

SCHOOL-BASED SUPPORT TEAMS' TRAJECTORIES IN RURAL CONTEXTS OF SOUTH AFRICA: THE TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

The challenges in the school-based support team members' execution of their duties have been focusing on their roles as teams and the roles of school management and its teachers in supporting the teams. However, literature is silent about the significance of involving all stakeholders who are at rural campuses and employed by the South African Department of Basic Education. The current paper concentrates on determining the challenges in the implementation of the school-based support team in rural areas, with a view to suggesting solutions. We opted for Ubuntu as a theoretical framework. To complement the conceptualization of the above, group discussion was used to generate data from the selected participants. Fifteen teachers employed by the DoE and enrolled as BEd honours students at a rural campus from one of the universities in South Africa were selected using the convenient selection technique. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data and the findings indicate that implementation is not easy because of the lack of resources; parents are not aware of their children's disabilities, and a lack of support from the district-based support teams. However, adequate educational resources, a literacy programme for rural dwellers, most especially parents, to enable them to be aware of their responsibilities as parents towards schools and the development of functioning and effective collaborative relationships among all education stakeholder in rural locations were recommended.

Keywords: School-based support team; *Ubuntu*; Rurality, Postgraduate student

INTRODUCTION

School-based support team (SBST) is an establishment of the Department of Education in South Africa to solidify the trajectory of inclusivity in the South Africa education system where the learners with learning disabilities and other vulnerabilities are managed (DoE, 1995). The responsibilities of the team according to Gaffney (2016:2) and *Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS)* (DBE, 2014:10) includes but is not limited to supporting learners who are perceived to be vulnerable and have learning disabilities. This team also saddles with implementation of inclusive pedagogy in the schools' education and/or classrooms. However, the introduction of SBST in South Africa is not a misplaced priority as it predominantly compliments the transformation agenda of the United Nation Visions. This is corroborated by DBE (2014) as well as Makhalemele and Nel (2015:2) that the aims of the SBST in South Africa are to transform the classroom practices by supporting learners with learning barriers. With this, it is therefore a priority in a nation such as South Africa who is endowed with various diversities such as ethnicity, regional differences, racial disparities, language among others. The diversities are not limited to nationalism but also there are various diversities in classroom such as individual differences in the

learners' backgrounds, cognitive and intellectual capabilities, social and sociological prowess (Omodan & Tsotetsi 2018:84). With such diversities, the establishment of SBST is quintessential to fulfil the parlance of equality and inclusive learning system.

Despite the intention of the SBST as an education policy to support and/or integrate inclusive education by accommodating all forms of learners with their disabilities towards learning, literatures have demonstrated that the successes expected to be recorded as a result of SBST establishment is on the moribund most epically in rurally located schools (Masango, 2013:1). Part of the challenges to the implementation of SBST, according to Masango (2013:2), is the lack of knowledge of the team members to take care of learners with special needs which may have resulted from the lack of training and motivation to carry out their responsibilities. This is practically in line with our observations that most members of these teams in rurally located schools have only possessed teachers' training which is considered incomprehensive enough to deal with learners' needs in this context. However, finding such teachers without the needed skills in the team is largely a posture of failure. This is not only a predicate in our argument, it is also against the guidelines of the SBST which stipulates that the team members shall comprise education with proven specialised knowledge and skills, learning and classroom support, guidance and counselling, life skills among others guidelines (DoE, 2005: 36). Among these team members, the school management such as the principal, head of departments among others are expected to be part of the team (Rulwa-Mnatwana, 2014:7). However, in our argument, this will maintain a quality disposition of the teams' responsibilities because the management team are considered experienced and knowledgeable enough to manage the schools.

In rurally located schools, the reverse is the case as observed and expressed by the postgraduate students who are also employees of the Department of Education working in rural schools. In many rurally located schools, there are discrepancies such as politics and politicking that makes the "qualified unqualified and the unqualified qualified" in the choice of team members as it was observed that many chosen members are not competent to handle the responsibilities. This supports our argument that several teachers with low grades found themselves in the team with little or no knowledge on how to maintain the proposition of inclusivity in the schools by supporting learners with a barrier to learning. Makhalemele and Nel (2015:15) support this, stating insufficient knowledge of team members remain one of the challenges of providing quality and effective support services in South Africa schools. Nel, Engelbrecht, Nel and Tlale (2014:907), in their report, found out that the problem is not only on the SBST but also on the part of district-based support team (DBST). In their study, the teachers alleged that DBST is not skilled enough to render assistance to be able to give necessary support services to learners with learning barriers. To justify our argument, scholars such as Schoeman (2012) as well as Nel, Tlale, Engelbrecht and Nel (2016) acknowledge that school support systems are still not adequately equipped to cater for their functions as stipulated in the policy guidelines and such case also exists in rural located schools.

