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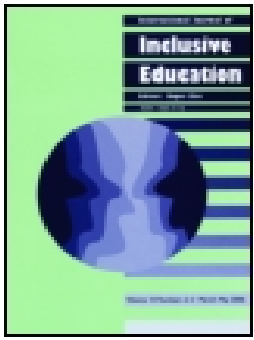


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Stay in your lane experiences of children with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities in two mainstream primary schools in Guyana

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ABSTRACT

Marginalisation, discrimination and depersonalisation are some of the negative experiences of children with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) in rural mainstream primary schools in Guyana. This paper presents these experiences from qualitative data gathered over six months of ethnographic research in two primary schools in Guyana. The data were analysed using situational analysis as posited by Adele Clarke and interpreted through a poststructuralist lens with the social model of disability theoretical framework. Children with SEND feel valueless and experience anxiety and loneliness in their placement in rural mainstream schools. This paper forms part one of a series presented to highlight institutional discrimination embedded in the practices and discourses which is fuelled by the dominance of the individual deficit model of disability in mainstream schools. The paper also illustrates how teachers' beliefs that disability is biological and they can not cater for such children who are considered unteachable and challenging. The paper further reflects on the collective conscience of mainstream teachers in rural Guyana who feel unsupported in unsuitable classrooms to meet the needs of children with SEND.

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Marginalisation; depersonalisation; Special education needs; disability; impairment; mainstream schools; Medial model of disability; social model of disability

Introduction

This paper shows the ubiquity of the metaphor of lanes in two schools in Guyana. In this paper, I first present an outline of the issue I explored in Guyana and positioned it in the wider research area of SEND. The Introduction is followed by the Context and Background in which I trace the experience of some children with SEND to show the onset of the metaphor of lanes I explored. The Research Questions are presented immediately after and are followed by the Literature Review which includes the Theoretical Framework to focus the intent of the paper. After engaging with the literature related to the study, I presented the Methodology and explained why I selected ethnography as the most suitable method to explore the children's experiences. The Data Analysis Approach follows the Methodology section and highlights my use of Adele Clarke's situational analysis to gather and analyse the data. I then shared my Interpretation of the experiences of the children and their

teachers and positioned the discussion in the global discussion on SEND. After declaring my stance on the experiences of children with SEND who participated in my study, I make some recommendation for teachers to follow to make reasonable adjustments for children with SEND in their classes after which I concluded the paper.

Restricted lanes marginalise and depersonalise children with SEND and endanger rather than preserve their safety. Many countries have equality legislation to preserve the rights and safety of all citizens because of inequalities in institutions and organisations of society. Similarly, Guyana's *People's New Constitution 1980, revised 2000* includes the Education Act – Cap 39:01 and the Persons with Disabilities Act 2010 – Cap 36:05 which make provisions for disabled and vulnerable people. Both clearly state that all children should be granted equal and safe access to public education. The laws also state that any form of discrimination against any child which denies that child safe access to education is a criminal offence. Children with SEND are not given the same opportunities as other children in mainstream primary schools in Guyana. There are discriminatory barriers to participation and socialisation which underpin the expected status, access, behaviours, attitudes; participations, achievement, and acceptance of children with SEND. Children with SEND are often told by teachers to 'Stay in their lane'. The 'Stay in your lane' directive and expectation is maintained in the value system of the school and society. The children with SEND who are constrained in marginalised lanes experience feelings of anxiety and loneliness because of the isolation and depersonalisation created by the lane surveillance. Teachers are not the only actors in the social world of mainstream schools who try to compel children with SEND to stay in their lane. Children without known SEND also have created a tiered social structure of acceptance for children with SEND which limits the participation and socialisation of children with SEND. The tiered socialisation structure supports the seeming quest to get children with SEND to remain excluded while being physically included in the two mainstream schools.

Context and background

Guyana is a part of the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Nations and has signed on agreement aimed at achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The experiences of the children with SEND are pivoted on sustainable development goal number four (SG4) which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Further, Guyana recognises SEND according to the UK, 2001 Code of Practice and indicates in its draft inclusive framework expectations emphasised in the Warnock Report, 1978. Internationally, Guyana also attended the Salamanca World Conference on Special Needs Education in 1994 and is a signatory to the Salamanca Statement, 1994 and the Dakar Framework, 2000. Regionally in the Caribbean, Guyana helped formulate and signed on to the Declaration of Pétion Ville of 2013, which reiterates the expectations of the Kingston Accord of 2004 all under the umbrella of Caricom's initiatives for inclusive education and SEND.

The Cooperative Republic of Guyana is a developing multicultural, multiracial and postcolonial country. It is located at the apex of the South American continent. Guyana's last population census revealed that its population is approximately seven hundred and forty thousand ($N = 740,000$) (Guyana Housing and Population Census Preliminary Report 2012; Bureau of Statistics, Government of Guyana 2018). There are

approximately one hundred and twenty thousand children ($N = 120,000$) in mainstream primary schools in Guyana (Bureau of Statistics, Government of Guyana 2018). There are approximately sixteen thousand and five hundred children ($N = 16,500$) with SEND. The Bureau of Statistics also reported that only 33 per cent of these children ($N = 5445$) are served by the education system, whether in mainstream or special schools. As a result, approximately eleven thousand and fifty-five ($N = 11,055$) children with SEND are not catered for by the education system, whether in mainstream or special schools (Bureau of Statistics, Government of Guyana 2018). These children are not provided with the necessary education experiences and opportunities because of the historical, systemic, structural, organisational and attitudinal barriers that continue to be antithetical to the philosophy and practice of inclusive education within the social structure of Guyana.

Guyana has eleven education departments, which are responsible for education provisions within their respective areas. Mainstream education is free and compulsory from the primary to secondary levels. At the Kindergarten level, education is free but not mandatory. To be a professionally certified teacher in Guyana, one must attend the nation's only teachers' training college, officially known as the Cyril Potter College of Education for a two year period. The teachers' college has a Special Education Diagnosis and Assimilation Centre at its main campus at Turkeyen. This centre which was opened in 2018 is still in its developmental stages.

The conceptualisation and contextualisation of Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) in Guyana are still in the nascent stages of metamorphosis. Guyana has not yet developed an official definition of disability. More specifically, it is still implementing programmes for the identification of special needs in early childhood and even embraces the individual deficit model of disability as the dominant discourse (Cheong et al. 2019; Lashley 2017, 2019). I was a senior mainstream teacher in year six for over a decade in one of the schools under study. During that time, I saw many children with SEND passed through mainstream primary schools in Guyana without benefiting from the learning experiences provided. Two distinct cases concerning children with SEND from this period are presented here:

The first is Aquennie who is now 17 years old. He has completed both mainstream primary and secondary schools without any reasonable adjustments to the classroom or school facilities and structures being made or additional specialist instruction given to him. However, he faced the challenges and survived, but this should have not been the case. Aquennie was born with an impaired right arm making physical activity very challenging. He also suffered daily abuse and was called names such as; 'one wing', 'Mongol', 'deviant' and more cruelly 'biological reject'. Aquennie could not keep up with the writing and other activities requiring the use of his right arm. I met him one day behind the school in tears; he was crying because the teacher had told him he was 'holding back' her class, and she did not know why he did not stay at home.

The second case is Armala who was a Hindu child from a wealthy family. She had multiple physical impairments and was also significantly smaller than the average year six child. She could neither read nor write. She found social interactions frustrating. The children in her class teased her and called her names like 'family curse and sins'. Unlike Aquennie, Armala, left the school after just one month and never returned to mainstream schooling.

These memories illustrate some of the many negative experiences that children with SEND face in mainstream primary schools in Guyana. The challenges to inclusion experienced by Aquennie were the result of Guyanese cultural attitudes expressed and

practiced by both his peers and teachers – who saw Aquennie as the ‘problem’ and did not give him the opportunity to participate in school activities. In Armala’s situation, the use of the notion of a family curse or a sin implies that disability was ‘evil’ and this evil was a part of Armala. This kind of exclusionary practice was evident within the two mainstream schools under study in Guyana.

SEND experts in Guyana (see Ajodhia-Andrews 2007; Ajodhia-Andrews and Frankel 2010; Fraser 2014; Lashley 2017, 2019; Mitchell 2005; Sam 2015), parents of children with SEND and other stakeholders in education indicated in previous studies that Guyana’s mainstream education environment is unsuitable for children with SEND. It also apparent that these children face more than environmental challenges in mainstream primary schools as is also documented by the researchers cited above. In sum, there is evidence to suggest that the culture, discourses and discursive practices of some schools are not sufficiently inclusive to accommodate and value children with SEND. These children face multiple barriers within the structure of the organisation and with perception and discourses on SEND.

In Guyana, SEND has been an area that has attracted very little research and interest to date. While the few studies available have provided essential knowledge about education for children with SEND and the discourse on disability in Guyana, they do not represent the stories told by the children themselves. As a consequence, they do not provide the kind of informative insights which can only come from contributions made by the children with SEND themselves. This study provided an opportunity for children with SEND to share their experiences and also their achievements with respect to mainstream schooling.

Research questions

The overarching question is ‘**What are the experiences of children with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) placed in Guyana’s mainstream primary schools?**’ The subsidiary questions are:

- (1) How do children with SEND reflect on their experiences and feelings in mainstream schools?
- (2) What, if any, adjustments and curriculum modifications do mainstream teachers make to include children with SEND?

Literature review

The literature explored in this study was done to be context specific to the experiences of children with SEND in Guyana. It also highlights the lack of information on children’s voices about their experiences of exclusion in Guyana and their teachers’ consciousness of the plight of these children but positioning themselves as powerless to do something about the children’s plight.

Theoretical framework

My theoretical approach to disability is derived from the social model of disability as put forward by Oliver (1990, 2013). The social model of disability does not perceive Sabrina

as someone with a disability. Like the poststructuralist theory also embraced in this study, the social model of disability has similar traits. Both theories postulate that those in marginalised groups are constituted by the discourses within which they live and work. Poststructuralist theory and the social model of disability perceive society as being shaped by the dominant discourses which influence the ways people with impairments experience participation in social spheres.

Further, the two theories challenge the medical model of disability, with its embedded policies and practices that shape the participation and experiences of children with impairments in the area studied. Poststructuralist theory offers ways of identifying discourses and discursive practices, which lead to marginalisation and discrimination of people with impairments. Similarly, the social model of disability challenges these discourses and discursive practices.

I have conceptualised the experiences and socialisation of children with SEND in two mainstream primary schools in Guyana through a poststructuralist view. Discourses, discursive fields and discursive practices are constitutive of social relations in many ways. According to Allan (2010); Harwood and Murray (2019) and Whitburn (2016), experiences and discourses are subjective, and it is necessary to engage them within the social sphere in which they are constituted. We are all caught in discourse, and our subjectivity is constituted by these (Allan 2010; Harwood and Murray 2019; Whitburn 2016). It is through discourse that meanings, subjects, and subjectivities are formed (Besley 2015; Harwood and Murray 2019; Rose 1998). Thus, the subjectivities of those in marginalised groups are constituted by the discourses within which they live and work. This includes people with impairments (Amsterdam et al. 2015; Parkes, Gore, and Elsworth 2010). Since subjectivity is dependent on discourse (González Rey 2019; Laclau 1995 as cited in Rasiński 2011) and discourses are practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak (Foucault 1972), the researcher's participation in the discourse is not a neutral reflection (González Rey 2019; Harwood and Murray 2019; Laclau 1995 as cited in Rasiński 2011; Parkes, Gore, and Elsworth 2010). In discussing the experiences of children with SEND in Guyana, I helped to create the meaning understood from the experiences.

Poststructuralists recognise that information collected can be only partial, situated in terms of time, place and the context of the specific situation, which in this study was the experiences of children with SEND (Amsterdam et al. 2015; González Rey 2019; Parkes, Gore, and Elsworth 2010). The analysis takes place at the level of the category according to which the subject is identified so that the individuals concerned voice their own experiences of that categorisation (Besley 2015; Hodgson and Standish 2009).

According to Oliver (1990, 2009, 2013), we are not disabled by our impairments but by the disabling barriers we face in society. The social model challenges discriminated and marginalised people with impairments in society and mainstream schools by enabling them to claim their rightful place in society (Kumar and Dwivedi 2017; Owens 2015). In Guyana, the presence of impairment in an individual is seen as disability. The social model of disability recognises 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 (Goering 2015; Nussbaum 2011; Van Aswegen and Shevlin 2019; Van Dongen et al. 2017). Lashley (2017, 2019) asserted that the traditional chalkboard method of instruction utilised in rural Guyana for children with visual and auditory impairments, without utilising assistive technology, is disabling for these children. In the same way, stair accesses without ramps or lifts in mainstream schools are hindrances to children with physical impairments. Moreover, the negative conceptions of impairment by mainstream teachers are also a disadvantage for children with SEND. If, as I have argued, disability is a social construct, then it can be changed to make the social and physical adjustments to meet the needs of individuals with impairments and the mainstream school system could be adjusted to accommodate all children. The impairment should be a means to make access to the mainstream education system easy and open.

Exploring the concept of 'Inclusive Education', a Guyanese cultural prospective

Consciousness and its products are always, though in variable forms, parts of the material social process itself whether idealised or illusory (Williams 1977). The government of Guyana sees the placement of children with SEND in mainstream schools as ideal whereas the mainstream schools, communities, religious bodies, street discourses and parents of children without an identified SEND see it as illusory because of the dominance in belief and practice of excluding children with SEND from mainstream schools in Guyana. Mainstream school teachers, and the others mentioned above, feel that the government practices and discourses on SEND are utopian and do not consider past and present processes in mainstream schools, which form the common understanding of the unsuitability of children with SEND for mainstream school and mainstream schools for them. These two forms of consciousness are in competition in Guyanese society.

