



Contemporary Trends in Socialization: Benefits for Children with Special Education Needs, Zambia

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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of modern socializing on children with special education needs in Zambia. Socialization is a fundamental process through which individuals acquire the knowledge, skills, values, and behaviours necessary for effective participation in society. In recent years, social media platforms and digital technologies have emerged as influential agents of socialization, offering new opportunities for communication, interaction, and learning. This study was descriptive in nature and had 85 respondents. Data acquired from questionnaires and recorded interviews indicated that families where child's parents and siblings are found help the child develop basic social norms. The study highlighted the impact of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, internet websites, Gmail/Email, and video games on the socialization experiences of children with special education needs (SEN). Findings revealed that while social media platforms and digital technologies offer expanded opportunities for social connection, learning, and self-expression for children with SEN, they also present unique risks such as exposure to inappropriate content, cyberbullying, and privacy concerns. Additionally, the study highlighted the importance of parental guidance, educator support, and digital literacy education in promoting safe and responsible digital citizenship for children with SEN. Understanding the impact of social media and digital technologies on the socialization process of children with SEN, parents,

educators, and policymakers can better support their educational, and social development and well-being in today's digital age.

Subject Areas

Special Education, Sociology, Psychology

Keywords

Socialization, Agents of Socialization, Children, Special Education, Needs

1. Introduction

Socialization helps children with special needs learn how to interact with others, develop their communication skills, learn about the world around them, and learn their worldview. It is an important aspect of learning and has educational benefits that cannot be over-emphasized despite the academic curriculum concentrating more on the performance of the learner while overlooking skills development. Socialization is an essential aspect of the life cycle of childhood development. It helps children with special needs learn critical social skills, improves communication, and enhances emotional development [1]. All these benefits are essential for success in school and life. Socialization transmits the culture of a society to its children, and this is done through teaching learners their cultural norms, values, knowledge, and beliefs. Socializing agents play a crucial role in the development of children with special educational needs (SEN), facilitating their integration into social environments and fostering positive interactions with peers and adults alike [2]. In the community, there are institutions (agents of socialization) that assist in the transmission of community culture. These institutions include the family, school, religion, media, peers and group [3]. Each of these has a specific role in helping a new member acquire the required skills, knowledge, norms, and habits to which the community believes in. Children with 'special needs' or better known as children with different abilities refer to the children who experienced obstacles in the development of this behaviour [4]. For children with special needs, engaging in social activities is not merely a pastime but a critical component of nurturing mental and emotional well-being. Children with special needs often encounter unique challenges that can lead to feelings of isolation from peers and the community. However, when they participate in community activities, they find themselves part of a supportive network that understands and values them. Children with special needs deprived of social relationships and togetherness can experience cognitive and speech delays, as well as physical and mental health concerns in adulthood. The socialization process for these learners creates a system that is inherently unequal by most empirical measures. This inequality has short term and long-term implications for the academic success of these children. This is contrary to the provision of educational policies [5]-[9] where every child who

reaches a minimum age is supposed to be in school or to have completed primary education. This call does not spare children with special education needs [10] [11] as it is their legal right. This study was set to address the influence of modern socializing agents on children with special education needs in Zambia.

The focus of this study was to investigate the influence of modern socializing agents on children with special education needs in Zambia because social skills help children with special needs learn how to interact with others positively and appropriately. They learn how to take turns, share, and respect the feelings and boundaries of others. These skills are essential for success in school and in everyday life as they are critical for a better understanding of diversity, increasing emotional development, improving communication skills, and mental and emotional health. Physical health benefits, enhanced learning opportunities, and increased self-esteem and confidence.

2. Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by social learning theory developed by Albert Bandura (1925-2021). He believed that children could learn new information and behaviours by watching or observing other people. Literature abounds detailing how children are surrounded by many influential models, such as parents within the family, characters on children's TV, friends within their peer group and teachers at school [12]-[15]. These models provide examples of behaviour to observe and imitate. Children therefore have to pay attention to some of these institutions and encode their behaviour especially when that behaviour was ideal. At a later time, they may copy the positive behaviour they have observed. The underlining factor then is that children must be watched and guided to choose between appropriate attitudes from models to lead exemplary lives.

Learners with special education needs, like any other children, are also subjected to this kind of learning through such models (agents of socialization). This makes the social learning theory appropriate for this study as it contextualizes the intersubjective connection of learners with special education needs among others in school and home environments. The theory requires parents and teachers to guide the children in the acquisition of observed behaviour from daily experiences. Therefore, this theory is appropriate in this study as children with special education needs to be guided in the process of socialization.

