



Level-up multigrade teachers' skills

Teachers should be trained to deal with inclusivity and diversity in their classrooms.

Matshidiso Taole is a professor in rural education and inclusivity in education at the University of South Africa.

ORCID ID

0000-0002-1398-7946

<https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2018.1520310>



Multigrade teachers need training in diversity and inclusivity.

Education is key for the development of a country and the pursuit of social justice for its citizens.

Multigrade teaching plays a pivotal role in providing access and quality education in the country, especially in rural areas. The right to education is enshrined in the South African Constitution and in the world declarations such as the United Nations Convention Children's Rights.

Teachers are required to design learning experiences that accommodate the needs of learners in their classrooms. This can be challenging for multigrade teachers who teach more than one grade in

one lesson. Dealing with diversity and inclusion in the classroom is most challenging in multigrade classrooms. Due to the number of grades that multigrade teachers teach, diversity is heightened in this type of classroom.

Teachers in this context are not given the resources and the support that they need. They are overloaded and do not have professional development opportunities.

"Teachers are battling to survive in the quest of attaining social justice for their learners," says Matshidiso Taole. "Professional development for multigrade teachers would ensure that they use inclusive techniques,

thus providing opportunities for all their learners to learn and meeting their learners' needs in light of social justice."

The Department of Education should organise workshops to assist multigrade teachers in managing diversity in their classrooms. This would reduce inequality and injustices that exist in the education system.

"If classrooms are not transformed to be equitable spaces based on ethics of care, respect and social relations, the universal goal of 'education for all' will not be realised."