

Challenges of Continuing Professional Teacher Development in Inclusive Lesotho Schools

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ABSTRACT The purpose of the present paper is to explore the challenges of Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) in inclusive Lesotho schools. The study is based on the concept that many teachers in inclusive schools do not have sufficient knowledge and skills required for teaching in inclusive schools and that in the multitude of schools there is presumably the little understanding of disability, pedagogy and least desire to handle the additional challenges of teaching a diverse learner population. Challenges of CPTD were discovered within the Special Education Unit (SEU), the schools and within individual teachers. Some of the reasons stated are that they do not have time because of a heavy workload; they also feel that they are forced to implement inclusive education while on the other hand their views are not taken into consideration. The research was located within a qualitative paradigm, individual face-to-face interviews and focus group interviews were used to collect data from ten primary school teachers and one assistant inspector from the SEU. Themes and sub themes which form central focus of the study emerged during the analysis of data.

INTRODUCTION

After decades of effort to create inclusive education, the time for it to manifest at scale may finally be at hand (Sailor and McCart 2014). Thomas (2013: 473) states that “for inclusive education to be at the core of education-as it should be-it has to be a truly inclusive education, not one that is narrowly defined. It can be so, and there has certainly been a progressively broadening compass to the idea of inclusive education. The term ‘inclusive education’ now refers to the education of all children, not just those with disabilities”.

Inclusion of students requiring diverse support into regular schools has become one of the most significant issues facing the education community, both nationally and internationally. To address this issue there is widespread acceptance that teacher training institutions must ensure that teachers are skilled enough and trained to teach effectively in classrooms where there are a variety of learning needs (Sharma et al. 2008). Teachers are believed to be the most valuable human resources available to make inclusive practices successful. If they do not have trust or acceptance in inclusion, they can become a major barrier to inclusion (Miles 2005). Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) has to a great extent become the vehicle for bringing about the planned change in edu-

cation systems as witnessed in the worldwide movement towards inclusive education. Many of these CPTD programs intended to promote inclusive education have, however, proven both inadequate and inappropriate, resulting in negative feelings (Engelbrecht and Green 2007: 143). Some of these factors are believed to be located within the individual teachers themselves, their schools or even in the education policies. Research has indicated that inclusion is not a goal that can be reached, but a journey with a purpose. Gafoor and Muhammed (2009: 1) reiterate that inclusive education operates on the principle that almost all children begin in a general classroom. Moreover, the concept places emphasis on changing the system as a whole rather than the child. It needs a shift in our educational system, a shift in structure and practice to a more flexible, more collaborative setup to accommodate all children. Over and above, inclusive education calls for essential changes in the roles and responsibilities of teachers (Engelbrecht and Green 2007: 140). Though regular classroom teachers are willing to take responsibility of all children, including those with special needs, they will not be confident if they are not equipped with necessary skills. Inclusion was found to fail because, in part, teachers were unable to meet demands of modifying and delivering an appropriate curriculum to children with disabilities (Ysseldyke in Loreman et al. 2005:

6). In the journey of inclusion, teachers will build on their experience and increase their skills in reaching all children. They will, however, also have a right to expect proper professional development and support along the way, just as parents have the right to expect that their children are taught by teachers are trained to teach all children (Mittler 2000: 133).

Lesotho's Ministry of Education and Training began to address the issue of implementing inclusive education policy in the 1990's. As a matter of strategy, the Ministry of Education and Training through the Special Education Unit chose to focus on primary schools as its main target of training. Ten schools were selected to take part in the pilot program (Mittler 2000: 27). Expansion from the pilot schools has been very slow and it has been estimated that it will take another ten years before the program has reached all schools. Over 1000 primary schools have, however, received no training and are probably not implementing inclusive education at all. Because teacher training in inclusive education has not reached a critical mass of schools, there appears to be a growing resistance to inclusive education (Engelbrecht and Green 2007: 28). The majority of teachers in Maseru inclusive schools do not favour inclusive education (Lithebe 2007: 20). The claims/observations made above indicate that, lack of CPTD for inclusive education has developed negative attitudes towards teaching learners with special educational needs, among teachers and therefore threaten the survival of inclusive education in education district; this seems to be a general problem among teachers in other districts. To address the issue, this research sought answers to the following question: *What are the challenges of CPTD in inclusive Lesotho schools?*

