ERRCDF
Rethinking Education 4 Inclusive Development

Research Article

Exploring Teachers' Readiness for Inclusive Education in a Lesotho Rural School: Agentic Capability Theory Analysis

Mamochana A. Ramatea¹* iD

Sumeshni Govender² iD

AFFILIATIONS

¹&²Faculty of Education, University of Zululand, Kwazulunatal, South Africa.

CORRESPONDENCE

Email: RamateaM@unizulu.ac.za*

Abstract: High poverty levels in Lesotho's rural areas present unique challenges that hinder effective inclusive education, emphasising the need to explore how inclusive practices address Sustainable Development Goal 4 in this context. This paper investigates the readiness of teachers to facilitate inclusive education in a rural school in Lesotho. Utilising agentic capability theory within an interpretive paradigm, the study employs an arts-based research design to examine the perceptions, knowledge, and experiences of teachers regarding inclusive education policies and their implications for teacher preparation. Data were generated through photovoice and focus group discussions with ten teachers engaged in teaching within inclusive rural school settings in Lesotho. The thematic analysis revealed several constraints in implementing inclusive education, including a lack of financial support and parental involvement, consistent with challenges identified in existing literature. The study emphasises the importance of strengthening stakeholder collaboration and leveraging local resources to support inclusive practices. It argues that, while inclusive education is widely valued, its successful implementation requires recognising the pivotal role of rural agents in overcoming these challenges. The paper calls for a critical examination of rural education contexts, advocating for a framework based on agentic capability to challenge existing assumptions of rural inadequacy and promote the inclusion of all learners.

Keywords: Agentic-capability theory, Inclusive education, Lesotho rural schools, SDG 4, Teachers' readiness.

1. Introduction

The adoption of inclusive education has significantly enhanced the provision of quality education globally, aiming to eliminate the segregating and discriminatory practices of the past (Hodgson & Khumalo, 2016). Recent global advocacy efforts have underscored the importance of ensuring equal access to quality education, as enshrined in policies such as Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006), which specifically targets inclusive education and enabling learning for all learners (Lansberg et al., 2019). These documents advocate for tolerance, interdependence, and equity to ensure success in inclusive education on a global scale.

In Lesotho, there has been a notable commitment to inclusive education as part of the broader global movement toward ensuring educational access for all. This commitment aligns with the principles of quality education outlined in the Lesotho Inclusive Education Policy (LIEP, 2018), which supports the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 4 (Quality Education), advocating for providing quality education to all learners at every level (Graham, 2020). By embracing these inclusive principles, Lesotho aims to build an educational system that not only acknowledges but also celebrates diversity, ensuring all learners, including those with special needs and disabilities, have the opportunity to succeed (Landsberg, Kruger, & Swart, 2019). The country's alignment with the core principles of inclusive education supports Molekoa et al. (2021), who argue that enabling educational opportunities for all learners allows nations like Lesotho to focus on removing barriers within the system and facilitating learning for everyone. According to the Lesotho Inclusive

Education Policy (LIEP, 2018), inclusive education requires countries and schools to welcome, value, and accept all learners, educating them together in an environment that fosters high-quality learning. To this end, the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET, 2008) recognises the right to basic education as a fundamental human right. Following Act 3 (MoET, 2010), specifically Section 4C, which affirms that all learners are entitled to an education "free from any form of discrimination at all levels of learning" (p. 164), the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET, 2008) is committed to ensuring that all schools provide inclusive educational opportunities. This mandate emphasises the provision of education to every learner, irrespective of their educational background, geographical location, or individual needs.

Despite these efforts, implementing inclusive education in Lesotho, particularly in rural areas, presents significant challenges. Many teachers in rural schools lack the necessary skills and resources to effectively practise inclusive teaching methods (Tseeke, 2021; Johnson-Jones, 2017). Issues such as inadequate teaching resources and insufficient teacher training further complicate the implementation process (Damoah et al., 2023; Hauwadhanasuk & Karnas, 2019). Rural contexts are commonly associated with a lack of relevant educational resources (Shambare & Jita, 2025). The shortage of resources in rural areas exacerbates these challenges, impacting teachers' preparedness to cater to the diverse educational needs of their learners (Mosia, 2022). This study addresses the pressing issue of teachers' readiness for inclusive education in rural secondary schools in Lesotho.

