TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE

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DECLARATION

Student number: **3007 470 3**

I declare that **TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE** 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.

_____   _____

SIGNATURE   DATE

(Mrs)

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I would like to express my profound gratitude to all the people who contributed to the completion of this study:

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ABSTRACT

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The South African government introduced Full-service schools to provide quality education to all learners through flexibility to meet the full range of learning needs. Full-service schools are institutions that strive to transform themselves, proactively addressing the barriers to learning and increasing participation of the learners and educators in the teaching and learning process. This can be achieved by enhancing the flexibility of teaching and learning methods used. This study therefore focused on the teaching and learning methods used in inclusive classrooms to accommodate diversity. This was a case study that was conducted at Mphuphuthe Full-service school at Ledig, situated in the Bojanala Region in the North West Province. A qualitative approach and purposive sampling was used. The triangulation of data collection methods using three data collection instruments, namely focus group interview, observation and document analysis was used. The results showed that teaching and learning is flexible, making use of differentiated methods such as multilevel teaching; songs and rhymes; storytelling using pictures, puppets and big books. Dramatisation was used in instances where learners acted out the stories they were told. Cooperative learning was used for problem solving activities and projects so that learners could work together. Differentiation in terms of lesson planning, activities and assessment standards was used to accommodate all the learners. Based on the findings, recommendations were made for effective teaching and learning in inclusive classrooms in the Foundation Phase.

KEY TERMS

Inclusive Education; Inclusion; Barriers to learning; Full-service schools; Scaffold; Foundation Phase; Straddle; Institute level support team; Language of learning and teaching; Code switch

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my:

- ➢ Dear husband Lotwane David Motitswe for his continuous support and encouragement.

- ➢ Daughters Ontlametse, Lethabo and Keamogetse for being so understanding and patient throughout my studies.

- ➢ Parents Steven Randle Sethusha and Elizabeth Bocxy Sethusha for their prayers, encouragement and support during every step of my studies.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"Tell me and I'll forget, show me and I may remember, involve me and I'll understand".   (Chinese Proverb).

1.1.   BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

In writing that, "Behind each classroom door lies a world of diversity", Lewis and Doorlag, (2006:5) meant that in any classroom learners display differences in their use of language, learning styles, developmental levels, cultures, socio-economic backgrounds and types of intelligence. This diversity gave rise to the concept of barriers to learning and development, and research has revealed that learners learn in different ways because of hereditary factors, experience, environment and/or their personalities (UNICEF, 2010: http://www.unicef.org/teaches /forum /0301htm). Consequently, the educators need to use a variety of teaching methods and activities to meet inclusively the different learning needs of children.

Inclusivity is now a global phenomenon, having received much impetus at the World Conference on Special Needs Education in 1994 in Salamanca, Spain (UNESCO, 1994:7). Its purpose is to inform and guide action by governments, international organisations, national aid agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other bodies in implementing the Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education. Although this was the focus, its conclusion was that it could not advance in isolation, and therefore promoted a broader approach, namely that of Inclusive Education. The new goal was to further the objective of education as a fundamental human right by paying attention to the basic policy shifts necessary for its development, thereby enabling schools to serve all learners, particularly those with special educational needs (UNESCO, 2009:8). The Salamanca Statement acknowledged the process of strengthening the capacity of education systems that would recognise and respond effectively to diversity. The emphasis was therefore on developing Inclusive Education systems that would

accommodate all learners, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This included both disabled and gifted children.

The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO, 2005:12) views Inclusive Education as a dynamic process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners, and of seeing individual differences not as problems but as opportunities for enriching learning. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision that covers all children of the appropriate age range. It embraces the conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular education system to educate all children.

In South Africa, where the research for this dissertation took place, Inclusive Education has been defined by the Department of Education (DoE) as a process of addressing the diverse needs of all learners by reducing barriers to and within the learning environment (South Africa, 2005b:12). Policy requires schools to respond to the diversity of learners and to provide equal educational opportunities for all. With regard to learners who experience barriers to learning, a policy of educational equity logically implies enriching the regular education taking place in the classroom with appropriate learning support.

The Education White paper 6 on Special Education Needs: Building an Inclusive Education and Training system (South Africa, 2001:14) posits that Inclusive Education provides for a diversity of learners needs by creating a diversity of rich learning experiences for all. It is based on a value system that invites and celebrates diversity arising from gender, nationality, race, language, socio-economic background, cultural origin and level of educational achievement or disability (Mittler, 2000:10). It also includes everyone in learning, regardless of any of these factors, so that all learners can belong in school and have access to the educational outcomes that it offers. Inclusion is about more than "special needs" or "disabilities," and is concerned with comprehensive education, equality and collective belonging (Thomas & Loxley, 2001:118). Inclusive Education is a process of strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners, and can thus be understood as a key strategy to achieve Education for All (EFA), hence teaching and learning in the

classroom should be designed and planned in such a way that diverse learning needs are accommodated and full participation in the learning process is achieved. The researcher intends to investigate the situation and examine ways in which educators accommodate diversity in the classroom.

Hargreaves (1997), Fullan (1998) and Miller (1998), cited by Engelbrecht and Green (2001:32), explained that for Inclusive Education to succeed educators and communities need to shift from one set of assumption, beliefs, values, norms, relationships, behaviour and practices, to another. This entails a fundamental re-culturing of learning and teaching that would involve significant reform and restructuring of all school operations. More specifically, making Inclusive Education an essential requirement would require the development of new conceptions about learning and teaching, and new practices for educators that reflect a supportive and nurturing environment. It would celebrate diversity and promote equal opportunity and access to education. Re-culturing for Inclusive Education requires a comprehensive and ongoing whole school development approach, which involves all role players and all systems of the school as a learning organisation (Cochran-Smith, 2009:2; Engelbrecht & Green, 2001:32). Whole school development therefore involves more than merely changing an educator's classroom practices and extends to include the context of the whole school. As Engelbrecht and Green (2001:34) have argued, Inclusive Education provides an additional incentive for whole school development and educational reform.

