

**MANAGING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE CLASSROOM  
WITH REFERENCE TO THE NKANGALA REGION IN  
MPUMALANGA**

by

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I declare that **MANAGING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE CLASSROOM WITH REFERENCE TO THE NKANGALA REGION IN MPUMALANGA** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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SIGNATURE  
(Mrs G N Mpya)

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DATE

## **DECLARATION**

I Gladness Nwacoye Mpya declare that “Managing inclusive education in the classroom with respect to the Nkangala region in the Mpumalanga” is my own work and that all sources are mentioned in the bibliography.

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G.N. Mpya

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Date

## DEDICATIONS

I am dedicating this dissertation to:

- My dear husband **Kwena Phaniel Mpya** for his sustained support and encouragement.
- To my son **Tshiamo** for being my late study companion, assisting me with typing this dissertation and offering technical assistance with the computer.
- To my daughter **Kutlwano** for being so understanding and patient throughout my studies.
- To my brothers and sisters, nephews and nieces for their kind support, constant encouragement and their unconditional love,
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## **ABSTRACT**

In 2006 South Africans celebrated the twelfth anniversary of a democratic South African. A paradigm shift in education was a prerequisite and the government introduced an inclusive education system.

The aim of this investigation was to make a contribution to the understanding of educational needs of learners who experience barriers to learning and to provide guidelines on how to support them. This research will however attempt to examine how educators manage inclusion in the classroom, their competencies and the strategies they need to be competent inclusive teachers.

The data is based on focused group interviews, observation and document analysis. The researcher selected Maloka primary school as the research site. The subjects that were chosen were 2 Grade 5 classrooms and 6 educators. The main themes identified in the interviews were among others availability of resources, strategies need and problems encountered in teaching inclusive classes.

The conclusion reached is that inclusive education is here to stay so the Department of Education and all other stakeholders should join hands and make it work.

## **KEY TERMS**

Inclusive education, inclusion, barriers to learning, regular classrooms, teacher-competencies, management, teaching and learning strategies, Individual Education Plan, assessment, inclusive classrooms.



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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **ORIENTATION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

For many years, education authorities in South Africa implemented a policy of separate systems of education. Regular schools used to cater for learners who were regarded as “normal” as the term was used then. Special schools accommodated learners with specific learning difficulties, behavioural problems, and physiological, neurological or psychological shortcomings. Recently the appropriateness of having such separate systems has been challenged both from a human rights perspective and from the view of effectiveness (Ainscow, Farrell and Tweddle, 2000:211). The practice showed discrimination against those with disabilities and those who were previously disadvantaged, as it included the issue of race, gender, class and religion.

The term “disability” refers to “... the social restrictions and constraints (barriers) imposed on persons with impairments in their pursuit of full and equal participation” (Burden 2000:29). Disabilities are usually present from birth or they may be caused by illness or an accident. They may have different causes and may assume various forms. According to Sidogi (2001:22) the different types of disabilities are sensory, physical, intellectual and multiple. The most important thing is that children with disabilities have to be identified as early as possible so that they can get assistance. Furthermore Burden (2000:29) defines disadvantaged people as “... those people who are constrained or restricted by society (barriers) from full and

equal participation". These people are said to be disadvantaged by their economic, social or political circumstances.

The Department of education (2002:134) elaborates further explaining that there are some of the learners who are placed at risk of learning breakdown due to the physical, emotional or sexual abuse situations in which they find themselves.

It is based on the above background that the movement to promote inclusive education in South Africa has emerged. It was, however only after 1994, when the newly elected government of National unity took over, that it emphasised the point that education is a basic human right and it should be accessible to all learners regardless of colour, race, gender, class, religion, disability, culture or sexual preference. As a matter of fact inclusive education was then seen as a way of removing the discriminatory practices and accommodating all learners, irrespective of their special needs.

Research has shown that a considerable amount of data concerning inclusive education has been collected, that is to determine attitudes of teachers regarding inclusive education, different interpretations of inclusive education and the role that educators play in implementing inclusive education. This research study will attempt to examine how educators manage inclusion in the classrooms and the competencies educators need in order to facilitate such inclusion.

As a researcher the author has realised that there is an urgent need to develop a clear understanding of what inclusive education is, how educators manage their inclusive classrooms and the competencies needed for them to be good inclusive teachers.

## **1.2 THEME ANALYSIS**

According to the Department of education (2001b:5) inclusive education was introduced into South Africa by the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee on Education Support Services (NCESS). The NCSNET and NCESS were appointed by the Department of National Education in 1996 to investigate and make recommendations on all aspects of 'special needs and support services' in education and training in South Africa. The main focus was on identifying barriers to accessing quality education for all learners and developing an education system that is responsive to the diverse needs of the different learner populations.

It is important to indicate that the theme of this project lies in the support of the above bodies in their effective and efficient implementation of inclusive education in schools. It will thus play a critical role in the successful management of this type of education in the classroom. Competencies that educators need to be able to accommodate the diverse needs of their learners will be examined. This study basically aims at helping all learners to be part of their normal peer group in society. It is therefore its objective to make sure those teaching strategies that educators use will accommodate all learners.

Amongst their investigations the NCSNET and NCESS found that "... most learners with disabilities have either fallen outside the system or been "mainstreamed by default" and the curriculum and education system as a whole have generally failed to respond to the diverse needs of the learner population, resulting in massive numbers of drop-outs, push-outs and failures..." (Department of Education 2001b:5). Educators are challenged to be in the driving



seat, minimizing drop-outs and accommodating all learners, enabling them to participate actively in the classroom and also in the society. It is the aim of this research project to help these educators to use different teaching strategies in managing their inclusive classrooms so that they can produce valuable members of the society.

### **1.3 FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM**

South Africa has striven to put different mechanisms in place to get the inclusive education process in motion. It is therefore important to examine all the facts that are vital to the success of this venture. Educators are, however, seen as the key figures for the successful implementation of inclusive education, yet, there are problems encountered concerning how to manage the inclusive classroom.

In narrowing down the field to a single problem formulation, the specific problems that will be examined in this investigation can be stated as follows:

- What is inclusive education?
- How do educators manage inclusive education in the classroom?
- What competencies do educators need to manage inclusive education successfully in their classrooms?
- What obstacles do educators encounter in managing inclusive education in their classrooms?

## **1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY**

Due to lack of appropriately trained and skilled teachers in inclusive education in most primary schools, an investigation of effective classroom management for inclusive education has become an urgent necessity. The researcher will attempt to provide some guidelines for overcoming the barriers that learners experience in learning.

Through a thorough literature review this study will examine:

- The concept of inclusive education
- The management of inclusive classrooms
- The teacher competencies needed for educators to manage inclusive education
- The effective teaching strategies relevant for teaching learners who experience barriers to learning

## **1.5 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS**

In order to understand the key concepts of this study, it is necessary to clarify them to avoid misinterpretations. Reeler (1983:4) points out that "... it is easy to assume that if one could discover the true meanings of each of a number of key terms, terms of historic nature that are used in a particular field (here specifically the field of Education) terms such as [inclusion, inclusive education, classroom management, barriers to learning, educator and the learner] it would then mean that each term would fit into place in some single, interlocking, consistent conceptual scheme". However, an attempt will be made to clarify the following concepts:

### 1.5.1 Inclusion

Inclusion is the “keystone” of today’s Government Education Policy. Farrell and Ainscow (2002:3) describe it as “... a process in which schools, communities, local authorities and government strive to reduce barriers to participation and learning for **all** citizens”.

Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff and Pettipher (2002:176) define inclusion as “... the shared value accommodating **all** learners in a unified system of education, empowering them to become caring, competent and contributing citizens in an inclusive, changing, diverse society”.

According to Hall (2002:32) “... inclusion is a principle that refers to the right of **all** learners to feel welcome in a supportive educational context”. Inclusion is also described as “... the placement of students with special needs in general education” (Lewis & Doorlag 2006:5, Idol 2006:77).

“Inclusion is the principle applied to accommodate/include **all** human beings, thus the full spectrum of diverse abilities, within one system, in such a manner that **all** involved can be assured of successful, equal and quality participation in real-life experiences from birth to the grave. This implies that **all** have to perceive and treat themselves and others as dignified human beings, in enhancing human potential maximally and in succeeding to achieve whatever outcome is envisaged and humanly possible” (Burden, 2000:29).

York, cited by Carreiro King (2003:2) defines inclusion as “... an involvement of students attending the same schools as siblings and neighbours, being members in general education classrooms with chronological age-appropriate classmates, having individualised and

learning objectives and being provided with the support necessary to learn (for example special education and related services)".

### **1.5.2 Inclusive education**

"Inclusive education means that all students in a school regardless of their strengths, weaknesses or disabilities in any area become part of the school community. They are included in the feeling of belonging among other students, teachers, and support staff" (Carreiro King, 2003:2).

Karagiannis, Stainback and Stainback, cited by Swart and Pettipher (2006:1) explain inclusive education as "... the practice of including everyone irrespective of talent, disability, socio-economic background, or cultural origin in supportive mainstream schools and classrooms where all student needs are met".

Gross (2002:233) corroborates Swart and Pettipher definition by describing inclusive education as "... the process by which a school attempts to respond to **all** the children as individuals by considering and restructuring its curricula provision and allocating resources to enhance equality of opportunity. Through this process, the school builds its capacity to accept all children from the local community and in so doing, reduces the need to exclude children".

Leyden and Miller (**in:** Visser, 2002:10) define inclusive education as "... the equal and optimal education of all learners within one school system. All learners are recognised as having diverse needs, but are valued for their shared humanity. It is also a system where all learners can be educated together and where personal diversity is seen to be enriching".

Alper, Schloss, Etscheidt and Macfarlane (in: Sidogi, 2001:4) maintain that inclusive education is "... the provision of educational experiences for all learners experiencing barriers to learning and development. Such learners would participate in the same classroom situation with those learners who are not experiencing barriers to learning and development, at the same mainstream schools and same mainstream classes that their peers attend".

### **1.5.3 Barriers to learning**

According to Visser (2002:9) "... a barrier to learning is something that prevents the learner from benefiting from education". It can be a barrier within the learner, within the centre of learning (for example school) or education system and it can be a barrier in the broader social, economic and political context.

Furthermore, Burden (2000:29) and the Department of Education (2002:130) broaden the issue by describing barriers to learning "... as those factors which lead to the inability of the system to accommodate diversity, which lead to learning breakdown or which prevent learners from accessing educational provisions".

### **1.5.4 Classroom management**

Classroom management is "... a means by which teachers demonstrate the rights and responsibilities of members of a school community, particularly those members who are in conflict, be it student and student or teacher and student" (Lewis, 1999:270).

Duke cited by Emmer and Stough (2001:1) states that classroom management is about "... the provisions and procedures necessary

to establish and maintain an environment in which instruction and learning can occur”.

The action taken by the teacher to establish order, engage students, or elicit their cooperation is very important. This phenomenon reiterates the opinion expressed by Doyle (in: Emmer and Stough, 2001:2) when referring to classroom management as “... the actions and strategies teachers use to solve the problem of order in classrooms”.

Emmer and Stough (2001:2) elaborate this concept when they state that classroom management is about the “... establishment and maintenance of order, designing effective instruction, dealing with students as a group, responding to the needs of individual student, and effectively handling the discipline and adjustment of individual students”.

#### **1.5.5 Educator**

The Department of Education (2003: C-2) refers to an educator as “... any person who teaches, educates, or trains other persons or who provides professional educational services, including professional therapy and education, psychological services at any public school, further education and training institution, departmental office or adult basic education centre who are appointed in a post on any education establishment under employment according to the Education Act 76 of 1998”.

Sethosa (2001:16) defines an educator as “... a person whose work involves educating others at all levels of education, in any type of education and training context, including formal and informal”.

De Villiers, Wethmar and Van der Bank (2000:30) indicate that "... an educator is someone who possesses authority in the educative situation by virtue of his/her academic knowledge about education in general and his/her skills and competencies in imparting their knowledge to the learners".

#### **1.5.6 Learner**

"A learner means any pupil or a student at any school, Further education and training institution or adult learning centre" (Department of Education 2003:E-17). "A learner means anyone who receives education or is obliged to receive education" (Joubert and Prinsloo, 1999:15). These authors further, describe a learner as "... any pupil or person who is taught or trained by an educator".

### **1.6 METHODOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION**

In essence the research design that has been adopted in this research study is qualitative. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:398) maintain that qualitative researchers investigate in-depth small, distinct groups as the researcher is concerned with understanding the social phenomenon from the research participant's perspective. The design is relevant to the research project since the aim is to investigate how educators manage their inclusive classrooms, particularly for a small selected group in their natural setting. The descriptive method will be part of the research tool as it is designed to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomenon being investigated.

### **1.6.1 The research site**

This study will be conducted at Maloka Primary School, which is situated in a rural Nkangala area in Mpumalanga Province. It lies to the East of Hammanskraal at Pankop Village. This school was established in 1950. The choice was however, largely dependent on the school having implemented an inclusive system. Maloka Primary was one of the 10 pilot schools chosen in the Nkangala region to implement inclusive education in the year 2000. Pankop is one of those villages in Mpumalanga whose scholars are academically delayed, suffering from the effects of socio-economic, environmental and educational deprivation resulting from poverty, therefore there are numbers of learners who experience problems in learning and who really need help.

McMillan and Schumacher (2001:185) recommended that prior to conducting the study, the researcher has to "... find a small sample of individuals that is similar to those who will be used in the actual study and administer the instrument to them". The researcher has to check for clarity, ambiguity in sentences, directions, and any problems that may have been experienced. A pilot study will however be done in Thipe Primary School. Thipe Primary is one of the primary schools in Makapanstad circuit in Northwest Province. Thipe Primary implemented inclusive education some years back.

### **1.6.2 Sampling**

Given that the aim of this research is to examine the educator's management of inclusive education in the classroom, it is necessary to select a school, which is currently practising inclusion, as the research site. In this research the subjects that were chosen are two



Grade 5 classes at Maloka Primary School. There are 34 pupils in class A and 33 pupils in class B. Class A have 16 girls and 18 boys, and class B has 20 girls and 13 boys. Their ages range from 8 to 11 years. The school has one principal, a head of department and 12 educators of whom 2 are males and 10 are females. There are 11 classes where all the classes include learners who experience different barriers to learning.

At the time of this study in Grade 5A, there are 6 learners with reading, 2 with writing, 7 with spelling, 3 with behavioural and 2 with numerical problems and 1 who is physically challenged. Almost half of the pupils in the class are from a disadvantaged background. In Grade 5B, 8 learners have reading problems, 6 with writing, 10 with spelling, 3 with behavioural problems and half of the pupils are from a disadvantaged background.

### **1.6.3 Data collection strategies**

Three strategies will be used to obtain data from the research participants, namely interviews, observations and document analysis. As McMillan and Schumacher (2001:41) put it, qualitative techniques collect data in the form of words rather than numbers and provide an in-depth verbal description of phenomena. The main goal of the verbal description, however, is to capture the richness of behaviour that occurs in a natural setting from the participant's perspective. It is therefore the aim of the researcher to observe educators in action in their classrooms, teaching their learners.

### **1.6.4 Focused group interview**

A focused group interview will be used to gather information as it allows an open conversation between the researcher and the

participants. Each participant may comment or ask questions or even respond to comments by others, helping the interviewer to have a better understanding of the problem. The researcher will interview a selected group of educators who have experience in teaching learners with barriers to learning, in this inclusive setting (Maloka Primary School).

The 6 educators sampled for this study are part of a Learner Support Team which was formed in the school to implement inclusive education, so this is an added advantage to the researcher to be able to get in-depth knowledge about the management of inclusive education and the strategies to overcome the barriers to learning.

## **1.7 PROGRAMME OF STUDY**

Chapter one, as the orientation chapter, introduces the study, analyses the theme and presents the research problem and the aim of the study. It also clarifies the relevant concepts and gives a detailed background of the project.

A perspective on managing inclusive education in the classroom will be discussed in chapter two. The competencies and teaching strategies that educators need to manage their inclusive classrooms will be discussed in detail. The barriers that learners experience in learning will be identified.

In chapter three, the focus will be on qualitative investigation of the management of inclusive education in the classroom with special reference to Maloka Primary School in Mpumalanga Province. The method of research, role of the researcher, selection of participants, data collection strategies and interviews will receive attention.

Chapter four will deal with a discussion of the results of the research and analysis of data collected.

Chapter five will discuss the management of inclusive education in the classroom and an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Chapter six will incorporate a summary of the study and suggest topics recommended for further study.

## **1.8 CONCLUSION**

Apartheid in South Africa has played a central role in signifying otherness and justifying discrimination among subordinate groups, for example, those who were labelled as “disabled” and those who were previously disadvantaged. The present political climate brought significant changes in many people’s lives.

In education, for instance, the curriculum, management skills, methods of teaching and assessment of learners had to change in order to accommodate all learners in the classroom. This was brought about by the education system that is practiced today, namely inclusive education. Educators, as the keys to the success of the implementation of this system need to be equipped with knowledge, skills and strategies to manage their inclusive classrooms. They need to be able to identify the learners who experience barriers to learning and who need to be given guidance in removing these barriers.

It is therefore the aim of the researcher in this investigation to provide educators with the relevant information to enable them to focus on the child and to give the best possible teaching that he/she (educator) is capable of providing.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **A PERSPECTIVE ON MANAGING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE CLASSROOM**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Inclusive education challenges the assumption that most people have about the purpose of education and the process of education and teaching. According to Van Zyl (2002:112) it is much more than merely changing the curriculum, as a result the need for educators to have an opportunity to learn, reflect and discover new ways of thinking and acting is important. For the successful management of inclusive education, educators need to be supported in the development of new skills and effective practices for their classrooms and their schools. It is therefore against this background that this chapter will attempt to shed light on the competencies that educators need to manage their inclusive classrooms, furthermore emphasis will be placed on examining effective teaching strategies, skills and knowledge on how to address or remove barriers that learners encounter in learning. All these efforts are made to assist educators in their striving to increase academic performance and to promote the social skills of all learners.

#### **2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

McMillan and Schumacher (2001:108) describe literature review as "... a narrative interpretative criticism of the existing research". They further explain that if that review is conducted carefully and well presented, undoubtedly it will add much to an understanding of the selected problem and help place the results of a study in a historical

perspective. In this publication an attempt will be made to review related literature and other relevant sources to answer the research problem.

### **2.2.1 Teacher competencies needed to manage inclusive classrooms**

According to Swart *et al.* (2002:177) it is interesting to note that there is overwhelming evidence that educators are the key force in determining the quality of inclusion therefore it is without doubt that they can, if given support, play a crucial role in transforming schools or without support they can bring no change at all. As the key figures in the successful implementation of an inclusive education policy their competencies in this field are of utmost importance. Furthermore in the article “Teacher preparedness for inclusive education”, Thompson cited by Hay, Smit and Paulsen (2001:214) emphasised that “... the effective implementation of inclusive education depends on the high quality of professional preparation of teachers at pre and in-service levels to equip them for and update their knowledge in meeting the needs of a diverse classroom population”.

Bothma, Gravett and Swart (2000:202) contend that originally educators had a negative attitude towards inclusion due to the fact that they were not trained to cope with learners who experienced barriers to learning and that their schools did not have the facilities or equipment needed by these learners. According to Pettigrew and Arkhurst (1999:226) schools need restructuring and educators need in-service training for a successful inclusive classroom to become a possibility. The author believes that it rests upon educators to act as change agents, and to be prepared to take initiatives in developing inclusive education. “... It is also very important to give teachers a

sense of ownership; they need to own the change through direct involvement, where their views and concerns are taken into consideration” (Dalin in: Nghipondoka 2001:27). Hence the Department of Education (2002:66) points out that those educators who are willing to pursue their skills-development need to be trained in a range of issues so that their contribution could be of value. It also recommends that educators, among others, be competent in communication skills and multidisciplinary work, some essential knowledge of common disabilities, behaviour management, multilingual issues, the effects of poverty and social deprivation and the skills to identify all the above by means of assessment processes.

Engelbrecht, Swart and Eloff (2001:256) warn that even though inclusive education has become a prominent item on the international educational agenda and has provided a framework for recognising diversity and providing quality education for all learners within an inclusive education system, it has also fallen prey to a lot of criticism. They argue that educators are under a lot of stress because they are not acquainted with the principles and management of inclusion.

From the above discussion, one may conclude that the educators’ lack of competency in managing their inclusive classrooms is a serious problem as it makes them feel stressed and less confident. Van Zyl (2002:96-97) highlighted the fact that it is not practically possible to make specialists of all educators on all the diverse needs in overcoming barriers to learning, but there may be a way of assisting all learners to benefit from inclusive classes, that is, by empowering educators in the following basic skills so that they may become competent inclusive educators.

- Orientation on inclusive education and the paradigm shift from the medical model to a human rights model of learner with special educational needs.
- Training on learner centred education.
- Management training in inclusive education for principals, deputy principals and heads of departments.
- Training on how to develop a school-based support service for special educational needs.
- Methods and models of inclusive practice.
- Orientation of educators to become reflective learners, conducting ongoing research to diagnose areas of need.
- Training in collaborative teaching, educators are to be trained to work as collaborative partners with other staff members. Emphasis should be placed on collaborative decision making, group processing and conflict resolution.
- Management of differentiation in the classroom.
- Training on how to adapt the curriculum to the individual learner's need.
- Flexible evaluation methods based on the learner's pace.
- Development of a resource-based learning environment. Materials should apply to the learners' life situation in their community.
- Educators should be trained as a resource, rather than the sole source of knowledge in the classroom.
- Skills on how to involve the parents in the learning activities in the classroom of the learner who experience barriers to learning.
- Development on how to create a positive learning climate in the classroom by having high expectations from all learners, positive teacher attitudes, rewards and incentives, order and discipline, frequent and appropriate assessment of work and feedback on learners' work (Van Zyl 2002:96-97).

