Application of Ubuntu Philosophy for the enhancement of Guidance and Counselling: An alternative for facilitating Inclusive Education in Lesotho

Malephoto Niko Ruth Lephoto

National University of Lesotho, Lesotho

Lephotoniko@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This conceptual paper addresses Guidance and Counselling as a crucial component for supporting and facilitating inclusive education in Lesotho. Research on inclusive education in Lesotho uncovered that some of the problems such as negative attitude towards learners with special educational needs, and lack of support structures for them hamper efficient inclusive education implementation. The paper considers the development of Ubuntu oriented Guidance and Counselling (GC) in Lesotho schools as another alternative for facilitating inclusive and equitable quality education. The paper argues from an assumption that inclusive education process should be framed within humanistic psychology which cultivate the attitude that learning communities should provide humane educational conditions to meet the needs of each individual of the learning community. The author beliefs that the development Ubuntu oriented GC can help to eliminate any discrimination of personality, and equal attitude to all learners become a culture in inclusive schools. A narrative literature approach was adopted as method of enquiry and foundation for discussions. The conclusion is that Ubuntu values of collaboration, solidarity, social justice, empathy, care and empowerment are the necessary cultural capital to enhance GC in Lesotho schools. The paper recommends that Lesotho education authorities and policy makers should ensure that Ubuntu is adopted as a guiding philosophy for the development of strategies and approaches intended to facilitate inclusive education.

Key words: Guidance and counselling, enhancement, facilitation, inclusive education, Ubuntu

INTRODUCTION

Since the Proclamation-Everyone has the right to education-in article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), education systems worldwide, have made significant strides to make education accessible to their citizens. Through 'Education For All' (EFA) international agenda, countries are adopting inclusive education. Lesotho, as a signatory to major United Nations treaties, has committed to the EFA ("Author, 2017"). It has committed to achieving sustainable development goal (SDG) number four; "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education, and promote lifelong learning". However, it is generally agreed that the road to achieving inclusive education is long and varied, with challenges and opportunities ("Author, 2014"). After many years of committing to inclusive education, many countries, including Lesotho, are struggling to practice inclusive education efficiently. Scholars assert that no government can realistically expect to switch overnight from special or integrated approaches to education to inclusive education ("Author, 2014, p. 41").

In attempts to make adjustments necessary for inclusive education practice, scholars have suggested adoption of humanistic approach to education ("Author, 2017; Author, 2017; Author, 2014; Author, 2005"). These scholars concur with "Author 2017" that humanistic education provide a foundation for personal growth

and development so that learning can continue throughout life in a self-directed manner. This article argues for the development of Ubuntu oriented GC. The author of this article argues from an assumption that problems such as emotional difficulties, poor self-image ("Author, 2014; Author, 2010"), negative attitudes and behaviours by teachers, and normal learners ("Author et al. 2012; Author, 2014; Author, 2015; Author, 2017; Author, 2017; Author, 2017") and injustices ("Author, 2014; Author, 2016") obstruct inclusive education practice. "Author et al. 2019, p.281" indicate that to provide the best service for inclusive education in schools, in addition to modifying the learning model, GC services are also needed.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: UBUNTU PHILOSOPHY AND CLIENT-CENTERED THERAPY.

This paper looks at enhancement of GC from perspectives of humanistic psychology to education. "Author 2017" argue that humanistic approach to education is good step forward that will help in overcoming the long standing challenges of inclusive education. "Author 2014" concur that inclusive education is the result of humanity ideas development based on the exclusive value of the human personality, their uniqueness and the right for the decent life. As such, strategies and approaches intended to facilitate inclusive education need to be guided by humanistic psychology that fosters conducive learning communities that enable learners to develop creative abilities ("Author, 2017"). "Author 2014" posits that inclusive education denotes equitable learning community where there is no any group of people isolated from the rest. It means the interests of any group of people are not suppressed by the interests and needs of others ("Author, 2014"). "Author 2017" postulate that the purpose of humanistic education is to provide a foundation for personal growth and development so that learning will continue throughout life in a self- directed manner. This article has adopted Ubuntu philosophy and Person-Centred Therapy of Carl Rogers as frameworks for GC enhancement.

