schools are the preferred environment to transform productive and useful citizens of any nation. Aybenyega (2006) retains that descent discipline is one of the key attributes of effective schools and most schools which experienced frequent deviant student's behavior have been blamed

on lack of effective implementation of school rules and regulations for discipline to reign in school.

Charles (2002) states that many of the discipline techniques teachers have relied on are ineffective especially those that involve demanding, bossing, scolding, warning, belittling and punishing as these tactics can keep behavior partially under control. Indiscipline on the other hand is any act that diverges from the acceptable societal norms and values. It is a violation of school rules and regulations which is capable of obstructing the smooth and orderly functioning of the school system (Edem, 1982). An undisciplined child is an uncontrollable child and can do any damage in school when he does not get what he wants (Asiyai, 2012) supported.

Joseph (2002) submits that over the last two decades, the growing incidents of school violence that includes learners with disabilities have left educators shaken and nervous about the potential for violence in their own schools. What it means is that learners with disabilities learning can produce detrimental side effects such as uneasiness, fearlessness, avoidance, dishonesty, undesirable attitudes towards learning, overall dislike for school and teachers, inclination to retaliate and many the desire to leave school as soon as possible. The circumstances lead to inhibited learning. Reporting on a study done with principal and teachers, Joseph (2002) lists tardiness, absenteeism, physical conflicts, drug use, gangs and physical abuse among major concerns. He also reports that the zero tolerance have not been very effective. later reported that many tend to believe that our schools are in crisis and this is linked to the failure of the school leaders to resolve conflicts. He adds that learning occurs best in an orderly environment Therefore, this study investigated the causes of indiscipline among learners with disabilities in inclusive setting in Sanyati District in Zimbabwe was guided by the following research questions.

Research questions

1. *How do teachers' classroom management skills contribute to the development of indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in inclusive education setting?*
2. *To what extent does the teacher's attitude towards children with disabilities contribute to indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in an inclusive education setting?*
3. *To what extent does teacher's preparation contribute to indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in an inclusive setting?*

METHODOLOGY

A survey approach was used to collect information on the causes of indiscipline among learners with disabilities in inclusive setting in Sanyati District in Zimbabwe. Creswell (2012) survey methods are very

effective in collecting information a selected attribute from a sample of respondent drawn from a target population through the use of questions. Survey method has the advantage that the findings can be generalised to the target population (Creswell 2009). Thus in this research findings obtained represent the general causes of indiscipline among learners with disabilities in inclusive setting in Sanyati District in Zimbabwe.

The research instruments

The research used questionnaires to elicit information from teachers on the causes of indiscipline among learners with disabilities in inclusive setting in Sanyati District in Zimbabwe.

Sample and Sampling procedures

The sample of the study was comprised of 30 teachers (15 males and 15 females). This sample constituted 25 % (Creswell, 2012) of teachers teaching learners with disabilities in Sanyati district in Zimbabwe. The research used a stratified random sampling. The respondents were selected by separating the population into non-overlapping groups of similar characteristics called strata and then selecting a sample from each stratum (Creswell, 2012). The study used stratified sampling techniques because the study population was heterogeneous and organised in isolated (strata).

Pilot testing

An equivalent of 15% of similar subjects from each similar stratum from another district in Zimbabwe was used to test the content validity and reliability of the research instruments. The pilot participants were selected using convenient sampling method from a similar population from a neighboring town to avoid sharing of information.

Data collection procedures

Permission for teachers to take part in the study on the causes of indiscipline among learners with disabilities in inclusive setting in Sanyati District in Zimbabwe. was sought from the Zimbabwean Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. With the information on the location of selected teachers in Sanyati district in Zimbabwe the researcher made appointments with heads of schools to visit their schools for data collection. Data was collected over a period of five days.

Data presentation and analysis

The research used quantitative methods of data presentation and analysis (Creswell, 2009). Tables graphs and charts were used in data presentation because they are easily read and understood (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2001). Raw scores were converted into percentages to explain the information

Ethical Considerations

This study was guided by principles that provide a generalised framework of how the research must be conducted. The study addressed the following ethical considerations:

(a) Informed Consent and Voluntary Participation

Respondents who were teachers teaching in regular classes of Sanyati district in Zimbabwe were given all relevant information about the risks or harm that could arise if they participate in the research. They then choose to participate or not to participate in the study (Makore- Rukuni, 2004). They were also allowed to pull out of the research at any point should they wish to without any penalties.