- **What competencies do general education teachers and special education teachers need to be competent inclusive teachers?**

These needs could be summed up as:

- The ability to solve problems, to be able to assess informally the skills a learner needs (rather than relying solely on the standardized curriculum).
- The ability to take advantage of learner's individual interests and use their internal motivation for developing needed skills.
- The ability to set high but alternative expectations that are suitable for all learners. This means developing alternative assessments.
- The ability to establish appropriate expectations for each learner, regardless of the learner's capabilities. If educators can do this, it allows all learners to be included in a class and school.
- The ability to determine how to modify assignments for learners. How to design classroom activities with so many levels that all learners have a part. This teaching skill can apply not just at the elementary or secondary level, but at college level as well. It will mean more activity-based teaching rather than seat-based teaching.
- The ability to learn how to value all kinds of skills that learners bring into a class, not just the academic skills but also the social skills. In doing so, educators will make it explicit that in their classrooms they value all skills, even if that is not a clear value of the whole school.
- The ability to provide daily success for all learners. Educators have to work to prevent the message all learners get when certain learners are continually taken out of class for special



work (Renaissance Group: Teacher competencies needed 2004:1).

The Department of Education (2001a:42) echoes the same sentiments as above, when indicating that educators should be trained in order to gain competencies in the following:

- “Identifying learners with special educational needs and learning disabilities.
- Using a variety of teaching strategies to accommodate the diverse needs of learners.
- Assessment of learners to determine their capabilities and competencies and reporting on individual progress of learners.
- Selecting learning activities suitable for the competency level of each learner.
- Using a variety of classroom management strategies.
- Organising and planning to teach Learners with Special Educational Need (LSEN), including practical demonstration.
- Development of individual programmes for learners”.

### **2.2.2 Inclusive classrooms**

It seems logical that educators would want classroom activities that consist of positive interaction among all class members and wish that learners were more alike in many respects. Unfortunately this is not possible. Any class consists of a diverse range of learners who need to be accommodated.

Alban-Metcalfe (2001:20) defines an inclusive classroom as “... one in which continuing emphasis on valuing individual differences lead all pupils, irrespective of social or cultural background, disability or difficulty in learning, to succeed in terms of the fulfilment of

academic and social goals, and in the development of positive attitudes to self and others". Even though this inclusive education, according to Engelbrecht *et al.* (2001:256) makes an additional demand on teachers especially those in general classes because they were not used to diversity, it is nevertheless the most suitable route to follow in order to reach the long-term goal of the present Democratic Government. The goal is developing "... an inclusive education and training system that will uncover and address barriers to learning, recognise and accommodate the diverse range of learning needs" (Department of Education, 2001b:45).

Educators are faced with serious challenges when teaching learners with diverse needs. They have to change their teaching strategies and create an environment that is conducive for all learners in the classroom, for example, those with physical, emotional and psychological problems. Since there will be a number of changes that will be made in the process of implementing the policy of inclusive education, educators and other stake-holders will have to be patient and be warned that: "... change is difficult, but inevitable. It is guided first by vision, then by planning, then by action. No matter how much we want to hurry, change is methodical and slower than we might wish. But it does occur" (Lilly in: Swart *et al.*, 2002:187).

In spite of the problems that educators encounter in planning their inclusive classrooms, Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker and Engelbrecht (1999:72) suggest some main issues that can be dealt with in meeting these challenges, for example, the learners, psychosocial environment, physical environment, classroom organisation and the inclusive curriculum. These issues will now receive closer examination.

### **2.2.2.1 The learner**

According to Engelbrecht *et al.* (1999:72) in any classroom there are no two learners who are the same. They differ in their pace and style of learning, hence educators have to use different methods in order to accommodate them all. Some learners have physical and/or sensory disabilities and they require assistive devices such as computers in order to learn effectively. There are some who have mild to moderate disabilities and they are difficult to identify, yet they need attention. It is therefore the responsibility of an inclusive educator to make them feel important and loved.

### **2.2.2.2 The psychosocial environment**

Khumalo (2000:34) attests that “... an inclusive classroom needs to provide a safe and supportive environment in which all learners are willing to participate in class activities without feeling ridiculed ...” When the atmosphere is not as supportive as it should be, there is no doubt that it may impede learning. The educator has the responsibility of creating and maintaining a classroom atmosphere which nurtures the personal, cognitive and social development of all learners (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 1999:72).

### **2.2.2.3 The physical environment**

The Department of Education (2002:140) is concerned about the inaccessible and unsafe environment in many centres of learning, hence it is conceptualised as a barrier to learning and development that needs to be removed. The classroom should be wheelchair-friendly, doorways should be widened, and stairs should be removed and be replaced with ramps to allow movement. Wadsworth and Knight (1999:3) contend that even though there is a

“... call for building accessibility for individuals with disabilities, not all facilities are in compliance, therefore a physical therapist or an occupational therapist needs to be included in an assessment of the school to determine needs such as handrails, ramps, widening of sidewalks and doors, and adjustment of equipment heights”.

Learners who experience barriers to learning may need assistive devices such as computers. Keel, Dangel and Owens (1999:24) found that for learners with achievement problems, computer-assisted instruction could be an effective learner-directed tool for initial acquisition of basic skills rather than just for practice and drill. The above authors also believe that computer-assisted instruction provides an alternative to teacher-directed instruction for specific component of instruction. Wolpert (2001:7) emphasises that caution should be exercised to ensure that computers should only be used as a medium of instruction and not as a replacement for instructional teacher contact. This author does not rule out the fact that computer assisted instruction was found to be beneficial for all learners for the same reasons namely that it is interactive, non-threatening and self-paced, she only advocated the need for balance between both forms of instruction.

#### **2.2.2.4 Classroom organization**

Choate (2004:428) indicates that creating an orderly setting is the first step in establishing an environment that is conducive to learning and preventing behavioural problems. The classroom should be arranged in such a way that learners are able to move freely without disturbing the classroom layout. Among others there should be a library or a quiet reading centre with books and magazines to help learners access information. Since learners will be working on projects that need to be displayed for assessment purposes, there

should be workstations even in corridors to allow flexibility. Furthermore Engelbrecht *et al.* (1999:74) clearly indicate that for optimal learning to occur there should be homogenous or groups of mixed academic ability that will work together and teachers should provide the necessary supervision.

#### **2.2.2.5    *The inclusive curriculum***

The curriculum is viewed as one of the factors that act as a barrier to learning and development in the classroom. Msimango (2002:128) emphasises that "... curriculum is at the heart of the education and framing system. It reflects the values and principles of our democratic society. It may thus be seen as the engine that should drive the values and principles espoused by our society". It is, however, important that the curriculum should be flexible enough to accommodate all learners in the classroom otherwise it could lead to learning breakdown.

The Department of Education took it upon its shoulders to review the curriculum that was used during the apartheid era. The curriculum then was teacher-centred and content-based. It was changed to the one that is learner-centred and aiming at meeting the diverse range of needs, and it is referred to as Outcomes-based-Education (OBE). As a researcher, this author regards OBE as a life saver because its main goal as Schoeman and Manyane (2002:176) put it, is to increase the knowledge of the learners and develop their critical thinking, understanding, skills, values and attitudes so that they may become successful individuals in their society.

Gordon (2000:10) indicated that the Outcomes-based approach does the following:

- “Allows learners to make progress through the learning programmes at their own pace and style.
- Credits learner’s achievements at every level, irrespective of the pathway they follow.
- Allows learners to demonstrate their competence in the manner that is most appropriate to their abilities.
- Allows multi-dimensional assessment methods to be used.
- Measures progress against previous achievements and not against those of other learners.
- Places emphasis on learners progressing and experiencing success”.

In addition to that Barnard, Chamberlain, Dittlhoise and Murtough (2005:6) summarised some practical guidelines for developing inclusive classrooms which they set out as follows:

- “Have a true understanding of each learner’s background, strengths, unique abilities, needs and barriers, and then use this information to inform planning and give a clearer focus.
- Differentiate to accommodate different abilities. (For example: grade an outcome and/or activity to different levels; give each group member a different task according to his or her strengths; create different types of tasks related to same learning material, *et cetera*).
- Motivate learners and affirm their efforts and individual progress.
- Build confidence.
- Encourage questioning, reasoning and experimentation.
- Require learners to meet realistic expectations in terms of their abilities. They should also have a clear understanding of the outcomes and expectations.
- Keep the content and materials as relevant as possible.

- Remember and accommodate the fact that learners learn at different paces.
- Determine and recognise the learner's baseline/prior knowledge.
- Develop a balance between individual, peer tutoring, cooperative learning and whole class teaching.
- Use and develop effective language skills (expressive and receptive, verbal and non-verbal).
- Break down learning into small, manageable and logical steps.
- Make use of open questions (those requiring more than one-word answers) and open tasks (those that have many ways of being answered/presented/dealt with).
- Try to ensure that learners remain challenged enough, without undue stress.
- Plan for and use deep learning approaches (understanding, interpreting and meaning-making), rather than just surface learning approaches (facts only, memorising).
- Provide additional instructional support in the context of the regular curriculum, not a different curriculum.
- Consolidate a lot, in various ways, until all learners understand the concepts or have acquired the skill, and make time to go back to tasks to discuss and learn from their own and other's experiences and learning methods.
- Promote self-management skills and responsibility through group roles and the types of tasks set.
- Use learners to help one another by means of group types, peer-assisted learning, buddy systems, *et cetera*. This ensures that learner's feel included and supported within the classroom by both peers and the teacher.
- Keep instructions clear and short (plan beforehand)".

### 2.2.3 Teaching strategies

“Managing diversity does not mean controlling or containing diversity, it means enabling every member ... to perform to his or her potential” (Roosevelt-Thomas **in**: Norris 2001:219). It is however, incumbent upon an inclusive educator to have good teaching strategies in helping the learner to unfold his/her potential. Educators have to be flexible in their thinking, be innovative and creative in their approaches to teaching and learning. Nghipondoka (2001:27) endorses the fact that flexibility in teaching will also enable an educator to continuously develop and implement instructional approaches that are beneficial to all the learners.

The Department of Education (2002:174) echoes the same sentiments as above, when it indicates that Curriculum 2005 encourages the use of different methods of teaching which the educator can employ that will not only vary the transfer of information but also how the information can be changed to suit all learners in the classroom. Educators should thus be encouraged to do the following:

- Vary their strategies to accommodate the diverse needs of learners.
- Vary and differentiate activities by integrating them into the teaching and learning actions.
- Give learners the opportunity to participate actively in all the activities in the classroom.
- Adapt the programmes to accommodate the learner’s needs and learning.
- Receive positive modelling of roles.
- Affirm and share good practices among colleagues.



Among others Van Zyl (2002:98-99) and Nghipondoka (2001:27-33) agree on the teaching approaches that serve as cornerstones for instruction in inclusive classrooms.

#### **2.2.3.1 *Differentiated (multi-level) instruction***

It is a type of instruction that allows for different kinds of learning within the same curriculum. The focus is mainly on the key concepts that are to be taught. Differentiated instruction is a teaching approach in which the educators prepare and teach one main lesson with variations, to cater for individual learner needs (Johnson **in:** Nghipondoka 2001:30). It also requires the educator to know his/her learners' intellectual, emotional and physical state, on an everyday basis since the needs of learners may vary over time.

Knight, cited by Nghipondoka (2001:17) asserts that: "In inclusive classrooms teachers need to be flexible to cater for the diversity of students needs through appropriate teaching programmes, organisation, resources and other adaptation that are necessary". This type of instruction is relevant to the aims and objectives of this research study as it assumes individualisation, flexibility and inclusion of all learners regardless of their skills development, permitting the educator to weave individual goals into classroom content and instructional strategies. "Differentiated instruction aims at differentiation in teaching, ensuring that the curriculum is accessible to all students" (Nghipondoka, 2001:31).

Historically, Fitch (2002:10) points out that disability legitimated segregation and inequality for disabled people and also for the people who were previously marginalized. South Africa is one of the countries that practiced apartheid. It differentiated between cultural groups, socio-economic background and language background; it

also enforced different standards of education in different schools. Differentiated or multi-level instruction was considered the most relevant teaching strategy that educators could apply. Broderick, Mehta-Parekh and Reid (2005:6) believe that when educators effectively differentiate instruction, constantly assessing learners' understandings, teaching responsively, and enabling learners to demonstrate competence in varied, meaningful ways most learners can participate successfully as full members of inclusive classrooms.

#### **2.2.3.2 Co-operative learning**

Van Zyl (2002:98) maintains that "... co-operative learning involves heterogeneous groupings of learners, allowing learners with a variety of skills and traits to work together". It encourages the higher achieving group members to assist learners who are having academic difficulties to understand and perform better. Learners become actively involved and their efforts contribute to the goal set by the group. As part of the group, learners acquire social skills to work with and support those who may at first be perceived as different. Co-operative learning, however, involves structuring learning so that learners work together in small groups in order to achieve shared academic goals.

#### **2.2.3.3 Activity-based learning**

Johnson, cited by Nghipondoka (2001:28) asserts that "... inclusive education requires curricula that are activity-based and that allows students to learn through personal experience". This is better achieved through activities that lead to discovery, movement and interaction with the community. Van Zyl (2002:98) supports the above statement by stating that "... activity-based learning gives emphasis to learning in natural settings, thus moving it from being

solely a classroom-based activity to encouraging and preparing learners to learn in community settings". Learners with learning difficulties often have problems with acquiring new knowledge. Some are hyperactive and get bored by lecture-type, dull lessons, some need concrete experiences in order to understand while others might lack motivation, however, being actively involved in their own learning can boost their morale and develop self-confidence. Activity-based instruction could be very successful, if it is used in different ways (Nghipondoka, 2001:29).

Nghipondoka (2001:29-30) identifies some aspects of classroom teaching that can promote active participation namely:

- "Learning through experience.
- Lessons based on discovery, movement and interaction with the environment.
- Differentiated activities.
- Clearly differentiated objectives leading to meaningful activities.
- Clarification of skills and concepts to be mastered.
- Sound interpersonal relations between teachers and learners and among learners themselves.
- Co-operative learning and peer tutoring".

#### **2.2.3.4 *Peer support and tutoring programmes***

Van Zyl (2002:99) notes that peer tutoring and support programmes are reported to have multiple advantages. This is due to the fact that the programmes provide information to the learners who are taught and the tutors themselves. This is supported by the fact that learners often learn best from teaching others. Hence the comments of Fisher, Hunt, Staub, Alwel, and Goetz, 1994, Janney and Snell, 1996 (*in*: O'Reilly, Lancioni, Gardiner, Tiernan and Lacy 2002:96)

when they state that "... the use of co-operative learning or peer tutoring instructional models can enhance academic achievements and social inclusion of students with intellectual abilities".

It is not surprising to realise that peer tutoring is regarded as a valuable component in an inclusive curriculum since it could build acceptance, understanding and friendship between learners while helping one another to learn. Moreover that these programmes support the concept that learners should be the centres of the learning process makes them to be in line with Curriculum 2005, which is learner-centred rather than teacher-centred. Inclusive education can be successful if these kinds of teaching strategies are well managed.

#### **2.2.4 Learner support**

"One of the pre-conditions for effective learning is the provision of adequate, appropriate and timeous support to learners by educators and significant others, such as parents and other learners" (Department of Education, 2001a:34). "Inclusive education is concerned with providing opportunities for all learners to become successful learners in the mainstream schools that serve their communities. Creating and maintaining these opportunities require not only emphasis on belongingness and meaningful participation but also on the provision of mutual emotional and professional support among all involved (learners, parents, educators, administrators, School Governing Body members, district and provincial officials)" (Engelbrecht, Eloff, Lomofsky, Masipa, Oswald and Swart, 2003:40). An individual alone is not able to achieve this but teamwork as Moran and Abbot (2002:162) aver, is the most critical strategy for creating successful learning experiences for all learners regardless of disability.

### **2.2.5 Support provided by educators**

In this investigation, focus is on how to help educators manage their inclusive classrooms. Some few years back there was debate about the implementation process of inclusive education and the attitudes of educators towards it. This was addressed and now that the first lap has been completed, the second lap of being in the core of the matter practising inclusive education in the South African regular classrooms can be faced. This is where educators feel the pressure of being unfairly treated by the government because they have no skills and knowledge of teaching and managing inclusive classrooms. Engelbrecht *et al.* (2003:40) in their research found that teachers were more willing to work together to share ideas on how successfully to unfold learners' potential.

Gordon (2000:13) and Engelbrecht *et al.* (2003:40) on the other hand recommend the development of collaborative relationships among educators so that they can share their expertise, workload, resources and ideas and be able to solve problems informally. Indeed it is true that "*Kgetse-ya-tsie e kgonwa ke go tshwaraganelwa*", [This is a Setswana proverb literally translated saying "a bag of locusts needs to be carried together". It means that people have to work together in order to achieve something.]

### **2.2.6 Support provided by other learners**

The Department of Education (2001a:35) indicated that many educators realised that learners who experience barriers to learning at school receive support from other learners. Educators also seem to argue that learners learn better from other learners whether academic or social skills. By comparison there is an apt observation when it comes to the different age groups (of learners). The

Department of Education (2001a:35) also mentioned that the level of support to these learners is smaller in higher grades than in lower grades. When learners are engaged in group work those who excel in that learning area help those who struggle. The most valued type of support is the acceptance and respect that learners who experience barriers to learning receive from some learners, as this makes them feel like valued and equal members of their classes and the school community in general (Department of Education 2001a:35).

## **2.3 BARRIERS TO LEARNING**

### **2.3.1 What are barriers to learning?**

Visser (2002:9) explains barriers to learning as "... those things that prevent the learner from benefiting from education". These can be barriers within the learner, within the centre of learning (for example school and library) or education system and they can be barriers in the broader social, economic or political context. The Department of Education (2002:130-131) describes them as "... those factors that lead to the inability of the system to accommodate diversity, which leads to learning breakdown or which prevents learners from accessing educational provision ...".

### **2.3.2 The barriers that learners encounter in learning**

Prinsloo (2001:345) mentioned that there are learners whose education requires additional planning and modifications in order to assist them to learn and they are described as those learners who experience barriers to learning. It is, however, the responsibility of the educator to use his/her competency to identify and be able to teach and support these learners to unfold their potential. South

Africa's old education system used to put pressure on those learners when they failed to meet the educational standards set by the department. They were referred to as "disabled" or those who had special needs hence they were to attend special schools.

It appears that the system, as Bothma *et al.* (2000:201) contended, viewed learning difficulties as originating only from deficits within the learner, yet according to their research it also originates from deficits within the system. This clearly indicates that the problems that these learners encounter in learning may be caused by a system that is unable to meet or adapt to the needs of specific learners. Hence the comments of Bothma *et al.* (2000: 201) and Swart *et al.* (2002:177) when they endorse the fact that "... South Africa has now moved from the learner having to adjust to the demands of the system, to a system that needs to be flexible enough to accommodate the diverse needs of all the learners as inclusively as possible". "... if the system fails to meet the different needs of a wide range of learners or if a problem arises in for example, the learners or education system, that learner or system may be prevented from being able to engage in or sustain an ideal process of learning" (Department of Education, 2002:130).

It becomes evident that for educators to be successful in their classroom management they need to understand that there are factors that act as barriers to learning and development. The Department of Education (2002:131) points out some of these factors.

#### **2.3.2.1 Socio-economic barriers**

The Department of Education (2002:131) maintains that there is a relationship between education and the socio-economic conditions

in each and every society. Hence the comments by the Department of Education (2001a:44) when they indicate that the successful implementation of inclusive education depends largely on the adequate and appropriate training of and support to educators as well as on the adequate provision of teaching and learning materials and other resources in order to meet the needs of any society.

According to the Department of Education (2002:131) South Africa is one of the countries that lacks centres of learning and other facilities, which can help to meet the educational needs of the society. This phenomenon reiterates the opinion expressed by Kotele (2000:47) when commenting that South Africa and Lesotho are two countries, which still have many limitations that retard the successful inclusive educational system, for instance, the lack of teaching and human resources, lack of funds, lack of support and lack of appropriate transportation. Inadequacies of those resources in our country may be the result of the apartheid policies and practices, which used to discriminate against people on grounds such as disability, race and gender. Some rural and many black urban schools are underdeveloped, lack teaching aids and well-qualified educators. These are seen as barriers to learning and the development of the process of learning.

#### **2.3.2.2    *Lack of access to basic services***

“One of the most significant barriers to learning ... is the inability of learners to access the educational provision that does exist and their inability to access other services, which contribute to the learning process” (Department of Education, 2002:132). During the past years South Africa used to provide facilities to communities according to their political status, race and colour. The marginalised rural areas and some black communities did not all receive



adequate learning facilities, to access information. As a result they had little or no knowledge about important learning matter as compared to their white or urban peers.

The physically disabled learners according to the Department of Education (2002:132) experience more problems because some do not have wheelchairs or those who have them cannot use them as the community centres are not wheelchair friendly. Health centres are far from the people and some are too expensive to be accessible to the poor.

#### **2.3.2.3 *Poverty and underdevelopment***

The Department of Education (2002:133) points out that under-nourishment in children leads to a lack of concentration and this affects the ability of a learner to learn effectively. Learners who go to school without food experience emotional problems which affect learning and development.

The author of this manuscript is at present teaching at a rural school where many parents and guardians are unemployed. Some of the learners at this school are orphans living with their grandparents or with their siblings only, without any income. Those learners have no proper uniforms. This is a problem because their peers humiliate them and they become withdrawn. It appears to be a barrier to learning as most of these learners tend to be under-achievers.

#### **2.3.2.4 *Factors which place learners at risk***

“Poverty, malnutrition, inadequate medical facilities, prenatal infections and infections during early childhood are mentioned as some of the factors that increase the incidence of disability among

children in developing countries” (Bouwer and Du Toit, 2000: 242). The Department of Education (2002:134) warns that people should recognise that there are some conditions, which may arise within the social, economic and political environment in which the learner lives, which may affect the learner in a negative way. A physically, emotionally or sexually abused learner may present a problem of lack of concentration in the classroom due to his/her emotional state. Hence the comments by the Department of Education (2002:134) when it states that for effective learning to take place an adverse social and emotional state of the learner will be a risk for learning breakdown. Divorce may also affect the learner negatively and cause him/her stress. Natural disasters and some epidemics also have an impact on learners.

Brigdemohan (2002:147) points out that South Africa has the fastest-growing HIV/AIDS epidemic in the world, with a higher percentage of people infected than in any other country. HIV/AIDS has affected all groups of people, young and old, black and white, literate and illiterate. It is however, impossible to deny the fact that people who were infected with HIV/AIDS were at first treated like outcasts by the society due to the stigma the society attached to the illness itself. Children of infected parents felt ashamed and were mocked by their peers, which of course could put them at risk as they may drop out from school. Some may drop out due to poverty; others became heads of families because they were orphaned and some had to supplement family income and help look after those who were ill.

