Positioning a Southern Inclusive Framework Embedded in the Social Model of Disability Theory Contextualized for Guyana

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Abstract—This paper presents how the social model of disability can be used to reshape inclusive education practices in Guyana. Inclusive education in Guyana is metamorphosizing but still firmly held in the tenets of the Medical Model of Disability which influences the experiences of children with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities (SEN/D). An ethnographic approach to data gathering was employed in this study. Qualitative data were gathered from the voices of children with and without SEN/D as well as their mainstream teachers to present the interplay of discourses and subjectivities in the situation. The data were analyzed using Adele Clarke's situational analysis. The data suggest that it is possible but will be challenging to fully contextualize and adopt Loreman's synthesis and Booths and Ainscow's Index in the two mainstream schools studied. In addition, the data paved the way for the presentation of the 'Southern Inclusive Education Framework for Guyana' and its support tool 'The Inclusive Checker created for Southern mainstream primary classrooms'.

Keywords—Social Model of Disability, Medical Model of Disability, subjectivities, metamorphosis, special education needs, postcolonial Guyana, Quasi-inclusion practices, Guyanese cultural challenges, mainstream primary schools, Loreman's Synthesis, Booths and Ainscow's Index

I. INTRODUCTION

IN Guyana, there is the need for cultural and traditional changes even if an inclusive framework is designed or contextualized to be adopted in mainstream schools. The objective of this research sought to gather data to understand how two school-based social model frameworks (Loreman's synthesis and Booths and Ainscow's Index) are adapted contextually for use more widely across Guyana, to support schools to make a positive difference to the experience of children with SEN/D in schools. Addressing Mrs. Archer's concerns became important since she highlighted a discourse that is dominant in Guyana and very active in the two schools studied. It highlighted a culture established in Guyana rooted in the medical model of disability which presents children with SEN/D as unsuitable for mainstream schools. These discourses suggest some of the possible challenges and opportunities to fully contextualized and adopt Loreman's synthesis and Booths and Ainscow's Index. These discourses also highlight the areas where potential challenges and opportunities for adapting the two school-based social model frameworks contextually for use extensively across Guyana.

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This will support schools to make a positive difference to the experience of children with SEN/D in schools is key to improving Inclusive Education in Guyana. This is important to the metamorphosis happening in Guyana's mainstream education system as it attempts to become more inclusive to accommodate all children.

A. Research Question

The paper was guided by a single research question: How can Loreman' Social Model Framework [1] and Booth and Ainscow's Index [2], [3] school-based social model frameworks be adapted contextually so that it can be used more widely across Guyana, to support schools to make a positive difference to the experience of children with SEN/D in schools?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

I am a disability somebody; I am nobody; I can do nothing good. The teachers say it, and I believe it. Sabrina, July 2018 – Interview

The approach to disability is derived from the social model of disability as introduced by Mike Oliver at a Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (RADAR) conference in 1982 and subsequently, in his book Social Work with Disabled People. The social model of disability argues that disability is a product of social organizations more than of personal limitations and it is used as a tool to improve disabled peoples' lives [4], [6]. The social model of disability perceives society as being shaped by the dominant discourses which influence the ways people with impairments experience participation in social spheres.

According to [4]-[6], individuals with impairments are disabled by the disabling barriers they encounter in their social spheres. The social model contests these disabling barriers constituted socially by supporting excluded and disabled individuals to claim their rightful place in society [7], [8]. Similar situations are present in Guyana. The social model of disability recognizes the existence of impairment as not constitutive by the limitation in itself, but rather sees it as the product of the interaction with the social, cultural, political and physical environment.

Sometimes, what is seen as a disabling for individuals who have impaired bodies is due to the physical and social arrangements as well as the institutional norms which can be altered [9]-[14] asserted that the traditional chalkboard method of instruction utilized in rural Guyana for children with visual

and auditory impairments, without utilizing assistive technology, is disabling for these children. In the same way, stair access without ramps or lifts in mainstream schools is hindrances to children with physical impairments. Moreover, the negative conceptions of impairment by mainstream teachers are also a disadvantage for children with SEN/D. The social model of disability has been usefully articulated in two frameworks to support changes in educational practice consistent with the social model of disability. These are Loreman's Framework/Synthesis [1] and Booths and Ainscow's Index [2], [3].

