




Assessing the School Agenda on Inclusive Education: What is the Intake of South African Teachers?



Thanduxolo Albert Nomtshongwana¹ , Andrea Mqondiso¹ 
& Pateka Pamella Jama¹ 

¹ Department of Continuing Professional Teacher Development, Faculty of Education, Walter Sisulu University, South Africa.

ABSTRACT

The South African education system has been perceived to have deteriorated to lower rates in the world. While there might be various factors at play, such as teacher workloads and continuously changing curriculum policies, for instance, one wonders how teachers are supported for the effective implementation of inclusive education (IE) for the benefit of learners with barriers (LEBLs) who are in mainstream schools (MSs). This research thus embarks on a journey to unravel the intricate tapestry of South African school agendas concerning inclusive education, with a specific focus on the perspectives and practices of teachers. The study thus adopted and engaged a qualitative approach and case study design for data collection, from a small purposefully selected sample of 5 principals and 15 teachers through individual interviews. The paper reports on thematically analysed data, which reveal that: majority of principals and teachers were not proficient enough with IE policy documents. Furthermore, they did not receive sufficient training on the IE policy, nor were they oriented on how to cope with high workloads. This paper advocates the Teacher Support Inclusive Collaboration (TESIC) Model, which can assist in IE implementation.

Correspondence

Thanduxolo Albert
Nomtshongwana
Email:
thanduxolon1@gmail.com

Publication History

Received: 23rd April, 2025
Accepted: 20th August, 2025
Published online:
23rd October, 2025

To Cite this Article:

Nomtshongwana, Thanduxolo
Albert, Andrea Mqondiso and
Pateka Pamella Jama. “
Assessing the School Agenda on
Inclusive Education: What is the
Intake of South African
Teachers?” *E-Journal of
Humanities, Arts and Social
Sciences* 6, no. 11 (2025): 2729-
2744,
[https://doi.org/10.38159/ehass.
20256111](https://doi.org/10.38159/ehass.20256111)

Keywords: South African Education System, MSs, TESIC Model, Inclusive Education (IE), LEBLs, Support, Commitment.

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education (IE) as a concept has acquired considerable attention in recent literature. Notwithstanding advocacy for inclusive practices, the genuine implementation of IE has often been rocky due to various factors.¹ Literature often portrays inclusive education as more of a world of promise than a conquered real world, as teachers still grapple with actual implementation.² Consequently, many learners with special educational needs, although they find themselves in inclusive classes, are still given minimal support or isolated in such classes.³ Furthermore, research shows an inconsistency between the ideal of inclusive education and its real implementation.⁴ There should be a way of reconciling such gaps among the policy, practice, and ideal, while inclusive education stands as a cornerstone of modern educational paradigms. It is renowned for its pillars of advocating for equitable access and opportunities for all

¹ Untung Rahardja et al., “Analysis of Covid 19 Data in Indonesia Using Supervised Emerging Patterns,” *APTISI Transactions on Management (ATM)* 6, no. 1 (2022): 91–101.

² K. Schwab, *Stakeholder Capitalism: A Global Economy That Works for Progress, People and Planet* (John Wiley & Sons, 2021).

³ Schwab, *Stakeholder Capitalism: A Global Economy That Works for Progress, People and Planet*.

⁴ Peder Haug, “Understanding Inclusive Education: Ideals and Reality,” *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research* 19, no. 3 (2017): 206–17.

students, regardless of their diverse abilities or backgrounds.⁵ In the context of South Africa, a nation marked by its rich cultural tapestry and historical complexities, it can be said that the pursuit of inclusive education holds profound significance in fostering social cohesion⁶ and dismantling barriers to learning.⁷ Amidst this backdrop, understanding the perceptions and practices of South African teachers regarding inclusive education emerges as a pivotal area of inquiry.⁸

Against the backdrop of historical injustices and persistent socio-economic disparities, the quest for inclusive education in South Africa transcends mere educational reform; it embodies a collective aspiration towards a more just, equitable, and inclusive society and social cohesion.⁹ Thus, this study not only serves as a scholarly endeavour but also as a catalyst for fostering dialogue, collaboration, and meaningful action towards realizing the vision of inclusive education in the South African context despite the complex and multifaceted realities.¹⁰

The implementation of IE in the South African education system is exacerbated by many factors.¹¹ The education system itself is perceived to be in a crisis that manifests in recent protests, which often turn into crime and different forms of unbecoming behaviour that can negatively impact the delivery of quality education in public schools.¹² Research indicates that school violence, teacher burnout, HIV/ AIDS, drug abuse, and teenage pregnancy are becoming chronic challenges.¹³ With Grade 12 results remaining low and universities complaining about first-year students who could not competently read and write, the quality of education generally alleged in South Africa is currently professed to be lower than ever.¹⁴ As general teaching and learning are affected by many factors, as indicated above, this raises a concern about how LEBLs suffer the consequences, knowing that they need additional support.

For the implementation of IE in classrooms, it is imperative to explore the conceptual understanding of principals and teachers regarding IE principles in general and EWP6 in particular. Even though South Africa has been counted among countries that have good policies on IE, there has been a need to find out how principals and teachers comprehend and conceptualise inclusive education in mainstream schools where these principles are to be accomplished.¹⁵ Research indicates that IE should not be implemented for the sake of conformity but with a sense of responsibility; otherwise, it can remain a ‘mainstream dumping.’

This research thus embarks on a journey to unravel the intricate tapestry of South African school agendas concerning inclusive education, with a specific focus on the perspectives and practices of teachers. By delving into the nuanced landscape of inclusive education within South African schools, this study seeks to shed light on the current situation, pinpointing both strengths and areas for improvement towards narrowing the gap between the ideal of IE and its reality through acknowledging the realities of inclusive classes.¹⁶ The central inquiry revolves around uncovering the intake of South African teachers

⁵ Rüyam Küçüksüleymanoğlu, “Principles of Equality,” in *Creating Positive and Inclusive Change in Educational Environments* (IGI Global Scientific Publishing, 2025), 23–52, <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-5782-8.ch002>.

⁶ Asma Mehan, *The Affective Agency of Public Space* (De Gruyter, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783111035642>.

⁷ Maria Francisca Muñoz-Oyarce, Manuel Monzalve-Macaya, and Sergio Sepúlveda-Vallejos, “Teachers’ Social Representations of Inclusive Education: A Systematic Review of Literature 2010-2020,” *Int J Eval & Res Educ ISSN 2252*, no. 8822 (2023): 8822.

⁸ Maryam Adewunmi, “Exploring Teachers’ Roles in Implementing Inclusive Education during Times of Crisis,” *Social Sciences Humanities and Education Journal (SHE Journal)*, September 1, 2024, 444–56.

⁹ Muñoz-Oyarce, Monzalve-Macaya, and Sepúlveda-Vallejos, “Teachers’ Social Representations of Inclusive Education: A Systematic Review of Literature 2010-2020.”

¹⁰ Patricia Alvarez McHattan and Audra Parker, “Purposeful Preparation: Longitudinally Exploring Inclusion Attitudes of General and Special Education Pre-Service Teachers,” *Teacher Education and Special Education* 36, no. 3 (2013): 186–203.

¹¹ T.F. Hodgson and S. Khumalo, “Too Many Children Left behind: Exclusion in the South African Inclusive Education System. With a Focus on the Umkhanyakude District, KwaZulu-Natal (A SECTION27 Report),” *South Africa: Ministry of Health Report*, 2016.

¹² M Camille Hoffman et al., “Measures of Maternal Stress and Mood in Relation to Preterm Birth,” *Obstetrics & Gynecology* 127, no. 3 (2016): 545–52.

¹³ J Hay and C Beyers, “An Analysis of the South African Model of Inclusive Education with Regard to Social Justice,” *Africa Education Review* 8, no. 2 (2011): 234–46; Andrea Mqondiso Buka and Jacob Maisha Molepo, “A Psycho-Pedagogic Approach for Inclusive Classes in Disadvantaged Rural Primary Schools in South Africa: Advancing Teaching Practices,” *International Journal of Educational Sciences* 12, no. 1 (2016): 38–44.

¹⁴ Hay and Beyers, “An Analysis of the South African Model of Inclusive Education with Regard to Social Justice.”

¹⁵ Dikeledi Mahlo and Anna Hugo, “Learning Support Teachers’ Views on the Implementation of Inclusive Education in the Foundation Phase in Gauteng, South Africa,” *Journal of Social Sciences* 37, no. 3 (2013): 301–6.

¹⁶ Suresh Maganti and Narayana Prasad Padhy, “A Feedback-Based Flexible Compensation Strategy for a Weak-Grid-Tied Current-Controlled Converter under Unbalanced and Harmonic Conditions,” *IEEE Transactions on Industry Applications* 58, no. 6 (2022): 7739–53.

regarding inclusive education. By examining their perceptions, attitudes, and preparedness¹⁷ In implementing inclusive practices,¹⁸ this paper aims to provide valuable insights that can inform policymaking, teacher training programs, and pedagogical approaches tailored to the diverse needs of learners.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In discussing the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa, it's crucial to consider various factors that impact the intake of teachers. Following is the breakdown of a few significant key points: support, barriers, awareness, commitment, and teaching and learning factors.