Given these concerns, there is a critical need for research focusing on how teachers can be better prepared to implement inclusive education practices effectively. Viewing teachers through the lens of agentic capability emphasises their potential to drive positive change within their educational environments (Alfaiz et al., 2019). Within this premise, it is assumed that when teachers exercise their agency, they can leverage qualities such as being active, flexible, creative, and patient, leading to successful changes in enabling inclusive teaching and learning (Goller & Harteis, 2020). This aligns with Bandura's theory of human agency (2018), which highlights individuals' proactive role in shaping their circumstances through self-regulation and decision-making. It underscores the significant influence teachers can have in contributing to change within their rural schools. According to Bandura (2018), a critical aspect of agentic individuals is their ability to regulate their motivation and actions through planning, selection, and the implementation of their capabilities.

This study aims to explore the readiness of teachers in rural secondary schools in Lesotho to implement inclusive education practices. Using an agentic capability framework, the paper highlights teachers' ability to overcome challenges and foster inclusive teaching and learning environments. It seeks to address gaps in understanding the unique challenges faced by rural education and proposes strategies to empower rural schools and teachers, enabling them to exercise their agency and achieve successful outcomes in inclusive education.

1.1 Research questions

The following questions guided the study:

- What specific challenges and barriers do teachers face in implementing inclusive education within a rural secondary school?
- How do teachers in a rural secondary school in Lesotho perceive their agentic capabilities in overcoming these challenges to promote inclusive education?

2. Agentic Capability Theoretical Lens

The theoretical framework employed in this study draws on Bandura's concept of agentic capability to explore how teachers in rural secondary schools in Lesotho perceive and exercise their agency in promoting inclusive education. Agentic capability, as articulated by Bandura (2018), emphasises the capacity of individuals to adapt to and influence their environment. Central to this theory is the view of individuals as active agents capable of both shaping and being shaped by their social contexts

(Bandura, 2001). Bandura (1999) developed the framework of agentic capability, positing that human agency operates within a complex interplay of personal, proxy, and collective influences (see Figure 1).
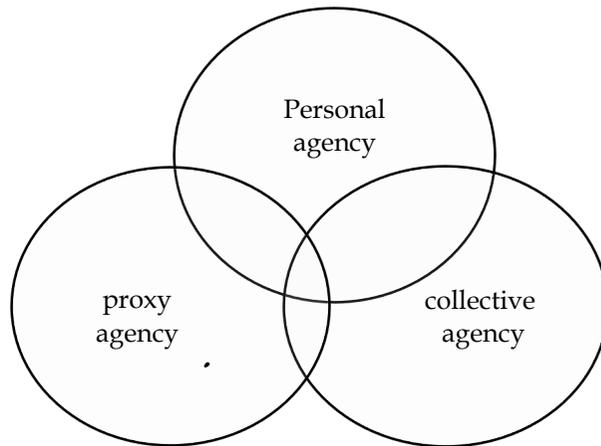

Figure 1: Three key modes of human agency (adopted from Bandura's (2005, p. 165)

This theoretical lens enables a nuanced analysis of how teachers identify factors facilitating inclusive education and navigate challenges in its implementation (Code, 2020). Personal agency, as the first mode of human agency within Bandura's framework, underscores the bidirectional interaction between individuals and their environments (Bandura, 2006). Alfaiz et al. (2019) further elaborate that personal agency involves deliberate planning, action, and adaptation to achieve desired goals, highlighting its relevance for teachers in rural Lesotho as they strive to promote inclusive practices. In as much for rural schoolteachers, as agents, to be able to identify possible means for the promotion of inclusive practices, it should be through the influence they have by planning and taking actions for their lives, highlighting their significant contribution to the implementation of inclusive education.

Proxy agency, another aspect of Bandura's theory, describes how individuals can exert influence indirectly through other agents (Bandura, 2008). Alfaiz et al. (2019) suggest that teachers may leverage proxy agencies by collaborating with others who possess the resources and knowledge necessary to support inclusive education initiatives, thus overcoming systemic barriers. This paper, therefore, indicates that whatever teachers identified as contributory factors to overcome barriers in the improvement of inclusive education is achievable through "interdependent efforts" (Bandura, 2000, p. 75).