Client-Centered Therapy: a humanistic approach to guidance and counselling

Client-centered therapy of Carl Rogers is a humanistic approach to guidance and counselling that emphasise respect for the human being. Its view of human nature is positive. It views a person as a unique, determined, free entity ("Author 2009"). The fundamental concept in this theory is the actualizing tendency, which according to Rogers, is an inherent self-directed tendency for the human organism to grow, develop and realise its potential ("Author, 2009; Author, 2005"). Rogers content that all people have the necessary resources for self-actualization. When a person fails to actualize his/her tendency, it has been blocked through environmental variables such as; conditions of worth-particular set of specific standards imposed on a person when his or her value is judged by others, and conditional positive regard ("Author, 2009"). Even though actualizing tendency can be impeded by external factors, this tendency activates in an environment characterised by genuineness, care, empathy and non-judgmental relationships.

Application of Client-Centered therapy in inclusive schools GC programmes aims at creating positive interpersonal environment through the attitude of congruence, unconditional positive regard and empathetic understanding of individual learners' needs and challenges ("Author, 2005; Author, 2009"). In this type of counselling environment, learners experience acceptance and subsequently become more self-accepting. Unconditional self-acceptance permits learners to move toward self-fulfilment. Client-Centered therapy in African schools assumes that the relation

between a teacher and learners matters more that the techniques and methods that are considered important in other counselling approaches. "Author, 2005" claims that this nurturing relationship between the learner and the teacher counsellor can stimulate the inner resources of the learner and the innate capacity to find the best way to survive and enjoy life. Client-Centered therapy strives towards improving increased self-understanding, more positive feelings, greater self-exploration and improved self-concept. In inclusive schools, it can be adopted as a strategy for the promotion of learners' resilience in the midst and context of various adverse conditions ("Author, 2005").

Ubuntu/Botho Philosophy framework for Guidance and Counselling enhancement

Ubuntu philosophy can be infused in humanistic GC undertakings. It is an African philosophy of care and support that is concerned with the maintenance of well-being for all. Similar to Client-Centered therapy, Ubuntu aims at cultivating conducive and learner-friendly environments characterized by positive relationships. The appropriateness of Ubuntu in GC undertakings is supported by "Author et al. 2019"-in their contention that inclusion can be related to equality, justice, and individual rights in the distribution of resources. As such, inclusive education guided by Ubuntu is evidenced by an "educational reform that emphasizes anti-discrimination attitudes, the struggle for equal rights and opportunities, justice, and expansion of access to education for all..." ("Author et al., 2019").

Moreover, the adoption of Ubuntu principles as a framework in this article is a response to the call by "Author 2018"-that; considering the challenges the African continent is faced with, it is necessary for people in their varying contexts to be oriented in Ubuntu principles since it can contribute towards general upliftment of African people. Ubuntu-orientated approaches and strategies for facilitating inclusive education, indicates mindfulness that for education to serve its purpose fully, it has to resonate with the socio-cultural context for which it is meant ("Author, 2018"). The Ubuntu principles of solidarity, harmony, social justice, empathy, tolerance, compassion, sharing, care and mutual support ("Author, 2011; Author, 2014; Author, 2013b; Author, 2017") are values crucial for the enhancement of G/C and facilitation of inclusive education. The application of these values in counselling environment can promote positive emotions and self-esteem among learners experiencing challenges. According to "Author 2017", teacher-student relationships are considered fundamental for students' adjustment in schools.

Although it is argued that Ubuntu cannot on its own solve all the problems facing international agendas in this globalised world, this article argues that Ubuntu should continue to be integrated as the major social capital for developing new strategies for facilitation of inclusive education in Lesotho. Ubuntu tenets of collaboration, respect and integrity permits the creation of inclusive social and cognitive spaces for construction of knowledge needed to enhance GC. In the created social and cognitive spaces, no prescriptions have to be followed, instead, schools create their learning and solutions by collectively answering questions such as: How can we enhance GC? What is our target for enhancement of GC? What assets are needed and available to achieve this? How can we effectively utilize available support and resources? How can available support and resources be continuously strengthened? What expertise and resources does the school need from outside?

