

Dissertation marking and feedback sheet

Programme: Erasmus Mundus MA/Mgr. in Special and Inclusive Education

Module: Dissertation - Education of Learners with Special Needs in a Mainstream Primary School in the Czech Republic: A Case Study

Module code:

Student Name: Alfred Kimuyu Kavyu

Student Number:

1st Marker's name: Mgr. Šárka Káňová

2nd Marker's name: doc. PhDr. Jan Šiška, PhD.

Use of literature/evidence

The theme of the dissertation (Inclusive education) is actual and it is highly important not only in the Czech Republic, but in all over the world in regard with the implementation of certain Disability Policies. Alfred, being a professional in work with children with special educational needs, displays a deep understanding of the research problem and overall context of the phenomenon. The literature review Alfred made is extensive and comprehensive, covering different positions on the problem and related issues. Alfred informs about the main findings and trends in the field of Inclusive education. By thorough review of the relevant literature he systematically analysed and by all main variables and arguments identification, he demonstrated strong academic skills. The only aspect I missed was as deep description of Czech Educational Policies as it was in the matter of Inclusive education or other theoretical concepts; however it is necessary to take into consideration Alfred's language barrier and lack of such materials available in English language.

Design of project- research question or hypothesis, and methodology

Alfred used a Case Study qualitative research design in a correct and a creative way. Explanation of the topic was created with justification using the relevant and actual literature.

He demonstrates a very good understanding of the choice of methods and can discuss the advantages and disadvantages of them. He set clear aims, which he was able to operationalize.

For the purpose of the research Alfred was in touch with regional Step by Step

Programme coordinator who helped him to find a suitable school implementing this programme and accommodating its organisational culture in accordance with the programme values. The sample chosen was created on purpose as the main task was to find out how the inclusive education of learners with special needs in a mainstream primary school in the Czech Republic looks like.

Despite of significant communication barriers between Alfred and Czech respondents, he demonstrated a very active and creative approach. Collaboration with a translator for communication with the respondents and usage of audio - records for further analysis were used. Alfred also used observation and spent certain time in the class observing and making notes about a class environment, a social interaction between the pupils, between the pupils and the teacher, between the assistant teacher and pupils and between the two teachers.

Data analysis and Presentation

The thematic analysis with open coding was used in the study. The methods for analyzing data, the dilemmas that are connected to it and ethical considerations are well illustrated. Analysis is appropriate.

A chapter called Findings represents the heart of the thesis; in which the author presents the results of the research and analysis. Chapters presenting discussion, conclusion and recommendations support or enhance the issues raised and discussed.

Structure, communication, and presentation

The work has a clear and cohesive structure. It is well presented with accurate citations (except internet resources) and bibliography. Alfred discussed strengths, weaknesses and limitations of the research approach he has chosen. The interpretation of data in Conclusion is provided carefully due to low number of respondents. The author put emphases not to generalize his findings.

Overall comments

Alfred has submitted a very good and *creative* thesis. The theme selected is very actual and important. The work is well written with a proper use of academic language. Alfred demonstrates broad theoretical understanding of the subject area and is able to discuss his contribution, reflect on limitations of the study, reflect on implication of the study and highlight the recommendations.

- In case you would lead a similar research project in the future what kind of research methods would you use? Would you use the same methods?
- Could you please articulate your personal opinion on inclusive education in the Czech Republic and compare it with your experience with this phenomenon from your country?

Suggested marking: 1-2 (excellent – very good)

Second marker: doc. PhDr. Jan Šiška, PhD.

Alfred chose an interesting topic. The choice is justified with references to the literature and Alfred's professional experience in Kenya. Some useful

background information on educational policies in the Czech Republic and Kenya is presented. However, the Czech educational reality remains rather unexplored and underreported in the dissertation. It is particularly pity given the fact that Alfred spent in the Czech Republic several months with good opportunities to study the Czech educational environment in depth. In other words a stronger effort should have been made to gather solid background information about the Czech educational policies. Nevertheless, the text is overall balanced. Alfred used sufficient scope of resources related to the topic.

The key word of dissertation, inclusion, is rather briefly introduced and more descriptive than critical. However, the use of the research methodology (case study) is justified and the methods explained using relevant sources.

Regarding the interview analyses, it would have been useful for analysis and follow up reporting to visualise the analytical process of data in a table.

The chapter 4.3 on interview analyses is structured /as Alfred explains in the first paragraph/ according the themes related to the research questions. However, such link between the research questions and the themes presented is not fully clear. The same comment refers to statement related to the three main themes (p. 41) which seem to be emerging from the observation. Again a table, chart, pictures, photographs would give a reader useful inside view of the environment explored.

Overall, the dissertation represents very good engagement with the module aims and attainment of learning outcomes. Well done.

1st Mark: 2

2nd Mark: 3

Mark given: 2 / B / 65