The third mode of human agency that is found within the environment for people's functioning is collective agency. This mode, identified by Bandura (2018), emphasises collaborative efforts among individuals to achieve shared goals. Hidayah, Hambali, and Radjah (2019) affirm that collective agency allows participants to pool their skills and experiences, facilitating unified action toward inclusive education within community contexts. As a result, in this mode of agency, participants achieve unity of effort for common purposes (Bandura, 2018) in the context of this paper promoting inclusive education.

Drawing on insights from positive psychology (Hidayah, Hambali & Radjah, 2019; Code, 2020; Alfaiz et al., 2019), this study recognises the inherent capabilities of teachers and their potential to collaborate with various stakeholders, including local communities and educational authorities (Molekoa et al., 2021). Such collaboration is vital for addressing the complex challenges of inclusive education and ensuring its sustainable implementation. The paper considers teachers as key agents

of change (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019) who play a crucial role in advancing inclusive educational practices. Their active participation in this study emphasises their agency and underscores the importance of self-belief and collaboration with other stakeholders, such as rural schools, communities, parents, and all learners, in achieving inclusive education objectives.

3. Research Methodology

This study is underpinned by an interpretive paradigm, chosen for its emphasis on understanding participants' perceptions and experiences (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). This approach aligns with Saunders et al.'s (2016) definition of interpretive paradigms, which prioritise exploring how individuals perceive their world to gain insights into the phenomenon under investigation. By adopting an interpretive paradigm, this study seeks a comprehensive understanding of how teachers in rural Lesotho schools conceptualise inclusive education. The study aims to explore factors contributing to inclusive education and assess potential implementation challenges. Interpretive paradigms facilitate in-depth exploration of individuals' lived experiences within their natural contexts (Maree, 2017). This aspect is pivotal to this study, as it allows for a better understanding of teachers' diverse perspectives, experiences, attitudes, and behaviours concerning inclusive education within rural school contexts.

3.1 Research design

This qualitative research employs an arts-based research design, chosen for its ability to deepen the understanding of social phenomena (Creswell, 2016; Bertram & Christiansen, 2014). Arts-based research enhances the co-generation of knowledge by integrating the voices of participants, particularly those from marginalised groups (Simmons & Daley, 2013). By employing an arts-based design, including photovoice and focus group discussions, this study aims to empower participating teachers to articulate their experiences and perspectives on inclusive education. In engaging with arts-based research, the participating teachers were divided into two groups. This division was intended to facilitate communication and enable the researchers to moderate the discussions more effectively during the data generation process. Table 1 below provides biographical information on the participants, divided into two groups:

Table 1: Biographic information of participants

Acronyms	Age	Sex	Experience	Study Level
Group A				
T1	41	F	14 years	B.Ed.
T2	48	F	10 years	B.Ed.
T3	38	M	8 years	B.Ed.
T4	45	F	12 years	Honours
T5	44	M	10 years	B.Ed.
Group B				
T6	42	M	13 years	Diploma
T7	45	F	16 years	B.Ed.
T8	46	F	11 years	B.Ed.
T9	40	F	10 years	B.Ed.
T10	38	M	9 years	B.Ed.

3.2 Selection of participants

A purposive sampling procedure was used to recruit ten secondary school teachers as participants in this study. Participants were selected based on their extensive experience teaching in a rural secondary school in Lesotho, ensuring they could provide rich and detailed information relevant to the study's objectives (Maree, 2017). This aligns with Crossman's (2018) assertion that the purposive

sampling technique enables participants to share their experiences based on their relevant knowledge. The participating teachers were chosen for their expertise and in-depth understanding of the status of inclusive education in Lesotho. This sampling procedure ensured that only teachers with five or more years of experience teaching in rural secondary classrooms in Lesotho participated in the study, as they were expected to have in-depth knowledge of the phenomenon investigated, thereby providing valuable information.

