

Pedagogical Approach of Special Schools: Case of the Special School of the Ten Houses of Brazzaville, Republic of Congo

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ABSTRACT: Special education is a set of challenges to be met. These challenges are characterized by the situations of difficulty experienced by children with disabilities during their development and their learning, because some are weakened by situations of abandonment, disadvantaged; some are carriers of deficiencies, others still gifted ; however, have difficulty learning. It is in this sense that this research proposes to study: the type of student categories that attend this structure, the type of pedagogy that is applied, the type of teachers in charge of animating this structure. It is concerned about the pedagogical approach of the schools of Brazzaville through the questioning below: What are the teaching methods used in the special schools according to the deficiencies of the children who are recruited there? The results revealed that the education of these categories of children is done according to specific methods among which the following types of education can be mentioned: type 1 concerning mild mental retardation; type 2 addressing moderate mental deficiencies; type 3 for children with affective instability, type 4 welcoming children with prenatal or acquired physical disabilities and the last type of teaching concerning children suffering from difficulties in basic learning: dyslexia; dysorthography; dysphasia dyscalculia. Thus, by referring to the results of our investigations, the hypotheses have been validated.

KEYWORDS: Pedagogical approach, special school, maladjustment, school maladjustment

INTRODUCTION

Over the past twenty years, there has been a general trend in the social sector to encourage the integration and participation of vulnerable children in order to combat exclusion. Integration and participation are essential to human dignity and the enjoyment of the exercise of human rights.

The European community has more than 30 million people with physical, sensory and mental impairments. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that nearly seven million people in France are affected by a disability. In Africa, although there are no exact statistics on people with disabilities, their number can be estimated at nearly eighty million. In Congo, three hundred thousand (300,000) disabled people were counted in 1996. Nowadays, the available statistics at the Ministry of Social Affairs show that the number of disabled people represents one third (1/3) of the Congolese population, i.e. approximately one million (1,000,000).

In this same perspective, several laws and circulars on school integration classes refer to the schooling of disabled children in primary school. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an intergovernmental commitment. It consists of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). All Member States have made a commitment to materialize this broad program which addresses the common concerns of the entire planet and promotes the public good.

The Congolese education system , like its economic and social system, evolves within a global framework, circumscribed by EFA, the MDGs and more recently by the SDGs of the 2030 Development Agenda adopted by the Member States of the United Nations in September 2015 Goal 4 quality education is supposed to relate to disability but target 4.5 is of particular interest to persons with disabilities “By 2030, eliminate gender inequalities in education and achieve gender equality access of vulnerable people, including people with disabilities, indigenous people and children in vulnerable situations, to all levels of education and vocational training”. Rejected, excluded or assisted yesterday, people with disabilities are today holders of civil rights.

The Congo, which has not remained on the sidelines of universal concerns, recognizes that each Congolese child has the right to education and instruction in accordance with School Law No. 25/95 of November 17, 1995 reorganizing the education system in Republic of Congo This law stipulates in its article 3, “Specialized schools must be created for certain categories of handicapped persons who require specific teaching and treatment with a view to caring for handicapped or maladjusted children”. This is the case of the “network of special schools” whose main structure is the “school of ten houses” in Brazzaville which is the subject of our research focused on the pedagogical approach of special schools.

Pedagogical Approach of Special Schools: Case of the Special School of the Ten Houses of Brazzaville, Republic of Congo

Mental deficiency concerns subjects with an intellectual deficit, adaptation and learning difficulties. Affective disorders for subjects characterized by an emotional deficiency, especially of a family nature, and whose lack of an appropriate education places the child in danger, such as abandoned children, etc.

To give handicapped children the maximum chance of success in the normal or specialized cycle, National Education must take their handicap into account. We all know that the deficiency expresses a lack, a deprivation, an absence or even a difficulty of the organ concerned. At school we deal with mental sensory deficiencies and affective deficiencies.

This reflection proposes to identify the types of children who attend this structure and to understand the teaching methods applied to these categories of children. In front of the situation of the children who cannot follow the lesson of the ordinary school, it is set up the System of specialized education. In the case of Congo, these specialized structures have emerged through the promotion of private schools. Among them, we were interested in the case of the “network of special schools”.

With the aim of welcoming children in difficulty with a view to providing them with an appropriate education, special schools are presented as structures of curative pedagogy.