RESEARCH METHOD

This paper followed a narrative literature review as a method to establish

facts about inclusive education in Lesotho. This approach to literature helped the author identify patterns and trends in the literature, and found gaps in knowledge related to the facilitation of inclusive education in Lesotho. Although several studies in Lesotho have addressed inclusive education issues, many focused on challenges that obstruct its successful implementation. No study was found in Lesotho that discussed inclusive education from an African perspective of Ubuntu. Also, no study was found that discussed GC as another approach for facilitating inclusive education. The narrative approach to literature helped the author to contextualize the study, and establish Ubuntu as a theoretical framework. The study used articles published in credible scientific journals to strengthen arguments suggesting the enhancement of GC in inclusive schools from the perspectives of Ubuntu.

CONCEPTUALIZING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Several definitions are provided to conceptualize inclusive education. For example, "Author 2014, p.40" define inclusive education as an acceptance of all children without exception or discrimination into the neighbourhood schools that they should ordinarily attend. Similarly, "Author et al. 2019" state it is a form of education service which does not distinguish between regular students and those with special needs. Further, "Author et al. 2019" show that inclusive education is about inclusion of students in remote areas, isolated indigenous communities, areas experiencing natural disasters and social disasters. In the same vein, "Author 2016, p.100", posits that inclusive education "involves placing special pupils in regular schools with the necessary support services to raise their attainment and enhance their access to and participation in education". Moreover, "Author 2015, p.84" points out that the aim of inclusive education is "extending access to education, promotion of full participation in education system by all the students at risk of exclusion, and promotion of the opportunity of realisation of their own potential". "Author 2018, p.1" refers to inclusive education as "a process of addressing and responding to diverse needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities and reducing exclusion within and from education".

Analysis of the above definitions provides that school systems should engage and make adjustments regarding curriculum, content, structures and strategies with a shared vision of including all children ("Author et al., 2019; Author, 2018; Author, 2017"). "Author, 2017, p.206" however argues that "no country has yet succeeded in constructing a school system that lives up to the ideals and intentions of inclusion as defined by international organizations". In this paper, inclusive education is understood as the process of educating all learners, regardless of their limitations. Inclusive education practice should ensure that each learner is supported to become a free member of a school and the community. Also, it has to empower learners to deal with challenges that pose a threat to their learning and academic achievement. Based on this understanding, the author argues for the enhancement of GC as another strategy to provide support to learners with special needs. At the same time, it is a strategy for mitigating threats to inclusive education, such as negative attitudes, maltreatment of learners with special education needs by their typical peers, and the emotional challenges that are reported to be common among learners with special educational needs ("Author, 2016"). GC is one educational support component that can promote attitudes of respect, acceptance and empathy. It can also promote opportunities for self-awareness and realization of one's potential while addressing emotions as integral to the school as a social world ("Author, 2016").

Its enhancement is viewed as part of a prudently designed approach to educate learners with diverse needs within the re-structured mainstream or school communities ("Author 2014). Enhancement of GC sits well with "Author, 2014" who argues that inclusive education is an effort that addresses inequalities in schooling and empowers learners with special educational needs (LSEN) to be independent. The following issues discussed hereunder are critical.

The context of inclusive education in Lesotho

Reports on issues of inclusive education in Lesotho show that for a long time, the Lesotho government had the plan to include learners with disabilities in education. Some reports show that even before the Education For All (EFA) initiative, Lesotho had already started movements in the direction of inclusive education. "Author, 1996" shows that the commitment to inclusive schooling was clearly reflected in establishing the Ministry's Special Education Unit and a series of national seminars conducted by the Ministry of Education in 1987 and 1988. Also, "Author, 1996" and "Author, 2012" concur that from 1990, the Lesotho Ministry of Education had already begun to explore ways to include disabled children within the school system. "Author 2009" shows that in1987, King Moshoeshoe II's charitable social organization "Hlokomela Bana" (Care for the children) called for a discussion on how to educate children with disabilities. Following the deliberations, it was recommended that Lesotho should move towards inclusive education because it fits into its cultural framework of extended family and caretaking of all children. It is, however evident that for a long time, there has been misunderstanding of what inclusive education involves. It seemed that instead of inclusion, integration of learners with disabilities in mainstream was adopted. "Author 2014" clarifies the concept of 'integration' as the placement of LSEN in mainstream schools that are unchanged, with an expectation that LSEN will adapt themselves to meet the expectations of the schools.