The idea of Inclusive Education is a concept that is emerging in Guyana's culture. It is still nascent and in its metamorphic stages (Cheong et al. 2018; Fraser 2014; Lashley 2017; Mitchell 2005). Although Guyana has a formal *zero-rejection* policy when it comes to registering children within their respective regions, it is not practised. Children with SEND are often told that the mainstream primary schools in their neighbourhoods do not have the resources to provide them with the necessary opportunities, experiences and socialisation, which they need. Children with SEND are also told that they are unsuitable for mainstream schools (Chouinard 2012, 2015; O'Toole and Stout 1998). Chouinard (2012, 2015) and O'Toole and Stout (1998) noted that this form of institutional discrimination is also fuelled by conceptions of superiority and inferiority among ethnic groups which also leads to marginalisation. Further, Chouinard (2012, 2015) and O'Toole and Stout (1998), who are also native Guyanese researchers, stated that parents opt to send their children to schools out of the neighbourhood or district because they believe that their children will be more welcomed and valued where the dominant discourse on culture is reflective of their culture and ethnicity. This shows another form of segregation in society.

Multiple structural and institutional inequalities in the mainstream schools and in Guyanese society have shaped the present collective consciousness, and dominant discourse on SEND, and the attitudes and practices of mainstream teachers as well as parents. Structural and institutional inequalities have also shaped the experiences of

children with SEND and made attempts at inclusive educational practices quasi- inclusive at best or non-inclusive at worst. Disabled people have identified inequalities, which have been created by institutional discrimination, as the problem because of the institutional distinction drawn between the social lives and interests of 'ablebodied' and disabled people (Barnes 1992, 2007). Institutionalised forms of discrimination, direct as well as more subtle, contribute to wider marginalisation of children with SEND and damage their sense of self-worth and positive identity (Howarth and Andreouli 2015).

Currently, Inclusive Education in Guyana's mainstream education system means placing children with SEND in mainstream schools without any form of modification being made to the educational culture, discursive practices or structure (Ajodhia-Andrews 2007; Ajodhia-Andrews and Frankel 2010; Fraser 2014; Lashley 2017; Mitchell 2005; Sam 2015). Once the child with SEND can access the building and the limited resources therein, s/he is placed in a mainstream school in a quasi inclusive education practice. Most of Guyana's mainstream school buildings are not disability friendly. Therefore, there is often no independent access for persons with limited mobility. In the schools, the resources are not modified, and the same standardised curriculum is expected to be delivered regardless of the circumstances of individual children. The mainstream teachers do not have any decentralised authority to modify the curriculum, but they are expected to provide meaningful learning and socialisation experiences for children with SEND. According, to Dr Barbara Reynolds, one of the deputy vice chancellors at the University of Guyana, this is unfair to the teachers as too much is already expected from the overworked mainstream teachers in Guyana (<https://hgptv.com/way-too-much-is-being-asked-of-teachers/>). This practice increases the possibility of exclusion and makes it difficult for children with SEND to function in mainstream schools. However, it is important to note that this practice is not policy driven because, as has been stated previously, Guyana does not have a formally written inclusive education policy or framework.

The power relationship in mainstream schools in Guyana

Disabled children do not belong here. They are always weak and spoiling things. Please send them to a disabled people's school. (Thomas (Child without SEND), Interview, 2018).

The demonstrations of power in the discourses in which Thomas is immersed have influenced his feelings that the placement of children with SEND threatened his power within school, and he needed to exert force to suppress those who threatened his power. With regards to this, power can be seen to be omnipresent and immanent in social relationships (Foucault 1980; Selchow 2017). This can be seen in the way the government's power influenced the placement of children with SEND in mainstream schools in Guyana while society's power, inclusive of its social institutions e.g. church, mainstream school, resisted the placement. The influence of power in mainstream schools also changes the dynamics because of the competing discourses on SEND. As such, new interplays of power in social relationships results in changes of discourses and practices to obtain power (Foucault 1973, 1980, 2003, 2006; Selchow 2017).

The entire education system is insensible and inflexible to diversity (Qu 2015; Robinson 2013) and, as a result, some teachers operate insensibly and inflexibly towards

children with SEND. The concept of biopower, according to Cisney and Morar (2015) and Foucault ([1963] 1975, [1975] 1977), describes the many avenues through which power exerts itself routinely in the typical and mundane activities within a social system. Individuals engage in self-surveillance and self-discipline, and, thereby, subjugate themselves to the power manifesting in society. This power is not forced upon the individuals through a dominating body (Cisney and Morar 2015; Foucault [1975] 1977) but rather individuals are implicated in their oppression as they participate in routine daily practices (Cisney and Morar 2015; Foucault [1975] 1977, 1980). In a similar way, Guyanese mainstream teachers engage in self-surveillance and self-discipline and implicate themselves to function in mainstream schools providing opportunities, experiences and socialisation for the general population of children without SEND, which oppresses children with SEND and themselves. UNICEF (2019–2030) stated that the Guyanese society also expects teachers to reflect its culture and practise it within the mainstream schools.

Normalisation for children with SEND in Guyana' mainstream education system

Everything is sin or disrespectful. Teachers are always right, and children must know their places. Some people are better than others, things are just not equal. My parents taught me to accept everyone for who they are. Why can teachers here not accept children for who they are? (Joel 2018 – Conversation after Cricket Practice)

The power influencing society creates the collective desire of what constitutes a good life and happiness (Chapman and Adams 2002; Foucault [[1975] 1977; Mallon 2017; Selchow 2017; Wolfensberger 1972). In this view, happiness can be seen as a multidimensional structure that includes the meaning of life, positive feelings, responsibility, positive relationships and success (Sezer and Can 2018; Seligman 2011). Children with SEND deserve happiness in a mainstream school, but as Joel explained, which is supported by Blackman et al. (2019), inequalities in school and society constitute barriers and the removal of children's power through institutional inequalities and discrimination and, as a result, children with SEND are often unhappy in mainstream schools. Therefore, their placement in mainstream schools does not equate to inclusion (Blackman et al. 2019). There is too much focus on their limitations and inabilities and not the practices needed for effective placement. Inclusion is influenced by the physical environment, attitudes, expectations and opportunities, in addition to a child's skills and abilities (Booth and Ainscow 2002, 2011; Loreman 2009). As such, schools should focus on the environment and teachers' practices, rather than on what an individual child can or cannot do (Maciver et al. 2018).

Children with SEND should be valued and feel valued (Booth and Ainscow 2002, 2011; Dell'Anna, Pellegrini, and Ianes 2019; Loreman 2009; Oliver 2008, 2013; Owens 2015; Ramaahlo, Tönsing, and Bornman 2018; Williams et al. 2017; UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2017; UNICEF 2019–2030). Changing the perceived value of the social roles of children with SEND is called Social Role Valorisation (SRV), and involves role-valorising (Wolfensberger 1983; Mallon 2017). SRV is of paramount importance to children with SEND in mainstream education systems where they are already devalued or at the point of becoming devalued (Wolfensberger 1980a, 1980b;

Mallon 2017). Children with SEND in this study were perceived by society's discourses as having lower value within mainstream schools and believed that they are undeserving of a good life and happiness in mainstream schools.

Moreover, teachers' depersonalising attitudes were associated with activating negative emotions like helplessness and loneliness (Koenen et al. 2019). However, teachers should be playing a major role in enhancing the experiences of children with SEND but sometimes teachers have negative emotions which impair efforts at social role valorising for children with SEND. In relation to this, Teachers' negative emotions have been found to impair teacher sensitivity in interactions with students (Stuhlman and Pianta 2002; as cited in Koenen et al. 2019). This indirectly harms students' socioemotional and academic development (Becker et al. 2015; Keller et al. 2014; Roorda et al. 2011).

The social-constructivist perspective on emotions of teachers suggests that emotions are embedded and expressed in daily social interactions and relationships with specific others, including students (Spilt, Koomen, and Thijs 2011; Zembylas 2007). As a result, students who have emotional or behavioural problems are likely to have overlapping problems across different areas of their health and development (Coombes et al. 2013; Gillberg 2010; Minnis 2013; Pritchetta et al. 2014). Teachers who score relatively low on tests of supportive teacher styles have lower quality interactions with students (Stroet, Opdenakker, and Minnaert 2013). Teachers need to be constantly socially valorising children with SEND to prevent overlapping problems highlighted above.

Methodology and data analysis approach

Research design

While I am a native of Guyana, I had not worked in the education system at the classroom level for over five years. I needed a research design which would embed me in the lived experiences of the children with SEND. Therefore, ethnography seemed to be the most appropriate research design to facilitate this. This is because ethnographic research is a process that engages the ethnographer in 'dialogue with the entire social reality encountered' (Corte and Irwin 2017; Rodgers 2007). In relation to this, Berry (2011) states that ethnography is the study of the socio-cultural contexts, processes, and meanings within cultural systems. It is a microscopic approach. I used Rodgers' (2007) and Berry's (2011) conception of ethnography because it allowed me to reveal and analyse the experiences, socialisation and barriers to full participation faced by children with SEND in the two mainstream primary schools in their socio-cultural contexts. Ethnography is one way to better understand the contextual (dis)engagement processes and meanings in a population (Corte and Irwin 2017; Rodgers 2007). I saw ethnography as a way of being situated in the two primary schools under study, observing, listening to and gaining an understanding of the experiences of the children with SEND.

It is widely known in the area of study that I was a successful mainstream teacher and currently a university lecturer in the field of SEND and curriculum studies at the University of Guyana. As a result, some of the children, teachers and parents were familiar with my presence in the schools, especially at Saints Primary School where I was once a senior teacher. Parents kept referring to my previous identity as a successful Grade Six

Assessment teacher, a role which they were comfortable with. Researcher identity, however, is never secure, bounded and controlled (Wainwright, Marandet, and Rizvi 2018) and some teachers were also unsettled initially because of my previous identity as a teacher assessor/lecturer. I spent the first two weeks of fieldwork simply 'hanging about' so that the students and staff became more comfortable with my presence as a researcher, by simply being in the schools, interacting with the teachers and children, and talking about my project. By the end of the first two weeks of 'hanging about', my new identity was accepted by all except two parents at Saints Primary school. The placement of children with SEND in disabling learning environments creates socially context-specific experiences. Ethnography allowed me to be part of the environment and socially context-specific experiences, which form the research site. I was able to map the experiences to context specific situations, which helped to established themes for analysis.

Unstructured interviews

Further, being fully situated and embedded allowed me, as a participant, to fully observe and to have the opportunity and time to interview at least one child per week at each school. Each interview with the children lasted for approximately twenty minutes. According to Tisdall (2012) and Wainwright, Marandet, and Rizvi (2018) researchers need to respect children's childhood, and so, interview time can be extended in circumstances beneficial to the children while maintaining respect for childhood (Tisdall 2012; Wainwright, Marandet, and Rizvi 2018). For example, Daniel, who has ADHD, could not complete an interview without several breaks. I respected Daniel's needs and extended the time so that Daniel could complete the interview without feeling under pressure. For confidentiality, I privately interviewed children in a room assigned by the head teacher of each school as agreed by the Ministry of Education, Guyana. The exact time for the interview was negotiated with the children with each being interviewed twice. A third interview was necessitated only when either of the first two interviews was interrupted. For example, sometimes children would exhibit overwhelming emotions forcing the interview to be ended earlier than expected.

Interviews enabled interviewees to speak with their own voices and express their thoughts and feelings (Alshenqeeti 2014; Halej 2017; Palinkas et al. 2016). Unstructured interviews are a natural extension of participant observation because they so often occur as part of ongoing participant observation (Patton 2002 as cited in Jones 2017). I was situated in the two mainstream schools' discursive practices and discourses. I engaged with the children with SEND when they were ready and also sometimes in a situation which illustrated their lived experiences. Engaging the children with SEND in situations which illustrated their lived experiences enabled me to construct the conversations around the present experience and situation, which would not have been possible with pre-constructed specific questions. I needed this flexibility to capture the personal and situated experiences of the children with SEND. This flexibility also permitted participants to approach me and initiate conversations, giving the participants more power and control over the interview (Halej 2017; Jones 2017).

Unstructured interviews can expose the researcher to unanticipated themes and help him/her establish a better understanding of the interviewees' social reality from the interviewees' perspectives (Halej 2017; Jones 2017). In this study, therefore, unstructured

interviews were used to gather data on the social reality and perspectives on experiences of children with SEND. The interviews were guided from the observations I made as I participated in the activities of each school. Neither the questions nor the answer categories were predetermined as the categories were determined after the data were generated. I also utilised open questions which allowed the children the freedom to choose what they shared with me and when or how they shared it. This flexibility also allowed conversations to occur at any time when incidents occurred relating to the experiences and socialisation of children with SEND while giving children control over interviews allowed me to gather data which was hidden, unanticipated, and unexpected in its full subjective reality.