The principle of the school in the context of special education is that children are recruited according to their handicap. Is this general description of the organization of special education respected by the « network of special » schools in Brazzaville?

In other words, what are the pedagogical assets of the special school that would promote the success of the pupils given that these children have not been able to adapt to ordinary schools?

This is how this research proposes to study the type of category of students who attend this structure, the type of pedagogy that is applied there, the type of teachers in charge of animating this structure. It is therefore concerned about the pedagogical approach of special schools in Brazzaville through the questions below:

- What are the teaching methods used in the “special schools” according to the deficiencies of the children who are recruited there?

- How are the teaching methods of special schools different from those of regular schools?

To this question we formulated the following hypothesis:

At the special school, the orientation of the pupils in the classes is done according to their handicap.

Goals

The present study aims to identify the types of children who attend the special school and to analyze the pedagogical practice adopted by the teachers in the special school.

1- Methodology

The work carried out enabled us to collect the data relating to the study carried out. Thus we will talk about the field of investigation, the target population, the representative sample, the data collection instruments.

1.1. Field of investigation

Our study is centered on the special school of Brazzaville and its extensions located within the enclosure of certain Catholic churches.

The network of special schools is a structure for specialized education and re-education of maladjusted children and adults in the context of literacy.

This network includes:

The special school “of the ten houses” which is the seat, in the district 4 Mougali, the Vincent box located in Mikalou II, the Joseph box in the district 6 Talangai

The special school and its annexes are part of the type II approved Catholic schools.

1.2. Population

The population concerned by our study is made up of teaching staff and students in the network of special schools. It includes 66 teachers including 30 men and 36 women supervising 2148 students including 1234 girls and 914 boys.

Students are divided into three (3) sections.

This population is represented in the table below.

Table n°1: Breakdown of the study population

Population Schools	Youth Section “J”		Technical section “T”		Practical section “SP”		Adult Section “A”		Total “student”	Total teachers	
	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F		T	F
Workforce											
MS school	252	103	722	435	157	72	224	175	1355	36	19
Wine box.	105	63	239	157	72	26			416	19	11

Pedagogical Approach of Special Schools: Case of the Special School of the Ten Houses of Brazzaville, Republic of Congo

Box Jose	153	77	143	91	81	35			377	11	6
Total	510	243	1104	683	310	133	224	175F	2148	66	36

Source: compiled by the author

As can be seen, the majority of the workforce is concentrated in the special school, which will serve as the main site from which we will draw our sample.

1.3. Sample

Given the very large population of the field of action, the special school of ten houses occupies a place of choice for the extraction of our sample. Clearly, it offers a framework that is very representative of the population.

This is how we retained the 36 teachers of the special school and with regard to the pupils we took as a criterion: to retain at least one class per section.

The count gives us a total of 177 students This brings the total study sample to 36 teachers and 177 students, i.e. 213 people all concentrated at the special school located at the “ten houses”

1.4. Data collection instruments

With respect to the objectives of the research, its interest and the size of the population, we have retained the documentary analysis, the observation, the interview and the questionnaire as data collection instruments.

1.5. Documentary analysis

Documentary analysis is part of documentary work, an educational tool, it alternates technical input and practical exercises with corrections and commentary.

The purpose of documentary analysis is to find the document during a documentary search, among the relevant answers to a question. For us, this research tool allowed us to learn about the mandatory educational documents that a teacher must have. To monitor the performance of the students, we consulted their homework notebooks, all these documents gave us information on the activities carried out at school level.

In addition, this analysis was completed by consulting the back-to-school report and that at the end of the 1st term to examine the results of the students in the term assessments.

1.6.- Observation

Observation as a research technique through the gaze of the investigator makes it possible to provide answers to the questions raised by a complex reality by establishing cause and effect relationships.

As far as we are concerned, observation allowed us to follow class practice. We followed 2 lessons per teacher, i.e. 72 lessons. This follow-up of the lessons took place as follows:

- adult section “A”: 18 lessons;
- young section “J”: 24 lessons;
- technical section “T”: 18 lessons;
- practical section “SP” 12 lessons.

Still in pedagogical practice, we also checked the compulsory pedagogical documents that a teacher must have.

As for the students, we checked their homework notebooks to get an idea of their performance. In order to properly organize this observation and collect reliable information, an observation grid has been developed for this purpose. It focused on areas of interest (Formulation of objectives, Lesson preparation, Lesson execution, Lesson evaluation).