Theoretical Framework

CPTD does not only benefit teachers by allowing them a chance to expand their skills and knowledge to become effective in their work, but also assists in the development of inclusive schools and communities. The authors find it appropriate to locate the study within the eco-systemic perspective, because it highlights the fact that levels of a system in the social context influence and limit one another continuously, so that the whole is more than the sum of its parts (Donald et al. 2007: 40). This implies that

when designing CPTD programs it is necessary to revisit these systems to find factors within them that can influence the effectiveness of CPTD. The systems that are relevant to study the present research include individual teachers, schools and the Ministry of Education and Training. The government of Lesotho through the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) is responsible for providing quality education to all its citizens and it is also responsible for providing quality teachers who will carry out this important task of educating the nation, in order to ensure that this happens, the Ministry has to play a pivotal role in assisting the teachers to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills. The schools as centres of teaching and learning also play a vital role in ensuring that the school environment is conducive for teaching and learning and that all the teachers have the necessary knowledge and skills to teach all learners effectively, as a result they have to play a leading role in CPTD. Teachers themselves need to continually improve their knowledge and skills to ensure that they are relevant to the new demands in education such as, the implementation of inclusive education. To make this possible they need to work hand in hand with the other levels mentioned above to ensure that CPTD takes place. The eco-systemic framework highlights the importance of balance between different parts of a system, it further demonstrates that when there is a major disturbance in one part of the system the balance of the system may be threatened therefore any challenges of CPTD in at any of these levels may affect the effectiveness CPTD in the other levels.

Literature Review

In fact, there has been a sharp division between special and mainstream teacher education programs. This division contributes to the barriers experienced in inclusive education. Because of this division the majority of teachers in the mainstream have not had a chance to work with learners with special education needs, because some have been sent to special or independent schools. In addition, because of this division, there is a long standing belief that teaching learners with special education needs requires special expertise. It is because of these circumstances that teachers fear that they may not have the specialised knowledge and skills

to work with students with special education needs. Teacher training would seemingly be a solution to this problem. Some authors like Mittler (2000) suggest that specialised skills for teaching learners with special education needs may not be crucial for effective inclusion. They further suggest that teachers already have the knowledge and skills to teach inclusively and those teachers who are effective overall with all their students are also more likely to be skilled in inclusive practices. This assertion might imply that teacher training for inclusion is not important, since teachers already possess skills necessary for inclusion. A study conducted by Grbich and Sykes (1992: 321) however, reveals that secondary teachers in Victoria, Australia, observed lacking in skills were required to modify curricula for children with diverse abilities and were reported to be in urgent need of training in this area. The same issues were raised by Lloyd (in Loreman et al. 2005: 6), who reported that teachers in New Zealand were unable to modify curricula to accommodate the perceived educational needs of children with disabilities, despite being aware of those needs. This shows that teachers are still unable to make the necessary modifications for accommodating special needs, despite being effective teachers. This takes us back to a point mentioned earlier on the previous page that inclusion was found to fail because, in part, teachers were unable to meet demands of modifying and delivering an appropriate curriculum to children with disabilities. Thus, teacher training, development and support are absolutely necessary for the successful implementation of inclusive education.

The level of success of inclusion can be connected to several factors, perhaps the most significant being teachers' preparation, attitudes and opportunity for collaboration. Engelbrecht and Green (2007: 148) assert that teacher education needs to address teachers' perspectives, values, motivations and views and their natural resistance to change. They feel that teachers have to be supported to make a shift from the medical pathological model of difference and disability to the social-contextual or social ecological model of understanding issues related to the accommodation of difference. This step was also supported by Loreman et al. (2005: 6), who state that positive attitudes towards children with diverse abilities are essential to the success of inclusive programs; these attitudes can, how-

ever, and need to be fostered through training and positive experiences with children with diverse abilities. Another important aspect that might be addressed through further training is teacher collaboration. Inclusive education requires classroom cultures and practices to change and may increase teachers' workloads. Teachers need to form partnerships with each other, with parents, learners, support personnel and other community members for both emotional and technical support. Learners' interests, needs and goals become the focus of collaborative decision making. To collaborate successfully, teachers, however, need to develop skills in problem solving, interpersonal communication, dealing with differences and managing themselves and their time. Teacher education has to accept the responsibility of promoting the development of these skills (Engelbrecht and Green 2007: 149). The main aim of teacher training is to empower teachers to be agents of change and to develop the teachers' commitment to inclusion and so Stanovich and Jordan (2002) recommend that for teachers to develop commitment to the inclusion of learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms they should be confronted with some of the history of the movement towards inclusive education by placing inclusion in the appropriate worldwide context. The importance of training teachers for inclusive classrooms cannot be denied. Many of the teacher development programs that were intended to promote inclusive education have, however, proved both inadequate and inappropriate, resulting in negative feelings towards the implementation of inclusive education (Engelbrecht and Green 2007: 143). The failure of the CPTD programs for inclusive education to empower teachers to become agents of change and to work effectively in inclusive classrooms in Lesotho have been made evident by the fact that to date only some teachers have received training. Secondly, there is uneven implementation of inclusive education policy even within schools that have been trained by the Ministry of Education. Moreover, in the many of other schools, there is apparently little understanding of disability, an inadequate amount of inclusive pedagogy, and little aspiration on the part of teachers to take on additional challenges of teaching a diverse learner population (Mariga and Pakacha 1993: 10). Martin (2014) and Sailor and McCart (2014) indicate that the reason in-

clusion has been such a hard sell, particularly for students with extensive support needs, is that general educators and sometimes parents have not seen the value of it, given the required departure from traditional teaching practices.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