The core principles and strategies of whole school development for Inclusive Education need to accomplish the following (Engelbrecht & Green, 2001:33; Peterson, Beloin & Gibson, 2000:1):

- Empower citizens in a democracy
- Include all
- Teach and adapt for diversity
- Build community and support learning
- Build partnerships
- Develop and share leadership.

With the main focus on teaching and learning methods in inclusive classrooms, the study considers the second and third principles:

- To include all, because access to education should be provided where all learners learn together across culture, ethnicity, language, ability, gender and age within the local community;

- In order to teach and adapt for diversity, educators need to design instructions to accommodate the diverse needs, interests and abilities of all learners and engage them in active learning through meaningful, real-world activities.

Roosevelt (in Norris, 2001:219) emphasised that managing diversity does not mean controlling it, but rather involves enabling every member to perform to his or her potential. It is, however, incumbent upon an educator to have good teaching strategies for helping the learners to be flexible in their thinking, and to be motivated and creative in their approaches to teaching and learning. As Nghipondoka (2001:27) has argued, flexibility in teaching will also enable an educator continuously to develop and implement instructional approaches that are beneficial to all learners.

The DoE (South Africa, 2002:48) devised Curriculum 2005 (C2005) to encourage the use of different methods of teaching which it was envisaged the educator could employ not only to vary the transfer of information but also to change the information to suit all learners in the classroom. The study will investigate whether educators vary their teaching strategies to accommodate the diverse needs of learners. Bouwer (in Landsberg, Kruger & Nel, 2005:48) maintains that educators should accept responsibility for all the learners in their classrooms, including those who experience barriers to learning. The study will also examine whether educators accommodate the needs of individual learners within the classroom curriculum. According to Rief, Julie and Heimburge (2006: xvii), educators are in a position of great privilege, with the opportunity to make a positive difference to the lives of children. The study will therefore also investigate the interaction between the educators and learners, the classroom environment and the curriculum and methods used.

The Education White Paper 6 (South Africa, 2001:6) emphasised the following statements to highlight the centrality of inclusion as a curriculum issue:

- The policy outlines how the education and training system must change to accommodate the full range of learning needs with particular attention to strategies for instructional and curriculum transformation (pp.11-12)

- Inclusive Education and training are about acknowledging that all children and youth can learn provided they receive support (p.16)

- Inclusive Education and training are about enabling teaching and learning methodologies and curricula, and maximising the participation of all learners in the culture and curricula of educational institutions (p.16)

- Inclusive Education and training are about uncovering and minimising barriers to learning (p.16)

- One of the most significant barriers to learning is the curriculum. Barriers to learning arise from the different aspects of the curriculum such as the content, the language, classroom organisation, teaching methodologies, pace of teaching and time available to complete the curriculum teaching and learning support materials and assessment.(p.19)

- Central to the accommodation of diversity in our schools and all other education institutions, is a flexible curriculum and assessment policy that is accessible to all learners, irrespective of the nature of their learning needs and whether they are in "special" or "ordinary" schools (p.31)

The study will investigate if these guidelines do provide guidance for educators, administrators and personnel on how to deal with diversity in South African classrooms and schools.

1.2.   MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

As noted above, classrooms are diverse in terms of the different learners who are taught and the way that they learn. Research indicates that children learn in different ways because of hereditary factors, experience, environment or their personalities (UNICEF, 2010: http://www.unicef.org/teaches /forum /0301htm, 06). Consequently,

educators need to use a variety of methods and activities to meet the different learning needs.

From experience of teaching at Marikana Primary school, situated at Bojanala Region in the North West Province, as the Head of Department (HOD) in the Foundation Phase, as well as from workshops attended, the researcher has realised that there is a serious need for the implementation of Inclusive Education in almost all schools. The Bojanala Region incorporates the Rustenburg area, surrounded by mines, which have led to overpopulation through the migration of people from various countries, including Malawi, Lesotho, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, as well as different South African provinces, such as Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and Limpopo. This is reflected in the diversity not only of nationality but also race, language, socio-economic background, cultural origin and level of educational achievement. Most of the schools in the North West Province, especially in the rural areas, are using Setswana as their language of learning and teaching (LOLT) in the Foundation Phase. Since Setswana is not the home language of most learners, this causes language and communication barriers, especially for those trying to access the curriculum. Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2010:18) contend that the 'curriculum' is often misunderstood as referring to the 'syllabus' or the content of what is taught. The DoE (South Africa, 1997: vii) defines the curriculum as everything that influences the learner, from the educator and work programmes, right down to the environment in which teaching and learning is taking place. The curriculum is the most significant of the barriers to learning, with different aspects such as the content (what is taught), the language or medium of instruction, the methods and processes used in teaching, the pace of teaching and the time available to complete the curriculum, and the learning materials and equipments that are used.

According to *Guidelines for Full-Service / Inclusive Schools* (South Africa, 2009b:9).*,* the most important way of addressing barriers arising from the curriculum is to make sure that the process of teaching and learning is sufficiently flexible to accommodate different learning needs and styles. This problem motivated the researcher to take the initiative to investigate the teaching and learning methods in an inclusive

classroom in the Foundation Phase. The study will therefore focus on how the different learning styles are accommodated within the curriculum.

1.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The study is based on the *Guidelines for Full-Service / Inclusive Schools* (South Africa, 2009b:7), relating to the implementation of Inclusive Education at practical level. Full-service schools are defined as those that will be equipped and supported to provide for the full range of learning needs among all learners (South Africa, 2001:22). In building the capacity of these schools, special emphasis is placed on inclusive principles, which include flexibility in teaching and learning and the provision of education support to learners and educators. As the name suggests, a Full-service school aims to allow all learners to learn and participate fully. All development and work in the school should strive to achieve these goals by sharing expertise and constantly thinking about the development of both educators and learners.

