

EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EDUCATION WHITE PAPER 6 IN SELECTED FULL-SERVICE SCHOOLS IN KWAZULU-NATAL

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ABSTRACT

The South African Department of Education (DoE) is still in the process of phasing in full service schools (FSS), and further development is said to be based on immediate to short-term results. Concerns surrounding the developments were whether available resources were sufficient to further expand the provision of FSS, and if the Education White Paper 6 (EWP6) had been successfully implemented in the previous phases. The purpose of this research is to evaluate the implementation of EWP6 within FSS in Kwazulu-Natal. Purposive sampling was used and the researcher selected Institutional level support team (ILST) members (n=43 participants) within FSS (n=50). Self-administered questionnaires elicited both quantitative and qualitative data which was analysed using SPSS and thematic analysis in order to address the following research questions: have policy objectives been met in the implementation of EWP6 within FSS, what are the barriers to implementing EWP6 within FSS and what strategies have ILST members used to overcome these challenges? Some schools reported successes with implementation of EWP6: enrolment of learners experiencing diverse learning barriers, ILST optimistic attitudes regarding possible benefits of inclusive education and their theoretical knowledge of multi-level teaching, whilst others reported barriers: inadequate resources, support provision to FSS/ILST and training, lack of involvement from parents and communities. If the identified gaps can be addressed, then the implementation of White Paper 6 in FSS could possibly be successful.

Keywords: Inclusive Education, Full-service Schools, Education White Paper 6, Support services, Institutional Level Support Teams

INTRODUCTION

The South African Schools Act (SASA), Act 108 Section 29(1), in 1996, promulgated that all learners have equal access to quality education (Engelbrecht, 2006; Makoelle, 2012). The Act serves to promote an ethos of inclusivity within schools. Education White Paper 6 (EWP6) propagated inclusion within schools by providing a model of Inclusive Education (IE) which emphasised that teaching and learning should be adapted to meet learners' diverse needs and equal access to quality education (Murungi, 2015; Makoelle, 2012; DoE, 2005a; DoE, 2001). IE can be broadly conceptualised as an education system that accommodates all learners needs, by acknowledging barriers (intrinsic or extrinsic) and meeting these needs to ensure effective learning (Ministry of Education and Science Spain, 1994; Stofile, 2008, Inclusion International, 2009). IE places emphasise on quality education where learning needs are met through adapted curriculum and differential teaching, access to quality education which enables learners to graduate and

contribute to the economy as equal citizens (Hall & Theron, 2016; DoE, 2005; Ministry of Education and Science Spain, 1994).

The aims of IE have been outlined in policy and to achieve these, EWP6 provides an inclusive model which intends to achieve this by providing support services, educational resources and infrastructural changes (DoE, 2005a). Support services form an integral part of IE (Aziz et al., 2016) and in full-service schools (FSS) support services are categorised as providing moderate levels of support. This support provision would include teaching and assessment adaptations, infrastructural support for accessibility as well as access to specialist professionals (KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education (KZN DoE), 2009). According to Nel, Tlale, Engelbrecht and Nel (2016) and KZN DoE (2009) support services should be facilitated by district-based support teams (DBST), and institutional level support teams (ILST).

ILSTs are primarily responsible for the implementation of inclusive practices within the school by ensuring that the school maintains an inclusive ethos, identifying learner's needs and making provision for learners' inclusive needs (KZN DoE, 2009). When schools require additional support such as infrastructural support, specialised teaching tools or specialised professional services, the ILST may then consult with the DBST (KZN DoE, 2009).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Salamanca Statement (World Conference on Special Needs Education) has served as a prominent force behind inclusion in many countries, including South Africa. The Salamanca Statement proposed a paradigm shift from a medical model of special needs where the problem is within the child to a systems approach which acknowledges the role of the education system, community, parents and other contributing factors which result in barriers to learning (Ministry of Education and Science Spain, 1994). In response to IE, other countries (Middle East and North Africa, Europe, Africa, Americas, and Asia Pacific) developed policies and strategies to reach context specific inclusive goals. FSS are one initiative that aims to address diversity of learning needs and is adopted within SA as well as internationally (Inclusion International, 2009).

EWP6 describes FSS as primary schools which are designated and converted to FSS to provide for diverse learning needs and barriers (DoE, 2001). DoE (2005b) encourages FSS to be flexible and engage in continuous development to address a broad range of learning needs. Support services available at FSS should include "physical and material resources, as well as professional development for staff" (DoE, 2001, p.22) but Conway (2017) found that teachers continue to refer students to special schools, displaying a lack of confidence in FSS having the necessary resources to cater for learners with special needs.