When dealing with the concept of Continuing Professional Teacher Development, the teachers' perceptions about themselves, their trainers and the CPTD programs being offered on one hand and the trainers' perceptions about themselves, the teachers and the programs they offer to teachers on the other hand cannot be ignored, since they have a direct impact on what is taught and learnt. In other words they have a potential to determine whether CPTD succeeds or fails. A qualitative design is considered most appropriate for this study because it allows the researcher to understand the feelings, experiences, beliefs, ideas, perceptions and actions of teachers and teacher trainers regarding CPTD for inclusive education (McMillan and Schumacher 2001: 396). Nieuwenhuis (2009: 55) highlights this point further by stating that qualitative researchers believe that the world is made up of people with their own assumptions, intentions, attitudes, beliefs and values and that the way of knowing reality is by exploring the experiences of others regarding a specific phenomenon - an attempt to see how others have constructed reality about asking about it. Another important reason for preference of the qualitative research by many people today is underscored by Rakotsoane and Rakotsoane (2006: 12) when stating that if there is one thing which distinguishes humans from lower creatures, it is their ability to talk. Qualitative research therefore acknowledges an interactive relationship between the researcher and the participants as well as between the participants and their own experiences and how they have constructed reality based on those experiences (Nieuwenhuis 2009: 55). The stories, experiences and voices of respondents are the mediums through which we explore and understand reality. Besides, the point of view of participants and their particular social and institutional context is largely lost when textual data is quantified. Qualitative research enables the researcher to view the word through

the participant's eyes. Teachers, schools and the Ministry of Education and Training through the Special Education Unit form the levels of the social context which are responsible for CPTD in inclusive schools. As a result all these levels need to be presented in the sample to find out how each one of them influence one another in a continuous process of dynamic balance, tension and interplay. Challenges within the SEU will influence how schools and teachers respond to CPTD and the way the teachers will respond to these challenges will in turn influence what happens in schools and the SEU's ability to implement inclusive education.

Participants

Sampling is very important while undertaking a research. Strydom (in De Vos 2005: 194) cites feasibility as the major reason for sampling. He argues that a complete coverage of the total population is seldom possible for a number of reasons, ranging from unavailability of time and resources to the type of research that one intends to do. For this study, a purposive, convenient sample of ten teachers from two inclusive primary schools and one participant from the SEU was selected. Sampling is defined by Nieuwenhuis (in Maree 2009: 79) as the process used to select a portion of the population for study. He further mentions that qualitative research is generally based on non-probability and purposive sampling rather than probability or random sampling approaches. Purposive sampling means that sample units are chosen, because they have particular features or characteristics that will enable a detailed exploration and understanding of the central themes the researcher wishes to study (Ritchie et al. 2003: 78). In addition, they have the characteristic that makes them the holders of the data needed for the study. For this study, sampling decisions are for that reason made for the purpose of attaining information-rich participants, who are likely to be knowledgeable about the phenomenon of CPTD for inclusive education (McMillan and Schumacher 2001: 401). Qualitative research usually involves smaller sample sizes than quantitative research studies. Patton (2002: 244) argues that there are no rules for sample size in qualitative enquiry. Sample size depends on what one wants to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what is at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility and what

can be done with the available time and resources.

Primary School Teachers

Teachers are the primary human resources for achieving the goal of an inclusive education and training system in all countries. In fact, teachers need opportunities for CPTD in order for them to be effective in their inclusive classrooms. Such opportunities have been available to teachers in Lesotho, especially teachers in primary schools. The researchers were mostly interested in serving primary school teachers who have had a chance to participate in any form of CPTD for inclusive education offered by the Ministry of Education's Special Education Unit. Ten (10) teachers made up the sample of teachers.

Teacher Trainers from SEU

A total of six (6) teacher trainers from the (SEU) are selected, with the responsibility of offering CPTD for inclusive education to practicing teachers in the ten districts of Lesotho. For the present study, one (1) teacher trainer constituted the sample of teacher trainers. It is worth mentioning at this stage that the main aim of qualitative research is not to generalize findings (McMillan and Schumacher 2001: 401), therefore the selection of participants was not driven by the concern for representativeness, but was driven by the conceptual question. The interest is to explore the challenges of Continuing Professional Teacher Development for inclusive education.

Data Collection

Interviews were used as tools for the collection of data; specifically the researchers utilized individual, semi-structured one-to-one interviews and focus groups interviews to collect a large amount of data simultaneously from teachers and the participant from SEU and to increase the quality and the richness of data. An interview is a two way interaction in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and to learn about ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participant (Nieuwenhuis 2009: 87). The aim of the qualitative researcher is to understand the world from the participant's point of view, to unfold the

meanings of people's experiences and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations (Greeff in De Vos 2005: 287).