#### **2.3.2.5 Attitudes**

The democratic government brought about changes in the lives of many South Africans. The education system, social system and

judicial system to name but a few, had to change their policies and practices to conform to democracy. The old system used to discriminate against people according to their race, colour, gender or disability. These discriminatory attitudes according to the Department of Education (2002:136) when directed towards learners in the education system manifest themselves as barriers to learning.

Baron and Byrne (*in*: Swart *et al.*, 2002:177) describe attitudes as "... internal representations of various aspects of the social or physical world-representation containing affective reactions to the attitude object and wide range of cognitions about it (thoughts, beliefs, judgements)". Attitude reflects past experience, shapes ongoing behaviour and serve essential functions for those who hold them. Papalia and Olds (*in*: Gordon, 2000:15) explain that attitude is "... a learned, relatively permanent way of responding to someone or something in a favourable or unfavourable manner". Hence the research undertaken by Bothma *et al.* (2000:201) found that some educators had negative attitudes towards learners who experience barriers to learning. The reasons they gave, amongst others, were that they felt they were obliged to implement policies about which they were not consulted; they did not have a clear understanding of the demands and changes they had to implement and often lacked adequate time to prepare for the implementation. This kind of attitude causes problems in both teaching and learning.

The Department of Education (2002:136) indicates that in the past learners used to be labelled as slow learners or as learners with special educational needs. As a result they became excluded or placed in a particular learning environment not because they belonged there but due to the requirements and standards set by the system of the ruling government. If people could change their

negative attitudes towards differences in our society then some barriers to learning may be overcome and the process of inclusion would stand a better chance of being successful.

#### **2.3.2.6 Inflexible curriculum**

If the curriculum is not flexible it can cause problems for learners because it will not meet their diverse needs. A flexible Curriculum requires a flexible inclusive educator to use different methods of teaching so that he/she can allow the involvement of learners with different abilities. The Department of Education (2002:137) points out that the nature of the curriculum involves different components, which are viewed as all-important in facilitating or undermining effective learning. These components are stipulated as follows:

- “The style and tempo of teaching and learning.
- What is taught?
- The way the classroom is managed and organised.
- Materials and equipment, which are used in the learning and teaching process”.

Mudau (2004:55) stressed that inflexible curriculum is detrimental to the learning and development of learners. An educator may teach at a pace which may disadvantage both slow and learners with high levels of ability. “What is taught or the subjects which learners are able to choose may limit the learner’s knowledge base or fail to develop the intellectual and emotional capacities of the learner” (Department of education 2002:138).

Sometimes people are trapped in the fallacy about gender. Where girls and boys may be forced to choose certain subjects or type of sports, not because they love or excel in them, but only because

someone believes it will be good for them. What is taught through the curriculum may often be inappropriate to the learner's life situation making learning difficult and it could contribute to learning breakdown. All these fallacies caused barriers to learners, as they were obliged to follow educational streams with which they were not comfortable.

The inaccessibility to learning materials and educators who lack in-service training in managing the diverse needs of learners in a classroom are some of the contributory factors to learning problems. The Department of Education (2002:138) indicates that blind learners are unable to access the Curriculum effectively if Braille facilities and other equipment are not available and also due to the lack of educators who are skilled to teach Braille and know how to use the audio equipment. "Assessment processes are often inflexible and designed to only assess particular kinds of knowledge and the aspect of learning, such as the amount of information that can be memorised rather than the learner's understanding of the concept involved" (Department of Education, 2002:139). Fortunately Curriculum 2005 is designed to accommodate all learners. In OBE "... learners move through the learning process at their own pace and can be assessed in a multitude of ways, no separate Curriculum is needed" (Pringle 2002: 81).

#### **2.3.2.7    *Language and communication***

For most learners, English is not their mother tongue though it is fundamental to learning and development (Kotele, 2000:121). As English is their second language they experience linguistic difficulties and somehow feel that they are not competent enough to be able to understand some of their learning materials. In addition to that the Department of Education (2002:139) states that "... second

language learners are often subjected to low expectations, discrimination, and lack of cultural peers”, as compared to their peers who are more conversant with the language than they are.

Deaf learners somehow experience more problems because their first language is sign language and this causes barriers to learning. Furthermore the Department of Education (2002:139) state that somehow there are “... misperceptions with regard to morphological, syntactic, discourse, pragmatic, “phonological” and semantic structures of sign language...”. There are learners who are non-speaking due to their physical, intellectual or mental disability and they will need Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) strategies so that they can be part of the learning process. “AAC is an instructional approach that can facilitate students with Little or No Functional Speech (LNFS) towards more fully realising their potential” Lloyd, Fuller and Arvidson (in: Dada and Alant, 2002:213).

Moreover they warn that if teachers have a negative attitude towards AAC this will form barriers to interaction and the implementation of AAC strategies within an inclusive classroom, will be unsuccessful. Dada and Alant (2002:213) elaborate on this theme saying that the main aim of AAC intervention within an inclusive classroom is to enable learners with LNFS to attain their fullest potential through meeting their communication and learning needs with effective communication skills.

The above authors expressed themselves more explicitly when they averred that AAC is the “... supplementation or replacement of natural speech and/or writing using aided and unaided symbols”. In this regard unaided communication refers to symbols that require only parts of the body (for example facial expressions, gestures, signs and speech) to facilitate communication, whereas aided

communication refers to symbols that use an external device or aid to facilitate communication (such as devices and communication boards). Language and communication are however, barriers which arise from the Curriculum itself as it stipulates the medium of teaching and learning to be followed at school. This needs to be addressed for effective implementation of inclusive education in our country.

#### ***2.3.2.8 Inaccessibility and unsafe built environment***

Most of the South African learning centres are physically not accessible to all because they were not built to accommodate the physically disabled learners. Department of Education (2002:140) indicate that there are some learners who use wheelchairs and other mobility devices, which specifically need ramps instead of stairs. This indicates that these learners will be unable to have access to those places without ramps, which is a form of discrimination. An inclusive classroom should guard against these discriminatory factors. It should consider the sizes of desks to be used and have enough space to cater for all learners who use crutches or wheelchairs and who use computers as their learning aids. Some buildings are dilapidated due to lack of funds. This may even be a threat to the children's lives.

#### ***2.3.2.9 Lack of parental recognition and involvement***

Managing an inclusive classroom without parental involvement and support is virtually impossible as parents are the learners' primary caregivers. When parents take a back seat in the education of their children effective learning is threatened and hindered. The Department of Education (2002:140) rightly predicted that if parents are not encouraged to be involved in their children's education and

not empowered and enlightened as to what is expected of them, they will definitely lack interest in supporting educators to achieve their goals.

Engelbrecht *et al.* (2003:42) viewed parental involvement from a different angle when they stated that lack of parental involvement is often related to social issues, for instance, parents who are illiterate, have HIV/AIDS, abuse alcohol, are poor and unemployed and those who are ashamed of their children with disabilities. It is without doubt that all these matters can cause barriers to learning and development.

Engelbrecht *et al.* (1999:55) endorse the fact that the new policies and legislations in South Africa support the optimal involvement of parents in the education of their children and these policies emphasise that parents must be involved in the process of identifying barriers and means to overcome them. Furthermore they maintain that parents can play a major role in providing an extra hand where teachers need additional support in the school or classroom. Parents are also responsible for developing local school policy and governing the school, as it would suit their communities.

The Department of Education (2002:140) is convinced that if parents and the community at large could be well informed about their importance in this course of action, they would become involved and take full responsibility in supporting their children.

#### **2.3.2.10 Disability**

Burden (2000:29) defines disability as "... the social restrictions and constraints (barriers) imposed on persons with impairments in their pursuit of full and equal participation". "Impairments are defined as



differences in body structures (physical) for instance visual and hearing impairments and in body function (physiological), such as chronic health conditions, which are manifested as a significant variation from established statistical norms". Burden (2000:29) also stresses that people should always try to address people with disability by making a reference to the person first, then disability for example a person with disability rather than a disabled person. By using these dignified words we could encourage equality for all.

The Department of Education (2002:141) mentions that "... for most learners with disabilities, learning breakdown and exclusion occurs where their particular learning needs are not met as a result of barriers in the learning environment or broader society which handicap the learner and prevent effective learning from taking place". It further explains that some of the learners experience learning breakdown due to intrinsic, cognitive or learning difficulties in areas such as in acquiring skills in for example, literacy or numeracy or in the organisation or management of their own learning.

### **2.3.3. Overcoming (preventing) barriers to learning and development**

"If the education system is to promote effective learning and prevent learning breakdown, it is imperative that mechanisms be structured into the system to break down existing barriers. Such mechanisms should develop the capacity of the system to overcome barriers which may arise, prevent barriers from occurring, and promote the development of an effective learning and teaching environment" (Department of Education, 2002:141).

The barriers that the learner experiences manifest themselves in many ways, the learner may sometimes be inattentive, frequently absenting himself /herself from school, being withdrawn and also by performing below his/ her potential. A competent inclusive educator should be able to identify these learners, monitor them and try to meet their needs, support them and try to concentrate more on what the learners achieve and not on what they cannot do. Hamacheck (in: Khumalo 2000:40) maintains that good and effective teaching relies mostly on the teacher perceiving problems experienced by the learners as real and providing resources to overcome these problems.

In addition the Department of Education (2002:141) suggests that in order to overcome barriers to learning, there should for example be the following: for example initiatives aimed at providing for learners who have been excluded from the system by both state and non-governmental organisations; innovative practices for recognising and accommodating diversity; training programmes which equip educators to deal with these diverse needs and organisation and development of teaching and learning environments.

## **2.4 RESEARCH FINDINGS**

There is a long-standing debate among scholars, policy makers, and others about the nature and value of inclusive education. Studies show that this system of education is echoed worldwide. A study by Naicker (1999) confirmed that different countries support inclusive education. It also indicated that some countries, for example, Australia, Brazil, Cameroon and Ethiopia offered support in teaching learners who experience emotional and behavioural disturbance, mental retardation, severe learning difficulties, physical / motor disabilities, visual impairment, hearing impairment, language

disorder and learning disabilities. In addition to that a study by Materechera (2002) indicated that Ghana is also one of the developing countries which support inclusion and since it was implemented there has been a great improvement, learners have better opportunities to access services which contribute to the learning process. Therefore this study concludes that inclusive education is there to provide quality education for all learners.

Valued as it is worldwide, inclusive education has some challenges that have an impact on its success. Research undertaken by Avramindis and Norwich (2002) Mudau (2004) and Sidogi (2001) found that most educators have a negative attitude towards it. In their studies they reflected that some educators felt that it would be unfair to include learners who experience blindness and deafness as barriers to learning in a regular classroom would make them feel uncomfortable and retard their progress. They mentioned that their peers would laugh at them and gossip about their condition. It is thus evident that a key factor to ensure that management of inclusion in a classroom is a success depends largely on the positive attitude of educators. Hence a study by UNESCO (2000) in Romania which revealed that negative attitudes of educators and adults are the major barrier to inclusion.

On the other hand in a study conducted by the Department of Education (2001a) in Mpumalanga and Eastern Cape Provinces, Engelbrecht *et al.* (2003) and Hay *et al.* (2001) revealed that there are some educators who showed interest in inclusion and are open and willing to learn more about barriers to learning.

Despite their interests and willingness to acquire skills in managing inclusion, they still feel threatened and stressed about the demands that are put on them by this system. Results from the study by

Materechera (2002) in Northwest, Bothma *et al.* (2000) Engelbrecht *et al.* (2001) Hall (2002) and Hay *et al.* (2001) reflected that lack of in-service training in inclusive education is one of the sources of stress in managing inclusive classes. A study of Gordon (2000) in Gauteng Province also confirmed that the ongoing professional development was one of the greatest concerns that educators expressed.

It should however be noted that not only the attitudes of educators have an impact on learning, the attitudes of parents also have impact in the successful implementation of inclusive education. The results from the study by Materechera (2002) in North West reflected that 87% of the respondents indicated that if parents were not involved in the learning of their children, it may result in their children's learning being difficult. This is supported by Ainscow, Farrell and Tweddle (2000) study in England when they found that the partnership between the Local education system (LEA) and the parents played a vital role in promoting inclusive education. Parents should therefore not be left behind in managing inclusion effectively.

A study conducted by Swart and Pettipher (2006) in South Africa found that educators believe that parents also need training as much as educators in order to change their attitude towards inclusion. They indicated that there were few parents who were still sceptical about it. Some parents of learners who were in class with the learners with disabilities expressed their concern that their children's learning needs were not always met. In an extreme case, one parent did not want her child to be in the same class as the learner with a barrier to learning.

Studies done by Brown and Gibson (2006) in Britain demonstrated that parents of typical learners increasingly recognize the benefits of

inclusion for their own children. These parents also said that they did not believe that their children's education was at all compromised by the presence of the disabled peers. In contrast to that parents of learners who experience barriers to learning were reluctant to embrace an inclusive setting for their children. Understandably, they had fears that their children would not fare well in an inclusive setting whereas in a segregated setting they would be more protected and well understood.

Despite the differences that people have about inclusive education a study by Brown and Gibson (2006) in Britain reflected that everyone benefits from the inclusion of learners who experience barriers to learning in regular classroom. These authors found that learners who experience barriers to learning are far more likely to realize their economic and other success when they leave the school system. The management of inclusive education needs the commitment of all involved.

## **2.5 CONCLUSION**

This chapter focused on the perspective of managing inclusive education in the classroom. It also discussed competencies that educators need in order to manage their inclusive classes as well as the teaching strategies needed to accommodate all their learners. The barriers that learners encounter in learning and how they may be prevented were discussed. Finally the effective classroom management techniques for inclusive education were highlighted. The following chapter will be an overview of methods and procedures employed to answer the research question, which focuses on managing inclusive education in the classroom.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHOD OF RESEARCH

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a discussion of the research design and methodology. Research design according to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:30) describes the procedures on how to conduct research including: "... when, from whom and under what conditions the data will be obtained". It also indicates how the research is set up explaining the methods that will be used to collect data and the procedure in general for conducting the study. Research methods (methodology) "... are the ways one collects and analyses data" (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001:9). In addition to that Mouton and Marais (in: Mudau, 2004:101) define research methodology as:

- a study of a research process in all its broadness and complexity;
- the various methods and techniques that are employed;
- the rationale that underlines the use of such methods;
- the limitations of each technique;
- the role of assumptions and presuppositions in selecting methods and techniques;
- the influence of methodological preferences on the types of data analysis employed; and
- the subsequent interpretations of findings.

The qualitative research design, sampling and the data collection strategies that will be used in this research will be discussed.

### **3.2 THE RESEARCH DESIGN (QUALTATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN)**

The researcher will use a qualitative research design to investigate the management of inclusive education in the classroom. Qualitative inquiring according to Mudau (2004:102) gives a researcher the opportunity to enter into the person's experience, and by so doing one gets a different response regarding particular aspects of concern in a study. Hence the comments of Taylor and Bogdan (in: Sethosa, 2001:144) that the qualitative approach "... enables researchers to view their respondents as human beings with ideas, feelings and motives rather than as mere sources of information. Their ideas, motives and feelings may yield useful descriptive data". According to Cloete (2002:39) a qualitative approach is relevant to an investigation into inclusive education. The approach has been used before for gathering information in special education. Due to the uniqueness of learners having different categories of disabilities as well as within them the approach allowed researchers to collect rich information.

Keeping the above in mind, this is the reason why the researcher opted for the qualitative research design. The aim of the research is to examine how educators manage their inclusive classrooms. Educators will be given a platform to express themselves in the interviews, explaining how they feel about inclusive education. They will also be given an opportunity to make suggestions on how to improve inclusion in schools and what educators actually need to be successful in their management of inclusion.

### **3.2.1 The research site**

The researcher has chosen Maloka Primary School as the learning site for research purposes. Maloka Primary School is situated in a rural area in the Mpumalanga Province. It lies to the East of Hammanskraal at Pankop Village in the Nkangala region. It was established in 1950. The school has changed from a separate education system to an inclusive system. Maloka was one of the 10 pilot schools chosen in the Nkangala region to implement inclusive education in the year 2000.

The researcher selected this school in particular because of its outstanding academic results and an excellent management record. The main purpose of the investigation is to gain a deeper understanding or insight into the management of the inclusive classroom from the relevant participants. Educators at Maloka Primary are regarded by the researcher as those participants who have experience in this phenomenon of managing the inclusive classrooms.

The school serves approximately 400 learners between the ages of 7 and 13 years. It offers instruction to learners from grade 1 to grade 7. Maloka Primary has historically drawn its learners mainly from the surrounding area. Most of the learners are from disadvantaged families.

Interestingly, the management of the school took the initiative and opened its doors for inclusion by providing in-service training for its educators. Workshops on remedial and inclusive education were



organized for educators to attend. The initiative was taken by the management team of Maloka Primary before it was nominated to be one of the pilot schools in the region.

The above initiative may, however, be an indication that educators at the research site have an interest in teaching learners who experience barriers to learning and they also support inclusion. Moreover, the Department of Education (2001a:19) in its research also found that educators in Maloka Primary gave a 100% indication of interest and support in teaching inclusive classes, irrespective of their (training) skills in teaching learners with barriers to learning.

### **3.2.2 Sampling**

Given that the objective of this research is to examine how educators manage their inclusive classrooms and the competencies that they need to manage the inclusive classes, it is necessary to select a sample of educators who have experienced this phenomenon. Makhado (2002:103) stresses the fact that it is important to select information-rich cases, as this will help the researcher to address the purpose of the research. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:401) further recommend purposeful sampling because the samples that are chosen are likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomena the researcher is investigating.

The researcher has chosen the sample purposefully, the reason being to maximize the depth of data elicited. The research subjects that were chosen were 2 grade 5 classes and 6 educators. The Grade 5A class comprise 50 learners (27 girls and 23 boys) aged between 11

and 12 years. Grade 5B class comprise 48 learners (26 girls and 22 boys) aged between 11 and 12.

The research was limited to a small group of teachers ( $n = 6$ ) which is acceptable and typical of qualitative research. The majority of educators at Maloka Primary were female and black. Six females were chosen as participants. The educators are aged between 30 and 47 with more than 8 years of teaching experience at the research site. All six educators were qualified having Junior Primary Teachers Diplomas (JPTD) and Senior Primary Teachers Diplomas (SPTD). Two educators from the sample have BA degrees in Education and the other two have certificates in Remedial Education.

The training of these educators did not cover inclusive education as a training module. Although their diplomas covered assessment and different teaching methods, the curriculum did not address the teaching of learners who experience barriers to learning. Workshops were the only initiatives which introduced the educators to the concept of inclusive education. The six educators use subject teaching in grade 5. Different educators teach different subjects, unlike in lower grades where one educator, the class teacher, teaches all the subjects.

The advantage of choosing the six educators from the research site was that at the time of the research these educators formed the Learner Support Team (LST) in the school. These educators are therefore the small knowledgeable and informative group teaching inclusive classes. In this regard McMillan and Schumacher (2001:398) maintain that qualitative researchers investigate in-depth small,

distinct groups as the researcher is concerned with understanding the social phenomena from the research participants' perspective.

Condryn (**in:** Sidogi, 2001:120) states clearly that qualitative research seeks to identify behaviour and also to understand the meaning in a more complex manner and thus lends itself to the use of small sample approach. In other words qualitative research focuses on the detail and quality of an individual or small group's experience rather than the way behavioural traits or individuals with specific characteristics are distributed in a known group. As Sidogi (2001:120) puts it, "... the validity of the sample depends not so much upon the number of the cases studied, as upon the degree to which an informant faithfully represents a certain cultural experience".

### **3.2.3 Pilot testing**

According to Mertens (**in:** Sethosa, 2001:159) pilot testing is all about trying out the research procedure with a sample similar to the intended group of participants. It is also done so that a researcher is able to face validity and improve the questions that he/she is going to ask the chosen participants.

In this study the research was piloted in Thipe Primary school. Thipe Primary is one of the primary schools in Makapanstad Circuit in Northwest Province. The above school had implemented inclusive education some years back. Educators at the pilot school have experience in managing inclusive education in their classrooms.

The choice of the school depended largely on the fact that it was adopted by the University of Pretoria. The University used this pilot school as one

of their centres for sending their students to do practical lessons concerning inclusive education. The researcher selected 2 grade 5 classes and 2 educators. The classes comprised 45 learners in each. There were 22 girls and 23 boys in one class and 24 girls and 15 boys in the other class. The two educators in the pilot school were qualified, one educator has a Senior Primary Teachers Diploma (SPTD) and the other a University Diploma in Education (UDEP). These educators have also attended workshops in inclusive education.

It transpired from the interviews with the pilot educators that they have experienced many problems after their school implemented the inclusive education system. These educators at Thipe Primary also suggested some ways to improve classroom management strategies to be more accommodative to learners who experience barriers to learning.

Questions about different strategies and methods in teaching inclusive classroom were then added to the interview schedule. It is thus evident that pilot testing is of value, as Marshall and Rossman (in: Sethosa, 2001:159) emphasize that "... questions have to be pilot tested on a small group to determine the usefulness and reliability of the information before it is administered to a larger group of respondents".

### **3.3 DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES**

Data collection strategies in this investigation included observations, interviews and the analysis of documents. The main strategies were

focus group interviews and observations aimed at obtaining information on managing inclusive classrooms.

### **3.3.1 Observations**

Observations were undertaken in order to get answers to the research questions, by observing educators in action teaching their learners. Engelbrecht *et al.* (2003:17) believe that "...observation is a major means of collecting data in qualitative research". The reason being that it offers a first hand account of the situation under investigation. One of the objectives of this study is to examine how educators manage their inclusive classrooms. However, it is therefore relevant to use observational method in order to get valid and reliable answers since it (observation) expects the researcher to be part of the people at the research site, observing the behaviour in the environment.

