

The need for curriculum modifications for special needs learners in Botswana

MA Okumbe and GN Tshoko

University of Botswana, Botswana

Curriculum modifications can be put into practice for different purposes ranging from altered content knowledge, conceptual difficulty, educational goals, to instructional methods and assessment. Nevertheless, curriculum modification still remains an ambiguous concept especially in relation to the concept of special needs learners, special educators, and to some extent curriculum implementers. This paper will endeavour to discuss the concept of curriculum modifications in order to understand its nature and potential. It will also analyze some categorizations of curriculum modifications as suggested by King-Sears (2001), which include, accommodation, adaptation, parallel curriculum outcomes, overlapping curricula on a continuum and to see to what extent these modifications can be applied efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of special needs learners in Botswana. The paper will hence make some recommendations regarding the best curriculum modification(s) that can be used by special educators to harness the potential of special needs learners. Changes in the curriculum mandate changes in assessments based on the curriculum. This paper will therefore also discuss the accompanying changes in assessment to enhance a quality education for learners with special needs.