Semi-structured One-to-one Interviews

Greeff (in DeVos 2005: 296) asserts that semi-structured interviews are used in order to gain a detailed picture of a participant's beliefs about, or perceptions or accounts of a particular topic. For this particular research, a semi-structured interview was held with one teacher trainer from the Ministry of Education's Special Education Unit to get a detailed account of the CPTD programs for inclusive education offered to primary school teachers in the Maseru Education District, focusing specifically on the challenges of CPTD. The researcher had predetermined questions on an interview schedule, but the interview was guided by the schedule rather than dictated by it. The researcher listened carefully to identify some important points which were raised by the participant, even if they did not appear on the schedule. A semi-structured interview allowed an in-depth understanding by providing the interviewer with the opportunity to probe and expand the interviewee's responses without biasing later answers (Babbie and Mouton 2007: 289). This enabled the researcher to gain information that would, however, be difficult to obtain through other methods.

Credibility and Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (in Babbie and Mouton 2007: 276) argue that the key criterion or principle of good qualitative research is found in the notion of trustworthiness. They have included credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability as key criteria of trustworthiness. In addition, several steps were followed to ensure trustworthiness. Crystallisation: information was collected from different sources, for example, teachers and teacher trainers using different tools of data collection. One-on-one interviews were used for teacher trainers and focus groups for teachers. Information from these sources was studied together with information from literature to investigate the links. Audit trail: some of the documents and interview notes and raw data were submitted to a colleague for auditing to determine the acceptability of the research.

Data Analysis

With permission from the participants, an audio recorder was used to record interviews. The researcher also took field notes to help with the analysis of data. Soon after each interview, all the information captured on audio cassettes was transcribed word for word. The transcript was studied to identify themes that emerged from its contents. This way of sorting data is known as coding in research (Rakotsoane and Rakotsoane 2006: 25). Coding was carried out with the help of an external decoder. The reliability of the coding is at times checked by having another person encode the same data in order to see whether there is agreement (Neuman as cited in Rakotsoane and Rakotsoane 2006: 25). Themes were then tabulated and conclusions made in order to address the research question. In qualitative research it is possible to do the data collection and data analysis concurrently. De Vos (2005: 335) highlighted the importance of this overlapping of data collection and analysis when stating that ...the result of this process is the effective collection of rich data that generates an alternative hypothesis and provides the basis for shared constructions of reality.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Previous researches indicate that quality teacher training for inclusive education was central to fostering a broadened concept for inclusive education (Opertti 2009: 16). Findings of the study revealed that there were several challenges of CPTD in inclusive Lesotho schools. While some of the challenges were due to the practices in the schools, some were challenges experienced by teachers as individuals and some were those which emanate from the Ministry of Education through the SEU, which is the body responsible for CPTD in schools, especially primary schools. For the purpose of this study the challenges were classified as, challenges regarding the SEU, those regarding the schools and those regarding teachers. The following were revealed as challenges within SEU: lack of human resources; lack of financial resources; a heavy work load; failure by the government to implement proposals; the limited number of schools under the CPTD program; lack of follow-up; the dominant use of the cascade model; the focus on disability as the only form of barrier

to learning and the timing of the workshops. Challenges within the school included the following: lack of resources; lack of quality leadership and a heavy work load. Challenges exhibited by teachers were the following: lack of commitment; teachers' views are not taken into consideration and a lack of collaboration among teachers.

Challenges within the SEU

The Special Education Unit Lack Human Resources to Carry Out CPTD

Responses from both the teachers and the SEU indicated that there was an acute shortage of staff within the SEU to carry out the responsibility of CPTD in inclusive schools. In Lesotho, there were only five people employed by the SEU to serve the whole country on matters of inclusion. The shortage of staff caused the training of teachers at a slower pace. In 2007, the unit had directly trained teachers in more than 80 schools while over 1000 primary schools had received no training at all. Johnstone (in Engelbrecht and Green 2007: 28) reiterated, a major challenge for the Special Education Unit was that the four people employed by the Unit at any given time could in no way address the training needs of the entire country. Teachers in some schools might never receive any form of training for inclusive education in their career lives and as a result would not implement any inclusive practices in their classrooms.

There Are No Funds for Supporting and Carrying Out CPTD Programs

The study revealed that the SEU was in a serious financial crisis. Since 1991 the project for CPTD in inclusive education was funded by Save the Children's fund (United Kingdom) until 2002, when the government of Lesotho took over. Since that time the unit had been experiencing problems regarding funding. When the project started the workshops for CPTD in inclusive education used to last for as long as three weeks, but soon after the government took over, the time was reduced to a week, later to three days. At the time of this research project there were no funds for organizing workshops and as a result the Unit had stopped offering any form of training to teachers. In general, it appeared that with the prevailing economic and political turbulence in many of these countries

special education services were not being adequately funded in many developing countries (Eleweke and Rodda 2000).