McMillan and Schumacher (2001:273) also indicate that the "...observational method relies on a researcher's seeing and hearing things and recording these observations, rather than relying on subject's self-report responses to questions or statements". So a primary challenge in an inclusive classroom is the teaching strategies that educators have to employ to accommodate all the learners in the classroom. Therefore, through observation the researcher will have:

- first-hand information on how educators vary their strategies;
- insight into how they differentiate their activities to give every learner an opportunity to participate ; and
- opportunity to see if there are barriers to their efforts to apply different teaching strategies in teaching their learners.

Furthermore Leedy and Omrod (2005:145) point out that observations in a qualitative study are intentionally unstructured and free flowing, allowing the researcher to be flexible, shifting his/her focus from one thing to another as some new events or important objects present themselves in the situation. The researcher observed six educators from two different grade 5 classrooms at the research site. There are 9 periods for different learning areas in a day which run for 30 minutes each. Educators were observed for a full day from the first to the last period. Due to the fact that in grade 5 educators use subject teaching the researcher had the opportunity to observe them for two consecutive days.

Marshall and Rossman (in: Van Zyl, 2002:34) stress that "... observation is the systematic description of events, behaviour and artifacts within its context by the researcher". The researcher will then describe the behaviour of the educators and have the opportunity to understand whether there are barriers in the classroom or there are promoters of inclusive teaching. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:439) also reveal the point of view that when a researcher observes, there are some non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice, body movement and other unverballed social interactions that suggest the subtle meaning of language that he/she (the researcher) registers. Observation also allows for a holistic interpretation of the phenomenon that is investigated when it is used in combination with interviews and document analysis.

The researcher was interested in the following:

- methods of teaching that educators used;
- the classroom factors that serve as barriers to the success of inclusive education; and
- the factors that may promote the efforts for the application of inclusive teaching approaches.

### **3.3.2 Documents**

McMillan and Schumacher (2001:42) explain documents as records of past events that are written or printed; they may be anecdotal notes, letters, diaries, tax records and receipts, maps, journals, newspapers and official minutes. Merriam (in: Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2003:17) uses documents as an umbrella term to refer to a wide range of written, visual and physical material relevant to the research study. Given the objective of this study on examining the management of inclusive education in the classroom, the researcher needs to understand how they managed inclusion in the past. The researcher therefore interprets the facts from the documents in order to provide the explanations of the past, and clarifies the collective educational meaning that may be underlying current issues and practices.

Documents collected during fieldwork included curriculum frameworks, policy documents on inclusion, books, departmental circulars, senior phase documents and the school's vision and mission statement. Other official documents were:

- Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: 2001.

- National learner support and development conference: 2002.
- Baseline study on inclusive education in Mpumalanga and Northern Cape pilot schools: 2001.
- Draft guidelines for the implementation of inclusive education: 2002.

### **3.3.3 Focused group interviews**

The focused group interview is one of the chosen methods used in this study to collect data. It is "... a strategy for obtaining a better understanding of a problem or an assessment of a problem; concerning a new product, program or idea by interviewing a purposefully sampled group of people rather than interviewing each person individually (McMillan and Schumacher 2001:455). Krueger (in: Van Zyl, 2002:30) recommends that a focus group should consist of between 6 to 10 participants in order to get as many different opinions as possible. Hence 6 educators from the research site were chosen to participate in the study.

As educators at Maloka Primary School have experience in managing inclusive education in their classrooms, the researcher has purposefully selected them in order to clarify, extend, qualify or even contest the findings of the literature study. Gasant (2002:88) emphasized that in focus group interviews "... participants share feelings, experiences, facts, opinions, perceptions and their motives around a certain topic".

According to Van Zyl (2002: 28) focus group interviews "... are utilized to obtain data from a small group of participants and these



participants must have common interests that are linked to the subject that is researched". It is for this reason that the researcher has chosen educators (from Maloka Primary) who have an interest in teaching inclusive classes. In addition to that, some of these educators are furthering their studies following the stream of inclusive education.

It is interesting to note that the research group will provide more light on some issues, which the researcher was not aware of, which are of value. The above issue is qualified by the fact that the interview questions will be open-ended and less structured. Open-ended questions allow the participants to answer the questions in a unique way. Participants will be free to make comments or ask questions which will allow for probing, making follow-up questions and leading to the stimulation of in-depth discussion of the subjects. Their inputs will, however, elicit new ideas on how to manage inclusive education in the classroom and it will be of great benefit to the study. The advantage of a focus group interview, according to Van Zyl (2002: 29), is that it can be compiled at a very low cost and within a short period of time.

#### **3.3.4 The interviews**

The venue for the interviews was the Principal's office as the educators unanimously chose it because they felt it was conducive for all of them. Chairs were arranged in such a way that the participants were facing each other and also allowing the interviewer to make eye contact with all of them during the interview. The educators were briefed about the procedure before the interview started. They were

asked to be open and honest about inclusive education. Their inputs about what they lack as educators, availability of facilities and their competencies were of value to the research.

The different strategies that educators feel could be of value to promote the management of inclusive education, especially in the classroom, was highly appreciated. Educators were made aware that they are valuable participants so they have to air their views confidently and honestly. Even though the questions were carefully selected and phrased in advance, they were semi-structured and open-ended allowing for probing and clarification where necessary. The researcher had to guard against asking leading question that would not contribute to the study itself.

McMillan and Schumacher (2001:269) indicate that "... semi-structured questions have no choices from which the respondent selects an answer. Rather, the question is phrased to allow for individual responses". Even if the questions are open-ended, the fact is that they are fairly specific in their intent. The questions were arranged from simple to complex allowing the participants to relax, feel at home, gain confidence and be ready to expand their answers. The researcher used the questions as guidelines and did not stick to the format dogmatically.

### **3.4 DATA ANALYSIS**

Merriam (in: Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2003: 18) clearly indicates that "... data analysis is the process of making sense out of the data. Making sense out of data involves consolidating, reducing, and interpreting

what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read – it is the process of making meaning. Data analysis is a complex process that involves moving back and forth between concrete bits of data and abstract concepts, between inductive and deductive reasoning, between description and interpretation. These meanings or understandings or insights constitute the findings of a study.”

During the interviews notes were taken by the researcher. At the same time the interviews were tape-recorded. The interview questions were the same for all the participants unless there was a need for the question to be rephrased for the sake of clarification. To ensure accuracy the researcher read the transcripts and listened to the audiotapes repeatedly in order to increase the understanding of the participants’ viewpoints. Then the information gathered was transcribed and supplemented with the notes taken. The whole process was completed immediately after the interviews had been conducted.

Managing the collected data included coding the data. The codes were used to identify aspects relevant to the questions and these coded aspects were clustered into themes. Categories and subcategories started to emerge. Literature and observation assisted the researcher in identifying the final categories. The categorization of the data was undertaken to ensure clarity and simplification of data so that it could be applied in the field.

### **3.4.1 Validity and reliability**

The qualitative researcher as the person who collects data is accountable for the results of the research findings. These findings should, however, be credible and trustworthy so that they may be applied in the field and be useful to the people who read the research findings. Khumalo (2000:52) stressed that to establish the trustworthiness of the data in qualitative research it is important that the researcher should use different procedures. The two concepts that are established in the notion of trustworthiness are validity and reliability.

Makhado (2002:116) explains validity as "... the degree to which scientific explanations or phenomena match the realities of the world". Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh, Best and Kahn (**in:** Sethosa, 2001:146) describe validity as "... the extent to which an instrument or procedure measures what it is suppose to measure". In essence reality is multi-dimensional, ever-changing and in a sense subjective therefore it could be difficult to ensure validity.

Silverman (**in:** Makhado, 2002:118) defines reliability as "... the degree to which the finding is independent of accidental circumstances of the research". In addition to that reliability as Sethosa (2001:149) puts it "... is the degree of consistency with which the instrument or procedure measures whatever it is supposed to measure". Meaning that if this measuring instrument is administered to a different group of respondents, under different circumstances, that is time and venue, it would lead to the same observations and

conclusions The tape recorder and the transcripts are however materials that have important implications for reliability and accuracy.

Smit (2002:24) is of the opinion that the validity of qualitative research lies in its internal validity rather than its external validity. By internal validity, the above author refers to internal logical relationships that have to do with goals, reasons, and meaning. It deals with how the study's findings match reality. According to Makhado (2002:116) internal validity addresses the following questions:

- Do researchers actually observe what they think they observe?
- Do researchers actually hear the meanings that they think they hear?

The importance of the issue will be to understand the actions of the participants. However, the strength of this research lies in its internal validity. Best and Kahn (in: Sethosa, 2001:157) stress the fact that "... validity is greater when the interview is based upon a carefully designed structure, thus ensuring that the significant information is elicited."

The inclusion of different sources of data collection in a research increases the reliability and validity of the study results. To ensure the application of the above concepts the researcher has included triangulation. According to Sethosa (2001:157) "... triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods in the collection of data in order to compensate for the limitations of each method". The researcher, however, has used different journals, books, dissertations, theses,

semi-structured interviews, observations, pilot testing and other relevant documents to enhance the credibility of her interpretations.

### **3.4.2 Anonymity and confidentiality**

The participants who took part in the study were reassured that their names would not be used in the transcriptions, the reason being to protect their privacy.

Keeping the above in mind McMillan and Schumacher (2001:421) remind us that "... researchers have a dual responsibility that is:

- protection of the participants` confidence from other persons in the setting whose private information might enable them to identify them; and
- protection of the informants from the general reading public".

De Vos (**in:** Makhado, 2002:122) mentioned that "... confidentiality implies that only the researcher and possibly a few others should be aware of the identity of participants, and should also have made a commitment with regard to confidentiality. Anonymity means that no one, including the researcher, should be able to identify any subject afterwards".

Cohen and Manion (**in:** Makhado, 2002:122) summed this up succinctly when pointing out that "... a participant or a subject is considered anonymous when the researcher or another person cannot identify the participant or subjects from the information

provided". It is also unethical to identify an individual participant in the research study.

### **3.4.3 Ethical guidelines**

When a researcher needs to conduct an investigation into sensitive issues he/she needs to be ethical. Being ethical one has to apply a system of moral principles to prevent harming the people the researcher is working with. "Research that harms or offends, or that appears to be conducted incompletely, invalidly, or without due regard for consequences, is likely to result in someone questioning the prerogative of the scientist to conduct such research" (Makhado 2002: 120).

It is, however, important to note that qualitative researchers in most cases face ethical dilemmas and have to make decisions to resolve them in order to continue with the study. According to Engelbrecht *et al.* (2003:18) in qualitative studies, ethical dilemmas are likely to emerge at two points, namely, during the collection of data and in dissemination of findings.

Furthermore McMillan and Schumacher (2001:420) warn that "... qualitative researchers need to be sensitive to ethical principles because of their research topic, face-to-face interactive data collection, an emergent design, and reciprocity with participants". Moreover, criteria for a research design involve a variety of issues. Amongst those issues are the selection of information-rich informants, efficient research strategies and adherence to research ethics. Cohen and Manion (*in*: Makhado, 2002:120) asserts that "... most qualitative

researchers devise roles that elicit co-operation, trust, openness and acceptance, and should take into account the effects of the research on participants in order to act in such a way as to preserve their dignity as human beings”.

### **3.5 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter the researcher explained the use of interviews, observations and document analysis, the aim being to try and produce a wealth of descriptive data that hopefully would explain the complexity and promote broader insight into the field of inclusion.

Chapter four will attempt to present a detailed description and analyze the data that was collected using the methods described in chapter 3.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **PRESENTATION OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The views presented in this chapter are summarised from the interviews that were conducted from the focused group, observations and document analysis. The researcher contacted the principal of Maloka primary school requesting his permission to conduct research at the school. This was done in a letter attached as Appendix A. The researcher was granted permission to conduct the study. The researcher conducted focused group interviews with 6 educators from Maloka primary school and another 2 from the pilot school. There were 22 questions which were categorized into groups of common themes in order to have a clear understanding and a flow of information. The interview transcripts are attached as Appendix B. The data obtained during interviews and from observation were then prepared for analysis as described in Chapter 3.

#### **4.2 DATA ANALYSIS**

McMillan and Schumacher (2001:461) define data analysis as "... primarily an inductive process of organizing the data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among the categories". In this investigation analysis of data obtained from the observations, focused group interviews and document analysis was conducted

using content analysis. The analysis entailed identifying, coding and categorizing the primary patterns in the data. The interviews were recorded by means of an audio tape which made it possible for the researcher to listen to the responses again.

### **4.3 RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The following main themes recurred in the interviews:

#### **4.3.1 Perceptions**

##### ***4.3.1.1 Definition of inclusive education***

Clarification of statements indicated that the participants do not have a good understanding of inclusive education but are clear regarding the meaning of the concepts. All participants indicated that inclusive education promotes education for all children irrespective of their disability so that they can be educated in the same classroom with other learners of their age. People who have little understanding of inclusion believe that learners who experience barriers to learning need to be placed in separate classes. It was earlier the norm that learners were separated according to race, colour, and various disabilities. After 1994 the education system was changed to accommodate all. There is no doubt that many changes occurred in education. Slabbert (2001:290) expresses the implication of these changes as follows:

“If education wants to be relevant in this new world and if it wants to claim that it prepares learners for life, then a new paradigm is also

what education needs. But a new paradigm in education changes everything about education especially the perception of what education actually is, and it retains nothing of what education formerly was perceived to be. This is the non-negotiable point of departure if a new paradigm in education is to be achieved and the challenge for those who pursue such venture”.

Some of the responses defining inclusive education are:

- It is simply making space for all children, including those with disabilities and learning barriers and putting them together with those who are physically functional.
- It is a learning education which includes learners with learning barriers, that are physically challenged or impaired, into the mainstream school.
- Inclusive education includes all learners, irrespective of their greater or lesser difficulties, in gaining access to education in the mainstream.
- Inclusive education is the response to the diverse needs of all learners and ensuring quality education through appropriate curricula.
- It is the education whereby all learners, irrespective of their disabilities, are included in the mainstream of a school.

- Inclusive education caters for all learners irrespective of any disability. All the learners can show their potentials.
- Inclusive education is a type of education which allows learners with special education needs to be accommodated in a normal school.

The above definitions show insight into and extensive knowledge of the practice of inclusive education. An interesting manifestation was observed, namely, that the educators who participated in the interviews practised what they preached as their classes were inclusive.

The Department of Education (2001b:16) explains that inclusive education is about acknowledging that all children and youths can learn and accepting the fact that all learners are different in some learning needs which need to be respected to maximize their participation in the culture and curricula of educational institutions. The above explanation, however, encompasses all the information about inclusive education. The interesting issue is that the definitions of the participants are encompassed in the above explanation. In a way this could be a good indication of their understanding of the concept.

#### **4.3.1.2 Views on inclusive education**

All the participants were positive about inclusion. They all supported the system because of its non-discriminating nature. They pointed out that the system gives every learner an opportunity to participate

fully in the process of learning. The participants also indicated that it was a positive step the government had taken, even though they viewed it from different perspectives. One of the participants stated that "... every parent needs his/her child to be accepted in this world". Another one gave a financial perspective as she mentioned that "... since special schools were expensive some disabled learners were unable to attend so with inclusion every learner is accommodated". This latter participant gave her reason, guided by the constitution, that no one should be discriminated against due to colour, race, sex or disability. Lastly two other participants highlighted the issue of drop-outs at schools which are caused by, among others, the inflexible curriculum content which does not respond to the educational needs of all learners. An inflexible curriculum is one of the main problems because it does not accommodate all learners, for example, those who are physically disabled, hard of hearing and those who are visually impaired. These types of learners tend to leave school not because they do not have talent or they are unintelligent, but because the system does not accommodate them.

#### ***4.3.1.3 Admission of learners in regular schools***

Three participants supported the principle's admitting learners with barriers to being taught in the regular school. Two participants were unsure about their feelings as they indicated that they did not yet have a complete understanding of inclusion. One of the participants had some doubts even though she supported the idea that all learners should be admitted in regular schools. She stated that there should be enough human resources to help these learners before

they are admitted to avoid negligence and lack of individual attention.

#### **4.3.2 Availability of resources**

The participants had some doubts as to whether, what they have in their school was suitable to enable educators to efficiently deal with diverse learning needs in their classrooms. All participants mentioned that the teaching and learning materials available were computers, charts and textbooks. According to the researcher's observation there were only two computers. The researcher felt that there was a need for additional computers to meet the needs of inclusive education. Inclusion expects all learners to have equal access to all the resources and have equal opportunity to use them maximally. Farrell (2003:24) recommends the use of computers stressing that learners can access information from the internet sites by downloading it on to a computer. That information can be read by a screen reader through speech synthesis, magnification or Braille.

The researcher observed one educator at the research site teaching learners using charts. While some were busy with those materials, the educator gave other learners an opportunity to look for information on the computer. Those who were using computers seemed to be enjoying the experience and it was fun for them. After downloading the information the other group had to follow and do the same. If learners were given enough opportunity to practise computer usage on a daily basis for a longer period with many computers around, the researcher believes it would be of great value as learners seemed to benefit a lot from it. The participants

stated that they have charts in different classrooms which help them to teach learners about things that they see. This is very important. One participant argued that even though they have the materials it is a fact that these materials were not plentiful which in a way hampered their progress and success. According to the researcher's observation most of the teaching aids were hand-made which supports the claim of insufficient materials made by the above participants.

Their response to the issue of support they receive from the school, parents and from the department of education in order to enable them to be effective now follows.

#### ***4.3.2.1 Departmental support***

The participants were all enthusiastic about the support they received from the government. They all intimated that they had attended workshops on inclusive education. However, the participants felt that the time allocated for workshops was insufficient because inclusive education is a new system which needs intensive training. One participant emphasized that workshops should be on an ongoing basis until educators felt that they were well equipped to teach inclusive classes effectively.

The participants also stressed that they were not acquainted with the principles of inclusive education and moreover that inclusion was not part of their curriculum when they were trained at their colleges. All the participants reiterated time and again that they were never exposed to teaching learners who experience barriers to

learning in their regular classes. This made them feel insecure and inadequate.

Virtually all the participants expressed the wish to receive extra support from other role players for successful management of inclusive education in the classroom. Among others the following were high on the list:

- Learning and teaching materials that are relevant to teaching learners who experience barriers to learning effectively e.g. audio-visual equipment (over-head projectors) assistive devices and more computers.
- Sponsorships from different companies and to have opportunities to undertake some educational excursions in order to be exposed to other exciting and educative situations.
- More classrooms which will minimize overcrowding of learners, and allow educators to balance the pupil teacher ratio which is approximately 1:35.
- Assistant teachers or volunteers who will help them manage these learners in the classroom as they need more supervision. This is corroborated by Prinsloo's findings (2001:345) when claiming that community-based involvement for inclusive classrooms is essential where members of the community are involved in actualising the full potential of learners.
- To be developed in Arts and Craft skills for teaching learners who are severely struggling in learning theoretical activities.
- Suitable buildings which are wheelchair friendly, is one of their important needs. Most South African learning centres are physically not accessible to all learners because they were not



built to accommodate the physically disabled learners. Educators felt that the buildings were not safe. It is thus important, according to the participants that they need to be provided with adequate buildings.

It is interesting to note that the Department of Education has committed itself to establishing district-based support teams aimed at strengthening of education support services in South Africa. According to the Department of Education (2002:86) district-based support teams refers to "... an integrated professional support service provided at district level by support providers, employed by the Department of Education, who draw on the expertise of education institutions and various community resources in their area". The main function of these teams is to help education institutions to identify and address barriers to learning in order to promote effective teaching and learning in local education institutions. The relevancy of educational support includes classroom and organizational support, and specifically providing learner and educator support, curriculum and institutional development and lastly, administrative support. In other words, if the Department of Education's support system can be properly implemented, it will address the problems of the educators in inclusive classrooms.

#### ***4.3.2.2 School support***

All the participants agreed that the school supports them with learning materials. The participants also indicated that they form part of the site-based team (Teacher Support Team) which was

established two years ago. Nevertheless, the participants expressed a feeling of inadequacy in how to support other educators since they were not experts in that field. The researcher felt that the participants did not have much to say about what kind of support the Teacher Support Team (TST) gave to the school. They feel that they still need more information about inclusion. However, it should be noted that if a Teacher Support Team is well equipped it can make a difference to the quality of teaching and learning. The team would ensure that help is available within the school and in proper context. The Department of Education (2001a:42) suggested that Teacher Support Teams should receive training on the following:

- Giving proper guidance and support to educators teaching learners who experience barriers to learning;
- Screening and identification of learners who experience barriers to learning;
- Making appropriate follow-ups on learners' programmes;
- How to make referrals to the Education Support Services personnel of the Department of Education;
- Counselling; and
- Life skills.

#### ***4.3.2.3 Special school support***

The general opinion of the participants was that they need support from different stakeholders. The support would enable their school to meet the challenge of managing inclusive classrooms. One participant mentioned that as educators, they sometimes visit special schools so as to gain knowledge about learners who

experience barriers to learning. Unfortunately they have few special schools in their area. According to the Department of Education (2001a:48) "... special schools are perceived to have expertise in developing technology for supporting learners and adapting teaching methods to accommodate learners who experience barriers to learning". The Department of Education (2002:31) further contends that special schools are there to act as resource centres by focusing on building the capacity within the schools to support learners, teachers, parents and the community through setting up and developing site-based support teams that involve all teachers and stakeholders, and engage themselves in ongoing staff development.

The above issue of special schools as important support system is endorsed by the Department of Education (2001b:21) when it indicates that the new roles of special schools in an inclusive education is to provide expertise and support, especially professional support in curriculum, assessment and instruction to the neighbouring schools. The "... special schools, with their skilled and experienced staff, have to offer assistance and support to the teaching staff at mainstream schools" (Prinsloo, 2001: 345).

#### **4.3.2.4 Parental support**

Although all the participants reported that they found themselves in close relationships with the learners and the parents, the participants felt that the parents needed to go the extra mile in helping educators overcome these barriers. There are some parents who feel that it is the responsibility of educators alone to see to it

that their children are able to perform well in all activities at school. Yet other parents are good in different sporting activities and they could be of service to the learners. It is, however, important for parents to know that they are always welcome to render any service that could be of importance to their children.

Participants indicated that parents were prepared to provide educators with the necessary information about their children when requested to do so. The information helps to facilitate the effective support of learners who experience barriers to learning. Hence the comments of Noy (in: Gibson and Blandford, 2005:40) stressing that "... most important benefit that teachers draw from co-operation with parents is: emotional support, which helps to reduce burn-out, strengthens the teachers' professional, social and personal image, relieves the feeling of solitude that accompanies the teachers' work and increases their motivation to persevere and refresh their professional knowledge". The above authors recommended some key principles in communicating and working in partnership with parents.