According to the *Guidelines,* Full-service schools strive to access equity, quality and social justice in education, and promote a sense of belonging so that all learners, staff and families experience a sense of worth in the learning community. They also have the capacity to respond to diversity by providing appropriate education for individual needs of learners, irrespective of disability and differences in learning styles or pace, or social difficulties experienced. In addition, they establish methods to assist curriculum and institutional transformation to ensure that both an awareness of diversity and additional support are available to those learners and educators who need it (South Africa, 2009b:9). When the DoE in the provinces identified schools to become Full-service, they considered the policies and guidelines as their criteria for selection.

When the Inclusive Education project was in the schools, some teachers were confused because they did not understand what they were supposed to do. Others were concerned that they had not been trained to teach children who were unable to participate in learning activities the way others in their classes could. According to a

report on the Inclusive Education field test: 2004- 2009 (South Africa, 2009a:6), all the educators in the Full-service schools had received orientation and basic training in Inclusive Education.

From the Full-service / inclusive school perspective, barriers to learning are not only intrinsic but can also be cultural and systemic, in particular from the learners' environment, such as negative attitudes; stereotyping of learners; inflexible teaching methods and practices; inappropriate language and/or communication; inaccessible or unsafe environment; lack of support from or non-involvement of caregivers; and lack of leadership in the school (South Africa, 2009b). Since most schools at Rustenburg are encountering the external barriers, it is important to investigate the teaching methods and learning strategies that educators use at the Full-service school.

1.4.   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Against this background the investigation is guided by the following research question:

- **Which teaching methods do educators use to address diversity in inclusive classrooms in the Foundation Phase?**

The following sub-questions also guide this study:

- Is teaching and learning sufficiently flexible to accommodate different learning needs and styles?

- How is diversity addressed?

- How is support provided?

- What does the inclusive school policy say and is it implemented?

- What competencies do educators use to manage the inclusive classrooms?

1.5.   AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to investigate the teaching and learning methods in an inclusive classroom in the Foundation Phase. The objectives are

- To investigate if teaching and learning methods are sufficiently flexible to accommodate different learning needs and styles

- To investigate whether diversity is addressed when these teaching and learning methods are used

- To explore the support provided in inclusive classrooms

- To explore the educators' competencies in managing the inclusive classroom

- To establish whether an inclusive school policy is developed and if it is being implemented

- To explore the challenges educators experience that might also cause barriers to teaching and learning in their classrooms.

1.6.   RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The qualitative method as mode of inquiry used in the study is suitable for gaining more information on and understanding ways to address diversity in inclusive classrooms. Data was collected during school visits, from classroom observation and in-depth focus group interviews, and an analysis of key documents (including learners' portfolios and workbooks, and educators' workbooks). This strategy enabled the researcher to generate consistent and detailed research reports on the teaching and learning methods in an inclusive classroom.

1.6.1. Research design

This section refers to the plan of the research project (Mouton, 2001:55; Punch, 2005:53). It was important before the research was undertaken to create guidelines that would give it order and direction, and assist in maintaining focus (Burton & Bartlett, 2005:96). To this end, the research design detailed all the issues involved in planning and executing the project, from identifying the problem through to reporting and publishing the results (Punch, 2005:54). The research design is a case study,

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which Creswell (2001:15) regards as a way of exploring in depth a programme, an event, an activity, a process, or one or more individuals.

Case studies are bounded by time and activity, collecting detailed data with a variety of methods from multiple context-rich sources over a sustained period of time (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, & Delport, 2005:272). In exploring the teaching and learning methods in inclusive classrooms in the Foundation Phase, the researcher used the multiple methods of observation, focus group interviews and document analysis, spread over three weeks. As a case study it aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of the practice and so facilitate informed decision-making, that is a 'bounded system.'

1.6.2.   Research approach

Qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. The researcher chose this approach to investigate teaching and learning methods, the way educators address diversity in their classrooms, and educators and learners' interaction and relationships. The phenomena were researched in their natural settings, with an attempt made to make sense of and interpret them in terms of the meaning people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the use and collection of a variety of empirical materials, including personal experience, introspection, interviews, observation, and historical, interactional and visual texts. The qualitative research method makes it possible to obtain firsthand information (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, & Delport, 2002:271).

De Vos et al. (2002:112) write that the qualitative approach is concerned mainly with the understanding of social life and meanings that people attach to everyday life. It differs from quantitative research in employing non-statistical methods, allowing for smaller samples to be purposefully selected. On the same note, McMillan and Schumacher (2001:398) regard qualitative research design as a method of experimentation studying human behaviour and habits. Qualitative methods are used by researchers to observe the world around them and find results that explain what they saw.

Qualitative researchers, according to Creswell (2003:182), deal with socially constructed realities and qualities that are complex and indivisible into discrete variables. The researcher's task is to try to describe, understand and interpret how various participants in a social setting construct the world around them. The researcher based the study on the qualitative approach because qualitative design employs an inductive strategy (Creswell, 2003:182) that is not based on predetermined or preconceived ideas but on theories that emerge from the data.

The objective of qualitative research is to promote better self-understanding and increase insight into the human condition, with emphasis on improved understanding of human behaviour and experience. In line with Creswell (2003:14), the study is positioned within a constructive paradigm, which suggests that the researcher believes in the existence of multiple realities, that is a number of meanings of individual and collective experiences that are socially and historically constructed to develop a theory or pattern. The researcher expected to obtain the views and perspectives of educators as key informants of what they said, understood and did.

Neuman (2011:69-81) submits that the interpretive approach in qualitative research analyses social actions through direct and detailed observation in their natural setting, so as to understand and interpret how people create meaning in their social world. Because of the choice of the research design and the nature of the problem under investigation, the study followed an interpretive approach that enabled the researcher to shed some light on the teaching and learning methods in inclusive classrooms and how these impacted on learners' performance.