The SEU is Faced by a Heavy Workload

The findings of the study divulged that teacher training was not the only responsibility of the SEU. The five people employed by the unit also had to undertake a lot of administrative work as part of their duties to ensure that the unit was run properly. The staff at the SEU was not only inadequate for training teachers in the whole country, but the amount of work assigned to them made it even more difficult to devote their attention to CPTD. This did not only affect the quantity of the programs, but the quality of programs for CPTD was also affected.

Proposals Made by the SEU Are Not Implemented by the MoET

The study's findings indicated that the Government of Lesotho was not implementing proposals made by the SEU to facilitate the process of inclusive education at an expected rate. Research indicated that in many Developing Countries it remained the case that special needs provision would not be a priority of government policy and expenditure (McConkey and O'Toole as cited in Eleweke and Rodda 2000). Some of the reasons quoted were that meeting the needs of citizens with special needs was costly. It is significant to note that the needs of the "normal" majority would have to be met prior to meeting those of individuals with special needs who were in the minority and that due to lack of awareness of the potentials of the people with disabilities, expenditure on services for them was considered a waste of the scarce funds and that even with the best training some of them would perpetually remain "tax eaters" and never become "tax-payers" (Mba as cited in Eleweke and Rodda 2000: 4). This lack of urgency to implement policies made it difficult for the SEU to extend CPTD to all teachers who need it.

Workshops are the Predominantly Used Model of CPTD for Inclusive Education

Conducting workshops were the predominantly used model of CPTD by the SEU to equip teachers with the skills and knowledge required

for inclusive classrooms. Teachers from different schools were invited to workshops to be sensitized about the different disabilities and ways to accommodate learners with such disabilities in the classroom. Workshops, seminars and conferences were, however, considered to be the traditional approaches to CPTD, which adopted a technical and simplistic view of teaching and believed that teachers knowledge and skills could be improved by using experts from outside the school (Lee as cited in Steyn 2009: 263). Oswald (in Engelbrecht and Green 2007: 154) asserted that short workshops away from the workplace did not seem to be the answer to teachers' sustained and meaningful professional development, since they seemed to ignore both personal and professional needs of teachers. The NCSNET/NCESS commission suggested that the focus of capacity building for inclusive education and training system should be on developing the self-sufficiency of teachers within the context of the school where they were presently working (Department of Education 1997). Mundry (2005: 14) advised that policy-makers and education managers should therefore abandon outmoded approaches to staff development and invest in the more practice-based approaches to CPTD.

The Cascade Model is Also Predominantly Used for CPTD

The findings of the study revealed that the cascade model of CPTD was another commonly used model of CPTD utilized by the SEU to prepare teachers for the realities of the inclusive classrooms. The participants from The SEU indicated that seven teachers from each school were selected to attend the workshop with the hope that when they got back to their respective schools they would cascade their newly acquired skills and knowledge to their colleagues. In most developing countries CPTD had been ignored, because of the budget constraints and heavy emphasis on pre-service education, but when it was provided the cascade approach was popular for reaching many participants in a short time (Leu as cited in Ono and Ferreira 2010: 61). In schools with an authoritarian management style, where distrust, discriminatory practices and disagreement among the staff still occurred, the cascade approach did not seem to work well (Oswald as cited in Engelbrecht and

Green 2007: 154). In addition, reason for the failure of the cascade model in CPTD which was often quoted was that the message of the training workshops often got diluted as it was passed down the cascade, with the result that in many instances the recipients of the message at the lower levels were less enthusiastic and skilled than those who received the initial training (Oswald as cited in Engelbrecht and Green 2007: 145). This model of CPTD needed to be used together with other school based models.

Teachers do not Get Follow-up Visits after Attending Workshops

Teachers in focus group interviews complained that after workshops there was no follow-up by the SEU to see if they were coping well with the propositions which were made during the workshops and address some of the challenges which teachers might be experiencing in their respective schools. Because of the brief nature of the workshops and the fact that they were not context specific (Ono and Ferreira 2010: 58) teachers felt that no real learning took place during these workshops. Teachers needed to put into practice whatever theory they had acquired during workshops and then be given feedback on their actual practice so that they could see what they were doing right and improve upon their shortcomings. Professional development should use coaching and other follow-up procedures, be collaborative, be embedded in the daily lives of teachers and provide opportunities for continuous growth (McLeskey and Waldron as cited in Engelbrecht and Green 2007: 144).