In relation to our argument, Makoelle (2014:71) reported that teachers experience tremendous stress in the implementation of SBST in their schools and that the lack of a formal support structured plays a significant role in the implementation flaws. However, the policy document (White Paper 6) appears to be unclear on the issue of implementation, which may have a result in policy summersault as the main issue facing SBST in schools (Donohue & Bornman, 2014:1). This is to infer that the reality in rural schools remains that learners with barriers to

educational needs still face support challenges. This is to say that the practicalities involved in adapting diversities is nothing to write home about in rural schools because the implementation of the policy has fallen on the shoulder of teachers who have been seen as incompetent without specialised skills coupled with external support from relevant education support services such as the DBST. However, this paper is bent on identifying challenges in the implementation of the SBST in rural areas, with a view of suggesting relevant solutions.

The research question is: How can school-based support teams' policy be adequately implemented in rural schools to ensure learners with diverse disabilities are well catered for?

In order to answer the above research question, the following objectives are raised to pilot the study predominantly to:

- examine the challenges facing the implementation of SBST in schools; and
- provide possible solutions to ameliorate the challenges in order to ensure that the learners with barriers are accommodated.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is situated in Ubuntu philosophy. This was chosen because it is about relationships and interrelatedness between and among people. It is all about compassionateness, love and respect for one another for the development with emphasis on cultural richness of people in the society (Omodan and Tsotetsi, 2019:30). It provides acceptable ways of applying principles on how society members relate with one another and to the workspace when faced with the challenges of modernity (Hlalele & Tsotetsi, 2016; Msengana, 2006:83). This theory originated from the Xhosa language, which means humanness (Tutu, 2004). It was first noticed in the ancient village in Africa where people of different diversities lived together in harmony and work together with the same goals and objectives, which are to maintain unity, oneness, love and respect for one another (Bolden, 2014). Lefa (2015) also described this as “*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*”, which means “a person is a person through other people”. That is, people's existence is dependent on their relationships and interrelatedness to other people. With this, one could conclude that Ubuntu is an African philosophy predominantly interested in harmonious relationships, cooperation, and commitment to the general goals of a people.

In respect of the above, authors such as Shizha (2012) and Bondai (2016:38) agreed that Ubuntuism is a multicultural belief that promotes healthy relationships and respect, tolerance toward diversities and appreciation of one another without feeling threatened by the culture and the way of life of others. This is to say that Ubuntu is an inspiration to oneness, it infuse and enhances mental and moral attributes in people by the people and for the people. This is to extend on our earlier assertion that Ubuntu is embodied on the value of people's responsibilities towards one another, mutual and commitment towards generalities, trust and sharing and selflessness. It also includes inbuilt respect for others among other ethical values (Samkange & Samkange, 2013). The argument here is that Ubuntu philosophy is an agent of change in the world of transformation where change is imminent. If this could be done in the society, the people of the society also constitute the people/human capital in the school system. That is, Ubuntu advocates people to see themselves as one and partner in progress in society. The school should not be an exception and should comprise the learners, teachers, managers, governing bodies as well as policy makes.

However, Ubuntu has a different meaning to various scholars, especially on how to interpret the defined relationships embedded in Ubuntuism (Gade,2012). This is true as many authors have defined the forms of relationships in line with their aims and objectives but the bottom line remains that Ubuntu preaches relationships and harmony. That is the way people behaves towards other people in order to better the lot of the community. This, according to Jojo (2018:232), is a way of questioning the meaning of working together and the manner in which humans/workers are connected. It also entails their behavior towards achieving their organisational goals and objectives. Tutu (2004:3) also predicted that you could not be human all by yourself except if you possess the qualities and principles of Ubuntu. This is to say that, in schools, no teachers, managers, learners, policy makers and other stakeholders could exist in isolation. If the school must achieve it aims and objectives, all stakeholders must see themselves as partner in progress.