Support: The cultural context substantially impacts the conceptualization and teaching practices in inclusive classes.¹⁹ Recent literature on ICs emphasizes the crucial role of teachers' beliefs, understanding, and attitudes in the effectiveness of inclusive practices.²⁰ In the same vein, O'Reilly and Colum state that teachers' professional character and beliefs are painted as key factors in shaping inclusive classroom environments.²¹ As far back as 2015, Dev & Haynes pointed out that inclusive classroom settings can provide a more positive environment for both teachers and learners experiencing barriers to learning disabilities compared to isolated settings.²² Teachers play a crucial role in fostering inclusive classrooms. There are many barriers faced by teachers when supporting the needs of all learners, including those with disabilities, and that may often result in stress.²³ Various strategies to help teachers cope with stress need to be in place.

Awareness of inclusive education among teachers is also distinguished as a factor that can result in positive outcomes for learners.²⁴ Inclusive pedagogy, among many others, is an essential phenomenon²⁵ in the literature, focusing on integrating practice and scholarship to develop evidence of inclusive teaching approaches.²⁶ High efficacy beliefs and positive attitudes towards IE are highlighted as crucial in promoting inclusive classroom environments.²⁷

The level of support provided to teachers plays a substantial role in their willingness and ability to grasp inclusive education. This support can come in various forms such as professional development programs, resources, mentorship, and ongoing training.²⁸ In South Africa, initiatives like the Department of Basic Education's Inclusive Education Policy Framework aim to provide guidance and support to educators.²⁹

¹⁷ Muñoz-Oyarce, Monzalve-Macaya, and Sepúlveda-Vallejos, "Teachers' Social Representations of Inclusive Education: A Systematic Review of Literature 2010-2020."

¹⁸ Erica O'Reilly and Miriam Colum, "Newly Qualified Teachers and Inclusion in Higher Education: Policy, Practice and Preparation," *Journal of Higher Education Policy And Leadership Studies* 2, no. 1 (2021): 64–78.

¹⁹ Ritanjali Panigrahi, Praveen Ranjan Srivastava, and Dheeraj Sharma, "Online Learning: Adoption, Continuance, and Learning Outcome—A Review of Literature," *International Journal of Information Management* 43 (December 2018): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2018.05.005>.

²⁰ Muñoz-Oyarce, Monzalve-Macaya, and Sepúlveda-Vallejos, "Teachers' Social Representations of Inclusive Education: A Systematic Review of Literature 2010-2020."

²¹ O'Reilly and Colum, "Newly Qualified Teachers and Inclusion in Higher Education: Policy, Practice and Preparation."

²² Poonam Dev and Leslie Haynes, "Teacher Perspectives on Suitable Learning Environments for Students with Disabilities: What Have We Learned from Inclusive, Resource, and Self-Contained Classrooms?," *The International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences: Annual Review* 9, no. 1 (2015): 53–64, <https://doi.org/10.18848/1833-1882/CGP/v09/53554>.

²³ Thanduxolo Nomtshongwana and Andrea Mqondiso Buka, "Teachers' Experiences on Stress during COVID-19: A South African Case Study," *E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences* 4 (2023): 1–17; Robert William Barnard and Ruan Hendrik Henn, "Overcoming Learning Obstacles: Strategies for Supporting Students with Diverse Needs," *OALib* 10, no. 08 (2023): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1110509>.

²⁴ Thanduxolo Nomtshongwana, Manyakaza Aviwe, and Buka Andria Mqondiso, "Factors Influencing Implementing Inclusive Education in Chris Hani East District, South Africa," *International Journal of Studies in Inclusive Education* 2, no. 1 (April 20, 2025): 51–59, <https://doi.org/10.38140/ijisie.v2i1.1851>.

²⁵ Tawanda Majoko, "Teacher Key Competencies for Inclusive Education: Tapping Pragmatic Realities of Zimbabwean Special Needs Education Teachers," *Sage Open* 9, no. 1 (2019): 2158244018823455.

²⁶ Lani Florian and Kristine Black-Hawkins, "Exploring Inclusive Pedagogy," *British Educational Research Journal* 37, no. 5 (2011): 813–28.

²⁷ O'Reilly and Colum, "Newly Qualified Teachers and Inclusion in Higher Education: Policy, Practice and Preparation."

²⁸ Florian and Black-Hawkins, "Exploring Inclusive Pedagogy."

²⁹ Buka and Molepo, "A Psycho-Pedagogic Approach for Inclusive Classes in Disadvantaged Rural Primary Schools in South Africa: Advancing Teaching Practices"; Majoko, "Teacher Key Competencies for Inclusive Education: Tapping Pragmatic Realities of Zimbabwean Special Needs Education Teachers."

Barriers: While IE aims to provide equal opportunities for all students, including those with disabilities, to learn together in the same classroom, there are various barriers that hinder effective teaching and learning in inclusive classes. It is generally attested by literature that teachers experience numerous barriers when it comes to implementing IE.³⁰ These barriers can include a lack of resources, inadequate training, large class sizes, cultural biases, and systemic inequalities, which all may lead to stress.³¹ Addressing these barriers requires a multi-faceted approach involving government policies, community involvement, and targeted support for educators. Authors affirm the views of Osero and Abels et al., who opine that teachers' lack of knowledge and understanding about principles of IE, their negative attitudes towards inclusive pedagogy, and their lack of developing innovative, useful inclusive strategies can also contribute to their stress.³² Furthermore, the lack of basic resources, such as specialized teaching materials and infrastructure suitable for diverse learners, remains a critical challenge.³³ The lack of adequate training and support for teachers in implementing inclusive practices is one of the critical aspects to be addressed. Teachers may not have adequate skills, knowledge, or confidence to handle the diverse needs of students with disabilities in inclusive classes.³⁴

Awareness: An awareness campaign for inclusive education is critical in promoting understanding, acceptance, and implementation of inclusive practices in educational settings by teachers.³⁵ This awareness needs to extend beyond theoretical knowledge to practical strategies for creating inclusive classrooms. Research also indicates that efforts to raise awareness can include training workshops, seminars, and educational campaigns.³⁶ Such campaigns aim to increase knowledge, change attitudes, and foster a supportive environment for students with diverse needs. Stakeholders, including parents, teachers, students, and the community at large, can also be incorporated into such endeavours. William and Ligembe correctly point out that such programmes assist in reducing stigma and stereotypes, dismiss myths, and build support for inclusive practices as they offer knowledge and understanding about the benefits of inclusive education and strategies for creating inclusive environments.³⁷ William and Ligembe argue that most teachers frequently lack training in inclusive practices; as a result, they struggle to effectively handle challenges experienced by learners experiencing barriers in their classrooms.³⁸ Furthermore, raising awareness campaigns about inclusive education policies, teaching strategies, and the importance of creating inclusive classrooms capacitates teachers to effectively support all learners in inclusive classes. One of the advantages of these awareness campaigns is to promote the allocation of resources, such as

³⁰ O'Reilly and Colum, "Newly Qualified Teachers and Inclusion in Higher Education: Policy, Practice and Preparation"; Muñoz-Oyarce, Monzalve-Macaya, and Sepúlveda-Vallejos, "Teachers' Social Representations of Inclusive Education: A Systematic Review of Literature 2010-2020."

³¹ Kofi Nseibo et al., "Learning Together: The Dynamics of Training Teachers for Disability Inclusion in South Africa," in *Frontiers in Education*, vol. 7 (Frontiers Media SA, 2022), 999814; Gorica Popovska Nalevska, Filip Popovski, and Hristina Dimova Popovska, "Higher Education for Students with Disabilities in the Republic of Macedonia: Challenges and Perspectives," *International Journal of Research Studies in Education* 11, no. 13 (2022): 85–100; Frank Akiyoo, Herme Mosha, and E Ogoti, "Adequacy of Teaching and Learning Resources for Implementing Inclusive Education in Primary Schools in Arusha Region, Tanzania," *International Journal of Innovative Research and Development* 11, no. 2 (2022).

³² Peterson Ondieki Osero, "Challenges Teachers Encounter in Implementing Inclusive Education in Public Primary Schools in Nyamira County, Kenya," *International Journal for Innovation Education and Research* 3, no. 3 (2015): 217–30; Simone Abels, Brigitte Koliander, and Thomas Plotz, "Conflicting Demands of Chemistry and Inclusive Teaching—a Video-Based Case Study," *Education Sciences* 10, no. 3 (2020): 50.

³³ Dita Nimante and Maija Kokare, "Perspective of Teachers on Their Competencies for Inclusive Education," *Acta Paedagogica Vilnensia* 49 (2022): 8–22; P.W. Chirwa et al., "The Impacts of COVID-19 on the Sustainable Management of the Forestry Sector in Southern Africa," *International Forestry Review* 23, no. 3 (September 2021): 298–308, <https://doi.org/10.1505/146554821833992785>; Rita Raudeliūnaitė and Eglė Steponėnienė, "Challenges for Primary School Teachers in Ensuring Inclusive Education for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders," *Pedagogika/Pedagogy* 138, no. 2 (2020): 209–25.