The Duration of the Workshops Does Not Allow for Sufficient Learning

The findings of the study revealed that the amount of time spent during the workshops was too brief. This concern was raised by both the teachers and the participant from the SEU. In the initial stages of the project the CPTD of teachers for inclusive education was funded by Save the Children (United Kingdom) and during that time the workshops lasted for three weeks, but afterwards the workshops lasted for three days or even one day while the content that was to be learnt was still the same. This meant that the quality of learning was seriously affected, be-

cause everything was squeezed together to fit into the available time.

CPTD Programs Focus Only on Disability and Not on the Other Barriers to Learning

The collected responses from teachers and the participant from the SEU indicated that in schools in the Maseru Education District, inclusive education was mainly about the integration of children with disabilities into the mainstream classrooms. The main message of the programs of CPTD was the anatomy of the different forms of disabilities and ways to accommodate learners with disabilities into the classrooms. These programs often resulted in teachers who had a narrow perspective of what inclusion in education was and who were unable to respond to other challenges of inclusive education which were not related to disability. The disability perspective had been criticized as being too narrow in its understanding of inclusion because it tended to focus only on one form of exclusion. "An increasing emphasis on diversity (including disabilities) in education emphasizes the responsibility of state education to identify and address a wide range of barriers to learning, of which intrinsic barrier created by a disability is the only one" (Engelbrecht and Green 2007: 4).

Only a Few Schools are Enlisted under the CPTD Program

The findings of the study indicated that there were only a few schools which were enlisted under the CPTD program. Teachers in some schools were not receiving any CPTD for inclusive education and there was no clear plan which was in place to ensure that teachers in these schools would acquire the necessary skills and knowledge required for inclusive classrooms. In the multitude of schools, there is presumably little understanding of disability, a scant amount of inclusive pedagogy and little desire on the part of the teachers to take on additional challenges of teaching a diverse learner population (Mariga and Phakacha 1993: 10).

Challenges within Schools

As demonstrated by the ecosystemic framework, disturbance in one level of the system often resulted in disturbance in other levels too.

The challenges of CPTD experienced by the SEU have affected the schools response and ability towards the implementation of inclusive education. This in turn has also affected the way teachers respond to inclusive education, especially their CPTD. The following were the challenges of CPTD within schools.

Schools Lack Resources Necessary to Facilitate Teacher Learning

The dearth of resources at the school level has been highlighted as another key challenge for CPTD for inclusive education in inclusive schools. Teachers had complained that there were no resources to support their learning at the school level, schools lacked in the necessary text books and most of the schools had no computers and no access to the internet and other electronic resources. When addressing the issue of resources Steyn (2009: 270) suggests that schools should be humane and professionally supportive where teachers have the resources they require and the opportunities to work together and learn from each other. Provision of human and material resources was found to be of utmost importance for the implementation of inclusive education in Botswana (Mukhopadhyay et al. 2012). The lack of resources in schools discourages those teachers who are willing to learn and serves as a scapegoat for those teachers who are not willing to undertake CPTD.

There is a Lack of Quality Leadership for CPTD in Schools

The findings of the research indicate that there was a lack of quality leadership for CPTD in schools. Responses of the participant from the SEU indicated that school principals didn't always take responsibility for CPTD for inclusive education in their schools. This became evident when school principals denied teachers who had attended workshops a chance to share information with other teachers. School principals have to believe in inclusive education in order for them to assist in the development of schools as inclusive communities. When principals are not convinced about the importance of inclusive education, they often act as barriers to the development of inclusive school communities. School principals, as education managers

in schools need to be involved in the learning process. This involves the commitment to identify the needs of teachers and the appropriate training to meet these needs (Lee 2005: 46). Quality leadership means that managers are involved in the learning process, which requires reflection on teaching and learning practice and evidence that the PD of a teacher has taken place (Steyn 2009: 268). The absence of an enabling legislation for the implementation of inclusive education in Lesotho compounds this problem of lack of quality leadership in inclusive schools. School principals are often not aware of the role they should play in the provision of CPTD for inclusive education. They are also often not prepared for the responsibilities that come with the implementation of inclusive education. As a result they often lack the skills and knowledge for being instructional leaders.

A Heavy Workload Was Seen as an Impediment in Setting Aside Time for CPTD

A heavy workload had been mentioned as another challenge for CPTD for inclusive education in inclusive schools. Teachers complained that they had a lot of responsibilities at school which often deprived them a chance to study for inclusive education.. Apart from the role of teaching, teachers also had to do a lot of administrative work, such as ensuring that their scheme and record books were up to date and organizing extra-curricular activities.

Challenges Exhibited by Individual Teachers

Teachers Are Not Aware of Their Needs for CPTD

The findings of the study showed that some teachers were not aware of their needs for CPTD for inclusive education. This was indicated by the fact that some teachers were so ignorant about learners with special educational needs, especially those who did not have obvious disabilities. They could not identify these learners and were not even aware of the needs of these learners as a result they could not communicate their own needs for CPTD. King and Newmann (2001) argue that teacher learning is most likely to occur when teachers have influence over the substance and process of professional development. Inclusive education is a new reality in

many schools which brings with it a lot of uncertainties to teachers who have to implement it as a result attending one workshop on inclusive education cannot be a panacea to teachers' problems.