The synthesis and index are flexible tools. Booths and Aincow's Index has been adapted for use in many other countries and translated into 37 languages [3], [15], [16]. Loreman's Synthesis utilizes a social model of disability framework and is rendered useless and irrelevant unless it is contextualized to local educational practice, context, culture, and circumstance [17], [1]. The synthesis has been contextualized for use and modified in 22 countries [17], [1]. The synthesis does not function effectively unless it is contextualized. This study explored how Loreman's Framework [1] and Booth and Ainscow's Index [2], [3] can be adapted contextually as a social model framework to be used in mainstream education across Guyana, to support schools to make a positive difference to the experience of children with SEN/D.

III. APPROACH

Ethnography was the research design which facilitated our embeddedness in the lived experiences of the children. Ethnographic research allows the research to converse intimately with the whole social sphere of research [18], [19]. Reference [20] suggests that ethnography is the study of the socio-cultural contexts, processes, and meanings within cultural systems. It is a microscopic approach. We used Rodgers' 2007 [19] and Berry's 2011 [20] conception of ethnography because it allowed to reveal and analyze the experiences, socialization and barriers to full participation for children with SEN/D in the two mainstream primary schools in their socio-cultural contexts.

The research involved 38 children; 36 with identified SEN/D and two without identified SEN/D who shared similar relational elements in the experiences of children with SEN/D in the two schools. Using ethnography, we participated in the lived experiences of these children and their mainstream teachers for two semesters in Guyana. In ethnographic studies, exploring situatedness experiences in the area of study is not planned for but is revealed in complexities [18], [19]. In this study, such situated experiences occurred when parents visited the schools and voluntarily shared their views on the experiences of children with and without SEN/D. We added their voices to the discourses because they were part of the situation and social arena. This was an approach to situational analysis taken by Clarke [21] and it was used to gather and analyze data in this study. Purposive theoretical sampling guided us to seek out additional data sources to collaborate the situated meanings of interviewed children with SEN/D.

IV. ANALYSIS OF LOREMAN'S SYNTHESIS

The first feature of the synthesis posited by Loreman [1] states:

'All children attend their neighborhood school. Schools and districts have a 'zero-rejection' policy when it comes to registering and teaching children in their region.'

Many children with SEN/D who participated in this study were living in impoverished state and facing the possibility of neglect [22]. This meant that registration at school did not necessarily mean attendance. Attendance was hindered by parents taking children out of schools to work primarily at crop time when rice is harvested. Many times, this is the only means of income for many families who live in poverty. This factor also increased truancy in the two participating mainstream schools. The national truancy reports of the Ministry of Education in 2018 [65], indicated that many children with SEN/D are registered at their neighborhood mainstream schools, but do not attend. One of the primary reasons given for this was the lack of resources.

Joseph, Amanda, Sabrina, Holly, Jonese and many other children live with mothers who are single parents, living in an impoverished state. Single parents in Guyana face many challenges with little or no support from society. Some parents like Sally (excerpt below) would choose to invest their limited resources on the child who they perceived as having the capability to excel in education. As is evident in Sally's expression, she would not recognize the child with impairment as one who may have the ability to excel.

Lidon, you are aware that I raise my children alone. I am not employed. My son cannot make it in education. He is disabled. What can he do in school? He is my burden. He is my shame to carry. I cannot send him to school to pressure the teachers. He will waste their time. I am poor. I have to spend the little money on his sister's education. She is not disabled; she has a chance. Sally-The mother of a child with a physical disability (Interview, 2018)

I can write. My hands are fine. I love reading. I can do mental mathematics. Mommy does not think I can do well in school, yet I have to help my sister with her work. I read a lot at home. My neighbor gives me the newspapers daily after he has read them. Mommy is poor, and she will sacrifice my chances for my sister's, and it makes me sad. I don't want to hate anyone, but sometimes I am very sad, and I wish I could die. Sally's son with a physical disability (2018)

Sally's son was denied the opportunity to have educational experiences from home because of lack of resources. He felt his mother was biased and neglected his needs. Child neglect in various forms is the most common form of child abuse in Guyana [22]. Unintentionally Sally was taking power away from her son just as the discourses in society. He developed negative emotions and wished he would die due to being deprived of the opportunity to attend school. Guyana has a suicide rate of 29.2 per 100,000 people. For every single female suicide, there were 3.2 male suicides [23]. A suicide rate of 29.2 persons per every 100,000 is alarming for a

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country whose population is approximately 740,000. Children with SEN/D in this postcolonial country are among the statistics of suicide-related deaths.

