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International Development and Management  
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# **Teaching for All**

## **Teacher Perceptions of Inclusive Education**



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## Abstract

Through a case study of teachers' reactions to inclusive education in Dar es Salaam, this thesis sought to answer (1) how teachers in Dar es Salaam perceive their ability to deliver inclusive education to their students and (2) how an understanding of their perceptions can be utilized to overcome the challenges of implementing inclusive education in Tanzania's public schools. Using an abductive approach, theory and data influenced each other. The ways in which the teachers were reacting to inclusive education were explored through a model of professional development which found that teachers doubted their capacity to teach diverse students, citing limited resources and training. Theories of international policy adaption were then employed to demonstrate how taking teachers' views about resources and training into consideration will ease the incorporation of inclusive education into Tanzania's education system.

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## 1. Introduction

A sign displaying the name of a primary school at its street entrance in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania reminds everyone who passes that “Education is a key of life.” In a world where 1.4 billion people live on 1.25 US dollars a day, education is viewed as a means to help raise people out of poverty (UN, 2012). Indeed, education was recognized as a human right with the international acceptance of the 1948 Declaration of Human Rights. It is through education that people learn about their world and develop the skills needed to reach their potential. As countries seek to improve their economies attention must be drawn to the education of the populations’ workforces. Expanding opportunities for education access has been seen to foster both individual achievement and national economic growth. As the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) seeking to alleviate global poverty were established, education was given a prominent place in the objectives. Indeed, after the first goal to halve world poverty, universal primary education is stated as Goal 2. The goal came out of efforts to achieve Education for All (EFA) which began with the World Conference on Education for All in 1990 held by the United Nations<sup>1</sup> and the World Bank.

Although the goal of universal primary education is far from new,<sup>2</sup> it was reaffirmed with the MDGs and its prominence increased. Since the establishment of the MDGs, many developing countries have made great advances in increasing the number of students attending school. However, as many as 61 million school-aged children are out of school, 47% of which are not expected to ever attend. Furthermore, the quality of the education those in school receive has come into question. (UNESCO, 2012:5) Young people face many challenges that eclipse their ability to learn, either by being unable to physically attend school or being unable to gain knowledge even once they enter the classroom. The specific circumstances circumventing learning vary from country to country and from student to student. In order to address the specific contexts of learning, policymakers have become more attuned to the challenges facing children. They have turned to the solution of inclusive education as a means to move beyond the quantitative statistics that targets, such as those of the MDGs, inspire.

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<sup>1</sup> Specifically UNESCO, Unicef, UNDP and UNFPA

<sup>2</sup> It was first mentioned as a goal for African nations in the 1961 Conference of African States on the Development of Education in Africa

Defined as a school-wide approach that minimizes the barriers to education<sup>3</sup>, the strategy of inclusive education has been named by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as the solution for achieving universal primary education (UPE). Countries are advised to develop educational policies that foster the application of such an approach within their school systems. Inclusive education, as it seeks to address the challenges of students, calls upon teachers to play active roles in identifying the reasons behind a student's challenges and to seek innovated strategies that may mitigate the students' barriers (UNESCO, 2009). As a result, much attention has been paid to the body of knowledge teachers must possess in order to efficiently create inclusive classrooms.

However, much of the research conducted on the results of inclusive education systems center on cases in Europe and in the United States where school systems are older and are often working with larger education budgets (Armstrong, Armstrong, Spandagou, 2010). When analyzing the results and practicality of implementation strategies for such an international policy, research must first be done on a broader scale that also takes different education systems and environments from other regions of the world into account. There is not one universal definition of what education means. Although there are some standards, which have been translated into 'best practices' around the world, each country's unique education system defines for itself the values that it seeks to instill in its students. While it is useful to explore the ways in which education is organized and conceived in one context, when seeking to implement inclusive education in one country, understanding the local context may be more useful.

The United Republic of Tanzania is one of the countries that has committed to utilizing inclusive education in their school systems. Tanzania developed a *National Strategy of Inclusive Education* for the years 2009 to 2017 with the main objective of "all children, youth and adults in Tanzania [having] equitable access to quality education in inclusive settings" (MoEVT, 2009:3). Although developing a fully inclusive education system nationwide will take time, pilot schools have been established to begin understanding how such international strategies can be translated within the Tanzanian context. Such focus has been given to sensitizing the teachers on inclusive education and the methods available to address

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<sup>3</sup> See Figure 1 for examples of groups who often face barriers as well as Chapter 3.1.2 for examples of barriers that are common in Tanzania.

their students' educational needs through expanding the opportunities for aspiring teachers to receive training sessions. Teachers are seen as crucial to the implementation of the inclusive policies.

From October 2012 to February 2013, I conducted qualitative fieldwork in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, speaking to government employed teachers who work at public primary and secondary schools as well as curriculum developers at the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) about their views of inclusive education. The following thesis is an attempt to add to the discussion of how inclusive education can be incorporated into existing educational systems using the insights gained through thirty interviews. It will address two questions:

- 1) How do teachers in Dar es Salaam perceive their ability to deliver inclusive education to their students?
- 2) How can an understanding of the teachers' perceptions be utilized to overcome the challenges of implementing inclusive education in Tanzania's public schools?

This thesis will begin with an examination of the methodology utilized during fieldwork. Following, will be a brief description of Tanzania's school system and of inclusive education definitions. The theoretical framework will then be explained. It is broken into two parts. The first relates to how to create inclusive teachers and includes a critique of what is called an "Ideology of Expertism." The second part relates to the translation of international policies into national contexts. The focus will turn to an analysis the case teachers in Dar es Salaam where, through abductive reasoning, the responses received in interviews with the teachers will be discussed in relation to the theoretical framework.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1. Research Design**

In a constructivist ontological perspective, "reality" can differ between individuals as a result of the different perceptions they hold. People interpret the meaning of their realities based on their own experiences and perceptions, and this construction then motivates the way they think and behave. Although a "truth" may exist, the perceptions people hold about that "truth" greatly affect how they conduct their daily lives. The people whom participated in the study have a wealth of knowledge accumulated from their life experiences and from them I

can gain a new understanding of their realities. Based in interpretivist epistemology, the perceptions I report are also influenced by my own interpretations and the meanings I construct around the information I gather both during the data collection and the analysis. This is based on my understanding that the capacity to access knowledge is subject to the researcher's construction of reality which is a continuous process (Bryman, 2008:4).

This study uses a single interpretive case study with the "bounded system" explored being the teachers responding inclusive education in the public schools of Dar es Salaam (Merriam, 1998:38). Case studies can provide an understanding of a holistic view of what is happening in an area (Yin, 2003:16). The process of case study research is not always linear, due to the interconnectivity of the actors and phenomena (Dubois, Gadde, 2002:555). As a result, a linear progression to the research is less justifiable, and the analysis has been approached through abductive reasoning. Rather than working in planned phases the theory and findings must engage in a dialogue out of which new theoretical concepts emerge (Buchanan, Bryman, 2009:439). The initial theories are similar to "preconceived notions" which are further refined through gathering empirical evidence and may then require expanding the theoretical framework (Dubois, Gadde, 2002:555).

## **2.2. Qualitative Methods**

Qualitative methods focus on words and the communication of ideas. They yield a 'human' side to an issue by allowing the people studied to speak about their own experiences (Bryman, 2008:22; Mack et al, 2005:1). Although quantitative methods can elicit opinions, such an approach may also have the potential to ask questions in a manner that assumes an understanding of the concepts in ways that is different from that of the respondents, which risks constructing meanings that are based more on the researcher's understandings than those of the informants (Chambers, 2008:6). Their propensity to test a particular theory limits the scope of the possible information that can be collected (Merriam, 1998:33).

Semi-structured interviews formed the majority of the data. The inherent flexibility of such interviews enabled the study's participants to discuss aspects of the topic that they deemed important. The act of the interview allowed for a deeper understanding about the opinions the teacher held by creating a space where their thoughts could form (Brockington, Sullivan, 2003:73). During fieldwork, interview questions were modified to suit the flow of the conversation and attempts were made to ask questions in such a way that the participants



could explore how they defined the concepts' meaning (Chambers, 2008:6)<sup>4</sup>.

When allowed, the interviews were audio recorded so that I could offer my full attention to the participants and to create a more natural flow to the conversations. Consent to the recording was requested prior to each interview. Participants were further informed that it was their choice and that they could request the audio be stopped at any time. After each interview, general notes of impressions and observations were written. The notes were incorporated into transcriptions of the interviews.

### 2.3. Sampling

Case studies seek to understand phenomena, but not always its “magnitude” or “distribution” (Dewalt, Dewalt, 2002:2; Merriam, 1998:27). Instead, through interviewing even a small number of people, if the right questions are asked, underlying issues can surface and a deep awareness of people’s lives can be found. As a result, I did not seek to speak with every teacher in Dar es Salaam, nor did I visit each of the 345 public schools in the city.