³⁴ Nseibo et al., "Learning Together: The Dynamics of Training Teachers for Disability Inclusion in South Africa"; Penda Annie and M Muvombo, "Views of Students on the Inclusion of Learners with Disabilities," *International Journal of Research-Granthaalayah* 7, no. 3 (2019): 142–47.

³⁵ Rahardja et al., "Analysis of Covid 19 Data in Indonesia Using Supervised Emerging Patterns."

³⁶ Annie and Muvombo, "Views of Students on the Inclusion of Learners with Disabilities"; Agnes William and Nestory Ligembe, "Challenges Facing Instructional Supervision in Public Secondary Schools Students in Nyamagana District, Tanzania," *Direct Research Journal of Education and Vocational Studies* 4, no. 1 (2022): 81–88.

³⁷ William and Ligembe, "Challenges Facing Instructional Supervision in Public Secondary Schools Students in Nyamagana District, Tanzania."

³⁸ William and Ligembe, "Challenges Facing Instructional Supervision in Public Secondary Schools Students in Nyamagana District, Tanzania."

specialized teaching materials, assistive technologies, and infrastructure modifications, for schools.³⁹ Evaluation of awareness campaigns is crucial to assess their impact and effectiveness. Neumann, Robson, & Sloan suggest that continuous monitoring and evaluation are essential for the refinement of strategies, identification of areas for improvement, and measurement of outcomes.⁴⁰ The awareness campaigns for inclusive education are crucial for promoting understanding, changing attitudes, and fostering supportive environments for students with diverse needs. In all, these campaigns can contribute to the successful implementation of inclusive practices in schools.

Commitment: Teacher commitment and will are significant aspects of the successful implementation of inclusive education. Various studies reveal that there are prominent fundamentals that crucial impact on teachers' commitment to the implementation of IE, including their knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and self-efficacy.⁴¹ Florian and Camedda recommend that inclusive pedagogy and approaches be integrated into the initial stages of teacher preparation instead of being dealt with as a specialized topic.⁴² As alluded to above, teachers' epistemology and values have an impressive role in adopting and creating innovative strategies for effective inclusive teaching and learning practices.⁴³ Nīmante and Kokare argue that although teachers may perceive and accept that they are ready and have enough skills to teach inclusive classes, they may lack the confidence to do so.⁴⁴ This indicates a gap for additional support and training. The impact of continuous professional teacher development programs can never be emphasized in fostering an inclusive culture. Teacher commitment is prejudiced by an amalgamation of factors, including attitudes, beliefs, self-efficacy, competencies, and professional development. Authors argue that if the above-mentioned factors are addressed, for example, through comprehensive teacher education programs, ongoing support, and a positive school culture, teachers' commitment to inclusive implementation can be an achievable goal.

Teaching and Learning Factors: Effective teaching strategies are essential for meeting the diverse needs of learners in inclusive classrooms. Teachers need to employ a variety of instructional methods, differentiation techniques, and assistive technologies to support students with diverse abilities and learning styles. Collaboration with other professionals, such as special education teachers and therapists, can also enhance the quality of teaching and learning in inclusive settings.

Research has shown that strategies like peer tutoring, cooperative learning, and the involvement of paraprofessionals can significantly enhance the support provided within inclusive education settings.⁴⁵ Additionally, the provision of training, materials, and resources by resource centers can aid schools in effectively implementing inclusive education practice.⁴⁶ Collaboration among parents, healthcare providers, and educators has been identified as a key factor in promoting healthy child

³⁹ Annie and Muvombo, "Views of Students on the Inclusion of Learners with Disabilities."

⁴⁰ Jan Neumann, Andrew Robson, and Diane Sloan, "Monitoring and Evaluation of Strategic Change Programme Implementation—Lessons from a Case Analysis," *Evaluation and Program Planning* 66 (February 2018): 120–32, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2017.09.012>.

⁴¹ Richel C Dapudong, "Teachers' Knowledge and Attitude towards Inclusive Education: Basis for an Enhanced Professional Development Program," *International Journal of Learning & Development* 4, no. 4 (2014): 1–24; Lani Florian and Donatella Camedda, "Enhancing Teacher Education for Inclusion," *European Journal of Teacher Education* (Taylor & Francis, 2020); Yang You et al., "Large Batch Optimization for Deep Learning: Training Bert in 76 Minutes," *ArXiv Preprint ArXiv:1904.00962*, 2019.

⁴² Florian and Camedda, "Enhancing Teacher Education for Inclusion."

⁴³ You et al., "Large Batch Optimization for Deep Learning: Training Bert in 76 Minutes"; Timo Saloviita and Simone Consegna, "Teacher Attitudes in Italy after 40 Years of Inclusion," *British Journal of Special Education* 46, no. 4 (2019): 465–79; Nimante and Kokare, "Perspective of Teachers on Their Competencies for Inclusive Education"; Martin Ogachi Matundura, Kennedy Bota, and Hezborn Koderu, "Teachers' Perceptions of Inclusive Education in Public Primary Schools in Kisii County, Kenya," *The International Journal of Research in Education and Psychology* 08, no. 01 (2022): 54–68, <https://doi.org/10.54513/IJREP.2022.8104>; Bansu Irianto Ansari et al., "Blended-Learning Training and Evaluation: A Qualitative Study," *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, December 2023, 155–64, <https://doi.org/10.36923/jicc.v23i4.201>.

⁴⁴ Nimante and Kokare, "Perspective of Teachers on Their Competencies for Inclusive Education."

⁴⁵ Jing Qi and Amy S Ha, "Inclusion in Physical Education: A Review of Literature," *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education* 59, no. 3 (2012): 257–81; Claudia Verret et al., "Ontosystemic and Microsystemic Conditions toward Inclusive Education of Students with Emotional and Behavioural Disorders in Quebec Primary School," *International Journal of Special Education* 37, no. 2 (2022): 33–42.

⁴⁶ Francis R. Ackah-Jnr and Beverley Fluckiger, "Leading Inclusive Early Childhood Education: The Architecture of Resources Necessary to Support Implementation and Change Practice," *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education* 70, no. 1 (January 2, 2023): 56–76, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1034912X.2021.1885013>.

development and successful transitions for children with disabilities in inclusive education settings.⁴⁷ Recognizing the significance of collaborative relationships among stakeholders, especially in the transition from preschool to elementary school, is essential for ensuring the continuity of support for students with developmental disabilities.⁴⁸

Kauffman and Hornby emphasize the importance of synthesizing key components of special education and inclusive education to provide equitable education for children with disabilities.⁴⁹ They suggest that a fusion of philosophies, values, and practices from both fields is essential for effective implementation. Similarly, Hornby presents a theory of inclusive special education that combines the principles of inclusive education with the interventions and strategies of special education, highlighting the need for a cohesive approach.⁵⁰ Williams and Dixon introduce a framework for methodologically inclusive advancements in research synthesis, emphasizing robust methodologies in advancing research in education.⁵¹ This framework can be applied to studies on inclusive education to ensure comprehensive and reliable evidence synthesis. DeMatthews et al. focus on effective leadership practices that support inclusive education, highlighting the significance of leadership in creating inclusive school environments.⁵² They identify common themes related to leadership practices, organizational conditions, and social challenges that influence the success of inclusive education initiatives. VanderKaay et al. discuss the benefits of tiered approaches to rehabilitation services in education settings, which can enhance educators' capacity and promote positive outcomes for students with special needs.⁵³ By providing direct support in classrooms, these approaches effectively address barriers to inclusive education. Nel et al. offer insights into the essential skills, knowledge, and attributes required for inclusive teachers, emphasizing the importance of teacher preparation and professional development in fostering inclusive practices.⁵⁴ This aligns with the findings of Holmqvist and Lelinge, who identify research gaps in teachers' professional development for inclusive education, suggesting areas for further exploration and improvement.⁵⁵ Overall, the synthesis of literature underscores the need for a collaborative and holistic approach involving stakeholders, effective leadership, robust research methodologies, and tailored support strategies to promote inclusive education successfully.

Teachers' role in classrooms: The authors agree with Lindner et al. who state that inclusive classrooms are meant to be multi-dimensional settings in design.⁵⁶ This enables meeting the diverse needs of all students, including those with disabilities or special educational needs. Various factors, such as teacher preparedness, perceptions, teaching approaches, and the alignment of educational practices with inclusive philosophies, influence the realities of inclusive classrooms. Research by Lindner et al. emphasizes the importance of differentiated and personalized teaching approaches in inclusive classrooms.⁵⁷ The inclusive class teachers (ICTs) are expected to accommodate and provide support to LEBLs. Support is declared as a necessary component of successful inclusive education practices as the needs of LEBLs are

⁴⁷ Michelle Villeneuve, "Building a Roadmap for Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction in Australian Communities," *Progress in Disaster Science* 10 (2021): 100166.