This theory is unequivocally relevant to underpin this study because to implement the SBST policy in schools, “all hands must be on deck”. It is expedient for teachers who are in the team to see themselves as one, equal and partners who cannot exist in isolation and that their success depend on one another. The other teachers as well must see the support team system as their own responsibilities not only the responsibility of the team because the success of the school is the success of all the teachers. On the other hand, the team members with the spirit of Ubuntu will understand that s/he is not superior to the others thereby they could at all-time sort information and/or knowledge from one another to achieve their target. Hence, when the spirit of Ubuntu is well utilised by the people in the school system, it results in the maximisation of efforts to collaboratively ensure that learners with learning disabilities are well taken care of even when resources and other external supports needed are not available. This is visible because Ubuntu promotes engagement with problems and boosts the reputation of the people living with the problem (Jojo, 2018:234). Most significantly, a school system under the influence of Ubuntu have determined teachers, SBST members, management and school governing body members, even learners in such atmospheres are compassionate about their progress and development. This collaboration and commitment will then ensure that learners with negative derivatives such as learning disabilities are well encouraged by supporting them.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to provide solutions to the problem of the study by answering the research question through the execution of the stated objectives, we adopted a qualitative research approach. This helps us to understand the people and their social and cultural context within their community (Creswell et al., 2016:53). This approach is appropriate because it provides data for research questions inquiring on “how” and “why” (Jameel, Shaheen & Majid, 2018:1). For this to be implemented, a case study research design was used in order to ensure a full in-depth review of an existing phenomenon. A case study in its practicality investigates case in depth with a focus on a specific situation (George & Bennet, 2005). This, according to Yin (1998), is suitable to describe trajectories in the implementation of a policy or a programme. Therefore, building this study on the pedestal of case study is appropriate because the target is to rationalise the issue involved in the implementation of SBST policy in schools. Group discussion was used to get information from the selected participants. Group discussion was used because it allows the interviewer to actually

get into the happenings of a particular case. Moreover, it enables the researchers to understand the situation on the ground in a different perspective as it affects the participants (Escalada & Heong, 2014). This technique is a qualitative data collection method that brings people together in research comprise for locally made knowledge (Nyumba et al., 2017:23).

The participants of 15 teachers who are also BEd (honours) students employed by the DBE and enrolled at a rural campus of one of the universities in South Africa. They were divided into three groups and each groups comprised five members. These participants were selected using the convenient sampling technique. The convenient sampling technique uses the community members who are convenient to locate and make (Alvi, 2016:23). Not only that, it is also unique because the population are homogenous, which makes all members appropriate to be participants (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016:3). At the time of the study, those teachers who are also registered postgraduate students on the rural university were easy to approach because they come to campus every weekend to pursue their studies. However, this does not jeopardise the result of the study in any way, because they are also employed teachers in the located rural schools. Data collected were analysed using thematic analysis and this is appropriate to respond to the objective of the study which has been categorised into two segments, “the challenges” and “the solutions”. Thomas and Harden’s three steps of thematic analysis was therefore employed. These steps involved coding, developing the themes and analysing based on the themes (Thomas & Harden, 2008:7–8). This is useful for this study because it helps to appropriately identify and categorise the data according to the themes or consistent meaning making (Alhojailan, 2012:40). The issue of research ethic in this study was consider vita with adequate respect to the right and privilege of the participants (Ojo & Obimuyiya, 2019). In the process, the participants were not coerced to participate and their freedom to withdraw from the activities was assured.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The results of this study are presented below in themes. These themes were identified using Thomas and Harden’s three steps of thematic analysis. Three themes, namely; lack of adequate resources, parents not being aware of their children’s disabilities and a lack of support from the District-Based Support Teams (DBST) were identified and discussed:

Lack of Adequate Resources

The data revealed that a lack of adequate resources is responsible for the deficiencies in the implementation of the SBST policy in rurally located secondary schools. This is generally regarded as a major set-back to the education system in the developing countries because availability of educational resources contributes immensely to the teaching and learning effectiveness (Mupa & Chinooneka, 2015:125). Chingos and West (2010) also argue that the quality of learning materials such as textbooks and conducive classrooms among others is important to the improvement of instruction but the reverse is the case in the research area. This was indicated in the following conversation:

“The implementation process is a problem because teachers have too much workload and find it difficult to identify such learners”.

“In rural areas is even more difficult because of lack of resources and lack of DBST”

The first statement shows that there is too much work for the teachers and the teachers are the ones responsible for the implementation of SBST. This shows that they are too busy with their statutory responsibilities because of inadequate human resources such as teachers and other support staff. Not only that, a participant also said that rural schools lack human and physical resources and the DBSTs are not up to their responsibilities to give them necessary supports to enable them to implement the SBST policy properly. This is not far from the finding of the Nel et al. (2014) that DBST also finds it difficult to fulfil their responsibilities to the schools within their districts. Not only that, financial resources is also lacking in the school system, and where there is not enough money, implementation of any educational policies may record setbacks. This is shown in the below statements from the participants.