1.6.3.   Selection and description of the research site

The researcher conducted this case study at one primary school, which is a pilot school for Inclusive Education, situated in the North West Province, one of nine South African provinces. The provincial education department in the North West is divided into four 'Regions', sub-divided into four 'Area Project Offices'. The researcher focused on the Moses Kotane Area Project Office in the Bojanala Region, because Rustenburg's mining industry has been the recipient of widespread migration, leading to overpopulation, characterised by diversity of nationality, race,

language, socio-economic background, cultural origin and level of educational achievement.

Most of the schools in North West, especially in rural areas, are using Setswana as their LOLT in the Foundation Phase, despite it not being the majority's home language. This adds the learning barrier of language and communication to those of poverty, HIV and Aids, and other socio-economic factors.

1.6.4. Sampling

A sample, according to Arkava and Lane (in De Vos et al., 2005:194), comprises elements of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study, or it can be a subset of measurements drawn from a population in which the researcher is interested. Qualitative researchers tend to use a non-probability or non-random sample, since they rarely determine its size in advance and have limited knowledge about the larger group or population from which it is drawn (Neuman, 2011:220). The researcher purposefully selected as a pilot one Full-service school in the Bojanala Region. Purposive sampling is based entirely on the judgment of the researcher, in that a sample is composed of elements that contain the most characteristics representative of typical attributes of the population (De Vos et al., 2005:202).

The Foundation Phase was selected because it is the critical stage for promoting an interest in education and developing positive attitudes towards school. The target group comprised the head of department (HOD) and all Foundation Phase educators. The researcher focused on Grade 1 and Grade 3 classes. The foundation for schooling is effectively laid in Grade 1, while Grade 3 is the last class to exit the Foundation Phase, whereby systemic evaluation is implemented.

1.7. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

According to Creswell (2001:185), the data collection steps involve setting the boundaries for the study, collecting information through unstructured (or semi-structured) observation and interviews, as well as establishing the protocol for

recording information. The researcher used the strategies of observation, focus group interviews and school documents. As McMillan and Schumacher (2006:41) have noted, qualitative techniques collect data in the form of words rather than numbers and provide an in-depth verbal description, the main goal of which is to capture the richness of behaviour that occurs in a natural setting from the participant's perspective, and to validate the worthiness of data gathered through the other techniques. It was therefore the aim of the researcher to observe teachers in action in their classrooms, teaching their learners. Extensive description of the case and its context was therefore based on a variety of data sources, such as observation, documentation, interviews and records.

1.7.1. Observation

A major means of collecting data in qualitative research, Engelbrecht, Eloff, Lomofsky, Masipa, Oswald and Swart, (2003:17) regards observation as a firsthand account of the situation under investigation. This research focused on investigating teaching and learning methods in inclusive classrooms, and it was therefore relevant for the researcher to use an observation method in order to obtain valid and reliable answers. McMillan and Schumacher (2006:273) also indicate that observational method relies on a researcher's seeing and hearing things and recording what is observed, rather than relying on a subject's self-report in responding to questions or statements. Through observation the researcher was able to gain firsthand information on the inclusive teaching methods used in the classroom, and how activities were differentiated to give each learner an opportunity to participate.

McMillan and Schumacher (2006:439) advise researchers to observe some non-verbal cues, such as facial expression, gestures, tone of voice, body movement and other social interactions that add to or detract from the subtle meaning of the participant's language register. Observation also allows for a holistic interpretation of the phenomenon that is investigated, when it is used in combination with interviews and document analysis (Henning, Van Rensberg & Smit, 200 4:82). This assisted the researcher in observing the educators' methods of teaching; the classroom environment; factors that could serve as barriers and have an impact on learners

who experience barriers to learning; and whether educators were using differentiated strategies to accommodate learners' multiple intelligences and different learning styles.

1.7.2. **Focus group interviews**

McMillan and Schumacher (2006:278) define interviews as open response questions to elicit participants' meanings and how they make sense of important events in their lives. De Vos et al. (2005:299) describes a focus group interview as a means of better understanding how people feel or think about an issue, product or service. Focus groups create a process of sharing and comparing among the participants, and according to De Vos et al. (2005:299) are powerful means of exposing reality and investigating complex behaviour and motivation. The interaction among participants often consists of their efforts to understand each other, as they convey a willingness to listen without being defensive, which is uniquely beneficial in emotionally charged environment (Morgan & Krueger, 1998).

The researcher conducted a focus group interview as it allowed an open conversation between the interviewer and the interviewees, with the opportunity to clarify questions and answers in order to ensure accurate responses. Each participant was able to comment, ask questions and respond to comments by others, helping the researcher gain a better understanding of the problem. The researcher interviewed all the Foundation Phase educators, depending on the number of classes involved in teaching in inclusive classrooms. Where there were many, the focus was on Grades 1 and 3 educators only. The interviews were tape-recorded with full permission and consent from the educators, to ensure that important information was not omitted. The researcher used semi-structured questions as they involved direct interaction between the researcher and the participants. Semi-structured interviews are built up of open-ended questions that allow participants to respond in their own ways. Participants' comments and questions stimulated in-depth discussions of the subjects. Their input also elicited new ideas on practices, strategies and classroom management in inclusive classrooms. The following question guided the interviews:

- What changes did you encounter in teaching inclusive classrooms?

- How are you addressing the issue of language as a medium of instruction?

- Which methods are you using to include all learners?

- Which strategies are you using to accommodate different learning styles?

1.7.3. Documents analysis

Sources are generally classified into primary and secondary, the former being the original written material of the author's own experiences and observation, the latter derived from somewhere other than the original source (Bailey, 1995:294; Mouton, 2001:21-22; Neuman, 2011:395). For McMillan and Schumacher (2001:42), primary source documents are records of past events that are written or printed, whether anecdotal notes, diaries, letters, maps, journals, newspapers or office minutes, whilst for Creswell (2003:188) an important distinction is between private and public documents. Ritchie and Lewis (2003:35) distinguish between public documents (such as government publications), procedural documents (minutes of meetings) and personal documents (letters or diaries). Given the objective of this study, the researcher used the public, procedural and personal documents to collect data in order to understand how educators interpret policies, departmental circulars and other relevant documents.