FSS aims to function as a mainstream school and provide learners with mild learning barriers with an opportunity to learn in a mainstream schooling environment rather than a specialised school. FSS require support services, educational resources and infrastructural changes to meet diverse learning and teaching needs. These are defined by available resources and needs within the context of each FSS (DoE, 2005a).

Bornman and Donohue (2014) indicate that the greatest challenge faced in implementing IE is attributed to unspecified IE goals and lack of direction in achieving these goals. Stakeholders within FSS may find themselves unsure of their roles or how to achieve inclusion as it varies within

each setting, making specification difficult. Dyson and Todd (2013) in evaluating FSS in the UK found that unspecified FSS activities resulted in each school adapting activities to the schooling communities' unique needs.

The policy on IE aims for implement within a 20-year timeframe (DoE, 2001), with immediate, medium and long-term goals. According to these plans, DoE should currently be implementing the longer term goals with a total of 500 FSS and 380 resource centres to eradicate the large number of learners with special needs who are not attending school (DoE, 2001). The provision of support will be a strong indicator of whether the implementation of EWP6 in FSS will yield positive outcomes. Despite the provision of professional services, DoE (2005b) encourages schools to develop support teams by sharing and utilising the skills and knowledge of educators within FSS as well as neighbouring schools. This is done with the aim of strengthening an inclusive environment and escalating opportunities to minimise barriers so that learners fullfill their learning potential.

Diverse barriers to learning and methods of implementing IE have been identified and adapted in various countries. The Global Report on IE indicated multiple success stories regarding the implementation of inclusive practices within the schooling environment. Many of the successes of inclusion within schools were often attributed to support from the micro, meso or macrosystem. The FSES adopted in the United Kingdom, yielded positive outcomes for learners as well as families and communities (Cummings et al., 2007). Diversity in implementation and understanding of policy and strategies were experienced and interpreted in relation to problems experienced by the community in which the FSS existed. The central aim was to address learning barriers developing community partnerships, and additional support resources when necessary (Cummings et al., 2007).

To discuss the strengths and challenges in the implementation of IE it is compulsory to understand the history and culture of the country in which it is being implemented. In some countries IE experienced success even with a lack of resources due to the commitment and involvement of all stakeholders (Mayekiso, Mdikana, & Ntshangase, 2007), with others inclusion may focus more on learners with disabilities, class, or socio-economic, whereas other countries the focus is on racial groupings, HIV/AIDS status, socio-economic, disability, and ethnicity (DoE, 2001). The latter has become the focus for SA due to its long history of segregation and culture burdened by poverty and HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Bornman and Donohue (2014) indicate that the greatest challenge faced in implementing IE within SA is attributed to unspecified IE goals and lack of direction in achieving these goals. The DoE (2001) after releasing EWP6 faced the challenge of disseminating this information to society and provide training for teachers to implement inclusive practices and therefore include "training in new roles for teachers, a focus on multi-level classroom instruction, co-operative learning and teaching and the development of learners' strengths and competencies" (Conway, 2017, p.3). Teachers being the forerunners in implementing IE have reported lack of skills and in-depth knowledge of IE (Engelbrecht, Nel, Smit & Van Deventer, 2016, p.529). In studies such as Ntombela (2011), Mayekiso et al. (2007) and others, researchers reported that teachers reported a lack of training on IE, and subsequently a lack of confidence in teaching learners with special needs.

Teachers and schooling communities are provided with an understanding of DoE goals to develop FSS which accommodate learners with varying learning barriers (DoE, 2001). The DoE

will need to ensure that FSS are equipped with support services, infrastructure and resources (DoE, 2001). Special schools will still be maintained for learners with severe disabilities (DoE, 2001). Barriers to learning addressed by mainstream schools include: HIV/AIDS, poverty, socio-economic, family dynamics, Attention Deficit Disorders (ADD), and other factors that may hinder learning (DoE, 2001; Pettipher & Swart, 2006). Teachers who are unaware of how to access resources and support needed for inclusion to take place, need training (how to develop ILST, differentiated teaching and learning, how to adapt lessons, teaching strategies and assessments how to access DBST and how to involve the community in strengthening support structures) (Kalenga, 2011; De Jager, 2013).