Participant observation

I also used participant observation to gather data about participants' experiences and socialisation (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana 2014; Peticca-Harris, deGama, and Elias 2016; Roulet et al. 2017; Tedlock 2000). I began by observing the children whom the teachers identified as having SEND. Participant observation can provide access to behaviour or organisations, or parts of organisations, which would otherwise remain inaccessible. However, gaining and maintaining access to such organisations is often a challenging task because the guardians of the organisations may try to control the level of access allowed (Miles, Huberman, and Saldana 2014; Peticca-Harris, deGama, and Elias 2016; Roulet et al. 2017; Tedlock 2000). Overt Participant Observation involves the researcher being open with the group he/she is studying (Shah 2017) as this allows the aims of study to be shared intimately with the participants. While I shared the study I was mindful of how I shared with my adult participants and the children. Epstein (1998, 34) suggestion about children really understand what research is or what a researcher does guided how I talked about my study with children.

I participated in every aspect of mainstream primary education at both schools. For example, I had lunch in the communal teachers' room and became a member of both schools' public interface group. Fully participating the daily activities of the two schools allowed me to better understand the experiences of children from the perspective of school and society. During discussion with parents in this group, two parents questioned the support I was providing to children with SEND who they perceived as not being the priority for support. These parents wanted me to support the children without identified SEND who they felt were likely to excel at the National Grade Six Assessment and, therefore, need to be given priority support. Being deeply woven into the mainstream schools allowed me to understand the discourses, discursive fields and practices which shaped the experiences of children with SEND in the two participating schools. I felt the frustration of the mainstream teachers and witnessed the experiences and socialisation of the children with SEND directly within the social milieu in which they occurred.

As I participated in the discourses, I became so embedded in the subjectivities that sometimes the meanings became overwhelming for me. There were cases where I felt so emotionally overwhelmed and vulnerable that I took short walks to reassure myself that I was a researcher in the field. I was extremely overwhelmed when I observed children with SEND being abused racially by their class teacher. Being overwhelmed by the experiences of children with SEND led to me almost losing faith as a researcher. It was challenging being a part of the schools because I became aware of other practices that made children with SEND more vulnerable and at times unsafe.

Participants

The population for this study was the 2018 cohort of pupils and their mainstream teachers at Saints and Angel Primary schools (the names of the schools and participants are pseudonyms) in Region 5 – Mahaica-Berbice, is a rural administrative region. Both schools are ‘B’ Grade primary schools located in the centre of the community they serve, with over 500 children in each. Similarly, the buildings are both used by their communities to transmit and celebrate their different cultures e.g. community days, public talks and community outreach programmes. Neither school has a SEND policy or framework. Both schools pursue high academic performance at the National Grade Six Assessment, and both did exceptionally well on their school assessments. Neither school failed in any areas assessed on the School Improvement Assessment but, there was no component of the evaluation, which focused on SEND.

Saints Primary School shares its compound with the local church while Angel Primary School has its own compound. The community in Angel Primary School provides more academic support for children from low-income families. The school and the community are more inclined to celebrate student’s achievement at Angel Primary School and have far greater financial resources. The children at Saints Primary School are more athletic and excel in sports, poetry, drama and music. The teachers at Angel Primary School enjoy considerable freedom and independence within their classrooms, while at Saints Primary, the teachers are more likely to be monitored and supervised by the senior leadership team and their children tend to pose much more of a challenge to manage. The teachers there seem more resilient and resourceful in dealing with challenging behaviours than their colleagues at Angel Primary School. At Saints Primary School, there are more teacher-made instructional resources, while at Angel Primary School there are more ICT resources and commercially produced instructional materials. There is also a local library in the community of Angel Primary School and the churches, while influential, are more separate from school life.

Pupils with SEND in Grade Three to Six classes of the two mainstream primary schools were the target population. The pupils’ ages ranged from six to twelve years old. The children comprised of Amerindians, East Indians, Africans, and Mixed Races, which reflected the diversity of children in the two mainstream primary schools. Some of the children with SEND lived in extremely impoverished conditions. The population also included forty-four mainstream teachers from the two primary schools.

While the population under study consisted of the children and their teachers in two primary schools, the primary focus was on children with SEND. Hence, at the outset, the participants came from the group of children with SEND. As my study progressed, however, two (2) children without identified SEND who played significant roles in shaping some of the experiences of children with SEND were included. They directly contributed to the knowledge constructed, and the meanings interpreted from the socialisation and experiences of children with SEND. The teachers from the two schools all fulfilled the characteristics required for participants because they were mainstream teachers at the two schools and all had children with SEND placed in their classes.

Children were identified and selected to participate because I observed that they were knowledgeable about and had subjective experiences in the phenomenon of interest (Cresswell and Plano-Clark 2011; Etikan and Bala 2017; Palinkas et al. 2016; Halej 2017). I first acquired a list of children with SEND from each class from participating

schools. I used the list in addition to my observations and theoretical sampling to select children who could potentially participate in my study. While participants were selected, they were made aware of my study and the issue to be discussed. They were told that they were free to choose whether to participate or not.

Initially, I had intended to include thirty children with SEND and their mainstream teachers from the two schools. However, thirty-eight children were included; thirty-six with identified SEND and two without identified SEND who shared similar relational elements in the experiences of children with SEND in the two schools. In ethnographic studies, situatedness of experiences not planned for is revealed in complexities (Corte and Irwin 2017; Rodgers 2007). 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 SEND. I, therefore, 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 (2005). Theoretical sampling guided me to seek out additional data sources to clarify the situated meanings of the children with SEND who had already been interviewed. The selection included children with the following impairments/disorders:

- (1) Speech Impairment – Mute
- (2) Learning Disabilities / Learning Challenges
- (3) Emotional Behaviour Disorder
- (4) Dyslexia
- (5) Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)
- (6) Intellectual Disabilities
- (7) Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- (8) Exceptional Intelligence / Giftedness – Exceptional / Giftedness
- (9) Dysgraphia
- (10) Down's Syndrome
- (11) Not known

Establishing trustworthiness in research

I embraced the subjectivities presented because of the nature of my study as the first step to develop trustworthiness in my research. To be accepted as trustworthy, qualitative researchers are required to demonstrate that the research is conducted rigorously and methodically and that data analysis has been conducted in a precise, consistent, and exhaustive manner through recording, systematising, and disclosing the methods of analysis with enough detail to enable the reader to determine whether the process is credible. In this regard, I have been open and made clear each phase of the research. I systematically outline each step taken and modified through negotiation with the participants in the field. I aim to present the interpretive meaning of the statements of the participants about their lived experiences. I used situational and positional maps to triangulate conditions, relations and positions in the situatedness of the statements by the children, their teachers, parents and my observations (Table 1).

This research reflects the experiences of children with SEND in two mainstream primary schools. These children revealed their lived experiences and these are reflected in this paper with an audit trail for each step of data analysis. The data analysis

Table 1. Trustworthiness criteria of research design.

Conventional tests	Naturalistic criteria	Tactic(s) in this study	Example/descriptor applicable to present study	Phase in research
Construct Validity	Credibility	Use multiple sources of evidence	Methods: Audio recording, Unstructured interviews, Focus group discussions, participant observation Informants: mainstream teachers; children with SEND, Children without SEND, Parents.	Data collection
		Establish a chain of evidence	Collecting and offering sufficient evidence to enable readers to make a judgement on the merit of analysis and interpretation. Showing extracts of situational maps (Clarke 2005)	Data collection
		Have (i) discussions on statements with participants; (ii) key informants review transcripts and maps	Research Participants Research supervisor Director of Studies	Data collection Data Analysis Report Composition
Internal Validity	Credibility	Situational Maps	<i>Decentring the knowing subject</i> (Foucault [1963] 1975). <i>Mapping all the elements in the situation.</i> <i>Embrace researcher's subjectivities.</i> <i>The openness of data analysis.</i>	Data Analysis
		Relational Maps	<i>Mapping relationality, positionality and situatedness in the conditions and elements of the statements.</i>	Data Analysis
		Presenting Negatives	<i>Examination of negative cases for possible contribution.</i> <i>Showing the differences and negatives in the data set.</i>	Data Analysis
External Validity	Transferability	Use of theory	<i>From a critical review of the literature</i> <i>Using collectives of situations to formulate sensitising concepts and substantive theories.</i> <i>Provide a deep and thick explanation of the situation.</i> <i>Context-specific descriptions in maps.</i>	Research design / Conclusion
Reliability	Dependability	Use Data Collection Protocol	<i>Documenting and keeping a full record of procedures and rules for carrying out data collection.</i>	Data Collection
		Develop data database	<i>Keeping a full record of evidence collected / actual database for inspection by a third party e.g. Dated audio transcripts, notes of interviews, reflective journal</i>	Data Collection & Analysis
		Maintaining Data Analysis Records	<i>Keeping a full record of evidence of analysing data cartographically.</i> <i>Reveal maps in analysis and building sensitising concepts</i>	Data Analysis
	Conformability	Checking Method Approach	<i>Data is 'objectively' documented to check whether findings, inferences etc. are grounded in the data</i>	Audit of study
		Openness The Social	<i>Reveal the salient discourses within the situation of inquiry</i> <i>Reveal the complexities of situations as the basis of social life.</i>	Data Analysis, Audit of study Data Analysis, Audit of study

(Continued)

Table 1. Continued.

Conventional tests	Naturalistic criteria	Tactic(s) in this study	Example/descriptor applicable to present study	Phase in research
	Reflexivity	Research Design	<i>Be more reflexive and consider research design from the onset of the project to the conclusion of the project.</i>	Audit of study

Source: Adapted from Yin (2014, 45–49) and Lincoln and Guba (1985, 289–331).

process has been both exhaustive and rigorous to ensure that the stated interpretive meanings are dependable.

Data analysis

The data gathered were analysed through the development of situational and relational maps, analysis and interpretation. Situational analysis at the commencement of this study in 2017 was focused on the postmodern era. By the time I started writing this paper in 2019, it was referred to as the interpretive era (see Clarke, Frieze, and Washburn 2018; Whisker 2018). Situational analysis is a growing advanced approach to doing qualitative grounded theory research which is flexible and adaptive. The flexibility and adaptive features of situational analysis were capitalised upon in this study. It facilitated analysing data in an openly thorough and interpretive manner. Children with SEND were told the limits to which they can achieve and participate in mainstream education. This constituted a form of exploitation because any valuable contributions made by children with SEND were not acknowledged and recognised with the same significance as their peers without SEND. Children with SEND challenges were used as forms of humiliation. This paved the path of my focus after exploring the first set of data gathered, which led to theoretical sampling in both schools around the struggles of children with SEND.

The critical analytic goal of situational analysis is to understand the situatedness and relations of action and interaction in the phenomenon of interest (Mayer 2015; Miles and Singal 2010; Pohlmann and Colell 2017). The conditions, subjectivities and situatedness of the experiences of the children with SEND were in the experiences provided and were analysed as they existed. Everything in the situation makes and affects it while, at the same time, situations are also constructed and are unstable. The empirical world is constructed around situations, and situational analysis places both action and conditions inside the situation and demands analysis of the situation as a whole (Clarke 2005; Pohlmann and Colell 2017).

Situations are complex and are also particular configurations of conditions, temporal, geographical, interactional, sentimental and material. They are constructed through discourse (Foucault 1980). My analysis focused on understanding the discourses through which the participants formed their subjectivities. Foucault decentred the knowing subject to focus instead on the social as discursive practices and extant discourses as elements of practice that are constitutive of subjectivities (Clarke 2005; Foucault [1963] 1975). Drawing on a Foucauldian approach to the study of the experiences of children with SEND allowed me to establish a more in-depth analysis of the discourses constitutive of subjectivities on offer in understanding the experiences of these children.

Situational Map 1: Participation for Children with SEND in mainstream schools

Individual Human Elements/Actors <i>Individual children</i> <i>Parents</i> <i>Teachers</i> <i>Religious Leaders</i> <i>Head teachers</i> <i>Education Officers</i> <i>Government officials</i> <i>PTA executives</i> <i>School Cleaners</i>	Non Human Elements/Actants <i>School</i> <i>Home</i> <i>Training college</i> <i>Church/Mosque/Temple</i> <i>Playground</i> <i>Canteens</i> <i>School Gate Shops</i> <i>Cemetery</i>
Collective Human Elements/Actors <i>Teachers</i> <i>Parents</i> <i>Religious Organisations visiting schools</i> <i>Parent Teacher Association</i>	Implicated/Silent Actors/Actants <i>Children with SEND</i> <i>Some Teacher perspectives</i> <i>Children's voices</i> <i>Abused children</i>
Discursive Constructions of individual and/or collective Human Actors <i>Tiered Level of acceptance in social setting controlled by children without SEND.</i> <i>Children with SEND as not supposed to achieved tier 4 level of socialisation</i>	Discursive Construction of non-human Actants <i>Social Inclusion Practices and Policies established by the Ministry of Social Cohesion</i> <i>Government expectations from mainstream placement of children with SEND</i>
Political Economic Elements <i>National Division in Parliament</i> <i>National Practices of Exclusion</i> <i>International Sanctions – Insufficient</i> <i>Achieving Sustainable Development Goals</i>	Sociocultural/Symbolic Elements <i>Disability is deviant</i> <i>Segregation</i> <i>Cultural Hierarchical Structures</i>
Temporal Elements <i>Family shaming in society because of impairments</i> <i>Caging disabled children highlighted on national news media.</i> <i>Bullying in schools</i>	Spatial Elements <i>Variation in inclusion practices within school districts</i>
Major Issues/Debates usually contested <i>Socialisation/Participation</i>	Related discourses <i>Religion</i>
Other Kinds of Elements <i>Family resources</i>	

The major struggles of children with SEND are reflected in the map which I put forward below.