Further, "Author 2014" affirm that the two terms inclusive and integration are perceived to be synonymous in Lesotho. The Lesotho Inclusive Education Policy of 2018 "Author, 2018" however has clarified the difference between the two concepts. The policy defines inclusive education as a process of addressing and responding to diverse needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures, and communities and reducing exclusion within and from education. It aspires for a conducive environment that best corresponds to learners' requirements and preferences ("Author, 2018"). Further, the policy clarifies that inclusive education involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of appropriate age range ("Author, 2018"). Integration is defined as "the process of placing persons with disabilities in existing mainstream educational institutions with the understanding that they can adjust to the standardized requirements of such institutions including existing contextual arrangements as well as the curricula provision and educational facilities" ("Author, 2018, p.1"). Ubuntu/Botho fits well with the inclusive education because its values of care, support, respect, social justice, solidarity and others can enhance inclusive practice.

Although GC provision is often omitted in inclusive education discourse, I firmly maintain that GC counselling is an indispensable component for the facilitation of inclusive education, and thus deserves cognitive and social space in inclusive education discourse. "Author 2014" supports the view that if the inclusive education model's effectiveness is discussed, the psychological dimension should also be considered. This paper

advocates for strengthening GC as a strategy for ensuring that the psychological dimension is attended to. For example, emotional difficulties in inclusive schools, poor self-image and other problematic behaviours such as bullying are of interest when discussing the appropriateness of G/C in inclusive schools.

Emotional difficulties in inclusive schools

Although negative emotions are generally reported to increase among the school-going population in recent years ("Author, 2016; Author, 2014"), research reveals that they are highly prevalent in inclusive schools ("Author et al. 2017; Author 2014; Author et al., 2019)". It is noted that learners with special education needs are psychologically and emotionally challenged ("Author, 2013; Author, 2016"). They are likely to fall behind academically since they may possess minimal urge to participate in learning and other activities intended by the inclusive education initiative. "Author 2012" identifies some of the challenges of learners with special needs as meeting personal needs, challenges in realizing life aspirations, high levels of ignorance, failure in some life endeavours, psychological stress and socio-economic problems. Besides, numerous studies have shown that children with learning disabilities often report lower global self-concept and imperfect specific academic self -concept than their peers without learning disabilities ("Author, 2010").

The human tendency of conditional positive regard for other people is a reality in inclusive schools. Learners are genuinely accepted if they meet generally perceived standards for participation in school activities. "Author et al., 2017" note that in some societies, people with disabilities tend to be less accepted by a majority of people who make discrediting statements about their attributes. Another study by "Author, 2015" found that children with special needs encountered difficulty in social interactions with regular class peers and teachers. They were often laughed at, or devalued in many ways during an interaction. "Author et al. 2020" also, note that one of the barriers to access for students with disabilities in mainstream schools is the negative attitude of typically developing peers. They further indicate that attitudes of children towards their peers with disabilities are positively correlated with the frequency of interacting with them during free play and activities. "Author et al 2020" believe that these attitudes can lead to avoidance of interactions with students with disabilities. Still, they can disrupt interactions, which can, in turn, cause low satisfaction from such interactions among people with disabilities. From these discussions, it can be deduced that negative attitude from normal learners and teachers can directly or indirectly trigger negative emotions of LSEN. Research shows that negative attitudes may be just as obstructive as physical barriers, limiting those with disabilities from participating fully in schools and communities "Author et al. 2012, p. 380". "Author et al., 2012" and "Author, et al., 2019" agree that learners with disabilities may experience low acceptance by peers, loneliness, rejection and bullying. "Author et al. 2019" add that such learners have less access to social support than their healthy peers. I concur with "Author et al. 2012" that this could badly result in declining academic performance, problematic behaviours and dropping out of school.