Teachers still hold the medical model ideology to teaching learners with barriers and hence a need of a paradigm shift (change in beliefs and practice) was necessary for IE to be implemented (Ntombela, 2011, Mkhuma, 2012). Educators trained prior to EWP6 and have many years of teaching experience within the medical framework are faced with difficulty re-orienting their teaching methods (Ainscow, 2009 cited in Bornman & Donohue, 2014). As suggested by UNESCO (n.d.), IE training and teacher development, needs to be approached holistically. Therefore, although DoE faces challenges of resources (human and financial) to provide training and dissemination of information it is suggested that schools share skills, knowledge and resources (DoE, 2005). The DoE looks beyond the learner and into the community, and society at large. This is a reflection of a holistic and systemic approach to learning. The DoE encourages this approach by providing training for teachers to address diverse learning needs and a move towards a social perspective (Oswald & Swart, 2011).

The lack of training and support systems available to FSS may cause identifying and assessing barriers to learning challenging. Bornman and Donohue (2014) indicated that many teachers and schools are uncertain of the parameters of learning disability which can be accommodated in schools (Bornman & Donohue, 2014). This may hinder the implementation of IE as teachers and all interacting systems would be unable to identify and develop strategies in meeting the needs of learning barriers.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) reported that although the South African education system has many challenges ahead it is commendable what has been achieved thus far (Khumalo, 2008). There has been noticeable achievement in equity, and access to schooling. Strengths that reflect commitment of the DoE to IE, the action-research method on the education system and the broad acknowledgement of barriers to learning. South Africa, as a developing country, is expected to still face challenges on the road to improving the FSS.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory used to guide the study is Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory in understanding the interrelating systems influence in implementing EWP6 within FSS. The ecosystemic theory seeks to explain the various systems necessary for the successful implementation of EWP6 in FSS. An understanding of the context and interaction between the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem will allow the researcher to evaluate the impacts of each system involved in the implementation of EWP6 in FSS. FSS

involve multiple support systems within the mesosystem as well as an interaction within the community and DBST which comprise of the exosystem. A holistic understanding of each system could also assist in directing further support, resources or intervention to relevant systems in support of successful implementation of EWP6 within FSS (Mayaba, 2008, Geldenhys & Wevers, 20).

The research aimed to provide feedback for future developments of FSS within KZN to assist in conceptualisation and operationalism of inclusive practices. And further affirm how EWP6 goals are interpreted, whether there are commonalities in the goals of each district or whether these goals are context specific. The success of FSS as specified by EWP6 is dependent on the implementation and available resources and support systems. Makoelle (2012) noted the need for further research on how IE is applied within South African classrooms beyond the policies and guidelines. This research evaluated the implementation of EWP6 within selected phase one FSS within KZN. The research tackled the following issues:

- i. Have policy objectives been met in the implementation of EWP6 within FSS?
- ii. Provided these objectives have not been met, what were/are the barriers to implementing EWP6 within FSS?
- iii. What strategies have ILST members used to overcome challenges linked to the implementation of EWP6 goals within a FSS?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to adequately address the research questions as well as provide rich data, a mixed methods approach was selected, both quantitative and qualitative research methods were utilised. A questionnaire was used to collect data. To analyse the quantitative data, items were coded using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive data informed the extent to which EWP6 specifications were met based on frequency tables. Qualitative data, thematic analysis, was used to explore the lived experience of ILST members in implementing EWP6. The process of generating themes and reporting these, according to Braun and Clarke (2006), involved familiarisation with data, generating codes, searching for themes, reviewing, defining and providing themes with titles.

Participants

The original fifty FSS were were purposively selected to participate in the study. Participants were selected based on their knowledge and experience in implementing EWP6 within a FSS and key role players were ILST members. Questionnaires were distributed to all 50 phase one FSS to ensure sufficient data as well as to ensure a representative sample of the KZN region and the researchers received 43 questionnaires.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations were developed in accordance with the University's Policies and Procedures, and the KwaZulu-Natals Department of Education Policy on conducting research

within educational institutions. Participants were briefed on the research and advised that they were at liberty to withdraw from the research at any time. Informed consent was requested in writing and rights of participants were acknowledged and adhered to (Bak, 2004). Research participants were treated fairly and confidentiality was maintained throughout the research; during data collection and documentation of findings (Bak, 2004; Durrheim, Painter & Terre Blanche, 2006).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Implementation of EWP6 Policy Objectives within FSS