This theory holds significant importance in understanding the influence of modern socializing agents on children with special education needs (SEN) in Zambia. Bandura's theory emphasizes the role of observational learning, modeling, and reinforcement in shaping human behaviour, suggesting that individuals acquire new behaviours and skills through observation and imitation of others within their social environment. In the context of children with SEN in Zambia, Bandura's social learning theory provides valuable aspects into how these children learn and develop social skills, adaptive behaviours and self-regulation strategies through interactions with various socializing agents. Modern socializing agents,

play crucial roles in facilitating the socialization process and promoting the inclusion of children with SEN in mainstream society. Parents and caregivers serve as primary socializing agents for children with SEN in Zambia, providing essential support, guidance, and modelling of appropriate behaviours. The teachers and educational professionals play a pivotal role in implementing inclusive practices and creating supportive learning environments for children with SEN in Zambian schools.

3. Research Methods

This study used a descriptive research design. The study was conducted in selected special schools of Lusaka Province because it has the institutions on target and was also convenient for researchers due to geographical settings [16]. Three (3) special schools were sampled. The study targeted children with special education needs, teachers for children with special education needs, and school administrators in schools with special needs children. Eighty-six (86) respondents comprised twenty-one (21) teachers (4-from lower primary and 3-from upper primary selected judgmentally from each special school), twenty-one (21) parents (4-with children from lower primary and 3-with children from the upper primary from each special school), 5-leaders from religious organizations and 3-school administrators were selected purposively to participate in this study. 36 children with special education needs were identified through snowball sampling technique and participated in focus group discussions (6-per panel).

Semi-structured questionnaires were used in collecting data from the teachers, parents and leaders of religious organizations while an interview guide was used on school administrators and children with special education needs and was analysed using SPSS and themes. To protect confidentiality and privacy, pseudo names for school administrators (P1, P2 and P3) were used while from focus group discussion (Pfgd1, Pfgd2) quasi names were used. All questionnaires had (Q1, Q2) codes and the responses were presented in relation to questionnaire code. Consent with each participant was sought after explaining the purpose of the study which made the participants willing to participate while others declined and directed the researcher to key persons for the study. Participants were also informed of the need to record the interviews, and they willingly accepted as they were made aware of the reason for this.

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents and discusses the results of the study. These are segmented into key thematic areas arising from the study and following the earlier set research objectives.

4.1. Description

From **Table 1**, most of the respondents praised these institutions of socialization in aiding the development and education of the children with special education

needs. For instance, 36(78%) of respondents acknowledge the positive roles which the family is playing the socialization process of children with special education needs. However, a drawback was spotted where peers are concerned recording the lowest 15 (33%) in acknowledging their influence on the education of their fellows. Generally, 180 out of 276 recognized the positive influence of these agents of socialization in the development of special needs children making 65%, while 70 (25%) took a neutral stance and 26(9%) indicated negative on the influence of these institutions.

Table 1. Influence of agents of socialization on children with special education needs.

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Family's influence on the education of SEN	36	3	7	46
School's recreational facilities	28	16	2	46
School influence on SEN Children	43	3	0	46
Religious influence on SEN children	25	20	1	46
Media influence on SEN children	33	10	3	46
Peers' influence on SEN children	15	18	13	46
	180	70	26	276

Furthermore, it is evident that respondents generally recognize the positive impact of these traditional agents, which modern agents can be fused in, particularly in the family and schools, on the education and development of children with SEN. However, there are also areas of concern, notably the perceived influence of peers, which received lower recognition. The majority of respondents (78%) acknowledge the positive role of the family in the socialization process of children with SEN. This finding aligns with existing literature highlighting the importance of family support and involvement in promoting the well-being and academic success of children with disabilities or special needs [17] [18]. Conversely, the study by ref. [19] has also shown that strong family-school partnerships contribute to positive outcomes for children with SEN by facilitating good technological orientation, and communication, fostering collaboration, and providing emotional support.

Nevertheless, one key difference between traditional and new socializing agents is the level of accessibility and reach. While traditional agents such as family and school are typically confined to physical proximity and face-to-face interactions, social media platforms and digital technologies enable virtual connections and global communication. Similarly, ref. [20] [21] have shown that children with SEN can access information, resources, and support networks beyond their immediate physical environment, fostering a sense of belonging and reducing feelings of isolation. This expanded reach has the potential to enhance socialization outcomes for children with SEN, providing opportunities for social connection and community participation that may not be available through traditional agents alone.