“Sometimes schools do not have enough budget in order to support learners in special classes e.g. hospitality/consumer studies learners cannot do their practical because there are no enough ingredients for their dishes/ some stores are not working”

“The school buildings are not good and unsafe for learners with physical disabilities”

“Practicality is difficult because of lack of human resources and inadequate training”

From the first statement, it shows that there are not enough financial resources/funds available to implement the school aims and objectives in order to ensure a productive teaching and learning process in the schools. This deficiency, according to the participant, is responsible for the inability of schools to make available the practical tools for hospitality/consumer studies to implement their teaching and learning practical aspect of the subject. The lack of practical tools is contrary to the aims of the DBE (2014,) which envisages catering for the needs of all learners. The lack of financial resources is also responsible for the bad shape of the school buildings, which according to him, is unsafe. That is, the school’s physical resources are a challenge because it does not accommodate learners with disabilities. From the above, one could see that the practical implementation of SBST is dependent on the availability of human and non-human resources, even the available human capital in the schools are not well trained to be able to implement the SBST policy. This may be the reason why Makhalemele and Nel (2015:15), note that one of the challenges of implementation of such policy is insufficient knowledge of team members to provide quality support services for the learners with disabilities.

Parents are Not Aware of Their Children’s Disabilities

The parent-teacher relationships and partnership has been linked to the academic success of schoolchildren, that is the development and success of learners do not rest only on learner factors but also depends on the environmental interaction such as the home-school cares (Pirchio et al., 2013:145). This is to say that the family-school relationships are a panacea for a good school experience. This is why El Nokali, Bachman and Votruba-Drzai (2010) asserted that parent-teacher relationships are important to the learners’ wellbeing and academic performance but in the

case of this study, the reverse is the case. The parents are alleged to not have been aware of their children's health and learning barriers. This is evidence in the following participants' statements.

"Some learners come from child headed families therefore there are no parents, caregiver or guardians who knows about their health history".

"Black people are not well informed about learning barriers or disabilities. Therefore we cannot identify the problems in time".

"Parents, caregivers or guardians from rural areas are no informed on issues of learning barriers therefore they are unable to have and manage their children's learning disabilities".

"When parents are informed about their children's problems they react negatively as if the teacher said that the learner is stupid".

It is revealed that the declining implementation of SBST not only lies in the hand of the teachers and school's support staff but also in the parents. The collaborative mechanism towards the success of learners is also missing. The first statement confirmed that many learners are from child-headed households where nobody cares for the children, they only attend school without anyone taking absolute care and control of them, therefore nobody reveals their health status to the school for consolidation. Not only that, the second statement confirms that black people are not well informed about the barriers of their wards. In the context of South Africa, "black people" occupied the greatest part in the rural areas. The issue here is that, when the parent is illiterate, it makes it more difficult for the parents and the teachers, most especially those in the support teams, to identify the barriers in such learners quickly. Our argument is that this is an impediment to the easy implementation of the SBST policy in secondary school. Sheridan et al., (2012) opined in the same direction that when there is parental involvement in the children's schools life, there is strong collaboration between families and schools activities and this is most beneficial to children.

The issue has not only ended with parent inabilities but also involved some difficult paper work to get things done by the teacher. Teachers allege that despite their readiness to implement this policy, various and bureaucratic processes involved before learners with disabilities could be identified. See below statements from the participants.

"In schools teachers found it difficult because there is too much paper work for them and some learners cannot be identifies. Because they do not have their health history and parents do not explain their children history properly".

"If teachers were to support one another there wouldn't be too much or paperwork, in such a way that if a learner has right papers from Grade R then there would not be a need to actually have paper work when they get to the next Grade".

"In denial parents, parents do not want to admit or believe that their learner(s) has barriers to learning".

"Parents are accommodated by the policy but parents are not workshoped so they are clueless about the policy".