Positional Map 1: Stay in your lane

Achievement Lanes						
	Low			Middle		
	High					
Religious lanes With sin	Mainstream school is your judge and crucifier					Contradictory position – to achieve and be ‘bad’
		Available position for student with SEND				
Without sin – good						
	Contradictory position to fail but be ‘good’					The higher achievers are also good? Without sin?

The on the upper left are the lanes available for pupils with SEND. Also difficult to adopt contrary positions within the discourse as a 'good' person but struggling to achieve or conversely a high achiever in some area but labelled as 'bad' in some respect. The high achieving + good person option totally unavailable to children with SEND. It demonstrates a conflation of good – as being marked by not having an impairment. Impairment is punishment. The goal of situational analysis is to critically analyse to produce distinctive analytic understandings, interpretations, and representations of a particular social phenomenon. Overall, I believe I have produced a distinctive analytic understandings, interpretations, and representations of the meaning of the experiences of the children with SEND in the two schools I have studied.

Ethical considerations

It is the researcher's responsibility to ensure ethical responsibility in all stages of any research. My study involved participants who were extremely vulnerable. It was particularly important to approach the research with sensitivity and with care. Guyana is a very small country with a population of approximately 740,000 (Bureau of Statistics, Government of Guyana 2018). The two schools studied are located in small tightly knit communities, which made preserving total anonymity very challenging or almost impossible even with the use of pseudonyms. I explained the possibility of being recognised in publications resulting from my study to the teachers and the parents of the children. However, I made stringent efforts to safeguard the identity of all participants. I took precautions to protect the safety of children and their integrity in their learning environment. I told all participants of their rights to withdraw from my study at any stage. In addition, I informed them that they could request to have their contributions omitted from my study.

I ensured that my research complied with BERA (2014) and with articles 16–21 (Children, Vulnerable Young People and Vulnerable Adults) with additional emphasis on Articles 3 and 12 from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 3 states that in all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child need to be the primary consideration. Article 12 states that children who are capable of forming their views need to be granted the right to express their opinions freely in all matters affecting them, commensurate with their age and maturity. All the children with SEND who participated in this study were allowed to form their opinions about their experiences within mainstream primary schools and to express these views freely in all matters affecting them. Teachers' participation in the focus group sessions was voluntary. They were made aware of the study and the topic or issue to be discussed at the beginning of each focus group discussions.

BERA (2014), states that before the commencement of any study/primary research, one needs to get the consent/permission from the target sample of the population. In terms of BERA's consent /permission, I first sought permission then received approval from the Ministry of Education in Guyana, university's ethics committee and consent from participants. The BERA guidelines also state that children should be facilitated to give informed consent. Informed consent is more than a form or requirement in research, it is a process. Information need to be presented to participants so that they can voluntarily decide whether or not to participate in research (Nusbaum et al. 2017).

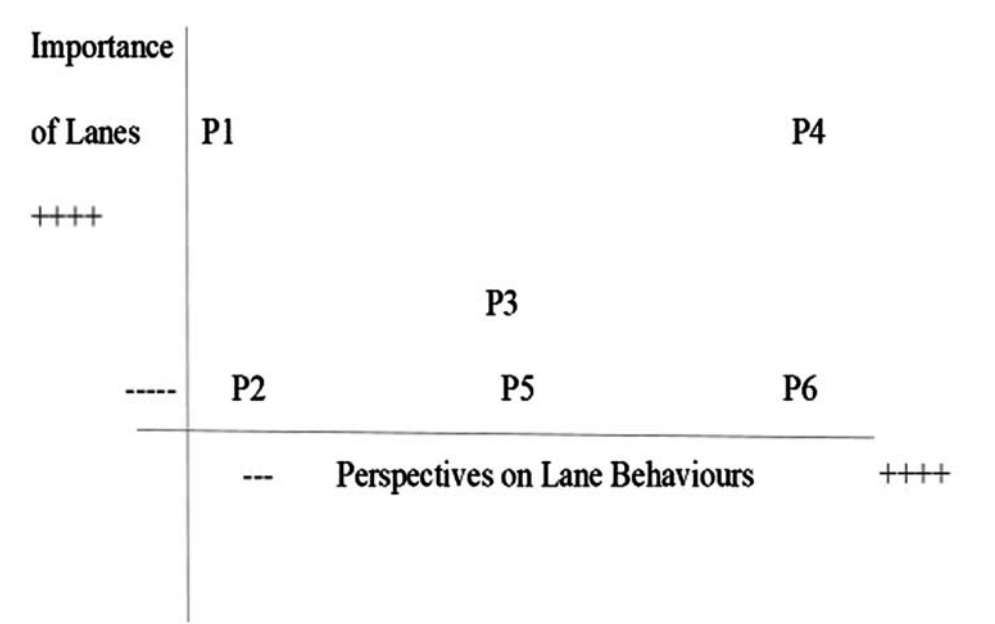
I gave all participants information that was, as far as possible, simple to understand, so that they could voluntarily decide whether or not to participate in the research. While the informed consent process is prospective and takes place before any research activity, consent was also an ongoing process between the participants and me for the duration of my study.

Further, I had an ongoing informal programme to check participants understanding of vocabulary during the interview process. I made it clear that they could say anything they liked and that I would tell other people about it, but without revealing who they were, e.g. by naming them. I judiciously noted the willingness and the behaviours of the children who participated. I was observant of the non-verbal cues such as body language and facial expressions. I also observed how the children individually approached me to share their experiences. An ethical code was established between the school and me. The established ethical code started with parental consent being obtained before any interactions commenced with the children. For the children who were unable to read the consent form, I read it to them and allowed them to give verbal consent which was audio recorded. When I interviewed the children, I continuously checked that they were still willing to participate.

Analysis, interpretation and discussion

Understanding lane marking behaviours

Positional Map 2: Perspectives on Lanes in Mainstream Schools



P1 = Teachers – Lanes are demarcated in schools to keep are in check. Staying in your lane is a sign of discipline and respect (position held by teachers and mainstream education hierarchy).

P2 = Teachers – Lanes maintain order in school and society. Children with SEND should stay in their assigned lanes especially in mainstream school. It will maintain school culture and order (position held by head teachers, parents and some parents).

P3 = Lanes are for safety. Lanes keep everyone in their respective positions. Stepping out of your assigned lanes is dangerous and could lead to consequences. God ordained lanes (position held by head teachers, parents, some parents, PTA, religious stakeholders).

P4 = Lanes are not required for the participating in mainstream school experiences. What is required is support and recognising that impairment does not disable someone. It does not mean they should be subjected to a lesser lane (position not held).

P5 = Children with SEND – Lanes are unfair. Lane marking behaviours are discriminatory practices and are done to directly exclude children with SEND. Lanes remind us that we do not belong. We are unwanted.

P6 = Children without SEND – Disabled children do belong in mainstream schools. They belong in special school. Special Schools and hospitals are their correct placement lanes. On motorways, lanes are marked and a car's position in them is regulated by law and custom. In schools, there is no physical demarcation to show lanes for different groups of children and, indeed, teachers, but their places in the hierarchy are, nevertheless, regulated. To help understand lane-marking behaviours, I share an observation of lane-guarding through the experiences of an Indo-Guyanese boy, Ramesh. Ramesh, who has SEND, was in Grade Four at Angel Primary School. He was a playful nine-year-old boy who was capitalising on the absence of supervision while the teacher was out of the classroom during the afternoon session of school. Ramesh was exhibiting mild forms of inappropriate behaviour. While observing the session, I noticed, the Grade Four teacher, Mr Stephen, who is an Indo-Guyanese male, returning to his classroom from the head teacher's, Mrs Faith's office, seemingly upset. Other teachers I spoke to after the incident stated that the head teacher, Mrs Faith, had reprimanded him for not having lesson plans and for stepping out of his lane by disregarding educational policies. He had been reminded to *stay in his lane* by Mrs Faith. Mr Stephen, upon seeing Ramesh, and without investigating or taking the time to observe or find out what was happening, shouted at him loudly and aggressively, (Ramesh) 'Hello! You are stupid! Why are you behaving like a monkey?' This was Mr Stephen's response to Ramesh's inappropriate behaviour. And, if Mr Stephen, the teacher, was trying to render the lanes more porous being insensitive to the student Ramesh, who has SEND, was reinforcing the rigid lane divide.

It appeared to me that Mr Stephen was experiencing negative emotions after his interaction with Mrs Faith. Several researchers (see Denham et al. 2003; Pianta et al. 2005; Swartz and McElwain 2012) have shown that high-quality teacher-child interactions, particularly concerning teacher sensitivity, contribute to children's social-emotional competence. I believed that Mr Stephen was experiencing subordinated emotions of inadequacy created by Mrs Faith's response to his unpreparedness and reprimand in the presence of other teachers. Mrs Faith's public reprimand appeared to have challenged Mr Stephen's image as a competent teacher before his colleagues. Likewise, Ramesh's behaviour also

challenged his self-image as a teacher. In an attempt to reaffirm his sense of self as competent, he shouted at Ramesh, thus, passing his challenged self-image and negative emotions onto Ramesh, who appeared to have stepped out of his lane, just as the teacher himself had been accused of doing.

As I reflect more on the occurrence that unfolded before me, I saw a cycle of events. Mr Stephens has just been reprimanded and he then picks on Ramesh and insults him. This is totally unprovoked and suggests that some sort of distortion process is going on. This sort of psychological transference confused the children who then started self-blaming in their confused state. It also appeared to me that it's not only about staying in one's lane. Perhaps tangentially, it's also about a hierarchical culture that racialised and works its way down through the whole institution and the teachers are also part of this and placed within it. They offload their reprimands to the children.

The other children appeared terrified and remained silent after Mr Stephen's outburst towards Ramesh. In my analysis of the situation, he had verbally abused a child with SEND and possibly traumatised the child with his outburst. Some children, who thought it was comical, started teasing each other during recess calling each other 'Hello! You stupid!' while role-playing the teacher's behaviour. I asked some of the children about their feelings regarding the experience. They reported being fearful and frightened by Mr Stephen's outburst. Those with SEND appeared even more terrified because a child with SEND was the direct victim.

Amanda: I feel pain bad pain in my heart. Sometimes I want to die. I may kill myself, but then it won't help me. Will it? The teachers do bad things and are never wrong. Amanda stays out of their way.

I observed that children with SEND like Pam and Amanda avoided contact with teachers probably because they did not want to have similar experiences to Ramesh. They appeared to be trying hard to ensure that their behaviours would not upset the teachers. Ramesh said to me that if he had stayed in his lane, the incident would not have happened and, apparently, blamed himself for Mr Stephen's behaviour.

Ramesh: Mr Lashley, if I had stayed in my corner, Mr. Stephen would not have shouted on me. I did not stay in my corner and that is why he shouted at me.

These children oppressively implicated themselves for their teacher's actions and, as Cisney and Morar (2015) and Foucault ([1963] 1975, [1975] 1977) suggest, individuals are frequently complicit in their own oppression. Causal attributions provide insights into why victimisation is related to emotional pain. Attribution theory assumes that when individuals confront a negative experience, they try to understand why it happened, and their subjective interpretations, in turn, account for their emotional reactions (Weiner 1986 as cited in Schacter and Juvonen 2015). Amanda and Pam were among the Grade Four children. They explained to me that they tried to understand why Mr Stephen reacted negatively to Ramesh's behaviour. In their interpretations, they equated Mr Stephen's action to that of victimisation and bullying.

Pam: Sir is always a bully. I am sometimes scared of him. Have you seen how he makes his face when he is angry?

Amanda: Amanda is very afraid of the teacher. He is a bad man.

Ramesh's classmates thought that Mr Stephen's actions were harmful and undesirable. They blamed themselves for causing it. Ramesh also blamed himself for being victimised by saying that if he had stayed in his lane, Mr Stephen would have acted differently. I tried to understand why the children were blaming themselves and avoiding direct interactions with teachers. I could not fully understand their internal analysis of the incident, but I understood that they blamed themselves. As such, this is likely to have caused these children considerable distress as self-blaming is emotionally painful and leads to more maladaptive forms of self-blame (Schacter and Juvonen 2015; Ttofi and Farrington 2011). In addition, characterological self-blame has been associated with low self-worth and depressive symptoms, as well as risk for future victimisation (Schacter et al. 2014). Ramesh described feelings of worthlessness. It was in this moment that I reflected on whether I had stepped out of my lane as a researcher and would be forced back into it by the school's administration. In fact, shortly after this, I was told to stay in my lane by Miss Ram. Miss Ram stated that I was no longer a teacher. I was above that identity and so I need to act above it and to not worry about the classroom practices of teachers or the experiences of the children. Miss Ram wanted to inscribe a fixed identity upon me through her perception of my embodied identities.

This incident also reminded of an experience I had almost ten years ago when I was teaching remedial Mathematics to my Grade Six class during a period which was timetabled for Spanish. I did not know Spanish, and my class was weak in Mathematics so I thought I was acting in the best interests of my class to work on their Mathematics, but I was told to play a Spanish video or something related to Spanish during the period. I was told that I did not have the authority to make the change I did, in other words I had not stayed in my lane. Being told to 'stay in your lane' within mainstream schools in Guyana is not a new phenomenon. It is normalised.