1.7. The Interview

The interview is a conversation, a dialogue involving two people or several interlocutors in direct contact.

The interview, says ARFOUILLOUX (1973, p.23) “aims to collect information on current problems and to appreciate the relationship with the personal history of the individual”.

The interview is also a privileged instrument of access to information in psychology.

We proceeded by a semi-structured interview. To carry out this activity we used an interview grid, Thanks to this technique the teachers expressed themselves freely

Finally, the interview allowed us to collect information from the teachers on the following areas of interest:

- The motivation of teachers;
- Teaching methods;
- Impressions of student work;
- Professional activities carried out at school;
- The problems posed by the students.

Pedagogical Approach of Special Schools: Case of the Special School of the Ten Houses of Brazzaville, Republic of Congo

1.8. The question sheet

According to the universal dictionary, the questionnaire is a series of questions serving as the basis for a survey, a test. The questionnaire is also a list of written questions addressed to users

A series of questions asked to the students of the sections (adult, technical and young) provided us with information related to their studies and their expectations or their schooling

Closed and open questions were proposed to them on the following basis:

- 1- The identity of the student
- 2- School performance
- 3- Student-student relationships.
- 4- Professional apprenticeship

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

2.1. Results from the Literature Review

The documentary analysis enabled us to grasp the relationship between the objectives assigned by the special school and the means implemented to achieve the expected results. It helped us to have information on human, material and financial resources, the general discipline within the school, the difficulties, even the wishes and suggestions.

This allowed us to understand the functioning of the school and to assess the services accordingly.

The work looks like this:

The special school of “ten houses” welcomes a diversity of children. There are mentally disabled, physically disabled, epileptics, Mongolians, young people excluded from formal school, adolescents who have never been to school and adults in the context of literacy.

As far as teachers are concerned, there are 36 of them working as teachers at the special school. We have divided them into three categories below:

Table 2: teacher qualifications

Qualification	Workforce	Percentage
Full teachers	11	30.55%
Qualified teachers	00	00%
Teachers trained on the job	25	69.44%
Total	36	100%

Source: Elaborated by the author

By referring to the objectives that the special school sets itself and to the questions on the qualification of the teachers, we retain that the teaching staff does not have the training required to teach children with intellectual disabilities.

Then there is an insufficient number of these staff insofar as certain teachers from the annexes come to teach other disciplines due to a lack of permanent teachers.

They are only 36 for a staff of 1355 students which brings the teacher-student ratio to 37

Regarding the administrative staff, it is made up of 21 people. These agents of the administration, to are taken as active teachers and dispense the courses in the classes. These are the “trained on the job.

The exploitation of the individual files of the children shows that the file of each pupil is composed of four (04) sheets (check-up, identity of the child, general observation of the child, psychomotor profile, level of school adaptation).A percentage of success will be calculated for this purpose:

$$\frac{\text{number of yes} \times 100}{\text{yes} + \text{no}}$$

The distribution of pupils by section depends on the statement of the individual sheets which reveals that the children are oriented in the different sections according to their handicap. We find there: young people in catch-up in the Young “J” section. Older pupils whose age varies between 14 and 26 years or even more who are oriented in the technical section (T) for instruction but also for learning trades such as: carpentry for boys, sewing for girls and gardening for all.

The practical section "SP" is reserved for students with mental disabilities. The most salient cases detected are the following:

- mental retardation;
- mental disorders;

Pedagogical Approach of Special Schools: Case of the Special School of the Ten Houses of Brazzaville, Republic of Congo

- epilepsy;
- mongolism.

But the exact figures expressed as a percentage have eluded us. The administration was unable to provide us with all this reliable information.

Finally there is a last section, that of adults who come to the special school within the framework of literacy.

In view of the above, we note that the orientation of pupils at the special school takes into account the handicap of each pupil, There is follow-up of students on the basis of school records.

The objectives and the type of students allow us to place the establishment in the category of curative pedagogy structures.

2.2. Results from observation

Having observed the teachers in their educational action, we found the following to represent in the form of a table

We have checked the compulsory educational documents for teachers. These are the documents to be kept, the documents to be displayed and the students' homework books. This allowed us to verify if the teachers apply themselves in the transmission of knowledge and also to appreciate their services and their performances.