I chose to interview teachers at schools located in each of Dar es Salaam’s three districts because the implementation of educational policies in Tanzania is decentralized to the district level. Each municipality has its own education office, which oversees the schools within their district. Due to the bureaucracy of Tanzania, I went through various gatekeepers within each district’s education office in order to speak with the teachers.

This research was conducted at four primary schools; two of which practiced inclusion and two that had yet to adopt such an approach. These schools were spread across the three districts of the city and included both urban and rural locations. One secondary school was also included as it was located in the same compound as one of the primary schools and its teachers were in close communication with teachers in the primary school. At each school I first approached the head teacher to introduce myself and my research project. I then asked the head teacher to identify teachers who would like to participate in the study. I requested teachers who had a variety of experience and who taught a variety of subjects and grades, hoping for “maximum variation” (Merriam, 1998:65).

The data presented in this paper come from interviews with 27 teachers; 16 women and 11 men, but are not intended to be generalizable to the whole population of teachers working in Dar es Salaam. However, the themes they illustrate are potentially issues at play

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendix: Interview Guide for a list of the questions asked

within other schools in the city as well as within the country at large.

Each interview with the teachers lasted from thirty minutes to an hour. They took place within the schools at which the teachers taught in an office when one was available. The interviews were conducted during school hours, as suggested by the head teachers. As a result, I focused my questions in order to gather as much information as possible while being cognizant of the teachers' time. This time constraint may have also truncated their responses or given the teachers less time to compose their answers.

Additional interviews were also held with two curriculum developers at the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE), an organization that works with the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) to translate education policies into practice within Tanzania's schools across the country. TIE develops the country's school curricula at each educational level, as well as a director of a special needs unit of a primary school in order to understand how inclusive education became a goal of Tanzania. I was introduced to these contacts through colleagues at UNESCO, where I held an intern position at the time. During these interviews, it was helpful to build rapport by highlighting my connections to UNESCO, however, I specified that the research I was doing was for my degree only.

#### **2.4. Reflexivity and Positionality**

When research methods entail "creating" knowledge, the researcher becomes an important instrument in determining how to interpret the collected data (Merriam, 1998:7). Researchers who are self-aware and open to learning the opinions of others will earn new understandings (Brockington, Sullivan, 2003:73). Thus, rather than viewing the positionality of the researcher as a source of bias, the experiences of the researcher become sources "from which to learn and gain valuable insights," and add further layers to the analysis (Dewalt, Dewalt, 2002; Goldstein, 2003:19; Penderson, 2004). While it is unnecessary to fret extensively over the whole background of the researcher throughout the research process it is important to be conscious of the way the researcher may be received by the informants and how their position can have ethical implications (Sultana, 2007:375).

While conducting research, I was conscious of the physical differences between myself and those whom I interviewed. I made an effort to dress appropriately, covering my knees and shoulders, and greeted everyone in my limited Swahili. I was struck several times by the ease with which I had access to the schools where I conducted interviews. It was not until I approached a teacher for help in finding the person or office for which I was searching

that my presence was questioned. I wonder if I would have been received in the same way had I not been a foreign woman, but rather a Tanzanian or a man. Also, coming from the American and Swedish education systems rather than Tanzanian, I was asked on multiple occasions to discuss inclusion from my experience. The questioning's tone held curiosity and perhaps also an eagerness to of an "expert." I was quick to remind them that I was a student, hoping to learn from them. However, I was open to sharing my experience, just as they had been open with me about theirs. As knowledge was created through our interaction, I could not claim "exclusive ownership" of the information (Chambers, 2008:86). Rather, through 'horizontal relationships' as 'equals' we had to be more partners. While I may have had more years of formal education than they did they had more professional experience than me and knew much more about education pedagogies than me.

## 2.5. Ethics and Limitations

There were several ethical considerations that guided the research. Permission to visit the schools was granted by Dar es Salaam's Regional Administration Office. In order to speak to teachers at the schools I contacted the district education officer in each of the three districts and from there I was directed to the principals of the schools. It is possible that the teachers I spoke with felt compelled to discuss their views with me because I had gone through the established authorities. However they were informed that their participation was voluntary. The participants were given anonymity and the names used throughout the thesis are pseudonyms.

In addition, some of the participants were aware that I was working with UNESCO during my time in Tanzania, an organization that has promoted inclusive education extensively within the country. My association with the organization may have prompted the participants to be more positive about inclusive education. To minimize that I distanced myself from UNESCO by highlighting that my research was an independent project.

The interviews were conducted in English without translators. Tanzanian students begin learning English in primary school and by secondary school it becomes the language of instruction. However, English remains at least the third language that Tanzanian's learn and Swahili is used in most unofficial settings. As a result, the proficiency in English usage of the participants varied and some interviews were smoother than others. I was conscious of the rapidity of my speech and the words I chose in order to facilitate comprehension. Still, it is possible that the connotation of the words they used may have had other intended meanings

than the ones I was able to glean, causing me to misinterpret their comments. For this reason, I present direct quotes of their comments within the analysis.

The interviews were conducted during school hours during breaks when teachers would usually plan their lessons. I allowed the participants to speak as much and for as long as they had time. As a result some interviews lasted only fifteen minutes while others lasted nearly an hour. During the shorter interviews the ideas expressed reinforced views presented in longer interviews.

## 2.6. Method of Data Analysis

The data of this study was analyzed with an abductive approach. Empirical evidence gathered in the form of statements made by the participating teachers were coded and the grouped in relation to a model of professional development created by Rouse and Florian (2008; 2008). The analysis of how teachers have learned about inclusive education led to in additional theoretical concepts to further explain the findings. Descriptions of how teachers are reacting to the concept of inclusive education will contribute to the theoretical discussions of how to prepare teachers to teach diverse students. The analysis will

## 3. Background

### 3.1. Tanzania



Tanzania is a democratic republic in Sub-Saharan Africa which, since 1964, includes the Mainland, previously named Tanganyika, and the island of Zanzibar to the East (See Figure 1: Map of Tanzania for further orientation). Although its capital has been Dodoma since 1996, Dar es Salaam remains an important economic hub and the country's most populous city. According to the 2012 census, of Tanzania's 44.9 million people, 4.36 million live in Dar es Salaam (URT, 2012). Many governmental ministries are still located within the city, including Tanzania's MoEVT,

Figure 1: Map of Tanzania  
Source: CIA, 2013

which has jurisdiction over education within Mainland Tanzania.<sup>5</sup> Categorized as a region of its own, the city is divided into three municipalities (or districts): Kinondoni, Temeke, and Ilala. Kinondoni District holds roughly half of the city's population. Ilala District is known to be the administrative heart of the city, hosting various local and national government buildings. Temeke District is the industrial and manufacturing center. (URT, 2013)

### 3.1.1. Education in Tanzania

Tanzania's youth population (0-14) is 44.8% of the total population (CIA, 2013). In Tanzania, students may begin their formal education at the age of five by enrolling in pre-primary schools. However, school is not compulsory until the age of seven, when all children must enroll in primary school, the first year of which is called Standard 1. Upon completing their seventh year of primary school (Standard 7), students sit a primary school leaving exam (PSLE) and if they pass, they may continue to secondary school, although continuing their education is not mandatory and vocational schools are also an option. (URT, 2012)

After its independence in 1961, Tanzania's first president, Julius Kambarage Nyerere, pushed for universal primary education (UPE). Although it was not until the Education Act of 1978 that primary level education became mandatory for Tanzanian citizens, during the following two decades Tanzania's adult literacy rate and primary school enrollment rate were among the highest within Sub-Saharan Africa (Woods, 2008:426). However, after economic reforms and changes in government during the 1980s, both rates soon plummeted. Thus, when the Tanzanian government abolished school fees for primary education in 2001, the school system was ill-equipped to accommodate the rapid increase in public school enrollment and quality of education languished (Woods, 2008; Hardman, Abd-Kadir, Tibuhinda, 2012). Schools were beset by problems of overcrowding and had insufficient supplies of textbooks and desks. In addition, many teachers were under qualified and inefficiently deployed. They had to work with meager resources, with appropriate curricula. (Woods, 2008:426).

Yet, even with the understanding that teachers can play a large role in their students' development, by international standards the average academic qualifications for those entering primary teacher training in Tanzania are low. In order to begin teacher training courses, prospective teachers need only complete four years of lower secondary school (Hardman, Abd-Kadir, Tibuhinda, 2012:826). Such low levels of qualification may diminish

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<sup>5</sup> Zanzibar has a separate Ministry of Education to develop policies for the semi-autonomous island.

the teachers' authority and risk lowering the status of their profession (Wedgewood, 2007:386).