3.3 Data collection tools

Data generation involved two primary methods: photovoice and focus group discussions. These methods were chosen to align with the focus of the study and the research design, which supports the use of multiple data generation approaches (Creswell, 2016). Photovoice, a participatory visual arts-based method, engages participants to visually represent the factors hindering the effective implementation of inclusive education (Lorenz & Bush, 2022). It was also selected to promote critical dialogue and enhance communication skills among participants and researchers (Wang, 2020). The use of photovoice can strengthen participants' agency, which aligns with the principles of the agentic capability framework adopted in this study. To achieve the goal of strengthening participants' agency, the photovoice method was employed with secondary school teachers to address research question 1, which centres on the barriers or challenges to implementing inclusive education. The participants, organised into two groups of five members, engaged in 1 hour and 30 minutes sessions and were prompted to take two photographs (see Figures 2 & 3) showing factors that prevent the effective implementation of inclusive education within their rural school.

Focus group discussions complemented photovoice by facilitating deeper insights into participants' understanding of inclusive education practices and their agency in overcoming implementation challenges (Colom, 2021). Focus group discussions were used to generate data for research question 2, which focuses mainly on the participants' understanding of inclusive education practices and how they perceive their agentic capabilities in overcoming challenges while implementing inclusive education. According to Colom (2021), focus group discussions are an effective method for gathering information through direct interaction between the researcher and participants. This enabled the researcher and participants to engage in open-ended discussions, reflecting on and producing rich, in-depth data and capturing details that might not have been addressed during photovoice sessions.

3.4 Data analysis

Once data was generated through photovoice and focus group discussions, it was transcribed to facilitate the analysis process. Data analysis was aligned with Braun and Clarke's (2022) six thematic procedural steps. These steps assist the researcher in identifying, analysing, and reporting themes in the present study, involving a thorough examination of the generated data. McMillan and Schumacher (2014) refer to this first step as familiarisation with the data, enabling researchers to develop a proper understanding of it. This is followed by assigning initial codes to identify commonalities across the data, engaging in the process of identifying themes by analysing and organising the coded data, reviewing the themes to ensure accurate categorisation of the coded data, defining and naming the themes, and finally, writing up the report, which is the last step resulting in the findings of the study.

3.5 Ethical consideration

This paper strictly adheres to ethical guidelines to ensure that the participants are treated with respect and that their identities are kept confidential. The participants' identities were protected through the use of pseudonyms, safeguarding them from any potential harm during the research processes (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). The issuance of informed consent was deemed central to the participants' voluntary participation (Clark-Kazak, 2017), as they were informed of the study's details and signed consent forms before the study commenced. This study complies with the ethical

standards required by the University of the Free State's Faculty of Education review committee by obtaining permission and ethical clearance, reference number UFS-HSD2021/1375/21, prior to the study's initiation.

4. **Presentation of Results and Discussions**

This section provides a detailed discussion and analysis of data relevant to two secondary questions aligned with the study's objectives: the impediments to inclusive education and the necessary measures for effective implementation. As revealed by the participants' responses, visual representations of the factors that hinder inclusive education practices include a lack of financial support and insufficient parental involvement. In contrast, during focus group discussions, participants acknowledged the need to empower all stakeholders and engage rural agencies, which are essential for the effective implementation of inclusive education practices.

4.1 Impediments of inclusive education

During the interpretation of photographs, participants identified key factors that hinder inclusive education practices. The implementation challenges identified encompassed two primary themes: a lack of financial support and a lack of parental involvement (see Figures 2 and 3).
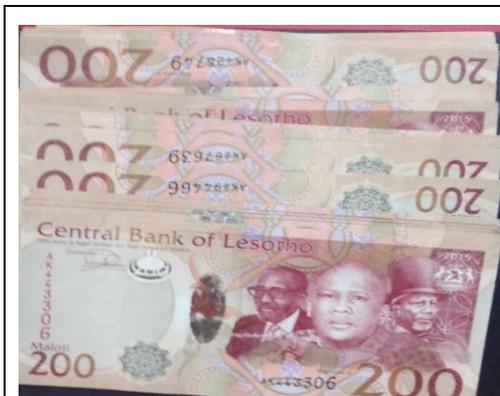
Figure 2: Group A's photo of the lack of financial support	*Figure 3: Group B's photo of the lack of parental support*

4.1.1 Lack of financial support

Participants highlighted financial constraints as a significant barrier to the effective implementation of inclusive education. In Group A, responses underscored this issue:

> *T1: Since the quality provision of education to all learners is facilitated through financial support in our country, this picture (figure 2) depicts money that our country fails to source for all schools and prepares them to be better placed for learning.*

> *T3: Despite the introduction of free and compulsory education, our country fails to adequately finance the education of learners, especially at the secondary school level, where special educational needs are financially demanding.*

> *T2: The financial instability of students' parents, coupled with insufficient government funds, poses significant challenges. Many students come from impoverished families and often face difficulties acquiring necessary teaching and learning materials.*

The excerpts above emphasise how insufficient financial resources, whether from the government or parents, serve as a significant barrier to teachers' efforts in implementing inclusive education. Participants highlight that financial instability within their country contributes to resource shortages,

which, in turn, hinder effective teaching and learning. These findings are consistent with Du Plessis and Mestry's (2019) research, which identifies inadequate funding as a major obstacle to inclusive education in rural schools. Their study indicates that insufficient investment in education leads to a lack of resources, undermining teachers' ability to implement inclusive education successfully. Participants also indicate that students' challenges in accessing education are directly linked to these financial constraints. This aligns with Hauwadhanasuk and Karnas (2019), who view financial inadequacy as a barrier that limits schools' capacity to offer inclusive education, particularly for learners with special needs. These findings are further supported by Temesgen's (2018) study, which identified the Ethiopian government's failure to secure sufficient educational funding as one of the greatest challenges teachers face. Therefore, it is evident from the current study that without financial stability in a country to support education, the provision of quality education may not be achievable.

4.1.2 Lack of parental involvement

Another significant barrier identified in the implementation of inclusive education is the lack of parental engagement in their children's education. In Group B, participants expressed concerns about parental reluctance to participate in educational activities, as evidenced by their responses to interpreted photographs (see Figure 3):

> *T9: Despite the significant role of parental involvement in children's education, many parents in our community are unwilling to engage in matters related to their children's schooling.*

> *T6: Effective education in our country necessitates collaborative efforts from all stakeholders, including parents. This is indicated by this picture (referring to a photograph in Figure 3). However, many parents of children with disabilities show little interest in their children's education, often neglecting to attend crucial meetings.*

> *T8: Lack of parental involvement is our greatest challenge, particularly in cases requiring significant parental support.*

These insights underscore how insufficient parental involvement poses a significant challenge for teachers striving to achieve positive outcomes in inclusive education. Despite the Lesotho Education Act 3 (MoET, 2010), which recognises parents as equal partners in their children's education, this study reveals a substantial gap between policy intentions and actual parental practices. The findings align with Ralejoe's (2021) research, which identifies the lack of parental involvement as a major challenge, often resulting in lower academic performance, higher absenteeism, and an increased risk of school dropouts. The findings of this study also support those of Du Plessis and Mestry (2019), who discovered that the absence of parental engagement becomes especially problematic in rural schools. Their findings indicate that parents of children with disabilities face additional barriers, such as limited understanding of the importance of their involvement, lack of time due to economic constraints, and cultural factors that hinder their engagement. This further resonates with Myende and Nhlumayo's (2022) confirmation that in impoverished areas, parental focus on survival often undermines their ability to engage in school activities. The findings of this study are consistent with these perspectives, showing that ineffective inclusive education practices in Lesotho are closely linked to the lack of parental involvement. Rural schools continue to struggle with significant barriers to implementing inclusive education, including financial constraints and inadequate parental engagement. These obstacles impede effective educational practices and jeopardise the academic progress and development of students in inclusive settings. Overcoming these challenges will require strategic interventions, including increased financial support and initiatives aimed at fostering greater parental involvement in the educational process.

4.2 Measures for effective inclusive education outcomes

During the analysis of participants' responses, two primary themes emerged as significant for overcoming barriers to effective inclusive education: the need to strengthen stakeholders' responsibilities and the need for enhanced agency within rural communities.

4.2.1 A need to strengthen all stakeholders' responsibilities

The data highlighted ineffective responsibilities among stakeholders as a critical challenge hindering the successful implementation of inclusive education. Participants emphasised the necessity for strengthened responsibilities among the various parties involved in education. Quotes from focus group discussions illustrate this viewpoint:

> T7: There is a need to engage all parties (teachers, parents, and families) to assist in enabling effective inclusive educational practices within our rural schools and communities.