"Author, 2014" suggests that schools have a significant in creating an environment of acceptance and support for different people. Scholars indicate that social relationships play an essential role in mental health and well-being of all learners ("Author, et al., 2017; Author, 2014; Author, et al., 2019"). "Author et al. 2017" suggest there is the need to ensure high-quality relationships and availability of tailored support. The relationships with the close circle of people are regarded as

significant in increasing positive self-regard and emotional balance. "Author 2014" recommends social capital as a protective factor for positive emotions. He defines social capital as a network of social relations based on mutual support and faith in the other person, right ecological conditions, fighting discrimination and actively promoting health. This paper argues that through purposeful enhancement of GC, cognitive and behavioural strategies used to cope with stressful situations can be strengthened ("Author et al., 2019). GC can promote social and emotional adjustment-promoting mental health and coordination of emotion, activities and thoughts ("Author et al., 2019"). The inclusive education context may promote mutual and productive interconnections which can be used as assets for enhancing positive emotions. In the Lesotho context, where teachers are expected to provide GC to learners ("Author, 2012"), teachers have to understand that their behaviour, "their way of thinking, the theoretical background they follow, and their specific teaching practices are critical factors which can enhance or undermine the inclusive process" (Author, 2017, p. 643).

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING AS A PILLAR FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Research sufficiently documented the significance of GC in inclusive education ("Author, 2019; Author et al. 2018; Author, 2016; Author, 2014"). GC is generally considered as the educational support service that assist all learners to participate in school activities ("Author, 2019"). It is an educational tool in shaping the orientation in a learner from negative ideas that are planted in them by their peers and other people in their environment ("Author et al. 2018"). Through GC, learners get proper adjustment guide that could help come in terms with reality and adjust to the existing situations. Several scholars ("Author 2019; Author et al. 2018") attest to the following benefits of GC:

1. GC helps learners realise their full potential.
2. It assists learners to establish some personal meaning of their behaviours and set goals and values for future behaviour.
3. Encourages client to develop adaptive skills to cope with everyday changes and challenges.
4. Encourages facilitative, co-operative peer interactions, and motivate learners to develop good interpersonal relationship.
5. Help learners cope with academic anxieties.
6. Equip learners with problem solving and decision making skills.
7. Fosters resiliency factors for learners and enable them develop positive self-image.
8. Assist the teachers, other school staff members and parents in understanding the needs and problems of learners.
9. Assures equitable access to educational opportunities.

The above mentioned benefits of GC in inclusive education are supported by "Author et al. 2019" that GC in inclusive schools is structured to help students achieve personal, social, emotional, learning and career independence. Learners receiving GC services get to know themselves better, understand their specific needs and their disorders. According to "Author et al. 2016" counselling is a process in which a counsellor helps an individual or individuals learn, understand themselves and their environment. It helps learners to choose the right type of behaviours that will help them develop, grow, progress, ascend, mature and step up educationally, vocationally and socially. "Author et al. 2014" say GC is the sum total of activities and services that are designed to help individuals achieve self-understanding and self-direction. Thesecan

help them to make adjustment to school, home and community. Understandably G/C can bring a positive change in learners' thoughts, feelings, attitudes and actions, thereby promoting accepting, supportive and learner-friendly inclusive schools. In order for GC to achieve its goals, "Author et al. 2018" suggest that counsellors are expected to be friends with learners, listen to learners' complaints, short comings, and provide guidance. From the above discussion, the author deduct that GC is naturally humanistic since its purpose is to support human growth. Hence, this article proposes that GC enhancement in Lesotho schools should be underpinned by African Ubuntu philosophy that is also humanistic.

According to "Author, 2015", education should empower young people with skills that enhance their holistic development. He further states that the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) in Lesotho has failed to integrate a life skills programme, catering for students' psychosocial development of students in its curricula. Also, "Author, 2015" notes that MOET first piloted the Guidance and Counselling syllabus in a few high schools in 2002 but never followed it up to be implemented by all schools. The author is cognizant of the fact that GC in Lesotho schools is not sufficiently utilized. Lesotho teachers' basic GC skills are not recognized as the best available assets to improve the state of GC in schools. This is evidenced by lack of structured GC service provision ("Author; 2014; Author, 2019"). The findings by "Author 2019"; "Author 2015"; "Author 2014" show that GC in Lesotho schools is random. Although teacher training institutions in Lesotho continuously train teachers in GC application in schools, there seem to be no follow up by the training institutions on how the acquired skills are applied in schools. Also, the MOET has never provided guidelines for GC implementation. The paradox is, the MOET unceasingly encourage that GC provision in Lesotho schools should be enhanced ("Author, 2009; Author, 2012"). This paper argues that with the recently legitimised inclusive education in Lesotho ("Author, 2018"), GC enhancement is more essential than before.