Roles and responsibilities

The research addressed ILST members as their predominant function is to facilitate inclusive practices. This was achieved by providing different forms of support to the school, neighbouring schools and the community in which the school is based (DoE, 2005b). The participants were asked to indicate their roles and responsibilities as an ILST member, their responses are indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Roles and Responsibilities of ILST Members

			Responses	
			n	Percent
Roles and Responsibilities	Assisting teachers in accommodating learners needs		32	20.3%
	Assessment of learner's learning needs		26	16.5%
	Teaching		27	17.1%
	Developing strategies to address learning barriers		20	12.7%
	Implementing strategies to address learning barriers		20	12.7%
	Liaising with the DBST		18	11.4%
	Liaising with community organisations regarding provision of services		13	8.2%
	Special Education		2	1.3%
Total		158	100.0%	

ILST members spend the majority of their time on activities assisting teachers in accommodating learning needs (20.3%), followed by assessment (16.5%) and teaching (17%). A Likert scale revealed that 46.6% of FSS are unable to provide special education support to their communities and neighbouring schools, often this is because they lack the resources. EWP6 indicates that FSS may allocate a learner support educator to pursue the task of collaborating and liaising with other stakeholders, communities, parents and support teams to assist in maximising inclusive practices and promoting learner success (DoE, 2005b). Only 7% of the sample was represented by learner support educators which may contribute to the poor response rates indicating community involvement regarding provision of services.

Participants were asked to indicate whether their experience in working collaboratively with parents, teachers and community organisations with the aim of supporting learners' with barriers had been positive. Majority of the participants indicated that working collaboratively with parents, teachers and community organisations was a positive experience. Collaborating with parents proved to be least favourable (24.4% of the sample). These findings correlate with previous research findings which indicated that the communities the FSS are meant to support and receive support from are unaware of the ILST and hence support provision is hindered (Kalenga, 2011). Benefits of parental and community involvement according to Inclusion International (2009) is invaluable to the success of inclusion. Filler and Xu (2008) further emphasise the critical role of parental involvement in the success of IE, as they discuss how family involvement and beliefs could impact the learner and other related systems like the schooling environment.

EWP6 indicates that FSS may allocate a learner support educator to pursue the task of collaborating and liaising with other stakeholders, communities, parents and support teams to assist in maximising inclusive practices and promoting learner success (DoE, 2005b). Only 7% of the sample was represented by learner support educators which may contribute to the poor response rates indicating community involvement regarding provision of services. Additionally, the inadequate support and resources provided to the schools negatively impacts their ability to provide supportive roles to communities and neighbouring schools which was one of the findings of the study.

Accommodating learners with barriers

From the 25 listed learning barriers, responses were distributed over all three categories: designated, non-designated and none. All the learning barriers listed were experienced by learners within FSS to varying degrees at each school. Learning barriers, autism and an inflexible curriculum were the only barriers that were not selected as a designated learning barrier. Autism was in the top three learning barriers in the category 'none' which represented those learning barriers not experienced by learners within the FSS. Learning barriers, 'inappropriate language/teaching language' and 'hearing impairments' were also amidst the top three learning barriers not found in the evaluated FSS.

Although FSS aim to cater to diverse learning needs, 36.7% of learning barriers that were experienced by learners within the FSS reportedly were not recognised by the DoE and not allocated extra funding. Data within the non-designated category showed no significance with regard to which learning barriers were unrecognised by DoE but rather all listed barriers were selected with a response rate ranging between 2.7-5.7%. The 19.9% of learning barriers experienced by learners within the FSS which participants indicated were recognised by DoE and allocated extra funding predominantly included: physical disabilities, visual impairments, socio-economic deprivation, moderate-profound intellectual disabilities and specific learning disabilities.

Participants were asked to comment on the learning barriers experienced in their schools and the extent to which they are accommodated. Comments revealed a concern regarding referral of learners experiencing learning barriers. Some participants were pleased with the assistance offered by the DBST in referring learners for assessment. Other participants indicated they were dissatisfied with the referral system and unable to accommodate all learning barriers as "[their]

school is not a special school”. In the above-mentioned cases it appears that referrals are perceived as either a means of assessment and intervention or a means of transferring learners with barriers to other schools considered more equipped to accommodate such learning needs (special schools).

Some participants indicated strategies to addressing learning barriers and suggested that early intervention is beneficial to supporting learners with barriers. One participant indicated that this is done by collaboration between the educator and learner support educator in developing relevant support programmes. Other FSS reported that the lack of early intervention caused barriers for learners. Other strategies to accommodate learning barriers included curriculum enrichment computerised programmes, collaboration with educator supports, parents, and development of support schedules/programmes. The dominant form of intervention was multilevel teaching (useful in adapting teaching material to accommodate the different learning needs within the classroom) for which teachers received training from DoE. Oversized classrooms however are said to pose a barrier to this form of intervention in some schools which are under resourced.