Calling a child 'a monkey' or 'stupid' is verbally abusive, victimising, and as evident in the child's statement, it gave rise to characterological self-blame. Graham et al. (2009) found that students exhibited more characterological self-blame when they were victimised in schools by someone of the same ethnicity. Ramesh is of the same ethnicity as Mr Stephen and also the same ethnicity of a significant proportion of the student population of the school. My analysis of the incident suggests that Mr Stephen inscribed Ramesh in a discourse which is constitutive of practices that induced feelings of alienation at school because of having impairment. The discourse deployed by Mr Stephen constrained Ramesh to the subordinate lane which he had previously departed. He was then made to feel more like an outsider by Mr Stephen who shared the same ethnicity as him, and he blamed himself for being responsible for his alienation by not staying in his lane.

Raz, Shadach, and Levy (2018) indicated that behavioural self-blame might cause mental distress, which increases the severity of post-traumatic stress disorder. I asked Ramesh, 'What is your lane?' He remarked, 'My lane is to behave like a good child and try not to upset the teachers.' Ramesh's response suggests that Ramesh felt guilty for not displaying the behaviour the teacher characterised as good. I further asked, 'Do you think you are a bad child?' He answered, 'I do not think I am bad, but I must be because I am disabled', which illustrates a profound level of self-blaming. I asked again what his lane was. He said with tears, 'Disability children lane.' At that moment, I understood the lane. I also realised that by asking the question, 'What is your lane?'

twice, I had reinforced the lane expectation, which made the child cry. I felt saddened that I had inflicted a further negative emotional experience on a vulnerable child.

Teachers exert power through various networks, systems (rules and regulations) and structures on children's perception of themselves and their experiences in school. Power operates in a net-like organisation and is exercised from multiple points (Foucault [1963] 1975, [1975] 1977, 1980). There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of the discourses of truth which operates through, and on the basis of, this association. We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truths (Foucault 1980, 93). The discourses that children with are exposed to produces the truths they believe. Power and knowledge are joined to effectively produce the subject (Foucault 1976). In the schools under study, with SEND seemed to believe that having impairment restricts them to an inferior lane where they need to remain. They also seem to believe that teachers, by virtue of their power and knowledge, are just in terms of maintaining the negative lane experiences. These lane experiences in schools create a child's perception of their world and their value in that world. Experiences also influence individuals and collective social perception of their value (Chapman and Adams 2002; Mallon 2017; Selchow 2017; Wolfensberger 1972). Children with SEND accept their subordinated, subjected experiences and value on a daily basis. These experiences are terrifying daily ordeals for them, leading them to be terrified children.

The key issue that I have observed in the schools was the way some teachers depersonalised children with SEND. Terrified children with SEND and teachers' depersonalising attitudes, were likely to have caused negative emotions such as helplessness and loneliness (Koenen et al. 2019). Children experience loneliness in a school of peers when they are not valued and are devalued by the attitudes and words of teachers who are supposed to be nurturing these children's development. Children also experience loneliness when they self-blame for anything negative that is happening around them (see Raz, Shadach, and Levy 2018; Schacter and Juvonen 2015). Teachers' depersonalisation of children with SEND and demands that they *stay in their lane* were clearly not nurturing. The children with SEND were bemused by their depersonalisation and felt powerless, and because of these experiences, it is easier for them to do the subordinated identity of children with SEND.

Valuelessness is a profound negative core feeling which manifests itself in the conscious and unconscious mind. It is so painful that we feel as if we are worthless. Valuelessness is closely linked to and tied to guilt. Feelings of valueness can stem from traumatic experiences in childhood. Some children with SEND in my research had experienced traumatic experiences, for example, Rawl, only had the full function of his right eye and also had learning disabilities. He was depersonalised by the words of his class teacher, Mr. Rohit, who told him that it was God's will that he stayed *in his lane*.

Rawl: My teacher said some of us are born to succeed and some of us are born to fail. If we are failing, we must accept that it is God's will for our lives and stay in our lane and he was referring to children with disabilities like me.

Rawl was so powerless that he felt he had no control over his own learning or chances of success. Mr. Rohit's comments seem to suggest that Rawl, himself, is 'deficient' and further suggest that the deficiency was within him. Mr Rohit, like many of his colleagues,

seemed to believe that children with SEND, like Rawl, with their presumed deficits, were hopeless, and that neither teachers nor the children themselves could mobilise to change their state, as this was decided by God. Other children with SEND have similar experiences which distorted their identity and self-value. Rawl blamed himself for being unwanted and being depersonalised by the teachers and children without SEND. The effect on a primary school child of being told it was God's will that you fail and that you need to walk in the lane of failure is likely to be highly damaging. Children stated that it was religiously horrifying since they attended church programmes and clubs in school which frame the regime of truth constitutive of the straight and narrow lane to God and Salvation. If you are not in the straight and narrow lane, which is the correct lane for salvation, you will face destruction. The teachers imbued children like Rawl, Amanda and Pam with the belief that they were born to be in the lane of deficit. The teachers firmly emphasised that it is the God who had created them and who had ordained this rather than locating the problem in the schools' culture and practices or the teachers' negative collective consciousness. Racism was also evident in Rawl's experience. Mr Rohit had acquired a reputation among children for deploying racist, sarcastic remarks. Kamenopoulou (2018a, 2018b) found that, in the global South, there were significant barriers to learning and socialisation created by poverty and social disadvantage such as racism.

Amanda: Nobody is helping Amanda. Nobody likes me. Everybody tells me I am a curse. I have accepted it, and I am staying in my corner out of their way.

Amanda internalised that she was a curse and that the curse was the reason she received negative treatment and experiences. Similarly, Pam thinks her disability was an affliction from God.

Pam: Yea. I am disabled, and I cannot walk. So I am expected to stay in my place. Accept my limitations and stay in my lane. Maybe is indeed God's will.

Many other children with SEND, namely Latchman, Ravi, Pooran, Shantie, Arif, Arifa, Bobby and Jonese, have accepted that they were to stay in their lanes because they had physical deficits and they did not have what was required to safely change lanes. As was described by Finkelstein and French (1993), Harpur (2012), Mitra (2006), Roush and Sharby (2011), Shakespeare (2014), Shakespeare, Iezzoni, and Groce (2009), some children with SEND continue to feel valueless. Some teachers seem unwilling to acknowledge the role they have played in affecting the mental well-being of vulnerable children and their perceptions of themselves. There seems to be no consideration of how their actions and depersonalising attitudes may affect the future self-image of these children as they interact in society outside mainstream school. The following excerpt from an interview with one of the teachers illustrates attitudes to children with send:

Miss Johnson: The experiences children with SEND have in my class are only negative because their expectations are beyond the reality of their capacity and what the school can provide.

The argument here seems to be that, because of their impairments, children with SEND could not expect a lot from mainstream schools and teachers. Like several other teachers, Miss Johnson believes that children with SEND have a lower capacity and

they need to accept the situated reality. They are unable to change lanes and overcome lane restrictions.

Miss Singh: I have seen Grade Six children with SEND cry about being bullied by peers, feeling humiliated by teachers, feeling frustrated and ignored and not accepted because they are just confused during learning experiences. The disabled children have more needs and sensitivities and do not know their place which creates some barriers to their learning experiences and socialisation in mainstream school.

Similarly, Miss Singh seemed to believe children with SEND had too many additional needs and did not know their places and, further, that the teachers need to ensure they accept such places. The teachers seem to be telling the children with SEND that the education system is not about opportunity for growth or even learning. As Foucault ([1963] 1975, [1975] 1977) argues, schools establish a disciplinary regime, in this case ensuring the children with SEND behave in a particular way in order that they slot into society and into the roles expected of them because of their deficits, in other words, that they stay in their lane. Miss Singh seems to be framing that the problems, challenges and barriers encountered by the children with SEND are the result of their limitations (Bingham et al. 2013; Braathen, Munthali, and Grut 2015; Bunbury 2019; Palmer and Harley 2012; Rees 2018) and that they are independent of the school environments. This implies that teachers cannot mitigate the students' difficulties in the classroom (Blustein 2012; Brittain 2004; Terzi 2004), so children with disabilities need to remain in their lanes.

Another aspect of teachers framing that the problems encountered by the children are constitutive of their limitations is that some teachers seemed to think that children were responsible for teachers' actions, which depersonalise them. Teachers often suggest that disabled pupils 'make them treat them in the ways that they do' – again attributing power to pupils that they do not have in the mainstream school environment. I argue here that teachers are just trying to escape taking responsibilities for their contribution to the powerless and undervalued nature of children with SEND in mainstream schools. Attributing illusory power to the children with SEND further implicate them for the experiences they endured. All my observations revealed that the power the teachers sometimes attribute to the children with SEND is the same power the daily deny children with from accessing in school. I have stated before how teachers marginalise children with SEND and in the marginalising experience attribute the power which created the barriers and marginalisation of the children with SEN/D. Miss Johnson and Miss Singh reemphasise how teachers implicate children with SEND in their oppression by attributing power to them with words when in the actual situation and experiences they directly prevent children with SEND from acquiring power.

Some teachers seemed to have other negative emotions towards children with SEND, which reduced teacher sensitivity in interactions with such students. Student alienation due to teacher depersonalisation can undermine teacher-student relationships (Stuhlmán and Pianta 2002 as cited in Koenen et al. 2019). This could also explain why children with SEND expressed opposition to mainstream teachers and why there was mistrust of some of their teachers. Students' mistrust for teachers indirectly hurts their socio-emotional and academic development (Becker et al. 2015; Keller et al. 2014; Roorda et al. 2011).

Teachers need to facilitate their students' learning and development of independence and autonomy. Initial teacher training in Guyana emphasises Erikson's (1950) theory of psychosocial development, which is taught in an entire module and is also integrated into several other modules at the teacher training college. Following Erikson, teachers are supposed to guide students in their development through the inevitable psychosocial conflicts they face. In relation to this, the children in the current study were located within stage four of their psychosocial development: 'industry versus inferiority'. According to Erikson, the basic strength of this stage is competence. The child who is ill-prepared or lacks the tools for learning from life's experience will experience despair. A successful resolution to these crises at this stage will require preparation at earlier stages. Erikson used the term 'inertia' (as in *inert*, or *passiveness*) to define the core pathology, the antithesis of competence. However, for most children, this is a period of relative calm, as it was in Freud's exposition (Erikson 1950). Inner conflicts (at around 9-11) give way to increased learning and mastery of the skills needed to succeed in later life (Erikson 1950). Through socialisation within mainstream schools, children could develop a sense of pride in their accomplishments and abilities. Teachers are expected to practice these principles in their classrooms and are expected to positively influence children by encouraging and complimenting children's efforts so that they can develop a feeling of competence, belief in their skills and themselves.

Practices in the classrooms of the two schools revealed that parents, teachers, and peers depersonalised children with SEND. Teachers seemed to help create many of the conflicts and crises children with SEND faced and did not assist by helping them to overcome these challenges. By being told to stay in your lane, students were probably discouraged and made to doubt their abilities to be successful. They were seldom praised or encouraged and this can be associated with the development of feelings of inferiority. The feelings of inferiority described by Rawl, Pam and Amanda, affected their daily lives in mainstream schools and is likely to have other negative implications on their learning and socialisation. For example, some researchers (Andreou, Didaskalou, and Vlachou 2015; Wang et al. 2014) have argued that feelings of inferiority can lead to loneliness and despair.

A social-constructivist perspective on teachers' emotions suggests that these are embedded and expressed in daily social interactions and relationships with specific others, including students (Spilt, Koomen, and Thijs 2011; Stroet, Opdenakker, and Minnaert 2013; Zembylas 2007). I observed teachers expressing negative emotions while they interacted with children. Some teachers noted that children with SEND were not always the direct cause of the negative emotions they expressed. Other stakeholders in education, such as parents and the Ministry of Education bear responsibility for these negative emotions. Some teachers presented themselves as powerless to include children with SEND because of resources scarcity. Resourcing learning is important but need not be dependent upon teachers' ability to finance from their personal budget.

Classroom discussion, 2018

Miss Johnson: I stopped spending my money since the last time the parent told me that if I think all children are intelligent like me. Some children are not meant to

learn. This was a parent of a child with SEND verbally abusing me on the streets on my way home from work, and the school's administration did nothing [**October 2018, Field notes**].

Miss Johnson: Parents and teachers need to acknowledge that sometimes that which we feel is negative is not always negative. We are all saying that the children with SEND feel marginalised and frustrated among other negative feelings. Negative feelings sometimes strengthen us and build our resilience. The children will benefit even if it is only a little in mainstream schools. So, despite their negative feelings, there is a rainbow beyond the rain [**October 2018, Field notes**].

Several other teachers shared the same sentiments. They seemed to think that negative feeling sometimes help in some way to produce stronger children with SEND. They seemed to feel that publicly depersonalising children with SEND was a useful practice to develop resilience.

Classroom discussion, 2018

Mrs Singh: I avoided Latchman in the corridor. He is just wasting time in school. He will be a farmer like his father. Since his mother committed suicide, he has just got weirder. I was happy when he completed Grade Five and he was no longer my problem.

Mrs Ram: I do not know why the boy Latchman does not wash his clothes properly. He upsets me. I had to tell him off in class. I hope by doing it publicly, it will make him change. The seasoning smell gave me an immediate headache when I entered the class. He does not learn anything and makes the class smell. He also affects the learning of other children, and the seasoning smell is just too much for them. I had to tell him off. He cried, but I was not concerned because he needs to know. I do not know if he did any work because I did not even want to touch his books.

