ABSTRACT

Inclusive education, which is believed to create equity of education to children with disability, is applied in different situations and contexts globally. In this case its implementation is not an easy task; it needs thorough investigation, understanding its aims and principles and taking consistent and appropriate measures to make it successful.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the practice of inclusive teaching to visually impaired students in English language teaching (ELT) settings, taking second cycle schools (Grade 5-8) as targets of the study in the three metropolitan cities of the Amhara National Regional State, Ethiopia. Particularly an attempt was made to study teachers’ beliefs, attitudes and instructional practices including visually impaired students’ views and other associated factors which are believed to make the practice of inclusive education successful.

The study was conducted using quantitative and qualitative methods, employing questionnaires, interviews, observations and document analysis to collect data. Descriptive statistics, Pearson product moment correlation and t-(z-) tests were also used as methods of data analysis.

The results of the study indicated that both teachers and visually impaired students (VISs) were found to have positive attitude towards inclusive teaching. It was, however, found out that among the demographic factors which influence teachers’ attitudes, their qualification, training and experience of teaching VISs were found to be statistically significant. Though teachers claimed that they had a strong belief on involvement of VISs
in an inclusive class and the benefits of inclusion, this did not match with their practice of teaching in inclusive settings by addressing the needs of VISs.

The study also showed that though there were some opportunities for admitting VISs in regular schools due to the presence of SNE policy and strategy along with a few preliminary conditions, the practice of inclusive teaching in the target schools was found to be in its infant stage. This implies that it was not being properly managed due to various constraints as compared to the requirements of inclusive education that were identified in surveyed literature.