**Reflections about inclusive education in pre-service training**

**Principal Trainers in the Zambia teacher training programme**

I’m Hamalengwa Cotildah, a lecturer at Charles Lwanga College of Education and also a ToT under NAD and CBR training inclusive education to different schools in Zimba and [unclear word] districts, also here in Charles Lwanga College of Education. I joined CBR in 2018 and since then I’ve been an active member for CBR and I’ve trained many modules, about 6 or so, to the teachers and even our students here.

Ok, I’m Aubrey Moono, head of section here in Expressive Arts, as well as a Senior Lecturer at Charles Lwanga CoE. With CBR and inclusive education I’ve been with the team since 2016 and with that I’ve trained a lot about inclusion in my day-to-day activities as well as the college at large. Together with Clotilde, we have done a lot here especially with our students and of course the Lecturers that are here.

Our college has about 35 lecturers, though we are still waiting for some more to come. Of these 35/33 lecturers we have about 23 are female and about 20 are male – all of them have been exposed to what inclusive education is. Of course, we are waiting for more; I’m going to talk about that when we talk of our future prospects. The college is small, we have an enrolment of about 6 to 7 hundred all the 3 cohorts together. As a college we have been working mainly with the third-year students in inclusive education, just to introduce them to what inclusive education is.

Cotildah

So far, we have trained 3 intakes. We started with the first one in 2017and we trained them in the third term, about 135 at that time were trained. I think we said we achieved something because after that training and before they left, we could see the change in attitudes from them. Even the lecturers were invited to that training. Before then there was some misunderstanding between what inclusive education was and special education. So, after the first training most lecturers appreciated because they were able to understand what inclusive education is and what special education is and they would marry the two. So, I think there we scored maybe we can say 70% with the students and the lecturers. The following year we also trained about 150 and also in the third term. It was a successful training, most of the students liked it and even in their refreshings it came out that they benefitted especially in terms of method of teaching; the learning styles and even the attitude, they will do the practice as they go into their schools.

* Aubrey

I think the third training we did was last year 2019 and that was in the second term of our school calendar which was somewhere in June. Again, we trained about 106/109 or so students and again it was another plus because like you may know that many teachers are trained but some of them are not participatory in the way they do things. Inclusive education encouraged them to be participatory in the way they handle their classes; so like my colleague mentioned, the learning styles actually impressed them so much, the attitudes that teachers have when they are teaching I think were brought out.

So as a college we can say that we have trained our students, at least we have introduced inclusive education to them which is a very good thing. How I wish we had started this maybe 10 years ago, this time around we would have been talking about hundreds and hundreds of teachers out there across the country as our teachers are always posted across this country, Zambia. So, we are encouraged that with the few that we trained; 300 + they are going to make a change out there when they go into their schools.

With the lecturers we are still doing something, especially that the MoE through the CDC has adopted the modules that have been developed by NAD and CBR and because those modules have been verified and accepted that they come into the TTC’s we hope that all the lecturers that will be found by then at the time of introducing these modules will benefit a lot. At Charles Lwanga we are already a step ahead because lecturers have been introduced to these modules and we want to believe that other colleges will follow suit and together we will change this nation.

Now one may ask to say what are we doing as a college and what the Ministry is trying to bring into the teacher training colleges through the curriculum that is offered. Of course, that is coming mainly for the pre-service teachers but NAD and CBR has been working with the in-service teachers which we think as a college we can still do in some way. We have come up with a course outline, a curriculum that will be offered for short courses. We have four short courses that we intend to introduce and have since written to the MoE and they are already buying in because the teacher education and the specialised services see what we are planning and they liked our plan. So, we have submitted that inclusive education being one of the short courses that will be offered here, we have teaching with ICT’s, we have the pedagogical content knowledge, and then we have literacy. So, these are the four areas that we want to continue re-training teachers, giving them short courses so that we give them the new strategies, the new ways of teaching or the better ways of teaching so that they are inclusive in their teaching.

As we have stated, you know inclusive education here is offered in our department, it belongs to education and specialised professional studies. They have it as a small component under special education but our understanding now being different, I think inclusive education is going to have this component of special education as we roll it out as a college.

Cotildah

Apart from that, my friend talked about the third years who were out last term in the field, we trained them in the second term. It was evident as we went out to monitor them, the way they were coming up with the lesson plans; they were able to plan even in an individualised way for different type of learners in their classes, differentiation. So many, our students got the concepts and that concept was practiced as they were doing their teaching practice. Their lesson plans were coming out nicely, inclusively, so I think we are doing something with our students and our students are implementing what they are getting from inclusive lessons.

* Aubrey

Yes on top of that, when we talk about our lecturers too I remember giving a presentation at the workshop in teaching with ICT’s. So I did a presentation where you are talking about inclusion with ICT, because people would look at inclusive education as maybe just paperwork but this college is also a centre of excellence in terms of ICT. So I demonstrated to my colleagues that in planning, even when we use the ICT’s, we need to plan for our learners using the ICT’s under inclusive education. So, it was a very exciting presentation with many people were surprised to say ‘wow we could use these gadgets to include many others in our learning’. Imagine you have a lesson that is probably online and the colour that you use to write on the whiteboard matters a lot to someone who has a problem with sight. So, the lecturers were cautioned to say they need to be aware of what colours can be perceived properly by everyone else as others may look but may not see what we have just written there.

There are so many ways of involving them. Those like, when you talk of learning styles, some learners may not be good with their sight but good with their ears; so, the audio’s are incorporated in the videos so that even those who cannot see, they are able to hear what you are talking about. Those that have a problem with the hearing, a hearing impairment, but their sight is good, pictures to accompany the audio’s as we teach is one strategy that you can include everyone else.

So, having said that I think as a college we have done a lot. We have also supplied some videos and pictures that you may want to refer to and see exactly what has been happening here from the time that we were exposed to inclusive education.

Thank you.