> T3: Since, the inclusive educational practices and implementation have brought forth more challenges to teachers, especially in rural schools. I think everyone needs to take part in successful inclusive educational outcomes.

> T10: Engagement of all stakeholders can alleviate challenges faced by teachers and positively contribute to inclusive education outcomes.

On the issue of how teachers in Lesotho's rural secondary schools perceive their agency in overcoming inclusive education challenges, T7 emphasised that collective efforts from all stakeholders are essential for building a solid foundation to ensure the success of inclusive education. This view aligns with the study by Myende and Nhlamayo (2022), which highlights that the success of inclusive education is significantly enhanced when schools actively promote collaboration among teachers, parents, and the community. The findings of this study also underscore the importance of the parent-teacher partnership in the inclusive education process. Participants in this study believe that the active involvement of all stakeholders, such as teachers, parents, and communities, especially in rural settings, can contribute meaningfully to the day-to-day implementation of inclusive education. Research has shown that effective stakeholder engagement plays a crucial role in overcoming systemic barriers to inclusive education, such as resource shortages and resistance to change. For instance, Molekoa et al. (2021) emphasise the importance of cooperative knowledge-sharing, expertise, and resource allocation, which are influenced by active stakeholder engagement in addressing these challenges. Similarly, Hidayah et al. (2019) advocate for stakeholder engagement as key to enhancing support services for inclusive education. This is particularly relevant to the findings of this study, which suggest that, for optimal inclusive education outcomes, rural schools in Lesotho must not only manage the practical aspects of inclusive education but also lead cultural shifts toward greater acceptance and involvement from all stakeholders. The participants' statements strongly emphasise the importance of collective effort in overcoming the challenges associated with inclusive education. This collective efficacy aligns with Bandura's (2018) agentic capability framework, which stresses the significance of collaborative efforts to achieve shared goals.

4.2.2 A need for the harnessing of rural agencies

Based on the participants' perspectives regarding the constraints in the implementation of inclusive education, a significant key finding was the importance of harnessing rural agencies to facilitate inclusive education. Participants recognised the potential of agencies within rural schools and communities to mitigate barriers in teaching and learning environments. Quotes from discussions further illustrate these perspectives:

> T4: Implementing inclusive education in our school is so challenging that most of us fail to meet the demands of inclusive education. I think Success for inclusive education can be achieved through comprehensive workshop training.

> T5: Empowering teachers with skills and knowledge through training is vital. This is a need in all our schools to enable teachers to become true agents. I also think that for teachers to become true agents, they need to be empowered to overcome barriers associated with inclusive education practices.

What stands out in the responses is the emphasis on the transformative role of rural agencies, particularly teachers. When equipped with the right skills and knowledge, teachers can become active agents in successfully implementing inclusive education. T5 highlighted the importance of empowering rural agents, recognising the significant potential they possess, and argued that inclusive education can only succeed when teachers, as agents, are adequately empowered. This assertion aligns with Bandura's (2006) concept of agentic capability, which perceives individuals as agents with unique abilities. The participants acknowledged that teachers possess such abilities but require empowerment to be equipped with the necessary skills to drive the success of inclusive education. These findings support Tseeke's (2021) assertion that many teachers in rural schools lack the skills and knowledge needed for the effective implementation of inclusive education. It is crucial to note that the participants in this study recognised that although rural schools face various challenges, such as a lack of training for teachers' professional development, they are aware of teachers' agency and the need for targeted empowerment initiatives. These initiatives are necessary to ensure teachers are properly trained to act as true agents of change. The findings also resonate with Alfaiz et al. (2019), whose research suggests that effective teacher training programmes can better prepare educators to meet the diverse needs of students in inclusive classrooms. This study underscores the potential of rural agencies by indicating that when teachers are empowered, they not only become agents of change within their classrooms but also contribute to creating an inclusive school culture, which in turn positively impacts the broader community. As the study participants have indicated, empowering teachers is central to transforming rural education and achieving successful inclusive education in Lesotho's rural schools. Their perspectives align with Bandura's (2006) assertion that individuals possess inherent skills and knowledge, which, when harnessed, enable them to achieve desired goals. Therefore, the findings highlight the need for stronger responsibilities among stakeholders and the harnessing of rural agencies to overcome barriers to inclusive education. These insights advocate for collaborative efforts and empowerment initiatives aimed at improving inclusive education outcomes in Lesotho's rural schools.