The majority of participants stressed the need for support from DoE to provide for the diversity of learning barriers experienced by FSS. Currently teachers within FSS feel they are solely responsible for catering for the diversity of learning barriers presented within their schools as the DoE has shown little support. Support services emphasised by participants included funding, support staff, training, transport for learners and other resources (visual and hearing aids). A school’s capacity to cater for the diverse learning needs and barriers as expected of a FSS is largely dependent on the available support services as expressed by the research participants.

Support services

The FSS addressing a diversity of learning needs, requires a variety of support services like learning aids, technical support, professional staff support, support staff (teacher assistants), financial support, training, and support from the DBST in assessment and interventions. These support systems assist FSS educators in eradicating or minimising learning barriers experienced by their learners and also serve as a resource and support system for neighbouring schools and communities. Participants indicate the extent to which support services were made available to their FSS. A summary of the results are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2: Availability of Support Services

		Percent
Support Provided	Strongly disagree	25.4%
	Disagree	15.1%
	Neutral	16.7%
	Agree	31.8%
	Strongly agree	11.0%
Total		100.0%

Results showed that a total of 40.5% (disagree and strongly disagree categories) of participants felt that support services were not made available to their schools while 42.8% (agree and strongly agree categories) of participants held a contradictory position. The difference of only 2.8% in indicated support provision could possibly be linked to the diversity of support provided

to particular FSS based on their needs and existing barriers presented in their schools. This was suggested in earlier data analysis, where the existence of learning barriers was inconsistent between each participating FSS.

The support services found to be lacking in FSS are represented in Table 3 from highest response rates to lowest.

Table 3: Support Services Not Provided

Disagree-Strongly Disagree Combined frequencies		Percent
Supports not provided	Resources to support learners i.e., hearing aids	46.7%
	Technical support	46.4%
	Professionals involved in support staff	32.7%
	Support: Teacher Assistants	30.0%
	Support teachers qualified	21.2%
	Accessible DBST for assessment and intervention	14.2%
	Training	8.9%

The findings are consistent with those factors which were identified as barriers to adequately accommodating learners with learning barriers. Participants indicated that there is a lack of resources such as visual and hearing aids to accommodate learning barriers. Technical support was the second leading support factor considered to be lacking from FSS and the third factor was professional support (psychologists, occupational therapists, speech therapists). However, the percentage of responses which indicated that professional support was made available was comparable. The latter was also evident alongside the support factor, ‘teacher assistants’ which appeared to yield similar response rates in categories ‘support services not provided’ and support services provided’. The last two factors listed under ‘supports not provided’ were found at the top two of support factors provided to FSS.

Support services made available to FSS are represented in Table 4 from highest response rates to lowest.

Table 4: Support Services Provided

Agree-Strongly Agree Combined frequencies		Percent
Supports provided	Training	50.5%
	Accessible DBST for assessment and intervention	48.2%
	Support teachers qualified	30.8%
	Professionals involved in support staff	29.8%
	Support: Teacher Assistants	28.2%
	Technical support resources available	9.5%
	Resources to support learners	3.2%

Training and accessibility to the DBST for assessment and intervention purposes received the highest response rates. Those participants who did not receive training indicated that they are willing to receive training relevant to FSS. In the previous section, educators specified that multi-

level teaching was their most effective strategy to overcoming learning barriers in the classroom and this skill was developed through training supplied by DoE.

Although participants found the training beneficial, some participants found that the training sessions were too short and did not appreciate that the DBST failed to follow-up with educators in applying the skills or knowledge gained during the training.

Participant 2: "But time was not enough and no following up... [from]DBST to assist educators in filling in gaps"

Other support made available to FSS was qualified support staff and teacher assistants however, it was evident that in many FSS this support is not accessible. The technical support and resources to accommodate learners received the lowest response rates in the category 'supports provided to FSS' and the highest response rates in the category 'supports not provided to FSS'. This is a clear indicator that these two factors are most neglected within FSS.

From the support services made available to FSS, participants indicated that the most helpful was the training and accessibility to the DBST for assessment and intervention purposes. Schools which have access to teacher assistants and professional staff found this support beneficial. Least effective support included: resources to support learners and technical support. This appeared to be positively correlated to the lack of support from the aforementioned.