While the influence of schools on SEN children is generally perceived positively, there are mixed opinions regarding the availability of recreational facilities. While 28 (61%) respondents recognize the positive impact of recreational facilities, 16 (35%) hold a neutral stance, and only 2 (4%) express a negative view. This discrepancy suggests a potential area for improvement in ensuring inclusive recreational opportunities within educational settings. In support of this finding, research indicates that access to recreational activities and extracurricular programs can enhance socialization, physical health, and overall well-being among children with SEN [15] [22].

However, participants raised concerns that the use of new socializing agents also presents unique challenges and risks for children with SEN. Similar studies [20] [23]-[25] indicate that social media platforms and digital technologies can expose children to inappropriate content, cyberbullying, and privacy concerns. Children with SEN may be particularly vulnerable to online risks due to the factors such as limited digital literacy skills and difficulty discerning credible sources of information. For this reason, it is essential for parents, educators, and caregivers to provide guidance, supervision, and support for safe and responsible digital citizenship.

As shown in the presentation of data, the influence of religious institutions and media on children with SEN received varying perceptions from respondents. For example, while a majority acknowledge the positive influence of religious institutions (54%) and media (72%), a significant proportion also express neutral or mixed views. Further exploration into the specific ways in which religious and media influences manifest in the lives of children with SEN would provide valuable insights into their socialization experiences.

One notable finding is the relatively low recognition of peers' influence on the education of children with SEN, with only 15 (33%) respondents acknowledging their impact. This contrasts with the substantial body of research [26]-[28] emphasizing the importance of peer relationships and social interactions in the socialization and inclusion of children with SEN. Peer support, acceptance, and positive social interactions have been shown to enhance self-esteem, social skills, and academic engagement among children with disabilities.

As presented, the majority of the respondents (93%) acknowledge the positive influence of schools on the education and development of children with SEN, with none expressing a negative view. This finding is consistent with research by ref. [17] emphasizing the pivotal role of inclusive education practices in promoting the academic achievement and social integration of children with disabilities. In addition, ref. [29]-[31] argue that inclusive educational environments provide appropriate support, accommodations, and access to resources to facilitate the participation and engagement of children with SEN in learning activities and social interactions. While traditional socializing agents such as family and school offer structured and supervised environments for socialization, new social media platforms and digital technologies provide greater autonomy and independence for

children with SEN. Children can navigate online spaces, interact with peers, and explore their interests at their own pace and in a format that suits their individual needs [32]-[34]. This autonomy can empower children with SEN to develop self-advocacy skills, assert their preferences, and build confidence in their abilities to navigate social interactions and relationships. Comparatively, the findings from the questionnaire responses align with existing literature on the influence of socializing agents on children with special educational needs, both globally and within Zambia. Studies conducted in other contexts have similarly highlighted the positive contributions of family support, inclusive education practices, and supportive peer relationships to the socialization and academic success of children with SEN [35]-[37]. However, variations may exist depending on cultural norms, educational policies, and socio-economic factors, underscoring the importance of context-specific research and interventions tailored to the needs of children with SEN in Zambia.

While the influence of religious institutions on children with SEN received mixed perceptions, with 54% acknowledging a positive impact, it is more important to dig deeper into the specific ways in which religious communities support or hinder the socialization of children with special needs. Research suggests that religious communities can provide valuable social support networks, promote values of compassion and inclusivity, and offer opportunities for spiritual growth and emotional well-being [38]. However, challenges may arise concerning accessibility, acceptance, and accommodation of individuals with disabilities within religious settings. Given this, addressing barriers to inclusion and fostering greater awareness and sensitivity among religious leaders and congregants could enhance the socialization experiences of children with SEN within religious communities.

Notably, the influence of media on children with SEN is another area of interest, with 72% of the respondents acknowledging its positive impact. However, it's essential to critically examine the content and representations of disability in media sources and their potential effects on children's perceptions and self-concepts. In line with this finding, [38] shows that while media can provide valuable educational resources, positive role models, and opportunities for social connection, it can also perpetuate stereotypes, stigmatization, and unrealistic standards of ability. Promoting media literacy skills, advocating for inclusive media representations, and engaging media producers in responsible portrayal of disability can mitigate potential harms and harness the positive potential of media as a socializing agent for children with SEN.