The insufficient monetary support of the schools had a direct impact on the quality of education received. As recent as 2009, 94.3% of students in Standard 7 took the PSLE, but only 49.7% passed. Moreover, Woods (2008:426) notes that UPE began to stand, in jest, for “*Ualimu Pasipo Elimu*,” which translated from Swahili means “teaching without education” (Woods, 2008:426). Even the Ministry of Education noted that the number of students in school was a higher priority than the quality of education provided. Depending on the school, class sizes can be as large as one hundred students in rural areas, although the national average ratio of teacher to pupil is 1:48. (MoEVT, 2009)

### 3.1.2 Barriers to Education

While the poorer quality of the education provided within Tanzanian schools hinders the success of students progressing to secondary school and beyond, there are also barriers that students face that keep them out of school altogether. A list of the people most likely to face barriers when seeking education

throughout the world is provided by UNESCO's illustration, Figure 2: Groups often excluded from education. According to a household budget survey conducted by the Tanzanian government in 2007, 13.4% of school-aged children (7-13 years old) were out of school. The survey found a higher non-attendance rate for boys



Figure 2: Groups often excluded from education (UNESCO, 2009:7)

(15.7% compared to 11% of girls) and among youths in rural areas (15.8% compared to 5.1% in urban areas). The survey also found that the distance between home and school was also a determining factor of school attendance as was whether the household head was literate. Youths living in female headed households were also more likely to attend school. (URT, 2012:107)

Additional factors also prevent children from attending school. 8.5% of children aged 7-13 have lost one or more parent in Tanzania. This decreases their ability to access education in schools by forcing them to take on the burden of household labor or to care for younger siblings. (URT, 2012:107) In addition, roughly 6.2% of the adult population is

affected by HIV/AIDS. This places more children at risk of becoming orphans and further increases their likelihood of leaving school to take care of ailing parents.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, in Tanzania, students who have physical and mental disabilities are sent to separate schools where the staff is trained to specifically teach students with disabilities. Having a disability is also viewed negatively. Parents have been known to hide their children with disabilities from public. People with disabilities also face harsh prejudices. According to Basic Education Statistics of Tanzania (BEST), in 2010 there were 36,585 children labeled as having disabilities in primary schools (0.434% of all primary school going children) (MOEVT, 2010) where it is estimated that 7.8% of the country's population above the age of 7 has a disability. (URT, 2008:43)

There is often an additional financial trade-off for parents to send their children to school. Even though school fees have been abolished at the primary school level, students are still required to provide their own uniforms and learning materials as well as transportation, lunches, and exam fees. As a result, children from impoverished families are more at risk of nonattendance. (Woods, 2008:426)

### 3.1.3. Inclusion in Tanzania

In order to address the barriers mentioned in the previous section and to improve the quality of education, Tanzania developed a *National Strategy on Inclusive Education*. The goal of the strategy is for “all children, youths and adults in Tanzania [to] have equitable access to education in inclusive settings” (MoEVT, 2009:2). The strategy document explains that the ministry's shift towards inclusion was influenced by recommendations made by the ministry of Finland after the Tanzanian ministry requested aid in improving the country's special needs education. The strategy lists five objectives:

- 1) Education policies and programs are informed by inclusive values and practices
- 2) Teaching and learning respond to the diverse needs of learners
- 3) Educational support is available to all learners
- 4) Professional capabilities for inclusive education are widened and strengthened
- 5) Community ownership of and participation in inclusive education is enhanced

(ibid)

Of the five objectives that are expected to result in inclusive classrooms, two

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<sup>6</sup> In addition, if 6.2% of adults are infected then as many as 10,000 teachers in Tanzania could also be affected, decreasing the number of hours they may be capable of teaching,

specifically speak about teaching and the need to enhance the capacity of teachers (Objectives 2 and 4). Educational support is also mentioned.

### **3.2. Inclusive Education History and Definitions**

The following section will explain the concept of inclusive education and the way its definitions have changed internationally.

Inclusive education as a concept is not at all new, however it has had several different interpretations. Initially, inclusive education was a reaction against education systems that separated students with disabilities, such as hearing loss or mental impairments, from mainstream classes into classrooms with other students with (sometimes similar) disabilities. These special education classes were taught by teachers trained in pedagogical methods that were thought to be better suited to the needs of the individual students. However, their removal from the mainstream was seen as an encroachment on the rights of the students, who were already among the most marginalized groups in their communities (Miles, Singal, 2010:5). Advocates of inclusive education pushed for the inclusion of students with disabilities in ‘regular’ classes. They argued that a lack of education was hindering the success of people with disabilities, not the disability itself (Peters, 2004:47).

At the time, the challenges faced by students were interpreted as occurring within the children, thus all interventions to enable learning had to come on an individual basis, developed based on diagnostics of the issues. Thus, in regular classrooms the content of lessons remained unchanged after the inclusion of the new students, though expectations for assignments were adjusted for the students on an individual basis. However, critics of this “individualized approach” argued that such a perspective sought to minimize the diversity between the students in an attempt to make each students fit within the classroom (Vlachou, 2004:6). In addition, the focus on the students’ special needs often caused the other barriers hindering students’ access and participation in education described in Chapter 3.2 to be overlooked (Ainscow, Miles, 2008:17).

Within the last decade the conceptualization of which students are at risk of being excluded has broadened. Prompted by the 48<sup>th</sup> session of the International Conference on Education, with the theme “Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future” held in Geneva in 2007, the discussion of inclusive education now centers on identifying the ways students may be prevented from participating in school, either by such special needs as previously



mentioned or by factors such as learning disabilities or family situations, and finding ways to meet their needs in such a way that each student can access the learning content. (Operti, Brady, 2011:461; Florian, 2008:203).

The shift from special education of students with disabilities to inclusive education was expected to eliminate the barriers because the approach focused on the manner in which the school, as an institution, was organized, rather than on the individual students. It was the task of the school to fit the needs of the students, rather than the students' task to fit into the school. In that regard, inclusive education presented the opportunity to better understand the ways schools can include students with disabilities as well as students facing other barriers (Vlachou, 2004:7).

In order for the content of classrooms to be accessible to the learners, the education system must take on the responsibility to educate all learners within one system, rather than promoting the separation of students into different paths of learning. Further, the content, teaching styles and materials of the schools must accommodate each student. UNESCO describes inclusive education as “a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education” (UNESCO, 2003:7). When inclusive education was adopted by UNESCO as the solution to achieving universal primary education, the aim of their recommended policies was to enhance the capacity of education systems “to reach all learners” (UNESCO, 2008:9). With the shift towards inclusion, rather than merely inserting the students with disabilities into classrooms, without making any adjustments, such policies necessitate that even general teachers have knowledge of alternative teaching practices to ensure that the students learn (Smith, Tyler, 2011:324). Still, the distinction remains blurred between inclusive education as a system to incorporate students with disabilities and as a system to educate all students. This may be due to the fact that students have different learning styles which may or may not fit well with the way the classes are structured. Yet, it is this fit which inclusive education encourages school systems to achieve (ibid:23).

It is the view that school systems need modification in order to fit the needs of all learners that international policymakers are now seeking to implement in schools. It is perceived to be a means to improve the delivery of education to the students from all societal levels and promoted “sustainable development [and] lifelong learning” (Operti, Brady,

2011:459). Figure 3, below, provides further illustration of the changing mindsets inclusive education promotes.

Figure 3

**Comparison of Traditional Approaches and Inclusionary Approaches**

<b>Traditional Approach</b>	<b>Inclusionary Approach</b>
Focus on student	Focus on classroom
Assessment of student by specialist	Examine teaching/ learning factors
Diagnostic/ prescriptive outcomes	Collaborative problem solving
Student program	Strategies for teachers
Placement in appropriate program	Adaptive and Supportive regular classroom environment

Source: Thomas, Loxley, 2007:125

Rather than focusing on a specific student, diagnosis the issue involved and creating a specific education direction for the student, the inclusive approach will look at the classroom as a whole and examine how the school may be causing barriers to learning. A solution with an inclusive approach will correct a whole class' environment.

## 4. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this thesis is presented in two parts and will be used in two separate parts of the analysis. As previously mentioned, the empirical evidence was first explored through a model of professional development. Thus, the first part of the empirical framework illustrates the way teachers are expected to adapt to inclusive policies and become inclusive teachers. Additional theories of the Ideology of Expertism were included to further explain the teacher responses. A framework on critiques of international education policies was then employed to explore the incorporation of international inclusive policies in Tanzania's education policies.

### 4.1. Creating Inclusive Teachers

In order for teachers to adequately teach inclusively UNESCO's *Guidelines for Inclusion* (2008:5), which provides suggestions for how countries can include concepts of inclusive education into their education policies, recommends focusing on the training that teachers will need to develop skills necessary to teach students with diverse needs. The

training consists of pre-service such as teacher college courses as well as continuing professional development. In this view, an inclusive teacher is conceptualized as a professional who continues to expand his/her teaching repertoire. As such, teachers themselves must be knowledgeable and motivated to improve the quality of education received by the diverse learners (Smith, Tyler, 2011:325).

Learning to use new tools and adapting them into daily routine does not happen automatically. When ideas are introduced to teachers it may still take time for the techniques to appear in their teaching style and once they are established as pedagogy, they may have been appropriated in a manner different from what was anticipated. Rouse (2008) in her study of teachers in Scotland identified that typically teacher's professional development, when it came to training for inclusive practices, focused only on the knowledge building but in interviewing teachers, she found that the ability for a teacher to learn and promote inclusive practices rested on the relationship between knowing, doing, and believing.