(b) Protection from Harm

The research made sure that respondents were not being exposed to any undue physical harm or psychological harm. The researchers tried to be honest, respectful and sympathetic towards all participants and if by any chance participants required debriefing after an interview the researchers provided this and made referral whenever possible (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2001).

(c) Confidentiality and Privacy

The researchers promised to protect the anonymity of the research participants and the confidentiality of their disclosures by consent to the release of personal information. Respondents' information and responses shared during the study was kept private to protect identities of participants (Creswell, 2009).

RESULTS

Results from teachers on the causes of indiscipline among learners with disabilities in inclusive setting in Sanyati in Zimbabwe were presented using the following questions on the research instruments on the causes of indiscipline among learners with disabilities in inclusive setting

Research question 1: How do teachers' classroom management skills contribute to the development of indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in inclusive education setting?

Respondents who were teachers teaching learners with disabilities in inclusive education setting in Sanyati district in Zimbabwe were asked on whether teachers' classroom management skills contribute to the development of indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in inclusive education setting. Their responses are shown in figure 1.

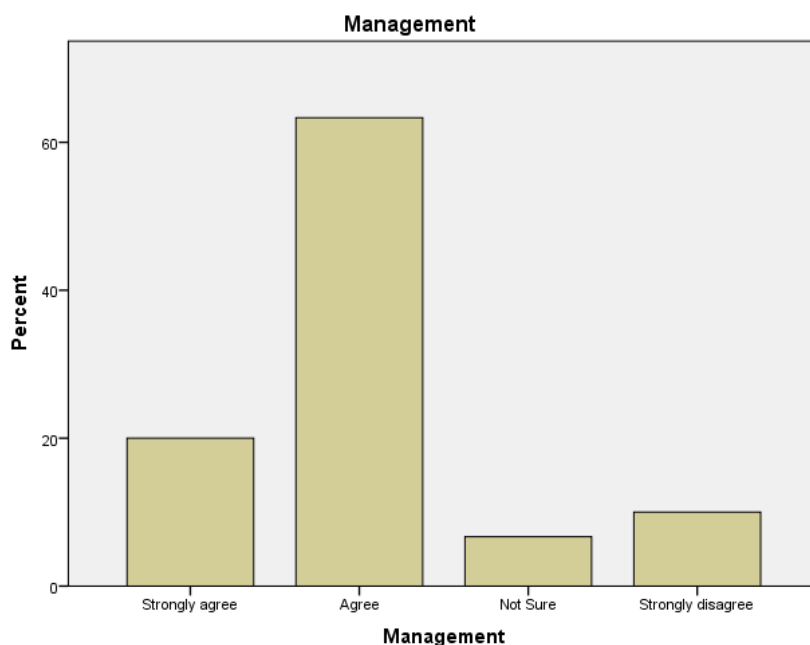


Figure 1 Responses from teachers on whether teachers' classroom management skills and the development of indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in inclusive education setting

Figure 1 shows that majority of respondents in the survey agree that poor classroom management has negative effect on children with disabilities. The figure also indicates that majority of respondents 19 (63,3%) do agree that poor classroom management cause of the development of indiscipline among learners with disabilities in an inclusive setting in Sanyati District, while others 6 (20%) strongly agree and 2 respondents (6.7%) are not so sure. Classroom management covers such areas as care of professional book, classroom appearance, sitting management and duty allocation. Poor management skills will therefore contribute towards indiscipline among children.

Research question 2 To what extent does the teacher's attitude towards children with disabilities contribute to indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in an inclusive education setting?

Respondents were also asked whether teacher's attitude towards children with disabilities contribute to indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in an inclusive education setting. Their responses are presented in table 1.