⁴⁸ Villeneuve, "Building a Roadmap for Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction in Australian Communities."

⁴⁹ James M. Kauffman and Garry Hornby, "Inclusive Vision versus Special Education Reality," *Education Sciences* 10, no. 9 (2020): 258.

⁵⁰ Garry Hornby, "Inclusive Special Education: Raising Achievement for All Students with Special Needs and Disabilities," *Australian Educational Leader* 37, no. 3 (2015): 22–25.

⁵¹ Dilafruz R Williams and P Scott Dixon, "Impact of Garden-Based Learning on Academic Outcomes in Schools: Synthesis of Research between 1990 and 2010," *Review of Educational Research* 83, no. 2 (2013): 211–35.

⁵² David DeMatthews, "Undoing Systems of Exclusion: Exploring Inclusive Leadership and Systems Thinking in Two Inclusive Elementary Schools," *Journal of Educational Administration* 59, no. 1 (2021): 5–21.

⁵³ Sandra VanderKaay et al., "Tiered Approaches to Rehabilitation Services in Education Settings: Towards Developing an Explanatory Programme Theory," *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education* 70, no. 4 (2023): 540–61.

⁵⁴ Mirna Nel et al., "Exploring the Perceptions of Lecturers and Final Year Students about the Infusion of Inclusion in Initial Teacher Education Programmes in South Africa," in *Frontiers in Education*, vol. 8 (Frontiers Media SA, 2023), 1024054.

⁵⁵ Mona Holmqvist and Balli Lelinge, "Teachers' Collaborative Professional Development for Inclusive Education," *European Journal of Special Needs Education* 36, no. 5 (2021): 819–33.

⁵⁶ Katharina-Theresa Lindner et al., "Do Teachers Favor the Inclusion of All Students? A Systematic Review of Primary Schoolteachers' Attitudes towards Inclusive Education," *European Journal of Special Needs Education* 38, no. 6 (2023): 766–87.

⁵⁷ Lindner et al., "Do Teachers Favor the Inclusion of All Students? A Systematic Review of Primary Schoolteachers' Attitudes towards Inclusive Education."

beyond the basic services available in typical general education classes.⁵⁸ Research indicates that there is a serious concern about the standard of curriculum delivery in inclusive classes as there is evidence that many are simply daycare centres giving little attention to LEBLs.⁵⁹

During the past three decades, apprehension increased regarding teacher commitment to learners with barriers in ICs worldwide.⁶⁰ This global commitment came as a result of an agreement on inclusive education which was adopted as a strategy for addressing the learning needs of vulnerable and marginalised learners at a world conference at Salamanca in Spain.⁶¹ To demonstrate a pledge and commitment to inclusive principles as stated by UNESCO, in 2001, the South African Department of Education (DOE) published a legislative framework known as Education White Paper 6 - Special Needs Education: Building an inclusive education and training system which is herein under referred as Education White Paper 6 [EWP6].⁶²

South Africa's inclusive education policy seeks to redress apartheid's brutally segregated education system, which deprived LEBLs of the right to learn in their familiar environments, intending to accommodate all children with disabilities in appropriate schooling at local, neighbourhood mainstream schools.⁶³

It can be argued that even though the South African government seems to be committed to implementing IE principles regarding policymaking, teachers were not conversant with the implementation of such policy reforms. Buka and Molepo are also of the view that teachers had negative attitudes towards LEBLs, thus making it difficult to implement IE in their classrooms.⁶⁴

The quality of educational support depends not only on the policy that a country adopts or commits to, but also on the way in which both teachers and learners can be supported in schools or classes. Buka and Molepo posit that most LEBLs were excluded from learning processes as they were grouped together and forgotten while in the same class as ordinary learners.⁶⁵ In view of the above assertions, one can conclude that teachers need more support to improve their skills and change their attitudes toward LEBLs in inclusive classes. Furthermore, while there are IE policies in place, one cannot resist asking the question: how do teachers understand them?

While there might be various definitions of inclusion, the basic premise of inclusive education is to include, accommodate, and support all learners regardless of their cultural background, race, gender, or disability.⁶⁶ Even though EWP6 was published 16 years ago, there seem to be challenges that impede the smooth and effective implementation of IE in schools, especially in the rural schools of South Africa.⁶⁷ Some teacher organisations indicate that there is an outcry about teacher workload due to the Peter Morkel Model, where teachers are allocated to schools based on learner enrolment.⁶⁸ However, the Peter Morkel Model can be professed to contribute to the unstable mobility of teachers (redeployment), which might impact negatively on the quality of teaching and learning. Redeployment can be literally conceptualized

⁵⁸ Dana Donohue and Juan Bornman, "The Challenges of Realising Inclusive Education in South Africa," *South African Journal of Education* 34, no. 2 (2014).

⁵⁹ Hodgson and Khumalo, "Too Many Children Left behind: Exclusion in the South African Inclusive Education System. With a Focus on the Umkhanyakude District, KwaZulu-Natal (A SECTION27 Report)."

⁶⁰ Nisha Bhatnagar and Ajay Das, "Attitudes of Secondary School Teachers towards Inclusive Education in N Ew D Elhi, I Ndia," *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs* 14, no. 4 (2014): 255–63.

⁶¹ UNESCO, *Final Report - World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality* (Paris: UNESCO, 1994).

⁶² Department of Education, "Special Needs Education: Education White Paper 6," 2001.

⁶³ Hodgson and Khumalo, "Too Many Children Left behind: Exclusion in the South African Inclusive Education System. With a Focus on the Umkhanyakude District, KwaZulu-Natal (A SECTION27 Report)."

⁶⁴ Buka and Molepo, "A Psycho-Pedagogic Approach for Inclusive Classes in Disadvantaged Rural Primary Schools in South Africa: Advancing Teaching Practices."

⁶⁵ Buka and Molepo, "A Psycho-Pedagogic Approach for Inclusive Classes in Disadvantaged Rural Primary Schools in South Africa: Advancing Teaching Practices."

⁶⁶ Kobus Mentz and Shermaine Barrett, "Leadership and Inclusive Education in South Africa and Jamaica: A Comparative Analysis," *International Studies in Educational Administration (Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration & Management (CCEAM))* 39, no. 1 (2011); Buka and Molepo, "A Psycho-Pedagogic Approach for Inclusive Classes in Disadvantaged Rural Primary Schools in South Africa: Advancing Teaching Practices."

⁶⁷ Petra Engelbrecht et al., "Enacting Understanding of Inclusion in Complex Contexts: Classroom Practices of South African Teachers," *South African Journal of Education* 35, no. 3 (2015).

⁶⁸ NAPTOA, "National Professional Teachers of South Africa Insights" (Pretoria: NAPTOA, 2007); SADTU, "Statement of SADTU NEC on Review of Peter Morkel Model.," 2015.

as the irregular and frequent movement of teachers from one school to another, as learner enrolment changes each year.

One of the negative impacts of redeployment can be regarded as teacher overload, which can have a detrimental impact on learning, especially that of LEBLs. Buka and Molepo assert that LEBLs require additional support when compared to ordinary learners, which can hardly be possible in a school with few overloaded teachers.⁶⁹ Buka molIn addition to the above assertion, negative teacher attitudes towards LEBLs are among the most disturbing phenomena in the implementation of IE in inclusive classes, especially in mainstream schools. Hodgson and Khumalo concur with the above authors by further stating that the situation of LEBLs in MSs is far from hopeless, as some teachers even call them ‘lunatics’.⁷⁰ This implies that while LEBLs are accommodated in mainstream schools, attention given to them might not be enough for them to acquire meaningful learning as compared to their counterpart in the same class.

The researchers also argue that intervention programmes to support teachers are needed if IC teaching has to improve for the maximum benefit of LEBLs and OLs. It cannot be emphasised that LEBLs need extra support or assistance to reach their educational potential when compared to ordinary learners in the same class. Research indicates that South African teachers in most mainstream schools receive minimal or no support in handling inclusive classes.⁷¹

Reality in Inclusive Classes

Inclusive classes can be assumed as central places where IE and EWP6 principles are to be implemented; however, research indicates that principals and teachers were not proficient enough in supporting LEBLs.⁷² Teachers seem to lack knowledge on how they can provide support to LEBLs, and in many instances, they end up ignoring them even though they are in class. Teachers grapple to teach both LEBLs and OLs while confronted with so many challenges, including time constraints, the inability to adapt curriculum, and their focus ends up being biased toward OLs.

Donohue and Bornman posit that the condition of LEBLs in classroom situations seems to be a continuation of exclusion and marginalisation.⁷³ A study by Engelbrecht et al. also confirms that LEBLs remain “on the periphery of the classroom activities” where they are continuously marginalised.⁷⁴ This has an effect on their promotions as they are deprived of their right to be full participants and beneficiaries of learning activities in the class. In addition to the above phenomenon, the current education policy allows learners to progress to the next grades in what can be termed as *walk-ins*, although they did not meet the requirements.⁷⁵ This *walk-in* strategy does not allow a learner to be in the same phase for more than 4 years. In the true sense, it can be argued that such learner progression does not necessarily mean learning has been acquired. This implies that even though classes in mainstream schools are characterised by a variety of learning abilities, teachers find it difficult to provide the necessary support that can enable learning for LEBLs to reach their full potential.

