

Internal Evaluation of TEDIs Face-to-Face Courses



TEACHER
EMPOWERMENT
FOR DISABILITY
INCLUSION

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Introduction



TEDI developed four short, face-to-face courses, and four accompanying online courses (MOOCs) for educators. This presentation focuses on the evaluation report of the four face-to-face courses:

1. Disability Studies in Education (DSE course);
2. Education and Care of Learners with Severe to Profound Intellectual Disability (SPID course);
3. Teaching Learners with Visual Impairment (VI course);
4. Navigating D/deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Education: Empowering Teachers (DHH course)

Chapters



- Chapter 1- International and national policy frameworks
Learners with SPD and teacher education,
Role of teacher empowerment
- Chapter 2- The Four Courses
- Chapter 3- Methodology
- Chapter 4- Quantitative Data
- Chapter 5- Qualitative Data
- Chapter 6- Discussion and Conclusion

The table below summarises enrolment and attendance across all the courses.

Enrolment across all the courses				
	DSE course	SPID course	VI course	DHH course
Number of course applicants	33	41	38	40
Number of applicants accepted	28	30	38	35
Number of participants	26	30	26	32
Awarded Certificate of Completion	16	30	22	9
Awarded Certificate of Attendance	10	0	4	21

Data was collected from course participants through pre- and post-course surveys, a final survey two months after course completion, and focus-group discussions. Data was also obtained from course facilitators through focus-group discussions

Findings

The findings of this evaluation indicate that all course participants have a more comprehensive understanding of disability after attending the courses.

This occurred primarily at four levels:

- human rights and social justice issues;
- parents and family networks;
- understanding specific medical aspects and more general issues of disability;
- how to more effectively implement inclusive education.

Quantitative Findings

While the DSE course learning outcomes survey did not produce a significant result overall, two items were significant: communication, and teacher support and development. This indicates that participants felt better equipped to manage these barriers after the course.

The SPID course learning outcomes survey produced a significant result, highlighting that participants on this course felt more confident in teaching and caring for learners with SPID.

Two of the three factors on the VI course learning outcomes survey (pedagogical elements related to teaching learners with VI, and psychosocial support for learners with VI) had significant results, illustrating that participants felt more confident in these teaching areas.

Lastly, the DHH course learning outcomes survey also produced a significant result, indicating that participants felt more confident about teaching DHH learners after the course.

Qualitative Findings

Themes:

- recognising the importance of understanding disability in specific as well as broad terms,
- the significance of collaborations,
- the relevance of advocacy,
- and how all of this promotes empowerment both professionally and personally.

This understanding of disability paves the way for better collaboration, which in turn provides for more effective advocacy work and ultimately leads to empowerment so that educators are active participants (not passive recipients) in the transformation of education in South Africa.

Conclusions

Four key conclusions were able to be drawn from TEDI's evaluation research:

- 1. There is very little teacher training that focuses on teaching learners with SPD.*
- 2. Short courses are one way in which the training gap can be filled, particularly while full degrees are being developed.*
- 3. Teacher training should focus not only on instrumental/technical skills, but also on empowerment.*
- 4. Any training that is developed needs to be evaluated so that we know whether or not it is effective*

Recommendations

The following recommendations can be made based on the findings from the evaluation research conducted by TEDI:

- There needs to be greater provision of teacher-education courses on disability-inclusive practice for all teachers at pre-service and in-service levels.
- There needs to be a focus on ongoing professional development through the provision of multiple learning opportunities that are incentivised.
- All teacher-education courses need to have a significant focus on disability rights and family involvement in the education of children with disabilities.
- Specialist full qualifications need to be supported and teachers need to be incentivised to do these courses.

- Attention should not only be given to specialist skills, but also to collaboration and team work.
- More engagement and collaboration among relevant stakeholders should be encouraged.
- Teachers should be supported to take responsibility for their own learning so that they become empowered to adopt an attitude of lifelong learning and ongoing professional development.
- More research evaluation studies should be conducted on the role of teacher education in building disability-inclusive education in South Africa.