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SCIENCES DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY---IN EARLY CHILDHOOD
CARE AND EDUCATION



LEARNING CHALLENGES INFLUENCING PRESCHOOL CHILDREN WITH
DISABILITIES IN SOME SELECTED PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS:
THE CASE OF WORABE CITY

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JUNE 2022
JIMMA, ETHIOPIA

Learning Challenges Influencing Preschool Children with Disabilities in Some
Selected Public and Private Schools: The Case of Worabe City

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A Thesis Submitted to Jimma University, College of Education and Behavioral
Sciences Department of Psychology---Ecce Program In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of a Master of Arts in Early Childhood Care and
Education (ECCE)

June 2022

Jimma, Ethiopia

DECLARATION

I here undersigned, declare that this master’s thesis entitled “**learning challenges influencing preschool children with disabilities in some selected public and private schools: in the case of siltie zone, Worabe city**” is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

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Acknowledgment

First of all, I like to forward my greatest gratitude to my advisors Zenebe Negawo (Ph.D.) main advisor and Dinaol Urgessa Co-advisor (MA) for their constructive and unreserved professional and helpful comments by sharing their precious time in reading the thesis and also for their appropriate guidance throughout my thesis work whenever I needed their support of any kind.

I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Jimma University and Siltie zone education department and the Siltie zone administrative office who allowed me to upgrade my educational status to MA level which I couldn't do by myself.

I would also like to forward my deepest thanks to Aschalew Terefe (Ass. Professor) head of the department of psychology, at Jimma University for his sincere advice in selecting my thesis title and for his mature guidance when I encountered inconvenient circumstances during my study.

My sincere appreciation and heartfelt thanks also go to my beloved wife Ramla Awol for her dedicated encouragement throughout my study and thesis work.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Worabe town administration Education office head, experts, supervisors, principals, preschool teachers, parents of students with disabilities in sampled schools, and Worabe city special needs education expert for devoting his invaluable time to help me in data gathering work.

I also extend my gratitude to all my colleagues for their contribution and support in every step I made in the completion of my thesis. I wish to acknowledge all those who contributed directly or indirectly to the success of this work.

Finally, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my instructors in the department of psychology; Dr. Habtamu Mokkonen, Dr. Abbi Lemma, Dr. Teklu Gemechu, and Ass. Professor Dessalegn Garuma and instructors of Health science who devoted their time to teaching us health courses related to child care and development.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CDs: Children with Disabilities

ECD: Early Childhood Development

ECCE: Early childhood care and education

ECE: Early Childhood Education

EFA: Education for All

EGRA: Early Grade Reading Assessment

ESDP: Education Sector Development Program

FDRE: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency

FGD: Focus Group Discussion

IE: Inclusive Education

KG: Kindergarten

MOH: Ministry of Health

MoE: Ministry of Education

MOWA: Ministry of Women Affairs

MDGs: Millennium Development Goals

OECD: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

PTA: Parent-Teacher Association

RTI: Responsive to Intervention

SNNPR: Southern Nations Nationalities and peoples region

SNE: Special Needs Education

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

UNESCO: United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

WHO: World Health Organization

ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to identify learning challenges encountered by preschool children with disabilities in selected public and private preschools of Worabe city. The study used a phenomenological research design. Data collection instruments were in-depth interviews, interviews, FGD, and observation. The data obtained from different sources were analyzed using the phenomenological condensation approach. Findings of the study revealed that the Learning of preschool children with disabilities is influenced by socio-cultural challenges in public and private preschools. Families of children with disabilities still hide their children with disabilities, because of discrimination. There is thinking among the community that disability is caused due to curse of God. Private schools resist receiving preschool children with disabilities. Roads and entrances to schools are not suitable for CwDs. Toilets are not accessible and appropriate for CwDs. There are no teaching aids that support the learning of children with disabilities and there are not enough play materials that suit their individual needs. Compounds of private schools are too narrow, and that of public schools is relatively wider. The majority of teachers of preschool children with disabilities are not qualified and they lack the knowledge, skill, and attitude to teach children with disabilities. Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations are given: Awareness creation programs should be launched to correct the thinking among the members of the society that disability, is caused due to curse of God and, schools should be barrier-free and child-friendly, teachers of preschool children should be trained.

Keywords: challenges, children, inclusion, preschool, discrimination, disability

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Preschool is an early childhood program in which children combine learning with play in a program run by professionally trained adults and it is mostly between the ages of 3 to 5 years. Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is well-defined as the period from birth to eight years old (Burger, 2010). Several trends in the 1960s urged a much more widespread growth of ECCE. These included the development of maternal employment outside the home for women with young children, the rise of social protection measures in Europe and North America, and several African countries' transitions to independence. Early Childhood Care and Education has been shown to offer long-term benefits by providing high-quality care and education to young children during their initial years (Belsky et al., 2007). Throughout the twentieth century, the concept of early childhood education as a tool for combating educational and socioeconomic inequalities emerged in many countries. This phase is thought to be the most crucial in a person's growth. The physical, social, emotional, language, and cognitive areas of early childhood development, all of which are equally important, have a major impact on general well-being throughout life (Davies, Janus, Duku, & Gaskin, 2016).

It has encouraged many conversations and interests among governments and politicians all over the world (RAIKES, SAYRE, & LIMA, 2021). Thus, UNICEF and UNESCO focused an advanced emphasis on providing high-quality early childhood education and care to all children (Mary Irvin, 2019). Early Childhood Care and Education had been incorporated into multi-sectoral and sectoral policies and strategic plans in Sub-Saharan African countries, such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), EFA targets, education, and health sector-wide applications, or country-wide education, health, nutrition, and protection plans.

Even though faith-based schools did play a role in encouraging literacy; still access to preschool remained very limited in Ethiopia and nearly absent in rural areas. Preschools were largely run by the private sector in urban areas favoring children from better-off parents, though non-governmental organizations too played a part. Access to preprimary education has expanded

from about 5 percent in 2010 to 46 percent in 2016, out of which 0-class contributed 33 percent (Mulugeta, 2015).

The beginning of 0-class education is linked to parents' inability to teach their children for a fee. In this situation, the Ethiopian government implemented the 0-class strategy, which is used in the first year of school before entering grade 1. In this regard, the right to education for children with disabilities is approved in international and national acts to enable the right to education without discrimination (Shah, 2010).

In all regions of Ethiopia, more than 80 percent of children were not reading at an expected fluency benchmark in 2010 (Abadzi, 2011). The second EGRA result showed that preschool education in Ethiopia is important. The main key lesson that one can learn from the second EGRA result is the major contribution of the preschool for the children that have not experienced early childhood education and that is why children are struggling in grades 1 and 2 in reading, writing, and comprehension skills. EGRA has forwarded a recommendation for expansion of the access to preprimary education in Ethiopia to enable children with reading, writing, and comprehension skills.

As mentioned above, there are several international and national policies, strategies, and plans about services that should be delivered to children with disabilities; there are still gaps in implementation. Therefore, the researcher of this study strived to examine the learning challenges of children with disabilities in some selected public and private pre-primary schools in Worabe city. The study focused on preschool learners with physical, visual, and hearing impairments in both public and private preschools.

The variation between public and private schools has been discussed in various studies. Generally, these studies agree that public schools are state or government-run schools that are required of or available to all children. Government agencies coordinate and run state education, which is open to all. On the other hand, private school refers to any type of formal school that is not part of the public school/education system. The reasons for privatization are different in different countries, but dissatisfaction with the services provided by government institutions, access and coverage, the quest for good quality, profit-making, and the need to reduce pressures upon existing schools are some of the major rationales (Begna, 2017).

In 1994, the Ethiopian government produced two policy documents, the "Education and Training Policy" and the "Education Sector Strategy," in which it promised to attain universal primary education by 2015. The government made it apparent that it would play a significant role in the growth of education by improving funding allocation to the educational system. Simultaneously, the government has acknowledged that it would not be able to cover the costs of educational expansion on its own. As a result, the strategy document suggested privatization as an option: The community would be encouraged and enhanced in the construction of schools and the provision of furniture on a self-help basis. In the provision of services, private sector engagement will be encouraged (Education & Policy, 1994). As mentioned above, the government of Ethiopia promised to attain universal primary education by 2015. The government promised to attain universal education both for children with and without disabilities, but still, there are major learning challenges that preschool children with disabilities face. However, there is a lack of research that indicates this gap and recommendations that suggest what has to be done to fill this gap to make the learning environment conducive for children with disabilities. Thus, the researcher of this study intended to fill this gap by examining the major learning challenges encountered by preschool children with disabilities in some selected public and private preschools of Worabe city in the year 2014 E.C

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The world is struggling for free, equitable, and quality education for all people, through Education For All (EFA) goals. These goals have been adopted in many countries including Ethiopia. The Universal Declaration for Human Rights in 1948 declared education as an important right for every person including people with disabilities. CwDs as clearly stated in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which entered into force in 2008 and has 145 signatories including Ethiopia were given wider chances for accessing education that will be friendly to children with disabilities. This includes making available all necessary environments that are supportive of the CwDs (Wolf, 2017).

Tangible program outcomes and targets were set more than ever before the preceding ESDPs through different approaches to meet the objective of ECCE as stipulated in EFA documents (Ethiopia et al., 2014) have placed mainly two key outcome targets: to increase GER

from 6.9% in 2009/10 to 20% in 2014/15 and to establish a pre-primary class in all rural and urban primary school compounds (Mulugeta, 2015).

Second Ethiopian EGRA Result (2014) showed that a high number of Grade 2 and Grade 3 children were not able to read a single word, which meant that the students were far below the benchmark of reading fluency (i.e., 60 words per minute). This clearly shows that because of the lack of practices of ECCE in Ethiopia, children are unable to read and write and comprehend what is expected of them. This problem is worse for children with disabilities. This can be the result of a lack of priority and consideration given to quality education among children with disabilities. That is why the researcher in this study examined the major learning challenges encountered by preschool children with disabilities in some selected public and private preschools and ultimately recommended ways of tackling the challenging problems.

Various comparative studies were conducted regarding practices, challenges, and opportunities of preschool education implementation. For instance, (Diale & Sewagegn, 2021; Haile & Mohammed, 2017) conducted a study on the practices and challenges of public and private preschools in Jigjiga city administration and these researchers found that preschool practices were below standard. Moreover, a comparative study was conducted by Jerusalem and Tsegai (2015) on the implementation of early childhood care and education in Bahir Dar city administration and their Findings revealed that there are curriculum implementation differences between public and private preschools. In addition to these, a comparative study between private and public pre-primary schools was conducted by (Ludago, 2020) on “Practices, Challenges, and Opportunities of Inclusive Education Implementation” in Kambata Tambaro Zone, SNNPR. Another study was conducted by (Dakamo, 2020) on “Inclusive Education Practices of Two Private Kindergartens” in Tabor Sub-city, Hawassa City Administration.

Apart from the above gaps, there are other gaps revealed in the research mentioned above compared with this research. The researches mentioned above focused on the practices, challenges, and opportunities of Childhood Care and Education. Contextually, the researches had to show that the issue of children with disabilities is the concern of all parts of society rather than leaving it to the government. Whereas in this study, the target group was specific to preschool children with disabilities, and both public and private preschools were taken into account. Methodologically, the above-mentioned researches used a mixed research design; but the

researcher in this study used a qualitative research design which is helpful to dig out the major learning challenges encountered by preschool children with disabilities deeply.

Conceptually, in this study the major learning challenges were studied from different perspectives; from socio-cultural, school-related, and teacher-related perspectives; but none of the above-mentioned researches showed in such a manner. Unless the major learning challenges are identified from their source of dimension, it will not be possible to tackle them appropriately.

Furthermore, there is a scarcity of studies conducted on the learning challenges of preprimary school children with disabilities in the study area. In these studies, there is also a study participant gap in that they did not consider children of preschool with disabilities. Therefore, based on the research gap mentioned above, the researcher in this study examined the learning challenges such as socio-cultural, school-related, and teacher-related challenges that encounter preschool children with disabilities in 3 public and 3 private preschools in Worabe city and Lessons to be learned from the better-practiced context are identified. To do this, the following basic research questions were answered at the end of this study.

- 1) What are the socio-cultural learning challenges influencing preschool children with disabilities in public and private preschools of Worabe city?
- 2) How do school-related learning challenges influence preschool children with disabilities in public and private preschools of Worabe city?
- 3) Do teacher-related learning challenges affect children with disabilities more in public than private preschools of Worabe city?
- 4) Are there lessons to be derived from either of the schools?

1.3 OBJECTIVES

1.3.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The general objective of the study was to identify Learning Challenges encountered by preschool Children with disabilities in public and private preschool children of Worabe city.

1.3.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- i. To identify the socio-cultural learning challenges encountered by preschool children with disabilities in public and private preschools of Worabe city.
- ii. To examine school-related learning challenges encountered by preschool children with disabilities in public and private preschools of Worabe city.