One could see that the issue of cumbersome processes is an impediment to the smooth implementation of SBST because many learners who came from likely disadvantaged homes do not have their health history available in schools and many parents are not aware, which makes them unable to explain their children well to teachers for proper care. In some cases, parents are seen not to be happy that their wards are having learning barriers, this may be an inclination beliefs

from religion and/or cultural background where there is beliefs that statements you make against yourself remains and follows your destiny. To expatiate the penultimate statement, it is difficult to convince such parents that their wards are impaired with learning barriers which may also affect implementation of the policy. According to the statements, the last statement showed that the policy accommodates the involvement of parents in the implementation but most parents in the rural communities seem to be illiterate regarding the SBST policy and its implementation.

Lack of Support from the District-Based Support Team

Lack of support from the district support team is one of the impediment to the implementation of SBST in the schools system. This is to say that there is a lack of collaboration and cooperation between the schools and their district officers to provide the needed hands in the implementation process. This is practically against the principle of Ubuntu. Ubuntu from the literature has been confirmed to mean unity, relationships, collaboration, cooperation, oneness and togetherness of people and/or the stakeholders in order to achieve the aims or objectives of such organisations or society (Shizha, 2012; Bondai, 2016:39). However, the opposite of the above is evidence in the participants' statements, which are stated below.

"No[t] enough support given to the teachers on how to deal with learners with barriers as it was thought, that there are special schools dedicated to them".

"Department do not hire many special teachers for these learners".

The first statement shows that there is not enough support given to teachers and the SBST to cater for the learners with learning barriers. This agitation here is that they should go and attend special schools since there is not enough support. This on its own may add to the barriers of the learners since they will continue to think badly of themselves as the leftover and/or marginalised learners. The support from the Department of Education is also lacking as teachers alleged that competent teachers were not employed to take up the responsibilities. This is confirming our above observation that teachers handling the SBST in the schools are incompetent who did not have enough or the required certificates to be able to implement the SBST policy in schools. In addition, this is not far from the argument of Masango (2013:2) that poor implementation of SBST in schools is as a result of lack of knowledge to deal with learners with special needs which could be linked to inadequate training and/or motivation to perform their responsibilities.

In order to ameliorate this, the data showed that, at some point the department organize support programmes for teachers and the team to be able to get an inclination but this was not effective, as reflected in the statements below.

"Workshops were done but not effective, therefore it was not enough to capacitate the educators".

"In rural areas is even more difficult because of lack of resources and lack of DBST".

The above statements showed that even though there is little support from the Department of Education, little or no result was recorded on the part of the teachers or the SBST to make them effectively implement their responsibilities towards the learners with learning disabilities. However, the case in rurally located schools is worrisome because the inadequate resources to deal with the scenario are not available. Above all, the support that is expected from DBST is not forthcoming, which has also contributed to the poor or inadequate implementation of the

programme. From the Ubuntu perspective, such programmes need maximum collaboration from all stakeholders to bring implementation to the limelight. Jojo (2018:232) interprets this as a way of questioning the sense stakeholders have of working together and behaving towards achieving their organisational goals and objectives.

DISCUSSION

The study revealed that the schools located in rural communities lack adequate resources such as human capital, material resources and financial resources needed for the proper implementation of the SBST programme in the schools. This lack of resources has done more harms than good in the system even to the wellbeing and learners' academic performance. Therefore, the lack of adequate resources has a significant negative impact on the proper implementation of the SBST policy in schools. This is in support of the observation of Indoshi, Wagah and Agak (2010) that lack of educational resources had a negative influence on the learners learning process. The findings of Gaotlhobogwe (2012) also corroborate the above findings that inadequate resources are responsible for the bad attitude and perceptions of learners towards schooling. This is logically to infer that the implementation of the SBST policy in secondary schools is made impossible because of the lack of adequate education resources, which is not limited to human resources alone but to non-human resources such as tools, material and equipment, buildings, textbooks and funds among others.

The study revealed that most parents from previously disadvantage group are not aware of their children's disabilities. Even when the teachers tell them, they do not believe it. Not only that, many learners come from a child-headed family with little or no parental care, as a result they do not have their health and other relevant record in schools for teachers to work with. This could be regarded to some extent as an illiteracy on the part of the parent and or guardian. However, this is in consonance with the findings of El Nokali et al., (2010) that parent-teacher relationships are significant to learners' wellbeing and academic performance in the schools. That is, parents' involvement and school-partnerships in the school operations is vital to the healthy development and learners' social outcome. This is to say that when the home care attitude of the parent of learners with learning disabilities is lacking, it will affect their barriers, thereby resulting in negative outcomes on the implementation of SBST in schools. This is not far from the conclusion of Pirchio et al., (2013:145), who state that the connections between the parents and the schoolteachers are a dimension of academic success of schoolchildren. Mautone, Marcelle, Tresco and Power (2014:10), also in consonance with this, state that home school relationships have significant influence on the quality of productivity. This in one way to influence the success of learners in schools, that is, the parent involvement and parent-teacher relationships will produce positive child outcomes (Jeynes, 2011).