4.2. Influence of Modern Socializing Agents on the Education of Children with Special Education Needs

The study established that children were exposed to different things in the surrounding environment during play and observation. This helped them to select model behaviour by reinforcing the positive behaviour observed. Consolidated

views of parents Q_{1,2,5,6,10,12}, indicates that:

Children with mental retardation learn and copy certain behaviours from family members and neighbours... parents have a role to correct especially wrong behaviours to accept family standards.

One significant finding highlighted in the consolidated views of parents is the role of family members and neighbours as influential socializing agents for children with SEN. The parents noted that children with mental retardation, a term used in some contexts to describe intellectual disabilities, learn and emulate behaviours exhibited by family members and neighbours. This indicates the importance of the family unit and immediate social environment in shaping the socialization experiences of children with SEN. A study by ref. [39]-[41] agree that family members serve as primary role models and sources of social learning, providing children with SEN with opportunities to observe and engage in social interactions within familiar contexts.

The findings from the study indicate that children with special education needs (SEN) are influenced by various socializing agents in their environment, particularly through observation and play. Children with SEN are exposed to different stimuli in their surroundings, which they observe and interact with during play. Through this process, they can select and model behaviours that they perceive as positive or desirable. This aligns with the principles of social learning theory proposed by ref. [42] which suggests that individuals learn by observing and imitating others' behaviours, particularly those that are reinforced or rewarded. This shows that the pride of the parent can be seen in the behavioural outcomes of their children and SEN children are not spared from this measure. Parental intimacy continues in children with special needs by nurturing them to attain certain traits found in other children.

The study observed that long ago, socialization was more biased towards community culture. Parents and siblings played a significant role in guiding children especially those with disabilities on how to dress and conduct oneself according to one's gender. Parents Q_{3, 4, 7, 9, 11, 14}, said,

Girl child chooses what to wear and compares her dress code with her sisters in the house, but I check if she is rightly dressed...my children with disabilities and those without disabilities dress in what I see as fit for them.

The findings from the study suggest that traditional socialization practices, particularly regarding gender roles and cultural norms, were prevalent in the past, with parents and siblings playing a significant role in guiding children's behaviour, including those with disabilities. The observation that parents influence their children's clothing choices based on gender norms and cultural expectations reflects the perpetuation of traditional gender roles within family settings. Parents' statements highlight the differential treatment between girls and boys regarding clothing choices, with girls often being compared to their sisters and subjected to stricter dress codes, while boys may face less scrutiny. Literature also agrees with

this study's findings on the need for parents to remain consistent in guiding their children on moral codes [43] [44].

In addition, some recent scholars have examined the impact of traditional gender roles and cultural expectations on children's socialization experiences, particularly within the family context. For instance, scholars such as [45] have explored how parental attitudes and behaviours regarding gender socialization contribute to the formation of gender identities and stereotypes in children. Their research underscores the influence of parental guidance and modelling on children's adherence to traditional gender norms and the perpetuation of gender inequalities within family dynamics.

Additionally, the observation that parents determine their children's clothing choices based on their perceived appropriateness reflects the exercise of parental authority and control over children's self-expression and autonomy. This finding resonates with the research of scholars such as [46], who have examined the role of parental control and autonomy support in shaping children's psychosocial development. Their work highlights the importance of balancing parental guidance with opportunities for children to assert their autonomy and self-expression, particularly in domains such as clothing choices.

Furthermore, the differential treatment of children with and without disabilities in terms of clothing choices underscores the intersectionality of disability and gender, wherein individuals with disabilities may face additional barriers to self-expression and autonomy. Even some recent scholars such as ref. [47] have explored the intersectionality of disability and gender, emphasizing the unique challenges faced by individuals with disabilities in navigating social expectations and norms. Interestingly, their research highlights the importance of promoting inclusive and equitable practices that recognize and respect the agency and identity of individuals with disabilities, including in matters of self-presentation and clothing choices.

Findings reviewed that the school plays a very important role in the socialization process for learners with disabilities. School administrators P_{1,2,3,4} said,

Pupils spend 5 to about 8 hours of their time in the inclusive environment which makes them learn more from their friends with and without disabilities and their teachers during the social process than in the home environment.