These experiences are unlikely to contribute to the development of resilience rather enforce the principles of the untouchables. Children with SEND expressed conflicting and negative feelings and realities. During the course of our conversations, ten out of thirty-eight participants mentioned that they had considered suicide. All showed signs of negative emotions such as helplessness, valuelessness, low self-esteem, anger, hatred, loneliness or despair. Latchman, Holly and Ravi had considered suicide immediately after being publicly embarrassed by their mainstream class teacher. Also, Belie, Sabrina and Rosemary, as well as Amanda, often spoke of suicide during interviews. Mary and Tricia were also publicly humiliated as well, although their teachers were aware that they were sexually abused and also spoke of committing suicide. Indeed, while I was writing this paper, a child with SEND from one of my research schools, but not from my sample, committed suicide. While speaking to Latchman, I felt scared and uncertain and questioned my inability to recognise such experiences in my students while I was a senior mainstream teacher. My inability to recognise experiences like Latchman's was probably because I had shared the same perspectives as other teachers and I was staying in my lane as I was told to do.

Latchman's interview, 2018 – learning disabilities and social stigmas

- Researcher: Hello Latchman, I was searching for you. Can I sit beside you?
 Latchman: You want to sit with me, Mr Lashley? Nobody does want to sit me. [Would you like to sit with me, Mr Lashley? Nobody ever wants to sit with me.]
 Researcher: How are you feeling today?
 Latchman: The teacha bused me out. She cursed me out and told me how I stink up the place. She did have to do that in front of all dem children. Dem laugh me bad. [The teacher insulted me. She cursed me. She told me I smelled. They all laughed at me because the teacher insulted me publicly.]

Latchman's utterances clearly expressed loneliness and despair, revealing hurt and pain experienced at school at the hands of teachers.

- Researcher: What do you have there?
 Latchman: Mi trying to write. Maybe if I write dem insults gone done. [I am trying to write. Maybe if I write properly, I would not be insulted anymore.]
 Researcher: What insults?
 Latchman: Teacha insults. Children insults. People insults. Mi always gets insulted. Thomas uses to beat me up, and nobody listens to mi complains. Maybe, Mi born fu get insults. Mi miss mi mudda. When mi mudda been a living dem insults was not so bad. [Teacher's insults. Other children' insults. People's insults. I always get insulted. Thomas used to beat me. Nobody listens to me when I complain. Maybe I was born to be insulted. I miss my mother. When my mother was alive, I was not insulted so badly.]
 Researcher: Tell me more about your school experiences.
 Latchman: School neva good to me. Mi was always getting shame up. Nah, learn none. Smell stink. Teacha nah want mi in dem class and nobody mix with me. [School experiences are always bad for me. I am always embarrassed. I do not learn anything. I smell and stink. The teachers do not want me in their class, and nobody wants to socialise with me.]

An already vulnerable child was expressing that mainstream school was never a good place for him. This troubled me because I wondered if I had contributed such feelings upon children while I was a mainstream teacher with a limited understanding of SEND. I tried to take Latchman's mind off the negatives of mainstream school by playing a game with him. It was only brief because he immediately started to express that he was deeply scared and in despair that things would get worse.

- Researcher: I understand, let us play a game.
 Latchman: You want to play too.
 Researcher: Yes
 Latchman: Thanks, Sar.
 Researcher: Everything will be fine.
 Latchman: Nah sar. Nothin is nah going to be fine. Mi scared. Nobody will talk to me when you gone. [No, it will not be fine. I am scared. Nobody will talk to me when you not around.]

Latchman expressed that he was in turmoil at school. School seemed to be exacerbating his challenges while simultaneously stripping him of any confidence he had in his abilities to contribute to society. Latchman had not developed resilience instead he had developed despair. He seemed to have negatively internalised his valuelessness, which produced thoughts of self-harming and feelings of despair. With

regard to such feelings, Collinsa et al. (2017) argue that alienation due to teachers' depersonalisation of children can lead to problem behaviours in elementary schools. While socio-emotional and behavioural problems which are internalising problems are characterised by depressive, anxiety-like symptoms and social withdrawal (McMahon 1994 as cited in Pakarinen et al. 2018). Boyo, Akeen, Akon, Amanda, Junior Bob, Holly and Rawl received severe corporal punishment because they expressed oppositional behaviours. They, as well as other children with SEND, seemed to be directly and indirectly harmed whether they internalised or externalised socio-emotional and behavioural problems. It is worth noting here that the same teachers who constituted depersonalised identities on vulnerable children also administered corporal punishment. While some degree of corporal punishment is legal in Guyana, it must be administered by a senior teacher (heads, deputy heads, assistant heads, and year leaders) following strict protocol and be documented in the stated record form (misdemeanour book). I did not witness the protocols being followed while corporal punishment was administered. I witnessed it rendering the students terrified and traumatised.

Some teachers appeared to ignore the feelings expressed by children. The '*Stay in your lane*' practice was also sometimes extended to the children without SEND when they were considered to be acting out of character, which sometimes meant performing like a child with SEND. While the children were frustrated, it needs to be acknowledged that the teachers were also frustrated because of the demands created in a learning environment with limited support.

Mrs Archer (teacher): I do not listen to their feelings about their experiences. This is not because I do not care about their feelings but because I want to have a clear mind to provide experiences for these children. I feel negative emotions about teaching because of being unsupported and given limited resources. It is placing me in a challenging situation to deal with children who are challenged, and the environment further challenges them. All this challenge leads to frustration. I know these children feel frustrated and I am frustrated.

Several studies on the emotional health and well-being of young people have reported that behavioural disorders affect about 7 per cent of those aged 9–15 years and clinically diagnosed mental disorders affect 10 per cent of 5–16-year-olds (Ford, Goodman, and Meltzer 2003 as cited in Coombes et al. 2013). The emotional health and well-being of the children with SEND who participated in this study were found to be affected by their experiences in mainstream schools. This was evidenced in their isolation, and thoughts of self-harm or suicide.

Children who have emotional or behavioural problems are likely to have overlapping problems across different areas of their health and development (Coombes et al. 2013; Gillberg 2010; Minnis 2013; Pritchetta et al. 2014). I did not directly investigate overlapping problems facing children with SEND. However, I did observe overlapping problems with learning and socialisation among the thirty-eight participating children. I observed that they were deprived of meaningful school experiences not merely because of impairment, exceptionalities or having additional learning needs but because of negative emotional experiences exacerbated by their unsupported mainstream school placement.

A number of researchers (Ainscow and Sandill 2010; Ainscow and César 2006; Ainscow 2010; Ajodhia-Andrews and Frankel 2010; Barriga et al. 2017; Florian 2012; Singal 2016; Tomlinson 2017) have stated that there are too many children with SEND who are deprived of an education.

It seems reasonable to argue that restricting children with SEND to inferior lanes in the two mainstream primary schools studied framed the quality of their experiences and socialisation.

Macy: Mr Lashley, today I volunteered again to solve a problem in mathematics, and the teacher shot me down. Telling me, I know that you cannot do it. After two of her selected children failed, I begged for a chance, and I followed the steps, and I solved it correctly. The teacher did not celebrate my effort. She just said a disappointing 'Thanks Macy go back to your seat now'. I do not like her. She is a wicked witch, and she does not like me.

Macy wanted to be fully involved and demonstrated the ability to excel. She was also trying to initiate selection to be able to participate in learning experiences. She was directly ignored by the teacher who seemed to feel that she could not participate. Akeen shared a different experience but with similar sentiments.

Akeen: The teacher took away my play time to please her favourite pupil. I did not do anything wrong. Every time she turned and saw me, she had a negative remark to say like: 'It had to be you. Why do you not stay in your place? You always act out of your place. You never get it right do you?', and if I tried responding, she told me to be quiet saying I am insulting.

Whilst Akeen maintained his innocence, the teacher's response was inappropriate but also evident is her emotional distress. Her distress is part of a wider discourse on SEND and the inability of children with SEND to remain in a subordinate lane. The distress expressed by the teacher appeared contingent upon Akeen's behaviour but it was not. It was constitutive social and cultural practices of exclusion and social stratification which subordinate children with SEND which are allowed to continue and even normalised in the school. Akeen was denied his entitlement to recess by his teacher so that a child without SEND could benefit from their social superiority. He was silenced when trying to resist the oppression of the lane experience. Researchers and international organisations (see Barriga et al. 2017; Levin and Lockheed 1993; UNESCO 2009; UNICEF 2019–2030) reveal concerns about the poor quality of experiences, opportunities and teaching offered to children in many mainstream schools, particularly in developing countries. This study highlights that there are considerable concerns regarding the depersonalisation of children with SEND in the two primary schools studied. There is poor quality in the two schools as well but due to depersonalisation – the ideas for support are there but they need to be woven together and connected more effectively.

SEND and sin equated

Another discourse observed during my time in the schools was that the lane gate keeping is divinely inspired. This is because of the belief that sin is the cause of the disabilities and negative experiences of some children with SEND. In Rawls's statement about his teacher telling him that he must accept his impairment has God's will for his life highlights that

disability as sin. It points out that his deficit is not merely in his body in need amelioration as directed by the medical model of disability but more spiritual. Only God can ameliorate spiritual deficits. Teachers, parents and children have repeatedly echoed that only God can ameliorate spiritual deficits. It is a tacit belief. I argue that as a researcher and Guyanese educator, it would appear that we are not fighting simply a within child deficit here therefore we are fighting one that has been given by God. Who would anyone think they were to fight against the Will of God!

Joel: The school is very religious, and everything is sin or disrespectful. Teachers are always right, and children must know their places. Some people are better than others. Racism is a lot, and things are just not equal. My parents taught me to accept everyone for who they are. Why can teachers here not accept children for who they are?

Joel was inscribed in a religious discourse which subjugated all behaviours outside of the normalised ones as inappropriate or sinful. He also imbued with feelings that inequality and racism were normalised practices. Like Joel, Ceon recognised that identities are provisional. Both boys contested the assigned subordinated and dominant roles within their school. For example, Ceon talked of SEND as the result of accumulated sins and also equated the mainstream school to the cross where Jesus was crucified and perceived the mainstream teachers as his crucifiers.

Ceon: I did not do anything wrong. They crucified Jesus. This school is my crucifier. Let them do what they want. Tables do turn. They will come to me needing something when I grow up.

In volume one of *The History of Sexualities* Foucault talks about a magic circle being drawn around the figure of the leper and now Ceon talks about being crucified by the school which puts him on a cross like Jesus and also draws a magic circle around him like a leper. The leper circle makes him untouchable. I am arguing that this is a desperate situation. It is to be put out of the bounds of the human and is possibly the worst thing that schools do to disable pupils and they do it a lot. Joel statement above also highlights other factors like race, religion, inequalities, impairments and everything constituted as sin or disrespect which cause children to have a leper's circle drawn around them which led to their crucifixion.

Some parents also frame the lane divisions by treating their children with SEND as though they were responsible for their impairments and disabilities or as Joel and Ceon puts it their sins. This inscribed feelings of guilty in the children. From this framed discourse, impairment seems to be seen as evidence of sin and of the individual being inherently sinful. Joseph's feeling of hatred was constituted by the discursive practices which subordinated him at home and in the community.

Sally's son (Joseph): Mr Lashley, I wish my mother believed that I am valuable. She thinks that because I have a physical handicap, I have a lesser value than my sister. I am expected to accept my limitation. She says it is God's will. My sister uses this to get her way in everything. I do not hate her for it. It is my mom, and the community who made her that way.

Mrs McDonald, a parent, during one of her many self-initiated conversations with me, reminded me about the normalised division among the children with SEND and those

without SEND. Mrs McDonald seems to constrain children with SEND as docile subjects to be excluded by dominant and powerful subjects like herself, her son and the teachers. Further, she inscribed the teachers as agents of her power and constitutive practices and expectation of segregation in the classroom.

Mrs McDonald: My son is not to mix with them [children with SEND]. He knows his place. I am serious. I told the teachers not to allow my son to be burdened with helping those disabled children.

To avoid guilt and punishment, some children have learnt to act as though they accept their subordinated lane designation to get around their teachers' surveillance. While this may be effective in avoiding conflicts with the teachers, it fuels the lane discourse. For some children, the lanes are to be laughed at while others find them terrifying.

Joel: I sometimes do not answer the questions. It is deliberately done now to stay in my lane. The first time I failed was not deliberate.

I would argue that often laughing about something is a defence against hurt and anger. The phrase, '*If I didn't laugh, I would cry*' reflects this view. I am of the view that Joel might be experiencing the same anxieties and loneliness as the others, but he had developed a different strategy for coping with it.

Lanes and emotional experiences: anxieties and loneliness

Children with and without SEND, for example, Tom and Boyo endured varying lane-related emotional experiences like anxiety and nervousness. In addition, they seemed lonely and lost, as if they could not do what was demanded of them. It was evident in their interviews that they were unhappy, and also, that they did not want to be in mainstream school.

Boyo: Sure at least you want to talk. Nobody ever talks with me. They are always shouting or quarrelling at me and telling me how I will fail. Telling me how I am letting my mother down. I am always panicking.

Besides panicking about failing in the assessments, Boyo did not want to be isolated further. He described the loneliness as painful. Like Boyo, Tom experienced loneliness at its extreme.