Table n°3 : Control of educational documents

Items	Yes	More or less	Nope
• Do the required documents exist?			
• The call register	+		
• The diary notebook		+	
• The notebook or preparation files		+	
• The advice book			+
• The educational activity book	+		
• The school's internal regulations	+		
• Monthly distributions	+		
• The timetables	+		
• The honor roll			
• The table of disabled			+
• The distribution of students by age			+
• The distribution of students by year of schooling			+

Source: compiled by the author

From this table we retain:

- 100% of teachers have the call register and the educational activity book;
- 10 teachers or 27.77% have their journal and preparation notebooks;
- No teacher or 0% has his advice book.

Report:

This roll call, which exists in all classes, is misused and the percentage of student attendance is never calculated. The advice book is downright neglected for lack of a pedagogical supervisor.

. A total of 72 lessons were attended, i.e. two lessons per teacher. The following results were obtained:

Table n°4 : Appreciation of the lessons

good lessons	12
Pretty good lessons	17
Passable lessons	20
missed lessons	23
Total	72

Source: compiled by the author

From this table we retain that many lessons are missed. We saw a lot of improvisation and abstraction in the lessons.

Performing the lesson:

Three questions are asked about this.

Pedagogical Approach of Special Schools: Case of the Special School of the Ten Houses of Brazzaville, Republic of Congo

Table n°5 : Realization of the lesson

Coded	Observation Questions	Answers				
		Yes	More or less	Nope	T	Percentage
1	Was the table used?	100%	41.66%	0%	36	100%
2	Has the material been prepared and used wisely?	63.88%	55.55%	0%	36	100%
3	Did the material involve the pupils in the elaboration of the summary?	13.77%	55.88%	13.88%	36	100%

Source: compiled by the author

From this table we retain:

- All the teachers used the table i.e. A percentage of 100%
 - The abstraction in the teaching of certain lessons due to the lack of didactic material. 36.11%.
 - the majority of teachers do not involve the students in the preparation of the summary, i.e. 72.22%
- Three questions allowed the evaluation of the lesson is also the subject of this focus.
The table below tells us the facts.

Table 6 : lesson evaluation

Coded	Observation Questions	Yes	More or less	Nope	T	Percentage
1	Did the teacher evaluate at the end of the lesson	11.66%	0	83.33%	36	100%
2	Is the evaluation in line with the fixed objectives?	11.66%	0	83.33%	36	100%
3	Is the evaluation within reach on the preparation sheet?	11.66%	0	83.33%	36	100%

From this table we retain:

- In general, teachers do not evaluate at the end of lessons, ie 83.33%;
- Only the calculation lesson could be partially evaluated.

Ultimately, the teachers of the special school still have difficulties in defining educational objectives, preparing lessons and they also do not master the methodological approaches to lessons. This means that on the methodological and pedagogical level great efforts must be made.

2.3. Results from the interview

In order to enrich our information, we used the interview.

To this end, we interviewed thirty-six (36) teachers from the special school on the following areas of interest:-on the assumption of responsibility for the school by the state: 41.66% of teachers recognize the free water and electricity at school This means that the State intervenes all the same aid is insufficient.

Table n°7 : Support for the school by the State

electricity Water	Nothing	Posting of civil servants	Ground	Donations	Total
15	5	10	1	5	36

In view of these results, there is reason to say that the State contributes somehow to the operation of the Special School. It was asked whether students are interested in school activities. Teachers have mixed opinions: some confirm it, while others refute it. The table below gives us the proportions.

Table 8 : Pupils' participation in school activities

Answers	Workforce	Percentage
Are interested in school activities	12	33.33%
Not interested in school activities	24	66.66%
Total	36	100%

Pedagogical Approach of Special Schools: Case of the Special School of the Ten Houses of Brazzaville, Republic of Congo

According to teachers, the majority of students are not interested in school activities. The next question is to know if the pupils participate massively in the proposed activities. The majority of teachers responded positively, as shown in the table below. Feedback on student work

Table n°9 : Teachers' impressions of pupils' work

Coded	Questions	Answers			
		Yes	More or less	Nope	T
1	What are your impressions of the students' work? good?	34	02	00	36
2	Is student attendance regular?	34	00	00	36
3	Do they show a spirit of competition?	14	16	06	36
4	Do they benefit from the teachings they follow?	20	14	02	36

The first question focused on teachers' impressions of student work. 94% of teachers have good impressions against 5.55% of teachers who have bad ones.

