How short courses can support the role of health professionals in an inclusive education system

TEACHER EMPOWERMENT FOR DISABILITY INCLUSION

11th Annual Celebrating Health Sciences Education Conference

15 August 2019

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Co-funded by the European Union

Presentation overview

- Introduction
- What is the TEDI project?
- Approach: TEDI courses on disability inclusion
- Approach: Research methods - Evaluation
- Outcomes: Preliminary evaluation findings
- Conclusions

Introduction

- Education White Paper 6 (2001): Address barriers to learning and provide support within inclusive education system.
- Dept Basic Education (2018): Centralised, district-based approach providing support in public ordinary, special, and full-service schools.
- Dependent on Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS, 2014) – determine levels of support
- Health professionals integral part of system, supporting teachers and working in district-based support teams (DBSTs).
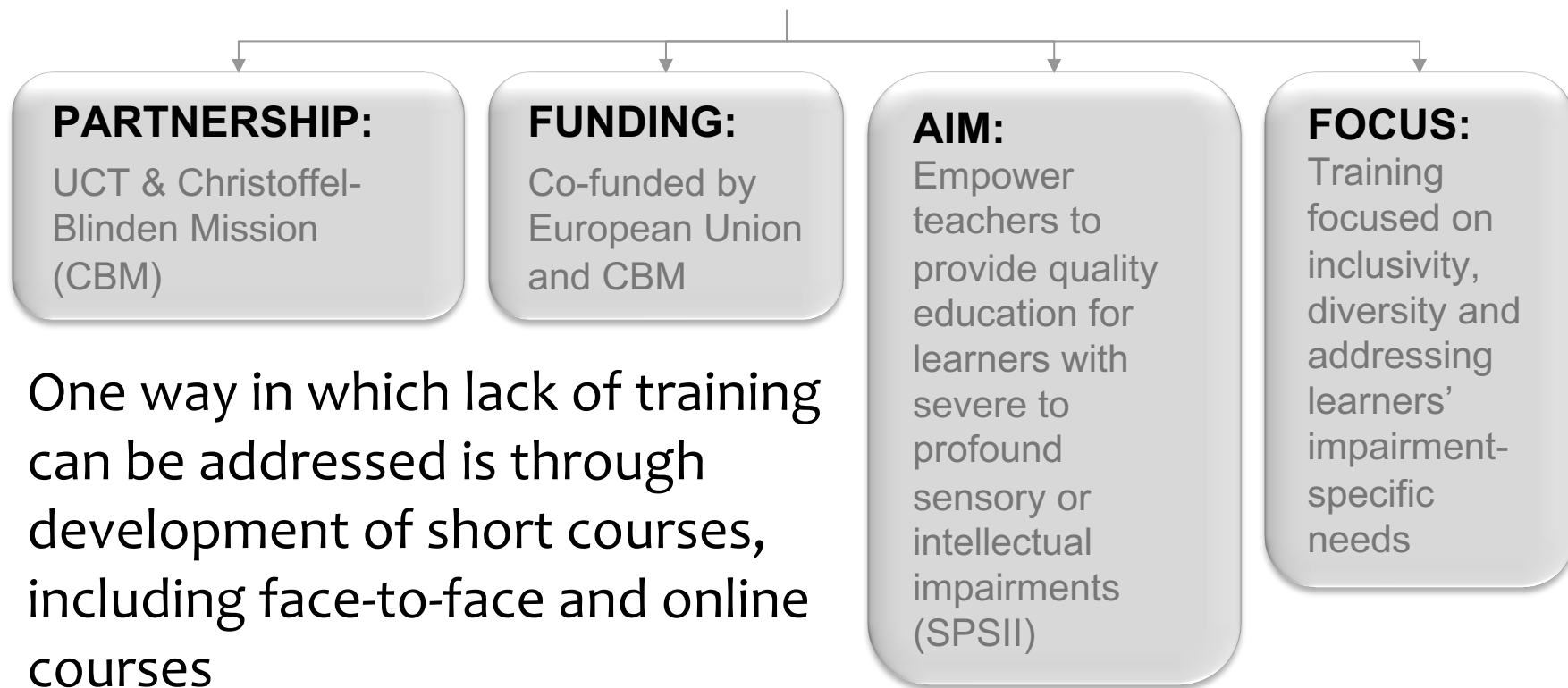
Introduction

- DBSTs made up of multi-disciplinary itinerant teams:
  - Education psychologist/counsellor
  - Social worker
  - Occupational therapist
  - Speech therapist
  - Learning support coordinator
- Teams offer:
  - Psychosocial and health support
  - Teaching and learning support
  - Systems, administrative and institutional support
- *"Sufficient and appropriately trained personnel"* in DBSTs needed (DBE, 2018, p. 11), but lack of training available, in particular training focused on impairment-specific barriers to learning (McKenzie, Kelly, & Shanda, 2018).

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What is the TEDI project?