- Positive attitudes to parents, user friendly information and procedures and awareness of support needs are important.
- To make communications effective professionals should:
  - acknowledge and draw on parental knowledge and expertise;
  - focus on the children's strengths as well as areas of additional need;

- recognise the personal and emotional investment of parents and be aware of their feelings;
  - ensure that parents understand procedures, are aware of how to access support and are given documents to be discussed well a head of meetings;
  - respect the validity of differing perspectives and seek constructive ways of reconciling different view points;
  - respect the differing needs parents themselves may have, such as disability, or communication and linguistic barriers; and
  - Recognize the need for flexibility in the timing and structure of meetings.
- Importantly, the Local Education Authority and schools should always seek parental permission before referring them to others for support. Where parents do not wish to have their details passed on to third parties their wishes should be respected.

#### **4.3.3 Competencies**

Teacher competency was one of the most important themes identified in the findings. The information that was gathered from the literature study indicated that most educators cited a common factor namely, the competency they need as educators. They mentioned

that lack of appropriate professional and in-service training in implementing and managing inclusive education is stressful to them. They all admitted that this situation leaves them feeling powerless, insignificant and insecure.

#### ***4.3.3.1 In-service training***

Five participants admitted that they were afforded the opportunity to be trained on inclusive education. This was reflected by statements such as "... I was trained by Scope Company from Finland for three months and also follow-ups for about two months were made". "... yes I attended many workshops sponsored by the Department ... we were doing sign language ... we attended them at ...Witbank, Nelspruit and Middleburg." The participants felt that in-service training in inclusive education is of crucial importance. Hence they complained about how little time they spent in this very important area of their profession.

In response to what in-service training the participants received for teaching learners who experience barriers to learning one participant reported that she received computer training at Witbank for three days. Not surprisingly the training she received does not equip her with the necessary knowledge for dealing effectively with learners who experience barriers to learning. From the research findings the researcher realized that the workshops that some of the participants claimed to have attended could not be sufficient to provide educators with the necessary skills. This is reflected by their lack of management skills in their inclusive classes.

Obviously lack of training in inclusion is a disaster to educators who teach inclusive classrooms. The general attitude of all the participants with regard to lack of training appeared to be negative. This was reflected in statements such as "... it was difficult for me to face the class situations, I was afraid to talk to them or even just to come next to them". "... it was very difficult you know, dealing with different abilities it is so difficult so I had many problems to deal with those learners". From the above it becomes evident that these insufficiently trained educators did not enjoy teaching learners who experience barriers to learning. "Teachers who have had training in special education have more positive attitudes. It is possible though, those attitudes can be modified through in-service training" (Walton 2002:29).

Furthermore the Department of Education (2001a:42) in their research found that educators were also not pleased about dealing with diverse learning needs in their classroom due to lack of training. As a result they identified some specifications on how they needed to be trained, for example:

- General training on inclusive education. i.e. (what it means, its benefits and challenges)
- Strategies for teaching learners with diverse learning needs, including methods for dealing with slow learners, learners who have physical and mental disabilities, abused learners, and learners under stress for a variety of reasons, as well as methods for handling large class sizes, and
- Training that will enable them to identify, diagnose and support LSEN.

The above findings indicate that lack of training for teachers will impede the effective management of inclusion. Equally important is the training of parents and other stakeholders, because one of the participants reported that it was difficult for her to teach those learners because she did not receive support from the parents.

#### **4.3.3.2 Skills**

Equally important in inclusion is the issue of skills that educators should acquire in managing inclusive classes. All the participants admitted that they did not have adequate skills to teach inclusive classes. They felt that they still needed to attend workshops and get clarity on many issues. Within the literature on attitudes towards inclusion Prinsloo (2001:346) found that teachers' lack of the necessary knowledge, skills and expertise to understand and assist these learners, causes frustration, demotivation and serious feelings of inadequacy which disrupt effective teaching and successful learning. Hence the recommendations made by Bothma, *et al.* (2000:204) that teachers need to receive in-service education and training to gain the necessary knowledge, skills and values to cope with learners of varying abilities and with diverse needs.

#### **4.3.3.3 Empowerment**

All participants expressed the notion that educators need to be empowered to be competent in managing inclusive classes. They felt that educators need to be equipped with the necessary knowledge for them to be confident when teaching their learners. In



one of the grade 5 classes which the researcher observed, learners were somehow idling. It was because the educator was not sure about the kind of occupational tasks to be given to other groups while still busy with some learners.

It was stressed by the participants that workshops should be conducted in such a way that educators are given an opportunity to observe the facilitator demonstrating their lessons. They stressed that they wanted to see the facilitator practically teaching an inclusive classroom. In this regard one participant was of the opinion that even if inclusion seems to be difficult, educators should not lose hope. They should not only rely on workshops and in-service training, they should rather be prepared to give more when looking for information that can assist them to be effective educators. She further stated that educators should be optimistic and have determination in making efforts to teach and to understand the background and problems of their learners.

#### **4.3.4 Changes**

“There is no doubt that we have entered a new world that we find extremely difficult to cope with... Not only is change taking place extremely rapidly, its intensity and scope is simply baffling. Change itself has become the only certainty that governs life” (Slabbert 2001:290). Any change is threatening and many are naturally resistant to change. However, Walton (2002:25) reminds us that change towards inclusion will definitely have a significant impact on school life. Rouse and Florian (*in*: Walton, 2002:25) warn against the simplistic notion that inclusion can be implemented so long as

the building is accessible and the educators willing to work with learners who experience barriers to learning. Surely such a change will not happen automatically. Rather it will take time, commitment, relevant resources, willingness to change and a positive attitude towards these learners. Most participants reported that in their teaching they came across a number of changes.

#### ***4.3.4.1 Teaching methods***

Five participants reported that they were using different teaching and assessment methods in order to accommodate all their learners in the classroom. They admitted that changing their teaching methods was not an easy task for them. Even though they all claimed that they have changed their teaching methods they still lack the skill of using the new approaches effectively. Walton (2002:25) stressed that despite the fact that educators mention the lack of skills in managing inclusion, the fact remains that "... there is no alternative but to make inclusive education work". Farrell (2003:113) also points out that in order to develop suitable strategies for inclusive classes, educators need to plan the curriculum objectives, teaching and assessment approaches, learning activities and resources. Educators need to understand the individual differences amongst their learners. When they teach them they should consider the following: prior attainment and aptitudes, level of understanding, pace and the pupils learning preferences.

One participant mentioned that she was still using the same methods as she believed that they would still help learners to attain their goals. Putnam (in: Gasant, 2002:74) argued that there were

“... some instructors who thought that whole-class lecture and discussion, including the teachers role as the ‘sage on stage’ was a good model simply because it has a long history and has worked for them in the past”. Putnam (in: Gasant, 2002:74) disagreed, clearly indicating that the world is changing at a rapid pace and learners need to cope with the new world. This implies that teaching methods and skills have to evolve as well.

#### **4.3.4.2 Attitude**

All the participants admitted that they initially had negative attitudes towards inclusive education. They all agreed that at some stage they realized that they have to do something about their attitudes. One participant mentioned an important issue of attitudinal change for herself as a person, she said: “... my attitude has changed positively towards learners in general. I am now diverse in terms of activities that I plan for my learners ... I have automatically developed my own tactics to cope with different learning problems ... I have managed to change learners with learning difficulties”.

One participant reported that teaching learners with barriers to learning gave her an opportunity to understand them even better. She further stated that every learner has a unique ability which is revealed, even though some have limited abilities, but what is important is that every learner is given an opportunity to express him/herself. Talmor, Reiter and Feigin (2005:216) believe that the most important condition for successful inclusion of learners who experience barriers to learning in the regular classroom is a change from negative to positive attitudes of educators towards these

learners. Slabbert (2001:292) stresses the fact that "... we are never victims of circumstances because we always have a choice how to react to circumstances... and we are also able to determine the quality of our lives in spite of circumstance." In other words a person can make himself / herself happy, or miserable, regardless of what is actually happening "outside" just by changing the contents of consciousness. The implication is that a person can change his/her negative attitude to suit and transform hopeless situations into challenges to be overcome. It could be done through the force of perseverance. Undoubtedly this would benefit all the learners.

#### ***4.3.4.3 Learning environment***

All the participants expressed the intense feeling that they would like to see more learners who are physically challenged being admitted in schools. In this regard one participant expressed the notion that admittance of such learners requires that the school buildings be user friendly. She indicated that ramps should be built instead of steps so that learners who use wheelchairs may be able to move freely. This was an important issue to consider as according to the researcher's observations there were only a few ramps at their school.

The above discussion is supported by the Department of Education (2002:53) when stating that accommodating diversity also entails changing of buildings by improving the structures of the buildings as they were built during that time of segregation where disability was not embraced. It further stressed that structural changes should include the following: simple ramps, accessible toilets, hand rails on

the walls, banisters on verandas, embossed signs, indicator lights or flags for break bells.

#### **4.3.5 Strategies**

According to Walton (2002:8) strategies refer to "... systematic plans or tactics that can be employed that will enable the predetermined goal (managing inclusion) to be realised". The use of specific strategies such as co-operative learning, individualization, peer tutoring and group methods are important and helpful to teach inclusive classes. The reason being that learners in an inclusive class are different therefore, they need to be accommodated irrespective of disability, ensuring that no one is rejected.

##### **4.3.5.1 Group method**

All the participants reported that they used the group method to teach their learners. They all struggled as they were not perfect in using it. For instance in one of the grade 5 classes, learners were grouped in a group of eight and most of them were passive. The intelligent learners dominated the group, which does not facilitate OBE and inclusive principles. The educator did not allow much active participation as learners were too quiet, they seemed to be afraid of making a noise. Group work is considered to be good when used in a proper way. Gordon (2000:90) reported that one of the participants in the interviews that he conducted pointed out that he believes in group work and chooses tasks that encourage children to work in groups with the belief children can easily learn when they

work together. Learners have different qualities and strengths, so when these qualities are combined they produce positive results.

#### **4.3.5.2 Co-operative learning**

Two participants indicated that they also use co-operative learning in their teaching. They felt that co-operative learning is important in that it accommodates all learners. Each learner is assigned a task which suits his abilities. Both participants agreed that when using co-operative learning they were more facilitators than directors. Learners were free to interact with one another. They were able to share problems that they encountered in their studies. According to Mudau (2004:88) co-operative learning is a way of "... learners working together in a group small enough that everyone can participate on a collective task that has been clearly defined and without direct immediate supervision of the teacher".

In addition to that Bradley and Graves (in: Mudau, 2004:88) found that learners who experience moderate to severe barriers to learning and development who participated in co-operative learning, showed an increase in their marks in areas such as social interaction, verbal interaction, personal interaction as well as academic achievement. These findings reiterate the opinion expressed by Harcombe (in: Engelbrecht, Green and Swart, 2001b:227) that when using co-operative learning it is helpful in a sense that it prevents bullying, helps learners to gain more strength in developing social skills and being able to provide social support to other learners.

The above authors further stipulate that the idea of co-operation instead of competition suggests that difference is useful and that varied abilities have a contribution to make towards the success of a group or class. Another most important fact about co-operative learning is that it gives educators the opportunity to plan in such a way that learners are given tasks that suit their abilities. They can also ensure that the strengths of each learner become evident to his or her peers and those learners can use their strength to support others with less developed or different abilities.

Another important aspect of co-operative learning, as Mudau (2004:89) indicates, is that when learners interact with one another and also with their teachers there is a chance that they may begin to change their attitudes positively despite the barriers that they may have, even teachers can change and see them in a different way, realizing that all learners can learn.

#### ***4.3.5.3 Individual method***

Although the participants claimed that the group method is important and beneficial to an inclusive class, one participant reported that she also used the individual method. This is certainly an important method in inclusion which gives every learner a chance to explore. The Individual method recognizes individual diversity. With this method every learner is respected and it acknowledges that the learner can do the work at his/her own pace. Individuals are accountable for everything that they do, whether it is an achievement or a mistake, they take responsibility for they own

actions. There is no group to cover their laziness or benefit from their hardworking skills.

The individual method allows the teacher and the learner an opportunity to know one another. Learners can also develop positive self-concept and self-esteem because all the work done will be their own efforts. They will also be committed to their own efforts rather than attributing success or failure to a disability label or to other group members. Learners with barriers to learning might have difficulty with learning that is presented to them in inclusive classrooms, but they have hope and pride that they can do better. Furthermore Wolpert (2001:11) found that individual and small group instruction is shown to improve the learning capacity of children with development disabilities.

Some of the responses were irrelevant and this was confirmed by some of the answers given by educators. One participant responded to the above question (what methods they used to accommodate all their learners in the classroom) as follows "... I would say all teachers need to be trained. Buildings that would cater for all learners should be built and teaching and learning aids that would be suitable for all learners should be purchased". The researcher concluded that some of these irrelevant responses might be due to lack of a proper knowledge and understanding of inclusive education or even the lack of effective strategies and methods to teach these learners with barriers to learning. The question according to the researcher was not ambiguous, it was simple and straightforward. One participant reported that the school supports them by giving them learning materials and they feel that those



materials are not enough. She indicated that parents support them by helping their children with homework. According to the researcher these answers were totally irrelevant

Another participant clearly indicated that she used to design activities which were aimed at the whole class irrespective of their differences in abilities, so those with learning disabilities were left unattended or given little attention. In essence it shows that learners were discriminated against but educators were not aware of the mistakes that they were making. Inclusive education should be a life saver for every citizen of this country because it allows everybody to be accommodated in all spheres of life. The Department of Education (2001b:17) maintains that inclusion is about recognizing and respecting the differences among all learners and building on the similarities.

All the participants felt that they were not doing justice to their learners as they were not accommodating them as they should be. Two participants indicated that they used question and answer and story telling methods only. However, this was unfair to the introverted learners as they might be too shy to answer some questions because they were afraid of failure. Learners who are hard of hearing were unable to understand and hear the questions and the answers given by their classmates. Despite the fact that the question and the answer method tested the learners' acquisition of knowledge, it was exclusive by nature.

#### **4.3.6 Problems encountered**

##### ***4.3.6.1 Overcrowded classrooms***

All participants indicated that overcrowding in the inclusive classrooms is a problem. The reason is that it prevents them from developing close relationships with their learners and it hinders progress as they are unable to assist learners who need more of their attention. In a way it inhibits individual attention. It was reflected by statements such as "... there is lot of pressure... we must have few learners in a class so that we will be able to address all the needs of these learners". "... Learner to teacher ratio must also be considered. Each and every individual's needs should be understood very carefully".

Gross (2002:81) argues that the research evidence on the link between smaller class sizes and pupil achievement does not show any correlation. In other words class size does not necessarily have any effect on the poor achievement of learners. The problem lies with the educators and the managers. Nevertheless the Department of Education (2001a:56) and Walton (2002:34) are in complete agreement with the participants that class sizes need to be small. The reason given is that larger classes prohibit effective teaching. Overcrowded classes also constrain educators from arranging learners in a way that would be conducive to the principles of inclusive education.

One participant emphasized that the number of learners in the classroom should be reduced, she said: "... as most learners with

disabilities are having behavioural problems, human assistance is needed". This statement is also corroborated by the researcher's findings that large classes can contribute greatly to problem behaviour. Hence the comments of Naicker (1999:52) that the challenge posed by large inclusive classes cannot be ignored and must be taken note of. Solutions need to be provided on reducing overcrowding in classrooms.

From the above discussion and what the researcher had observed at the research site, overcrowded classes can hinder the management of inclusive education in the classroom. It is evident that these educators have much pressure upon them caused by the nature of inclusion in respect of their classroom arrangements.

#### ***4.3.6.2 Introduction of different systems of approach (OBE and RNCS)***

Most participants were concerned about the workload that educators have. It was reflected by statements such as "... this education (referring to inclusive education) is generally stressful especially where a new method of education that is Outcomes Based Education (OBE) and the Revised National Curriculum Statement are being implemented. Educators are still struggling to adapt to the teaching methods, assessment and the jargon of OBE. The government has revised the curriculum and brought in another form of assessment and new terminologies which they need educators to use everyday". On top of this work load they expect educators to teach learners with barriers to learning who have to be accommodated and understood. Indeed it is a lot to ask from

somebody who is not well trained. Sethosa (2001:181) supports the above idea when revealing that in the interviews that she had conducted, one of the participants mentioned that the issue of OBE has to be addressed before any attempt can be made to talk about inclusion as other educators are not yet familiar with OBE. The results lead to negligence of learners who experience barriers to learning because of not mastering the approach.

Schoeman and Manyane (2002:177) and Williamson and Lemmer (2003:138) regard OBE as an approach to teaching and learning which is aimed at bringing about a paradigm shift from a content-based transmission mode to a competent-based one. It requires learning to take place in an integrated way. What is more important in OBE is what learners do with the knowledge they acquire than whether they know all the facts off by heart. Outcomes Based Education prepares learners to acquire skills to interact with the outside world. OBE was intentionally introduced to redress the political and educational injustice of the past.

Despite the fact that this was the best move in education the government has made, introduction of different systems of approach in a short space of time seems to be problematic. All the participants felt it is too much for them to be expected to understand a lot of different concepts put to them in a very short space of time. Some educators felt that the department mostly preaches the theory rather than practically demonstrating what they mean, for example, about solving the problems that they (educators) are faced with everyday.

Even though most participants felt inclusion will eventually be successful, there were still some who felt it will somehow fail if things are rushed without dealing with the basics first, that is, making sure that educators are well trained for inclusion and are sure about its implementation.

In addition to that, the results from the study by Materechera (2002:76) indicated that inappropriately trained educators could be a source of learners experiencing barriers to learning failing to learn and being excluded. Therefore, training of educators in inclusive education is important.

#### **4.3.6.3 *Multi-grade teaching***

All the participants found the challenge being greater in teaching learners with different grades and different abilities. They expressed the feeling that educators need to get involved in teamwork more than ever before. Sethosa (2001:194) argues that to include learners with barriers to learning in a class that has three grades appears to be impossible unless educators are given enough training in realistic programmes of intervention and know exactly what these learners need. There should be proper guidelines as to how instruction should take place in these classrooms. The above author also feels that a lot of work still needs to be done for educators to be competent enough. They should be given proper training in these methods. The researcher recommends the use of multi-level instruction as it is able to accommodate different grades. According to Sethosa (2001:194) the programme allows one lesson to be varied within one class to embrace different levels of cognitive

development. In this regard the degree of difficulty of lessons involved may be increased for each grade as and when needed.

#### **4.3.6.4 *Lack of concrete learning materials***

All participants admitted that they still lack concrete learning materials in their school. Two participants stressed that learners need concrete materials that they can touch and feel. The participants' opinion corroborate Sethosa's findings (2001:47) indicating that when real life examples are brought into the inclusive classroom or learners are taken to real life situations outside the classroom, where the subject matter is touched, seen and heard is very important. The reason is that learners' thought processes depend on contact with concrete objects. Equally important, concrete materials help learners in problem solving experiences that involve deductive and inductive reasoning.

One participant suggested television sets to be bought while the other participant suggested a tape recorder. The use of a tape recorder as one of the effective aids to be used by inclusive educators is supported by Keel, Dangel and Owens' findings (1999:24). These researchers indicated that there were three elementary aged students with learning disabilities. These students were taking steps to solve problems by having self-instructions, and then using their own taped instructions. After a second training session the researchers found that all the students solved problems correctly when using the taped self-instruction and later without the taped instructions. Surprisingly learners who had only observed the process were unable to solve maths problems correctly.

Furthermore Freeman and Mc Langhlin (*in*: Keel *et al.*, 1999:24) are confident that "... teachers have used the tape recorder for years in special education classes as an alternative means for presenting and reviewing sight words, maths facts, spelling words, and other written memory tasks" and that this was a success.

#### **4.3.6.5 Behavioural problems**

All the participants mentioned that behavioural problems affect their teaching in the classroom. They all agreed that on the whole learners who show behavioural problems are those who experience barriers to learning. Their statements reflected that behavioural problems were a thorny issue. As one participant reflected "I think the problem is with their behaviour, most of the learners cannot concentrate for a longer period". Another educator stated: "... the problem that I encountered is the behaviour problem of the learners with learning disability; it is very difficult to control them". Another educator added "I encounter behavioural problems and there is lack of concentration for those learners". One educator trying to emphasise the point said: "... there are a lot of problems because some have auditory and visual problems, some have perceptual problems... fine motor and large muscle problems...". These learning difficulties make them feel unaccepted and eventually they behave in an inappropriate way.

Two participants agreed that the reason for learners to behave inappropriately might be the following: overcrowding, lack of well trained teachers, lack of equipment and lack of other resources that may help and be of value to them. It should, however be noted that

the behavioural problems that educators encounter in their classrooms have long been there, not only in inclusive classrooms but also in regular classrooms. Overcrowding however makes it difficult to manage unacceptable behaviour.

In addition to that seating arrangements in the classroom seem to influence behaviour and achievements and the curriculum also can be a contributing factor in some cases. Learners who are bored by work that lacks interest and challenges may well become troublesome. The teaching styles that educators use to teach their learners, also have an effect on causing learners to lose control. It is suggested that educators need to be well equipped with knowledge on how to manage behaviour for the smooth running of the school and for the success of inclusion. Successful management of inclusive education lies mostly in the hands of the educator so his/her competency in inclusive education is essential.

The sense of frustration was felt among the participants when addressing the problems they are facing everyday. When asked how they address the problems they encounter, one educator said "... for those learners with behavioural problems I requested them to stand up and listen while standing in front of the whole class". Later in that response she admitted the negativity of the action she had taken as she indicated that these learners to some extent became passive when she wanted their inputs.

Two other educators emphasised the strategy of keeping all the learners occupied by giving them tasks when busy with another group. One participant made the comment that "... to address these



problems I had to introspect myself first ... these people are also human like me so I have to love them ... help them and interact with their parents so that they (parents) can also play a role in teaching and accepting their (childrens`) barriers". This participant highlighted the important issue of trying to involve parents in addressing the problems of these learners. Parents know their childrens` strong and weak points and also tend to know the causes of their behaviour so working with them can elicit very good results in trying to solve these problems.