- To the following question which concerned the regularity of the pupils within the establishment, 100% of teachers answered positively;
- For the 3rd question, 94% of teachers underline that the pupils are interested in sports, gardening, sewing and carpentry;
- To the last question on this center of interest, about the benefit that children derive from the lessons they follow in the special school, the majority of teachers reacted strongly and positively, i.e. 55%

Depending on the questions we selected:

The question on the qualification of teachers 75% of teachers feel qualified given their seniority in the structure and their experience. 25% feel unqualified as they are just starting out at this school

Table n°10 : Seniority and qualification of teachers

Seniority	31 years	30 years	25 years	23 years	19 years old	13 years	10 years	9 years	8 years	7 years	
Effective	2	3	6	4	3	2	6	3	1	6	
Total	2	3	6	4	3	2	6	3	1	6	36

Source: compiled by the author

The majority of teachers have ten (10 years) and more seniority in this establishment. That is to say that in relation to their experience they can do better.

Thus, with regard to the question relating to the problems posed by maladjusted children, we can retain the elements contained in the table below:

Table n°11 : Difficulties experienced with pupils

Nature	workforce	Percentage
No problem	01	2.77%
Low level	02	5.55%
Slowness in assimilation	07	19.44%
easy forgetting	05	13.88%
Pubertal crisis	8	22.22%
Inattention	02	5.55%
Escape	02	5.55%
Aggressiveness	02	5.55%
Overcrowded classes	02	5.55%
Difficult expression	04	11.11%
Orphan without support	01	2.77%
Total	36	100%

Pedagogical Approach of Special Schools: Case of the Special School of the Ten Houses of Brazzaville, Republic of Congo

It is noticed that children at the age of puberty pose more problems. To this are added the slowness of assimilation, easy forgetting and difficult expression. These treatises correspond well to the nature of the students in this sector.

The behavior of the pupils gives us the following indications:

Table No. 12 : Nature of student behavior

Nature	Workforce	Percentage
Calms	03	8.33%
unruly	06	16.66%
Turbulent	25	69.44%
Aggressive	02	5.55%
Total	36	100%

Considering the above, we can deduce that the students of the special school are rather turbulent, unruly and aggressive.

Regarding student attendance, it reveals that it is good 8.33% of teachers; quite good (16.66%). In general, the pupils are assiduous at school. About the handicap of the pupils, the surveys gave us the following information.

For 28 teachers or 77.77% the students are aware of their disability. For 8 teachers they are not aware of it at all.

In short, we retain that the pupils of the special school are tonic, hyperactive but assiduous at school. Those who are at the age of puberty pose more problems, but the majority are aware of their handicap.

2. 4- Results from the questionnaire

The questionnaire was addressed to the pupils of the special school "des dix maison". It focused on the identity of the pupil, the school performance, the choice of a profession, the socio-professional future and the pupil-student relations.

This questionnaire concerned 177 pupils who constitute part of our sample.

Table n°13 : Distribution of pupils by age and by class

Ages Divisions	6 years	7 years	8 years	9 years	10-15 years old	16-20 years old	21 and over	Total
"J"	1	2	6	8	39			59
"SP"			1	2	30			33
"T"						36	5	54
" HAS "						13	21	34
Total	1	2	7	10	82	49	26	177

We note the plethoric numbers in the "J" and "T" sections. They also communicated their average for the 1st quarter to us with the help of the master or the mistress.

Table n°14 : Averages for the 1st quarter

Effective Classes	Registered		present		Admitted		Percentage of successes	Stranded		Percentage
	T	F	T	F	T	F		T	F	
D1	56	19	50	19	19	08	38%	31	11	62%
T4	54	30	42	27	25	14	59.52%	15	12	35.71%
CL	33	15	25	12	12	04	48%	13	08	52%

Source: compiled by the author

But those who did not withdraw their ballot were unable to give us their average. There are 5 students in "J", 8 students in "T" and 6 students in "SP" making a total of 19 students. Section "A" does not have bulletins, so it is not concerned with the question. In summary we say that some students do not know until then what they would do after school

However, others wish to continue their studies in a training school, for example.

In view of the above, we believe that the pupils of the special school offer a spirit of community life. The self-esteem they offer to friends is sufficient proof of the degree of socialization.