Teachers' Views about Their CPTD Are Not Taken Into Consideration

Teachers in focus groups complained that their views regarding the challenges they encountered in schools and the changes they wanted to see happen regarding their CPTD were often not taken into consideration. One teacher actually said, *If the government wants it to be effective, they must listen to the teachers because we are the real stake holders we are the ones who deal with this learners day in day out so when we tell them the problems we encounter they don't want to listen it's as if we are being disrespectful.*

... Teacher learning is most likely to occur when teachers have influence over the substance and process of professional development. If teachers have some control over the course of professional development, this increases their opportunity to connect it to specific conditions of their schools, and it provides opportunities for them to exercise professional discretion. Empowerment facilitates a sense of personal ownership which promotes internalization of learning. In contrast, traditional professional development is often dictated by school, district, or state authorities without significant input from teachers (King and Newmann 2001). Teachers need to have a say in CPTD programs for inclusive education, No learning actually take place when teachers feel that they are not being respected.

There Seems to be No Collaboration between Teachers

The results of the study exhibits that teachers in inclusive schools did not work collaboratively with one another; teachers worked in isolation. Fullen and Hargreaves (cited in Engelbrecht and Green 2007: 114) indicate that teaching is traditionally a profession where teachers work alone in their classrooms, teachers work alongside colleagues with little support, feedback and opportunity to learn from one another. Regrettably, the traditional culture of teacher iso-

lation and the limited time available for collegial interaction have not supported collaboration among teachers (Collinson 2001: 267). The demands of inclusive education, however, require teachers to work collaboratively. Gut et al. (2003: 216) highlight that opportunities for collaboration are the first steps to understanding how to help the whole child. Teachers' learning is most likely to occur when teachers have opportunities to collaborate with professional peers, both within and outside of their schools, along with access to the expertise of external researchers and program developers. Because teachers respect the expertise of professional peers and have common experiences to communicate about, peer collaboration offers a powerful vehicle for teacher learning, a necessary supplement to published materials and advice from other authorities (King and Newmann 2001).

Strategies to Overcome the Challenges of CPTD

The current state of CPTD for inclusive education in inclusive schools in the Maseru Education District calls for a serious intervention in order to ensure that all teachers are ready for the realities of inclusive classrooms. A few themes came up regarding the way the participants think the challenges of CPTD can be overcome in inclusive schools in the Maseru Education District. The themes include the availability of resources, refresher courses, availability of an inclusive curriculum, teachers' views should be taken seriously, there should be follow-up sessions and the budget for inclusive education should be increased.

The MoET Should Provide the Necessary Resources to Enable the Unit to Carry Out Its Responsibilities

The participant from the SEU suggested that the MOET should provide the necessary resources to enable the Unit to carry out its responsibility of providing CPTD to teachers. The resources include the human and the financial resources. The participant felt that if more people could be employed to carry out the task of training teachers, all teachers could be reached and if the financial resources could be provided, CPTD programs could be well planned. Teachers on the other hand have also suggested that schools need to provide the necessary resourc-

es to facilitate their learning. Hoekstra et al. (2009: 10) as well as Hoekstra and Korthagen (2011) have also emphasised the importance of resources in teacher learning, by stating that their learning should be facilitated by giving these teachers ample opportunities to interact with peers, to report about their learning and access resources for learning. This implies that if schools do not have the resources, then the school should avail teachers time to find them.

Teachers Need Refresher Courses to Renew Their Commitment for CPTD

The teacher participants recommended that there should be refresher courses to revive them and to provide them with more information, as the initial workshops were often very brief. There was often a lot of work which needed to be covered, but due to the unavailability of time, this work was often not completed.

The National Curriculum Should be Adapted to Enable Implementation of Acquired Skills

The teachers felt that they did not have the skills to adapt the curriculum to enable the participation of learners with disabilities. Because of the lack of an inclusive curriculum, teachers were not able to implement the knowledge which they had acquired during the workshops; this further affected the effectiveness of these workshops in preparing teachers for inclusive classrooms. Hammeken (2007: 52) argues that good teachers are continually modifying and adapting the curriculum throughout the day to accommodate students who learn differently. Since teachers in inclusive Lesotho schools did not have these skills, the SEU should work with other responsible departments to modify the curriculum.