Loreman's synthesis and Booths and Ainscow's Index appear inadequate to accommodate some sociocultural factors encountered in the two schools. Some of these factors are quasi-inclusion practices, poverty, suicide, child neglect, socioeconomic status and other social deviant influences in Guyana's culture. Another critical factor that was identified in this situation is the gender of the child. Besides being physically impaired, Sally's discriminated child is a male. Reports in Guyana on academic performances indicate males are underperforming in mainstream schools due partly to not having their learning needs and interests met [24].

Children from families with low education, negative attitudes towards schooling, or poverty-stricken single parents have a higher likelihood of dropping out [25], [26]. Because of neglect [22], some children do not get an opportunity to drop out of school because they were never even given the chance to attend. To compound Sally's son's challenges, he is also facing marginalization at home because of the socioeconomic status of his family. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds seem to be at a higher risk of suffering the impact of socioeconomic crisis [27]-[29].

A child dropping out of school does not occur overnight. It is usually the result of a long process of child disengagement [25], [30], [26], [31]. All children with SEN/D in the catchment area of these two schools must first be allowed to be engaged in mainstream schools, and all factors which may contribute to barriers, disablement and disengagement must be reduced. Sally's daily actions disengage her son. Despite his daily efforts to prove her that he is capable by undertaking to do his sister's homework for a class level which he never attended, Sally contributes to framing his disablement.

In the Second feature of the Synthesis, Loreman [1] posited that: 'All children are welcomed and valued.' Children with SEN/D need an education system which can address the effect of broader socioeconomic inequalities [32]-[36]. Using [37], [32]-[35], writings on socioeconomic inequalities, the education authority of Guyana can recognize the need to provide diverse support as required by individual children. This is another challenge for the Synthesis since segregation based on diversities is embedded in Guyana's culture.

The third, fourth and fifth features of Loreman's Framework [1] state:

'All children learn in regular, heterogeneous classrooms with same-age peers. All children follow substantively similar programs of study, with a curriculum that can be adapted and modified if needed. Modes of instruction are varied and responsive to the needs of all.'

This feature is partly applicable as it is in the two schools and is being utilized as Guyana tries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal 4: *Quality Education*. Guyana has made significant strides in achieving this Goal. Guyana has begun with the placement of children with SEN/D in regular mainstream heterogeneous classrooms, with peers of similar ages who are already in mainstream classes. They all follow the same standardized program without any modifications. There is a contrast in executing *feature five* which states that 'modes of instruction must be varied and responsive to the needs of all'. There are many studies [38]-[43] which challenge learning styles. Learning style is what the mainstream teachers held as a guiding principle; and this was also because of Guyana subscribing mainly to *performance learning* using a *competitive goal structure* Grade 2; Grade 4; Grade 6; Grade 9.

The six and seventh features of Loreman's Framework [1] theory state:

'All children contribute to regular school and classroom learning activities and events; all children are supported to make friends and to be socially successful with their peers.'

The behavior of children is crucial for successful school experiences. Children, who are engaged, both academically and socially tend to stay in school [44]. There are alarming statistics on dropout rates in both of the schools. Children with SEN/D are facing numerous socialization challenges and negative emotions in mainstream schools. Children direct their attention away from learning when they experience negative emotions [44].

Children with SEN/D are blamed for "slowing down" the teaching and learning process in mainstream schools. Several teachers namely Miss Johnson, Miss Singh, Mrs. Archer and Miss Long blamed children with SEN/D for being responsible for causing the low academic performances at national standardized tests. Negative attitudes and behaviors affect the learning experiences for all children and can be linked to lower performance [45]-[47].

Further, children without SEN/D at both schools seemed unwilling to build relationships and connections with children with SEN/D. This apparent unwillingness contributed to some of the challenges children with SEN/D face at both schools in creating social relationships. It is vital to support children with SEN/D in making friends and be socially successful with their peers [48]. This is another challenge for the Synthesis contextualization.

The final feature of Loreman's Framework [1] inclusive framework states:

'Adequate resources and staff training are provided within the school and district to support inclusion.'

Investing during the early years allows children to acquire skills and knowledge that shape their development [27], [26]. These include cognitive, non-cognitive and socio-emotional skills, which facilitate the acquisition of skills and knowledge in the subsequent years of education. Guyana has limited resources, a considerable portion of the resources allocated to education in Guyana goes towards infrastructure (building schools and equipping them), salaries for teachers and improving public performances in mathematics and science. The allocation from national budget which is given for SEN/D is minimal. It is often inadequate to provide essential support materials and specialist training for teachers in the area of SEN/D [49]-[54]. Limited resources will challenge the

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contextualization of the synthesis.