- iii. To compare teacher-related learning challenges facing preschool children with disabilities in public and private preschools of Worabe city.
- iv. To identify lessons to be learned from the better-practiced context.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study were intended to provide advantages to: Primarily, the findings of the research benefit preschool children with disabilities that will learn after 2014 E.C in sample preschools of Worabe city and their parents, in that they benefit from the expected improvements that will be insured following the recommendations of the study. Principals of selected preschools in which preschool children with disabilities will learn that they will gain awareness to manage in an improved manner that benefits children with disabilities.

The findings of the study may also help preschool and regular teachers who teach preschool children with and/or without disabilities in selected preschools of Worabe city to increase their skills and awareness that help them provide better support for these children. The findings of the study will also benefit Worabe city education office management staff, supervisors, and experts in that they will gain awareness in executing their responsibilities during their supportive supervision. This study may also benefit other researchers who are interested in further study on the topic area indicated under the “Further study” section of this study.

1.5. Scope of the Study.

To make the study more manageable and feasible, the study was delimited to 3 public and 3 private preschools in Worabe city. Concerning time, the study will also be delimited to the academic year of 2014 E.C.

1.6. Limitation of the Study

Although this research has its contribution to filling the gap stated above, it had also limitations as well. The limitations were: that those children with disabilities were not included in the study believing that they would not have understood the research questions to answer and the parents of children with intellectual disabilities were not also included.

The other limitation was that at the beginning of the data collection, some participants especially some parents and some principals of sampled schools were not willing to participate. But they willingly participated after a discussion and clarification of the purpose of the study.

1.7 Organization of the Study

The organization of the study was divided into six chapters. The first chapter is the introduction and background of the study; the second chapter revised related and available literature on the theme of the issue of learning challenges to preschool CwDs. The third chapter presented the research methodology, design, and other elements under this chapter. The fourth chapter presented the analysis and interpretation of the collected data. Chapter five dealt with the Discussion of the main findings using relevant literature and the views of the researcher under the themes of the study. Finally, chapter six presented, a summary, conclusion, and recommendations of the study.

1. Operational Definitions of Terms

Children with Disabilities: in this study are those who have long-term physical, visual, and hearing impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in schools on an equal basis.

Challenge: the situation of being faced with something that needs great mental or physical effort to be done successfully and therefore tests a person's ability.

Preschool: is an early childhood program in which children combine learning with play in a program run by professionally trained adults and it is mostly between the ages of 3 to 5 years.

Pre-primary children: the period from four years to six years old children in this study.

Early Childhood Care and Education: refers to children's survival, growth, development, and learning including health, nutrition and hygiene, and cognitive, social, physical, and emotional development – from birth to primary school, in formal and non-formal settings.

Inclusive Education: is a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of educational needs of all learners.

Special Needs Education: Education designed to facilitate the learning of individuals who, for a wide variety of reasons, require additional support and adaptive pedagogical methods.

Socio-Cultural: in this study is a term related to social and cultural factors, which means common traditions, habits, patterns, and beliefs of the present in a population group which influence the learning of preschool children with disabilities.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2. Introduction

This section will provide background literature on the topic of the major learning challenges that face preschool children living with disabilities from socio-cultural, school-related, and teacher-related perspectives. In addition to these, the chapter will explore the major challenging situations in the education of children with disabilities in Ethiopia, the current status of Ethiopian ECE, theoretical framework of inclusive education practices which has a direct relationship with the topic of this study under sub-topics behaviorism-based, cognitive-based and constructivism-based inclusive education practices and finally conceptual framework of major learning challenges that face preschool children with disabilities will be presented.

2.1 Socio-Cultural Challenges

All international and national declarations that are adopted by governments that concern child rights are to benefit both groups of persons with and without disabilities. But, because society is organized to satisfy the requirements of non-disabled people, the impaired child is unable to obtain meaningful education, as evidenced by the negative attitude that impedes their efforts to lead ordinary life (Unesco, 2001). Many developing countries focused on newborn and child health, poverty reduction, safe and cheap child-minding environments, and the transition to primary schooling since the basic needs of so many young children were not being met (Jaramillo & Mingat, 2008). Africa has a common history of colonization by European countries, and the impact of this experience on the improvement of Early Childhood Care and Education (Kamerman, 2007).

Africa is known for having the world's youngest population (half of the population are children under 14 and 20 percent under 5). It is the region with the greatest newborn mortality rate, with children who are more likely to suffer from chronic malnutrition and insufficient food supplies, live in severe poverty, are exposed to armed conflict, and/or become AIDS orphans (Richter, 2006).

Pre-primary enrollment rates in most African countries are below 10%, however, rates

vary widely across the area, ranging from above 90% in Mauritius to under 1% in the Congo and Djibouti ADEA Newsletter (2015). The condition differs by country, with Eastern and Southern Africa accounting for 62% of the teenagers who took part. The majority of the children (80 percent) are enrolled in private programs.

Families react to a disability in their family in a variety of ways. However, most families face significant obstacles as a result of a child's impairment. When negative attitudes and a lack of understanding prevail, and no coping techniques or additional assistance are available, violence toward children with disabilities can occur. It was discovered that many children with disabilities in Ethiopia were treated unequally by their siblings and felt excluded. Furthermore, the parents appeared to avoid involving their disabled child in the immediate community due to sentiments of shame (Tirussew, 2005).

“The child’s lack of access to the family’s social networks is related to the social and bodily surroundings consist of the situation in schools, where teenagers with SNE are regularly exposed to a range of encounters and a lack of facilities to accommodate them in schools, all of which have an influence on the children's talent throughout education. Children with special needs are not able to access important education because society is not helpful to these children; instead, the society stands to satisfy the desires of those who are not with special needs as stated by a poor mindset that hinders their struggles to lead regular lives (Caldin, 2013).

According to the storytellers of the church, Ethiopia's disabled people, although in small numbers, participated in traditional education earlier than "modern" education. There were students with visual and physical disabilities near churches and mosques. These students were successful because the instruction was verbal (HUSSEIN, 2017). This is confirmed by the presence of mosques and monasteries of visually and physically impaired teachers who still teach the Quran, the Bible, poetry, and rhythmic religious songs (Temesgen, 2017).

For the past 40 years, children with obvious sensory impairments such as blindness and deafness have been educated in special schools originally started by foreign missionaries. However, to date, the capacity of some of these special schools is limited, and the number of children educated in these schools is still small (Temesgen, 2017).

As reported in SNE's 2006 Strategic Plan, there has been a general trend in recent years towards inclusive education aimed at including children with disabilities in their normal school environment. This move has dramatically expanded the range of special classes in mainstream school environments for children with visual and hearing disabilities and children with intellectual disabilities. However, most special schools suffer from overcrowding, lack of specialized teaching materials and equipment, and a shortage of teachers trained in special education (Tirussew, 2005). Special schools and classes whose funding depends on the government, as well as inclusive schools, report serious problems with financial bottlenecks. The situation is exacerbated for children with undiscovered or hidden disabilities who attend classes with non-disabled peers in mainstream schools without special educational support

2.2 School-Related Learning Challenges

Children with disabilities have rights similar to other children without disabilities. But when it comes to education, however, this is not true in reality. School-related learning challenges hinder the learning of all children, but these challenges severely hinder the learning of those children with disabilities because these children can do nothing by themselves to withstand the challenge. These challenging factors among others include the physical environments of the school, school curriculum, language and communication, instructional policies, and organizational structures. Inadequate education and teachers' development of the profession and professional support staff, shortage of funding, and constrained support from educational authorities are the most serious factors (UNICEF., 2007).

the assessment of children with disabilities is not standardized, and the existing curriculum and examination scheme are not flexible and do not provide for Special Needs Education (Albrecht, Johns, Mounstevan, & Olorunda, 2009). In the establishment of the curriculum and examination system, Special Needs Education receives little attention. In both public and private schools, children with disabilities are enrolled together with children without disabilities. There is a government directive that enforces every public primary school in Ethiopia to have at least one separate section for 0-class children which has an independent fence, toilet, appropriate furniture for the children, and a trained teacher for that level.

But this is not yet accomplished by most public schools in Ethiopia. There should be a curriculum that serves the needs of the disabled gives adequate attention to SNE and that makes school infrastructure supportive to the children who have special educational needs.

For children who are unaccepted by their peers or have strained relationships with their teachers, school can be a punishing experience. Many of their activities would be meaningless if they do not have friends. People without friends are particularly susceptible; their health and well-being are constantly put at risk. Education is a right for all children, regardless of their abilities. Unfortunately, this has not been met for children with disabilities all over the world, and only a few lucky ones are given this opportunity (Cornell, Shukla, & Konold, 2015).

Because the majority of school administrators are not properly equipped to handle SNE children, they are now facing significant obstacles in addressing their educational needs (Konold, Cornell, Jia, & Malone, 2018). It is not realistic to integrate special needs students in huge classes with more than fifty children as it reduces teacher-pupil contact and makes the selection of suitable teaching methods impossible (Mutugi, 2018).

2.3. Teacher-Related Learning Challenges

Inclusive education is highly pressured nowadays in all parts of the globe. But, it remains theoretical when evaluated from a practical point of view, especially in sub-Saharan African countries. This situation extremely hampers the learning of children with special needs education. Among the challenges are teachers-related challenges and this section discusses the learning challenges related to teachers. Classroom teachers were less keen to include students with more severe disabilities because of the day-to-day responsibilities they face.

Studies from other countries show similar results. (Hayes and Bulat, 2017), stated that a study of 14 countries, found that teachers welcome students with medical and physical disabilities. But resist the inclusion of students with special needs with significantly more disabilities. Teachers seem reluctant toward any learner putting extra demand on them referred to The majority of the teacher pieces of training lacked mandatory special needs education units during the pre-service training period. Some teachers with special education training find that the pre-service courses given in colleges are not sufficient for teaching the realities of students with special needs (Hayes & Bulat, 2017).

In-service training was more beneficial than pre-service training, according to (Al-Zyoudi, 2006) because it was based on actual classroom findings. Because of their everyday obligations, classroom teachers are less enthusiastic about including kids with more severe disabilities. In most countries, teachers are likely to be an essential resource for special needs education. However, even with a positive attitude, it is difficult for teachers to implement inclusive education without proper training, knowledge, and materials. Most teachers cannot read or write Braille. This is a barrier for them and their children. Only teachers can verbally teach children with disabilities. In other words, the lack of support and opportunity hinders the successful implementation of inclusive education. However, a positive attitude is the first step toward achieving inclusive education (Al-Zyoudi, 2006).

2.4. The Practice and Challenges of IE in Ethiopia

The special education program in its modern type was started in Ethiopia in 1925. Before this time, blind people were attending traditional church education. The introduction of westernized education gave, therefore, an alternative education system to the country and marked a significant step in the history of education in Ethiopia. Seventeen years from here later, the first institutional school for children with visual impairment was established in the town of Dembidolo in 1925 even though it was interrupted by the Italian invasion. The opening of this institutional school marked a significant step in the history of special needs education in Ethiopia. Therefore, the foreign missionaries were the first to establish institutional schooling for people with special needs in Ethiopia (Temesgen, 2018b).

When public schooling was expanded, different disability groups were considered for special schools. American and foreign missionaries established special schools for deaf children in 1956 and 1959. The government's participation in the area, on the other hand, came much later. Even though it is insufficient, the 1994 education and training policy stated about SNE for the first time in history. The policy's article 2.2.3 mandates the creation of specific units and classes for children with special needs. As a result of the policy, dedicated units and classes for children with disabilities have been established in regular schools (Temesgen, 2017).

Ethiopia has an estimated 691,765 disabled children; of these, only about 2,300 are enrolled in schools with a high risk of dropping out (MEKONNEN, 2020).

The country has committed itself to international proclamations advocating for the rights of children with disabilities to educational access, included ideals of supporting people with disabilities in its constitution, and developed national plans for special needs education (Woldehana & Teferra, 2021).

Predominantly, the teaching methodology of church education was oral. Historically, those who succeeded in their education were able to get positions and power (Temesgen, 2014). In the history of Ethiopian church education, hence, people with disabilities had a convincing role in taking part in the scholastic voyage. Thus, assessing the actual educational practice for students with disabilities in indigenous educational programs is worthwhile for realizing the quality education that the church and government are giving top priority today for the education of students with disabilities in Ethiopia. Despite much research being carried out concerning the educational condition of students with disabilities in the modern education program, inadequate attention is given to the status and condition of the indigenous education for people with disabilities in the Ethiopian Orthodox church (Franck, 2015).