Rouse sees a relationship between learning new techniques, practicing them and internalizing their usefulness and gaining confidence in it. Florian (2008) pictured the relationship as a triangle since each step of professional development of knowing, doing, and believing reinforces the stability of the other two. This triangle of professional development is depicted in Figure 4. The more the teachers practice the techniques the more they learn and gain confidence. Similarly, the more they believe in the usefulness of the technique, the more information they will seek out and the more they will practice the technique.

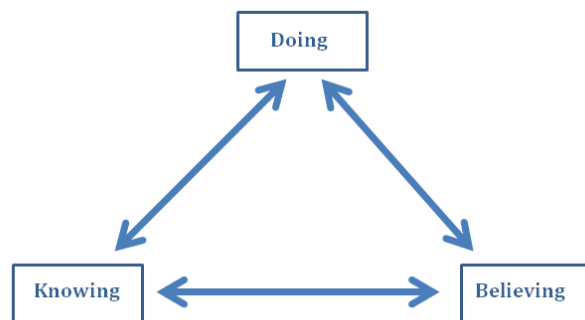


Figure 4: Triangle of Professional Development.  
Adapted by the author

The knowledge consists of the techniques for teaching different learners as well as the policies that exist on inclusive practices (Rouse, 2008:8). They require knowledge of what inclusion entails and techniques for how to deliver it. Doing then refers to teachers utilizing inclusive techniques within the classroom as well as “using evidence to improve practice” (Rouse, 2008:8). The teachers are encouraged to select “strategies on the basis of what is to be learnt, rather than what is wrong with the learner” can creatively problem-solve to remove the barriers their students face (Florian 2008:20; Rambla et. al., 2008:68). By believing it is

meant that the teachers internalize that every child can learn and that it is not only the responsibility of specialized teachers to ensure that every child is given educational opportunities (Rouse, 2008:9). Teachers need positive attitudes towards the aims of inclusive education in order to create inclusive classrooms (Operti, Brady, 2011:463).

#### **4.2. Moving Beyond Expertism**

As teachers pursue professional development, it is natural for them to doubt their ability to make use of their new understandings. This is especially true of general teachers who gain knowledge of how to teach students with special needs. Ware (2004) discusses that the techniques necessary for special education can only be utilized effectively by special education teachers because they went through a teacher education that specifically focused on those skills. As a result, general teachers, when encountering students who have needs with which they are unfamiliar, will differ to special education instructors. This “Ideology of Expertism” can have negative consequences when teachers attempt to learn techniques of inclusion. However, the expert status is arbitrary and fluid (Avramidis, 2005:103) and the knowledge can be acquired if the teachers are open to learning.

#### **4.3. Fitting policies to context**

The goals of EFA, reinforced by the MDGs, have been criticized for having been drafted by policymakers removed from local contexts. Easterly (2009) heavily criticizes the international policies. He argues that the MDGs established targets to measure performance, which he sees as, from the beginning, putting the countries of Africa at a disadvantage. He specifically points to the second goal of universal primary education. Here, African countries overall had a lower enrollment rate than other world regions in the 1990s (Easterly, 2009:29). The majority of the region will not reach the goal of universal primary education by 2015, despite the large increase in enrollment rates over the last decades. Easterly questions the view the world would have on Africa’s progress if the goal had been written proportionally as the first MDG was with halving the world’s poverty. Such an approach may have decreased the rapidity at which countries, including Tanzania, hastened to bring all of its children into school. Instead, more time may have been used to focus on preparing the schools for expanded enrollment.

In addition, Jansen (2005:374) criticizes the EFA goals for being developed apart from national education policies. The targets specified by the initiative project an urgency

that governments must strive to reach the targets as soon as possible. However, the countries have their own targets to achieve. This discrepancy, he argues, will prompt political leaders to “buy-into” the targets, but the national policymakers may not, leading to the structures needed to achieve international targets to be unstable within the nation. He further postulates that the national governments only adhere to the global targets because they are pressured to want to be ‘part of the game’ (Jansen, 2005:375). The pressure countries are under in the international community to meet standards created by international bodies was also noted by Armstrong, Armstrong and Spandagou (2010:4) who, view the spread of inclusive education initiatives, while seeking to increase access to school, as also demonstrating a country’s accepting the policy movements of distant international bodies in a reinforcement of “despondency”. Thomas and Loxley (2007:106) are also critical of the way inclusive education is developed into policies, arguing that due to policymaking taking place away from where the policies will be implemented can potentially lead to a disconnect between the way the policy is used and the way its initial intention.

## **5. Analysis**

The analysis will first discuss how the teachers perceive inclusive education, using the model of professional development to structure the discussion in order to speak about how the knowledge, practice and beliefs of the teachers have interacted. From conversations with the teachers it became apparent that the analytical model was insufficient to fully capture the perceptions of the teachers. Theories of expert ideology and teacher collaboration were brought in to contextualize the discussion. With an examination of the new roles of teachers, the analysis will then look into international education policy implementation to understand how inclusive education can be sustained.

### **5.1. Professional Development on Inclusive Education**

#### **5.1.1 Knowing**

In order to begin delivering inclusive education within classrooms, teachers must gain knowledge of inclusion; what it means and how to provide it. Research recommends giving teachers “appropriate skills and materials” through training. It is through training and learning about inclusive education that teachers gain knowledge and prepare to teach “diverse student populations.” (Acedo, 2011:301)

As described in Chapter 3, the MoEVT defines inclusive education in relation to the

barriers students face in accessing their education. To the ministry, inclusive education is a strategy to be employed throughout the education system. This may be the reason for the inclusive education document being entitled “strategy” rather than “policy.” As there is no “one way” to bring inclusion into a classroom, teachers must understand their roles in the process of creating inclusive classrooms. For this reason, it is imperative that they share the same vision of inclusive education as the policymakers. Currently, teachers in Dar es Salaam do not share one common understanding of inclusive education. The manner in which they describe the strategy will be explored further in this section.

While inclusive education has made an appearance in teacher education courses in Tanzania, it has remained relegated to courses related only to special needs education. For example, teachers may receive training in how to provide inclusive education in their classes at Patandi Teacher’s College in Arusha when specializing in Special Needs Education. Patandi is currently the only teacher college to offer a certification in special needs education, and each of its graduating classes contains only forty-five students annually. According to national statistics, there are 345 government-run primary schools in Dar es Salaam alone (MoEVT, 2010). Thus, it would take nearly eight years to put one teacher trained in inclusive education at each public school of just one city. However, Patandi is currently the only teacher’s college in Tanzania to provide training on inclusive education. At Patandi, prospective teachers learn the goals of inclusive education during a series of lectures and are offered practical techniques to provide it to their future students. Of the teachers who participated in this study, two attended Patandi; others took general teacher courses at other teacher colleges in the country.

Without a consistently utilized definition of inclusive education, classrooms in Dar es Salaam will not treat their students with the same approach. A clear definition of inclusive education must be understood at all levels. The concept of inclusive education came from human rights movements that sought to provide education to students with disabilities as well as social justice movements that advocated for schools to be made accessible to every child. As a result, inclusive education can be interpreted differently and in its implementation can set different priorities. Inclusive education is dependent on interpretation because it focuses on the situational context of individual classrooms. While teachers approach their students and their roles in similar manners, the outcomes of their teaching may look different. In one sense, inclusive education “means all things to all people,” however, “it can equally mean nothing” and become a hollow phrase used without understanding its purpose (Armstrong,

Armstrong & Spandagou, 2010:xi).

In a discussion held with an official at the Tanzanian Institute of Education (TIE) inclusive education “*in the Tanzanian context*” was defined as:

*A system of enrolling children, youths and adults to learn together with their peers. It also includes the different groups participating together in regular classrooms. They learn together with their peers regardless of their diverse abilities and without discrimination to minimize the barriers and to maximize the resources. It includes those with special needs but also orphans, albinos... Those peers together learn within the minimal resources.*

(William, Interview, TIE, 2013.01.21)

William’s definition echoes the national strategy, which is to minimize the barriers obstructing access to education so that all students (those classified as having disabilities as well as those having other educational needs) are able to learn in one classroom setting. However, even within the institute the purpose of inclusive education is understood differently. William’s colleague, Sarah (Interview, TIE, 2013.01.21), added that, “*Those with disabilities and regular students can be educated in one setting regardless of disability, race etc.*” The broad definition was employed by Sarah as well, highlighting the need to remove the barriers that students face in accessing their education. However, the students with disabilities were singled out, despite both officials understanding inclusive education as a strategy to include a wide range of marginalized students. The mentality that focused on including children with disabilities was the initial purpose of the inclusive education initiatives globally and in Tanzania, and it is this view of inclusive education that educators in Dar es Salaam think of first.