VI. ANALYSIS OF BOOTH AND AINSCOW'S INDEX

The first feature of Booth and Ainscow's Index [2], [3] states:

'Putting inclusive values into action.'

The Index has been adapted for use in many other countries and translated into 37 languages [3], [15], [16]. However, there was no indication of how the Index was adopted in these 37 languages. They did not state what cultural challenges were faced or social acceptances levels or barriers the Index did not cater for. There were no reports on how the inactiveness of the mainstream schools at being inclusive were affected and what were the impacts for children with SEN/D.

Supporting schools in diverse societies scattered in Guyana is challenging and will challenge contextualizing the Index. This challenge is significant because in the area where the two schools are located in Guyana, their traditional cultures still perceive children with SEN/D as lesser valued and unteachable. Putting inclusive values into action needs contextualization not only to culture but also geographically and demographically. Inclusion involves putting into effect in education and society a particular set of values or ethical principles [55], [56]. This again reinforces that putting inclusive values into action is context specific and will be challenging in Guyana for the Index.

The second feature of Booth and Ainscow's Index [2], [3] states:

'Viewing every life and every death as of equal worth.' [2]

The value of every life in a society directly depends on the society's consciousness of the worth of each living individual and the impact of the loss created by their death on society. Some lives are seen as having more value in traditional rural communities. Phenomenologically, death is nonbeing. To view every death as equal worth, society must see the purpose of each life as of equal value despite individual differences [57]. In Guyana, there are different cultural practices where death is the concern, and in some cultures, the ceremony is different depending on the influences the individual had who died. The suicide of children with SEN/D was not symbolic culturally like the suicide of children without SEN/D in the community.

The third and fourth features state:

'Supporting everyone to feel that they belong; increasing participation for children and adults in learning and teaching activities, relationships and communities of local schools.' [2]

In Guyana, it is racially and culturally challenging to support everyone so that they feel like they belong. There is still the prevalence of racism between the two dominant ethnic groups, i.e., East Indians and Africans. Racism in Guyana dates back into its history of African slavery and East Indian Indentureship during the colonial era. Increasing participation for children with SEN/D who are of a different ethnic and cultural group than the dominant one in the school community becomes challenging. Discriminating against marginalized ethnic groups is often activated by political factors and influences in the two schools.

Holly and Rawl verbalized differentiated discriminatory treatment they receive as children with SEN/D based on ethnic differences. They both indicated with direct examples that racial and power tensions make it hard for them to learn. The children also used derogatory identities (Coolie and Black) for themselves and the teacher. This is a reflection of a common practice and discourse in society. Reference [58] noted that Guyanese using derogatory identity when referring others of different ethnicity is a common practice especially in rural communities; suggesting and emphasizing another challenge to contextualizing the Index.

The dynamics among class, ethnicity and culture are vital elements which combine to forge an identity for the Guyanese people and their society. Children with SEN/D claimed that they felt the difference in experiences in the way they are socialized. It is the collective understanding that individuals share in their choice for their own or those with common characteristics. The difference in the occurrence of this form of discrimination between Angel and Saints Primary School is due to what [58] called a variation in identity.

The fifth and sixth features state:

'Reducing exclusion, discrimination, barriers to learning and participation; restructuring cultures, policies and practices to respond to diversity in ways that value everyone equally.' [2]

Reducing exclusion, discrimination and other barriers to learning must start within society's dominant discourses and it will be challenging and resisted in communities of the two schools studied. Reference [53] has indicated that they are currently working on restructuring education discourses and practices. Countries should respect, protect and fulfil the right of all children to education especially children who are vulnerable because of culture, background, socioeconomic status and SEN/D [59] [35]. Some countries of the global South work to identify and remove barriers and enable every child with SEN/D participate and achieve in mainstream settings [60], [61]. Establishing inclusive schools is the foundation of inclusive society. In addition, it will contribute to the valuing of children with SEN/D [62], [63], [35] and make education experiences meaningful to them. The expectation in this feature will be challenging in Guyana. Guyana's mainstream schools need a contextualized social model of disability framework considering the cultural peculiarities of Guyana to identify and remove barriers to enable every child with SEN/D participate and achieve meaningfully in mainstream settings.