Teacher **E**mpowerment for **D**isability **I**nclusion

PARTNERSHIP:
UCT & Christoffel-Blinden Mission (CBM)

FUNDING:
Co-funded by European Union and CBM

AIM:
Empower teachers to provide quality education for learners with severe to profound sensory or intellectual impairments (SPSII)

FOCUS:
Training focused on inclusivity, diversity and addressing learners' impairment-specific needs

One way in which lack of training can be addressed is through development of short courses, including face-to-face and online courses

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Approach: TEDI courses

	Disability Studies in Education	Disability Inclusion in Education: Building systems of Support
Duration	Five days	Five weeks, 2-3 hours per week
Presentation format	Face-to-face Lectures, including theoretical and experiential Group work and practical activities Action research assignment	Online - Coursera: https://www.coursera.org/learn/disability-inclusion-education Videos, podcasts (with transcripts) Readings Quizzes and peer-review assignments All materials released with creative commons licenses – open education resources

Need for district officials and teacher support personnel (including therapists) to understand how they can support teachers – focus of these courses

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Approach: TEDI courses

	Disability Studies in Education	**Disability Inclusion in Education: Building systems of Support**
Target audience	Educators at school, district and provincial levels responsible for supporting education of learners with severe to profound disabilities (SPD) Learning support advisors and teachers, principals, social workers, rehabilitation therapists, psychologists.	Open to anyone, but of particular relevance to educators, principals, and education officials interested in expanding access to education and curriculum for learners with SPD
Learning outcomes	Examine barriers to education for learners with SPD Explore changes to educational provision to address barriers Identify teaching, learning and curriculum strategies that promote disability inclusion	Understand disability as issue of social justice and describe disability inclusion within inclusive education framework. Describe educator support needs Identify systemic support structures available to teachers Explore impairment-specific support needs of learners with SPD

Approach: Evaluation of TEDI courses

Disability Studies in Education		Disability Inclusion in Education: Building systems of Support	
Piloted June 2018 with 26 participants		Launched Feb 2019 111 active learners to date	
Data collection	Pre, post and 2-months post surveys with 26 participants Focus group with 8 participants		Online pre-surveys completed by 56 participants Post surveys and focus group discussions to be completed by Cape Town participants
Data analysis	Quantitative data analysed using descriptive statistics and Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test Qualitative data analysed using thematic analysis		Data will be analysed using thematic analysis and descriptive statistics Course analytics

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Outcomes: Preliminary evaluation findings

Disability Studies in Education

		Communication		Teacher support and development		SIAS	
		Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
N	Valid	19	19	19	17	19	17
	Missing	0	0	0	2	0	2
Median		4	3	3	2	3	2
Very confident				1	2	3	2
Confident			3	3	9	4	10
Somewhat confident		3	8	12	3	7	2
Not at all confident		16	8	3	3	5	3
Wilcoxon Z value		-2.392		-2.673		-1.941	
Wilcoxon p value		.017		.008		.052	

Outcomes: Preliminary evaluation findings

Disability Studies in Education

Strategies for inclusion

Course helped participants realise *"all learners have the right to education"* and *"disabled learners [should not be treated] differently from others"*

It also helped participants understand *"different learning styles"* of learners with disabilities and *"how best to incorporate them to accommodate all the learners in class"*

Fostering empathy and understanding through hearing from people with disabilities

"I enjoyed the feedback of people that is living with disability and how successful they are"

"When you hear their story and how they hated to be excluded and the challenges they had to go through, and the bottom line of all of it, is you just want to be accepted and to be treated as normal. I think that, to me, was a total eye-opener"

Collaboration and advocacy

"I feel like a I am part of a network of people making a difference for inclusion"

"I feel that I want to change our teachers' mindset! This is where it might all change! I want to become an advocate for inclusive education/learners"

Outcomes: Preliminary evaluation findings

Disability Inclusion in Education: Building systems of Support

Of those who enroll in MOOCs, most don't intend on finishing – limited time, want to experience new topics, only interested in particular aspects

How can MOOCs be used?

- Text-book like resource or tutorials for taught course

- Pre-requisite for other courses

- Replace a taught course while facilitating online meet ups

- As module in a course or qualification

- For continuous professional development

Course analytics for Disability Inclusion in Education

- 1069 total enrollments

- 111 currently active learners

- 80 completed the first half; 57 completed the full course (5.4% of total enrollments)

Outcomes: Preliminary evaluation findings

Disability Inclusion in Education: Building systems of Support

Who is taking the course?

- 45.6% are 25-34 year olds

- 76% female

- 20% from Africa, 25.2% from Asia, 17.4% from Europe, 27.8% from North America

- Majority (72.9%) have a tertiary qualification

Motivation for taking the course

- 66% want to be able to support teachers in their work with learners with disabilities

- 76% want to learn about disability inclusion in education

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Conclusions

- Limitation: small sample size

- What is novel about our approach?

    - Platform encourages collaboration and support networks to form; opportunity for health professionals to connect with educators

    - Drawing on personal experiences of persons with disabilities – helps promote relational competence (Aspelin & Johnson, 2019)

    - MOOC can supplement and support face-to-face training, and can be used all over the world as OERs

- Where do courses fit in the landscape of inclusive education?

    - Could be infused as module in existing qualifications for health professionals (already part of PG Diploma in Disability Studies)

    - Can be offered as short courses to health professionals working in DBSTs and supporting inclusive education – help provide psychosocial and learner support (as per SIAS)