The focus on students with disabilities was also reflected in conversations with several teachers at local schools. Each teacher was asked to describe what they understood inclusive education to entail. Several of the definitions offered mentioned teaching approached that enabled children with disabilities to attend the same classes as those without. For example, Ethel (Interview, Temeke, 2012.12.12) stated that “*Inclusive education, this is the education which involves children with disabilities or with special needs and those children who are normal.*” Moreover, Lucy (Interview, Ilala, 2013.01.15), who graduated from Patandi in 2011, explained inclusive education as providing a classroom where one “*[teaches] normal children and the pupils [who] are challenged with visual impairment, with hearing impairment...*” Although Patandi offers inclusive education training, it may also devote much of its attention to working with individual students with disabilities, rather than

on the broader barriers as outlined by MoEVT. For these teachers inclusive education is heavily associated with special education.

Patandi is not the only place where teachers learn about inclusive education. In addition to pre-service training, MoEVT has focused on professional development for teachers who are already employed in several regions, including Dar es Salaam. One teacher, Eva (Interview, Temeke, 2012.11.29), initiated training sessions for the teachers at the school where she works. During the training session, teachers were sensitized to the many barriers that students may face and, over the course of several days, learned about techniques that could be used to minimize these barriers in the classroom.

Through participating in the training sessions, the teachers in Eva's primary school expanded their definition of whom the inclusive strategy targets. As one teacher at the school indicated, *"Inclusive education is where you include all children regardless to their differences so they study together"* (Anna, Temeke, Interview, 2012.12.12). But the responses teachers gave were in a spectrum. Some teachers only mentioned a process of bringing students with disabilities into the classroom, such as Angela (Interview, Temeke, 2012.12.12) who said, *"Inclusive education, this is the education which involves children with disabilities or with special needs and those children who are normal."* Other teachers emphasized that there are barriers that lead children to be excluded from education.

*You may think that maybe other kids, other students what we call 'ordinary' that you may think that that child is 'normal' and ordinary but when you have them in your class you find that even that one has a problem. So I have discovered that all children have...well now we can call it 'special needs.'*  
(Maria, Interview, Temeke, 2012.12.12)

Maria's revelation that a student's abilities are not fixed, but may change with circumstance, is the most apt way to explain why inclusive education is necessary in Tanzanian schools. Inclusive education is about more than just providing education for students who are already known to struggle when accessing education, but it is also meant to be a safety net to aid those students who may find barriers to their education in the future.

One student may go through a period where they struggle due to perhaps a change in circumstances in their home life. While their teacher may have classified them as "ordinary" after having seen them work well in their lessons, the teacher must be prepared to notice the reasons behind any change in academic performance. Rather than focus on the child's abilities and view their difficulties as a struggle, teachers need to be made aware of the final



purpose of inclusive education, which is to ensure barriers to education are minimized. Inclusive education “is a continuous struggle, not a fixed outcome” (Armstrong, Armstrong & Spandagou, 2010:33).

At the moment, the teachers in this study are very concerned with the challenges they face in teaching their students. Eva (Interview, Temeke, 2012.11.29) stated that “*Sometimes [teachers who will receive inclusive education training] are just ‘how can we include a child who is...epileptic?’ So they think of those big big things.*” Part of the issue with not having a cohesive definition is that teachers are only thinking about the children they find the most difficult to teach. Rather than working to accommodate the children facing barriers such as fatigue from walking long distances to school or inattention due to undernourishment, and bolstering their own self-confidence through achieving smaller victories, the teachers can see only what they perceive to be their inevitable failure to teach (looking at the long term). And this focus on the large issues leaves the teachers disheartened because they do not have the specialized knowledge to teach the students. “*These are really slow learners. How can you improve them? But we don’t know how to place the slow learners because we don’t have that knowledge*” (Ester, Interview, Temeke, 2012.12.12).

Although one hallmark of a good teacher is one who consistently reviews their teaching methods and seeks out new techniques, teachers also need to feel secure in their knowledge. Despite training in inclusion, it appears that teachers remain unconvinced that they can provide it in their classrooms. Perhaps it is a result of the separation of students into mainstream and special education schools in the past. When inclusive education comes to the schools and new students are incorporated within the classrooms, teachers often feel unprepared. In other studies, teachers also expressed concerns about not possessing the technical knowledge needed to aid the diverse student body. Instead, they felt that the students would be better served by an “army of experts” who could assist them one-on-one (Rouse, 2008:8). Lucy, who benefited from education at Patandi Teacher College, describes that

*With other teachers [she and other special education teachers] talk about what works and what doesn’t work. [They] share with [the teachers who have not been trained in Inclusive Education] because they were not taught the techniques. Sometimes they want to be taught how to teach those people and [she tells] them. (Lucy, Interview, Ilala, 2013.01.15).*

As a teacher who received specialized training on special needs education, Lucy’s colleagues

view her as an expert on effectively teaching students, even though Lucy has only taught for one year. There is still the feeling among teachers that more training is necessary if they are going to make use of inclusive methods. The relationship between general and special education teachers will be explored further in the analysis.

The danger of having competing definitions for what inclusive education entails in the classroom is that there is a lack of coherency. As policymakers push for the inclusion of more children, those teachers who view the goal of implementing inclusive education as solely an attempt to bring children with disabilities into classrooms may balk, anticipating students with needs they are unqualified to address. However, by viewing inclusion as a process to include all students, using techniques that are not geared toward one set of abilities but are there to enable a continuous re-evaluation of methods and learning to problem-solve, teachers will be more apt to view the change as a learning opportunity, instead of a futile attempt to catch up to teachers who spent years specializing in special education methods.

### 5.1.2. Doing

Teachers already have a wealth of knowledge about how to teach students with diverse needs, even when not trained specifically in special education. In the case of Dar es Salaam, they can understand their students' needs, and yet they still feel incapable of helping them.

#### 5.1.2.1. Defining the Barriers

When asked to describe the challenges their students face in accessing education the teachers in this study provided a list which generally included students who were disabled (with low-vision or low-hearing or with a mental disability), those who were from poor families, albinos,<sup>7</sup> orphans, nomads and street children. While the teachers had explained that inclusive education is specifically an issue of special education for pupils with disabilities, they also mentioned at least one of the other challenges. However, teachers often expressed that it is not always apparent to them how to teach the children who need the extra consideration.

Eva (Interview, Temeke, 2012.11.29), a teacher in a primary school's Special Needs

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<sup>7</sup> Albinos, due to their lack of skin pigmentation are more susceptible to blindness and cancer from the sun. Indeed, the Basic Education Statistics of Tanzania (MoEVT, 2010) list albinism as a category of disability. In Tanzania, in addition to the biological barriers, albinos face social barriers and are more sheltered, "giving them a reclusive, often invalid, status in the household and community where work in the open air is the norm" (Bryceson, Jonsson, Sherrington, 2010:367). There have also been reports in the last years of albinos being persecuted and killed in certain regions of the country (ibid).

Unit commented, *“It is easy in inclusive education to assist those with disabilities, so the orphans, people may think that they do need any special help more than their material needs [clothes or books], so that's why people do not consider them. But that is a problem.”* The danger that the less visible challenges bring is that the solution needed may seem too small. The teachers may see that a child is an orphan and assume that all that all the child needs are materials and, as a result, not look further into the emotional or behavioral needs that are often associated with orphans.

Teachers have various methods that they employ when they have students with different abilities in their classrooms. When speaking to the teachers about how they ensure that their students are participating in class, the focus of their discussion was not only on students with special needs. For example, Angela (Interview, Temeke, 2012.12.12), a primary school teacher who has taught for five years explained that *“we can say every student, orphan...so we are not dealing with only developmental disabilities, but we deal with different special needs or with different children.”*

One special education teacher who has taught for one year explained: *“In my class I have one student who has physical disabilities. I noticed that person that their disability is writing. He's writing very slowly and when he is writing he is quivering. So I have to sort some time to sit with him so that I can help him with his writing in the classroom”* (Ethel, Interview, Temeke, 2012.12.12). Here, the teacher observed her classroom and once she identified that one of her students was having difficulties in a specific area she took steps to improve the student's learning conditions. Teachers must adapt to the specific situations and find solutions to promote access to learning.

When asked to describe how he manages his class, one teacher of Standard 7, who was not familiar with inclusive education said:

*I can just spend my own time to teach those weaker groups. So I can find my own extra time. So I can speak with them, I can find an empty classroom and then I can put them into groups and I can ask them what is their problems.... choose to be like this... Because I am just a teacher not a counselor, but I can gather them and sit down and discuss with them the difficulties they are having. Most of them they are very open. (John, Interview, Kinondoni, 2013.01.28)*

John understood that he may not know why a student struggles but he can see the impact it has on their studies. Yet he felt that knowing the reason for their struggles could help him to

understand how to teach him better.