The seventh and eighth features state:

'Linking education to local and global realities; learning from the reduction of barriers for some children to benefit children more widely.' [2]

While developing these custom-made curricula puts additional demands on schools and teachers, it is also a mechanism of ensuring the quality of education for children with SEN/D, wherever that education takes place. Education is seen as an essential tool to combat poverty, social exclusion

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and marginalization [27], [64], [35]. Guyanese mainstream teachers do not have the autonomy to organize the curriculum. They are expected to follow the standardized process implemented in education. The Guyanese teachers' lack of autonomy is another potential challenge for the index and synthesis.

The ninth and tenth features state:

'Viewing differences between children and between adults as resources for learning. Acknowledging the rights of children.' [2]

There is need for awareness-raising in the two schools and communities around about SEN/D. Awareness-raising sessions about tolerance and valuing differences and diversities are all put forward by [65], [66, p.13], [67], which could be an opportunity for the Index and synthesis to be seen as a tool which could contribute to changing society's perception of children with SEN/D.

The eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth features state:

'Improving mainstream schools for all and promoting social relationships between schools and communities.' [2]

Participating teachers found that collaborating with their colleagues and the children resulted in them thinking of innovative ways to best respond to children's diversities. It also gave greater confidence to experiment with different teaching practices [68] and increases children's achievement through enhanced learning experiences. It also reduces mainstream teachers' frustration and uncertainty about making provisions for children with SEN/D in their classes [68]. Challenging environmental and social conditions in mainstream schools there made it very difficult to provide a comprehensive and inclusive education system for Gaza's children with SEN/D [69]. Children in the two schools in Guyana have similar experiences and provide another opportunity for the synthesis to be widely used to improve the learning environment.

The final feature states:

'Recognizing that inclusion in education is one aspect of inclusion in society.' [2]

Inclusion in society is essential for social and economic development and becomes vital as education becomes more inclusive because teachers must respond to a greater diversity of student needs [70]. Recognizing that inclusive education is a part of framing an inclusive society would require teacher development primarily in classrooms, where practice develops. The developed inclusive practices must be connected to and build on the expertise available within the society. With the guidance of Loreman's Framework [1] synthesis and Booth and Ainscow's Index [2], [3] and with the evidence gathered in this study, we provide another alternative starting point for Guyana.

VII. SOUTHERN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FRAMEWORK FOR GUYANA

The teachers stated that they felt ill-prepared, ineffective, unsupported and feared failure by having limited resources and facilities to guide and support children with SEN/D.

Teachers' effectiveness is always being questioned and being invalidated and this could be attributed to some of the fear of failure. Invalidations negate the confidence and value in teachers' effectiveness and professional practices [71]-[73]; [35]. Teachers' fear of failure complicated their interactions with children with SEN/D and could also challenge how Loreman's Synthesis [1] as well as Booth and Ainscow's Index [2], [3] as school-based social model frameworks are contextualized and adapted across Guyana. For Guyanese mainstream schools to be fully inclusive they must ensure that the following features are fully implemented:

1. All neighborhood schools and local school districts must be free from discriminatory practices like institutional discrimination and inequalities as well as any form of victimization or preferential treatment for some children based on race, ethnicity, gender, background, culture, socioeconomic status, poverty, parents' sexual orientation, and impairment. Other factors are not limited to the area of residency, which may result in preferential treatments of one group of children and increase the vulnerability of the other group or restrict their participation in experiences and socialization offered at school.

2. The mainstream education authority, structures and systems currently in place within mainstream schools in Guyana must make evident reasonable adjustments and modification to reduce barriers to access in the daily practices, structures and systems of the schools.

3. All children should be given the support needed in the mainstream school they are placed. This support is not limited to curricula and educational materials/resources but must extend to social, emotional and physical support as the individual case necessitates.

4. All children are treated with love, respect, value and appreciation of individual uniqueness. Each child must be given opportunities to showcase his/her talents and have the talents and uniqueness celebrated especially children who are considered disadvantaged or vulnerable because of impairment(s).

5. Opportunities must be provided for all children to form social bonds and relations with peers so that they can also create connections with others who share similar interest, aspirations, skills, and abilities. In addition, compassion committees must be established to ensure awareness and sensitization of all stakeholders about children' diversities and potential to contribute to society's development to increase the value constituted on all children.

6. All opportunities, experiences and socialization must be flexible and adaptable to individual differences while maintaining parallel standards, expectations and outcomes for all. The education authority in Guyana should provide opportunities, experiences and socialization for children based on individual needs, culture, readiness and not perceived groups of learning styles.