Teachers' Views about Their CPTD Should be Taken Seriously

The participating teachers indicated they were the real stakeholders in the implementation of inclusive education since they dealt with learners on a daily basis so whatever suggestions they made regarding the challenges they faced in schools and their requirement for CPTD should be taken seriously or else there would continue to be a mismatch between what the teachers needed to learn and what was offered

to teachers. King and Newman (2001) concur that teacher learning is most likely to occur when teachers have influence over the substance and process of professional development. If teachers have some control over the course of professional development, this increases their opportunity to connect it to the specific conditions of their schools, and it provides opportunities for them to exercise professional discretion. Empowerment facilitates a sense of personal ownership which promotes internalization of learning. In contrast, traditional professional development is often dictated by school, district or state authorities without significant input from teachers.

Teachers Need Follow-up Observation and Feedback After Attending Workshops

Teachers revealed that after the workshops they needed to be visited in their schools for observation and feedback so that they could know whether they were still on the right track and be supported on the challenges which they could be experiencing in their schools. King and Newmann (2001) concur that teacher learning is most likely to occur if teachers have sustained opportunities to study, to experiment with and to receive helpful feedback on specific innovations. Yet, the most professional development activities are brief workshops, conferences, or courses that make no provision for long term follow up and feedback.

Teachers need to be Paid More Money for Teaching Learners with Disabilities

Findings from the study indicated that teachers in inclusive schools felt that the MOET should increase the budget for the implementation of inclusive education; teachers felt that teachers who taught learners with disabilities should be paid more money as this would encourage more teachers to engage in CPTD for inclusive education. An incentive scheme to reward teachers for successfully implementing their acquired knowledge and skills might have a more motivational value (Steyn 2009: 268).

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to explore the challenges of CPTD in inclusive Lesotho

schools. The participants were expected to give an exploration into the challenges of CPTD within the SEU, the schools and teachers as individuals and suggest ways in which these challenges could be overcome. The study revealed that there were several challenges of CPTD in inclusive schools. While it is common to blame teachers when implementation of new initiatives fails, the SEU in its current form does not have the capacity to offer training to teachers. The unit is faced by an acute shortage of human and financial resources required to develop programs for CPTD. The use of the traditional models of CPTD, such as workshops, is another challenge that needs to be overcome. These models of CPTD often result with little or no learning at all as they are brief and they fail to cater for differences in adult learning. Traditional practices in schools also contribute to the challenges of CPTD. In schools where the culture of teacher isolation still exists and where there is a limited time for collegial interaction, teachers often fail to learn with and from one another. There is a lack of quality leadership for CPTD and a lack of resources to facilitate learning in these schools, which results in a lack of commitment for CPTD among teachers. The participants proposed suggestions on how these challenges of CPTD could be overcome. These include the need for the MOET to provide the necessary resources to enable the SEU to carry out its responsibility of training teachers on inclusive education. Teachers also feel that they have to be consulted about their own needs. Recommendations are made regarding gaps identified during the study. Recommendations are directed to the government, the schools and teachers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and the discussions generated from the interviews held with teachers and the participant from the SEU, the following recommendations are made to support CPTD for inclusive education. The government of Lesotho as one of the countries which endorsed the Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education should reconsider its funding structure for the implementation of inclusive education with more emphasis on CPTD. The SEU should employ more people to carry out the duties assigned to the Unit as the four assistant inspectors cannot be

expected to train all practicing teachers in Lesotho. The people responsible for offering CPTD for Inclusive education should have training on the latest trends and models of CPTD. This can help them to identify other models of CPTD which can be used together with the commonly used ones, such as the workshop and the cascade models, in order to increase the possibility of quality learning. The MoET should develop an enabling legislation to support an effective implementation of inclusive education. This mandatory order should specify the role that schools should play in CPTD so that schools can take responsibility for teacher training. Because of the teachers' busy schedule, there is often no time for CPTD in schools. The Lesotho MOET should develop professional days where teachers are required to attend school, when pupils are not present, for staff development. Taking teachers out of schools to attend workshops often result in little or no learning for inclusive education. Initiatives for CPTD should be school-based, programs designed for groups of teachers from the same school have several benefits, teachers can share experiences, skills and any problems encountered in the program. School principals should be empowered to become instructional leaders by equipping them with the skills that would enable them to identify teachers' needs, ensure that those needs are met and support teachers throughout their professional development. Schools should build their own resources which can assist in CPTD. This would include buying books, browsing the internet to find the relevant sources and exchanging material with other schools. Teachers should be consulted about their own CPTD to ensure that there is no mismatch between what the teachers need and what is provided. Teacher collaboration should be encouraged; the walls of isolation that exist between teachers should be broken down so that teachers can learn together and from one another. CPTD programs should not only concentrate on disability. Teachers should be equipped with skills such as problem solving, interpersonal communication, dealing with differences and managing themselves and their time. This will enable effective collaboration. Teachers should be encouraged to become lifelong learners who subscribe to and read professional journals and enrol in graduate programs. Teachers should be encouraged to take risks in order to become experienced and inde-

pendent. The MoET should develop an incentive scheme to reward teachers who undertake training for inclusive education as this can surely motivate teachers to update their knowledge and skills.

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