I asked John where he learned that it was important to not only identify the students who are struggling in his classes, but equally so to identify the reasons behind their struggles. John replied that it was not a lesson he was taught specifically during his training as a teacher. Instead he *“learned from experience.”* John’s experience demonstrates that if teachers believe that diversity of abilities in a classroom benefits them they will seek to keep them in the classroom by doing something about it and looking to find new techniques (Rouse, 2008). However, John mentioned that he will quit teaching once he has completed the business degree he is pursuing because his teaching salary is too low.

It is important that teachers focus on the barriers that cause exclusion, rather than “attributing problems to the intrinsic characteristics of pupils” (Rambla et. al., 2008:68). It may be true that a teacher cannot change the student’s situation, but they can work to accommodate them in their teaching, for example, giving students extra time to complete tasks. In John’s case, he sought to understand the students’ circumstances so that he could develop an appropriate solution. However, this same teacher has felt unsupported and unappreciated in his profession to the point that he is planning to stop teaching.

#### **5.2.2.2. Defining Inclusive Teachers**

When teachers were asked to describe what their roles were as teachers to their students they gave several descriptions. William, an official at TIE, believes it is vital that teachers accept diversity. Other participants also hold this view. Joyce (Interview, Ilala, 2013.01.15) a primary school teacher of 13 years who teaches English and Geography states, *“Our role as teachers at each school, what we are always doing is [creating] unity or [creating] love between the...students... That is the role we are playing as teachers: to make them learn together.”*

Margareth is a primary teacher of 18 years who teaches Standard 6 Science, Languages and Social Studies. For her, it is important for the students to be around people who are different from them because her goal is to have them *“feel as if they are all part of one family”* (Margareth, Interview, Kinondoni, 2013.01.29). She tries to close the gap between her students so that it is easy for them to communicate and encourages them to help each other. Gerard, a secondary school teacher of 7 years, also describes teaching in a manner that encourages all of his students to participate. As he explains, *“If they sing, we have them all sing the same song. If they want to eat, we have them eating together. So whatever they*

*do, they do together*” (Gerard, Interview, Temeke, 2013.01.23). He makes an effort to treat all of his students in the same way.

Ethel (Interview, Temeke, 2012.12.12), who has taught special needs education for a year, explains that teachers teach their students *“that disability is not inability. They must know that every human being is able. Every person has his or her own problems.”* Ethel’s demonstrates that teachers are ensuring that the lessons they have received about the purpose of inclusive education are being transferred to the students that they teach. The relationship between teaching and caring for students has been noted in other research of the identities the profession of teachers inspires (Robinson & McMillan, 2006:331).

However, several teachers feel unsupported by the government because they receive low salaries. A Standard 6 teacher, Jane (Interview, Ilala, 2013.01.15) states, *“Our salary is not enough for us. So teachers think about how to find the money. So we teachers go to find another [job]. Some of us are motivated and some of us are not committed. So it is frustrating.”* John, the Standard 7 teacher confirms that he too would like a higher salary:

*“I enjoy teaching. But according to the government, they do not give us support, because there they do not have the funds, the salaries [of teachers] are very low, and we cannot afford to survive. And then nowadays the money is very difficult. It is a very difficult life”* (John, Interview, Kinondoni, 2013.01.28).

For both of these teachers, the low pay represents a challenge to their ability to continuing teaching.

Despite the challenge of learning how to provide inclusive education, some teachers have risen to the task and have sought to teach other educators about the successful strategies they have used. A secondary teacher, Gerard, who has taught for seven years, when asked about the challenges he faced in teaching responded:

*“There are some sort of challenges, especially, in the way some of the students they are very slow learners and they tell you some of them they go like they go into the classes so some of the teachers maybe they are... if you don't have any experience or maybe you are moving students or whatever, you become tired. Training for them, planning to help them do the same things every day. So sometimes, it is in the heart it's broken. Your heart breaks. You think that "I am so tired for them." But we are trying our level best to train teachers and other pupils who are helping those students. These people they are people like you. You can try to help them. Don't be hard. That is your work.”* (Gerard, Interview, Temeke, 2013.01.23).

Gerard's comment highlights that teachers must constantly work to include their students. As mentioned previously, inclusion is more process than a destination. This may seem, then, like a task that has no end, which is why Gerard and other teachers get "tired." Yet, if teachers view inclusive education as a process, teachers may "avoid a sense of frustration" when experiencing setbacks. When they reflect upon their teaching as a whole, they will see their pedagogies develop and become more inclusive (Armstrong, Armstrong & Spandagou, 2010:33).

With the knowledge and resources that the teachers have available to them, the teachers are learning to provide inclusive education, although it is a continuous process and is made more challenging by what they perceive as a lack of support from the government. The teachers of this study are not alone in feeling discouraged when teaching. Other studies have found the "attractiveness" of the teaching profession has diminished and retention rates have decreased within Sub-Saharan Africa due to (among other factors) low salaries and "under-resourced" classrooms. Moreover, "teachers feel that their views and voices go unheeded." (Buckler, 2011:246)

### 5.1.3. Believing

In Rouse's model, believing mostly refers to a teacher's appreciation for the inclusive approach. As echoed by other scholars, the attitude the teachers have is central to the success of inclusion within schools (Operti, Brady, 2011; Unianu, 2012). In fact it can be the primary barrier to inclusive education's success. Factors in how teachers react to inclusive practices can include the perceived challenge of the barriers that the students faces, their prior experience working with children with diverse needs, and their "trust in their capabilities" to effectively use inclusive methods (Unianu, 2012:901).

Teachers, for the most part, perceive students with different abilities studying together as a good thing. A repeated comment during the interviews was that inclusive education encouraged students to interact with each other and the sight of students helping each other became routine. As a special education teacher explained,

*"The way they change...they interact with other children...the way they have this social education... you find a child alone they are playing alone; the mental disabilities alone; and other children... Do you know even the schools for orphans, the orphans they study alone, can you imagine? But now, when those all the children, they study together, really they get something that the others do not.... So this thing of sharing ideas, this thing of making the friendships, this thing [called] social skills, it is really, really something"*

(Eva, Interview, Temeke, 2012.11.29).

In Eva's opinion, students should not study only with other students with similar abilities because such a separation leads to isolation. An essential element to learning is the classroom setting, which can be made more welcoming by the students learning to accept and work with one another (Thomas, Loxley, 2007:143). By encouraging students with diverse abilities to learn together, they then form friendships and share ideas, and learn from each other, which could not have occurred in separation. This could be described as "social learning."

Positive reactions to inclusive education were expressed by the teachers in relation to the positive changes they had seen in their students. Teachers with more experience teaching and who work with more diverse backgrounds have been found in other studies to have a more positive outlook (Unianu, 2012:903). That the role inclusive education can play in enhancing a student's learning was echoed in Ethel's explanation of why, after one year teaching special education, she found inclusive education to have a positive effect on the school where [she] worked.

*"It's not that my brain can already not do something, but through seeing another person, I can realize and I can improve my mind. So we are learning according to what others are doing. So in inclusive education, by doing so through the inclusive education classes it may help the students to enlarge their mind. That's how."* (Ethel, Interview, Temeke, 2012.12.12)

By including students of different abilities there is a process of mutual learning. It is interesting that Ethel's statement begins with "*it is not that my brain already cannot do something,*" which would imply that a student has the capacity to do this. Thus, mimicking the actions of others may not create ability but rather the awareness of ability.

Another challenge in Tanzanian education is the high ratio of teacher to pupil. While on average one teacher teaches 48 students, some schools have ratios closer to 1:100 (MoEVT, 2010). Countries like Tanzania need to have more teachers trained in inclusive practices (Démbélé, Lefoka, 2007:553). Economically augmenting the number of teachers is costly, however, inclusive education is thought to be more economical than having two separate educational systems in tandem (i.e. "regular schools" and "special education schools") (Lynch, 1994:29; Thomas, Loxley, 2004:44). Rather than supporting two separate buildings, there would be one building, and rather than having teachers trained in two techniques, there could be one teacher who could be trained in inclusive techniques. There are researchers who find that the techniques used specifically in 'special education' classes

work well in ‘regular’ classroom settings.

In the case of Tanzania, the conviction of teachers that inclusive education could increase all students’ access to formal education is influenced by their level of confidence in their ability to provide inclusive education successfully to their students.

## 5.2. Critique of the Model

The model suggested by Rouse (2008) is useful as an analytical tool and emphasizes the ways in which knowing, doing and believing in inclusive education interact when teachers are introduced to the new concept. Through the model’s application, a picture forms of how teachers understand inclusive education and the ways in which they could deliver it. However, the model does not provide a whole picture of reality. It supposes that when teachers are trained in a method and are given opportunities to put their new understandings and techniques into practice, then they will be convinced that the method is useful and will continue to use the techniques and seek more knowledge for improved implementation. However, when people gain new knowledge they will process it into ways potentially unforeseen.

### 5.2.1. Capacity

“Believing” in Rouse’s model is only defined in terms of teachers determining that the techniques of inclusive education have merit and could improve their teaching styles. It does not make reference to a necessity for the teachers to also believe that they are capable of using the new technique although other scholars view this as an integral part to teachers ‘beliefs’ (See de Boer, Piji, Minnaert, 2011:7, Savolainen et al., 2012:65).