However, when one looks beyond these policies and declarations and views the realities of primary school classrooms and their surrounding communities, it becomes clear that achieving Education for All, particularly children with disabilities involves much more than establishing policies and placing students in classrooms. Achieving true inclusion in Ethiopia will require action that is rooted in the conviction that inclusive education is not merely about access, but about changes in society and systems. Special schools in many developing countries are characterized by low quality and lack of regulation. The special schools in Ethiopia are no exception to this and are often crowded, poorly staffed, under-resourced, and generally concentrated in urban areas (Tefera, Admas, & Mulatie, 2015). In light of the shortcomings of these limited educational provisions for children with disabilities, the Ethiopian government established a special needs/Inclusive education strategy focused on the inclusion of students in mainstream classes close to their homes (Franck & Joshi, 2017).

However, as some voices in the education sector point out until there is equity in educational resource distribution for students with special educational needs; there is a need for affirmative action in budgeting for these students. Otherwise, simply grouping children with special educational needs will likely continue the fragmented efforts and lack of funding that has characterized special needs education in Ethiopia thus far.

One of the primary misunderstandings of inclusive education is a belief in the resource intensity of such an endeavor. The investment in inclusive education pays off significantly with increased participation in the economy by youths who have been given a high-quality education. In short, implementing inclusive education is not about increasing the education budget; but about the continuous, systemic, and sustained transformation of educational design, cultures, and values (Schuelka, 2018).

2.5. The current status of Ethiopian ECE

International policy frameworks, like Sustainable Development Goals, gave attention to early childhood education even though the practice in Ethiopia is short. The goal commits the states to equity and inclusive early childhood with strong emphasis. ‘Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all (Bordoloi, Das, & Das, 2020). It speculated on ensuring equitable and quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education for all that makes them ready for primary education. Goal 10 also talks about reducing inequality within and among countries. Particularly it states the ‘social, economic and political inclusion of all irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or another status. Accordingly, this is accepted and applicable by all countries including Ethiopia.

Currently, in line with sustainable development, the ministry of education is taking an action to address exclusive practices, in early childhood education and emerging different forms and trying to access rural and disadvantaged communities (Hirpa, 2021). Contemporarily, the involvement of private institutions, non-governmental organizations, and religious institutions has begun investing in ECE. The number of preschools is expanding in urban areas (Hirpa, 2021). Different documents including National Policy Framework, Operation Plan, and Guidelines for ECCE have been developed by (Sone et al., 2010) have been developed to enhance the accessibility and quality of early childhood education. The documents have the vision to ‘ensuring the right for all children to a healthy start in life, nurture in a safe, caring and stimulating environment and develop to their fullest potential.

Some forms of ECE are, 0-class and Child-to-Child programs. They aimed to address the need for ECE for rural and the most disadvantaged community. The 0-class program is a program provided for children aged 5–6 years, alongside the government primary schools.

The Child-to-Child approach is considered to deal with an educational practice in which grade 5/6 children have coached their younger siblings (Hirpa, 2021). Still, there is no significant change in the quality of early childhood education and enrollment rate compared to the total number of children requiring the service. The enrolment rate, the service delivery process, and services delivered to young children are quite insufficient and exclusive and do not show equity and quality education services to preschool children (Lemma, 2014). The 7% national-wide coverage only consists of families who can afford the tuition fees for their children. The program is not only inaccessible to children from low socioeconomic status and children with special educational needs but also has its limitations (Owenbiugie & Akpudi, 2019). ECE which considers children from low socioeconomic status and take high coverage 0-class is characterized by low quality, in terms of trained manpower, equipment, and other quality indicators. Children with disabilities are still denied the attention of the sector and they are excluded from the programs.

CwDs are currently targeted as one of Ethiopia's basic education priority groups, although schools lack the infrastructure to handle them. Teachers are in short supply, and most have not been trained on how to integrate CwDs into everyday classroom activities. Furthermore, the class is far too large. It is impossible to provide inclusive education for students with special education needs in classes with too many students, according to (Zabeli, Kaçaniku, & Koliqi, 2021). Children with disabilities go to elementary school, but only a small fraction of them graduate. This is due to a lack of school infrastructure and a curriculum that is not inclusive and does not meet the needs of CwDs.

2.6. Theoretical framework of Inclusive Education Practices

The inclusive education theory is based on three basic theories. For teachers to successfully make curricular and instructional decisions for each student, effective inclusive education methods should incorporate ideas from each of these ideologies. The title of this study is directly related to the concept and practice of inclusive education; the theoretical framework of Inclusive Education Practices is taken as a theoretical framework of this study and each of the theories that support inclusive education practice is described as follows:

2.6.1 Behaviorism-based Inclusive Education Practices

The primary focus of behaviorism is on observable and measurable characteristics of human behavior. Behaviorist learning theories emphasize changes in behavior that occur as a result of the learner's stimulus-response linkages. Because of earlier conditioning and psychological urges present at the time of the activity, an individual chooses one reaction over another. In the classroom, behaviorists have successfully implemented this system of rewards and punishments by praising desired behaviors and penalizing improper ones. Rewards can be varied, but they must be meaningful to the learner in some way. Among the practical teaching practices that evolved from behaviorist theory are: consequences, reinforcement, extinction, and behavior modification (Zhu, Yang, Zhang, & Chen, 2021).

In practice, behaviorism-based inclusive education approaches include the use of behaviorism in inclusive education settings, as seen by the emphasis on student behavior and performance while altering stimulus materials. Well-known instructional approaches such as explicit or direct instruction are examples of behaviorism-based inclusive education strategies. In general education classrooms, the strategy has yielded favorable research outcomes with kids with special needs. Explicit or direct instruction practices are systematic, featuring a teacher-led, step-by-step process that students follow during instruction. Furthermore, explicit or direct instruction-based approaches that break down tasks into their simplest pieces are extensively employed in inclusive education classrooms to teach students with special educational needs.

In addition, explicit or direct instruction-based practices that break down tasks into their smallest elements are widely used for teaching students with special educational needs in inclusive education classrooms (Al-Shammari, E. Faulkner & Forlin, 2019).

During the instructional process, Behaviorists assess learners to determine at what point to begin instruction and which reinforces are most effective. The teacher's role during the process is to: (1) determine which cues can elicit the students' desired responses; (2) arrange practices where prompts are paired with the target stimuli which are expected to elicit the responses in the 'natural' setting; and (3) arrange environmental conditions so that students can make the correct responses in the presence of those target stimuli and receive reinforcement for those responses (Al-Shammari, E. Faulkner & Forlin, 2019).

The findings of this research have shown that children with disabilities are not properly identified according to their specific needs or disabilities and the researcher recommended that public and private schools should properly identify children with disabilities according to their specific needs. Therefore, behaviorism-based inclusive education practice contributes to this research with the idea that behaviorists assess learners to determine at what point to begin instruction and which reinforces are most effective.

2.6.2 Cognitive–based Inclusive Education Practices

Adapting instruction to the developmental level of the learner is an essential aspect of Piaget's theory. The topic of education must be appropriate for the learner's developmental stage. The teacher's role is to make learning easier for students by giving a variety of experiences. "Discovery Learning" allow students to explore and experiment, resulting in fresh insights. Opportunities for pupils of various cognitive levels to collaborate frequently assist less mature students to progress to a more mature understanding. Another teaching implication is the utilization of concrete "hands-on" experiences to assist children in teaching (Zhou & Brown, 2015). In practice, cognitivist-based inclusive education approaches entail the use of cognitivist principles in inclusive education settings, as seen by the emphasis on mental information processing and memory. Students learn metacognitive skills to help them understand how they think. Students can prepare, organize, and convey knowledge and learning by using targeted study techniques, concept mapping, and reciprocal teaching.

A flow chart, which is used to organize information in a cognitivist-based classroom, is another example of a metacognitive approach. As a result, cognitivism can be linked to essential components of inclusive education best practices by assisting students in assimilation and accommodation of materials. Theoretically, constructivism aims to create cognitive tools that reflect the cultural wisdom of the culture (Institute & ICF, 2019).

The findings of this research have shown that the school environment and classroom facilities, indoor and outdoor play materials in all sampled schools are not adapted and not appropriate for the learning of children with disabilities. Thus, cognitive-based inclusive education practice has a contribution to this research in that it states that the topic of education must be appropriate for the learner's developmental stage. The teacher's role is to facilitate learning by providing a

variety of experiences. "Discovery Learning" provides opportunities for learners to explore and experiment, thereby encouraging new understandings.

2.6.3 Constructivism-based Inclusive Education Practices

The basic premise of constructivist theory is that people are said to learn when they have gained experience from what they learn. Practically, constructivism-based inclusive education practices are the applications of constructivism in inclusive education settings, which would involve instructional methods and strategies to assist learners to explore complex topics actively (Al-Shammari et al., 2019).

Inclusive education requires a constructivist approach to teaching and learning. Making this fundamental shift involves an explicit critique of assumptions, practices, and structures associated with a positivist approach. Constructivism 'rejects the notion that there are instructional strategies that are effective, regardless of context, including students' backgrounds and interests' but that, '...it acknowledges and respects the wholeness and particularity of learning as situational constructed'. An example of constructivism-based inclusive education practices is active learning. It suggested that practices such as teaching students to summarize, paraphrase, predict, and use visual images, help students with learning disabilities understand and remember (Al-Shammari et al., 2019)

Students in a constructivist inclusive education setting would benefit most from the following best practices as reported by such as peer tutoring and cooperative learning. Through peer tutoring and cooperative learning, students can interact with each other and actively learn in a real-world setting (Hattie, 2009).

In the Constructivism-based Inclusive Education Practices, it is suggested that practices such as teaching students to summarize, paraphrase, predict, and use visual images, help students with learning disabilities understand and remember. Some practices such as summarizing, predicting, and using visuals have also been found to have high to medium effects on students with special needs. Therefore, constructivism-based inclusive education practice contributes to such idea that children with disabilities should learn with appropriate teaching aids and teaching and learning materials, in addition, at the core of this approach to disability studies is the philosophical concept that all knowledge is socially/culturally constructed.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

3.1. Method

This study was intended to examine the learning challenges of preschool children in 3 public and 3 private preschools in the siltie zone, Worabe city. The researcher preferred to employ a qualitative research method which is more appropriate to understand the experiences and views of different groups of people regarding a phenomenon.

This study was intended to examine the learning challenges of preschool children in 3 public and 3 private preschools in the siltie zone, Worabe city. The researcher preferred to employ a qualitative research method which is more appropriate to understand the experiences and views of different groups of people regarding a phenomenon.

3.1. Research Design

The study focused on the learning challenges faced by preschool children with disabilities in selected public and private 0-classes of Siltie Zone, Worabe city. Qualitative research, particularly phenomenological research design was employed in this study. Phenomenological research design is a deep investigation of what experiences mean to people. It focuses on inquiry of people's common sense understanding and the meaning they make of their experiences. Phenomenological research design requires a researcher to focus on people's experiences of a phenomenon to obtain comprehensive details of experiences and views of people and ultimately reveal the essence of the experience (Bliss, 2016). In phenomenological research, respondents are asked to describe their experiences as they perceive them. They may write about their experiences, but the information is generally obtained through interviews. Data collection instruments in this research were in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and observation. In some cases, the information that was obtained from respondents was recorded and transcribed to the research data in the English language.

3.3. Description of Study Area

The study area, Worabe, is the capital city of the Siltie zone which is located in the SNNP. Worabe is found 172 kilometers south of Addis Ababa, on the road from Alem Gena to Hosana main Asphalt road. Worabe is a newly established city following the establishment of the

Siltie zone in 1993 E.C. Worabe is found in the center of the zone and it shares borders with different weredas of the Zone. That is; from the North with silti, from the West Alichu wuriro, from the South Hulbareg, from the East Dalocha weredas.

3.4. Population of the Study

The population of this study was 17 public and 6 private preschools and 53 children with disabilities from public preschool and their 53 parents, 15 preschool teachers from public, and 34 preschool teachers from private preschools. The population also included 24 children with disabilities from private preschools and 24 parents of these children. In addition to these, 27 teachers from public and 34 teachers from private schools, 17 public and 6 private preschool principals, 12 education office experts, 5 supervisors, and 1 education office head were the population of the study.

3.5. Sample and Sampling Technique

3.5.1. Sample Size

Preschool children with Disabilities in Worabe city public and private preschools were the focus of this study. Out of 17 public preschools, data was collected from 3 preschools, and out of 6 private preschools data was collected from 3 preschools. The sample schools were selected purposively. In the selected public preschools there are 15 teachers and out of these, 6 preschool teachers and out of 34 private preschool teachers 6 preschool teachers were selected purposively for an in-depth interview. From public sample schools 3 parents and from private sample schools 3 parents of CwDs were selected purposively for an in-depth interview. And also, out of 3 selected public preschools 3 (all) principals and out of 3 private preschool principals 3 (all) principals were taken by using the census method. From selected 3 public preschools 1 supervisor, 1 education office SNE expert and 1 education office head were taken purposively for the in-depth interview.

