

# Inclusive MOOCs: Contribution to South African teacher's establishment of communities of practice in online spaces

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# BACKGROUND

- ⦿ Inclusive education programs fail to empower teachers
- ⦿ Lack of specialized teacher education programs
- ⦿ More than 50% of children with disabilities are out of school.
- ⦿ Most teachers are faced with large classes



# PROBLEM STATEMENT



- ⦿ A lack of mechanisms tailored towards empowerment and collaboration of teachers, parents, and the broader community.
- ⦿ Teachers were left disempowered to promote inclusive education practices
- ⦿ Teachers appear not sufficiently trained to teach inclusively,
- ⦿ Majority of teachers lacked knowledge about using Massive Open Online Courses in their teaching settings.

# INTRODUCTION

- Need for additional opportunities for educators outside formal professional development programs
- Online learning through Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs)
- Viewed as one way of addressing these issues
- Prepare teachers to provide inclusive teaching practices
- To create awareness of disability, diversity, and inclusion



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# Research Questions

## Primary Research Question

*How can South African teachers be empowered through establishing collaboration within communities of practice in online spaces?*

## Secondary Research questions

**What systems do the schools have in place to support teacher empowerment and collaboration within communities of practice in online space?**

**What is the role of establishing collaboration within communities of practice in online spaces?**

### Objective 1

To investigate the experiences of South African teachers and their adoption of inclusive education practices in schools.

### Objective 2

To explore the idea of formalising MOOCs in school support systems to empower teachers towards their adoption of inclusive education practices.

### Objective 3

To examine the role of collaboration within communities of practice in online spaces.

## The aim of the study

The aim of the study is to explore how South African teachers are empowered through establishing collaboration within communities of practice in online spaces.

# METHODS

Province	Teachers	School Principals	Research Approach and sampling	Instruments	Data analysis
Limpopo	7	0	Qualitative Research  Case Study  Snowballing & Purposive Sampling	1. In-depth individual semi-structured interviews with teachers and local school principals  2. Virtual focus group with five stakeholders from the Northern Cape Education Department  3. MOOC Web Analysis	Thematic analysis
Eastern Cape	1	2			
Western Cape	2	2			
Northern Cape	1	0			
Free State	1	1			

# KEY FINDINGS

- ① The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the establishment of online collaboration
- ① A need for the establishment of Professional Learning Communities.
- ① MOOCs inspired teachers to adopt empowerment practices
- ① Exposed to new possibilities such as pursuing additional learning opportunities.
- ① To improve their teaching practices such as promoting inclusive pedagogical approaches.
- ① To address their day-to-day difficulties in school.



# BUILDING SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT

*The school collaborates with so many other stakeholders like the social development because we have learners with barriers to learning... We also collaborate with the South African National Council for the Blind... **Khanyisa***



# TEACHER ENGAGEMENT & SYNERGIES

*We are currently organizing the International Teacher Program because I want to bring teachers from Africa together in one space so that we can share best practices. Also, this initiative for building network and collaboration purposes. So, my interaction with other fellow teachers from different parts of the world has had a great impact online.*

**Nelson**



*I think the first thing would be extensive training for teachers and monitoring of the training and making sure that our teachers are also getting what they need to get a voice. P:3*



*Your peer support forums need to be contacted. In phase 2, they should start using an interactive whiteboard. Just to encourage teachers to be able to connect with someone in Dubai to do mathematics together to share good practices. That's point number one to grow as a teacher. **DENZEL***



# MOOC WEB ANALYSIS

- ① 56,643 enrolled in this course.
- ① Typically, around 10% complete it - but this does vary widely for different MOOCs.
- ① Participants appreciated the flexibility of online learning.
- ① Contributed tremendously towards their personal and professional growth.
- ① Proven to be helpful in raising disability awareness in the community.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

- ① Building systems of support between the school, parents, and the broader community.
- ① Establishment of professional learning communities.
- ① Intrinsic motivation for continuous professional development.
- ① Extensive training for teachers and monitoring of the training programs
- ① Strong emphasis on the adoption of the SIAS document.
- ① Mentorships program for novice teachers.
- ① Peer Support Groups.

# SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

- ⊙ The MOOCs are perceived as a teacher empowerment strategy.
- ⊙ The need for empowerment and collaboration of teachers.
- ⊙ To improve their professional ideologies on inclusion and teaching practices.
- ⊙ Adjusting learning according to learner needs.
- ⊙ To address teacher's day-to-day difficulties within the classroom.

# THANK YOU 😊

## Audience Questions & Answers