While teachers need active parent participation (APP) for balanced learner support, Buka and Molepo argue that parents of LEBLs were inactive in ICs in disadvantaged rural communities.⁷⁶ Such school communities were characterised by high levels of illiteracy, poverty, and unemployment. This implies that teachers in such communities are more overloaded as parents could not be of assistance, not by choice but due to being illiterate. Therefore, LEBLs end up being solely dependent on teachers for support.

⁶⁹ Buka and Molepo, “A Psycho-Pedagogic Approach for Inclusive Classes in Disadvantaged Rural Primary Schools in South Africa: Advancing Teaching Practices.”

⁷⁰ Hodgson and Khumalo, “Too Many Children Left behind: Exclusion in the South African Inclusive Education System. With a Focus on the Umkhanyakude District, KwaZulu-Natal (A SECTION27 Report),” 10.

⁷¹ Donohue and Bornman, “The Challenges of Realising Inclusive Education in South Africa.”

⁷² Engelbrecht et al., “Enacting Understanding of Inclusion in Complex Contexts: Classroom Practices of South African Teachers”; Buka and Molepo, “A Psycho-Pedagogic Approach for Inclusive Classes in Disadvantaged Rural Primary Schools in South Africa: Advancing Teaching Practices.”

⁷³ Donohue and Bornman, “The Challenges of Realising Inclusive Education in South Africa.”

⁷⁴ Petra Engelbrecht et al., “Enacting Understanding of Inclusion in Complex Contexts: Classroom Practices of South African Teachers,” *South African Journal of Education* 35, no. 3 (2015), 6.

⁷⁵ Chrissie Boughey, “The Significance of Structure, Culture and Agency in Supporting and Developing Student Learning at South African Universities,” *Alternative Access to Higher Education: Underprepared Students or Underprepared Institutions*, 2012, 62–88.

⁷⁶ Buka and Molepo, “A Psycho-Pedagogic Approach for Inclusive Classes in Disadvantaged Rural Primary Schools in South Africa: Advancing Teaching Practices.”

For effective ICs to exist, teachers have to conceptualise the theoretical frameworks underlying IE policies. Without a profound understanding of the underlying philosophical background of IE, ICs cannot be easily realised. The ideal ICs can be viewed as places that embody and support learning for a diverse range of learners, where “deficit views of difference and determinist views about ability are rejected.”⁷⁷

METHODOLOGY

In this paper, the qualitative research approach was chosen because it was suitable for gathering information from a real-world context. Instead of looking at numerical data, a qualitative research technique looks at language data. The researchers also used a case study research strategy to collect information from participants in specific schools.

Sampling

For the purpose of this paper, the purposive sample methodology was employed to select five TVET college managers and teachers for elementary education from eight TVET colleges in the OR Tambo Inland District. Only TVET with a low enrolment of disabled students were included as they were more likely to provide data on the subject. There were 5 principals and 15 teachers who participated in this paper. Permission and consent were obtained from the education authorities and participating respondents.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

In this article, researchers used face-to-face individual interviews to collect information about respondents' views and opinions on the causes of academic stress among students during these in-person, semi-structured in-depth interviews. Semi-structured interviews allow for greater flexibility between the interviewer and the interviewees. Participants in semi-structured interviews were able to tell as much as they wanted, resulting in “rich” information being collected. The researcher recorded the direct words of 5 principals and 15 participants on audiotapes. These were transcribed manually and then typed into Microsoft Word using the English language. As the researchers read through the data for analysis, they became familiar with it. After a thorough analysis of the data, the data was categorized and grouped into themes. An independent coder who can code and categorize the data provided the necessary assistance.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

This study reveals that implementation of IE has been hampered by various factors, including a lack of IE understanding by teachers, a high teacher workload, and no viable workshops to empower teachers for ICs. This can result in teachers feeling overwhelmed and underprepared to implement IE. They may struggle to cope with the additional workload and lack of training, which can hinder their ability to effectively support students with diverse learning needs. This can ultimately lead to a sense of frustration and inadequacy among teachers.

- **Teachers' Ignorance of IE Principles**

This study reveals that principals did not have an efficient understanding of what IE entails, while some teachers showed ignorance of IE and EWP6 principles. This implies that teachers in MSs had inadequate skills to give appropriate support for all learners in ICs. Buka and Molepo confirmed that most principals were found ignorant about the content of IE policy.⁷⁸

- **High-Teacher Workload**

According to the principals, teachers were overloaded. It was also supported by teachers who indicated they were overloaded, teaching many subjects. This overload caused teachers to feel stressed and overwhelmed, leading to a decrease in job satisfaction. It also caused teachers to struggle to keep up with

⁷⁷ Petra Engelbrecht et al., “Enacting Understanding of Inclusion in Complex Contexts: Classroom Practices of South African Teachers,” *South African Journal of Education* 35, no. 3 (2015), 1; Elizabeth Kozleski, Alfredo Artiles, and Federico Waitoller, “Equity in Inclusive Education: A Cultural Historical Comparative Perspective,” *The SAGE Handbook of Special Education* 2 (2014): 231–49.

⁷⁸ Andrea Mqondiso Buka and J. Molepo, “A Socio-Psychological Learning Strategy for Use in Inclusive Classes: Learning Opportunity for All,” in *EDULEARN15 Proceedings (IATED, 2015)*, 90–95.

the latest developments in their field, making it difficult to provide the best instruction to their students.⁷⁹ It was only a few teachers who seemed to be committed in regard to supporting ICs. The high workload can be regarded as one of the factors that impede the implementation of IE in ICs. Fuchs concurs with the above finding as he posits that high teacher workload is a barrier to effective inclusion.⁸⁰ He suggests that reducing workload is a crucial step to the successful implementation of IE. This can be achieved by providing adequate resources, such as additional personnel, to reduce the burden of tasks on teachers. Additionally, providing teachers with training and support is essential to ensure the successful implementation of IE.

- **Ineffective IE Workshops**

Principals in this study indicated that the workshops conducted were ineffective for classroom situations, whereas other teachers perceived the training they received as ineffective. This means that workshops were available, but seemingly, they did not give teachers competent skills for ICs. This finding is supported by Buka and Molepo, who concur with Geldenhuys and Wevers in indicating that on various occasions, such workshops were often symbolic and convenient for, or significant for, the organizers, that is, district-based support teams, not teachers they were presented to.⁸¹ In support of the above, Engelbrecht et al. indicate that failure in workshops provided could be attributed to their short duration (1 day), irrelevance to each teacher's class situations, and lack of visits to guide in the classroom.⁸²

DISCUSSION

A central standpoint of EWP6 is that inclusive education amounts to recognising and respecting learner diversity; acknowledging that all learners can learn and need support, and capacitating teachers to enable them to address a wide range of learning needs by 'focusing on teaching and learning actions that will benefit all students who experience barriers to learning'.⁸³ On the contrary, it seems that MSs were not proficient in providing for the educational needs of all learners in ICs. Many factors, including frequently changing curricula, initial teacher education, high workload, and systemic expectations on teachers, can hinder IE implementation. These factors make it difficult for teachers to effectively implement IE in the classroom. As a result, students may not receive the necessary support to develop the necessary skills and knowledge. It is important to recognize and address these issues in order to create a successful IE program.

Implementation of IE seems to be theoretical in many MSs. Among things hindering the practical implementation of IE in ICs is the prescriptive CAPS assessment policy, which states that a specific number of tasks need to be completed in a set period of time without considering different learner paces. The above phenomenon is exacerbated by systemic changes like a policy that has just been advocated, which states that a learner cannot be in a phase for more than four years. The implication is that learners are progressing to the next grades without acquiring the needed knowledge and learning. This lack of mastery of foundational skills and concepts can lead to learners struggling in higher grades.⁸⁴ As a result, learners may be unable to keep up with the curriculum and may be unable to complete their studies. This can lead to a decrease in educational outcomes and a decrease in the quality of education.

Moreover, this study reveals that principals as well as teachers did not have a clear understanding of IE, except for the few teachers who were studying it out of personal interest. There is an outcry from teachers that they are not provided with sufficient assistance in the form of practical and theoretical training in the 'curriculum differentiation', which is essential in ICs.⁸⁵ A study conducted by Buka and

⁷⁹ Thanduxolo Albert Nomtshongwana and Andrea Mqondiso Buka, "Primary School Teachers' Perspective on Stress Triggers: A South African Case Study," *E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences*, January 15, 2024, 1656–63, <https://doi.org/10.38159/ehass.202341322>.

⁸⁰ Wendy W. Fuchs, "Examining Teachers' Perceived Barriers Associated with Inclusion.," *SRATE Journal* 19, no. 1 (2010): 30–35.