Bogdan and Taylor (2003:747) define a personal document as any first-person account of the whole or part of an individual's life or reflection on a specific topic or event. It may be any one of a wide spectrum of sources, such as personal letters, diaries, autobiography, newspapers, journal articles, minutes of meetings, e-mail discussions, and children's school work (Creswell, 2003:187). Official documents are those compiled and maintained on a continuous basis by large organisations, such as government institutions (Bailey, 1995:94), and are more formal and structured than personal documents. They include minutes and agendas of meetings, memos, financial records, statistical reports, annual reports and process records. The researcher interpreted the data from such documents in order to provide a description of inclusive classrooms and to clarify the collective educational meaning

that may underlie current issues and practices. The documents were collected, analysed and used as valuable sources to indicate whether the information gathered was valid. They included government policies, departmental circulars, school's vision and mission statement, learners' profiles and workbooks, teachers' portfolios and Foundation Phase minutes books.

1.8. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The interpretive nature of qualitative research also typically involves the researcher in a sustained and extensive experience with participants, which introduces a range of strategic, ethical and personal issues into the process (Creswell, 2003). With these concerns in mind, qualitative researchers explicitly identify their biases, values and personal interests about their research topic and process. Other elements of the roles of the inquirer are to gain entry to a research site and attend to ethical issues that might emerge.

As a researcher undertaking a qualitative study, the interests of participants have to be protected. This was done by assuring them that they would not be identified by name and that their privacy would be protected. Confidentiality was also assured, with the researcher using the alphabet to represent names, e.g., "Ms T". According to Gay and Airasian (2003:59), confidentiality involves the researcher knowing the participants' names but promising not to divulge them or any information shared, while anonymity means that no-one will know the names of the participants. The researcher had an obligation to respect the rights, desires and values of the participants. Permission to embark on the research was requested from the school principal. In ensuring ethical research, the researcher adhered to the principles cited by Lincoln and Guba (2000:300), namely, informed consent, indication to participants of the voluntary nature of their participation, assurance of safety in participation as well as assurance of privacy, confidentiality, anonymity and the principle of trust.

1.9. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data analysis is the process of bringing order and structure to the mass of collected data. Merriam (in Engelbrecht et al., 2003:18) noted that data analysis is the process of making sense out of the information collected, which involves consolidating, reducing and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read. Data analysis in qualitative research is an ongoing, emerging and iterative or non-linear process.

Before beginning with analysis, data is transcribed,[1] with texts from interviews, field notes or memos being typed as word-processing documents. Analysis involves sorting out the words, sentences and paragraphs, an important prelude of making sense of, interpreting and theorising from that data (Henning et al., 2004:127). Notes were also taken during observation of lesson presentations and the classroom environment. Notes were written as word-processing documents.

A summary of various authors' descriptions of the qualitative data analysis process (Dey, 1993; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Silverman, 2001) is as follows:

- It takes place throughout the data collection process, and as such the researcher constantly reflects on impressions, relationships and connections

- Analysis commences with reading all the data and then dividing it into smaller and more meaningful units

- Data segments or units are organised into a system that is predominantly derived from the data, which implies that the analysis is inductive

- The researcher uses comparisons to build and refine categories to define conceptual similarities and discover patterns

- Categories are flexible and may be modified during the analysis

- Importantly, the analysis should truly reflect the respondents' perceptions.

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[1] Although 'data' is the Latin plural of datum it is generally treated as an uncountable noun and so takes a singular verb (*Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, 2011, Eds. Stevenson & Waite).

The process commenced by reading all the data and repeatedly listening to the audiotapes in order to increase understanding of the participants' views. Data was then divided into smaller meaningful units, and comparisons used to build, refine and modify categories. Creswell (2003:115) identifies steps of a data analysis model as beginning with the researcher reading all data, breaking down large bodies of the text into smaller meaningful units in the form of sentences or individual words, then perusing it several times to get a sense of what it contains. In the process the researcher writes in the margins, suggesting possible categories or interpretations, then identifies possible categories or themes or sub-themes, and classifies each piece of the data accordingly. Finally, data is integrated and summarised.

1.10. RELIABILITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS

According to Merriam (2002:97), reliability refers to the extent to which research findings can be replicated, that is, whether when repeated the study will provide the same results. Leedy and Ormrod (2009:124) contend that validity refers to the accuracy, meaningfulness and credibility of the research project as a whole. In order to ensure trustworthiness of the data, the researcher conducted the proposed investigation in an ethical manner and used live interviews and taped records to crosscheck the transcripts and look for consistent patterns and theme development among several investigators on a team.

Validity, meanwhile, is used to determine whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the reader of an account (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Creswell (2001:196) suggests some primary strategies to check the accuracy of the findings:

- Triangulate data by evidence from different sources and use it to build and justify coherent themes

- Use member-checking to determine the accuracy of the qualitative findings through returning the final report, specific description or themes to participants to determine their accuracy

- Use rich, thick description to convey the findings

- Clarify the bias the researcher brings to the study. This self-reflection creates an open honest narrative that will resonate well with readers

- Spend prolonged time in the field. In this way, the researcher develops an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study and can convey detail about the site and the people that lends credibility to the narrative account

- Use peer debriefing to enhance the accuracy of the account. This will resonate with people other than the researcher.