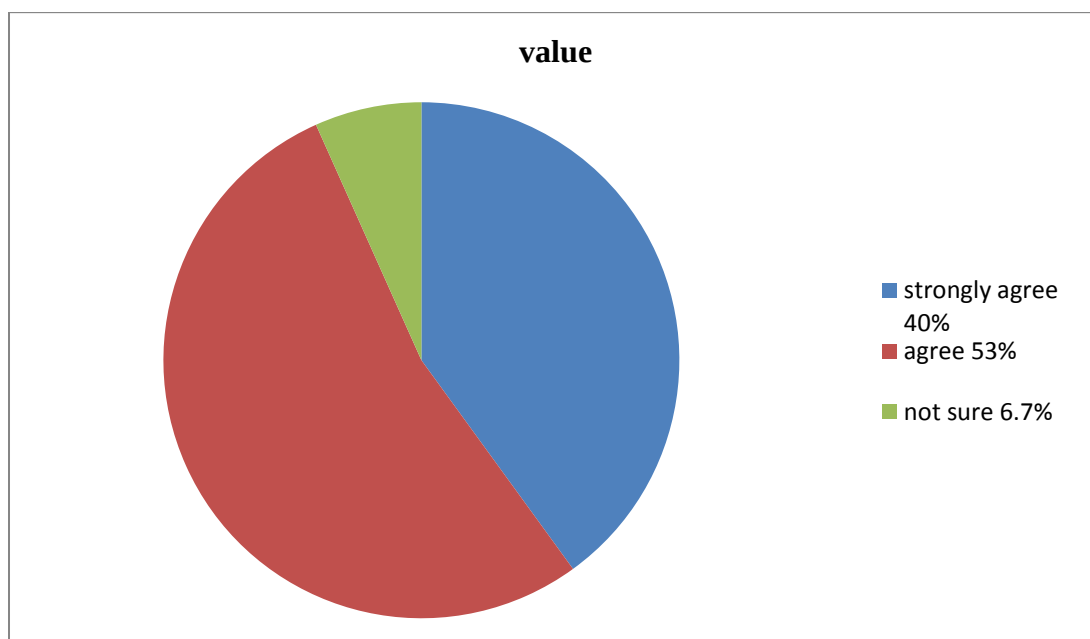
Table 1: Responses on whether Teacher's attitude towards learners with disabilities and contributes to development of indiscipline among learners with disabilities

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	12	40.0	40.0	40.0
Agree	15	50.0	50.0	90.0
Not Sure	2	6.7	6.7	96.7
Disagree	1	3.3	3.3	100.0
Total	30	100.0	100.0	

N=30

Table 1 above indicates that (50%) of respondents agreed that indiscipline emanates from teacher's attitude that cause its development. 12(40%) respondents strongly agree. 2(6.7%) teachers aren't sure on what to say on discipline, while 1(3.3%) respondent disagree that teachers are the one who cause indiscipline at school among children with disabilities

The respondents who were teachers were also asked whether valuing and respecting learners with disabilities the same as those without disabilities was also contributing to indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in inclusive education setting. Their responses are indicated in chart 1.

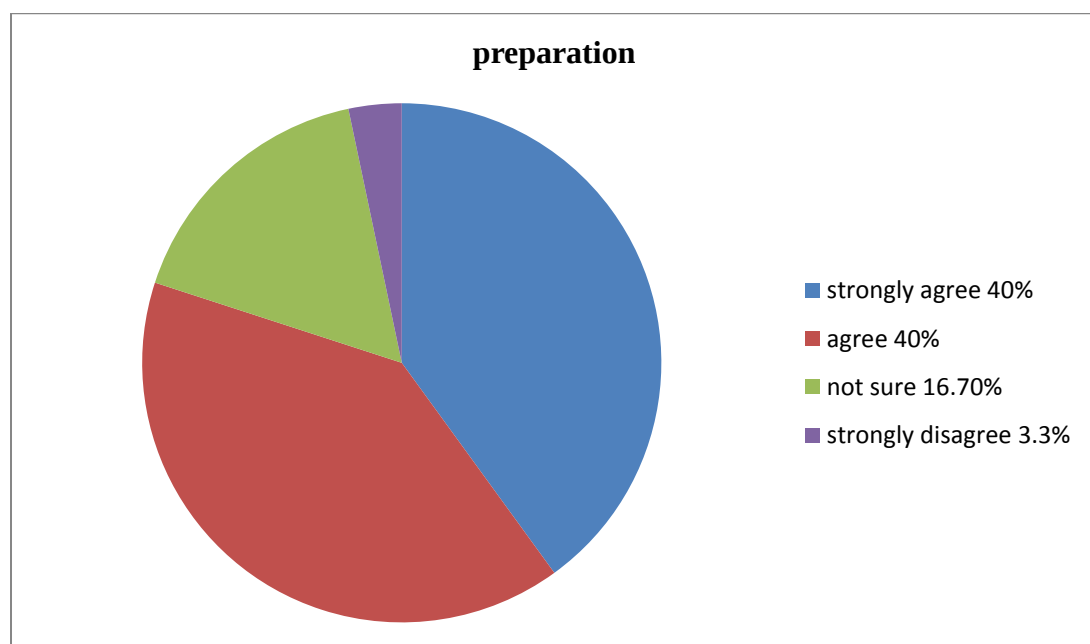


Chat 1 Responses from teachers on whether valuing and respecting learners with disabilities the same as those without disabilities was also contributing to indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in inclusive education setting

Chat 1 shows that majority of respondents 16 (53.3%) do agree to value and respect working with positive attitude by treating learners with disabilities regardless of their discipline. In support 12 (12%) of participants strongly agree with the above statement of how to treat learners with disabilities. However, 2 (6.7%) participants were not so sure on how to value and respect the positive attitude working by learners with disabilities.