As Chapter 5.1.1 illustrated, the teachers in the study possess knowledge of inclusion and some have begun to believe that inclusion can be used to support all of the children in school. Yet, they remain unconvinced that they themselves are in a position to deliver inclusive education within their teaching. This is not unique to the case of Dar es Salaam. Other studies of teachers (See Forlin et. al., 2009; Smith, Tyler, 2011:324; Unianu, 2012:901) have also found that teachers repeatedly question their abilities to teach special education. One common reason is a fear that they were provided insufficient training (Unianu, 2010:901).

Not every teacher in the study agreed that inclusive education was best for their students. However, their reasoning was similar to the hesitations mentioned by those teachers



who did. For example, Wilson, who was visually impaired and taught special education math for Standard 1, was adamant in his disagreement with inclusive education. He felt that including specifically blind children into a class with a “regular teacher,” meaning a teacher who did not specialize in special education, teaching persons with disabilities, then the students would be at a disadvantage. Speaking to the example of blind students he explained that:

*“Because, in the class they [blind students] are taught by other teachers who are not visually impaired. So they [the teachers] fail to introduce the knowledge to those disabled.... A teacher may be teaching mathematics, maybe explaining how to divide. You can hear a teacher saying "You divide this by this" so a student with a visual impairment cannot understand what the teacher mean by "this". That is a problem.”* (Wilson, Interview, Ilala, 2013.01.15).

In his reasoning, teachers who are unfamiliar with the specific needs of the students will not be able to cater to their needs all of the time. He demonstrates that teachers must be aware of their students’ needs and be cognizant of how their teaching methods impact the degree to which students can absorb their lessons. Indeed, he speaks as if the only way a teacher can anticipate the needs of the students is if they, themselves, have the same needs. Such a teacher would know to say a specific number rather than the imprecise “*this*.” It is true that a general teacher may miss the details that seem obvious to teachers trained in special needs education.

While Wilson may be incorrect in thinking that only a visually impaired person can teach other visually impaired people, he is not alone in concluding that special skills are needed to effectively teach a wide range of learners. John (Interview, Kinondoni, 2013.01.28), who teaches Standard 7, also expressed: *“Having a teacher trained would be so helpful to the students... But we do not have the psychological knowledge, or special knowledge to help them. So we treat them as normal students.”* Margareth, another primary school teacher of 18 years, echoed these sentiments:

*“There are schools in Tanzania that are specifically for students with disabilities and these separate schools are a good thing because those students with disabilities have a curriculum that teaches them at their own pace which is slower than that of students without disabilities. The extra attention will build their self-confidence and boost their abilities.”* (Margareth, Interview, Kinondoni, 2013.01.29)

She sees the children with disabilities as different from other students because they work at

slower paces. This is difficult and unfair to try to teach all the learners at the same time. She further explains that she is unable to teach the blind, for example, because she does not have the proper equipment (such as the special typewriter called “pecking spray”). Again, the reason for not utilizing the strategy of inclusion as designed by MoEVT was due to a perception that general teachers lack the “special knowledge” to properly teach in all the possible situations. While teachers feel competent in utilizing the knowledge that they have amassed during their professional careers, they continue to view their knowledge as being on a different level from those teachers trained in special education.

This perception that an expert specially trained to teach students with disabilities is well documented in other studies as an impediment to implementing inclusive education (See Skidmoore, 2004; Unianu, 2012). The isolation of special education knowledge from general teacher training has also been criticized because it “creates a false legitimacy for the growth of special education and the activities of special educators” (Thomas, Loxley, 2007:22). If general teacher education included modules of special education, there would be less of a divide between general and special education teachers. Ware (2004) identifies the view of putting the knowledge of special education teachers on a pedestal as “ideological expertism.” The special education “expert” is seen as “all-knowing” and the “experiences of ordinary...teachers [are] not valued by...professionals” (Ware, 2004:176).

The MoEVT also recognizes teachers trained in special needs education as having specialized knowledge. The *National Strategy on Inclusive Education* document speaks about the special education courses of Patandi Teach College as the channel through which inclusive education will reach teachers throughout the country. However there is an assumption that the knowledge will be shared with general teachers in a manner that allows them to understand and to make use of it. The participants did speak about collaboration among themselves, and mentioned asking for advice from special education teachers. Yet the perception that general teachers, too, have knowledge that can be useful in their discussions is absent from their narratives.

### **5.2.2. Teacher Development**

In addition to not addressing the need for teachers to believe that they themselves are capable of providing inclusive education, Rouse’s model minimizes the role that teachers can play in the development of inclusive school systems. In her argument, if teachers are given opportunities for training and practice then they will produce expected outputs. They become

passive receivers of information and, though they are expected to adapt the knowledge of techniques they receive as they are used in their teaching pedagogies, the model does not take into consideration the possibility that teachers will provide their own inputs. However, the goal of training teachers in inclusive education is to spark their creativity in problem-solving so that they become proficient at adapting their teaching styles to fit the needs of their students and to learn to recognize those needs. They are expected to use their knowledge to perpetuate the evolution of their teaching. Indeed, teachers should “co-develop” the curriculum they teach so that they feel involved and can take part in the process of creating the inclusion (Operti, Brady, 2011:461).

One cost-effective method that would mitigate the teachers’ worries would be the creation of formal mentorship programs partnering new teachers with older teachers and/or with teachers trained in special education. The mentor program would equip the new teachers with resources in the form of colleagues to offer advice about how to teach inclusively. The more experienced teachers or those with special education training would also gain “new perspectives.” (Hobson et al., 2009:209). Moreover, the collaboration between the teachers would foster creative problem-solving without perpetuating the belief that teachers without this special knowledge cannot teach. Indeed, the role of the mentor would be to foster self-confidence in the new teachers.

Lucy (Interview, Ilala, 2013.01.15) stated that “*some teachers understand because they want to understand.*” This begs the question whether those who do not want to understand eventually would. Most participants in this study mentioned discussing problems they face in teaching their students with other teachers and either asking or giving advice on a regular basis. Researchers (Rambla et. al., 2008; Winter, O’Raw, 2010; Operti, Brady, 2011) have found collaboration among teachers to be important in the development of school-wide inclusion. However, success of the teamwork hinges on designating “time for planning and reflecting together” (Winter, O’Raw, 2010:12). That participants brought up planning discussions may demonstrate that they see teachers as a source of further information. They are willing to seek out new knowledge which is essential for the continuous development of inclusion within classrooms (Rouse 2008:6). At least one teacher at each of the schools in the study had an awareness of inclusive education. Yet, that not every teacher knew about it and the dissimilar definitions held within single institutions suggests that teachers could benefit from further encouragement to collaborate.

Emmanuel, a secondary school teacher who has taught for two years, also affirmed:

*“Yeah, [we find solutions that work] because when we talk, we are maybe in the staff room, about the students. You talk about them. You note what is normal. Some teachers may suggest going with the students to talk to him or her and maybe we can even call the parents to come over. Maybe their behavior. It is though a hard challenge. We discuss how to deal with that kind of student”* (Emmanuel, Interview, Temeke, 2013.01.15).

The teachers make time to discuss and brainstorm with other teachers so that they can find solutions that will aid their students who are struggling. However, there are informal discussions that take place within the staffroom during breaks rather than within a formalized schedule built into lesson planning.

Pilj (2010) recommends that teachers work in teams and pursue what he refers to as “reflective counseling.” He argues that while policymakers focus on how to train teachers in new knowledge, such training can manifest in different outcomes, sometimes for the better but sometimes not. This is because teachers often make “intuitive choices” in the spur of the moment when teaching to adapt their lessons’ to their students’ needs. Afterwards, the teacher may find it difficult to express why a given choice was made. (ibid:199) The reflective counseling done in groups of fellow teachers would enable teachers to collaborate and find solutions in as more systematic manner. Teachers in Dar es Salaam already discuss lessons learned informally, so Pilj’s counsel that fearing that such discussions of pedagogy would raise negative judgments on their teaching abilities, teachers may feel uncomfortable may not apply as much in the case of teachers in Dar es Salaam (ibid).

### **5.3. The Role of Inclusive Teachers**

As all students are given accessible education, the responsibility of providing the education lays with their teachers. Rather than focusing on each individual separately, inclusive teachers must view the class as a whole and critically reflect on how their teaching encourages the participation of their students (Thomas, Loxley, 2007:125). As such, teachers must be central in the research of how to provide inclusive education in the classroom.