Lincoln and Guba (2000:290), on the other hand, proposed four alternative constructs that more accurately reflect the assumptions of the qualitative paradigm. Firstly, *credibility* is an alternative to internal validity, with a goal to demonstrate that the inquiry was conducted in such a manner that ensures the subject was accurately identified and described. Secondly, *transferability* is an alternative to external validity or generalisability, whereby the burden of demonstrating the applicability of one set of findings to another context rests more with the investigator who would make the transfer than with the original investigator. Thirdly, *triangulating* multiple sources of data can be used to corroborate, elaborate or illustrate the research in question. Fourthly, *dependability* is an alternative to reliability, whereby the researcher attempts to account for changing conditions in the phenomenon, as well as changes in the design, by increasing refined understanding of the setting.

The researcher employed the validity strategies proposed by Creswell to ensure the accuracy of the findings.

1.11. CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

The following key concepts were used throughout this study, therefore it is important to clarify them:

1.11.1. *Inclusion*

According to the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994), inclusion refers to the guiding principle that informs the framework accompanying the statement that schools should accommodate all learners, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. Farrel and Ainscow (2002:3) describe inclusion as a process in which schools, communities, local authorities and government strive to reduce barriers to participation and learning for all citizens. For Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff and Pettipher (2002:176) it is 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. Inclusion is a principle applied to accommodate or include all human beings within one system, in such a manner that all involved can be assured of successful, equal and quality participation in real-life experiences.

As understood to apply in this study, inclusion is the process by which learners, especially those who experience barriers to learning and development, have access to and participate in the general school system.

1.11.2 *Inclusive Education*

According to the National Commission on Special Needs Education and Training (NCSNET), and the National Committee for Education Support Services (NCESS) (1997:11), Inclusive Education is defined as a learning environment that promotes the full personal, academic and professional development of all learners, irrespective of race, class, gender, disability, religion, culture, sexual preference, learning style and language.

According to the *Guidelines for Full-Service/ Inclusive Schools* (South Africa, 2009b:8), Inclusive Education is defined as a process of addressing the diverse needs of all learners by reducing barriers to and within the learning environment. 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 who are not experiencing barriers to learning and development. Within the context of this study, Inclusive Education is seen as part of an education system that responds to diverse needs of all learners in order to remove all barriers to learning.

1.11.3. *Barriers to learning*

Barriers to learning are defined by Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2002:4) as any factors, either internal or external to the learner, which cause a hindrance or 'barrier' to that person's ability to benefit from schooling. According to the Education White Paper 6 (South Africa, 2001:17), a wide range of learning needs may manifest as a result of physical, mental, sensory, neurological and developmental impairments, psycho-social disturbances, differences in intellectual ability, specific life experiences or socio-economic deprivation. The White Paper also identifies the following factors as contributing to barriers to learning:

- Negative attitudes to stereotyping of differences

- Inappropriate communication

- Inappropriate languages or languages of learning and teaching

- Inadequate policies and legislation

- Inaccessible and unsafe built environments

- The non-recognition and non-involvement of parents

- Inadequately and inappropriately trained education managers and educators

- Socio-economic barriers

- Lack of parental recognition and involvement

South African Quality Education for All (South Africa, 1997: 19) describes barriers to learning as those factors that lead to the inability of the system to accommodate diversity, which lead to learning breakdown or which prevent learners from accessing educational provision over age.

This study focuses on the external barriers, such as the curriculum, language and communication and socio-economic factors.

1.11.4. Foundation Phase

The Foundation Phase is the first phase of the General Education and Training band. It goes from Grade R (the reception year) up to Grade 3, and includes learners from six to nine years old. It is a four-year phase, with the most important learning programmes being Literacy, Numeracy and Life Skills (South Africa, 2003a). During the Foundation Phase the focus is on the acquisition of those primary skills, knowledge and values that form the bedrock for further learning. The research will focus on the Foundation Phase teachers and the methods they use to overcome barriers to learning.

1.11.5. Full-service/ Inclusive school

The Education White Paper 6, (South Africa, 2001:22) defines Full-service schools as schools or colleges that will be equipped and supported to provide for the full range of learning needs among all learners. Furthermore, they will be assisted to develop their capacity to provide for a full range of needs. Special emphasis is placed on the development of flexibility in teaching and learning and the provision of support to learners and educators. A Full-service school is one to which everyone belongs, and is accepted and supported by his/her peers and other members of the school community in the course of having his/her educational needs met.

1.11.6. Learners experiencing barriers to learning

Learners who experience barriers to learning are those with impairments and those categorised as having special educational needs and/or barriers to learning, such as socio-economic conditions, attitudes, inflexible curriculum, language and communication, and inaccessible or unsafe building environments (South Africa, 1997). The concept "learners with special educational needs" (LSEN) was used for the first time in England during 1978, in the Warnock Report on Special Educational

Needs (Warnock, 1978:15). Hereafter it was incorporated in England in educational legislation. Other countries followed by using the concept LSEN more freely, for instance in South Africa, after a report of the working committee was compiled in the White Paper in 1995 on Education and Training in a Democratic South Africa, and the South African Schools Act no 84 of 1996.

"Special Educational Needs" are experienced by certain learners as different from those of other children, such that 'different special measures' need to be taken to meet them (NCSNET and NCESS, 1997). Examples are:

- The curriculum must be changed

- Additional time is needed by these learners to complete an examination paper, test or activity

- A special seat must be allocated, because the learners may be in a wheelchair

- Special tuition is required because a learner has fallen behind other learners and needs to catch up

- Additional help is rendered in a certain learning area in order to overcome difficulties experienced.

According to NCSNET and NCESS (Burden, 2000:3), the reasons the concept "learners who experience barriers to learning" is preferred to "learners with Special Educational Needs" were that barriers to learning refer to the needs of the individual learner or the system that needs to be addressed, e.g., barriers within the learner him/herself, the curriculum, the learning centre, the system of education and broader social context. In addition, the concept "learners with Special Educational Needs" (LSEN) is too broad and all-inclusive and does not explain the causative factors of why a particular learner cannot actualise his/her full potential, or why such a learner should be excluded from mainstream schools.