5. **Conclusion**

This article presents an overview of teachers' readiness for inclusive education practices and emphasises the necessary measures for successful implementation in a rural secondary school in Lesotho. These measures include strengthening responsibilities among stakeholders and harnessing the potential of rural agencies. To ensure the effectiveness of inclusive education, it is crucial to address barriers such as a lack of financial support and insufficient parental engagement. The findings also highlight the significance of collaborative efforts and strengthened responsibilities in achieving quality teaching and learning through inclusive education. Moreover, viewing teachers' abilities through the lens of agentic capability in Lesotho's rural schools has significant implications. The use of participatory arts-based methodologies encourages participants to exercise their agency, not only as agents but also as co-contributors towards change within their rural schools. Additionally, the agentic capability framework promotes community development through interdependent efforts. In this context, enabling the implementation of inclusive education may stem from harnessing rural agentic capabilities. This demonstrates that inclusive education practices can succeed by mobilising rural agencies, allowing all stakeholders to unite with a shared vision for community development.

Based on the insights of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:
- Adequate arrangements and financial support services for effective inclusive education practices should be established in rural school contexts.
- The implementation and practices of inclusive education require a shift from rural insufficiency to the mobilisation of rural school agents, encompassing the involvement of all stakeholders in development.

- Local individuals (teachers, learners, parents) and the broader community should be encouraged to recognise their significant role in the management of education. By acknowledging local agents, they must also uncover and harness their inherent potential, thereby exercising their agentic capabilities.

6. Declarations

References

Alfaiz, A., Hidayah, N., Hambali, I. M., & Radjah, C. L. (2019). Human agency as a self-cognition of autonomous learning: A synthesis of practical agentic approach. *Journal of Social Studies Education Research, 10*(4), 370-391. https://www.learnechlib.org/p/216528/

Bandura, A. (1999). *A social cognitive theory of personality.* In L. Pervin & O. John (Eds.), *Handbook of personality* (pp. 154–196). New York, NY: Guilford Publications.

Bandura, A. (2001). Social cognitive theory: An agentic perspective. *Annual Review of Psychology, 52*(1), 1–26.

Bandura, A. (2006). Toward a psychology of human agency. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 1*(2), 164–180.

Bandura, A. (2008). *The re-construal of "free will" from the agentic perspective of the social cognitive theory: Are we free?* (pp. 86–127). London, England: Oxford University Press.

Bandura, A. (2018). Toward a psychology of human agency: Pathways and reflections. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 13*(2), 130–136.

Bertram, C., & Christiansen, I. (2014). *Understanding research: An introduction to reading research. Pretoria, South Africa: Van Schaik Publishers.*

Bourn, D. (2016). *Teachers as agents of social change. International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning, 7*(3), 63–77.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). *Conceptual and design thinking for thematic analysis. Qualitative Psychology, 9(*1), 3–26. https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000196

Clark-Kazak, C. (2017). Ethical considerations: Research with people in situations of forced migration. *Refuge*, 33(2), 11-17. https://doi.org/10.7202/10430559ar

Code, J. (2020). Agency for learning, intention, motivation, self-efficacy, and self-regulation. *Frontiers in Education*, 5(19). https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2020.00019

Colom, A. (2021). Using WhatsApp for focus group discussions: Ecological validity, inclusion, and deliberation. *SAGE Journal of Qualitative Research*, 1–16.
https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794120986074

Creswell, J. W. (2016). *Research design: International students' edition*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Crossman, A. (2018). Understanding purposive sampling: An overview of the methods and its application. https://www.thoughtco.com/purposive-sampling-3026727

Damoah, B., Khalo, X., & Omodan, B. (2023). Disparities in rural university transformation: A review from a South African perspective. *Prizren Social Science Journal*, 7(3), 1-10. https://doi.org/10.32936/pssj.v7i3.449

Du Plessis, P., & Mestry, R. (2019). Teachers for rural schools: A challenge for South Africa. *South African Journal of Education*, 39(1), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v39ns1a1774

Goller, M., & Harties, C. (2020). Human agency at work: Towards a clarification and operationalisation of the concept. In M. Goller & S. Plaloniemi (Eds.), *Agency at work: An agentic perspective on professional learning and development* (pp. 85–103). Springer.