Table 3.1: Summary of the study population and sample size

Type of participant	No. of the total population in a public institution	No. of the total population in private institutions	Sample size from public institution	Sample size from private institution	Remark
Preschools	17	6	3	3	public preschools are 0-classes
Preschool teachers	15	34	3	3	In-depth interview
School Principals	17	6	3	3	In-depth interview
Supervisor	5	2	1	-	In-depth interview
Regular teachers	27	34	12	12	Focus group discussion
SNE Expert Education office head	12	12	1	-	In-depth interview
Parents of 0-class CwDs	1	-	1	-	In-depth interview
Total	94	24	24	21	

3.5.2. Sampling Techniques

Sampling is one of the most important factors which determine the accuracy of a study (Farrokhi & Mahmoudi-Hamidabad, 2012). There are ten woredas and five administrative towns in the siltie zone. Therefore, in most cases, the purposive sampling technique was used to select the intended sample size.

3.5.3. Sampling Procedure

A sample is a portion of the entire group (called a population). Sampling procedure: is choosing part of a population using a selected method to represent the entire population of a study (Taherdoost, 2016). In this study, the researcher used mostly purposive sampling technique

to choose subjects that he believed would be able to provide important information and sometimes the census method was used when all of the population was taken as a sample. In addition to these, the in-depth interview questions prepared for parents of children with disabilities were translated into their mother tongue; siltigna.

3.6. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Disabilities are of different types. The usual types are physical, visual, hearing, and intellectual disabilities. In this study, Parents of children with intellectual disabilities were not included and parents of children with physical, visual, and hearing disabilities were included.

3.7. Data Gathering Instruments

The qualitative data gathering method plays an essential part in effective examination by offering information useful to understand the processes behind observed results and examine changes in peoples' perceptions of their well-being (Fisher, 2021). In this study, three data-gathering instruments (in-depth interview, Focus Group Discussion, and Observation) were used to gather the required data.

3.7.1. In-Depth Interview

In-depth interviews are most suitable for conditions in which one wants to ask open-ended questions that produce a depth of evidence from relatively few people (Fisher, 2021). Separate in-depth interview questions were conducted for selected parents of CwDs and preschool teachers who teach CwDs. In the in-depth interview, 3 parents of CwDs from public schools and 3 parents of CwDs from private schools, 3 teachers of preschool CwDs from public schools, and 3 teachers of preschool CwDs from private schools also participated. In addition to these, 3 principals from public sample schools and 3 principals from private sample schools, 1 education office head, 1 education office SNE expert, and 1 school supervisor, a total of 21 participants were interviewed. A single participant was interviewed for about 2 hours using an in-depth interview and interviewing stopped when data saturation was maintained.

3.7.2. Focus Group Discussions

Focus Group Discussion is one of the qualitative data gathering methods in which a group interview is conducted with approximately six to twelve people in a group who share similar characteristics or have common interests (Pacho, 2015). Based on a predetermined set of topics, a facilitator guided the Focus Group Discussion. In the focus group discussion, it was the

facilitator who created an environment that inspired participants to share their perceptions and points of view.

The facilitators' profession in this study was from the field of educational psychology. The participants of the focus group discussion were 12 regular teachers from sample public schools and 12 regular teachers from sample private schools. 24 individuals participated in the focus group discussion. 50-60 minutes were consumed with one discussion group and the teachers who sometimes have exposure to children with disabilities, but regularly teach other classes in sample schools were selected for the focus group discussion purposively. The FGD with one group stopped when sufficient information was obtained. In doing this, enough time was given for all members of each group to talk and share their thoughts, opinions, and views.

This is evidenced by the explanation of scholars as follows: "No new themes go hand-in-hand with no new data and no new coding. If one has reached the point of no new data, one has also most likely reached the point of no new themes; therefore, one has reached data saturation. That is when the ability to obtain additional new information has been attained and when further coding is no longer feasible, data saturation will be achieved (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

3.7.3. Observation

Observation is more direct than other data-gathering instruments. It depends on the direct evidence of the eye to witness first hand events (Frels, Sharma, Onwuegbuzie, Leech, & Stark, 2011). The researcher observed the selected sample schools see to what extent the school's physical environment and classroom facilities were suitable for the educational needs of CwDs and all other necessary concerns related to the topic area. For this purpose, the researcher developed an observation checklist to conduct the observation.

To assure data quality, triangulation was applied. Triangulation involves examining changes or lessons learned from different points of view, or in different ways and it was used to substantiate the information that was obtained from one data gathering instrument (for example, interview, focus group discussion, and observation) with the information that was obtained from another. It is used to improve the quality of monitoring and evaluation information, and to make analyses more reliable. There are many ways of triangulating information. These include comparing different sources of information, applying different methods, and using different investigators (Foko, Mahwai, & Phiri, 2020; Msweli, 2020).

From this point of view, to maintain data quality assurance the information that was obtained from preschool teachers was compared with the information that was obtained from regular teachers.

3.8. Data Gathering Procedures

Before the commencement of data collection, the proposal was commented on and approved by the advisors of the research and then the researcher developed and designed the necessary data collection instruments for all respondents of the study. The data collection instruments as described earlier were in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and observation. These instruments were prepared in English and the in-depth interview questions prepared for parents of children with disabilities were translated into their mother tongue, siltigna by the researcher. Then, the researcher submitted these instruments to the advisors and got comments and incorporated the comments, and then finalized and duplicated the instruments and made them ready for field data collection work. Then after, the researcher received a letter of collaboration from Jimma University, the department of psychology prepared for concerned bodies of the research area.

The letter was submitted to the education office of Worabe city and the purpose of the study was explained to the office by the researcher. Another letter was written by the education office to sample schools. The researcher received and submitted a copy of this letter to sample schools explaining the purpose of the study to the principals of sample schools. The purpose of the study and the confidentiality of the responses they would have given was explained to each of the participants and they confirmed their willingness to participate in the study, although resistance was encountered temporarily from some participants. Finally, the in-depth interview and FGD followed by observation were administered and data were collected, organized, analyzed, and interpreted.

3.9. Data Analysis Method

Since this study used qualitative data (i.e. in-depth interviews, focus group discussion, and observation), the data analysis method was also used depending on the assumption that qualitative data is stated and defined in terms of words. To analyze the data gathered through in-depth interviews, focus group discussion, and observation, the researcher has used the

phenomenological condensation approach which is one of the qualitative data analysis methods and it comprises the reducing of large texts into brief statements and then narration into a meaningful report.

3.10. Ethical Concerns

The researcher kept the ethical principles that aim at protecting the dignity and privacy of every individual who provided personal information about themselves or others. Before an individual became a participant in the research he/she was notified of the aims and anticipated benefits of the research. The confidentiality of the responses they gave was addressed by the researcher. No pressure of any nature was applied to encourage an individual to become a subject of the research. The researcher gave sufficient information to respondents that they had a choice regarding whether or not to participate in the research and as they were not being forced to participate.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis and interpretation of data collected through in-depth interviews, focus group discussion, and observation. As explained above, the objective of this study was to examine the learning challenges of preschool children with disabilities in selected 3 public and 3 private schools in Worabe city from the perspective of socio-cultural, school-related, and teacher-related challenges. Responses were gathered through the in-depth interview from 6 (3 public and 3 private) schools preschool teachers, 6 (3 public and 3 private) school principals, 1 education office SNE expert, 1 school supervisor, 1 education office head, 6 (3 from public and 3 from private) sampled schools parents of preschool CwDs. The supervisor, education office SNE expert, and education office head that are taken from the education office as participants of the interview were requested to answer the interview questions that concern both public and private schools because it is these bodies who should supervise private schools too.

In addition to this, the chapter contained responses gathered through 4 (2 from public and 2 from private) schools focus group discussions of regular teachers. Each of the focus group discussions comprised of minimum 6 members. Information gathered through observations using an observation checklist of 6 (3 public and 3 private) sample school compounds and classroom environments are also included in the chapter. They were told that their responses would be kept at maximum confidentiality and would be used only for academic purposes and all participants were present to give their responses. They gave their opinions and views and shared their experiences freely in the sessions facilitated for them within the compounds of selected schools and appropriate places and in the times suitable for them.

4. Demographic Characteristics of the Study Participants

Table 4.1: Demographic characteristics of participants of public institutions

	Indicator	preschool teachers	Regular teacher	School principals	Supervisor	Woreda SNE expert	Education office head	Parents of CwDs
Sex	Male	-	7	3	1	1	1	1
	Female	3	5	-	-	-	-	2
	Total	3	12	3	1	1	1	3
Education level	Grade 10/12 Certificate	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
	Diploma	2	4	1	-	1	-	-
	First degree & above	1	8	2	1	-	1	1
	≤ 1 year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Work Experience	1-3 year	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
	4-6	1	4	-	-	-	-	-
	7 years and above	-	8	3	1	1	-	-
Subject trained	SNE	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Other than SNE	2	12	3	1	1	1	-
	Not trained in any subject	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Age	20-25							
	26-30	3	3					
	31-35	--	3					
	36-40		4	3	1	1	1	
	41-45		2					3
	46-50							
>50								

SNE= Special Needs Education, CwDs= Children with disabilities

As indicated in the above table (table 4.1), the total number of teachers of preschool CwDs who participated in the interview from public schools is 3 and the total number of regular teachers who participated in the FGD is 12. Concerning characteristics of sex, particularly teachers of preschool CwDs in public schools were all females. Whereas in the case of regular teachers, out of 12 participants of FGD from public schools 7 of them are male and the rest 5 are females. Concerning the ages of teachers of preschool CwDs, their ages range from 26-30. Whereas concerning the ages of regular teachers from public schools 3 (1 male and 2 female) range 26-30 years; 3 (2 male and 1 female); 31-35 years; 4 (2 male and 2 female) 36-40 years and 2 male 41-45 years. This shows that all preschool teachers and regular teachers are mature enough to give appropriate answers to the interview questions presented to them.

Table 4.1 above also shows that out of the 3 teachers of preschool CwDs from public schools 2 are diploma holders and 1-degree holder. From this specific point, although the 2 diploma holders of teachers of preschool CwDs from public schools are trained in subject areas other than SNE.

In the case of the educational level of regular teachers who sometimes have exposure to teaching children with disabilities, out of 7 male regular teachers of public schools on table 4.1 above; 5 of them are degree holders and 2 of them are diploma holders and out of 5 female regular teachers, 2 of them are diploma and 3 of them are degree holders. As the above table shows, the area of the subject in which preschool teachers are trained is from public schools as shown in the above table is 1 SNE, 2 other than SNE. 2 teachers of preschool CwDs as shown in table 4.1 above have 1-3 years' service, and 1 teacher has service year between 4-6 years.

As explained earlier, among 3 teachers of preschool CwDs only 1 has the required qualification for teaching CwDs. Table 4.1 also shows that 2 teachers of preschool CwDs have teaching experience that ranges from 1 to 3 years which is not enough to get experience that enables them to appropriately handle children with different learning needs according to their specific needs. So, this implies another teacher-related learning challenge to preschool children with disabilities.

Table 4.1 above shows that 3 principals of public schools are all males and concerning their age it ranges 36-40; the age of education office head, education office SNE expert, and school supervisor range 41-45, 31-35, and 36-40 respectively. Concerning educational level, as shown in table 4.1 above; 2 principals are degree holders and 1 principal is a diploma holder.

Participants in education offices are all degree holders. The table also indicates that the educational level and experience of the majority of these respondents are enough to lead their respective institutions. However, the rights to education of children with disabilities are not recognized by the institutions they lead. Whatsoever the reason may be, the rights of these children for education should be prioritized. Therefore, they have to strive to improve the services their institutions provide to children with disabilities.

As table 4.1 above indicates, out of 3 parents of CwDs participated in the interview; 2 of them from public schools are females and 1 parent is male and their age ranges from 34-45 years for participants in public schools. The educational level of the parents is 1- 1st degree, 2 grade 10/12 completes.

Table 4.2. Demographic characteristics of participants of private institutions.

Indicator		preschool teachers	Regular teacher	School principals	Parents of CwDs
Sex	Male	-	4	1	1
	Female	3	8	2	2
	Total	3	12	3	3
Education level	Grade 10/12 Certificate	3	-	-	2
	Diploma	-	8	-	-
	First degree ≤ 1 year	-	4	3	1
	1-3 year	1	1	-	-
Work Experience	4-6	2	2	-	-
	7 and above	-	-	3	-
	SNE	-	-	-	-
Subject trained	Other than SNE	-	-	3	-
	Not trained in any subject	3	3	-	-
Age	20-25				
	26-30	3	6	--	--
	31-35	--	6	--	--
	36-40	--	--	3	3
	41-45	--	--		
	46-50	--	--		
	>50	--	--		

SNE= Special Needs Education; CwDs= Children with disabilities

As indicated in the above table, the total number of teachers of preschool CwDs participated in the interview from private schools is 3 and the total number of regular teachers who participated in the FGD is 12. Concerning characteristics of sex, particularly teachers of preschool CwDs in private schools were all females. Whereas, the age of regular teachers from private schools in table 4.2 above ranges from 6 (2 male and 4 female) 26-30 years; to 6 (2 male and 4 female) 31-35 years. This shows that all preschool teachers and regular teachers are mature enough to give appropriate answers to the interview questions presented to them.