#### **4.3.6.6 *Lack of remedial teachers***

Three participants stressed that the lack of remedial teachers at school is a challenge. They all agreed that if a remedial class could be introduced there would be enough time to be attending to learners' specific needs. In a remedial class there is a remedial teacher who could create programmes that will assist other educators to alleviate the learning difficulties that learners experience. To achieve this the remedial teacher could be relieved of other teaching duties so that he/she can have sufficient time to work on these programmes.

The Department of Education (2002:28) elucidated this when stating that the remedial teacher should not be attached to a permanent class, but provide a learning support service for all in the school. The main aim of this kind of learner support service is "... to provide support to educators in all areas of curriculum and assessment adaptation, learning material development and advice on how to identify and address barriers to learning.

Two participants felt that a psychologist and social worker should also be organised to identify the causes of learners' behaviours. Department of Education (2001b:33) expressed its commitment in its layout of the framework for establishing an inclusive education and training system. It promised that the ministry of education ensure that when learners have entered the formal education system, the school-based support teams will be involved in identifying "at risk" learners and try to address the barriers to learning. To achieve that, the department will also have to work closely with the ministers of social development and health.

#### **4.3.6.7 Time**

All participants felt that the time factor appeared to be a problem when teaching inclusive classes. They reiterated time and again that when teaching learners with barriers to learning one needs enough time to explain thoroughly since the learners need to progress at their own pace and be creative. This clearly shows the importance of creating more time for both teachers and learners to make inclusion successful.

Nghipondoka (2001:68) in her research found that teachers felt that the time allocated to each period, that is 45 minutes, does not allow teachers to enlarge upon the laid down syllabi, or to do extra planning of activities for learners with learning difficulties. They work under pressure to finish the syllabi. It would be better if the syllabi were developed in such a way that learning difficulties are taken into

consideration, making provision for time to give differentiated attention to learners with learning difficulties.

As the above question was the last on the list, the researcher asked the participants to comment, give a strategy or any information that they thought might be of value to the readers and the nation as a whole to make inclusion effective. One participant remarked: "... I think what is important is for us as educators to accept change. That we were just teaching these learners using general stream. Now we have to adjust to the change so that we will be able to accommodate these learners. When we come back from the workshops we should make sure that we implement exactly what we have been taught. It should be done immediately".

#### **4.4 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter the researcher discussed the results of the qualitative inquiry. Focus group interviews revealed that educators need more information about management of inclusive classes. It is evident that educators need to be encouraged to find out more about barriers to learning in order to keep them abreast of new developments in inclusive education. Despite the prevailing policies on inclusive education and Outcomes Based Education, educators are still uncertain about teaching strategies and relevant resources needed to manage inclusion effectively. It is also apparent that educators do not have a clear understanding of inclusive education. So the government has a lot to do to reach its goal. Parents need to be empowered about inclusion so that they can assist educators to be successful in this difficult task.

It is however evident to the researcher that it is more than just a matter of educators acquiring skills, knowledge and changing their attitude to deal with learners who experience barriers to learning. Educators need to redefine their role in the classroom.

The next chapter will focus on the guidelines for managing inclusive classrooms and the discussion of an Individualised Education Plan (Programme) that can be used to eliminate or compensate for the obstacles to learning that stem from learners' disability.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **MANAGEMENT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE CLASSROOM**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

Educators are faced with a difficult task in their classrooms today. They are expected to continue to use the existing curriculum to teach learners who were previously not in the mainstream, not because these learners opted not to be in that stream but because the education system did not allow them to be included with other learners. Carreiro King (2003:9) argues that, despite the fact that educators did not receive in-service training on inclusion, they are expected to implement more effective delivery techniques and also change instructional strategies, grouping practices, pacing and assessment, not only to accommodate students' individual needs but also to alter the conditions that led to the referral of students to special education.

These however are the imbalances that were caused by the apartheid regime. Fortunately, education is there to be used as a tool to redress these imbalances. According to the researcher, the management of inclusive education in the classroom is an immediate priority which needs to be addressed. In order to have effective and successful management there are some guidelines that have to be seriously considered.

## **5.2 GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS**

### **5.2.1 In-service training of educators**

According to Le Roux and Maila (2004:236) In-Service Education and Training (INSET) "... refers to instructional programmes to provide for continued professional development of education practitioners during their working years". Mothata (*in*: Le Roux and Maila, 2004:236) concur, explaining INSET "... as programmes aimed at upgrading skills and qualifications, and providing training in new policy directions, as the ongoing professional development of teaching practitioners". The above definitions clearly show that there is no way that educators could be able to implement and manage inclusive education successfully without being trained. Therefore, the most logical line of thought is that there should be training before one can embark on certain processes. Educators need training concerning the background of the barriers to learning, its causes, the type of curriculum to be followed, the materials that should be used, content, teaching strategies and how to overcome these barriers that learners experience. Without proper training it is going to be difficult if not impossible for educators to manage an inclusive classroom.

Educators also need to be skilled in identifying the barriers that learners experience in the classroom. They should have the ability to use a variety of teaching and learning aids, the support strategies to be taught and they should be guided on how the content that they teach is of value in order to develop the skills, values and attitudes of learners (Bothma *et al.*, 2000:204).

Enlarging on this view Schechtman and Or (*in*: Bothma *et al.*, 2000:204) feel that the emotional aspects that underlie educators'

beliefs regarding inclusion of learners in regular classes are ignored. Hence they suggested that in training educators, the service providers "... need to recognize and accommodate teachers' fears and anger ... challenge their existing beliefs, enhancing insight and raising the will to change by means of self-exploration in a psychological atmosphere". Similarly Walton (2002:30) indicates that if inclusion is to be successful there should be a number of skills, techniques and attitudes that could be learnt to enable educators to function effectively in an inclusive classroom. The issues that need to be addressed during in-service training include:

- Helping educators to acknowledge and understand differences in physical attributes, learning styles and emotional responses. Educators should also learn about activities that will help non-disabled learners accept their disabled peers.
- Showing educators how to adapt instruction and assessment to meet the needs of all learners.
- Empowering educators with the attitudes and skills required for collaboration practice.
- Enabling educators to promote the involvement of parents and communicate effectively with parents.

In addition Rouse and Flourian (in: Walton, 2002:31) also indicate that "... such training needs to be ongoing and should ideally involve all personnel". Staff members should also ensure that the training they receive meets the particular needs of the school community.

### **5.2.2 Early identification of learners and intervention**

The Department of Education (2002:191) states that the lack of knowledge of educators and parents in identification of barriers to learning prevents learners from being identified timeously for

intervention. It further states that the lack of identification can also compound the child's needs over an extended period of time and later manifest in behavioural difficulties, low self-esteem, early drop-out, passiveness and a low self-concept. Educators have to have skills in detecting the barrier in the children so that they are able to assist them in a relevant way. Absence of proper knowledge of the problems that the learner encounters will deny educators a chance to address the barriers. "Educators may regard these learners' lack of academic achievement as the result of stubbornness, laziness or lack of motivation" (Holz and Lessing, 2002:237).

### **5.2.3 Teaching strategies**

According to the Department of Education (2001a:33) in order for educators to accommodate the diverse needs of learners they "... are expected to use a variety of teaching strategies and have to adapt the curriculum to suit the needs of all learners". Educators should understand that there are some learners who are slow in their approach to learning. It is therefore indispensable that educators should use different methods of teaching to embrace them and move with them along all steps of the way to actualising their full potential. This is what inclusion expects educators to do.

Furthermore the Department of Education (2001b:17) mentions that inclusion is a system which "... is about supporting all learners, educators and the system as a whole so that the full range of learning needs can be met. The main focus being on teaching and learning factors with the emphasis on the development of good teaching strategies that will be of benefit to all learners".

Educators are encouraged to use the OBE principles in an inclusive classroom because OBE upholds the principles of inclusion as it is a



learner-centred and activity-based approach. It is OBE's aim as Schoeman and Manyane (2002:176) aver to increase the knowledge of learners and to develop their critical thinking, understanding skills, values and attitudes. OBE allows the educator to design lessons and activities so that learners may experience some success as learners are motivated when they are successful. Educators have to give learners assignments and activities that are at the learners' instructional level and give every child enough time to complete his/her own task at his/her own pace. Sethosa (2001:41-44) summed it up succinctly when she recommended that educators use the following important principles in teaching their inclusive classrooms:

- individuality;
- totality;
- motivation;
- reduction of subject matter;
- task analysis; and
- emphasis and purposefulness.

#### **5.2.4 Class organisation**

Engelbrecht *et al.* (1999:73) and the Department of Education (2002:176) endorse the fact that the practical organisation of learning materials of any classroom, including inclusive classrooms, is very important. To manage the classroom in an effective way learners should have enough space for movement, materials and other relevant equipment should be organised in such a way that they are easily reached by learners. The Department of Education (2002:176) summarised the various ways classrooms should be organised in order for the educator to be successful in managing the inclusive classroom. This type of organisation is said to be applicable in Early

Childhood Development (ECD) in order to lay the foundation for inclusive education.

The researcher however does not hesitate to stress that the same guidelines should be applied to any inclusive classroom situation. These guidelines are as follows:

- ECD sites should ensure that the physical arrangement in the classroom and management of space for groups, paired and individual activities is provided.
- Practitioners and educators in ECD need to be sensitized to the impressionable minds when facilitating inclusion and mutual respect for diversity.
- Platooning for ECD where there is insufficient classroom/school space should be well coordinated and sites should be enhanced with prioritizing aspects around planning of physical infrastructure.
- In multi-grade classes the needs of learners are not addressed adequately, partly due to the lack of facilities. Having no place to play and be creative has an effect on the learning and teaching processes. Multi-grade classes, despite the low learner/teacher ratio need to be adequately provisioned for and resourced to accommodate the different levels.

In this context Gibson and Blandford (2005:52) warn that "... classroom organisation concerns substantially more than a furniture arrangement, displays of pupils' work and the use and choice of equipment. It includes consideration of pupil groupings and the use of other adults, whether educators, teaching assistants or other helpers. Decisions about classroom organisations need to support interactivity and teachers need to be conscious of the impact of different social settings on effective learning"

### **5.2.5 A flexible curriculum.**

A flexible curriculum is one which allows for differentiation with regard to lesson objectives, outcomes and time allocated to different lessons. This curriculum has to be underpinned by a principle of inclusivity. It should be noted that managing inclusive classrooms needs a flexible curriculum which will challenge the skills of educators to accommodate all learners in the classroom. Educators need to be supported on an ongoing basis. Sethosa (2001:192) explains that "... this does not mean that these learners need separate programmes, but it simply means that the existing programmes need to be adapted in such a way that they are suitable for learners with special needs". The Department of Education (2002:137) warns that barriers to learning can be found within the curriculum itself. As a result the Department of Education (2001b:20) suggested a way of dealing with this problem, stated as follows: "... the most important way of addressing barriers arising from the curriculum is to make sure that the process of learning and teaching is flexible enough to accommodate different learning needs and styles. The curriculum must, therefore, be made more flexible across all bands of education so that it is accessible to all learners irrespective of their learning needs".

Finally Sethosa (2001:192), the Department of Education (2002:173), and the Department of Education (2001a:33) recommend the application of curriculum 2005 in managing the inclusive classroom, because it embraces the belief that all learners can learn, each in his/her own way and at their own pace.

### **5.2.6 Content**

The content that is taught in the classroom should be that which will equip all learners with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed for success in life, unlike the old traditional subject-centred and teacher-directed approach which was often concerned with learning the content by heart in order to advance to the next class. Choate (2004:46) stresses that the content that is taught in the classroom should be relevant to the academic progress, personal issues and societal issues. The author also emphasises that learners should be coached to perform authentic tasks such as:

- read for specific information, safety, and pleasure;
- solve their real-world maths problems;
- complete applications and other personal and business correspondence;
- solve school, community, and societal problems; and
- apply science knowledge and skills to improve and maintain health.

Meier (2003:223) warns that the changes that curriculum 2005 and OBE have brought to South African schools have an impact on every aspect of classroom management and didactical aspects of teaching and learning. Educators should thus have a broad knowledge and understanding of the principles and aims of education.

### **5.2.7 Assessment**

Sethosa (2001:125) indicates that "... assessment has to be an integral part of learning because it helps learners to succeed by

providing them with feedback about their knowledge, skills and attitudes acquired”. Moreover that they are assessed according to what they are capable of doing, their own potential, progress and abilities. In actuality, assessment poses a serious problem to educators in an inclusive classroom.

“Assessment refers to the process of identifying, gathering, and interpreting data about the learner’s knowledge, skills and attitudes, as measured against nationally agreed outcomes for a particular phase of learning” (Sethosa, 2001:264). Problematic as it is, assessment is also a threat and causes stress to the average educators who are not trained to teach learners with barriers to learning. It was mentioned in Sethosa’s thesis that educators are still trying to absorb OBE and its form of assessment and now inclusion has been implemented, which also needs to be understood and practised. It is for this reason that educators need to be guided on how to go about assessing these learners.

Even though curriculum 2005 has outlined the guidelines for assessment, educators need to be given assistance on how to assess specifically learners who experience barriers to learning. It should not be left to the educators to decide and discover what to do.

Educators should know the reason for assessment and how to use it. Sethosa (2001:265) stressed that the main reason for assessment is to identify areas of difficulty, with a view to designing intervention programmes for learners who experience barriers to learning. Furthermore the author maintains that assessment is a tool which gives the educator guidance as to:

- What can this learner do that the educator can build on, to help the learner learn more?

- Where does the learner have difficulty?
- What would the learner be able to do with a little bit of extra help?
- Should the educator teach the learner differently?
- Where is the educator going wrong?

Since OBE is learner-centred and strives to help learners to achieve their full potential, the assessment is not based on what the learners do not know, rather on the progress the learners are making in achieving the specific outcomes.

Educators should know that the following aspects are the ones which are generally assessed (Sethosa, 2001:266):

- The learner's interest
- The learner's strong points
- Academic strengths and needs and areas of difficulty
- Social and communication skills
- Fine and gross motor skills
- Self-management skills
- Skills for daily living

Van den Berg (2004:282) concludes that in order for an educator to ensure that assessment is an ongoing process the following types of assessment should be dealt with in the classroom:

- Baseline assessment
- Formative assessment
- Summative assessment
- Portfolio
- Systemative assessment

### **5.2.8 Learning support material**

Insufficient teaching and learning support materials may result in a situation where the educator will revert to traditional formal teaching whereas the availability of resources will provide a much richer learning environment as well as the potential for greater variety in teaching methods and curriculum content (Meier, 2003:232).

Educators should be empowered with skills to make use of the available resources to make learning possible and also to improvise by developing various kinds of hand-made learning materials. These materials can be made by learners, as learners who experience learning difficulties become motivated when their own materials are used in the classroom. They develop positive self-concepts and a positive self-esteem, knowing that they are also recognised and important in life. It is interesting to note that the Department of Education (2002:175) indicates that learning support materials should at least evince the following characteristics:

- reflect and understanding of the principles of human rights e.g. sensitivity towards gender, race, disability;
- be accessible in terms of the language of the learner;
- be varied, relevant, and age-appropriate and made available in various mediums for the diverse classrooms i.e. Braille, large prints and tape aids;
- be purchased against criteria established for the selection of material to be put in place.

### 5.2.9 Parental involvement

Sethosa (2001:53) and Lemmer (2002:56) state that parental involvement in South Africa is well documented and endorsed by the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996. Throughout the Act, reference is made to the rights and responsibilities of parents with regard to the education of their children, regardless of their cultural background. Engelbrecht *et al.* (1999:55) agree with the above researchers, stating that the following policy documents: the White paper of Education and Training 1995; the South African Schools Act, 1996 and NCSNET/NCESS emphasise that parents must be involved in the process of identifying barriers to learning and development, and need developing plans of action to address these barriers.

Keeping the above information in mind, one realizes that it is apparent that South African parents should no longer take a backseat concerning their children's education as was dictated by the political and social conditions before 1994. Heystek and Louw (*in*: Lemmer and Van Wyk, 2004:261) indicated that parents were seen mainly as clients who had little say in school management and functioning. It should be noted that fortunately nowadays the value of parental involvement is undisputed. This view is supported by Meier (2003:232) when she avers that "... the family is one of the most important influences in a child's life, because it provides an emotional and physical environment that constantly surrounds the child and in which exceptional psychological ties exists". Gibson and Blandford (2005:39) also believe that "... parental involvement in the school enriches the pupils' world and extends their horizons because, when the parents take part in the educational process, the pupils are exposed to a variety of people who represent different worlds in terms of life experience, age, occupation, hobbies and mentality".



Parental involvement in a way serves as a personal example for each pupil and increases awareness of the importance of the community action.

The researcher is attempting to emphasize that educators cannot win the battle of successfully managing inclusion alone, they really need to involve parents in teaching these learners. Sethosa (2001:203) believes that for parents to be effectively involved, they do not necessarily have to know how to read and write, they may be allowed to volunteer to teach learners other skills and values in the classroom.

Dietz (*in*: Lemmer and Van Wyk, 2004:271) seems to express the contrary view that even though parent volunteers are a cost effective way to expand the range of activities at school, it is difficult to involve them and take them on board due to the fact that most of them "... have little time for volunteering and those who do are either not reached or considered unsuitable as they are often the elderly or unemployed".

Nevertheless, educators are advised not to look down upon the parents thinking that they do not have the experience and expertise to teach learners as Kohl, Lengua and McMahon (*in*: Pienaar, 2003:266) in their research found "... that parental involvement is closely associated with more positive experiences in children in the school environment". Lemmer (2002:56) further indicates that many educators do not know the backgrounds, communities and neighbours of the learners that they teach. They are also unaware of the family structures and the problems that these communities encounter, so involvement of parents will help them to conquer these barriers.

Sethosa (2001:55) is supported by Lemmer (2002:57) and Pienaar (2003:269) who echo the same sentiments. They have set forth suggestions for ways in which parents, including grandparents and care givers, may be involved in the education of their children. These ways are:

- Parents, grandparents and caregivers who do not work may be invited to tell stories to young children. This could be treated as part of oral culture.
- Sharing stories from different cultures is a good way of exposing children to other cultures and helping them to develop a pride in their own culture, as well as tolerance and understanding of other cultures.
- Parents, grandparents and caregivers may be invited to tell children about special holidays and ceremonies practised in different cultures.
- Introducing different traditional foods may also be used to teach children about different cultures. Different traditional foods may be brought to the school to show to the children and raise funds at the same time.
- Parents and grandparents may be interviewed. In this way they can be drawn out to tell interesting stories about their families. This may encourage children to draw up family trees.
- Parents and grandparents from different areas, provinces and countries may be invited to tell children about their specific area, province or country of origin. In this way children will learn about geography.
- Parents and grandparents may be invited to listen to children reading.

Parents can play a vital role in the education of their children who are intellectually and cognitively different. Finally, "... in spite of the above, it needs to be said that no teacher effort or school

programme, no matter how elaborate, can succeed without the cooperation, involvement and support of the parents” (Sethosa, 2001:53).

The researcher hopes that the above guidelines will bring greater comprehension and help to make a difference to educators on how to manage the inclusive classroom.

### **5.3 AN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN (PROGRAMME)**

#### **5.3.1 Historical background**

The segregation and isolation of learners who experience barriers to learning was also practised in England. During the eighteenth century in England they practised a separate system of education. Learners who experienced barriers to learning were taught in special schools. According to Cowne (2003:1) these learners “... were seen as unfit for the large classes of 50 or more to be taught by educators with no special training”.

Major efforts were made to bring changes in the system of education in England. Cowne (2003:2) mentioned that towards the end of the period between 1944-1978 children with severe learning difficulties were at last given the right to education through the Handicapped Children Act (1970). It would appear from the literature that learners who experience barriers to learning were then given a chance to be taught in the mainstream classes. The government still had a lot to do to ensure that all learners had a right to a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum.

However, it was only after 1994 that the government of England published the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment

of Special Educational Needs. Most importantly, as Gibson and Blandford (2005:17) pointed out, the code of practice gave schools further guidance and promoted the use of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) in managing the learning of pupils with barriers. According to Cowne (2003:4) the above document "... has a status between regulation, which is mandatory, and a circular which is advisory". It also describes the roles of educators and their responsibility for learners who experience barriers to learning in a regular school.

### **5.3.2 What Is Individual Education Plan (IEP)?**

The Individual Education Plan (IEP) is a written statement describing the special education and related services specifically designed to meet the needs of the learner with disabilities. Such a plan spells out an extensive and intensive programme of individualized instruction which is designed to eliminate or compensate for the obstacles to learning that stem from a learner's disability (Turnbull *et al.*, Hallahan and Kauffman, *in*: Sethosa, 2001:83).

Cowne (2003:20) notes that "... the term IEP refers to both a process and a document. The document has two key purposes. The first being educational, for those identified as having additional needs. The second is accountability, providing evidence of what has been done for the individual child and recording parents' and teachers' views". "... The purpose of an IEP is to collect information which indicates how best to teach the pupil and develop a plan of action, with targets which can be understood and achieved by the pupil and his or her teachers and parents" (Cowne 2003:21). Most importantly Farrell (2003:60) stressed that IEP is not a document that is solely used by the special need coordinator but a "... working document for all teaching staff".

In addition to the above definitions Schwartz (2005:84) describes an IEP as "... the paper manifestation of the dynamic, living process of problem solving among all IEP partners for determining the special education and related service supports needed for students with disabilities... It is a process that has shared ownership among general and special educators, parents, students and other agency partners, a process focused on short and long range positive student results", see Appendix C.

Gross and White (2003:100) argue that in a climate where schools identify very large groups of their population as experiencing barriers to learning, the Individual Education plans are not well supported. The problem stated is that there is a lot of paperwork to be done for each individual for such large numbers. Barnes (2006:32) adds that "... some parents believe that once they get their child on an IEP, any academic difficulties they were having will soon disappear". The IEP is there to help educators prepare the child for life after school, they should not be seen as a free pass that shields children from bad grades.