The researcher agrees with the White Paper 6 (South Africa, 2001:14), that learners with barriers to learning are those with impairments and those categorised as having special educational needs or experiencing barriers to learning. The researcher will focus on learners who experience barriers to learning, such as socio-economic

conditions, inflexible curriculum, language and communication barriers, and other extrinsic barriers.

1.11.7. *Classroom environment*

Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2010:131) regard the classroom environment as being determined by the degree to which it matches the values and needs of particular learners, and believe that a positive one is the best to match all learners' needs and values. Pielstick (1999:114) identified three fundamental aspects of the classroom environment that need to be considered, namely the physical, social and instructional. For Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2010:131) these aspects are not independent but rather influence each other in different ways. Factors of the physical aspect that influence the possibilities for social interaction and general active learning are building facilities, noise, lighting, ventilation and temperature, display possibilities, seating facilities and class size. Meanwhile the principles of the instructional aspects that develop an inclusive health-promoting classroom are active engagement, connecting, facilitating interaction, flexibility and teaching and learning materials.

The researcher agrees with the views of Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana that the aspects of classroom environment develop an inclusive health-promoting classroom for all learners.

1.12. DIVISION OF CHAPTERS

The following plan will be followed:

Chapter 1 presents the orientation, background, the research problem and the aim of the study. It also clarifies the relevant concepts and gives a detailed background of the study.

Chapter 2 reviews literature on teaching and learning methods in an inclusive classroom in developing and developed countries, and provides a theoretical framework. The focus will also be on different learning styles and multiple

intelligences in determining the teaching methodologies to be applied. Focus is placed on the role of teachers in the inclusive learning and teaching.

Chapter 3 focuses on qualitative investigation of teaching and learning methods in an inclusive classroom at a Full-service/ Inclusive school and how teachers adapt the National Curriculum Statement so all learners who experience barriers to learning can access the curriculum. It explains the research design, sampling and data collection strategies. This chapter will also explain the data analysis and interpretation, the ethical considerations and measure taken to ensure the validity and trustworthiness of the study.

Chapter 4 presents the findings and the analysis and interpretation of data collected from the investigation

Chapter 5 draws a conclusion and makes recommendations.

1.13. CONCLUSION

The proposed study is therefore aimed at teaching and learning methods in inclusive classrooms improvement of the effective implementation of Inclusive Education at a practical level. This study will render valuable findings for policymakers and educational planners to develop effective guidelines that can be used to further the implementation to many schools. I also envisage that it will help educators to think about how they can improve the way they are teaching and doing things and to help teachers to develop skills to reflect on their own teaching so that they become independent reflective teachers.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

"Teaching children to be knowledgeable about differences, supportive of others, and active in changing structures that are oppressive to various groups can all begin within inclusive classrooms. It is within a classroom that openly and directly addresses the interests, needs, and possibilities of all its members that students may best experience democratic structures that empower and support all participants"   (Sapon-Shevin)

2.1.   INTRODUCTION

Chapter One presented the main aim of the study, which is to investigate the teaching and learning methods in inclusive classrooms in the Foundation Phase. This research traces some of the early development of Full-service schools, from an international perspective to their introduction by the South African Government (South Africa, 2005b:5) as part of the implementation of Inclusive Education at ground level, and the charting of a way for all schools ultimately to become inclusive. Full-service schooling is aimed at inclusion, examining what can be done to increase learning and participation in curriculum and addressing and removing various barriers that hamper it (South Africa, 2005b:6). With the DoE (South Africa, 2005b:10) having expressed a wish to realize inclusion, Full-service schools would have to be prepared to explore and address the challenges of everyday school life through a form of capacity-building for the educators that aimed at transforming the whole school context.

Chapter Two therefore reviews the literature of the last two decades on inclusion of all learners in mainstream schools, Full-service schools, inclusive education policy in teaching and learning, inclusive curriculum, and the external barriers to learning. The chapter will also present a conceptual and theoretical framework for the study, arguing the need for inclusion in the education system and the transformation of ordinary schools into Inclusive schools.

2.2. INCLUSION OF ALL LEARNERS IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

The philosophy of inclusion in the South African Education system is rooted in the country's Constitution (South Africa, 1996a), which itself is grounded in the values of human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedom (South African Schools Act {SASA}, 1996b:34). For that reason, the move towards inclusion in the country's education system has aimed at maximizing the participation of all learners in the curriculum and developing them to become fully functioning citizens who can participate meaningfully in the country's economy, and be able to compete globally. The DoE (South Africa, 1997) defines curriculum as everything that influences the learner, from the educator and work programmes to the environment in which teaching and learning is taking place. According to the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994:59), inclusion was the guiding principle that informs the framework (which accompanies the statement) that schools should accommodate all learners regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include learners with disabilities and gifted learners, street and working learners, and learners from remote or nomadic populations.

This view, according to Mastropieri and Scruggs (2007:46), came to ground diversity as a major feature of classrooms in the 21st century, and reflected a "salad bowl" of multilingual and multicultural society. The analogy of a salad bowl is different from that of the more traditional "melting pot", where all the different ingredients assimilate into "oneness", in that the ingredients contribute to the goodness of the dish without losing their characteristic features. Therefore, the focus of inclusion should no longer be on the "specialness" of the learner and/or the education they need, but rather on increasing participation by the removal of barriers to learning in order for the learners to reach their full potential (Bornman & Rose, 2010:52). Lorenz (2002:35) also defines inclusion as celebrating the diversity, responding to the acceptance of individual differences and building on their strengths to ensure full participation of all learners in the education system. Following the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO 1994:59) on the definition of inclusion, the DoE initiated the implementation of Full-service schools to promote inclusion, but if really committed to achieving inclusion of

all learners in mainstream schools it had to define a set of principles and more practical aspects to guide the transition process to Inclusive Education.