As shown in table 4.2 above; the educational level of all of the teachers of preschool CwDs from public schools is 10th/12th complete. Thus, the educational level of private preschool teachers is found to be below the standard and this implies that they need further educational training that enables them to upgrade their educational level. In addition to this, out of 4 male regular teachers of private schools in table 4.2 above; 2 of them are degree holders and the rest 2 of them are diploma holders. Out of 8 female regular teachers of private schools in table 4.2 above; 6 of them are diploma holders and the rest 2 are degree holders. In addition to this, 3 (all of them) preschool teachers are not trained in any subject.

Table 4.2 above shows that 1 preschool special needs teacher from private schools has service year \leq 1 year; 2 teachers of preschool CwDs have service years 1-3 years; Table 4.2 above also shows that majority of teachers of preschool CwDs have teaching experience that ranges from 1 to 3 years which is not enough to get experience that enables them to appropriately handle children with different learning needs according to their specific needs. So, this implies another teacher-related learning challenge to preschool children with disabilities. Therefore, they have to strive to improve the services their institutions provide to children with disabilities. Out of 3 parents of CwDs participated in the interview from private schools as shown in table 4.2 are all females, and their ages range from 36-44 years for participants in private schools and their educational level is 1st-degree holders, diploma holders, and grade 8 complete.

4.3. Analysis and Interpretation of the Collected Data

As described above, the data gathering instruments for this thesis were in-depth interviews, focus group discussion, and observation. These instruments were prepared for different groups of respondents such as preschool teachers, school principals, and parents of

preschool children with disabilities all from selected public and private sample schools and a school supervisor, education office head, and education office SNE expert.

In addition, focus group discussion questions were conducted with regular teachers selected from public and private sample schools, and an observation checklist was prepared to check the status of the availability of observable facilities, school compound, classroom environment, and outdoor play equipment observed.

The researcher tried to prepare all the data collecting instruments based on basic research questions and were intended to answer the basic research questions presented at the end of chapter one. These basic research questions were related to:

4.3.1. What are socio-cultural learning challenges influencing preschool children with disabilities in public and private preschools of Worabe city?

To answer this basic research question, interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with the participants mentioned above and the following results are obtained:

A mother of a child with a physical disability from one of the public schools replied that:

Sometimes there is social support made by charity organizations to those who need such support. These supports are facilitated by kebele officials. Most of the time, it is observed that such supports are given to those who do not need them. For example, I have 3 children and they are orphans. One of them has a physical disability and she is learning in this school. She is female and now her age is 6 years. I live in a rented house without constant income, but I haven't got any support yet from the kebele.

One of the principals of public sample schools forwarded his idea that supports the first respondent's idea and said:

Families of CwDs still hide their disabled children, because they are afraid of discrimination from society. There are many children with disabilities in villages who do not come to school. The school has a greeting program using sign language every Monday morning for all of the students of the school during the flag ceremony. This weekly program aims to include those children with disabilities in the activities of the school. The school also transmits messages during such ceremonies to the families of CwDs through students and parents of non-disabled children. But, the progress is too slow.

Another respondent of a private school principal added his idea that supports this point and said:

There is a belief among the members of society that disability is caused due to rage and curse of God. Families of CwDs also assume that disability is a special problem caused to them by their child. Some families do not provide appropriate support to their children.

The third private school principal also forwarded his opinion that supports the ideas of former respondents and he said: *that parents of CwDs are stigmatized and discriminated against by the community. Because of this, some parents do not bring their CwDs during registration time. They bring them to school 1, 2, and sometimes 3 months after the proper registration time. But, whatever the time passed, we receive these children to accommodate them with the available condition in our school.* He also shared his experience and said:

Near our school, there is a mentally disabled girl. Her age could be 14 years and her mother does not want to bring her to school. I repeatedly told to the mother bring her child to our school at least to stay with students to exercise social interaction with students; I also told her that the school would not ask for any cost to do that. But the child's mother refused to do so. I asked the reason why she refused and she said if I bring my daughter to school, the students would laugh at her and she would become desperate and demoralized. The principal added that:

due to social discrimination, there are more than 20 children with disabilities in one village called Zomobate in Worabe city. Almost all of these children are from the diaspora community of Arab countries.

A principal of one of the private sample schools shared her experience as follows:

One of the social challenges that encounter children and that hinder their learning is that when CwDs play with their friends neighborhood, they may quarrel with each other. Usually, in such cases, CwDs are beaten up by friends. But these children would be re-beaten by their families because of false information received from their non-disabled friends because these children sometimes could not explain the happening correctly.

From the explanation given above, CwDs would-be victims of social injustice. They have been beaten up by their friends on one side and their parents or parents of their friends get irritated or annoyed at them for the guilt that their friends have committed but they projected it on the students of special needs.

In answering this question the school supervisor also forwarded his experience as follows:

On my part, I always advise parents of CwDs during my regular work and social interactions that they should send their children to school and they should respect their rights to education. On the way the disabled children to school and in the school compound too, other students in groups simply observe them and gaze at them. Some years ago, I had seen 2 schools aged CwDs in a house. I advised the parents to take them to school, but they never did so. Due to discrimination from the community, many families hide their disabled children.

In responding to the first basic research question in a focus group discussion of regular teachers in one of the sample schools, a participant said:

The discrimination act in the community due to CwDs has various features. For example, some families who live in hired houses are made to leave the houses. It is also hard for some mothers of CwDs to get another marriage who are widows because of the death of their husbands. All of the members of the focus group discussion agreed with this idea.

In a response to the first question, a principal of one of the sample private schools said the following that is transcribed from the record of the principal:

Concerning the societal influence on CwDs learning and their parents that hinder children's learning, there is progress in the awareness of society. It is not the same now as it was some years before. Now some parents bring their children with special education needs; even sometimes we are not interested to receive these children because of the absence of trained teachers and shortage of appropriate materials to support the children according to their specific needs. Of course, I know that there are children in their homes, especially those who came from Arab countries who have not yet come to school. As I said, many of their parents ask us to accept and accommodate their CwDs. But, what I can do is that I accept only special cases that if I refuse them to accept would remain home like the boy that you have seen with a wheelchair and treat him as much as I can.

Concerning this point, the education office head and SNE expert forwarded their ideas as transcribed from the record as follows:

Indeed, parents hide their children with disabilities because of discrimination. The majority of children with disabilities who are in their homes are those who came from Arab countries. Parents of those children with disabilities who came from abroad do not

hide their children, but those parents from inland hide their children with disabilities due to social discrimination. Our office used to strive to aware parents not hide but rather, bring them to school.

As explained by the education office, some parents hide their children with disabilities on the other hand; some parents send their CwDs to school. This situation shows that awareness of parents on disability differs from parent to parent. This shows there should be continuous awareness creation activities for all members of the community.

4.3.2 How do school-related learning challenges influence preschool children with disabilities in public and private preschools of Worabe city?

To answer this basic research question, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions were conducted with the participants mentioned above and the school environment and classroom facilities were observed using an observation checklist and the following results are obtained:

In responding to the above research question, a principal of one of the public sample schools said:

From the beginning, roads and entrances to schools are not suitable for children with disabilities. There are no encouraging situations to support children with special educational needs in our school. There are 156 (75 male and 81 female) children at the KG level. Among these 62 (34 male and 28 female) are preschool children and there are 4 children with different disabilities in the preschool. Their disabilities are 1 male with autism, 1 female with physical (a defect on the lower limb of the left foot), and 2 with hearing (1 male and 1 female unable to speak). There is no appropriate toilet for CwDs. All the KG level children including CwDs use a toilet with only 3 seats. The children should cross a problematic, bumpy road to go to the toilet. In addition to this, the seats of the toilet are not proportional to the whole children concerning ratio and not appropriate for CwDs, especially for those with physical disabilities.

Teachers of preschool CwDs of the school agreed and ascertained the idea given above during the interview session held with them.

A teacher of preschool CwDs in one of the private sample schools stressed that: *our school is not open for children with disabilities because of the absence of necessary materials for these children. She added that this year some months after the commencement of class, a mother brought her child with behavioral problems and asked the school to accept her child telling that a doctor who visited the child told her to take him to school and stay with peers so that the child would develop social interaction and get relief gradually. The school accepted the child and tried to treat him for the time being. The child began going to and disturbing his sister learning at this school in another upper grade repeatedly and other students in that class couldn't learn properly. Then after, we clarified the case to the child's mother and told her not to bring him to school again for the sake of learning of children.*

A principal of one of the private sample schools explained his idea for the same question during the interview conducted with him as follows:

We know that private schools do not accept CwDs for different reasons. But last year, our school discussed the issue of students with special needs whom their parents bring to our school and we decided to accept these children at least for two reasons:

First; these children are human beings and citizens of the country; we have to share the problem with their parents and we did this free of fee for 3 children with different levels of behavioral problems.

Secondly; by accepting these children be it free or with payment, we build a good image and our school would be preferred for the future. But, we were accused of accepting these children by other children without disabilities to their parents for the disturbance they faced. We discussed and tried to convince parents of children without disabilities.

Finally, parents of children with disabilities began not to send their children to school regularly and two of those children remained out of school and one of them is still in our school with good progress.

The researcher visited all the sample schools for almost 3 weeks. In addition to the information gathered through interviews and FGD, the schools were observed using an observation checklist and the following were observed:

Policy and strategy documents of preschool programs were not available in all visited sample schools during the observation time.

There are no learning materials such as syllabus, teachers' guide, or student's text, except the availability of brail, slate stylus for those with visually disabled children, and lesson presented with sign language using a computer in Worabe primary school for those children who could not hear and speak. Sign language dictionary is also observed in Ardi Academy, one of the private sample schools. Other schools are free of such materials.

All the principals of public and private sample schools were asked about the practice of preschool education programs concerning the age of CwDs: in responding to this question:

Principal A from a public sample school said:

We separated preschool children into three: 4, 5, and 6 years. 6 years are assumed to be Upper KG/0-classes. But, their ages are not perfectly known. The ages of some of these children may be more than 6 and some of them may be less than 6 years old. This is because some parents hide their disabled children due to social discrimination. We accept all children including CwDs and we place them in integrated classes. We do not have special classes for students with special needs education.

Principal B from a private sample school revealed:

Some children who come to our school, especially those who come without a certificate are not age-appropriate and the type and level of disability (if any) are not identified. After we have received these children, we observe them, identify and check whether they are aware of literacy and numeracy so that we decide where to place them.

Principals were asked another question regarding the availability of curriculum materials (teachers' guide and children's book) appropriate for preschool children with and without disabilities.

In terms of the suitability of buildings of the sample schools, the size of school compounds with adequate fields to play for all children including CwDs were observed and all public schools have adequate compounds, but there are no adequate indoor and outdoor play materials and preschools in all sample schools are not fenced separately from other upper grades. In Worabe primary school, which has a special needs education center and provides relatively better services in terms of learning of CwDs, the special needs education children do not have a toilet at all. There is no material for play in the school appropriate for CwDs.

In all sample schools, it is observed that children with disabilities are not allowed to interact with other non-disabled peers which is essential for their social development. In addition, in any of the schools, attention is not given to interest-based learning/play. In general, although public schools were found to have adequate compounds, no public school compound is organized to fit the developmental needs of preschool children with disabilities.

In the case of private schools, all the compounds of observed private sample schools, except Ardi Academy are too narrow that they were not initially constructed for school purposes, the schools are opened in hired rooms, and their classrooms are suffocated with a large number of children in a class (on average 65 children in a class).

Ardi Academy is initially constructed for school purposes, the width of classrooms and school compound is relatively better.

Parents were asked about the status of the relationship of parents of CwDs with sample schools. In responding to this question all the participants of the interview (school principals, parents, SNE teachers, and education office participants expressed that the majority of parents have a close relationship with schools. Some parents visit schools to follow up on their children's learning. If schools arrange meetings concerning children's learning with parents and other concerned bodies, they would be informed through telephone and by writing a letter.

In all sampled schools, except Worabe primary school, children with disabilities are being taught in integrated classes and teachers do not have assistant teachers. So, it is too difficult for preschool teachers to provide additional support for CwDs/special needs. Classrooms are not suitable for using teaching aids, which are challenging especially for CwDs.

In all public and private schools questions related to provisions of appropriate support by sampled schools for children with disabilities and the availability of enabling environment for inclusive education were raised for preschool special needs education teachers and regular teachers. All of them responded similarly assuring that appropriate support for children with disabilities according to their needs was not provided and all of them agreed that there were no enabling environments for inclusive education in their respective schools.

Another question related to the learning of preschool children with disabilities in schools according to their needs without discrimination was raised to parents of CwDs.