### **5.3.3 Steps in preparing an IEP**

- Identify the problem, individual teacher or team
- Identify pupil and teacher needs
- Negotiate a feasible strategy, agreed by a team of practitioners
- Create a time scale for action
- Determine desired outcomes and evaluate actual outcomes
- Monitor progress

Source: adapted from Gibson and Blandford (2005:108)

#### **5.3.4 Content of an IEP**

An IEP should include the following:

- Prioritized short term targets
- Teaching strategies to be used
- Provision to be put in place
- When the plan is to be reviewed
- Success criteria
- Outcomes

Source: adapted from Gibson and Blandford (2005:110), Farrell (2003:61), Cowne (2003:21)

In addition to the above information, Sethosa (2001:83-84) and Mastropieri and Scruggs (2007:39-40) indicate that there are other components of an IEP which are of importance. These are:

- A statement of the learner's present level of educational performance. This includes the learner's academic achievement, social adaptation, prevocational and vocational skills, self-help skills and psychomotor skills. This statement will indicate the strengths the learner possesses, for example what the learner can do, the skills which the learner has mastered in order to build on them, and the weaknesses and skills not mastered so that these may be remediated.
- A statement of annual goals that describes the educational performance to be achieved by the end of the school year in the light of the programme. This will reflect what the learner is expected to achieve and is a statement of what the teacher predicts the learner will do under the aegis

of the educational programme.

- For each annual goal, a statement of short-term instructional objectives, written in measurable terms. This will show the steps that have to be taken to reach the annual goals; they are sequential and relevant to the goal.
- A statement of specific services required by the learner – including all special education and related services needed to meet the learner's unique needs, for instance, speech therapy, occupational therapy and so on. Any special material and media used in intervention are also listed.
- The date for the initiation of the IEP together with the date for termination of the plan. This is necessary because the IEP only lasts for one year.
- A description of the extent to which the learner will participate in a mainstream education programme.
- A justification of the type of placement envisaged for the learner.
- A list of individuals who are responsible for the implementation of the IEP.
- Evaluation procedures and schedules for determining progress towards achieving goals. This is a statement of the extent to which goals have been reached, what has been learned and how well it has been learned.

### **5.3.5 The smart practice**

The education planning is based on the principle of an agreement entered into by all involved. As with all the plans, the targets set within an action will need to be:

- **Specific** – clearly stated
- **Measurable** – all must agree on how success will be assessed
- **Attainable** – pupils and teachers must act on the identified problem
- **Realistic** – targets must be possible within the home/school
- **Time-limited** – everyone must be clear about the time-scale within which the targets are to be reached.

Source: adapted from Gibson and Blandford (2005:109)

### 5.3.6 The IEP process

According to Smith, Finn and Dowdy (**in:** Sethosa, 2001:85) the IEP process may be summarized as follows:

- Child finds activities
- Screening
- Assessment of strengths and needs
- Design Individualised Education Plan (IEP)
- Placement decision
- Implement IEP
- Evaluate programme



### **5.3.7 Reviews of IEPs**

It is essential that pupils with IEPs have regular reviews. Colleagues should work together and everyone in a group be given an opportunity to report back. Every school needs a planned time-table for IEP reviews and the review dates must be adhered to. Cowne (2003:22) suggests that IEPs should enhance the school's policy and make provision for all concerned. Gibson and Blandford (2005:109) contend that the most common outcomes should be the identification of:

- What worked well and why.
- The difficulties and how such difficulties can be overcome.
- New areas of concern and new targets for action.

### **5.4 CONCLUSION**

Snyman and Bloem (in: Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2001a:186) believe that management of inclusive education can only succeed if educators have sufficient knowledge about disabilities and receive adequate support within their school. They further emphasize that the "... classroom educator should be equipped with enough knowledge about impairments and disabilities to be able to identify those learners and arrange for the necessary steps to be taken in this regard, thus preventing learners from becoming handicapped by society and environment".

It is without reservation that the author wishes to state that if quality teaching is required in education it is necessary to make educator training, support and the distribution of resource material a top priority. Addressing these challenges will hopefully result in learners performing better in their studies, thus inclusion could be effectively

managed which would be a good investment for the individual, the school, the department, the society and the nation in general.

It may not be easy to understand how to manage an inclusive classroom, but it need not be impossible. This chapter has revealed some of the guidelines for managing inclusive classes and an Individual Education Plan (programme) that educators could use to address barriers to learning.

In the following chapter a discussion of the summary of the main findings will be presented as well as the recommendations for further studies to illuminate and enhance the management of inclusive education in the classroom.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY AND CONCLUSION**

#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

The research in this study has shown that the inclusion debate is no longer concerned merely with what inclusion is and the extent to which mainstream schools are able to accommodate all children, regardless of their needs but increasingly focuses on the successful management of inclusion specifically in the classroom.

It should be pointed out that since the mid 1980s; there has been a strong national movement to include all children in the regular classrooms, irrespective of colour, race, gender, disability, class and religion. However, years passed by until 1994 when South Africa became a democratic country and had to undergo a process of massive transformation in different departments to meet its goals. Education is one of the departments which has experienced the most far-reaching programmes of reform and transformation ever seen as it has embarked on a curriculum review process which is at the heart of the education system. However this was not as simple a process to achieve as it was one of the most complex changes on the education scene.

Undeniably inclusive education has brought some huge changes that have certainly generated resistance and fears from different stakeholders and other people on the ground, resulting in negative

attitudes in those who feel it as a burden and it has brought some smiles to those who had previously felt neglected.

In spite of the pressure that inclusion has put on educators as a whole, it has been implemented and practised in many regular schools in South Africa. The burning issue is how to manage it in the classroom and this entails teacher competencies that educators should have to better address the learning needs of all students, strategies that should be applied, different methods to be used to accommodate all learners not just those with disabilities and learning differentials but all of them to reach their full potential and lead a meaningful life.

## **6.2 SUMMARY**

The researcher has tried throughout this research to examine the management of inclusive classrooms, the competencies needed for educators to manage inclusive education, and the effective teaching strategy relevant to teaching learners who experience barriers to learning. The concept of inclusive education and its related terminology have been clarified to assist the investigation.

### **6.2.1 Summary of chapter one**

Chapter one gave an outline of this research project, an overview of its background, the research questions, design and the methods that were employed to investigate these research questions. The clarification of concepts was undertaken to assist the reader to gain an adequate understanding of inclusive education and the related terminology. The aim of explaining the concepts is to avoid ambiguity and misinterpretations.

Having the appropriate information about the issue that provoked the researcher to undertake this investigation one could conclude without doubt that effective management of inclusive education in the classroom is necessary and a serious effort should be made to upgrade professional development of educators in various areas. The researcher is also aimed at preparing and presenting the facts to readers in a way that would stimulate their interest in further reading on this theme.

In (cf 1.5.2) inclusive education is explained as the provision of educational experiences for all learners including those experiencing barriers to learning and development. Quite often, people tend to have a misunderstanding of the terms 'inclusion' and 'inclusive education'. It is therefore sincerely hoped that this study will shed light and allow the reader to acquire more insight and understanding of what inclusion effectively entails. Sidogi (2001: 4) summed this matter succinctly when she said that "... learners who experience barriers to learning should participate in the **same** classroom situation with those learners who are not experiencing barriers to learning and development, at the **same** mainstream school and **same** mainstream classes that their peers attend and be taught by the **same** educator.

Sethosa (2001:19) also warns that the constitution of South Africa protects learners who experience barriers to learning and guarantees that these learners are entitled to enjoy equal rights with the ordinary population in the eyes of the law. The constitution also guarantees that no citizen shall be discriminated against on various grounds and these grounds include disability

In the light of the above discussions, the researcher deemed it necessary to make an effort to collect data towards assisting

educators by way of deepening their insight into understanding the barriers that learners experience, how to overcome these barriers, the methods that can be used to directly address the issues relating to inclusive education, and most importantly how to help pupils to be able to overcome their own difficulties, learn and grow to become a successful and responsible citizens who will eventually be part of building a democratic nation.

### 6.2.2 Summary of chapter two

In an increasingly complex, competitive and democratic society like South Africa it is imperative that individuals think creatively, have skills, knowledge, values, and above all know their rights as human beings. The truth is, different as people are with regard to their personal characteristics, that are culture, religion, gender and disability the fact remains that all are equal in the eyes of law. This brings to light that inclusion as the key part of the development of education and practice around the world it is based on a right perspective. This, however, is clearly indicated in chapter one (cf 1.5.1) where it is stated that inclusion is the principle applied to accommodate/include all human beings, thus the full spectrum of diverse abilities within one system in such a manner that all involved can be assured of successful, equal and quality participation in real-life experiences from birth to grave. This is supported by Gordon (2000:4) who stresses that "... schools should accommodate **all children** regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, and linguistic or other condition. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalised areas or groups."

From the above statements it is thus evident that there are many challenges which face educators, learners, parents and the education system in specifically addressing the needs or problems that are experienced in the classroom.

Educators serve as the key figures in the effective management of inclusion in the classroom. This responsibility placed on educators' calls for a major paradigm shift in competency of educators, methodology and their assessment of learners. Hence Swart & Pettipher (2001:41) stress that inclusive education challenges educators to rethink their roles and responsibilities, construct relevant knowledge and learn new skills in order to adapt to the desired change.

In this study more emphasises is placed on the management of inclusion particularly in the classroom. It should be highlighted that an inclusive classroom looks different all the time because the environment is created by whatever instructions the teacher and students have as a group or as individual in the group (Renaissance Group. Teaching strategies for inclusion 2004:1). This however, provides the a reader with a picture of what an inclusive classroom looks like, which justifies the frustration that educators feel of lacking competency and skills to manage it effectively.

Lomofsky, Roberts and Mvambi (in: Gordon 2000:9) indicate that diversity is the keyword in the inclusive classroom and further stress that not only are learners with a range of learning disabilities and severity of difficulty present but also learners with language and cultural differences, learners with emotional and socio-economic difficulties and learners with various physical difficulties are found in an inclusive classroom. It is for this reason that these classrooms should be informal allowing for multipurpose use. In such

classrooms a lot of time for social interaction should be set aside that will also reach beyond the classroom and into the community.

The researcher discussed some important issues that should be dealt with in organising a successful inclusive classroom, that is, the learner, psychosocial environment, physical environment and a classroom organisation.

Swart and Pettipher (2001: 42) also conducted their own research in which they found that it is the role of the educator to create a welcoming and safe classroom which accommodates diversity in the school. To meet this challenge they stated that an educator has to establish a classroom atmosphere that promotes a sense of community and values the contributions and challenges of its members. Unfortunately, educators who lack professional development in this area will tend to confuse an inclusive classroom with a *laizes faire* type of situation. According to Swart & Pettipher (2001: 42) the educator should have the ability to analyse the learning characteristics, strength and needs of learners as individuals and to plan for instruction based on these needs.

Equally important is to note that building an inclusive classroom and learning environment is also dependent upon the attitudes of learners, parents, and a creative partnership between educators, parents and learners. It should be stressed that the successful inclusive classroom needs continuous advocacy campaign.

To avoid pandemonium in inclusive classrooms educators need to review their methodology. The methods that they used to teach their regular classrooms need to be flexible enough to cater for varying needs at different times. One method might be good for a certain group of learners but ineffective for some which calls for



differentiation in teaching approaches. [*“Ndlopfu a yi etleri hi rivambu rinwe.”*] An elephant does not always sleep on the same side. *This is a Xitsonga proverb which literally means that if we try to accomplish something, but fail, to do so, do not despair try again from a different angle.* In this context this implies that educators need to use new strategies and new approaches to teach their learners who might have a problem in achieving the outcomes expected..

Among other teaching approaches the researcher explained differentiated instruction, co-operative learning, activity based learning, peer support and tutoring programmes. By having established valuable information concerning classroom management, the researcher hopes to be of assistance to educators in dealing with inclusive classroom.

Barriers that learners encounter in learning were highlighted and the the reseacher sees the value of this study lying within the explanation of how these barriers could possibly be prevented, as prevention is better than cure.

Even though inclusion is seen as the best move that the government has made, according to the research findings, educators felt that they lack professional development, they need to be trained in order to face these challenges of inclusive education in a more positive way.

### **6.2.3 Summary of chapter three**

In chapter three, the qualitative investigation of the management of inclusive education in the classroom was discussed. The researcher used the qualitative design in order to explore and examine inclusive

education thoroughly. It was mainly structured to complement the literature study that had been undertaken in order to gain more knowledge about the management of inclusion in the classroom. The main aim being to assist educators to develop skills, have strategies and gain competencies in teaching learners who experience barriers to learning.

The methods used to collect data were observation and focussed group interviews. According to Burgess (*in*: Smit, 2002:20) "...the essence of the qualitative approach lies firstly in its focus on the observed present; with an attempt being made to obtain a participant's account of the social setting without disturbing the process of social life within this social setting". These guidelines were carefully observed at the research site.

The researcher supports the idea that when educators have developed in areas in which they in inclusion, they will become more confident, change their negative attitudes towards these learners, become patient with them, gain skills and eventually empathize with them and finally lead them to be accommodated in all spheres of life.

The researcher chose Maloka Primary School as the research site to obtain more information about teachers' competencies and the strategies that they use, as it was one of the pilot schools in the Nkangala region that practised inclusion. The researcher purposefully selected the above school because it was practising inclusive education so it could provide the researcher with valuable information that could possibly be of value to the nation.

#### **6.2.4 Summary of chapter four**

The qualitative data collected through the investigation were analysed, summarised and discussed. The researcher observed educators at the chosen site and at the pilot school teaching their learners. There was also a focused group interview with educators from the site. The questions for the interview were semi-structured in a sense that participants were not given any choices to select from, but were allowed to respond freely and give their own opinions. This allowed the researcher to gain more insight into the project.

From the research findings, it became evident that managing inclusive education in the classroom could be done effectively only if some of the issues are thoroughly dealt with for instance, putting relevant resources into place and giving educators enough training.

The researcher's findings in chapter four indicated that educators at Maloka Primary School are familiar with the concept of inclusion and have a clear understanding of what inclusive education is. The lack of resources seems to hamper their progress and success in managing their classroom effectively.

Lack of in-service training for educators appears to have an impact on their knowledge of the use of the materials for improving the culture of teaching and learning. The workshops that the participants stated they had attended were somehow not satisfactory for most of the participants. The final statement was that they needed more training in order to boost their confidence and become secured.

Educators had positive perceptions that the changes that they came across in teaching learners with barriers were more positive than negative as they were handling inclusion from a different perspective than before. It shows that the knowledge that they have acquired since they started teaching these learners was of value and has had a positive impact.

According to the researcher's observation these educators might be lacking more information about which strategies they need to employ in teaching their learners, and they still lack the practical expertise in of how to use those strategies fruitfully.

#### **6.2.5 Summary of chapter five**

In the past years learners who experience barriers to learning have been denied the appropriate education services in regular classes. There has been a change in the education system which brought some changes with regard to learners who experience barriers to learning. The new system is Inclusive Education. The system gave learners with barriers to learning an opportunity to be educated with their peers in mainstream classes.

It is evident that changes in the policies result in changes in the broad spectrum of spheres of education. Seemingly the teaching strategies, class organisation, content and the learning materials needed a review. Educators need in-service training to manage their inclusive classes. From the research findings, it is evident to the researcher that educators are still experiencing problems in managing their classes effectively.

Chapter five suggested some guidelines for managing inclusive classrooms. It is also apparent that educators experience difficulties

in solving the problems of those learners who experience barriers to learning. The researcher provided a detailed discussion of an Individual Education Plan which will help educators and pupils.

### **6.3 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY**

It is important for every researcher to mention the limitations that may raise questions regarding the credibility of the study. In essence, the present research study was undertaken with the aim of establishing how educators manage inclusive education in their classrooms. Despite the fact that the study is directly related to inclusive schools, the researcher feels that it would also have been useful to uncover the situation in regular classrooms, the universal factor above all else is that all learners need effective strategies and competent educators who can manage the classrooms effectively.

The main limitation of this study is the fact that it was conducted only in a part of the Mpumalanga region and scaled down to the small sample of respondents in one school and included only female teachers. However, its intensity may be insignificant considering that the respondents meet the criteria as Cloete (2002:46) explained that when the respondents have had experiences relating to the phenomena to be researched, and are verbally fluent and able to communicate their feelings, thoughts and perceptions relating to the research phenomenon then their input is valuable. In a nutshell the researcher selected information-rich cases as McMillan & Schumacher (2001:401) stressed that the insight that is generated from qualitative inquiry depends more on richness of the cases and the analytical capabilities of the researcher than on the sample size. The chosen site, Maloka Primary School, served as a pilot for implementing inclusive education even though it started practising it before it was selected to be amongst the chosen few. The sample

was restricted to six educators of this selected site and it was piloted in one of the primary schools. This may be a limiting factor in the generalization of the findings.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the researcher is convinced that the research has achieved its goal. The problems that the study has uncovered with regard to problems those educators have encountered in managing inclusive classrooms is a general problem that occurs in many schools around South Africa, and, thus the results of the findings may be generalized to a reasonable extent.

## **6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS AND FURTHER STUDY**

### **6.4.1 Recommendations**

Conducting this research has been one of the richest learning experiences this researcher has ever had, especially considering that managing learners who experience barriers to learning in the classroom has been a thorny issue to the researcher as educator and to the majority of educators world-wide as proven by the literature. Finding ways of how to identify, overcome and prevent these barriers to learning is something worth striving for.

According to the literature study, the implementation, practice and perception of inclusive education have been explored. What appeared to be lacking was the management of inclusion in the classroom. Hence the researcher feels more interested, encouraged and motivated to fully manage the inclusive classrooms without any reservations after collecting this information.

This research has identified some factors that need to be attended to in order for inclusive education to be effectively managed in the classrooms, these are:

- **In-service training** for educators and the training programmes for parents and learners should be implemented in order to create a positive inclusive learning environment not only in the Mpumalanga area but in all other areas towards building an inclusive education system. It has become clear from the study that educators need enough time to gain adequate knowledge about inclusion so the way the Department of Education uses workshops and train educators needs a thorough review.
- **Relevant resources** have been shown to be of crucial importance. It is evident from the present study that inadequate resources or lack of teaching and learning materials, especially materials that can help to make learning accessible to learners who experience barriers to learning, is a major challenge. Providing these resources cannot be left to the discretion of schools and educators to improvise. The government should, as promised in the Department of Education (2002:31) and the National Coordinating Committee Meeting (NCCIE) identifies, extend and develop resources and materials which will teach, and support teachers to overcome the barriers to learning in all the learners.
- **Overcrowding** had been identified as one of the factors which inhibited the success of managing the classrooms even before inclusive education was implemented. Most black schools find themselves having to accommodate up to 50 learners and sometimes even more in their classrooms due to financial restraints and lack of adequate buildings. This overcrowding problem in a way makes it impossible for educators to give learners individual

attention and this is not conducive to inclusive classrooms as every learner needs attention and to be allowed to learn at different a pace. Educators encounter problems in administering discipline in their overcrowded classroom because there are some learners who experience emotional and behavioural problems who need special attention. Due to overcrowdedness they find it difficult to cope with this problem. The fact is that these types of learners have a low concentration span so they end up disturbing other learners which in turn disrupts the lesson. Overcrowding also limits the space available to the educator to arrange the learners in a way that would be conducive to the principles of inclusive education.

The Department of Education (2001b:16) states that “...inclusive education is about maximising the participation of all learners in the culture and curricular of educational institutions and uncovering and minimizing barriers to learning, it is also about empowering by developing their individual strengths and enabling them to participate critically in the process of learning”.

The current situations in most schools will not be able to meet the needs of the above principles due to overcrowdedness, so the researcher recommends that the government should consider the employment of teacher assistants and the building of more classrooms for these learners.

- **Parental involvement** is viewed as a useful asset in an inclusive classroom as it may help to relieve educators from some of the burdens that they carry. Parent volunteers can also play an important role in making classroom management effective and successful as they could in a way promote continuity between the home and the school. Parents should be made aware that their services are very important in the education of their children, and



that their involvement will be of much value. They need to be confident in rendering their services to the school and this confidence could be enhanced by providing them with training and allowing them to attend workshops so that their assistance may have a meaningful impact on their children's development.

- **A barrier-free physical environment** is a situation to which inclusive education as a new system has its own demands. The majority of schools were not built to accommodate the learners who experience barriers to learning, for example for those with visual problems and those who have physical disabilities (who uses wheelchairs). These older buildings make access difficult for these learners. It is, therefore, recommended that school ramps, toilets, basins, taps, pathways, doors, handles, playground facilities and classroom space and flooring be upgraded in all learning centres to make them accessible to all learners. Gordon (2000:6) summed up this need stating that "...ordinary learning centres have to transform to welcome all learners in an anti-discriminatory learning environment, where the culture of learning, teaching and service is entrenched through well equipped teachers, centre-based and community-based support teams, democratically elected representative governance bodies, and learners eager to learn".
- **A language programme**, where the majority of learners are taught in a language different from their home language places the learners at a disadvantage and contributes to learning breakdown. According to the research findings the Department of Education (2002:175) states that "...learners with a strong grounding in their mother tongue in their early development stage have the ability to manage the language skills of a second and third language better than those learners that have not been exposed to their own mother tongue in their foundation years". Furthermore it is explained that there is also

a direct relationship between a learner's performance and the language of instruction. Therefore the researcher recommends that educators should be multilingual, for example know at least one African language, preferably the predominant African language in that area where the school is situated. Also to accommodate deaf learners or hearing impaired learners educators need training in sign language in order to facilitate learning to all their learners.

- **A change of attitude**, is required as the fact that the inequalities caused by the apartheid system has left many people marginalized and disadvantaged in many spheres of life cannot be disputed. Educators, Principals, SGB, learners, parents and the community at large have stereotypical attitudes towards learners with barriers to learning. The researcher recommends that all the significant role players and those who play a role directly or indirectly in assisting learners to be part of the democratic society, be empowered with adequate knowledge on barriers to learning and be equipped with information and skills that could help learners in inclusive education to unfold all the latent talents and abilities that they have in their lives.
- **Extrinsic Motivation.** It is high time that educators be extrinsically motivated. The researcher wishes to assert that love, dedication, commitment adequate knowledge and skills are not enough for educators to make an even greater effort to awaken the pupils' desire to learn and develop their potential to lead a meaningful life. It is recommended that educators should be given incentives like salary increase and a rich stimulating environment so that they may put more effort into their work. Teaching learners with different abilities in one classroom is somehow strenuous and accommodating those with different learning barriers in that particular class is extremely demanding to educators. In addition to

that an unfavourable teaching and learning environment can contribute negatively to learning and teaching, hence it should be kept in mind that job-dissatisfaction may be caused by several issues which may lead to workers not producing good results.