⁸¹ Buka and Molepo, "A Socio-Psychological Learning Strategy for Use in Inclusive Classes: Learning Opportunity for All"; Johanna L Geldenhuys and N E J Wevers, "Ecological Aspects Influencing the Implementation of Inclusive Education in Mainstream Primary Schools in the Eastern Cape, South Africa," *South African Journal of Education* 33, no. 3 (2013).

⁸² Engelbrecht et al., "Enacting Understanding of Inclusion in Complex Contexts: Classroom Practices of South African Teachers."

⁸³ Petra Engelbrecht et al., "Enacting Understanding of Inclusion in Complex Contexts: Classroom Practices of South African Teachers," *South African Journal of Education* 35, no. 3 (2015), 2.

⁸⁴ Nomtshongwana and Buka, "Teachers' Experiences on Stress during COVID-19: A South African Case Study."

⁸⁵ Hodgson and Khumalo, "Too Many Children Left behind: Exclusion in the South African Inclusive Education System. With a Focus on the Umkhanyakude District, KwaZulu-Natal (A SECTION27 Report)," 9.

Molepo also indicates that most principals were found to be ignorant of the content of inclusive education, although they claimed it was one of the guiding policies in their schools.⁸⁶ This finding also confirms the views held by Geldenhuys and Wevers and Buka and Molepo, who point out that most teachers in the system were initially trained for either mainstream or special education and not for an inclusive classroom environment.⁸⁷ There have been some workshops conducted on IE, but seemingly they were not providing teachers with the skills and confidence on how to carry out support in ICs, hence they were deemed ineffective. Workshops should be frequently conducted to equip teachers on IE with the purpose of addressing problems facing ICs, not with the intention of making reports.

This kind of training, therefore, leaves teachers with a problem of not knowing how to cater to ordinary learners and LEBLs in their teaching. As a result, this ends up perpetuating marginalisation and exclusion of the latter, as they do not acquire learning as their peers do. Buka and Molepo confirm that other factors that impede IE implementation, such as workload and inadequate training workshops for principals and parents of LEBL, cannot be left out.⁸⁸ The authors recommended that district-based support teams should engage with teachers to understand their needs and provide appropriate support. This could include providing technical assistance, providing resources, and offering training.

The findings of this study affirm that IE was not implemented in the participating mainstream schools, as both principals and teachers did not have an adequate understanding of EWP6 principles. One of the reasons was that not all principals were capacitated or familiar with the policy and programs of IE in schools with respect to implementation in the Eastern Cape.⁸⁹ For many of the principals, EWP6 was perceived simply as a policy document that has not yet truly come into effect in terms of its implementation.⁹⁰ All participants (principals and teachers) confirmed in percentages (see figures 1 and 2) that they had no idea how to cater in their teaching for both ordinary and LEBLs in the same class. It seems as if this poses a problem to LEBLs who are already in inclusive classrooms.

Teacher workload has also been indicated as a challenging factor in implementing inclusive education. Teachers seem to find it difficult to cope with many subjects that they have to teach and in other cases, they were never trained for. This is mainly due to redeployment where teachers are moved from schools due to learner enrolment. The remaining teachers end up having to divide subjects without teachers amongst themselves, with the intention of ensuring that no subject is not taught. The consequence of this phenomenon for ICs is a lack of time to provide necessary support. Engelbrecht & Green confirm the above challenge as they posit that teachers in South Africa currently have to cope with a workload that has increased significantly over the last couple of years, and that this might lead to work overload.⁹¹

Teacher Support Inclusive Collaboration (TESIC) Model

To address the problem of marginalisation and exclusion of LEBL in ICs, workshops prepared for mainstream teachers should be purpose-driven, not just carried out for convenience and reports of DBST.

The more effective IE implementation method used in Latin American countries has been classroom-based programmes in which trainee teachers learn by coming into contact with real-life situations.⁹²

This paper proposes the TESIC model, which is founded on classroom-based programmes used in Latin America as indicated above. The content of workshops conducted by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) normally follows a top-down approach. In this approach, service providers from DBE assume to know what is needed by teachers and then base the content of the workshop on such an assumption. The TESIC model intends to introduce a bottom-up approach where teachers present challenges they encounter in ICs to a District-Based Support Team (DBST). Thereafter, DBST tailors

⁸⁶ Buka and Molepo, "A Socio-Psychological Learning Strategy for Use in Inclusive Classes: Learning Opportunity for All."

⁸⁷ Geldenhuys and Wevers, "Ecological Aspects Influencing the Implementation of Inclusive Education in Mainstream Primary Schools in the Eastern Cape, South Africa"; Buka and Molepo, "A Psycho-Pedagogic Approach for Inclusive Classes in Disadvantaged Rural Primary Schools in South Africa: Advancing Teaching Practices."

⁸⁸ Buka and Molepo, "A Socio-Psychological Learning Strategy for Use in Inclusive Classes: Learning Opportunity for All."

⁸⁹ Buka and Molepo, "A Socio-Psychological Learning Strategy for Use in Inclusive Classes: Learning Opportunity for All."

⁹⁰ J. Lampe, *Balkans into Southeastern Europe, 1914-2014: A Century of War and Transition* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014); Buka and Molepo, "A Socio-Psychological Learning Strategy for Use in Inclusive Classes: Learning Opportunity for All."

⁹¹ P. Engelbrecht and L. Green, *Responding to the Challenges of Inclusive Education in Southern Africa* (Pretoria: Van Schaik, Publishers, 2007).

⁹² Pateka Jama and Andrea Buka, "Viable Workshops for Inclusive Classes: The Intake of South African Teachers," March 12, 2021.

workshop content with the intention of solving real IC problems. Its advantage is that even follow-up workshops will be informed by teachers' reports on what they are experiencing in class; in that way, real situations are addressed.

This model is recommended with the purpose of addressing the ineffectiveness of workshops and seminars carried out on IE by DBSTs, which leave teachers with a problem of connecting what they have been taught with what is actually taking place in class.

TESIC also involves healthy partnerships and relationships among the three components of learning in inclusive classes, namely DBST, principals, and teachers. It is a new approach to conducting workshops that might address real-situation challenges.

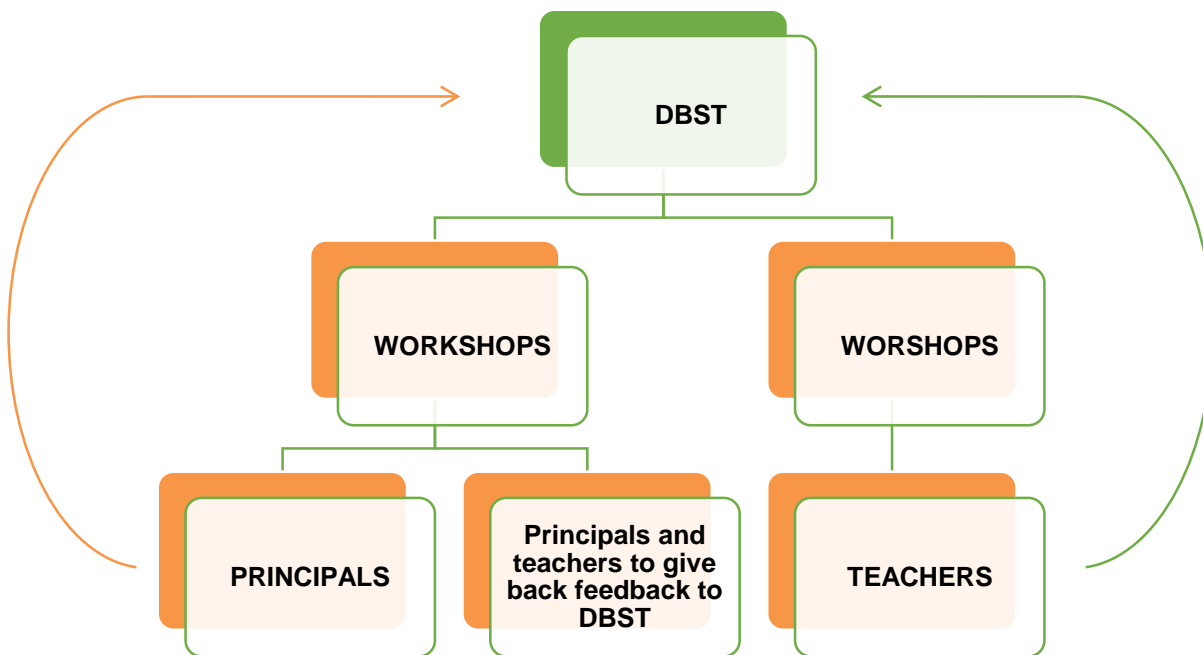


Figure 3: Teacher Support Inclusive Collaboration (TESIC) Model
 Source: Jama and Buka (2020)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the field study, it is recommended that there should be workshops for all principals and teachers conducted by DBSTs to ensure that there is a clear understanding in schools about EWP6 and IE consecutively.