In responding to this question, a father of a child with a hearing disability from one of the public schools said that:

Children in this school are not learning with an equal opportunity with other non-disabled children; for example, there is only one teacher for 21 children with different disabilities. These children do not have a separate toilet, comfortable playground, necessary materials to learn according to their needs, and adequate and appropriate teaching aids. The school should facilitate proper learning conditions for our children; we can contribute what we can for them; because we are doing everything we can to educate our non-disabled children, our children with disabilities have equal rights with others.

Another respondent from a private school said:

When children with disabilities play with their non-disabled peers, they improve their social interaction and through time their performance in learning shows progress. So; parents, donors, and other concerned bodies should collaborate to facilitate transportation facilities for those children who come from distant areas to this school, then parents would be encouraged and they would continue sending their children with disabilities to school. To do everything we can for our children with disabilities including covering the transportation cost, parents want to see something that shows their children are learning. But, I observe no behavioral change in my child after staying for months at school. In addition, adequate time should also be given to these children. As explained above, these children have only one teacher without an assistant. The teacher had an assistant last year whose qualification was a BA degree in SNE. This year, he has been assigned to teach civics and ethical education to upper grades in this school. Therefore, to facilitate proper learning of CwDs collaboration between society, parents and the government is decisive and needs great attention.

The researcher asked the principal why the school assigned the SNE graduate teacher to teach another subject in upper grades. The principal replied:

The teacher that we assigned to teach civics and ethical education is a diploma graduate in this subject and there is a shortage of teachers who graduated in civics and ethical education.

This question was also presented to the education office head and SNE expert of the education office and they replied similarly:

We discussed repeatedly on this issue; the school assigned the teacher to teach civics and ethical education in upper grades because of a lack of trained teachers in this subject. We are searching for a trained teacher on the market, but we couldn't get yet.

This clearly shows to what extent the issue of children with disabilities is neglected.

In responding to the question regarding the distance of the school from the disabled children's homes, a mother of a child with disabilities from public schools said:

It is about 6 kilometers far from our home to my child's school. Others also assured that the children are forced to travel 1-4 kilometers from home to school.

4.3.3. Do teacher-related learning challenges affect children with disabilities more in public than private preschools of Worabe city?

To answer this basic research question, in-depth interviews were conducted with teachers of preschool children with disabilities in public and private schools, parents of preschool children with disabilities, school supervisors, education office head, education office SNE experts, principals of sampled public and private schools, and focus group discussions were prepared and conducted with regular teachers of public and private sampled schools and the following results are obtained:

Regarding the qualification of teachers of preschool children with disabilities and regular teachers and whether they are trained in SNE or not and teachers of preschool children with disabilities themselves were asked about their qualifications and acquisition of training related to SNE.

In answering this question: 2 public and 3 private school principals among 6 principals of sample schools responded that all the teachers who teach preschool CwDs are not trained in SNE. In the special needs education center of Worabe primary school, the teacher is a graduate with a BA degree in SNE. As explained above the number of students in the special needs center of Worabe primary school is 21 with different disabilities and there is only 1 teacher for all these children. This issue was a topic of discussion by parents during the interview session with parents and they criticized this situation strongly.

Teachers who teach preschool CwDs in sample schools except that of Worabe primary school assured that they are not trained in SNE and they did not get any form of on-the-job and/or short-term training.

But, the principal of one of the private schools, Ardi Academy stated that he has taken some courses of SNE when he was learning a diploma program and he sometimes orients KG teachers on how to handle children with disabilities/special needs.

Another interview question was raised for teachers of preschool CwDs concerning whether they provide the appropriate support for all children based on their needs and potential including children with disabilities. In responding to this question, a respondent from one of the public school SNE teachers said:

It is impossible to provide the appropriate support for all children including children with disabilities based on their needs and potential in our school; because there are no necessary materials to support children with disabilities. In addition to this, CwDs have different needs and they have also different behaviors; the time given is not adequate to support CwDs properly with the available materials. Besides, handling CwDs is tedious more than I can say.

A parent interviewee replied to the above question:

The children with SNE in this school are not learning properly, because the teacher in this school does not provide the appropriate support because there are no enough appropriate materials with the help which children with disabilities could be supported.

Teachers of preschool children with disabilities were asked a question to examine their awareness of CwDs. All of them agreed that if CwDs are supported according to their specific needs, they can learn equally with their peers.

A respondent from a public sample school stressed that:

There is a visually impaired female student in grade 3 of this school. She scored the first rank in all sections in the first semester of 2014 E.C. She is still leading the class.

From this, one can understand that if CwDs are provided with the necessary support according to their unique needs, they can learn not less than their peers, in some cases even better than their peers.

They are not simply burdens or dependents of others and many of them could be models of courage and exemplar of bravery.

Another question asked during the interview session with teachers who teach preschool CwDs in sample schools was “Do you think that teachers have the same interest to teach preschool children with and without disabilities?”

In responding to this question, one special needs teacher from a public sample school said:

Teachers do not have the same interest to teach CwDs and without disabilities because of the absence of necessary materials to support children with special needs according to their needs. CwDs are simply integrated into regular class; everything in schools is there considering children without disabilities.

Another special needs education teacher replied:

teachers do not have the same interest; because one who teaches CwDs without appropriate material support could be accountable if their respective behaviors do not show any noticeable positive change.

Concerning the above question, respondent A of a focus group discussion from a private sample school argued:

I have the same interest to teach children with and without disabilities because it is not due to their will that some sort of disability is caused to them; it is due to the will of God for the reason he knows. Participants of the group agreed with the idea of the first respondent.

Another respondent of a focus group discussion from a public sample school explained that:

it is impossible to say the interest of all teachers concerning the teaching of CwDs is the same; it differs from teacher to teacher.

Another respondent of the group said: *that teachers do not have an interest because teaching CwDs is boring.*

A respondent of the group on the other hand revealed that: *teachers feel boredom because there is no material to help them with, when teachers try to support them by giving more attention, they will be out of plan. 40 minutes is not enough to pay special attention to CwDs and to fulfill what they should do for the rest of the class.*

Another respondent added that:

in addition to teaching CwDs, the school assigned me as a purchaser of the school and this by itself is a tiresome and challenging task. So, the school should

shift the purchasing responsibility to another person; so I would get some more time to support the children.

Based on the above responses given by different groups of participants, teachers do not have the same interest to teach children with and without disabilities. Some responses show that the cause of loss of teachers' interest is due to the load that teachers should execute. Some teachers believe that if a behavioral change is not observed in CwDs whom they teach, teachers could be accountable. Others also believe that enough time is not provided to support CwDs. This was also assured by one of the respondents during the FGD session of a public school. This among others shows a loss of attention to children with disabilities by different bodies.

SNE teachers and regular teachers were requested during their interview sessions to tell what challenges they face that hinder them not to caring for and educating CwDs according to their specific needs. A respondent from a private sample school replied that:

these children have diverse needs. In teaching them, some of them need to be told repeatedly, some of them need additional material support to learn properly, and some others have aggressive behaviors that they quarrel with other students now and then. Therefore, to care for and educate these children without adequate and appropriate materials and training and assistant teachers is extremely challenging.

The other important question that preschool SNE teachers and regular teachers of public and private sample schools participated in was the in-depth interview were asked to forward their opinions, views, and suggestions that have to be done to improve the quality of inclusive education in their respective schools. A respondent from a private sample school said:

What so ever is needed for their education should be fulfilled. Their specific needs should be identified first and should be intervened accordingly. Some children with special needs could not tell their needs. Therefore, the needs of CwDs should be identified and appropriate support should be provided individually.

Another SNE teacher from a private sample school added that:

teachers who are trained in SNE found in Worabe city should come together and unite to support CwDs in one center. There should be a special school in the zone for SNE. The government should also assign teachers specialized in SNE. In addition to this, the government should also facilitate short-term training programs for those who are

currently teaching students with special needs in general and CwDs in particular. Learning aids should also be fulfilled according to their specific needs.

Another respondent during the FGD session from a public sample school said that:

teachers should handle CwDs with love and affection. If teachers do this, other students would also approach children with disabilities friendly following teachers. All of us have to know that the problem concerns all members of society and it should be the duty of members of the society to send to school those children who are hidden in their homes and deprived of their rights to education because of their disability.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. DISCUSSION OF MAJOR FINDINGS

Through appropriate curricula, organizational structures, instructional methods, resource utilization, and collaborations with their communities, inclusive schools must acknowledge and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different learning styles and rates, and ensuring that all students receive a high-quality education. Every school should offer a continuum of services and assistance to accommodate the range of special needs that exist there (Moran, 2022).

Addressing the various learning requirements of all children and students using a universal strategy and in a setting that is conducive to learning strengthens the search for appropriate and available resources (Mensah & Badu-Shayar, 2016). The creation of educational materials for children to use supports teachers in facilitating learning without taking over the classroom or intimidating the children. Challenges to implementing inclusive education include lack of teacher awareness, supply of training, physical and social accessibility of the schools, coordination among interested bodies, and commitment of stakeholders (Temesgen, 2018a).

The implementation of sustainable inclusive education will emphasize continuous and ongoing in-service development as well as inclusive instruction for all teacher candidates throughout pre-service training. Emphasizing that including all students in their classroom falls under their specialized role and not merely the area of specialists and special curriculum, has a favorable impact on teachers' views about inclusion. By offering more carefully thought out and supported expectations for how they instruct and what inclusive education looks like in the classroom, teachers can also be motivated to be more inclusive (Peterson-Ahmad, Hovey, & Peak, 2018).

It was also mentioned that strong school leadership is essential for the successful implementation of inclusive education, and the most inclusive and high-quality schools are those with inclusive leaders who are visionary, engaged, independent, and discreet. However, the results of this study show that the majority of the principals of the sampled schools provide very little administrative support to implement effective educational setting that includes children with disabilities in sampled public and private schools.

The development of the nation will not be balanced but rather distorted until leaders at all levels receive extensive training on the value of inclusive education and the long effects of teaching Children with disabilities (Boscardin & Shepherd, 2020).

In this section, the major findings of the study are discussed based on the basic research questions raised earlier in chapter one. The researcher used different data-gathering instruments; namely, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and observation. These instruments were conducted with the research participants such as preschool teachers who teach children with disabilities, school principals, supervisors, regular teachers, Education office SNE experts, Education office head, and Parents of preschool children with disabilities. Then, the major findings revealed are:

5.1. Socio-Cultural Learning Challenges

Concerning socio-cultural learning challenges of preschool children with disabilities in selected public and private schools of Worabe city, results of this research revealed that there is a belief among the community that disability is caused due to rage and the curse of God. Families of children with disabilities lack awareness and have a poor understanding of the issue of disability in that they assume disability is a special problem caused to them by their children. Some parents of children with disabilities are stigmatized and discriminated against by the members of the community. Because of this, some parents do not send their children with disabilities to school during the proper registration time. Some parents may send about 1-3 months after the proper registration time. But, even if some schools receive these children with disabilities, they would drop out soon.

Some families do not provide appropriate support to their children with disabilities believing that these children have no bright future. That is why the parents become reluctant to send their children with disabilities to school within their appropriate school age. Such negative attitudes of members of the community and families themselves toward children with disabilities caused learning challenges for these children.

On the way the children with disabilities to school and in the school compound too, other students without disabilities being in groups simply observe them and gaze at them. In such circumstances, these children would not be motivated to go to school again.

From the explanations given above, one can understand that this thesis revealed that preschool children with disabilities in selected public and private schools of Worabe city encountered learning challenges that originated from stigma and community discrimination and resulted in a loss of motivation for children with disabilities to learn.

These findings also coincide with a justification of (Tirussew, 2005) which is stated as: *Families react to a disability in their family in a variety of ways. However, most families face significant obstacles as a result of a child's impairment. When negative attitudes and a lack of understanding prevail, and no coping techniques or additional assistance are available, violence toward children with disabilities can occur (Tirussew, 2005), discovered that many children with disabilities in Ethiopia were treated unequally by their siblings and felt excluded. Furthermore, the parents appeared to avoid involving their disabled child in the immediate community due to sentiments of shame.*

The child's lack of access to the family's social networks is related to the social and bodily surroundings consist of the situation in schools, where teenagers with SNE are regularly exposed to a range of encounters and a lack of facilities to accommodate their schools, all of which have an influence on the children's talent throughout education. Children with special needs are not able to access important education because society is not helpful to these children; instead, the society stands to satisfy the desires of those who are not with special needs as stated by a poor mindset that hinders their struggles to lead regular lives (Caldin, 2013).

5.1.2. School-Related Learning Challenges

Concerning school-related learning challenges of preschool children with disabilities in selected public and private schools of Worabe city, the results of this study have shown that the majority of principals of sample schools openly disclosed during in-depth interview sessions held with them that roads and entrances to schools are not suitable for children with disabilities.