The finding revealed that there is inadequate support given by the higher authorities such as DBST and the Department of Education. This has rendered the school incapacitated to ensuring the adequate implementation of SBST in the school. The resultant effect is however not pleasant to the learners with learning disabilities because it excludes them in total teaching and learning activities in the schools. The inference here is that there is no adequate collaboration and cooperation between the external forces such as district and other education agencies and the

school. This is in consonance with the conclusion of Makhalemele and Nel (2015:13) that unsatisfactory support and collaboration from and or with Department of Education hinders the implementation of inclusive education policies in schools. This finding is an indication that the external education agencies still may not believe in spirit the collaboration as a means to actualising education objectives. That is, they are not yet following the principle of oneness and interconnectedness, which means, a person is person through other (Lefa, 2015). This is to confirm that no entity or system can exist independently with either external or in-house supports.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The empirical investigation of the trajectory in the implementation of the SBST policies exposes the challenges militating against the SBST policy. Among these challenges, identified to be predominant in the rurally located schools of South Africa, is the inadequate disbursement of educational resources such as human capital, materials resources and financial resources to enhance the speedy actualisation of the policy. Secondly, parents from the disadvantage class are illiterate to many school based policies that could help to enhance their children's learning abilities. This is to say that the parent-teachers relationship is strained towards the SBST policy. The strain condition is contrary to the SIAS (2014) policy where parents should participate in the SBSTs as equal partners. Lastly, lack of support from the DSBT and/or DOE challenged the implementation of the SBST. This is to conclude that lack of adequate resources, parents being unaware of their children's disabilities and a lack of support from the DBST are dimensions of poor implementation of SBST policy in rurally located schools in South Africa. These factors in our conclusion have rendered SBST implementation mechanism useless and ineffective to support learners with learning disabilities. Based on the above findings, it is therefore recommended that:

1. The government, through the department of education should prioritise the schools located in rural communities in South Africa and make sure that all educational resources needed to pursue the objective and goals of education, especially inclusive education should be provided. These resources include, but are not limited to, adequate funding, adequate provision of educational facilities such as teaching materials, aids, classrooms and building facilities. Not only that, the relevant agencies such as the Ministry of Education/Department of Education should ensure that competent human capital are employed to take up the SBST responsibilities in the schools and those in the system should be trained and retrained for their responsibilities to be actualised effectively.
2. The government, the Department of Education and other educational agencies including the school's governing bodies and/or the school management bodies should ensure that better education is provided to rural dwellers, especially those parents, to enable them to be aware of their responsibilities as parents towards the identification of learners with learning barriers and remedies to ameliorate the deficiencies. The school management and the government should devise a means to eradicate the stigma attached to learners with disabilities as this will make their parent willing to disclose any incongruences from their children to their teachers. To add to this, parents must be well informed and properly trained on how to support their children which could be achieved through organization of workshops for parents alongside teachers in the community schools. Among the other

findings, this stems out as one of the blind areas since the consulted literature did not mention it.

3. It is also essential that the government, DOE and district officers collaboratively develop functioning and effective ways of inclusive and cooperative relationships among themselves. This could be done by establishing a general support system in the community that will oversee the activities of SBST in the communities. This, in our opinion will ensure clinical supervision, monitoring, proper and prompt implementation of SBST. Even to make it more encompassing, the members of schools' governing bodies and the parents in the communities could be made a member of such teams. This, in our own view, will be effective because those in the support system will only be responsible for the implementation of SBST in the schools in the community and there would not be complaints of excessive workload as their responsibilities will be solely rested on the SBST implementation.

IMPLICATION FOR EDUCATION MANAGERS AND POLICY MAKERS

Drawing from the findings, school managements, policy makers, academics and other education agencies can use the findings to suggest further inclusive development within and outside the schools. Universities, the Department of Higher Education and Training as well as the Department of Basic Education can use the findings to design professional development programmes for the pre-service and in-service teachers and make them aware of their future responsibilities to learners. Over and above teachers being professional in this regard, it is imperative to bring parents and DBSTs on board for a successful implementation of the SBSTs' activities.

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