As has been mentioned throughout this study, teachers felt threatened to respond to the new system of inclusive education as they felt they were not part of the decision making at certain levels, are having to use new methods of teaching which they are not conversant with and they have little knowledge and skills in practising inclusion. These factors could contribute negatively to managing their inclusion successfully in the classroom. Steyn (2002:98) attested that performance alone does not enable individuals to satisfy their needs, especially if they lack the appropriate skills or when their prior training is inadequate. The above author also supports the idea of extrinsic motivation when stressing that the outcomes may come from the external environment in the form of praise, promotions or financial rewards.

- **Assessment;** Assessment is the continuous, planned process of gathering information about the performance of learners against the Assessment standards (Barnard, Chamberlain, Dithiso and Murtough 2005:7 and Van den Berg 2004:280). According to these authors the aim of assessment is to show what the learner has achieved and how he or she is able to integrate and apply that knowledge and those skills correctly. What seems to be a problem is how to assess these learners with barriers to learning in an inclusive classroom. The fact that different learners need different ways and time to be assessed, calls for an urgent need for training educators in assessment methods, which supports critical and creative thinking for all learners. Even though continuous assessment (Cass) is

recommended to be used, as it is the chief method for curriculum 2005, more workshops are still needed.

## **6.5 Conclusion**

The challenge for South Africans as a nation, in trying to meet the demands for future generations in a democratic world, is to prepare learners to accommodate one another regardless of their physical, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should also include gifted learners or those who experience barriers to learning, children from urban or rural areas and those who are at risk of having barriers.

The study suggests that to meet the above challenges a lot of work needs to be done by way of taking all the stakeholders on board in facilitating the practice and implementation of inclusive education in its entirety. People should be made aware that inclusion is not something that will happen overnight as it is a process that demands time, continuity, dedication, commitment, love, motivation intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and also self-sacrifice.

Learners who experience barriers to learning are part of the nation, they need to be loved and cared for they need support from all the people around them and they have the right to learn and be treated with dignity.

All educators should serve our country with pride and join the previous Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal in his invitation to build an inclusive education system. He said "...let us work together to nurture our people with disabilities so that they also experience the full excitement and the joy of learning and to provide

them, and our nation with a solid foundation for life long learning and development” (Department of Education 2001b:4).

The above is by no means an exhaustive account of this theme. One of the issues that deserve further attention is the assessment of learners who experience barriers to learning in an inclusive classroom. It is also imperative that other identified problematic factors should be addressed to improve the management of inclusive education in Mpumalanga and in all of South Africa. Unless these issues are dealt with, educators will remain under pressure, be frustrated and eventually this will inhibit the success of inclusion in schools.

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## APPENDIX A

P.O BOX 271  
HAMMANSKRAAL  
0400  
22 April 2005

THE PRINCIPAL  
MALOKA PRIMARY SCHOOL  
PRIVATE BAG X369  
PANKOP  
0476

SIR/MADAME

I am a student at the University of South Africa trying to further my studies in Education Management. The topic of my dissertation is **Managing inclusive education in the classroom with reference to the Nkangala Region in Mpumalanga.**

To complete the requirements for the course I need to become acquainted with various aspects of inclusion at the institutional level. This means that I have to undertake research in certain areas, which requires the cooperation of people in an institution. I would like to conduct my research at your school.

Thanking you in advance for helping me to reach my goal. It means a lot to me as an educator to experience how you manage this challenging situation.

Sincerely yours

---

N G Mpya

## **APPENDIX B**

### **TRANSCRIPTION OF FOCUSED GROUP INTERVIEW WITH EDUCATORS NUMBER 1 TO 6**

#### **DEFINITION OF SYMBOLS USED**

R: The Researcher

E1 to E6: Educator Number 1 to 6

#### **QUESTIONS**

1. R: What is your understanding of inclusive education? Educator number one, can you please tell us?

E1: It is simply making space for all children, those with disabilities and learning barriers, putting them together with those who are physically functional.

R: Thank you. Educator number two, could you please tell us your view?

E2: It is... a learning education, which include learners with learning barriers who are physically challenged, or impairment in the mainstream school.

R: Educator number three?

E3: I think inclusive education includes all learners irrespective of their great difficulty in gaining access to education in mainstream.

R: Thank you, educator number four?

E4: Inclusive education is the system that is responsive to the diverse needs of all learners and ensuring quality education through appropriate curricula.

R: Educator number five, can you please tell us your view?

E5: I'll say it is an education whereby all learners irrespective of their disabilities are included in the mainstreams of school

R: Educator number six?

E6: I think that it caters to all learners irrespective of any disability. All the learners can show their potentials.

R: Thank you. Is there anyone who wants to add maybe on what inclusive education is?

E2: Ok...If I may add on that. Ok I think it is a type of education, which allows learners with special educational needs to be accommodated in a normal school.

R: Thank you, and ...

2. R: How do you perceive inclusive education? Educator number one.

E1: I perceive ... inclusive education as being good because we have to move forward together as a nation. No one simply deserves to be sidelined... all born for a reason. We all deserve a chance.

R: Thank you and how do you perceive inclusive education, educator number two?

E2: I think generally it is a good method because it does not discriminate against learners because of their physical challenges.

R: Educator number three?

E3: Inclusive education is good because it assists all learners.

R: Educator number four, your view?

E4: I think inclusive education is good because it has changed teachers' diversity, values and attitudes.

R: Number five?

E5: I think it is imperative as it allows each and every child to be educated.

R: Educator number six?

E6: I think it discouraged unfair discrimination especially against less gifted learners who were not given enough opportunity and been evaluated academically only.

R: Thank you.

3. R: ...Why do you think inclusive education is the best or worst move the government has made? Educator number one?

E1: According to me, I believe is the best move because when the parents give birth to a child with barriers he gets to rejoice, for she; she feels that her child is also accepted and equal to others.

R: Yes, and educator number four what do you think?

E4: Hmm... It is the best move because most learners with special needs for example those with physical disabilities were not able to go to special schools, as they are expensive.

R: ... educator number three?

E3: It is the...

R: What do you think educator number three? Just tell us your view.

E3: Ok. Inclusive education is the best move because the government has made to recognize and respect the differences among learners and building on the similarities.

R: Educator number two, your view?

E2: I think it is a good move because the government aim is to reduce discrimination among schools.

R: Number five?

E5: It is the best move since every disabled learner can be exposed to the learning situation.

R: Number six do you have an input?

E6: I think it is the best move because numbers of dropouts will decrease because every learner is being given an opportunity to prove his/her talent.

4. R: Ok, if you had a choice would you allow the principal to admit learners who have barriers to learn? Educator number one?

E1: Yes I would allow him to admit them to help us educators to understand the learners and to learn more about them.

R: Number two, your view.

E2: I think I can say yes and at the same time I can say no. Yes because these learners need support from the educators and other stakeholders. No because human resources and also physical resources should be made available before admission of such learners.

R: Ok, educator number... three, do you have an input?

E3: I can say yes because mainstream schools allow all learners irrespective of their difficulties.

R: educator number four what can you say?

E4: I can say yes because the learners can be part of the community and because if they are isolated they will not be able to work with others, as they were not used to other people.

R: Thank you and educator number five what is your point?

E5: I'll say yes because all learners must learn and then children must be given equal opportunities by the government.

R: Educator number six do you have any comment about that?

E6: Oh on this... I don't have any comment.

5. R: Thank you. What resources are available at your school to help you deal with the learners who have learning problems?

E1: At our school we have computers and charts which help us to deal with these learning problems.

R: Educator number two can you tell us?

E2: We only have very few resources such as computers and Braille apparatus, which are not enough to allow educators to be effective and efficient.

R: Number three.

E3: We have resources such as Braille apparatus, charts, sign language materials and pictures.

R: Ok, educator number four.

E4: There are few computers, charts are also available that make different activities which are made by educators.

R: Educator number five.



E5: ... we have books and computers.

R: Educator number six.

E6:... we have natural resources.

6. R: What support do you receive from school, from the parent and from the department of education to enable you to be effective educators?  
Educator number two?

E2: At school level we only have few resources those have mentioned above, that is the computers and Braille apparatus from workshop for educators. From the department side, the department only organizes.

R: ... educator number three.

E3: The school supports us with learning material; parents support teachers and learners to help learners to do their homework.

R: Educator number four.

E4: ... As a school we have a based team that supports learners with barriers, the parent are also cooperative e.g. when we are doing case studies and department help us with development of workshops.

R: Educator number five.

E5: The department allows me to undergo some courses and improve my qualifications. The school also invites some of the motivational speakers. And once again we also visit special schools so as to gain knowledge from teachers in special schools.

R: Thank you. Educator number six.

E6: The above mentioned stakeholders play an active part that is full support in intervention, refresher workshops, monitoring and correspondences.

R: Educator number one.

E1: Ok, from school level we have Learners Support Team which help us with the ideas and they assist in reporting whatever is happening everyday and from the parents' view, they come to school to help us with answering each question posed to them concerning the learners and from the department side, the department sends educators to attend workshops so that they can be able to understand the problem, the learning, learners with a special problems.

7. R: Thank you. What additional support as educators would you like to receive in order to teach these learners effectively?

E2: I think firstly schools should be user friendly for such learners. Government should organize some more workshops so that educators are given enough information on how to deal with such learners. Resources also must be increased.

R: Thank you. Educator number one.

E1: Ok, I think we need relevant resources and the workshops for example, two to three weeks workshops for inclusive education... which will ...help us in practical teaching learners with barriers.

R: Thank you educator number one. And educator number three, what additional support do you need in order to teach the learners effectively?

E3: Additional support such as sponsors and excursions only.

R: Thank you. Educator number four?

E4: ... in addition to that we need more workshops and also teacher: pupil's ratio in the class must be minimized. In the case of more barriers, the assistant teacher or a volunteer is needed.

R: Educator number six, what can you say?

E6: I think ... to be work-shopped especially in Arts and Craft skills for those learners who are severely struggling in learning theoretical activities.

R: Educator number five what is your view?

E5: I'll say a building, which is suitable for physically disabled learners.

8. R: What in-service training did you receive for teaching learners with barriers to learning?

E2: Workshop, workshop.

R: Ok, thank you educator number two. ... educator number one?

E1: ... I received computer training at Witbank for three days.

R: Ok, thank you, educator number three ... educator number four.

- E4: I attended workshops on learners with special needs.
- R: Educator number five, did you attend any workshop?
- E5: Yes, I did attend a workshop.
- R: Ok, thank you, and educator number six
- E6: ... yes I attended many workshops sponsored by the department for ... we were doing sign language, Braille and then these workshop we attended them at... Witbank, Nelspruit and Middleburg.
- R: Thank you, educator number two?
- E2: I only attended the workshop.
- R: Ok, thank you. ...
9. R: Where did you receive the training and for how long were you trained?  
Educator number one?
- E1: ... I enrolled with Wits University for two years.
- R: ... Educator number two?
- E2: The training I received was for only two weeks at Nelspruit.
- R: Educator number three?
- E3: I received the training from Middleburg and Pretoria only for four weeks.

R: Educator number four?

E4: I was trained by Scope Company from Finland for three months and also follow-ups for about two months.

R: ... educator number five?

E5: I received that from Braille Pretoria ... for three weeks.

R: Educator number six?

E6: ... I received the training from Kekana Primary School for two weeks.

R: Ok, thank you.

10. R: And if you were not trained, before how do you deal with these learners?

E1: ... it was very difficult for me to face the class situation. I was afraid to talk to them or even just to come next to them.

R: Educator number two, if you were not trained, how did you deal with these learners?

E2: What I did was to group them according to their problems, and teach them separately from those who can easily understand the matter.

R: Number three how did you deal with the matter?

E3: It was very difficult even the support from the parents. I didn't... they didn't support me; it was very, very difficult.

R: Thank you. Educator number four?

E4: Uh... mam it was very difficult you know, dealing with err learners with different... with different abilities is so difficult so I had many problems to deal with those learners.

R: Educator number five?

E5: ... I could use methods and techniques from my previous knowledge of the college.

R: Educator number six?

E6: ... if I were not trained... I should visit the special schools and buy books to enhance my understanding of different learners.

R: So it was very difficult for you ladies?

All educators laughed.

11. R: What effect does your qualification have on your competency in teaching your inclusive classroom?

E1: Mam, it helped me a lot because I learnt more about such learners, sitting with them during the observation. And the lecturers took us to the inclusive class to meet the learners. So for me it was very helpful.

R: Educator number two?

E2: My qualifications helped me a lot because I could understand various methods of assessment.

R: Number three?

E3: The methods that I was taught helped me to be able to accommodate these learners.

R: Number four?

E4: My qualifications helped me to change the attitudes towards learners who experience barriers to learning.

R: Educator number five?

E5: ... unfortunately I could not comment on that.

R: Number six?

E6: ... it is equipping me with knowledge to be able to handle these learners.

R: So all of you, do you think we just have to perhaps undergo some workshops or have some training of a sort in order to understand these children?

All educators: Yes, yes.

R: Thank you.

E1 And for follow-ups to be done like, for instance if I only received the workshop the people who are responsible for this they have to come to school and assist me so that they become aware and sure that I'm implementing the right thing.

12. R: Ok... thank you. What do you suggest could be done to empower educators to be competent inclusive educators?

E1: I think they should be given enough workshops ...allow educators to observe such lessons during teaching time and we should also let them look how these learners behave and how to handle them.

R: Hmm... thank you educator number one. Educator number two?

E2: I agree with him/her. We still need some more workshops which must be organized so that we can be work-shopped more and get more information about this.

R: Educator number three, do you have any comment?

E3: Yes, I think more workshops and in-service training are needed.

R: Educator number four?

E4: I suggest that educators can be encouraged to further their education in inclusive education and also attend workshops where possible.

R: Educator number five?

E5: I think we should go an extra mile. That is dedication and determination.



R: Educator number six?

E6: I suggest that we must attend more workshops.

13. R: Thank you.... What changes did you encounter in teaching an inclusive classroom (that is learners with barriers to learning)?

E1: As an educator, you have to handle your learners differently because they are not the same.

R: ... educator number three, what changes did you encounter in teaching an inclusive classroom?

E3: The changes are the methods of teaching and assessment. The tasks of the learners in class are different.

R: Thank you. Number two?

E2: My attitude has changed positively towards learners in general. I am now diverse in terms of activities I plan for my learners.

R: Thank you. Educator number five?

E5... I have automatically developed my own tactics to help learners with different learning problems and then I have managed to change my attitude towards these learners with learning difficulties.

R: Number four, do you have any comment?

E4: I think that I have changed the methods of teaching so that I can include all learners so that they can be educated.

R: Ok. Number six?

E6: I think to know more about these learners I have also realized that it gives an opportunity to every learner who has certain ... ability even though some are limited.

14. R: Ok what changes would you like to see being implemented in your school to make inclusive education effective?

E2: I think what is important now is to see more learners who are especially physically challenged being admitted in schools, ramps must also, be made, toilets and also the school should provide resources so that they could feel free to be with us here at school.

15. R: What methods do you use to accommodate all your learners in the classroom? Educator number four?

E4: ... the methods I am using to accommodate all the learners are group method, pairs and different tasks given to learners.

R: Number three?

E3: Only group and cooperative learning.

R: Number one, do you have any comment?

E1: Yes. I use group work and individual method.

R: Number six?

E6: ... I'm using, group work, cooperative learning, role play, practical presentation and written work.

R: Educator number five, what methods are you using?

E5: ... I would say all teachers need to be trained, buildings that would cater for all learners should be built and teaching and learning aids that would be suitable for all learners should be purchased.

16. R: Thank you. .... Which methods did you use before you were allocated an inclusive classroom? Number one?

E1: I was using group work method only.

R: Ok. Number four?

E4: ... I was using the old method that is the question and answer method and I was not dividing the learners into groups. It means that I concentrated on brilliant learners only.

R: Is it working?

E4: ...it was not working but now it's much better because I include all methods. I vary methods teaching.

R: Thank you. Which methods did you use before you were allocated this inclusive classroom educator number two?

E2: I used to use the group method but very little. Activities that I made were meant for the whole class. Those with learning abilities were left unattended or given little attention altogether.

R: Ok. Educator number five?

E5: I was using question and answer method and story telling.

R: Number six?

E6: I was only using brainstorming and observation.

17. R: So what pressure does an inclusive class put on you as an educator?  
Educator number three?

E3: The pressure that I have is the number of learners in the classroom. As most learners with disabilities have behavioural problems more human assistance is needed.

R: Ok. What pressure does an inclusive class put on you as an educator, educator number two?

E2: This education is generally stressful especially during this time where a new method of education that is Outcomes Based Education and the Revised National Curriculum is being implemented. Educators' workload is too much.

R: Educator number one, what's your view?

E1: ... there is a lot of pressure. I am unable to help all learners due to overcrowded classes. So I believe and I trust and hope that we must have

fewer learners in a class so that we will be able to address all the needs of these learners.

R: Thank you. Educator number six, what do you think?

E6: ... it is a challenge especially when dealing with different grades and abilities. I think educators should get involved in teamwork discussing such issues.

R: Thank you. Educator number five, what do you think? Did you have any pressure?

E5: Yes, I would say so and it needs more time ... teacher: learner ratio must also be considered, and then each and every individual should be, I would say, her needs should be understood very carefully.

18. R: ... Personally, do you think there have been any changes in teaching the inclusive classroom? number two?

E2: ...it is a slight change in terms of learners but for educators this is a burden for them or for us rather.

R: Number one?

E1: Yes... I think there are changes in teaching these inclusive classrooms because I do understand these learners, they do not come from the same ... background. So I have to treat them differently.

R: Number four do you want to add?

E4: Yes, I want to add because I have realized that there are changes because when dealing with learners who have disability more time is needed. So for those who are not slow more tasks are needed for them.

R: Number five?

E5: I think there is a change because I accept all learners irrespective of their disabilities and also learners I used to interact with.

R: Educator number six, can you just please tell us your view?

E6: I can say yes because learners, for example, who have been quiet for a long time, can now see life differently.

R: Thank you.

19. R: What other materials can you advise other educators to use in order to be effective inclusive ... teachers?

E3: ...I can advise them to do more occupational tasks. They must also use computers so that when you are busy with the other group, others must be occupied by the computer.

R: ...educator number one?

E1: ... I will make sure that I encourage them to love the learners with barriers and try to understand them. They should also be patient enough to handle them and work with them as well.

R: Educator number two do you have anything?

E2: ... I think if they can get lots of pictures or real objects so that they can see and touch them.

R: Educator number five?

E5: I guess they... should be shown TV sets and computers are available to those who can be able to use them.

R: Educator number six do you have anything to add?

E6: ... they can use the phonic charts, number charts and also use the tape recorders.

R: Thank you.

20. R: ... What problems or obstacles did you encounter when teaching these learners? Number three?

E3: Overcrowding, lack of teachers, lack of equipment and lack of resources such as Braille apparatus.

R: Ok, thank you. Educator numbers two?

E2: I think the problem is with their behaviour most of them; some of the learners cannot concentrate for a longer period.

R: Number one?

E1: Yes ... I had lot of problems; you remember in one question I said I was afraid to look at them and I was even afraid to touch them so that was the obstacle that I was really faced with.

R: Number four?

E4: ...the problem that I encounter is the behavioral problems of the learners with learning disability. It is very much difficult to control them

R: Number five?

E5: ...I encounter behavioural problems and there is a lack of concentration in those learners

R: Number six, did you encounter problems when teaching these learners?

E6: Yes, there is a lot of problems there because some have auditory and visual problems, some are perceptual problems some with fine motor and huge muscle problems so you'll have to assist these learners, that's what I have encountered,

21. R: ... how do you address these problems, as educators, educator two?

E2: What I normally did for those learners with behavioural problems I requested them to stand up and listen while standing in front of the whole class. Of which to some extent they will become passive when I need their inputs

R: Number four how do you address these problems?

E4: To address these problems I always give them work and they always sit next to me in the classroom.



R: Number five do you have a strategy?

E5: Yes... I address this problem by giving other learners occupational test when I am busy with the other groups

R: Number six?

E6: ... I separate these learners accordingly so as I address such problems or deal with them

R: ... in what other way, ok do you want to add?

E1: Yes

22. R: ... In what other way can these challenges be addressed because it seems as if it's a very difficult situation? Educator number four?

E4: I think that these challenges can be addressed by introducing remedial classes; so that these learners can have enough time to be helped.

E2: I think a psychologist should be organized to diagnose what causes this kind of behaviour at schools.

R: Thank you educator number one?

E1: I suggest more workshops for educators and follow-ups.

R: Educator number five do you have something to say?

E5: Yes, I would say by minimizing learners in the classrooms and if possible learners can be grouped according to their capabilities and disabilities.

R: Thank you, educator number six ... do you have any comment?

E6: ...on that I don't have any comment.

R: Ok, educator number three?

E3: Building of more schools these remedial schools and more social workers and Psychologist are needed to these schools

R: Ok thank you. Is there any one who just wants to add or just wants to give us a strategy or any information about this inclusive education? Any comment. Educator number one.?

E1: ...I think what is important is for us as educators to accept change that we were just teaching these learners using general stream now we have to adjust to the change so that we will be able to accommodate these learners, and again when we come back from the workshops we should make sure that we implement exactly what we have been taught and it should be done immediately because when you hold the information when you cascade it after a long period you will find that it is very difficult for you to implement exactly what you have been taught.

R: Thank you. Educator number one, is there anyone who wants to say something about this inclusive education? ... in absence of comments and questions I would like to thank you as a panel you've made a great input I think from now we are going to be able to go further with this inclusive

education and then its going to help other people with how to manage this inclusive education. Thank you and enjoy your day.

All educators: Thank you.

## APPENDIX C

Teaching strategies proposed:.....

Extent of participation in ordinary class activities:.....

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Evaluation criteria::

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### Programme for intervention

Area of need	Long term goal	Short term objectives	Services needed to meet the goals	Review comments
Mathematics				
Reading				
Writing				

### The IEP team

Team member	Position	Signature
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		