Graham, L. J. (2020). *Inclusive education for the 21st century: Theory, policy and practice*. Allen & Unwin.

Hauwadhanasuk, T., Karnas, M., & Zhuang, M. (2018). Inclusive education plans and practices in China, Thailand, and Turkey. *Educational Planning*, 25(1), 29-48.

Hidayah, N., Hambali, N., & Radjah, S. (2019). Promoting inclusive education through the involvement of stakeholders. *International Journal of Engineering & Technology*, 8(1.9), 42-45.

Hodgson, T. F., & Khumalo, S. (2016). Too Many Children Left Behind: Exclusion in the South African Inclusive Education System with a focus on the uMkhanyakude District. *A Section 27 report. KwaZulu-Natal.*

Johnson-Jones, K. J. (2017). *Educating students with visual impairments in the general education setting* [Doctoral dissertation, The University of Southern Mississippi] https://aquila.usm.edu/dissertations/1337

Kivunja, C., & Kuyini, A. B. (2017). *Understanding and applying research paradigms in educational contexts. International Journal of Higher Education,* 6(5), 26–41. https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v6n5p26

Landsberg, E., Kruger, D., & Swart, E. (2019). *Addressing barriers to learning: A South African perspective.* Van Schaik.

Lesotho Inclusive Education Policy. (2018). *Lesotho curriculum and assessment.* Ministry of Education and Training.

Lorenz, L., & Bush, E. (2022). *Critical and creative thinking and photovoice: Strategies for strengthening participation and inclusion. Health-Promoting Practice, 23*(2), 274-280. https://doi.org/10.1177/15248399211055714

Maree, K. (2017). *First steps in research* (2nd ed.). Van Schaik.

McMillan, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (2014). *Education research: Evidence-based inquiry.* London: Pearson Higher Education.

Ministry of Education and Training. (2008). *Lesotho curriculum and assessment policy.* Ministry of Education and Training.

Ministry of Education and Training. (2010). *Lesotho curriculum and assessment.* Education Act 3 of 2010.

Molekoa, T., Ubisi, L., Sefotho, M., & Ferreira, R. (2021). Full-service schoolteachers' views of career construction for learners with visual impairment. *International Journal for Education and Vocational Guidance, 23*(1), 421-440. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10775-021-09510-2

Mosia, P. A. (2019). Towards an ideal framework of education support services for learners with special education needs at basic education level in Lesotho. In *Student support toward self-directed learning in open and distributed environments* (pp. 59–77). IGI Global Scientific Publishing. https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-6684-3670-7.ch015

Myende, P. E., & Nhlumayo, B. S. (2022). Enhancing parent-teacher collaboration in rural schools: Parents' voices and implications for schools. *International Journal of Leadership in Education,* 25(3), 490–514. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2020.1731764

Resnik, D. B., & Shamoo, A. (2015). *Responsible conduct of research* (3rd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2016). *Research methods for business students* (7th ed.). Pearson Education Limited.

Shambare, B., & Jita, T. (2025). Factors influencing virtual lab adoption in marginalised rural schools: Insights from South Africa. *Smart Learning Environments,* 12(1), 11. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40561-025-00369-2

Simmons, N., & Daley, S. (2013). The art of thinking: Using collage to stimulate scholarly work. *The Canadian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning,* 4(1), 1.

Temesgen, Z. (2018). School challenges of students with visual disabilities. *International Journal of Special Education,* 33(3), 510–522.

Tseeke, M. (2021). Teachers' perceived self-efficacy in responding to the needs of learners with visual impairment in Lesotho. *South African Journal of Education,* 41(2), 12. https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v4Ins2a1920

United Nations (UN) (2006). *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.* United Nations.

Wang, C. C. (2020). The Tai of photovoice. *Health Promotion Practice,* 23(2), 205–210.