

Practicing Inclusion for Hard of Hearing and Deaf Students in Regular Schools in Ethiopia

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Abstract : This research aims to examine the practices of inclusion of the hard of hearing and deaf students in regular schools. It also focuses on exploring strategies for optimal benefits of students with Hard of Hearing and Deaf (HH-D) from inclusion. Concurrent mixed methods research design was used to collect quantitative and qualitative data. The instruments used to gather data for this study were questionnaire, semi-structured interview, and observations. A total of 102 HH-D students and 42 primary and High School teachers were selected using simple random sampling technique and used as participants to collect quantitative data. Non-probability sampling technique was also employed to select 14 participants (4-school principals, 6-teachers and 4-parents of HH-D students) and they were interviewed to collect qualitative data. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques (independent sample t-test, one way ANOVA and Multiple regressions) were employed to analyze quantitative data. Qualitative data were also analyzed qualitatively by theme analysis. The findings reported that there were individual principals', teachers' and parents' strong commitment and efforts for practicing inclusion of HH-D students effectively; however, most of the core values of inclusion were missing in both schools. Most of the teachers (78.6 %) and HH-D students (75.5%) had negative attitude and considerable reservations about the feasibility of inclusion of HH-D students in both schools. Furthermore, there was a statistically significant difference of attitude toward to inclusion between the two school's teachers and the teachers' who had taken and had not taken additional training on IE and sign language. The study also indicated that there was a statistically significant difference of attitude toward to inclusion between hard of hearing and deaf students. However, the overall contribution of the demographic variables of teachers and HH-D students on their attitude toward inclusion is not statistically significant. The finding also showed that HH-D students did not have access to modified curriculum which would maximize their abilities and help them to learn together with their hearing peers. In addition, there is no clear and adequate direction for the medium of instruction. Poor school organization and management, lack of commitment, financial resources, collaboration and teachers' inadequate training on Inclusive Education (IE) and sign language, large class size, inappropriate assessment procedure, lack of trained deaf adult personnel who can serve as role model for HH-D students and lack of parents and community members' involvement were some of the major factors that affect the practicing inclusion of students HH-D. Finally, recommendations are made to improve the practices of inclusion of HH-D students and to make inclusion of HH-D students an integrated part of Ethiopian education based on the findings of the study.

Keywords : deaf, hard of hearing, inclusion, regular schools

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