Tom:	No one wants to be friends. I eat there by myself. I stay away from embarrassment.
Boyo, (<i>Crying behind the boys' washroom</i>):	Mr Lashley, I cannot do this anymore. I cannot do it. I cannot do this. It is too hard. I cannot do this work. It is just too confusing. I cannot understand any of it. I am always lost in class, and it hurts my head. I am embarrassing my mother. I cannot do. I cannot do it. The pressure is too much. The work is too complicated. I cannot do this. I want to learn, but I cannot learn. I was not made to learn.

Boyo believes that he was not made to learn because he believes that disability is something from God. God created him with disability. He echoed Mr Rohit's statement that God made some children with impairments, and they need to accept God's will for their lives. Other children with SEND echoed Boyo's feelings that 'I cannot do it'. Boyo,

Latchman and Ravi accepted the belief that they were made to suffer the experiences they were encountering. They accepted their perceived equated sin as making them lesser individuals. They also accepted that there are superior lanes of which they could not be a part. Thomas expressed power from his perceived superior condition relative to the children like Latchman, Ravi, Boyo and Tom in the inferior lane.

Thomas: I felt powerful. I felt good. I felt superior. I felt like I was regaining control of the school for the regular children who were here before the disabled children came.

Changing lanes

I pictured a prisoner looking through the bars of his cell, yearning for freedom. As a prisoner yearns to experience life on the outside once more, similarly, children with SEND are imprisoned in mainstream schools with invisible bars, forcing them to mentally stay in their lanes. Some yearn to change lanes, but this is not an easy task. There are many barriers to overcome. Overcoming the barriers does not permanently improve one's position. One can easily be subjugated to one's proper 'lane'.

Ravi: Do you think I can fit in? I want to be normal. Well, I am treated like I am not wanted or I am not of the same value as everyone else. The people in this village look at my father and me like if we are the village rejects. The teachers and children in the school treat me like the school reject. Plus, my father treats me like I am the one making things worse for us by failing at school.

Ravi did not think he could fit into the social structure of the mainstream school and be equally included in its discourses. He revealed that he was unwanted and rejected in society. He sees himself as untouchable and an outcast because like Cassy he was made to believe that discourse. He did not want to be in mainstream schools and watch from the side-lines of the lanes to which he was assigned. He wanted to be treated humanely and be recognised in the mainstream school discourses and practices, which he perceived as unfair. Cassy shared similar feelings, as is clear from the following extract:

Cassy: Cassy do not want to watch at all. Cassy always has to watch. Cassy never gets to do. It is not fair. This school is not fair. Nobody is fair. Mr Lashley is not fair.

Momentary escape

Researchers have indicated that, through stimulating and rich experiences, children with SEND can be active agents in mainstream schools and society (see Mallon 2017; Wolfensberger 1992, 1995a, 1995b, 1996; Wolfensberger and Glenn 1973; Wolfensberger and Tullman 1982). Like Ravi, Cassy, Arif and Arifa, other children with SEND yearned to escape the lane in which they were placed. There are two forms of momentary escape which the children can experience. However, Ravi, Latchman, Boyo, Cassy, Arif and Arifa, among others, were not allowed to be active agents and, for them, staying in their lane had been normalised.

The Normalisation principle (Mallon 2017; Wolfensberger 1992) can offer an escape for children with SEND since it proposes to treat the revealed voices of SEND children with recognition and respect. As was mentioned in the previous paragraph, there are two

forms of momentary escape for children with SEND. The first is through enhancement of their social image. For example, Arif and Arifa achieved this form of momentary escape by doing the Rangoli designs for Diwali celebrations at school. For the period of the celebration, Arif and Arifa were acknowledged and accepted because they could do something the other children could not do. However, after the week of celebration had passed, their valorised role was stripped from them and the moment of escape became a faded experience.

The second momentary escape comes when children with SEND individually make persistent efforts at reducing the barriers they face. Some children do this by demanding to be involved, respected and seen as fully human. However, the gatekeepers of the lanes quickly extinguish this by reminding them of their impairments and perceived limitations.

Amanda: I am demanding not to be treated like a class pet. I am demanding to be given work to do in school.

Here, I argue that Amanda is making a claim to personhood in the mainstream school. Through her demands, Amanda experienced a moment of escape. In contrast, some children who are intellectually capable but find school challenging because they have some kind of impairment which the teachers consider challenging; inappropriate and unmanageable do not find the escape. Akon was one of the children who was very intellectually gifted but found school non-stimulating and socially challenging. These children with SEND create their own enabling conditions and reduce the barriers they face by ignoring the tiers of acceptance and disregarding lane discourses.

Akon: The farmers are great teachers, the rice farmers over there. They are patient and teach you practically. I cannot learn the way things are taught in school. The teachers think I am a dunce and I have no future. They ignore me without care so keep me limited. I have found a bright future. It makes more money than teaching.

Akon found his escape, but it was not in mainstream school. He found his own enabling environment in the rice fields. Unfortunately, there are few children with SEND like Akon.

Akon: I talk about your work with the farmers. The farmer who was a teacher has a disabled son, and he teaches him at home like how he teaches me when I come to the fields. His son is intelligent. He can outsmart me.

Akon framed a different discourse with the farmers' support which inscribed the farmers as more inclusive agents than mainstream teachers. Akon was confident and he engaged me about my research and spoke about it with others. He also expressed opposition to the disciplinary regimes of the school in a similar way to his school mate Ceon. He contested the school's practices because he did not want to have the same negative experiences as other children with SEND.

Alicia: I have learnt that in everything there will be challenges and Saints Primary is just one of the challenges. I stay in the lane the teachers set, so I do not get into trouble. Every challenge must be conquered for you to grow. I conquer every time I represent the school and win. They have no choice but to accept that I am fantastic.

Alicia points out that children with SEND use the stay in your lane principles as a strategy to avoid being visible. Being visible with SEND gets you into trouble. Alicia also suggests a different, and dynamic, way of dealing with her challenges in a fractured mainstream school. It also suggests that even the children with exceptionalities find some of the socialisation tiers, process and practices as things which have to be conquered. Despite all the challenges encountered in the mainstream school, some children with SEND like Daniel still appreciate being there. They stated, as did other children with SEND, that they were inhibited by the negative attitudes and discourses.

Daniel: Yes I like coming to school because I get to run around and play. I do not like how some of the teachers behave. I am always afraid that they will shout on me or punish me. But at school I get to roam, and I wander about. I am not allowed to wander about at home.

All children need to be guided and supported in developing positive emotional health and well-being. This includes developing a definite sense of self, as well as the ability to cope with stressful situations, temper, emotional arousal, to overcome fears, and accept disappointments and frustrations (Coombes et al. 2013; Osofsky and Fitzgerald 2000). When children are subjected to daily depersonalisation and reminders to stay in their lanes, their emotional health and well-being is likely to be damaged.

Tiers of socialisation beyond moments of escape

According to the UNICEF Education Strategy (2019–2030), children with disabilities and other vulnerable children, such as those who are extremely poor, or from ethnic and linguistic minorities, suffer significant social marginalisation in low-income and ‘developing’ countries. This strategy covers over 150 countries, and Guyana is one of the developing countries included. UNICEF (2019–2030) also states that at least 175 million pre-primary school-age children and 262 million primary and secondary school-age children – one in five children – are not attending school globally. Moreover, primary school completion rates have not improved since 2009 and remain around 66%. In this situation, it is likely that children with disabilities are likely to be more vulnerable.

UNICEF (2019–2030) further states that there are significant disparities of access and learning associated with wealth, location, disability, mother tongue and ethnicity. Such inequities are reflected in the ongoing marginalisation of children with disabilities. As I have shown above, the schools I have investigated had implemented a stratified and tightly regulated system, which resulted in the marginalisation of children with SEND.

UNICEF (2019–2030) also emphasises that ethnicity is a variable in the socialisation of vulnerable children, without mentioning their educational and familial settings. However, other research suggests educational, religious and familial settings reproduce socioeconomic status (SES) via distinct socialisation patterns in their community contexts (Snell 2011). Research has consistently shown that pupils with SEND remain less accepted by, and may experience greater loneliness than, their non-SEND peers (Avramidis 2010; Koenen et al. 2019). This form of marginalisation in socialisation reproduces more inequality for children with SEND.

Avramidis (2010) and Koenen et al. (2019) argue that children with SEND are most likely to be identified on anti-social indicators. However, Avramidis (2010) also indicates

that children with SEND with the pro-social characteristics of leadership and sportsmanship were well-integrated into their peer groups. I observed some children with SEND, such as Quan, Devi, Alicia and Joel, who possessed pro-social characteristics, and succeeded up to level four on the tiers of socialisation mentioned earlier in the paper. On the other hand, Snell (2011) argues that spatially stratified patterns in youth socialisation result in vulnerable groups becoming particularly disadvantaged. Furthermore, it is well-established that systems of social inequality reproduce across generations (Reay 2018; Snell 2011). Prior to the 2018 cohort, other children with SEND experienced similar forms of social inequality in 2004–2010.

Friendships in school provide an important social mirror which can be used to validate a child's developing self-image (Banks, McCoy, and Frawley 2018; Gifford-Smith and Brownell 2003). Poor-quality friendships in school can negatively impact children social and emotional well-being (Banks, McCoy, and Frawley 2018; Perdue, Manzeske, and Estell 2009). Put simply, negative peer relations among children put them at extremely high risk of experiencing social exclusion as adults. As a result, positive peer experiences could be viewed as an educational outcome or a measure of a student's school engagement (McCoy and Banks 2012).

Like those of Avramidis (2010) and Koenen et al. (2019), this study suggests that those children with SEND who possessed what are considered to be significant skills are more likely to be allowed regulated access to full participation in mainstream primary schools. These children are less likely to face total rejection, barriers, discriminatory practices and other depersonalising behavioural practices. This goes a little beyond the moments of escape. I first realised this with Joel at Saints Primary School. Despite the teachers' perception of Joel's learning disability, he was celebrated among his peers. He was respected and acknowledged as valuable because he possessed excellent cricket skills among other talents. Joel's acceptance challenged the social order of the school while demonstrating the possibility of long moments of escape from the depersonalised lane for children with SEND.

In relation to this, Ceon, who was seen as the confident, but defiant, leader of the social group of boys who played cricket, declared that they did not concern themselves with this aspect of Joel's life. The group celebrated his skills without highlighting his impairment. In relation to this, Ceon stated 'It was not as if Joel was a "Mongol"'. 'He does not have a physical disability.' What is unique in this context is that this particular group of boys formed a tightly knit bond of friendship and Ceon and Joel's bond appeared to be unbreakable by any discourse or power at school or in the community. However, this form of acceptance is not wide-spread throughout the two schools and it is commonplace for Children with SEND face multiple socialisation and acceptance challenges because they are seen as different from the conventional norms.

The number of children with SEND placed in mainstream education has increased substantially in recent decades (Ferguson 2008; Vlachou, Stavroussi, and Didaskalou 2016). This is also true for the two schools under study. One-quarter of students with SEND have serious difficulties forming relationships with their peers in mainstream schools (see Avramidis 2010; Banks, McCoy, and Frawley 2018; Frostad and Pijl 2007; Koenen et al. 2019). At both schools, most children with SEND required support and guidance to form social relationships and bonds. These children told me that they were not given enabling support and guidance to develop meaningful relationships with their peers.

In relation to the above, many researchers (for example, Avramidis 2013; Hameed and Manzoor 2016; Koster et al., 2009; Reay 2018; Snell 2011) have argued that positive social interaction is essential to the full inclusion of children with SEND in mainstream education. This was evident in Joel and Ceon's social interaction at Saints and with Quan and Devi's at Angel, which involved supporting each other in challenging situations. Ceon and Joel lived in the same locality and shared the same friends in and out of school. Joel's classmates accepted him because he was a friend of Ceon, who was the class leader. Children's perception that their classmates accept them is also essential to the type and quality of experiences the children with SEND have in mainstream schools, which is critical for the social development and personal well-being of children with SEND.

Some researchers (see Koster et al. 2009; Maciver et al. 2018) have concluded that sometimes the support children with SEND need does not come from teachers or SEND specialists or critical workers, but rather from their peers. The support children can provide for each other to enhance experiences and socialisation, and provides a permanent escape from the relegated subordinate lanes. Some researchers (see Frederickson et al. 2004; Frederickson, Warren, and Turner 2005; Soriano, Watkins, and Ebersold 2017; Vlachou, Stavroussi, and Didaskalou 2016) argue that parents of children with SEND also recognise the placement of their child in mainstream school as a social advantage. Children with SEND need support to socialise and not depersonalised tiers that direct their socialisation into a lesser lane.

The importance of guidance and support for socialisation and the significance of the socialisation process itself for children with SEND can never be overemphasised. There are a number of complex barriers to socialisation in the two schools, which require fundamental changes in structures, attitudes, and values rather than simply guidance and support. Acceptance of children with SEND is a tiered process in both schools and children without SEND are often the controllers of the tiers of acceptance. The tiers include:

- • Tier 1: Non-acceptance, just tolerance because there is no other choice
- • Tier 2: Acceptance in the mainstream classes without socialising
- • Tier 3: Acceptance and minimal socialisation
- • Tier 4: Full Acceptance and complete socialisation

Tier 1: non-acceptance, just tolerance because there is no other choice

Children who have both physical and cognitive impairments are not socially accepted by their peers in the schools under study. Children without known SEND seem to consider the children with SEND who have both physical and cognitive impairments to be too difficult to be included in their daily social spheres. This was expressed by Thomas earlier in the paper. This finding is supported by research, which has found that disability is a leading cause of marginalisation in education (Groce and Bakhshi 2011; Singal 2016; Tomlinson 2017; UNESCO 2010). This often makes experiences of socialisation in mainstream schools unpleasant and lonely.