7. Teachers, educators, support staff, other vital workers and stakeholders must receive compulsory training on SEN/D, inclusion, differentiated instruction, inclusive learning and assessment. There must also be continuous professional

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development sessions to enhance local capacity to promote inclusion. More local studies must be done to enhance children' experiences using the uniqueness they bring to mainstream schools.

8. Because of the diversities in cultures and demography of the education districts in Guyana, inclusive policies while holding national elements must be formatted in the local context. Local teachers must receive the support from a national specialist as required and/or requested.

9. All local schools must attempt to be more than an educational institution in the local communities. They should strive to be avenues where all (children and members of the society) can have the opportunities where they can collaborate and help each other advance in an inclusive environment.

10. All neighborhood schools must emphasize more than just academic achievements at national assessment, but also highlight skills attainment, sports, arts and creativity, music and all other results must be of equal merit as academic performance/achievement.

11. All schools must be actively seen as trying to reduce the discriminatory behaviors and practices toward children with impairment in society even when they are not placed at mainstream schools.

12. The education authority in Guyana should provide support for children in disadvantaged sociocultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, especially poverty to remove barriers that are not socially created and the feeling of disablement experienced by children with SEN/D.

13. The education authority in Guyana should foster a value system in mainstream schools which enable all participants to recognize their value to their local community's and country's history, growth and development.

VIII. The Inclusive Checker Created for Southern Mainstream Primary Classrooms

The Inclusive Checker for Southern mainstream primary schools became a project within the study. It was also designed to support the mainstream teachers in their efforts to improve their classrooms and practices to benefit all children. It provided a simple means for the mainstream teachers to have immediate formative feedback on the experiences of all children especially those with SEN/D in their classes. The general view in schools was that support staff did have an impact on pupil attainment, behavior and attitudes especially children with SEN/D [77]. Guyanese mainstream teachers do not have additional help in their classrooms, even when more children with SEN/D were added to these classes. The teachers needed more support. The institutional structure of Guyana does not facilitate them having that additional staff support in the class unless someone volunteers. There should be appropriate resources to support children judged by the extent to which the mental images that children formed is likely to be helpful or unhelpful in structuring their thinking for all children [55], [78], [74]-[76]. Teachers lacked both

teaching resources and staff support hence, we proposed the inclusive checker as a support tool teachers can use as a guide to measure inclusive actions.

Teachers typically enter mainstream teaching without adequate training [79], [80] and need ways to support and monitor their practices. Self-monitoring is noting the presence, absence, or level of specific behavior, and is one example of self-management [81]-[83]. Self-monitoring is a low-intensity, secondary prevention strategy designed to improve teachers' self-management skills and to improve their effectiveness, inclusive practice and social development as they provide experiences for children with SEND.

Teachers who self-monitored made better decisions resulting in better student performance than teachers who did not self-monitor [81]-[86]. They can help children create better learning experiences and strengthen their skills to cope within the schools they are being placed [87], [80], [88]. It is our hope that if the mainstream teachers at the two participating schools self-monitor, they could become more inclusive in the experiences provided to children with SEN/D. It could allow teachers to be more in control of the factors which can influence the experiences of children in the classroom [81], [89], [83], [86].

IX. Conclusion

The study highlighted that it is possible but challenging to fully contextualize and adopt Loreman's Synthesis and Booths and Ainscow's Index within the mainstream schools' system in Guyana. Positioning a Southern Inclusive Framework within the mainstream education system of Guyana is challenging because of the quasi-inclusion practices, gender peculiarities, poverty, race, suicide, child neglect, socioeconomic status and other social deviant influences in Guyana's culture not considered in depth by either framework. The challenges to fully contextualize and adopt Loreman's Synthesis and Booths and Ainscow's Index within the mainstream schools' system can be overcome with the application of the 'Southern Inclusive Education Framework for Guyana' and its support tool 'The Inclusive Checker created specifically to accommodate the unique sociocultural factors in Guyana'.

Ethical Considerations

Stringent efforts were made to safeguard all participants' identity with the use of pseudonyms. Precautions were also taken to protect the safety of children and their integrity in their learning environment. All participants were told of their rights to withdraw from the study at any stage. They could have their contributions omitted from the research and any documented pieces shredded or returned to them. We ensured that the research complied with [90], [91] and with Articles 16-21 (Children, Vulnerable Young People and Vulnerable Adults) with additional emphasis on Article 3 and Article 12 from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. All participants were given information that was, as far as possible, easily comprehended, so that they could have voluntarily decided whether or not to participate in the

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