Pedagogical Approach of Special Schools: Case of the Special School of the Ten Houses of Brazzaville, Republic of Congo

2.5. Discussion

Let's say that for P. Perrenoud (1997, p. 21) *"the differences are due in particular to the diversity of the public educated: each teacher evaluates according to the pupils he has or has had from those in parallel classes, the expectations of the parents, and school management."*

In short, our investigations reveal that the special school "des dix maison" in Brazzaville is a private specialized education structure which welcomes children with learning and adaptation difficulties. There are children weakened by situations of abandonment or violence, some from very disadvantaged socio-cultural backgrounds, others who have disabilities, others who are still gifted, however, have difficulty learning. Clearly, these are all children who lack the normal intelligence to follow lessons in a so-called ordinary school structure.

All of our respondents agree that the education of these categories of children is done according to specific methods, among which we can cite types of teaching such as:

type 1 concerning mild mental retardation, type 2 addressing moderate or severe mental deficiencies, type 3 comprising children with emotional instability, type 4 welcoming children with prenatal or acquired physical infirmities and last type of teaching concerning children suffering from difficulties in basic learning: dyslexia, dysorthography, dysphasia dyscalculia.

All these practices evoked during our investigation constitute a means to the success of the specialized educational action undertaken at the special school of the "ten houses", as estimated by P.Meirieu (2004, p.110) *"All student needs to be considered in his difference and grouped with others in order to be taken care of according to their specific common needs"*

Thus by referring to the results of our investigations (documentary analysis, observation, interview, questionnaire) and to the suggestions of the investigators, the analysis of M.Develay (1996, p.18) *"shows that the crisis refers to transformations that must be permanent because of the balance of power within the school system and the balance of power between the school system and its environment. development has been suitably recruited it must bring together pupils of school age with intellectual disabilities, likely to achieve elementary learning through appropriate pedagogy"*. Concerning the attendance of the children 100% of the teachers have the register of call but this register which exists in all the classes is badly used and the percentage of attendance pupils is never calculated. For Guy Villars (1972, p.137) *"Experience has shown us that the regularity or irregularity of a child's school attendance is, in an almost general way, an excellent indicator of the level social integration of children and parents"*. This may reveal the need to distinguish between the following aspects: i) regular attendance, ii) irregular attendance, iii) partially irregular attendance and to have an appreciation of the whole schooling of each subject. All these studies show us the psychosocial significance of school maladjustment encountered in children and only confirm our research.

Hints

Taking into account the teachers' suggestions that we make our own, it is desirable that the government through the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education responsible for literacy take charge of the network of special schools by training qualified teachers.

- Payment of teaching staff salaries with bonus;
- Provision of modern equipment and teaching materials;
- The assignment of pedagogical supervisors for a good follow-up of lessons in their educational action;
- the contribution of the national educational community for the proper functioning of special schools;
- The design of specific school programs, adapted to school misfits;
- Orientation of pupils to the special school in an official manner.

Such an organization would make it easier for the competent authorities to direct these pupils either to general education or to vocational establishments.

It would also make it possible to apply a relevant pedagogical framework instead of being satisfied with simple courses or episodic training.

CONCLUSION

Our research, which focused on the subject entitled "Pedagogical approach to special schools", consisted of studying the teaching methods applied in these schools according to the handicap of the children recruited there.

This work being an exploration situation was based on research questions that guided us in our investigations.

At the end of this work, the processing of the data collected allowed us to better identify and understand the pedagogical approach (the pedagogical act applied within the special school of Brazzaville). The results obtained indicate that the special school is making significant progress in terms of expressing its intentions to re-school young pupils and socio-professional training for adolescents.

Pedagogical Approach of Special Schools: Case of the Special School of the Ten Houses of Brazzaville, Republic of Congo

The result is a promising prognosis for the future of the students. This is explained by the fact that the planned return to school will have been prepared for and facilitated by educational work that favors the development, autonomy and social responsibilities of the handicapped or maladjusted child.

Certainly, it goes without saying to set objectives or goals in order to achieve the expected results. But this can only be achieved if and only if the necessary financial, material and above all human resources are available.

However, our study reveals that the special school does not have qualified human resources. Hence the many difficulties. These difficulties have a negative impact on the schooling of children with intellectual disabilities, and even their future. However, this study has attempted to shed light on the signs of sociability and appropriation of knowledge offered by children with intellectual disabilities despite their handicap.

In short, the special school must reorganize itself by correctly applying the standards of organization of education which ensure the proper functioning and effectiveness of educational policies. In addition, we encourage studies on this type of structure, to inform parents, students and the social and educational community to contribute to the development of these schools.

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