- Personnel familiar with IE should be employed, and workshops should be presented to district staff, in particular, to ensure DBSTs are established and equipped to help mainstream teachers.
- A healthy relationship between principals and DBSTs needs to be established.
- Programmes that focus on encouraging meaningful collaboration that will work for ICs and learners need to be created. This can be helpful in building rapport that allows each member to freely express personal views on IE and reality in the workplace.
- Assessment Procedure to cater for different learner paces, and provide how LEBLs can be supported before the recording of marks is expected.

CONCLUSION

The paper has assessed how teachers are supported for the effective implementation of IE for the benefit of LEBLs who are in MSs in South Africa. The main problem that seems to be at hand now is what is actually happening in inclusive classes, more especially to LEBLs who are already in MSs, bearing in mind that IE was developed to address their learning needs and ensure that they are no longer marginalised.

The Department of Basic Education needs to liaise with school-based stakeholders in the education sector in order for IE to materialise in schools and to avoid the past repeating itself, where LEBLs ended up dropping out of school as their needs were not met by the education system of the time.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abels, Simone, Brigitte Koliander, and Thomas Plotz. "Conflicting Demands of Chemistry and Inclusive Teaching—a Video-Based Case Study." *Education Sciences* 10, no. 3 (2020): 50.
- Ackah-Jnr, Francis R., and Beverley Fluckiger. "Leading Inclusive Early Childhood Education: The Architecture of Resources Necessary to Support Implementation and Change Practice." *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education* 70, no. 1 (January 2, 2023): 56–76. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1034912X.2021.1885013>.
- Adewunmi, Maryam. "Exploring Teachers' Roles in Implementing Inclusive Education during Times of Crisis." *Social Sciences Humanities and Education Journal (SHE Journal)*, September 1, 2024, 444–56.
- Akiyoo, Frank, Herme Moshia, and E Ogoti. "Adequacy of Teaching and Learning Resources for Implementing Inclusive Education in Primary Schools in Arusha Region, Tanzania." *International Journal of Innovative Research and Development* 11, no. 2 (2022).
- Annie, Penda, and M Muvombo. "Views of Students on the Inclusion of Learners with Disabilities." *International Journal of Research-GRANTHAALAYAH* 7, no. 3 (2019): 142–47.
- Ansari, Bansu Irianto, Junaidi Junaidi, Suci Maulina, Herman Herman, Ilham Kamaruddin, Abdul Rahman, and Nanda Saputra. "Blended-Learning Training and Evaluation: A Qualitative Study." *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, December 2023, 155–64. <https://doi.org/10.36923/jicc.v23i4.201>.
- Barnard, Robert William, and Ruan Hendrik Henn. "Overcoming Learning Obstacles: Strategies for Supporting Students with Diverse Needs." *OALib* 10, no. 08 (2023): 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1110509>.
- Bhatnagar, Nisha, and Ajay Das. "Attitudes of Secondary School Teachers towards Inclusive Education in N Ew D Elhi, I Ndia." *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs* 14, no. 4 (2014): 255–63.
- Boughey, Chrissie. "The Significance of Structure, Culture and Agency in Supporting and Developing Student Learning at South African Universities." *Alternative Access to Higher Education: Underprepared Students or Underprepared Institutions*, 2012, 62–88.
- Buka, Andrea Mqondiso, and J Molepo. "A Socio-Psychological Learning Strategy for Use in Inclusive Classes: Learning Opportunity for All." In *EDULEARN15 Proceedings*, 90–95. IATED, 2015.
- Buka, Andrea Mqondiso, and Jacob Maisha Molepo. "A Psycho-Pedagogic Approach for Inclusive Classes in Disadvantaged Rural Primary Schools in South Africa: Advancing Teaching Practices." *International Journal of Educational Sciences* 12, no. 1 (2016): 38–44.
- Chirwa, P.W., J.M. Kamwi, G. Kabia, L. Makhubele, W. Sagona, N. Matakala, and P. Gondo. "The Impacts of COVID-19 on the Sustainable Management of the Forestry Sector in Southern Africa." *International Forestry Review* 23, no. 3 (September 2021): 298–308. <https://doi.org/10.1505/146554821833992785>.
- Dapudong, Richel C. "Teachers' Knowledge and Attitude towards Inclusive Education: Basis for an Enhanced Professional Development Program." *International Journal of Learning & Development* 4, no. 4 (2014): 1–24.
- DeMatthews, David. "Undoing Systems of Exclusion: Exploring Inclusive Leadership and Systems Thinking in Two Inclusive Elementary Schools." *Journal of Educational Administration* 59, no. 1 (2021): 5–21.
- Department of Education. "Special Needs Education: Education White Paper 6," 2001.
- Dev, Poonam, and Leslie Haynes. "Teacher Perspectives on Suitable Learning Environments for Students with Disabilities: What Have We Learned from Inclusive, Resource, and Self-Contained Classrooms?" *The International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences: Annual Review* 9, no. 1 (2015): 53–64. <https://doi.org/10.18848/1833-1882/CGP/v09/53554>.
- Donohue, Dana, and Juan Bornman. "The Challenges of Realising Inclusive Education in South Africa." *South African Journal of Education* 34, no. 2 (2014).

- Engelbrecht, P., and L. Green. *Responding to the Challenges of Inclusive Education in Southern Africa*. Pretoria: Van Schaik, Publishers, 2007.
- Engelbrecht, Petra, Mirna Nel, Norma Nel, and Dan Tlale. "Enacting Understanding of Inclusion in Complex Contexts: Classroom Practices of South African Teachers." *South African Journal of Education* 35, no. 3 (2015).
- Florian, Lani, and Kristine Black-Hawkins. "Exploring Inclusive Pedagogy." *British Educational Research Journal* 37, no. 5 (2011): 813–28.
- Florian, Lani, and Donatella Camedda. "Enhancing Teacher Education for Inclusion." *European Journal of Teacher Education*. Taylor & Francis, 2020.
- Fuchs, Wendy W. "Examining Teachers' Perceived Barriers Associated with Inclusion." *SRATE Journal* 19, no. 1 (2010): 30–35.
- Geldenhuis, Johanna L, and N E J Wevers. "Ecological Aspects Influencing the Implementation of Inclusive Education in Mainstream Primary Schools in the Eastern Cape, South Africa." *South African Journal of Education* 33, no. 3 (2013).
- Haug, Peder. "Understanding Inclusive Education: Ideals and Reality." *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research* 19, no. 3 (2017): 206–17.
- Hay, J, and C Beyers. "An Analysis of the South African Model of Inclusive Education with Regard to Social Justice." *Africa Education Review* 8, no. 2 (2011): 234–46.
- Hodgson, T.F., and S. Khumalo. "Too Many Children Left behind: Exclusion in the South African Inclusive Education System. With a Focus on the Umkhanyakude District, KwaZulu-Natal (A SECTION27 Report)." *South Africa: Ministry of Health Report*, 2016.
- Hoffman, M Camille, Sara E Mazzoni, Brandie D Wagner, Mark L Laudenslager, and Randal G Ross. "Measures of Maternal Stress and Mood in Relation to Preterm Birth." *Obstetrics & Gynecology* 127, no. 3 (2016): 545–52.
- Holmqvist, Mona, and Balli Lelinge. "Teachers' Collaborative Professional Development for Inclusive Education." *European Journal of Special Needs Education* 36, no. 5 (2021): 819–33.
- Hornby, Garry. "Inclusive Special Education: Raising Achievement for All Students with Special Needs and Disabilities." *Australian Educational Leader* 37, no. 3 (2015): 22–25.
- Jama, Pateka, and Andrea Buka. "Viable Workshops for Inclusive Classes: The Intake of South African Teachers," March 12, 2021.
- Kauffman, James M, and Garry Hornby. "Inclusive Vision versus Special Education Reality." *Education Sciences* 10, no. 9 (2020): 258.
- Kozleski, Elizabeth, Alfredo Artiles, and Federico Waitoller. "Equity in Inclusive Education: A Cultural Historical Comparative Perspective." *The SAGE Handbook of Special Education* 2 (2014): 231–49.
- Küçüksüleymanoğlu, Rüyam. "Principles of Equality." In *Creating Positive and Inclusive Change in Educational Environments*, 23–52. IGI Global Scientific Publishing, 2025.
<https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-5782-8.ch002>.
- Lampe, J. *Balkans into Southeastern Europe, 1914-2014: A Century of War and Transition*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014.
- Lindner, Katharina-Theresa, Susanne Schwab, Mona Emara, and Elias Avramidis. "Do Teachers Favor the Inclusion of All Students? A Systematic Review of Primary Schoolteachers' Attitudes towards Inclusive Education." *European Journal of Special Needs Education* 38, no. 6 (2023): 766–87.
- Maganti, Suresh, and Narayana Prasad Padhy. "A Feedback-Based Flexible Compensation Strategy for a Weak-Grid-Tied Current-Controlled Converter under Unbalanced and Harmonic Conditions." *IEEE Transactions on Industry Applications* 58, no. 6 (2022): 7739–53.
- Mahlo, Dikeledi, and Anna Hugo. "Learning Support Teachers' Views on the Implementation of Inclusive Education in the Foundation Phase in Gauteng, South Africa." *Journal of Social Sciences* 37, no. 3 (2013): 301–6.
- Majoko, Tawanda. "Teacher Key Competencies for Inclusive Education: Tapping Pragmatic Realities of Zimbabwean Special Needs Education Teachers." *Sage Open* 9, no. 1 (2019): 2158244018823455.
- Matundura, Martin Ogachi, Kennedy Bota, and Hezborn Kodero. "Teachers' Perceptions of Inclusive Education in Public Primary Schools in Kisii County, Kenya." *The International Journal of Research in Education and Psychology* 08, no. 01 (2022): 54–68.