Essentially, "Author et al., 2016" write that GC services in schools shall develop, assess and improve educational programmes; enhance teaching and improve the teachers' competence, and reduce the cost for the children. GC serves empowerment purpose for all learners since, it helps schools to meet learners' psychosocial needs. Similarly, "Author et al., 2017" stipulate that GC enhances self-acceptance regardless of one's perceived weak points. It empowers learners towards realization of life aspirations. It also enhances emotional intelligence, positive self-regard, assertiveness and resilience. The outcome of strengthened GC should be "the enhancement of the whole child, not only educationally but also socially and emotionally" ("Author et al., 2011, p.55").

Ubuntu philosophy supports the enhancement of GC in inclusive education. Grounding the enhancement of GC in Ubuntu philosophy indicates understanding that African perspectives should underpin newly developed educational programmes in the African context. Knowledge construction and practices intended to bring a positive social change in Lesotho learners' psychosocial beings should no longer be completely informed and dominated by foreign perspectives. It is hard to disagree with "Author 2008" that "psychology's *next force* must spring from the philosophical underpinnings of humanistic psychology". "Author 2008" argues that it is time for a humanistic reformation that goes beyond a call for the opportunity to develop individual potentialities and self-actualization. In the quest for inclusive education, African schools need a unifying psychology that recognizes the value of Ubuntu philosophy in guiding the formulation of strategies for

facilitating inclusive education. Ubuntu-centred GC offers the opportunity for mutual actualization ("Author, 2008"), where all learners, regardless of their backgrounds, limitations and disabilities are supported to maximize their actualizing tendencies.

According to "Author et al. 2017", enhancement of GC guided by Ubuntu philosophy should be understood as a vehicle for knowledge construction needed for successful inclusion in education. Essentially, "Author, 2018" suggests that each education system ought to be based on a specific philosophy of education that drives it. Equally, "Author 2015" posits that knowledge construction located within African cultural value system is a dynamic and fluid process that involves Africans' lived experiences. In support, "Author, 2015" affirm that there is a need to challenge the dominance of Eurocentric knowledge systems that for a long time maintained superiority in knowledge production. Therefore, framing GC enhancement within philosophical viewpoints of Ubuntu is an effort to revive and restore the African Basotho modes of thinking concerning education and GC provision.

Ubuntu principles for grounding enhancement of G/C in the context of Inclusive Education

Ubuntu principles of respect, empathy and human dignity ("Author, 2015") allow the development of GC programmes cultivating the same principles in inclusive schools. This approach can re-connect Africans to their collective beliefs in regard to GC provision for children and youth, and revitalize a sense of collective responsibility in educating and guiding children and youth ("Author, 2015"). GC enhancement guided by Ubuntu philosophy can promote empathy, respect, unconditional acceptance for all learners, social justice and altruism as school ethos. The application of Ubuntu in GC suggests that during GC activities, teachers have to be creative in how they can infuse these values so that learners understand them and appreciate them as significant principles that can positively contribute to their personal, educational, social, psychological and vocational growth. Basically, teachers need to adopt these values as principles that guide their day to day interactions with learners, parents and other members of staff. Fundamentally, Ubuntu-oriented GC undertakings can cultivate teacher-learner relationships that value respect for all learners as humans. Thus, teachers become sensitive to learners' individual needs. When this is achieved, Lesotho schools would have preserved the Basotho philosophical statements of social justice, equality, equity, peace, participation, respect, mutual co-existence and inclusion ("Author, 2018; Author, 2009").

"Author 2015" and "Author 2017" agree that in Basotho indigenous education, respect for community life not only took precedence, but the elders educated children and youth for the common good of the community. This approach to life is still relevant for the current inclusive education agenda. Actually, "Author 2015, p.41" notes that the "spirit of humanness (Botho) promoted interdependency among people within a community: as such it made survival within impoverished circumstances less difficult". This approach to life that sustained African communities, still bears great significance in modern African communities and schools. Cultivation of the spirit of humanness in GC activities has the potential to promote and instil ethics of concern, love, acceptance, respect, tolerance and human dignity towards every learner.