Teachers already play a large role in the success of their students but particularly in developing countries. In one study of nine Sub-Saharan African countries,<sup>8</sup> the “teacher effect” had a 27% bearing on student achievement. This was possibly due to teachers being the primary source of academic contexts students have in the countries. (Démbélé, Lefoks,

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<sup>8</sup> Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo

2007:535) Their interpretation of curricula allow them to “choose to change the way the work” in teaching (Florian, 2008:207). They are the closer to the students than school administrators and policymakers. They are the individuals in schools who most interact with students. Where inclusive education is pushed by school administration, the attitudes teachers hold about the practice of inclusion may still constitute a barrier to the policy’s adoption (Unianu, 2012:901; de Boer, Piji, Minnaert, 2011:331).

As previously explained, teachers in Dar es Salaam currently feel under prepared to teach diverse learners because they that feel their knowledge of how to do so is lacking. Even the teachers who are excited by the results they have seen coming from inclusion in their schools, express doubts related to the ability to appropriately teach inclusively with the materials and training available to them. What they see as a lack of materials available both for teaching and learning. A lack of “relevant materials” and “absence of support services” are among the obstacles found in studies of education expansion and teacher development (Elewke, Rodda, 2002:113; Smith, Tyler, 2011:324).

In order to successfully include the students through their teaching, teachers must receive pedagogical knowledge through training, have opportunities to practice and view the results of their teaching methodologies, and believe both that inclusive practices will improve the quality of education their students receive and that they have the ability to provide education in an inclusive manner. As Tanzania adopts the inclusive education approach in its education policies, supported by international guidelines, it will be important for the views of teachers to be considered.

#### **5.4. Translating Policies**

Thomas and Loxley (2007:107) argue that education policies are inherently complex to implement because guidelines are passed “from one person to another” and at each level of interpretation the force of the intent is weakened, “attenuated” and “compromised.” As such inclusive education should develop from alterations made at the school level. The human factor in policy implementation cannot be overlooked. In Dar es Salaam, some teachers did seem to naturally include techniques of inclusive education in their teaching styles. For example, as mentioned Chapter 5.1.2.1 of the analysis, John (Interview, Kinondoni, 2013.01.28) “*learned from experience*” to understand the causes of his students’ struggles. Moreover, inclusive education has been interpreted in different ways, as demonstrated in the variety of definitions the teachers of the study gave to the concept in Chapter 5.1.1. The way

the teachers interpreted the purpose of inclusive education influenced whom they focused on including within their classrooms.

Policymakers develop policies with the expectation that the implementation of the policies will match the way they conceived it. However, because they are distant from those who will be responsible for the implementation (in education policy making, a ministry of education is removed from the local primary school teachers), their intent can easily be reinterpreted. (Thomas, Loxley, 2007:94) In order for the intention of an education policy to reflect its intended purpose at every level of implementation, teachers must be involved. Indeed, teachers need to understand and “properly engage with pedagogy” (ibid). While receiving training in inclusive education, they should criticize and question the tools they are given and develop them further to suit their own needs in the classroom. If a teacher does not develop their own understanding of what encompasses good teaching, then they will welcome the “plethora of claims about what constitutes ‘best practices’” in teaching (Alexander, 2008:2).

Inclusive education was adopted as a ‘best practice’ strategy for achieving the goals of EFA in part because the approach went beyond the number of children in school, and looked further into the reasons for why the children were not attending. Easterly (2009) contends that focusing on the increase proportionally in the number of children in school is more useful and effective than efforts to enroll all students now. Jensen (2005:369) also writes about the danger of a “zealous pursuit of targets as ends on themselves.” The number of students become the goal, which in Tanzania, lead to a decline in the quality of education. And yet, it seems that when inclusive education was transferred into other contexts, such as Tanzania, it was still treated as the other international policies, where countries quickly tried to meet the targets, without much consideration for how to resource the initiatives. Tanzania’s *National Strategy of Inclusive Education 2009-2017* was written in 2009 and, at the time, a specific funding strategy had not yet been determined. The strategy document states, “It is proposed that resourcing and financing inclusive education be developed into a resource-based model whereby funding is based on services provided” (MoEVT, 2009:27). Incorporating inclusive practices in the schools was seen to be important and funding would be an issue to be decided as more about what services would be needed was learned. However, as conversations with the teachers revealed, the availability of learning materials influences their feelings of capacity.

Jensen (2005) writes that international policies in education are often adopted by national governments and adapted into their national education policies outside the planning phase. This is evident in Tanzania's *National Strategy of Inclusive Education 2009-2017*. It has sought to adhere to the Guidelines of Inclusion as specified by UNESCO and it is in the process of incorporating the inclusive approach in its education policies. The *National Strategy of Inclusive Education* is envisioned to achieve the education sector objectives previously detailed already detailed within the country's Education Sector Development Programme 2008-2017 (ESDP). For instance, the eleventh objective of the ESDP is for "the fundamental principle of inclusion at all levels [to be] applied as a key strategy aimed at achieving universal and equitable access, backed up by related teacher training and community publicity" (URT, 2009:8). However, the process of incorporating inclusive practices, though firmly integrated within the ESDP, was only conceived after the first year the development program's implementation.

When looking to the objectives specified in Tanzania's Strategy the fourth relates to building teacher's capacities through education. It states, "Professional capabilities for inclusive education [are] to be widened and strengthened" (MoEVT, 2009:3). It is important to base efforts to create international policies on the experiences of the teachers across different systems. The teachers need to be the starting point when analyzing what needs to change within the system, rather than looking to the "best practices" of other education systems in donor countries that are founded upon their own unique situations and cultural contexts (Hardman, Abd-Kadir, Tibuhinda, 2012:827). As the strategy is conceived, the fourth objective of enhanced professional capabilities will be achieved through improving teacher education in three ways:

1. By promoting inclusive education in a revised teacher education curriculum
  2. By equipping three additional teacher colleges to teach inclusive education
  3. By providing opportunities for administrators to receive professional development
- (MoEVT, 2009:22).

The strategy will increase the opportunity for teachers to develop their inclusive teaching methods. The prospective teachers still in school will receive direct training. Teachers already employed will be able to learn through their administration. However, as the current study demonstrated, providing training will not lead to teachers feeling confident in their roles, unless each teacher feels they are capable of understanding, utilizing and adapting the

knowledge they receive.

While striving to implement inclusive approaches for educating all learners in Tanzania is an essential step to further development, it is vital that the government ensures that resources are in place. The learning materials must be sufficiently available and appropriate to aid in the delivering quality education. Further, teachers must be encouraged to adapt the materials to creatively teach inclusively.

## 6. Conclusion

This thesis sought to determine how teachers in Dar es Salaam perceive their ability to deliver inclusive education to their students and how an understanding of their perceptions can be used to ensure the success of implementing inclusive policies in Tanzania's schools.

The method of case study research of teachers responding to inclusive education in Dar es Salaam's public schools was conducted with an abductive approach. Framing the discussion of the teacher's reception of inclusive techniques within a model of professional development depicted teachers as holding varying opinions of the purpose of inclusive education.

Despite the majority of the teachers having positive attitudes towards inclusive education approaches, there was a lack of confidence in their ability to provide inclusive education to their students. The hesitations lay in the meager teaching and learning materials available to the teachers and a perception that special education teachers were better suited than general teachers to deliver inclusive education to students. The model of professional development was further elaborated to better demonstrate how the teachers viewed their own abilities. 'Ideological expertism' was used to explain why general teachers deferred to the 'expert' knowledge of special education teachers. Teacher cooperation and mentorship programs were explored as possible strategies to encourage teachers to become their own experts.

Teachers are central to bringing inclusive education into the classroom because of their continuous contact with their students. As such, an understanding of their position should be included when developing education policies. Tanzania was eager to bring inclusive education into its classrooms as a means to improve the quality of education while reaching those children who have been marginalized by barriers. In order for inclusive



education to make a difference to students' access to education, teachers must have confidence in their ability to problem-solve and teach all students. This can be encouraged if they are given the necessary teaching and learning materials and are offered training in inclusive education as general teachers.

While these are the concerns specifically of teachers in Dar es Salaam, teachers from other communities should also be encouraged to express their concerns, both in Tanzania and in other countries that are seeking to bring inclusion into their schools. If education is a "key" to unlocking a student's potential then it is teachers who help them design their key and determine which lock they wish to open. As such, the teachers must be encouraged to develop their teaching styles and to think creatively about how to teach their students who will continue to have more diverse aspirations.

Further research is necessary to understand how teachers are responding to the new roles inclusive education requires of them in other contexts. If they are supported and have confidence in their inclusive methods, the quality of education worldwide can improve.

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## Appendix: Interview Guide

- School:
- Gender:
- How long have you been working at X school?
- Have you taught at other schools?
- What subject(s) do you teach and which grades?
- Why did you become a teacher?
  
- How many students are generally in your classes?
- What sort of barriers to education do your students face?
- Describe your relation to your students within the classroom?
  
- How do you ensure that all of your students learn?
- Where did you learn your teaching methods?
- Did you have any follow-up training or professional development opportunities?
  
- How would you define Inclusive Education?
- Were you trained specifically in inclusive education?
  
- Do you feel that your school as a whole provides inclusive education for your students?
- What is your opinion of inclusive education?
- What is the biggest challenge in teaching?