The findings suggest that schools play a crucial role in the socialization process of learners with disabilities, providing an inclusive environment where they have the opportunity to interact with peers, both with and without disabilities, as well as with teachers. The statement made by school administrators highlights the significant amount of time that learners spend within the school environment, suggesting that it serves as a primary context for socialization, even more so than the home environment. In support of this, other researchers like [48] have indeed emphasized the importance of inclusive educational environments in facilitating

socialization and promoting positive outcomes for learners with disabilities. For instance, they have conducted extensive research on inclusive education, emphasizing its benefits for learners with disabilities in terms of academic achievement, social integration, and well-being. They argue that inclusive schools provide opportunities for positive peer interactions, fostering a sense of belonging and acceptance among learners with disabilities.

Most of the social rules on how to behave with others are learned at school from teachers and their fellow friends. Ref. [4] study agrees that most adolescents including those with special needs spend most of the day in schools. Since schools carries the aspirations of the community they are located, children become beneficially and products of services. Schools are responsible for socializing groups of children with different abilities and driving specific skills and values to children. For this reason, children will not only get skills; they will also learn how to live in the community according to the community values.

In a similar study, [49] highlight the role of teachers in promoting inclusive practices and facilitating the socialization of learners with disabilities within the school context. Their research emphasizes the importance of teacher attitudes, knowledge, and instructional strategies in creating supportive learning environments where all learners can thrive. By fostering positive relationships, providing individualized support, and promoting collaborative learning experiences, teachers contribute to the social and academic development of learners with disabilities.

Moreover, traditional socializing agents such as family and school have long been recognized for their influential role in shaping the socialization experiences of children with special education needs (SEN). Family members serve as primary agents of socialization, providing emotional support, socialization, and role modeling [50]-[52]. Similarly, ref. [1] [50] and [53] [54] show that schools offer formal education and socialization experiences, exposing children to societal norms, values, and perspectives. In contrast, new social media platforms and digital technologies provide additional avenues for communication, interaction, and learning, expanding the socialization opportunities available to children with SEN.

The statement made by school administrators indicated the unique opportunities for social learning and skill development that occur within the school environment. Similarly, to the current study, ref. [55] [56] have explored the role of peer interactions and peer-mediated interventions in promoting social skills and social integration among learners with disabilities and of course, this goes in line with the statement raised. Their research highlights the benefits of peer support and collaboration in enhancing socialization outcomes and reducing social barriers within inclusive classrooms for every learner in institutions of learning today.

Peer groups also influence the socialization of fellows especially where special needs children are concerned. A number of children with or without disabilities uses more mass media in their everyday lives. They enjoyed indoor activities compared to outdoor ones. Common views from the children Pfgd_{1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6} indicate,

we enjoy using technology such as computers, phones, all time...when I

reach home from school, I like playing FIFA games on my laptop and sometimes watch wrestling on TV if no one is watching.

Television movies, electronic play games, and others have negative effects on the development of these children. If left unchecked, children may end up imitating such behaviours and expose them to their peers. Exposing children to social media channels which promote immorality may end up spoiling them.

Ref. [57] in their findings also highlighted the pervasive influence of peer groups and mass media on the socialization experiences of children, including those with disabilities concerning media aspects. For example, scholars such as [58] have conducted extensive research on children's media use and its impact on their socialization and development. Their work emphasizes the importance of understanding how children engage with media content and the potential effects of media exposure on their attitudes, behaviours, and perceptions of the world.

In support of the findings, [59] revealed that even Gmail/Email and video games offer additional avenues for communication, interaction, and skill-building for children with SEN. Email can be used for academic purposes and social communication, while video games can provide immersive and interactive experiences that promote teamwork, problem-solving, and social interaction. However, concerns have been raised about the potential for excessive screen time, addiction, and exposure to violent or inappropriate content in video games. It is very essential that parents and educators monitor children's online activities and promote the balanced use of digital media to mitigate potential harms.

In addition, other scholars such as [60] have explored the role of peer relationships and social networks in shaping the experiences of children with disabilities. Their research highlights the importance of peer support and social interactions in promoting social inclusion, self-esteem, and well-being among children with disabilities. However, they also note the potential challenges and barriers that children with disabilities may face in establishing and maintaining social connections within peer groups.

Additionally, the preference for indoor activities and technology use among children aligns with broader trends in modern society, where digital technologies play an increasingly prominent role in everyday life. Similarly, ref. [57] [61] [62] have documented the prevalence of media use among children and adolescents, emphasizing the need for critical media literacy skills and responsible media consumption practices. With that in place, it is essential to consider the potential risks and benefits associated with excessive screen time and media exposure.