CONCLUSION

This article has responded to the Lesotho Inclusive Education policy (2018) call that inclusive education providers should create a culture of collaboration in a landscape of mutual respect and equality

for all. The policy was formulated based on the principle of child friendly schools "Author, 2018". It aims to eliminate exclusion that is a consequence of negative attitudes and lack of response to diversity in learning. The discussions and arguments raised in this article aligned with Lesotho Inclusive Education Policy (2018) appeal that all MoET departments, together with all stakeholder's view and value learner diversity as integral to the human coexistence. The policy also appeals to those involved in education that they should prevent marginalization and discrimination based on the special educational needs to reduce barriers to participation in learning. More pertinent to this article, the policy encourages the MoET departments to fulfil their responsibility to facilitate an inclusive culture within their individual education settings and be accountable through the programmes, practices and outcomes of the entire learning community.

The author responds to these requests by contributing a new approach to facilitation of inclusive education. The approach is informed by Lesotho philosophy of education that is derived from Basotho philosophical statements of justice, equality, peace, participatory democracy and co-existence. Thus Ubuntu principles of participation, solidarity, interdependence and connectedness can foster recognition of local knowledge and resources as valuable inputs for facilitating inclusive education initiative that benefits all. This implies that teacher counsellors need to work collaboratively and in solidarity with school administrations, parents and learners to develop necessary GC undertakings that support inclusive education. Operationalization of Ubuntu principles permit principals, teachers, learners, parents and other stakeholders to realise their power as they participate in construction and re-construction of the knowledge necessary for transforming their learning ecologies, drawing from their experiences and perspectives. This can also raise a greater sense of empowerment among those involved. When people feel empowered, they become motivated to respond positively to inclusive education practice, thereby ensuring that diverse needs of all learners are catered for in an inclusive setting.

REFERENCES

Austad, C. S. (2009). Counselling and Psychotherapy today; Theory, Practice and Research. McGraw-Hill. New York.

Boer, A. D., Pijl, S. J. & Minnaert, A. (2012). Students' attitudes towards peers with disabilities: a review of the literature. *International Journal of Disability Development and Education,* https://www.doi.org/10.1080/1034912X.2012.723944.

Boitt, M. L. (2016). Evaluation of the challenges in the implementation of the guidance and counselling programmes in Baringo County Secondary Schools, Kenya. *Journal of Education and Practice,* 7(30), 27-34.

Bolden, R. (2014). (Eds.). 'Ubuntu'. In: D. Coughlan & M. Brydon-Miller

(Eds.). *The* SAGE E*ncyclopedia of Action Research*. London: SAGE.

Chiiran, G. G. (2014). Approaches to guidance and counselling and its benefits to youth: Kenyan urban experience. *African Research Journal of Education and Social Sciences* 1(1), 1-7.

Coughlan, B. & Carpenter, B. (2013). Critical issues in the emotional well-being of students with disailities. THINK-PIECE SERIES FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION, SEPTEMBER 2013.

Galaterou, J. (2017). Teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education: The role of job stressors and demographic parameters. *International Journal of Special Education*, 32(4), 643-657.

Firdaus, F.A & Mariyat, A. (2017). Humanstic approach in education according to Paulo Freire. *At-Ta'dib*, 12(2). DOI:http://dx.doi.org/10.21111/at-tadib-v12.2.1264.

Freire, E. & Koller, S. H. (2005). Person-Centered Therapy with impoverished, maltreated and neglected children and adolescents in Brazil. *Journal of Mental Health Counselling*, 27(3), 225

Gaydarov, K. (2014). Psychological wellbeing in the context of inclusive education. *International Journal on New Trends in Education and Their Implications*. 5(3), 1-12

Hankova, M. & Vavrova, S. 2016. Emotional and social needs of integrated disabled students in secondary school environment. *Procedia-Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 217, 229-238.

Hanks, T.L. 2008. The Ubuntu paradigm: psychology's next force. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology. 48(1):116-135*

Lephoto, M.N.R. (2019). Adopting a relational leadership as a strategy for empowering teacher counsellors: A pathway to promoting Learners' well-being and empowerment. *Gender & Behaviour*, 17(3),13777-13793.