- <https://doi.org/10.54513/IJREP.2022.8104>.
- McHatton, Patricia Alvarez, and Audra Parker. "Purposeful Preparation: Longitudinally Exploring Inclusion Attitudes of General and Special Education Pre-Service Teachers." *Teacher Education and Special Education* 36, no. 3 (2013): 186–203.
- Mehan, Asma. *The Affective Agency of Public Space*. De Gruyter, 2024.
<https://doi.org/10.1515/9783111035642>.
- Mentz, Kobus, and Shermaine Barrett. "Leadership and Inclusive Education in South Africa and Jamaica: A Comparative Analysis." *International Studies in Educational Administration (Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration & Management (CCEAM))* 39, no. 1 (2011).
- Muñoz-Oyarce, Maria Francisca, Manuel Monzalve-Macaya, and Sergio Sepúlveda-Vallejos. "Teachers' Social Representations of Inclusive Education: A Systematic Review of Literature 2010-2020." *Int J Eval & Res Educ ISSN 2252*, no. 8822 (2023): 8822.
- NAPTOSA. "National Professional Teachers of South Africa Insights." Pretoria: NAPTOSA, 2007.
- Nel, Mirna, Johnnie Hay, Tanya Bekker, Christa Beyers, Nicky Pylman, Gregg Alexander, and Sheila Matoti. "Exploring the Perceptions of Lecturers and Final Year Students about the Infusion of Inclusion in Initial Teacher Education Programmes in South Africa." In *Frontiers in Education*, 8:1024054. Frontiers Media SA, 2023.
- Neumann, Jan, Andrew Robson, and Diane Sloan. "Monitoring and Evaluation of Strategic Change Programme Implementation—Lessons from a Case Analysis." *Evaluation and Program Planning* 66 (February 2018): 120–32. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evalprogplan.2017.09.012>.
- Nimante, Dita, and Maija Kokare. "Perspective of Teachers on Their Competencies for Inclusive Education." *Acta Paedagogica Vilnensia* 49 (2022): 8–22.
- Nomtshongwana, Thanduxolo Albert, and Andrea Mqondiso Buka. "Primary School Teachers' Perspective on Stress Triggers: A South African Case Study." *E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences*, January 15, 2024, 1656–63. <https://doi.org/10.38159/ehass.202341322>.
- Nomtshongwana, Thanduxolo, Manyakaza Aviwe, and Buka Andria Mqondiso. "Factors Influencing Implementing Inclusive Education in Chris Hani East District, South Africa." *International Journal of Studies in Inclusive Education* 2, no. 1 (April 20, 2025): 51–59.
<https://doi.org/10.38140/ijisie.v2i1.1851>.
- Nomtshongwana, Thanduxolo, and Andrea Mqondiso Buka. "Teachers' Experiences on Stress during COVID-19: A South African Case Study." *E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences* 4 (2023): 1–17.
- Nseibo, Kofi, Richard Vergunst, Judith McKenzie, Jane Kelly, Amani Karisa, and Brian Watermeyer. "Learning Together: The Dynamics of Training Teachers for Disability Inclusion in South Africa." In *Frontiers in Education*, 7:999814. Frontiers Media SA, 2022.
- O'Reilly, Erica, and Miriam Colum. "Newly Qualified Teachers and Inclusion in Higher Education: Policy, Practice and Preparation." *Journal of Higher Education Policy And Leadership Studies* 2, no. 1 (2021): 64–78.
- Osero, Peterson Ondieki. "Challenges Teachers Encounter in Implementing Inclusive Education in Public Primary Schools in Nyamira County, Kenya." *International Journal for Innovation Education and Research* 3, no. 3 (2015): 217–30.
- Panigrahi, Ritanjali, Praveen Ranjan Srivastava, and Dheeraj Sharma. "Online Learning: Adoption, Continuance, and Learning Outcome—A Review of Literature." *International Journal of Information Management* 43 (December 2018): 1–14.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2018.05.005>.
- Popovska Nalevska, Gorica, Filip Popovski, and Hristina Dimova Popovska. "Higher Education for Students with Disabilities in the Republic of Macedonia: Challenges and Perspectives." *International Journal of Research Studies in Education* 11, no. 13 (2022): 85–100.
- Qi, Jing, and Amy S Ha. "Inclusion in Physical Education: A Review of Literature." *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education* 59, no. 3 (2012): 257–81.
- Rahardja, Untung, Ignatius Joko Dewanto, Arko Djajadi, Ariya Panndhitthana Candra, and Marviola Hardini. "Analysis of Covid 19 Data in Indonesia Using Supervised Emerging Patterns." *APTISI*

Transactions on Management (ATM) 6, no. 1 (2022): 91–101.

- Raudeliūnaitė, Rita, and Eglė Steponienė. “Challenges for Primary School Teachers in Ensuring Inclusive Education for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders.” *Pedagogika/Pedagogy* 138, no. 2 (2020): 209–25.
- SADTU. “Statement of SADTU NEC on Review of Peter Morkel Model,.” 2015.
- Saloviita, Timo, and Simone Consegna. “Teacher Attitudes in Italy after 40 Years of Inclusion.” *British Journal of Special Education* 46, no. 4 (2019): 465–79.
- Schwab, K. *Stakeholder Capitalism: A Global Economy That Works for Progress, People and Planet*. John Wiley & Sons, 2021.
- Shilaluke, Given, Mercy Dotty Mushwana, and Maphuti Chueng. “Reflections on Women’s Experiences of Lamentation in Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Marriages in Mopani District, Limpopo Province, South Africa.” *E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences* 6, no. 9 (2025): 1799–1815. <https://doi.org/10.38159/ejass.20256894>.
- UNESCO. *Final Report - World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality*. Paris: UNESCO, 1994.
- VanderKaay, Sandra, Leah Dix, Lisa Rivard, Cheryl Missiuna, Stella Ng, Nancy Pollock, Sandra Sahagian Whalen, Isabel Eisen, Christine Kyte, and Michelle Phoenix. “Tiered Approaches to Rehabilitation Services in Education Settings: Towards Developing an Explanatory Programme Theory.” *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education* 70, no.4 (2023): 540–61.
- Verret, Claudia, Nancy Gaudreau, Line Massé, and Marie-France Nadeau. “Ontosystemic and Microsystemic Conditions toward Inclusive Education of Students with Emotional and Behavioural Disorders in Quebec Primary School.” *International Journal of Special Education* 37, no. 2 (2022): 33–42.
- Villeneuve, Michelle. “Building a Roadmap for Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction in Australian Communities.” *Progress in Disaster Science* 10 (2021): 100166.
- William, Agnes, and Nestory Ligembe. “Challenges Facing Instructional Supervision in Public Secondary Schools Students in Nyamagana District, Tanzania.” *Direct Research Journal of Education and Vocational Studies* 4, no. 1 (2022): 81–88.
- Williams, Dilafruz R, and P Scott Dixon. “Impact of Garden-Based Learning on Academic Outcomes in Schools: Synthesis of Research between 1990 and 2010.” *Review of Educational Research* 83, no. 2 (2013): 211–35.
- You, Yang, Jing Li, Sashank Reddi, Jonathan Hseu, Sanjiv Kumar, Srinadh Bhojanapalli, Xiaodan Song, James Demmel, Kurt Keutzer, and Cho-Jui Hsieh. “Large Batch Optimization for Deep Learning: Training Bert in 76 Minutes.” *ArXiv Preprint ArXiv:1904.00962*, 2019.

ABOUT AUTHORS

Thanduxolo Albert Nomtshongwana serves as a lecturer at the Faculty of Education at Walter Sisulu University in Mthatha, located in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. In his current role, he specializes in continuing professional teacher development, where he is dedicated to enhancing the skills and competencies of teachers. His research focuses on educational leadership and management, specifically understanding teachers' stressors in psychological education. By exploring educational dynamics, he aims to address teachers' challenges and enhance teaching practices and student outcomes.

Andrea Mqondiso Buka is currently a Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Education in the continuing professional teacher development at Walter Sisulu University, Mthatha, Eastern Cape, South Africa. His research focuses on inclusive education and educational management and policy, especially psychopedagogical research.

Dr. Pateka Pamella Jama is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Psychological Education at North-West University, Potchefstroom campus. Her fields of specialisation are Inclusive Education and Learner Support.