Research question 3 To what extent does teacher's preparation contribute to indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in an inclusive setting?

Respondents who were also asked whether does teacher's preparation contribute to indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in an inclusive setting. Chat 2 presents results from the respondents.



Chat 2 Responses on whether poor teacher lesson preparation contribute to indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in an inclusive setting

The pie chart above indicates that majority of respondents agree by (40%) and those who strongly agree have the same percentage (40%). Those who are not sure are (16%) while only (3.3%) strongly disagree meaning the (3.3%) had the lowest number of participants. Elaborating on this finding a key informant has this to say: That the (40%) has the highest number of percentage as compared to the rest of the participants. It means majority of teachers saw the problem of teaching without proper preparation as it promotes the development of indiscipline among learners with disabilities.

DISCUSSION

Discussion of this study results the causes of indiscipline among learners with disabilities in inclusive setting in Sanyati District in Zimbabwe is presented following the study research questions.

Teachers' classroom management skills and development of indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in inclusive education setting

Results from this study shows that poor teacher classroom management skills contribute to development of indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in inclusive education setting in Sanyati District in Zimbabwe. Learners with disabilities tend to misbehave when learning in poorly managed classes.

Baker (2005) observes that improved teacher training in classroom management is a critical part in improving discipline among learners. Factors contributing to effective classroom management include: teaching methodology, lesson planning and preparation, interpersonal relationships and student motivation (Gaston, Lee & MacArthur 2010). Paine et al (1983) observed that structuring a classroom so that it supports positive student behavior requires prior planning. The structure of the classroom environment should decrease the likelihood of inappropriate student behavior and increases desirable student interactions and consequently improves academic performance. A good classroom environment would enable learners to study in a way that is interesting, enjoyable and purposeful. Among models to restructure a good classroom environment include: use of a variety of teaching methods and involving students to numerous learning activities, physical class arrangement that allows a teacher to access students, efficient use of class time and ensuring that students interact positively during cooperative learning activities (Emmer & Stough, 2001). V 'Kerr and Nelson (2002) assert that the use of rules is a "powerful, preventive component of classroom organization and management plans." Rules are aimed at establishing the expected behaviors, what to be reinforced and the consequences for inappropriate behavior. Thus emphasis of effective class discipline helps to cut down on discipline problems and leave the classroom with fewer interruptions and disruptions. Wong (2007)

believes that student performance is influenced by how well the procedures are laid out and taught to them.

To instill class discipline, teachers should introduce class rules early enough when the year is beginning and make sure they are understood by all. The teacher should be fair and impartial across all the students. In case of disruption within a lesson, the teacher should deal with the interruption with as little distraction as possible. Teachers should consider over planning as a recipe to avoid giving students free-time within the lesson. The teacher should be consistent in that they cannot afford to ignore negative behavior. Collins (2007) advocates for "cooperative discipline" where the teacher and students work together to make decisions. To him teachers should come up with a code of conduct that shows how students should behave and not how they should not behave. This instills discipline in a child as they know what is expected of them. Glenn (2003) emphasized the need for teachers to hold class meetings severally. Class meetings encourage respect among teacher and students. According to Barbara and Coloroso (2006) theory of Inner self control, students should be given an opportunity to develop their self-control and that classrooms are the ideal places for this opportunities. Thus class discipline can be identified through the use of lesson plans, learning activities, a code of conduct (rules and routines), communicating to parents and through group works (Collins 2007). Consequently, there are strategies that promote good use of routines such as: praising, giving a token and signing behavior contracts with students with behavior problems (Emmer & Stough 2001).

Teacher's attitude towards children with disabilities and development of indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in an inclusive education setting

Based on the second objective the findings from this study the respondents revealed that causes of indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in inclusive education setting in Sanyati District in Zimbabwe is largely caused by negative attitudes of teachers towards learners with disabilities. Teacher's attitude does impact on the learners behaviour because they ignore learner's problems which grounded to indiscipline. Additional, some participants noted that teachers were observed not to be strict in maintaining discipline among learners with disabilities leading to misbehaving.

According to Davies (2003), inclusion is endorsed as a principle by many teachers but there are concerns about the practicalities. Concerns regarding practicalities often relate to particular types of needs and represent a rejection of the principles of inclusion per se. Teachers' attitudes and values are crucial to the success of inclusion in mainstream school. Teacher training should not be solely information-based but should have regard to the importance of values and attitudes and provide opportunities for trainees to work with children with disabilities, (Armstrong, 2005).