Barriers Experienced in Implementing EWP6 within FSS

Participants mentioned the following barriers: a lack of resources and technical support, overcrowded classrooms to support individualised teaching and learning and poor collaboration with parents and communities. Qualitative data indicates that due to a lack of support from DoE with regard to funding, training, and resources (human and material) FSS staff/educators find it difficult to fulfill their roles in accommodating learners with barriers:

Participant 3: "Facilities are not adequate to the needs."

Participant 4: "The present ratio of 1:35 in primary schools has a great effect in implementation of inclusive education. Most learners with barriers demand individual attention compared to normal learners."

Participant 5: "We have high numbers of learners in the classroom that's makes it difficult to deal with those learners."

Overcrowded classrooms made it difficult to provide individualised teaching and teachers indicated the need for support and additional resources to address challenges. Teachers find a FSS classroom, results in some learners feeling neglected since learners requiring more support receive more attention. Overcrowded classrooms further aggravates this problem as teachers are unable to create a conducive learning environment.

Participant 6: "More attention is given to learners with barriers & less is given to learner with non-barriers..."

Participant 7: "...The learners with barriers seem to get special attention from teacher assistants and teachers in such a way those who do not have specific learning barriers seem to feel as if they are neglected and some change behaviours."

Accommodating diversity of learning barriers is proven a challenging experience for FSS which are still adapting to the associated roles and responsibilities. Alongside the lack of resources

to comply with their roles and responsibilities, FSS feel that they lack the support from DoE/the DBST.

Participant 8: "As a full-service school we admit learners with different challenges, as a school we try to assist at our own level but when it calls for the Department to intervene it becomes a challenge".

Participant 9: "District support is difficult to access."

Intervention requested from DoE/the DBST involved assessment and referrals. The process included paperwork which is difficult to manage with an busy workload. Assessments are necessary to determine the means of intervention required to minimise learning barriers. Assessment results indicate the teaching and learning methods required to assist learners but, the process maybe lengthy. Some respondents indicate that lack of early intervention caused difficulty in assisting learners with barriers and resulted in neglect.

Lack of training resulted in low levels of confidence when teachers needed to fulfill their roles addressing learning barriers. Although 50.2% of respondents reported receiving training, educators do not feel confident addressing learning barriers. Training provided to assist within the classroom and address the diversity of barriers was limited to courses (multi-level teaching, bullying and other training involved understanding the fundamentals of IE and FSS). Additionally, respondents felt that the training lacked support in applying the knowledge gained and insufficient time was allocated for the workshops.

Participant 10: "It is not easily implemented because of lack of knowledge to human resources."

Participant 11: "...Educators need to be equipped with specialisation in inclusive education and regular workshop..."

Some FSS schools indicated that they are well-equipped to support a diversity of learning barriers and can provide support to neighbouring schools and the community but, this is not the case with those schools that still need support. With the lack of resources and support, other FSS are unable to provide support to neighbouring schools and communities.

Participants also indicated that communities and parents lack of involvement and support posed a barrier to implementing EWP6 within their FSS. Communities and parents are not equipped with the knowledge regarding FSS and what they represent which resulted in parents withdrawing their children from the schools, reluctance in accepting learning barriers and lack of post-school support from community stakeholders.

Participant 12: "It was not easy for [our] school in particular because the community thought the school has been transformed into a special school and the parents removed their children from the school."

Participant 13: "Learners who are put on programmes do not get the assistance when they exit our school. What is the use of helping these learners if the assistance is not constant and sustainable?"

Collaboration and support from all relevant stakeholders is seemingly lacking due to lack of knowledge on the part of the community and lack of practical training for teachers and caused a barrier to implementing EWP6 within FSS.

Strategies Used to Overcome Challenges

First phase FSS challenges in implementation have not been experienced in vain, with FSS strategizing means of overcoming these challenges. Participants were asked to comment on how they would overcome the challenges faced by their school in implementing EWP6. Participants suggested that they are unable to generate solutions regarding overcrowded classrooms as this is a departmental issue (norms and standards). Some of the solutions which were provided included:

- Extra classes as oppose to the challenge of providing individualised attention in overcrowded classrooms.
- Involve stakeholders, school council, learner support and parents to assist in accommodating learning needs and closing the gap on teaching and learning resources.
- Submitting a list of teaching and learning needs to the DoE to address the lack of resources (human and material).
- Utilise SIAS to assist with referral of learners for assessment and intervention.
- Develop a support programme for learner's unique learning needs.