There are no learning materials with which to support children with disabilities/special education needs. Toilets are not enough concerning the ratio of children to seats of toilets and they are not appropriate for children with disabilities. In some of the schools, the researcher observed that children should cross a problematic and bumpy road to go to the toilet. Teachers of preschool children with disabilities/special needs agreed and ascertained the idea given above during the interview session held with them. In addition, they assured us that there are no teaching aids that support the learning of children with disabilities/special needs and not enough play materials that suit their individual needs. All respondents of private schools assured that schools are not open for children with disabilities except for special cases during registration because of the absence of appropriate materials for these children.

These results confirm that the *physical environments of school, school curriculum, language and communication, instructional policies, and organizational structures, inadequate education and teachers' development of the profession and professional support staff, shortage of funding, and constrained support from educational authorities are the most serious factors* (UNICEF., 2007).

For children who are unaccepted by their peers or have a stressed relationship with their teachers, school can be a punishing experience. Many of their activities would be meaningless if they do not have friends. People without friends are particularly susceptible; their health and well-being are constantly put at risk. Education is a right for all children, regardless of their abilities. Unfortunately, this has not been met for children with disabilities all over the world, and only a few lucky ones are given this opportunity (Cornell et al., 2015).

5.1.3. Teacher-Related Learning Challenges

Concerning teacher-related learning challenges of preschool children with disabilities in selected public and private schools of Worabe city, the results of this study have shown that all teachers of preschool CwDs except Worabe primary are not qualified in SNE and they did not get short-term training.

The majority of the respondents explained that it is impossible to provide the appropriate support for all children including children with disabilities based on their needs and potential in schools because of the absence of necessary materials. The time given is not adequate to support CwDs

properly with the available materials. Besides, teachers feel that handling children with disabilities without appropriate materials is tedious.

Teachers of preschool children with disabilities revealed that teachers do not have the same interest to teach preschool children with and without disabilities; they prefer to teach children without disabilities to those with disabilities because teaching SNE without appropriate materials is impossible and in some cases, it causes accountability to the teachers.

Children with disabilities are simply integrated, but not included in regular classes; everything in schools is there considering children without disabilities. Classroom teachers were less keen to include students with more severe disabilities because of the day-to-day responsibilities they face.

Studies from other countries show similar results. (Hayes and Bulat, 2017), stated that a study of 14 countries, found that teachers welcome students with medical and physical disabilities. But resist the inclusion of students with special needs with significantly more disabilities. Teachers seem reluctant toward any learner putting extra demand on them referred to the majority of the teacher training lacked mandatory special needs education units during the pre-service training period. Because of their everyday obligations, classroom teachers are less enthusiastic about including kids with more severe disabilities.

CHAPTER SIX

6. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

This chapter contained a summary of major findings, a conclusion, and recommendations for the findings. As explained earlier, the objective of this study was to examine the learning challenges of preschool CwDs in 3 public and 3 private schools in Worabe city. The study focused on the learning challenges of CwDs from socio-cultural, school-related, and teacher-related perspectives. To attain this objective, the researcher gathered data through in-depth interviews, FGD and Observation.

Learning of preschool CwDs is influenced by socio-cultural, school-related, and teacher-related challenges in public and private preschools of Worabe city. Private schools usually do not accept CwDs. The findings of the research have shown that the enrolment and inclusion of children with disabilities in private schools is a big concern that their doors are not open to accepting children with disabilities due to the absence of trained teachers in SNE and the lack of appropriate teaching-learning materials. There are many children with disabilities in different villages of Worabe city who had remained at home. Some are school-aged, and in certain circumstances, there are children whose age surpasses their school age. This is because there is a belief among the members of the community that disability is caused due to rage and the curse of God.

Families of children with disabilities also assume that disability is a special problem caused to them by their impaired children. Some parents do not send their CwDs to school during the proper registration time because of discrimination. But, even if some schools receive these children, they would drop out soon. That is why the parents become reluctant to send their children with disabilities to school within their appropriate school age. Such negative attitudes of members of the community and families themselves towards children with disabilities caused learning challenges related to the negative attitudes of the community.

Results of this study have shown that children with disabilities in both public and private preschools were not included well. Parents, teachers, and school principals lack adequate training concerning the inclusion of children with disabilities.

Concerning school-related learning challenges encountered by preschool children with disabilities, the majority of principals of sampled schools openly disclosed during in-depth interview sessions held with them that roads and entrances to schools are not suitable for children with disabilities. In both public and private sampled schools, there are no separate toilets for CwDs.

Size of school compounds with adequate field to play for all children including CwDs was observed and all public schools have adequate compounds, but there are no adequate indoor and outdoor play materials and preschools in all sampled schools are not fenced separately from other upper grades.

In the case of private schools, their compounds, except Ardi Academy are too narrow that they were not initially constructed for school purposes, they are opened in hired rooms, and their classrooms are suffocated with a large number of children in a class. In such classes, learning of CwDs is extremely challenged.

In general, during the observation conducted in all public and private sampled schools, it was observed that indoor and outdoor settings of the schools assured that the learning and playing materials are not adapted and modified to support the learning and development of children with disabilities.

Moreover, it was ascertained that it is impossible to provide the appropriate support for all children including children with disabilities based on their needs and potential in schools because of the absence of necessary materials. The time given is not adequate to support CwDs properly with the available materials. Teachers do not have the same interest to teach preschool children with and without disabilities. Respondents assured that CwDs have diverse needs. In teaching them, some of them need to be told repeatedly, some of them need additional material support to learn properly, and some others have aggressive behaviors. Therefore, to care for and educate these children without adequate and appropriate materials and training and assistant teachers is extremely challenging.

6.2. Conclusions

Based on the abovementioned findings of this study, the following conclusions are suggested: As explained earlier, the objective of this study was to examine the learning challenges of preschool children with disabilities in selected public and private schools of Worabe city from the perspectives of socio/cultural, school-related, and teacher-related challenges. The socio-cultural challenges that influenced the learning of preschool children with disabilities as the study depicted are:

There is a belief in the community that disability is caused due to the curse of God. Families of children with disabilities also assume that disability is a special problem caused to them by their children. Such negative attitudes of the community and families themselves towards children with disabilities caused a loss of motivation to go to school and even if they go, they would drop out soon. Moreover, some families hide their children with disabilities at home and do not send them to school within the specified registration time. This is because families of children with disabilities face discrimination by the community. The time given is not adequate to support children with disabilities properly with the available materials.

Due to stigma and discrimination from the community in Worabe city, families who have a child with a disability and living in a hired house are displaced from the house they live in because of their disabled child. In such cases, children with disabilities are forced to be absent and drop out of school.

Schools lacked essential facilities that aid the learning of children with disabilities, such facilities as ramps for classrooms, toilets are not enough concerning the ratio of children to seats of toilets and they are not appropriate for children with disabilities, in some of the schools the researcher observed that children should cross a problematic and bumpy road to go to the toilet and other facilities for preschool children who are physically challenged, hearing aids, walking aids, like white cane and other support materials among others.

There are not enough play materials in schools that suit the individual needs of children with disabilities. Playgrounds and playing materials were found to be facilitated considering children without disabilities and children with disabilities face challenges in their learning in public and private schools in this regard. Respondents of private schools assured that schools are not open for children with disabilities except for special cases during registration because of the

absence of appropriate materials for these children. Some teachers also feel that handling children with disabilities without appropriate materials is tedious.

SNE teachers in the sampled schools, (except in one of the public schools in which the teacher is a degree holder in SNE for the resource center of the school) lack the necessary skills, knowledge, and attitude to implement the inclusion of preschool children with disabilities. They are not trained in the teaching of children with disabilities and they haven't got even short-term training. Concerning this issue, Tirussew, (2005) stated that:

the development of inclusive education and teacher training programs are the most challenging issue in the process of implementation of inclusive education. Besides, to avoid pedagogical challenges, of inclusive education ordinary class teacher who teaches students (children) with special needs should be capable of teaching skills and knowledge.

Teachers are not interested to teach children with disabilities. Some teachers make children with disabilities blench because of their disability for minor mistakes they commit unknowingly during movement in class. Some teachers also lack a motherly approach to children with disabilities. All these are teacher-related challenges to the learning of preschool children with disabilities.

Generally, lack of knowledge and skill among teachers, principals, parents, and officers, physical and social inaccessibility of the schools for children with disabilities, and negative attitudes due to lack of awareness of the parents of children with disabilities are the major factors hindering the learning of children with disabilities in both public and private schools.

6.3. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested:

This research revealed that there is thinking among the members of the community that disability is caused due to the curse of God and some families of CwDs also assume that disability is a special problem caused to them by their children. Therefore, continuous awareness creation programs should be launched by the education office of Worabe city in collaboration with stakeholders to correct this negative thinking among the members of the community and to reshape the understanding of families of CwDs.

Public and private schools should properly identify CwDs according to their specific disability during registration time. Schools and the education office of Worabe city should strive to facilitate a conducive learning environment for the CwDs. They should take full responsibility and accountability for guaranteeing that all preschool children with disabilities are accepted and served according to their specific needs without discrimination.

SNE experts of the education office in collaboration with school supervisors should follow up on the proper implementation of inclusive education in schools.

The education office should strive for the allocation of the appropriate budget that enables proper implementation of the education system in schools in which CwDs are fully included.

As observed during the observation period of this research, educational settings of public and private schools are not conducive enough to accommodate CwDs with disabilities. Private schools should work in collaboration with the education office and the curriculum they apply should support the development and learning of CwDs and it should also coincide with the type of curriculum applied by public schools.

This research has disclosed that SNE graduate teachers in Worabe are assigned by public schools with recognition of the education office of the city to teach other subjects in upper grades instead of assigning them to teach children with disabilities. On the other hand, preschool children are not trained in SNE. So, these schools and the education office should assign SNE teachers to teach children with disabilities. In collaboration with the education office and schools, existing resource centers in public schools should be equipped with appropriate learning materials for CwDs. A strong partnership should be established among these stakeholders so that their partnership creates strong collaboration among them in terms of providing financial and technical assistance.

6.4. Further Research

I) As described earlier, this research revealed that there are many children with mental/intellectual disabilities in different villages of Worabe city and the majority of these children are those who came from diaspora communities of Arab countries. So, research can be conducted by any interested party to disclose the reason why this happened there.

II) Research with a title similar to this research can be carried out in other weredas of siltie zone for comparison and search of common solutions.

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Appendices
Appendix A

Jimma University

College of Education and Behavioral Sciences

Department of Psychology, ECCE Program

Interview Questions for Principals of Primary/Pre-Primary School

The purpose of this interview is to assess the major learning challenges encountered by primary/pre-primary schools 0-class children with physical/hearing/visual disabilities among selected public and private schools in the case of siltie zone, Worabe city. The interview is designed to collect data from public and private primary/pre-primary schools for master’s thesis purposes. Therefore, you are kindly requested to give genuine and appropriate responses. The researcher would like to assure you that the information you give will be kept confidential and will be used only for academic purposes. The researcher wants to thank you in advance for your kind collaboration.

General Background Information:

1. Name of school: -----

2. Status/position: -----

3. Sex: -----

4. Age: -----

5. Academic qualification: -----

6. Work Experience: -----

6.1 Experience as a principal: -----

6.2 Experience in teaching: -----

7. How do you evaluate the practice of 0-class education programs about target groups such as the age of children, and children with different disabilities?-----

8. How do you evaluate the status of the physical environment of your school regarding the site, adequacy of the basic facility (latrine, water, and space) to equally accommodate 0-class children with and without disabilities?-----

education program concerning target groups such as the age of children, and children with different disabilities?-----

How do you evaluate the status of the physical environment of your school regarding the site, adequacy of the basic facility (latrine, water, and space) to equally accommodate 0-class children with and without disabilities?-----

education program concerning target groups such as the age of children, and children with different disabilities?-----

1. How do you evaluate the status of the physical environment of your school regarding the site, adequacy of the basic facility (latrine, water, and space) to equally accommodate 0-class children with and without disabilities?-----

2. To what extent the learning materials, equipment of classrooms with teaching aids, and outdoor play equipment are appropriate for 0-class children with different disabilities?----

3. Are there curriculum materials appropriate for 0-class children with and without disabilities (teacher's guide, children's book)?-----

4. Are teaching and learning material presently applied for 0-class CwDs of your school government approved? Yes/not. -----If the answer is not; why-----

5. Does the teaching-learning process include children with disabilities? -----

6. Do parents of children with disabilities have close contact with the school?-----

Are teachers of 0-class who teach children with disabilities trained in SNE?-----

How do you evaluate parents/community's attitudes towards 0-class children with disabilities during registration and in the teaching-learning processes?-----

Would you mention the challenges that are encountered in providing 0-class programs in public and private schools regarding children with disabilities?

a. Socio-cultural challenges-----

-School-based challenges-----

b. Teachers-related challenges-----

7. What are the major advantages of implementing an inclusive 0-class program without discrimination against children with disabilities?-----

8. Does the education office of Worabe city or the education department of Siltie zone provide supportive supervision to your school at a regular interval?-----

Appendix: B

Jimma University

College of Education and Behavioral Sciences

Department of Psychology, ECCE Program

Interview Questions for 0-class CwDs/SNE Teachers

The Interview Questions below comprise a sample of questions that will be answered by the KG/0-class teachers who teach children with and/or without disabilities. All your responses and information will be kept at the greatest confidentiality and only be used for this study. Please, give your responses genuinely. The researcher likes to forward his thanks in advance for your kind collaboration.