According to Bwire (2010) inclusion largely depends on teachers' attitudes towards pupils with special needs, on other view on differences in classroom and their willingness to deal with differences effectively. Generally, the attitude of teachers has been put forward as a decisive factor in making schools more inclusive. If class teachers do not accept the education of all pupils as an integral part of their job, they will try to ensure that someone else (often the specialist teacher) takes responsibility for pupils with disabilities and will organize covert segregation in the school (for example, the special class). It can be argued that in order to guarantee a minimum of positive teacher's attitude, the teacher has to accept having children with special needs in their classes and be prepared to work with other professionals (Bwire, 2010). Teachers who are committed to inclusion often refer to pupils with severe educational needs as positive assets to the classroom rather than problems to overcome.

Teacher's lesson preparation and indiscipline among learners with disabilities learning in an inclusive setting

Findings revealed that inadequate lesson preparation from teachers sometimes perpetuate indiscipline among learners with disabilities. Respondents observed that if learners are pre-occupied with setting up displays and materials distributed to them thus leads to no indiscipline behaviour to emanate. Additionally, educators who do not play a significant role on the management of school discipline tend to experience a number of disciplinary problems. Lack of proper preparation confuse the whole learning system caused by failing to prepare for good learning progress.

According to a research conducted by Hyman (1997), researchers are of the view that teachers sometimes perpetuate indiscipline by their approach. Agreeing with this Fields and Fields (2006) adds that adequate teaching, punitive school climates and inadequate principals also lead to problems behaviors. Educators play a significant role in the management of school discipline. Educators who do not actively involve learners in classroom may experience disciplinary problems. The involvement of learners in matters pertaining to their education reduces behavioral problems. Learners who are actively engaged and interested in classroom activities stay on the task at a higher level than learners less interested and involved, (Smith & Laslett, 1993). Smith and Laslett, (1993) underlined the role of teacher as an educator who involves his or her learners in class, treats them as people who are capable of thinking for themselves, and do not treat them as objects to be cajoled and shaped into manageable underlings who need to climb on board the educator's behavior track experience less disciplinary problems. If teachers pre-occupied with setting up displays, distributing materials or searching for equipment then there are ample opportunities for idling chatter and other unproductive activities (Fields & Fields, 2006).

The role of "teachers as disciplinarian" has shifted towards one with a focus on positive educational and behavioral development. Teachers exert a large influence on how children develop. Teachers exert a large influence on how children develop their moral code (Sternberg, 2013), and consequently societal expectations are placed upon teachers to inculcate appropriate attitudinal and behavioral outcome teachers' practice is "motivated by the best interest of the pupil's students entrusted to their care..... (and is shown) through positive influence professional judgment and empathy," (Teaching council, 2012). Attempts to foster desirable behaviors should begin early and be implemented across all environments to which children are exposed, particularly the school.

Effective classroom management consist of various interrelated components. Specifically, effective classroom management is practice rather than reactive; it is decisive and focuses on the elimination or reduction of student's misbehavior (Emmer & Stough, 2001). Additionally, effective classroom management involves the promotion of student engagement, and the maintenance of a positive and productive learning environment (Brophy, 1988). Effective classroom management involves the successful structuring of activities and transitions between them (Barbetta, Norona & Bicar, 2005). The literature clearly shows that teacher's preparedness reduces the opportunities for disruption (McIntosh, Herman, Sanford, McGraw & Florence, 2004). The smooth transition from one classroom activity to another largely stems from teacher forethought and planning, and from the use of plain instructions (Barbetta, 2005). It is long been argued that children benefit from provision of clear, concise teacher instructions (Darch, Kame'enui & Crichlow, 2003). Conversely, unclear or complex commands pose difficulty in terms of compliance and offer opportunity for classroom disruption (Fisher, Adelinis, Thompson, Worsedell & Zarccone, 1998).

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Based on the complex nature of the interaction between aspects such as inclusion, disability, and indiscipline public policy, several recommendations can be made for populations with similar characteristics as the one covered by this study. This study recommends the need for further research on inclusion, disability and indiscipline. Discourse analysis that investigates the relationship between inclusion and indiscipline of learners with disabilities learning in inclusive education setting could lead to improved implementation of inclusion. The findings of such studies could guide the development of inclusive policies that encourage community participation of non-dominant cultures such as people with disabilities in designing community activities that enhance their personal development.

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