UNICEF (2019–2030) states that children with disabilities in Guyana and the Caribbean are less likely to attend or remain in mainstream schools. They have lower transition

and completion rates. They do not achieve the results as their peers without SEND (Caribbean Development Bank 2018; UNESCO 2017a, 2017b, 2017c, 2017d; UNICEF 2019–2030; WHO 2011). This is reflected in the experiences of Latchman, Holly, Amanda, Boyo and Ravi's who expressed the desire to quit school, as well as resonating with Junior, Bob and Akon's truancy, Nial's escapes from school and Bobby's feelings of being unable to cope with learning. This suggests that there is a strong possibility that they may not remain in school, achieve prime targets or transition effectively to the next level in education.

Tier 2: acceptance in the mainstream classes without socialising

In this tier, the children without SEND accept that children with SEND are placed in mainstream schools and they are recognised as part of the school. However, the children without SEND do not socialise or identify with them in anyway. At both schools, this was evident at social occasions like Culture Day, the Christmas social, concerts, Music Day and during daily recess. Latchman, Sabrina, Cassy, Ravi, Tom, Besham, Akeen, Amanda and Rawl spoke extensively of the experiences on this level of socialisation.

Extracts from separate interviews, 2018

- Tom: I am sad. No one wants to be a friend. It is like everyone does not like me. My father does not like me. The teachers do not like me. The children in my class do not like me.
- Tom: I do not like being by myself. It just hurt more, but no one never asks me why I am always by myself.
- Sabrina: Mi nah miss non at school. Nah like mi a learn anything deh. Dem teacha nah help me and dem picnie nah like me. [I am not missing out on anything at school. It is not as if I am learning anything. The teachers do not like me. The children do not like me either.]

I observed that children without SEND do not sit with any child with SEND in their learning groups. Even when mainstream teachers place children with SEND in specific learning groups, those without SEND do not interact with them and do not make any effort to have conversations or share activities. This suggests the social exclusion stance of children without SEND while parents of children with SEND also informed me that they had told their children to avoid interactions with children with SEND.

Mrs McDonald's extract; field notes 2018

My son is my pride and treasure. I buy everything he needs in school. I always support the schools through the PTA, fundraising, community outreach and anything they ask. My husband makes regular donations when he comes home from the gold fields. All I ask in return is that my son is given support by the teachers to continue to excel. He is brilliant and always does well in his assessments. He does not like sports though. Since the ministry started the new thing of bringing all children with disabilities in the schools, the teachers do not have enough time to focus on the brilliant children. My son's performance has started to decline. He often tells me that the teachers ask him to help teach the children with Special Education Needs as they call them. I told him that it is not his job. He is to focus on his work alone. He is not to mix.¹ He knows I am serious because I told the teachers not to allow my son to be burdened with that. If he must continue helping, I could put him in private school.

We can afford it. The donations my husband gives this school could pay the private school fees.

Mrs McDonald held a constant gaze on the teachers and the discursive practices in the school. She was inscribed in many powerful positions through the PTA and her production of wealth for the school. She used the acquired power to code her subjective expectations as the normalised expectation of school. However, her actions were contingent on the support she acquired in the school. The needed support Mrs McDonald mobilised effortlessly with her powerful identity. Mrs McDonald was not the only parent who told me that she disagrees with inclusion and feels it is damaging their children's education. One parent verbally stated his dissatisfaction with the placement of children with impairments in the National Grade Six Assessment Class and blamed me for supporting the placement.

Elbert's extract; field notes 2018

I need my girl child to do well in her Common Entrance Examination.² This school used to do so well at Common Entrance. Lidon you were a top student of this school. Your mother was a top student too. Lidon, you used to teach Common Entrance class very long. You were good at it also. Your children used to do very well. You used to encourage them to work hard, and we as parents believed in you. Now you come back and instead of helping the school do well again, all you are doing is supporting them with this disability placement thing now. Everything is Special Education Needs now. Lidon, you are not disabled. I expect you to understand. Lidon, you have your little brother coming up in year five. Don't you want him to do well like you, your mother and all the children you taught? Stop this nonsense and leave the Special Education thing alone. Help the school to get better results at the Common Entrance again.

Everybody not bright like you and passing Common Entrance is their chance. Lidon I was happy when I hear you are back at the school. First, I thought you left the University of Guyana work and came back to help your community. It is like you changed. First, you were all about doing well, and now you are about disability. If you are not helping the children pass the common entrance, go back to England or University of Guyana. All I want to hear is you helping the children pass examination again. You went to England and came back to talk about disability and more disability. Go back or help our children pass the Common Entrance Examination.

Elbert's insertion in the discourse seemed to be intended to place me in the lane he expected. He embodied the expectations of segregation and exclusion like Mrs McDonald. He was inscribed in a discourse which he did not fully understand and by his expression excluded his daughter. He failed to realise that his daughter was being supported because the school realised she had dyscalculia. He thought his daughter just needed help to pass the examination and need not socialise with children with SEND. He failed to acknowledge that the fact that his daughter required additional support meant she had a special education need. Berlinski et al. (*forthcoming*) state that parents' responses to questions about their children may be particularly averse if they believe the questions to be stigmatising or if they refer to impairments rather than difficulties. Probably, Elbert and his daughter were fearful that the other children may no longer want to socialise with her if she was identified as having SEND, or, he may only have considered children with visible impairments as having SEND.

Tier 3: acceptance and minimal socialisation

This tier is slightly better for children with SEND. It involves being accepted by peers without SEND but with little/minimal socialising. Socialisation is limited to the amount required for learning experiences, school assemblies, and sharing facilities and resources such as the canteen and computer room. On this tier, children with SEND at both schools felt that they were a part of the schools despite knowing that children without SEND had not entirely accepted them as equals. Daniel and Belie were on this tier.

Tier 4: full acceptance and complete socialisation

The final tier of acceptance is 'Full Acceptance with all socialisation benefits'. This tier is only for a selected few, and is reserved for the elite group of children with SEND at the two schools. At Saints Primary School, it was evident that Joel had been admitted to this tier along with his friend Ceon, who were skilled cricketers, and at Angel Primary, Premchand, the computer wizard in a wheelchair, also occupied this tier. This tier of acceptance includes children with SEND who possess skills, talents and knowledge that make them very important to the children without SEND. It also includes children with SEND who are exceptionally gifted and intelligent, such as Quan, Devi, Alicia, and Akon.

The form of inclusion practised in the two schools needs action beyond simple placement of children with SEND in mainstream education. Otherwise, this can be more detrimental than non-inclusive practice. Moreover, this approach fails to take advantage of the benefits of student diversity within the learning environment. Exposure to children of all types, on a daily basis, allows staff and students to see that, just like themselves, children with SEND have strengths and weaknesses, and good days and bad days (Singal 2016; Soriano, Watkins, and Ebersold 2017; Tomlinson 2017; Westwood and Graham 2003). Therefore, the inclusion of children with SEND in the two schools has benefits for all groups and levels of children as well as for the teachers.

Adjustments and curriculum modifications mainstream teachers make to include children with SEND

The data suggest that the *one size fits all approach* utilised in the two schools studied was not only applied to learning experiences in classrooms but was also utilised in extra and co-curricular activities, sports, community events, and the resources given to all children. Neither reasonable adjustments nor modifications were made for children with SEND and other diversities. This appeared to be the standard operating procedure. These exclusion types of standardised approach, practices and operations made school experiences frustrating and unpleasant for children with SEND.

Children with SEND were forced into mainstream school life without any modifications or reasonable adjustments to mainstream schools, which made it very difficult for them to have meaningful experiences and effective socialisation. Even children with mild learning disabilities suffered these disadvantages. The unsupported placement of children with SEND combined with a lack of partnerships between the teacher training college, mainstream schools, communities and other stakeholders contributed to some of

the negative experiences of the children. Overall, there was an ad hoc approach to inclusion in the two schools. To help teachers in making reasonable adjustments and modification to cater for children with SEND, I recommend Lashley's Southern Inclusive Education Framework.

Lashley's Southern Inclusive Education Framework

For Guyanese mainstream schools to be fully inclusive, the following features need to be fully implemented:

- (12) All neighbourhood schools and local school districts need to be free from discriminatory practices like institutional discrimination and inequalities as well as any form of victimisation or preferential treatment for children based on race, religion, ethnicity, gender, background, culture, socioeconomic status, parents' sexual orientation, and impairment (Guyana, Prevention of discrimination Act 1997, Cap. 99: 08). All neighbourhood schools and local school districts need to be free from any barrier which may result in preferential treatment of specific groups of children and increased vulnerability of other groups or restricted participation in experiences and socialisation offered at school.
- (13) Reasonable adjustments and modifications need to be made to the structures and systems currently in place within mainstream schools to reduce barriers to access that are constituted or embedded in the discourses, discursive practices, structures and systems of the schools.
- (14) All children need to be given the support needed in the mainstream school in which they are placed. This support is not limited to curricula and educational materials/resources but need to extend to social, emotional and physical support as the individual case necessitates.
- (15) All children need to be treated with love and respect and be valued and appreciated for their individual characteristics. Each child needs to be given opportunities to showcase his/her talents and such talents and uniqueness need to be celebrated, especially for children who are considered disadvantaged or vulnerable because of impairment(s).
- (16) Opportunities need to 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 and different interests, aspirations, skills, and abilities. In addition, compassion committees could be established to ensure awareness and sensitisation of all stakeholders to children's diversities and potential to contribute to society's development to increase the value placed on all children.
- (17) All opportunities, experiences and socialisation need to be flexible and adaptable to individual differences while maintaining equal standards, expectations and outcomes for all. Opportunities, experiences and socialisation for all children need to be provided, based on individual needs, culture, and readiness rather than on the basis of learning styles.
- (18) Teachers, educators, support staff and other stakeholders need to receive compulsory training on SEND, inclusion, differentiated instruction, inclusive learning and assessment. There also need to be continuous professional development

sessions to enhance local capacity to promote inclusion. More local studies need to be carried out to enhance children with SEND experiences in mainstream schools.

- (19) Due to the diverse cultures, geography and demography of the education districts in Guyana, inclusive policies, while broadly adhering to national policy, need to be based on the local context. In addition, local teachers need to receive support from national specialists as required and/or requested.
- (20) All local schools need to attempt to be more than an educational institution in the local communities. They need to also strive to be avenues where all (children and members of the society) can have the opportunities to collaborate and help each other advance in an inclusive environment.
- (21) All neighbourhood schools need to emphasise not only academic achievements at national assessment, but also highlight skills attainment, sports, arts and creativity, music and these wider areas of education need to be of equal merit to academic performance/achievement.
- (22) All schools need to actively try to reduce discriminatory behaviours and practices toward children with impairments in society even when they are not placed in mainstream schools.
- (23) Schools could provide support for children from disadvantaged sociocultural and socioeconomic backgrounds to remove barriers created by poverty and other social disadvantages and attempt to reduce the feeling of disablement experienced by children with SEND.
- (24) Schools could also ensure everyone honours the national motto ‘one people, one nation, and one destiny. Equal we are alive and in death to the value of the community and country’s history, growth and development’.

Conclusion

There are clear discriminatory boundaries to participation and socialisation – that is – to inclusion, which outline the expected status of behaviours, attitudes, participation, achievement and acceptance for children with SEND. Children with SEND are often told by mainstream teachers to stay in their lane which depersonalised them. It is not that teachers highly negative and damaging attitudes, they are also caught up in the situation as they are portrayed by the government of lone professional practitioners. There are no policies and local inclusion frameworks to guide teachers and any nationally adopted policy has not yet reached teachers in the classroom because of the resistance to full inclusion in school and society. Children without known SEND participated in, and reinforced, social structures of non-acceptance of children with SEND in ways that limited their full inclusion. The data suggest that there is a seeming quest to get children with SEND to stay in their lane meant that they remained excluded while being physically included in mainstream schools.

Lanes can have positives; they can be demarcated for safety and guidance. Lanes can even help to support socialisation by connecting children. But the only time anyone should be expected to stay in any lane is when they are queuing up. Lanes, borders and boundaries must be porous, flexible and accessible to all. Even on the motorways where lanes are demarcated, all road users can access the lanes whether to overtake

temporarily or to change direction because their destination has changed. This flexibility is not apparent in the two schools because society still stratified children based on impairments and perceived normalcy.

Children with SEND in the two mainstream schools should be allowed to move freely among the lanes and tiers of socialisation and not be subjected to depersonalising and marginalising lane directives and surveillance. Children with SEND need experiences in schools which do not contribute to any perception of valuelessness or feelings of loneliness in the mainstream socialising spheres. The most explicit and blatant exclusion processes on the grounds of disability are taking place in schools (Calderón-Almendros 2018). A significant number of school children continue to be subjected to unfair and discriminatory treatment in mainstream schools (UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2017). The experiences of the children with SEND take their power and make them doubly vulnerable in mainstream school and society. These two schools need support in writing or adopting an inclusion framework aligned with the social model of disability. Teachers need support and training and not to be portrayed as lone perfectionist practitioners in schools accessible and friendly in their structure and arrangement to children with impairments.

Notes

1. *Mix* is a local term used in Guyana, which means 'to socialise'.
2. *Common Entrance Examination* was the first name given to the Year Six assessment examination. It later became known as the 'Secondary School Entrance Examination', and now it is called the 'National Grade Six Assessment'.

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