Participant 14: "Unfortunately we are unable to implement individual attention but we do extra classes to support learners. From time to time we also invite LSA's [learner support educators] from our Circuit Offices to assist us with challenges. We also try our best to involve all stakeholders e.g., parents, community and relevant qualified professionals..."

The inadequate support from the DBST/DoE and insufficient training negatively impacted the referral/intervention process and the capacity to which teachers felt confident in addressing learning barriers. Respondent's lack of confidence emanated in their responses as many felt helpless and indicated that more training was needed. Some participants indicate that they operate on a "trial and error" framework when addressing learning barriers. A strong indicator of support is suggested as a means of overcoming this barrier as other respondents indicate that they work closely with the DBST and school staff in developing workshops or programmes.

Participant 15: "Its just a matter of trial & error situation as really what can one do with a grade 9 learner who can not identify sounds nor write"

The lack of parent and community involvement was due to poor dissemination of information to the community regarding the nature of the schools. School principals and support staff indicated that this had resulted in the schools having to contact and meet with parents on numerous occasions to address the matter and clarify the nature of the school. Additionally, parents were enlightened on learning barriers and the importance of referrals. However, some parents still showed reluctance to the referral process, assessment and intervention. Some participants indicated that the DBST and other NGO's are then involved in supporting parents or disseminating information. To improve parental involvement, the schools involve them in NGO initiated projects held at the school.

Participant 16: "School has various activities that involves parent to come to school e.g., projects by NGO's"

Participant 17: "Continuous parent/school sessions where we give talks relating to the above problems [referral process for learners with barriers]. Also individual sessions are given to explain why a parent needs to sign and allow for a referral to be processed"

Positive Experiences and Perceptions on Implementing EWP6 in FSS

The majority of participants responded to questions regarding their experiences in implementing EWP6 in FSS from a social liberalist perspective. They emphasised that EWP6 is favoured as it promotes equal, quality education, in a learning environment which is free from discrimination and adheres to democratic human rights.

Participant 18: "All learners can be accommodated at the same school. Democratic Constitution guarantees (section 12) that everyone has the right not to be treated in a cruel, inhuman and degrading way..."

Participants indicated that their experience had given them an appreciation in accepting and accommodating a diversity of learning barriers and acknowledge that all learners are able to learn despite their barriers to learning. A provision of quality equal education opportunities was said to involve eradicating the divisions of special education and mainstream and aligning these to provide an education that meets all learning needs.

Respondents shared that IE had fostered an ethos of communal benefits that encouraged learners to later engage in employment activities that ultimately contributes to the country's economy. Furthermore, IE nurtured an atmosphere of cohesion and acceptance; this is funnelled into the community when FSS provides support to neighbouring schools. Education within FSS is more than curriculum delivery but rather the provision of care and support.

Participant 19: "Our learners now understand and work to each other very well. They accept learners with barriers. Those who have barriers to learning they feel comfortable to be at school. No discrimination to each other. They enjoy to be at school."

It was recommended that the synergy of FSS be carried to all schools to encourage execution of IE. Although participants welcome IE within their schools and recommend it to other schools, they emphasise the need for support for successful implementation of EWP6. Despite the tough transition from mainstream to FSS, participants acknowledge that with support and time schools may be able to fully engage the ethos and principles of IE and EWP6 goals.

Participant 20: "Though it was difficult at first, but what made me happy is that I have seen a great improvement in both the academic and social life of the learners. So that what keeps us going and motivated."

This study examined actions taken by ILST members in implementing EWP6 (the roles and responsibilities, support provision to school, learners and communities) and the extent to which learning barriers were accommodated. These factors were used as a measure to determine the extent to which the policy objectives and inclusivity is achieved within FSS. Support services provided to FSS were evaluated and participants indicated a significant finding of poor technical and material resources/support. According to DoE (2005b) support services are dependent on learning and teaching needs but may include interventions (curriculum support, support for educators, training, therapeutic intervention, professional services), as well as physical and material resources (teaching aids, hearing aids, ramps, and accessibility features).

The overall result showed that many FSS, lack the technical and material supports. Although the former (technical support) may be considered unnecessary to teaching, the latter (material supports - hearing aids, glasses, and other educational resources) should be made more readily available. This argument is supported by the finding that physical disabilities, visual impairments, socio-economic deprivation, moderate-profound intellectual disabilities, behavioural

disorders and specific learning disabilities are the most common learning barriers experienced and rely on material/educational resources.