It was established that religious organizations play a significant role in promoting co-existence and imparting skills to youths. Parents Q_{13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21}, gave out the following views,

Our church, (United Church of Zambia) have girls and boys brigade, others have youth departments like SDA, Catholic which help in promoting, training and maintaining Christian beliefs and behaviour in children's spiritual,

physical, intellectual and social programs through weekly activities that involve camps, activity days and mission trips.

This is in line with ref. [63] who argued that religious socialization is an interactive process within which individual development skills are realized. Most religious organisations in Zambia provide primary, secondary and tertiary education. In some instances, institutions in charge of children with special education needs have been established and funded by these institutions.

Findings brought to the fore various programmes and activities organized by these religious institutions, such as girls and boys brigades, youth departments, camps, activity days, and mission trips, which aim to foster Christian beliefs and behaviours while addressing youths' spiritual, physical, intellectual, and social needs. Despite the parents' highlighted programmes, modern socializing agents such as Instagram, the platform provides children with SEN a visual medium to express themselves, share their experiences, and connect with peers and communities. Similar studies have shown that social media can facilitate social support and reduce feelings of isolation among children with SEN [20]. For instance, a study by ref. [64] found that Instagram can be a valuable tool for promoting self-confidence and self-expression among individuals with disabilities. However, the research also highlights concerns about the potential for exposure to harmful content and cyberbullying on Instagram [23]. Children with SEN may be particularly vulnerable to online risks due to factors such as limited digital literacy skills and difficulty discerning credible sources of information.

Similarly, [65] shows that LinkedIn offers opportunities for children with SEN to develop professional skills, build networks, and explore career pathways. The study suggests that LinkedIn can serve as a valuable resource for individuals with disabilities seeking employment opportunities and professional development. This is similar to the contributions of the participants in the current study on programmes that help children to navigate. However, there is limited research specifically focusing on the experiences of children with SEN on LinkedIn, and further investigation is needed to understand how the platform can best support their social and vocational goals.

In the aftermath of this study, the emphasis on promoting Christian beliefs and behaviours through weekly activities, camps, and mission trips reflects broader trends in religious education and youth ministry. In agreement with the findings, scholars such as [66] have studied the effectiveness of youth ministry programmes in fostering spiritual development and moral formation among adolescents. Their research highlights the importance of holistic approaches to youth ministry that integrate spiritual, social, and experiential learning opportunities. It can be of greater use if the institutions contribute to the holistic development of youths and promote positive values and behaviours regardless of their disabilities in the various communities of Zambia.

Pertaining to modern socializing agents, internet websites encompass a wide range of online resources and platforms that can support the socialization and

learning needs of children with SEN in various communities. For instance, ref. [67] supports the findings by indicating that educational websites provide interactive learning activities and tutorials that cater to diverse learning styles and abilities. Additionally, the ref. [6] agrees that therapists have enjoyed the use of the internet as they learn more methods on how best they can navigate in caring for the learners with SEN in the modern era in Zambia. While internet websites offer valuable educational resources, they also present risks such as exposure to inappropriate content and online predators. Regardless of that, parents, teachers, and caregivers must provide guidance and supervision to ensure safe and responsible internet use for children with SEN.

5. Conclusion

This study was set to examine the influence of modern socializing agents on children with special education needs in Zambia. This included the traditional agents and modern ones. A combination of data from both questionnaires and recorded information from interviews indicates a significant influence which agents of socialization play in the education of special needs children. For the modern agents, through an exploration of various social media platforms such as Instagram, LinkedIn, internet websites, Gmail/Email, and video games, and in comparison, with traditional socializing agents like family, school, and peers, several key findings have emerged. Traditionally, families where a child's parents and siblings are found help the child develop basic social norms. The parents also have an indirect influence in deciding the religious organization of such children as religious organizations also devote their resources to the provision of education and other key social services for the wellbeing of special education needs children. In light of these findings, it is evident that a balanced approach to socialization is essential for children with SEN in today's digital age. By harnessing the benefits of both traditional and new socializing agents, parents, teachers, and policymakers can support the social development and well-being of children with SEN effectively. Moreover, promoting digital literacy education, fostering open communication about online experiences and challenges, and implementing strategies to mitigate online risks are crucial steps in ensuring the safe and positive use of social media and digital technologies by children with SEN. Therefore, all agents of socialization must restructure and realize their roles in helping special children achieve their potential because modern and traditional socializing agents are all essential.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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