Letseka, M. (2013). Educating for Ubuntu/Botho: Lessons from Basotho indigenous education. *Open Journal of Philosophy*, 3(2), 337-344.

Mabovula, N. N. (2011). The erosion of African communal values: A reappraisal of the African Ubuntu philosophy. *Inkanyiso, Journal of*

Human and Social Sciences, 3(1), 38-46.

Mahlatsi, M. (2017). Botho/Ubuntu Philosophy of education from childhood to adulthood in Africa. *International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research*, 6(8), 94-98.

McCarthy, J., Brennan, L. & Vecchiarello, K. (2011). Parent-School communication in the inclusive classroom: A comprehensive model of collaboration in education. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Vol 1(15).

Ministry of Education and Training. (2009). Curriculum and Assessment Policy; Education for Individual and Social Development. Lesotho. The Age Multimedia Publishers.

Ministry of Education and Training. (2012). Lesotho Education Sector HIV and AIDS Policy. Lesotho

Ministry of Education and Training. (2018). Lesotho Inclusive Education Policy. Printed by Morija Printing Works (Pty)Ltd.

Mohammad-aminzadeh, D., Abasi, A., Kazemian, S., Bardezard Y. B.& Younesi, S. J. (2019). Comparing emotion regulation strategies and adjustment between students. *Practice in Clinical Psychology*, 7(4), 245-254.

Mosia, P. & Lephoto, M. (2014). Supporting vulnerable learners in Lesotho Education System: The case of Lekhalong Combined School. Tsebo 3(5), 79-94.

Mosia, P. A. (2015). The prevalence of bullying at high schools in Lesotho: perspectives of teachers and students. *Africa Education Review*, 12(2), 161-179.

Munro, L. (2016). Teacher perspectives on bullying towards primary-aged students with disabilities. Unpublished Dissertation. University of Toronto.

National Disability Authority. (2014). Preventing school bullying of children with special educational needs or disability: Executive summary.

Nath, A. & Kumar, R. & Behura, A. K. (2017). Humanistic Approach to Education: A look into the humane perspective of teaching and learning. *Global Journal of Engineering Science and Researches* 53-55

Nigmatov, Z. G. (2014). Humanistic Foundations of Inclusive education. *Archiv euroeco,* 2(1), 69-71.

Nkoane, M. M. (2015). Sustainable rural learning ecologies: A pathway to acknowledging African knowledge systems in the arena of mainstream production. *Journal of Higher Education in Africa,* 13(1-2),33-44.

Oludare, B. A & Afolabi, T. P. (2019). The inclusion of guidance and counselling into basic education curriculum for quality assurance. *Asian Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, 2(2), 33-43.

Oluremi, F. D. (2015). Attitude of teachers to students with special needs in mainstreamed public secondary schools in South western Nigeria: The need for a Change. *European Scientific Journal,* 11(10), 194-209.

Pautina, A. R., Pratiwi, W. & Talignasing, S. Y. (2019). Guidance and counselling programmes for inclusive education in primary school. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Islam,* XI(2), 281-297.

Poulou, M. S. (2017). Students' emotional and behavioural difficulties: the role of teachers' social and emotional learning and teacher-student relationships. *International Journal of Emotional Education,* 9(2), 72-89.

Romeo, K. (2014). Raising self-esteem for students with special needs. Unpublished Dissertaion. Cailifornia State University San Marcos.

Tlali, T.V. 2018. Towards a local philosophy of education: Embracing indigenous knowledge systems to enhance relevance in Lesotho education: Prospects and Challenges (Ed.) Mapheleba Lekhetho. Nova Science Publishers, Inc.

Tough, H., Siegrist, J.& Fekete, C. (2017). Social relationships, mental health and wellbeing in physical disability: a systematic review. *BMC Public Health*, 17 (414), https://www.doi.org/ 10.1186/s12889-017-4308-6.

Zyoudi, M. A. L. (2010). Differences in self-concept among student with and without Learning Disabilities in Al Karak district in Jordan. *International Journal of Special Education*, 25(2), 72-77.