Participant's Code: _____

1. Sex: _____
2. Age: _____
3. Qualification: _____
4. Subject Trained: _____
5. 0-class teaching Experience: _____
6. Teaching experience in other subject-----
7. Did you get any training regarding the education of 0-class children with disabilities?
8. Who are 0-class children with disabilities for you?
9. Do you provide the appropriate support for all children including CwDs based on their needs and potential? Yes/no----- If the answer is yes, How?-----

and if the answer is no, why?-----

- 10 . Does your school provide appropriate support for children with disabilities? Yes/no--
----- If yes, mention types of supports provided-----

10. 11. Do you think that teachers have the same interest to teach 0-class Children with and without disabilities?-----

12. What enabling environment for inclusive education is there in your school?-----

13. What challenges do you face to care for and educate children with disabilities/special needs?-----

14. Discuss your role to alleviate such challenges.-----

15. How is your relationship with parents/caregivers of children with special needs?-----

----- 16.

What should be done to improve the quality of inclusion in your school?-----

Appendix C
Jimma University
College of Education and Behavioral Sciences
Department of Psychology, ECCE Program
In-depth Interview Questions for Parents (English version)

The purpose of this interview is to examine the learning challenges encountered by primary/pre-primary schools 0-class children with physical/hearing/visual disabilities among selected public and private schools in the case of siltie zone, Worabe city. The interview is designed to collect data from public and private primary/pre-primary schools for master's thesis purposes. Therefore, you are kindly requested to give genuine and appropriate responses. The researcher would like to assure you that the information you give will be kept confidential and will be used only for academic purposes. The researcher wants to thank you in advance for your kind collaboration.

General Background Information:

1. Name of school: -----
2. Relationship with the child: -----
4. Sex: -----
5. Age: -----
6. Academic status: -----
7. What do you know about the advantage of preschool/ 0-class class education for children with disabilities?-----

8. Do you think children with disabilities in 0-class are learning in schools according to their needs without discrimination?-----

9. Do teachers of 0-class children have regular communication with parents regarding the education of children with disabilities?-----

10. Are 0-class children with disabilities interested to go to school regularly? Yes/no-----
If the answer is no; what do you think the reason is? -----

-

11. Is the school accessible for your child?-----

12. What challenges do you face from society, particularly that hinder your child's learning?-

Appendix D

Jimma University

College of Education and Behavioral Sciences

Department of Psychology, ECCE Program

In-depth Interview Questions for Parents mother (tongue version)

ዩታይ የሂፍ ሱል ቀስድ በስልጤ ዞን ቦራቤ ከተመ በትሜጠሩ ዩመትዋ የቢቶሰብ አሽር ጋርቸ 6 ዘማነ ሜላያኔ ሴረኚ አሽረ ጋረ ተግባትክ ቀደ ላድ ዘማን በአ ጎልጌ ይቀራነይ ኡዝረኘ ወልድ ባሽከ ያለቢ ምካተ ለሙጥሎትን። የሂፍዚ ሱል የትስናደይ ቡመትዋ በቢቶሰብ አሽር ጋርቸ ለ2ኛ ዲግሪ ለሙጣሎ ብል ፊሬስ ጭም ላሰትን። ቶቡያሙይ ፊሬስ በሺሞ ይቴንዛነኮዋ ላሽር ቀስድ መጥ ይዌላነኮ የትሬግጥንኩማው። በደለቤዝነት ላሺሙዩ ኡግዠ ይቀድማኔ ያሾክራው።

የንዱሉላ ሃለት ፊሬስ:

- 1. ያሽር ጋሪ ሱም: -----
- 2. ቱዝረኛይ ጩሎ ያለይ ሩክቦ: -----
- 4. ልገ: -----
- 5. ኡምር: -----
- 6. ያሽር መቃም: -----

1. ሉዝረኘ ወልድ የ አ ጎልጌ አሽር ያለይ ፋይደ ምንግዝን? -----

 -----በ አ ጎልጌ ያለይ
 ሉዝረኘ ወልድ አሽከ ባለይ ክሺ አሰነት ይቀራን ባሞኔ -----

 -----የ አ ጎልጌ አሽርጌታቶ ቡዝረኛይ ወልድ
 አሽር ውርት ታቦትእንደት በሰወክትከ ይትራከቡያን ሃለት አለ? -----

የ አ ጎልጌ ወልድ ሁለግነ አሽረ ጋረ ሂደት ዮዳን ኢለወድ? አው ዮዳን/ኢለወድ-----ጀዋባሙ
 ኢለወድ ይላን ቦነ ለምን ይመስለማን?-----

አሽር ጋሪ ለጨላሙ ይሪቀያን?-----

ባማይብ ይጄጅቢማን የነዋ በጨላሙ አሽር ደውሰ ያመጫን ግዝ?-----

Jimma University
College of Education and Behavioral Sciences
Department of Psychology, ECCE Program
Interview Questions for Education Office head and Experts

The purpose of this interview is to examine the major learning challenges encountered by primary/pre-primary schools 0-class children with physical/hearing/visual disabilities among selected public and private schools in the case of siltie zone, Worabe city. The interview is designed to collect data from public and private primary/pre-primary schools for master’s thesis purposes. Therefore, you are kindly requested to give genuine and appropriate responses. The researcher would like to assure you that the information you give will be kept confidential and will be used only for academic purposes. The researcher wants to thank you in advance for your kind collaboration.

General Background Information:

1. Name of school: -----
2. Status/position: -----
4. Sex: -----
5. Age: -----
6. Academic qualification: -----
7. Work Experience: -----
 - 7.1 Experience in the education sector: -----
 - 7.1 Experience in other than the education sector: -----
8. Are there policies, strategies, and/or directives with the help of which the office guides and supports preschool programs in public and private schools?-----

1. Do you think that all 6 years old children with and without disabilities are registered in either public and/or private pre-schools within the specified registration time of the year? Yes/no-----If the answer is yes, how do you assure? If the answer is no, what are the cultural challenges that hinder their registration?-----

2. How do you coordinate and support the 0-class program in public and private schools?---

3. Is there a qualified 0-class program focal person in your office as coordinator of the program? Yes/no-----: If the answer is no, which directorate follows the program responsively -----

Does your office provide supportive supervision to all public and private pre-primary schools/ 0-class equally at a regular interval?-----

4. Do you think that parents and communities are playing roles in supporting and leading the work of per-schools and/or 0-class in public and private schools?-----

Which activities are planned and implemented in your office to enhance the quality of the preprimary 0-class education program in which children with different disabilities are included? (educational input, training, supervision, monitoring, and evaluation)?-----

8. How do you explain the learning challenges that encounter in accommodating 0-class programs in public and private schools?

a. Socio-cultural challenges-----

b. School-based challenges-----

c. Teachers-based challenges-----

5. Does your office allocate enough and appropriate budgets to 0-class programs where children with disabilities learn at least in public schools? Yes,/no-----if yes; how? ---

If no; why?-----

Thank You!

Appendix F

Jimma University

College of Education and Behavioral Sciences

Department of Psychology, ECCE Program

Interview Questions for school supervisors

The purpose of this interview is to examine the major learning challenges encountered by primary/pre-primary schools 0-class children with physical/hearing/visual disabilities among selected public and private schools in the case of siltie zone, Worabe city. The interview is designed to collect data from public and private primary/pre-primary schools for master’s thesis purposes. Therefore, you are kindly requested to give genuine and appropriate responses. The researcher would like to assure you that the information you give will be kept confidential and will be used only for academic purposes. The researcher wants to thank you in advance for your kind collaboration.

General Background Information:

1. Name of school: -----

2. Status/position: -----

4. Sex: -----

5. Age: -----

6. Academic qualification: -----

7. Work Experience: -----

7.1 Experience in the education sector: -----

7.2 Experience in other than the education sector: -----

8. Are there policies, strategies, and/or directives with the help of which you guide and support 0-class programs in public and private schools?-----

Do you think that all 6 years old children with and without disabilities are registered in either public and/or private pre-schools within the specified registration time of the year?

6. Yes/no----- If the answer is yes, how do you assure? If the answer is no, what are the cultural challenges that hinder their registration?-----

7. How do you coordinate and support the 0-class program in public and private schools?---

8. Do you provide supportive supervision to all public and private pre-primary 0-class equally at a regular interval?-----

9. Do you think that parents and communities are playing roles in supporting and leading the work of preschools and/or 0-class in public and private schools?-----

10. Would you mention activities planned and implemented in your office to enhance the access and quality of preprimary 0-class education in which children with different disabilities are included in public and private schools? (educational input, training, supervision, monitoring and evaluation)?-----

11. Which learning challenges are encountered in accommodating 0-class programs in public and private schools?

a. Socio-cultural challenges-----

b. School-based challenges-----

c. Teachers-based challenges-----

12. Does your office allocate enough and appropriate budgets to 0-class programs where children with disabilities learn at least in public schools? Yes,/no-----if yes; how? ---

If no; why?-----

Thank You!

Appendix: G

Jimma University

College of Education and Behavioral Sciences

Department of Psychology, ECCE Program

Focus Group Discussion Protocol with Regular Teachers

The focus group discussion guide below comprises a sample of questions that will be answered by the 0-class teachers who teach children with and/or without disabilities. All your responses and information will be kept at the greatest confidentiality and only be used for this study. Please, give your responses genuinely. The researcher likes to forward his thanks in advance for your kind collaboration.

Participant's Code: _____

1. Sex: _____
2. Age: _____
3. Qualification: _____
4. Subject Trained: _____
5. 0-class teaching Experience: _____
6. Teaching experience in another subject -----
7. Did you get any training regarding the education of 0-class children with disabilities?
8. Who are 0-class children with disabilities for you?
9. Do you provide support for all children based on their needs and potential? Yes/no-----
----- If the answer is yes, How?-----

-----and if the answer is no, why?---

10. Does your school provide appropriate support for children with disabilities? Yes/no---

If yes, mention types of supports provided-----

11. Do you think that teachers have the same interest to teach 0-class children with and without disabilities?-----

6. How do you evaluate the practice of the 0-class education program concerning target groups such as the age of children, and children with different disabilities?-----

7. How do you evaluate the status of the physical environment of your school regarding site, adequacy of the basic facility (latrine, water, and space) to equally accommodate 0-class children with and without disabilities?-----

8. What enabling environment for inclusive education is there in your school?-----

9. What challenges do you face to care for and educate children with disabilities/special needs?--

10. Discuss your role to alleviate such challenges.-----

11. How is your relationship with parents/caregivers of the children with special needs?-----

11. What should be done to improve the quality of inclusion in your school?-----

Appendix H
 Jimma University
 College of Education and Behavioral Sciences
 Department of Psychology, ECCE Program
 Observation Checklist

Observation checklist for School compound and classroom environment of public and private schools

1	OBSERVABLE FACILITY AND/OR MATERIAL FOR 0-CLASS CHILDREN with DISABILITIES	Availability of facility/material tick [√]		Status of the facility tick [√]		
		yes	No	poor	Moderate	good
1.1	Policy, and strategy documents of 0-class programs					
1.2	Syllabus					
1.3	Teacher's guide					
1.4	Students' text					
1.5	Conversation cards					
2	SCHOOL COMPOUND AND CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT					
2.1	The site is suitable for 0-class children with disabilities					
2.2	The school compound has adequate field to play for all children					
2.3	Enough latrine with regard to ratio and appropriate for CwDs					
2.4	Sufficient water supply					
2.5	Comfortable feeding room					
2.6	Ramps for buildings					
2.7	Standardized classrooms with appropriate chairs & walls with teaching aids					
2.8	Reading room/corner & appropriate materials to read					
3	OUTDOOR PLAY EQUIPMENT					
3.1	Balance					
3.2	Swinging					
3.3	Merry go round					
3.4	Slide					
4	GENERAL					
4.1	awareness of all teachers about IE and education of CwDs					
4.2	Enough time to support learners with disabilities					
4.3	sufficient administrative support for CwDs from principals					
4.4	On job training for teachers about the rights and education of CwDs					



Appendix I. Focus group discussion in one public sample primary schools



Appendix J. Focus group discussion in one of the private sample schools



Appendix K. Focus group discussion ahead in another private sample schools



Appendix L: Interview with parents of CwDs in one of the public sample schools SNE classrooms.



Appendix M: Interview with the principal of one of the private sample schools



Appendix N. Focus group discussion ahead in another public sample schools



A private preschool classroom where CwDs are integrated into.



A preschool classroom in a public school where children with physical disabilities are integrated.