The microsystem involves the direct interaction that a child has with various structures such as his/her parents, school and peers (Shaffer & Kipp, 2007). Issues found on this level included the interaction between the teacher and learners. Involvement of the parent in the learners schooling not only impacts on the learners' progress but also on the teachers' ability to maximise IE practices (mesosystem). Filler and Xu (2008) indicate that interventions that could promote parental involvement help teachers understand the microsystem of the learner. The mesosystem represents the interaction between two or more structures of which the child has direct interaction (Geldenhys & Wevers, 2013). Filler and Xu (2008, p.64) found that some parents do not fully understand IE and refer to "special education as a place and not asset of services intended to support the successful education of children in the regular educational setting". The macrosystem involves structures which do not interact directly with any of the above systems however it has an impact on each system including the learner (Mayaba, 2008). Teachers feel that learners with barriers should be taught at a special school and parents of learners without barriers feel their children should or can not be educated in the same schooling environment as those learners with learning barriers. In a country that has been defined by segregation, EWP6 and FSS have been a difficult adjustment.

The study presented with limitations: the sample group was delimited (only represented ILST). This impacted on the generalizability of the study; the study delimited the sample group to include only first phase FSS and whilst the researchers expected that this phase will provide more rich data, this delimitation also impacted on the sample size; the sample represented FSS within the KZN region as opposed to FSS nation-wide, hence findings cannot be generalised to include other provinces; IE within mainstream and resource centres/special schools were not evaluated so findings regarding the implementation of IE and EWP6 cannot be generalised to these schooling environments and finally the questionnaire was designed to address FSS specifically.

CONCLUSION

FSS in KZN have experienced multiple successes yet are currently struggling to fully encompass the goals of EWP6 within FSS. The success experienced at present include the enrolment of learners experiencing diverse learning barriers, optimistic attitudes to the possible benefits of inclusive education and theoretical knowledge of multi-level teaching. The following recommendations are suggested are a result of the findings:

- Specialised training for ILST members to develop skills, community support, liaison with community members and NGO's, and FSS to better understand their role of support.
- Resources (material and human) and support to FSS to equip FSS to support neighbouring schools.
- Promotion of parental involvement (value and belief system in each family needs to be acknowledged) and FSS needs to navigate families and communities to a system of inclusion.
- Requisition of services needs to be convenient and efficient.

- Extend training time (theoretical and practical), follow up sessions assist in the assimilation of skills taught.
- Teachers could facilitate their own career development through reflection and collaboration with colleagues.
- FSS may share their experiences, growth and development to facilitate and inspire a positive paradigm shift in the implementation of IE.
- Smaller classrooms may improve teacher attitudes to inclusive practices and allow for successful implementation of IE and multi-level teaching.
- The DoE needs to make provision for adequate resources, to ensure all learners learning needs are met.
- ILST members need to be role models, promote awareness and the benefits of IE and address concerns of parents and communities.
- Conduct needs analysis within each FSS community to determine and specify FSS activities to achieve EWP6 goals.
- Community outreach to develop the needed support in overcoming barriers to implementation (i.e., teacher support groups, business affiliations to provide resources, fundraisers for financial support, parental support in maximising inclusion practices).

For successful implementation of EWP6 in FSS and subsequent phases of implementation, this study discussed barriers to implementation as well as strategies developed by teachers involved in phase one FSS to overcome such barriers. According to Anderson (2004) this approach to evaluation allows for ongoing progress as policy objectives and practices to implementation allow for an understanding of whether actions are promoting or demoting in nature and suggest possible modifications. Studies on FSS and IE indicated that further development of FSS could benefit from policy coherency, clarity of the objectives, and contextually relevant strategic frameworks and could also provide guidance on which partnerships may be appropriate in supporting the objectives of FSS (Cummings et al., 2007).

Participants indicated experiencing multiple barriers in implementing EWP6 within the FSS context and some, found means (with some measure of success) of overcoming these challenges. FSS are yet to find suitable strategies to put policy objectives into practice as many felt overwhelmed and unsure of how to completely fulfill the objectives for IE within a FSS. The reasons for this varied but most commonly represented a lack of training. ILST members are unable to fulfill their roles predominantly due to inadequate support services which was also noted by Makhalemele and Payne-van Staden (2018). To conclude, FSS are faced with challenges in fully implementing EWP6. Although some schools have reported positively on this experience many indicate that this transition is an ongoing process which requires a considerable amount of support from all stakeholders.

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