Swart and Pettipher (2001:19) wrote that the concept of inclusion embraces the democratic values of liberty, equality and human rights, and recognizes and accommodates diversity, thereby respecting the rights of all learners. This definition is in line with the South African approach to inclusion defined in White Paper 6 (South Africa, 2001:6), as changes in attitudes, behaviour, teaching methodologies, curricula and environment to meet the diverse needs of all learners. The education system should therefore be transformed if it is to respond to the needs of all the learners, but the effective implementation of Inclusive Education goes beyond ideals and policies. Amongst other things, it requires training and retraining of educators, and they should also feel supported in their efforts to promote learner success and positive interdependence in the classroom. To understand the challenge, specifically in terms of Full-service schools, it is necessary to examine their development and the practical difficulties facing inclusion in the South African education system.

2.3.   FULL-SERVICE SCHOOLS

The DoE (South Africa, 2005b:6) recognized that the concept of Full-service schools was new to the country, although many independent schools had already taken steps towards developing education institutions that were responsive to a range of learning needs. The Education White Paper 6 (South Africa, 2001:22) defines Full-service schools as schools or colleges that would be equipped and supported to provide for the full range of learning needs among all learners. They would be assisted in developing their capacity to provide for a full range of needs, with special emphasis placed on the development of flexibility in teaching and learning and the provision of support to learners and educators.

2.3.1. Full-service schools internationally (USA)

According to Dryfoos (1993:12), Full-service schools have been established with the goal of ameliorating social-, health-, and mental health-related problems that affect the child's ability to succeed in school and later in life. Dryfoos (1993:15) identified three definitions to conceptualize a Full-service school:

1. A central point of delivery, a single community hub for whatever education, health, social, human, or employment services have been determined locally, and are needed to support a child's success in school and in the community.
2. A new kind of institution designed to meet the needs of contemporary children and families. Quality education is integrated with the provision of physical, mental health, and social services that support and enrich the lives of the children, the parents and the community.
3. It not only offers the best academic, mental health services and health education but also enhances the lives of families by including adult education, parenting classes, and parent resource centres.

Originally, as public schools in the USA, their main aim was to promote inclusion by forming partnerships with various stakeholders who would contribute to the accomplishment of the learning needs of all learners (Dryfoos, 1993:390). To provide support to learners experiencing barriers to learning and to promote the capacity building of educators at the school, Full-service schools attempted to integrate different community services. Their transformation implies that the school and the community would become partners in promoting Inclusive Education (Dryfoos, 1993:393). Their existence was based on a premise that all relevant stakeholders in the education system would help them to develop a shared vision, with common goals and collaborative decision making to promote inclusion of all learners.

2.3.2. Development of Full-service schools in South Africa

The DoE (South Africa, 2002:43) pointed out that an imperative point of departure for ordinary schools converted into Full-service schools was to engage in the process of

inclusion. They were to be primarily mainstream education institutions that could provide quality education to all learners by supplying the full range of learning needs in an equitable manner, whilst striving to achieve access, equity, quality and social justice in education (South Africa, 2001:14). From a later publication, the DoE (South Africa, 2005b:10) stated the aim of Full-service schools as being to allow everyone to learn and participate fully. All development and work in the school would strive to achieve these goals by sharing expertise and constantly thinking about the development of both educators and learners. A Full-service school would be prepared to explore and address the challenges of everyday school life through capacity building among educators and on-going institutional development aimed at transforming the whole school. The DoE (South Africa, 2005b:14) also envisage a Full-service school as being a beacon of the transformation process in education by developing cultures, policies and practices that celebrate diversity, respect difference and value innovation and problem-solving. It would create a safe and supportive environment in which educators would be motivated and supported in their work, where learners would feel a sense of belonging and be able to engage in the learning process, and where caregivers would be valued and involved in the life of the school community.

2.3.3.   Transformation of ordinary schools into Full-service schools

According to the DoE (South Africa, 2002:22), transformation involves:

> … a shift from a pedagogy of exclusion to a pedagogy of possibilities that takes into consideration barriers to learning, different intelligences and learning styles as well as a shift from organizing services according to categories of disability towards determining level of support needed.

Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff and Pettipher (2002:175-178) maintain that to recognize and respond to the diverse needs of all learners, an education system that provides separate education (i.e. separating special needs and ordinary schools) must be transformed into a single integrated system. Rather than seeing an individual learner as being inadequate to fit into the system, the emphasis is on the system itself and

the factors within the system that cause barriers to learning (South Africa, 2002:22). Transforming ordinary schools into Full-service schools is not a technical exercise to provide improved facilities but a fundamental change of principle cultures and practices of the school (South Africa, 2005b:13). The development of Full-service schools involves developing all aspects of the school to create an environment in which learning, and therefore, development can take place. Transforming ordinary schools to Full-service schools is a holistic developmental process which includes aspects of leadership and change management, educator development, policies and culture of the school, with technical support and assistance and other mechanical support change. It follows, therefore, that for Full-service schools to promote and implement Inclusive Education effectively, transformation should be treated as an essential feature of its existence.

2.3.4. The ethos and principles of Full-service schools

The ethos of the Full-service schools embraces a vision of a society for all, based on the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (South Africa, 2005b:8), the realization of which requires that they adopt a holistic, flexible and accommodative approach. This philosophy is based on beliefs that support inclusion (South Africa, 2005b:9), such as:

- Everyone in the site of learning is responsible for the education of each learner, regardless of their learning needs.
- Everyone in the site of learning is focused on meeting the needs of all learners in a unified system of education.
- All educators have skills and knowledge that can and should be used to support the efforts of each educator to ensure the success of all learners.
- All learners benefit from participation in mainstream institutions and should be shown respect for their unique, personal forms of growth and contribution.

This means that educators should be encouraged to develop themselves as skilled assistants, to gain access to the inner world of the learner, to earn their trust and to understand how learners experience life at school (Kottler, 1999:2). Developing

access to effective learning practices requires the practical implementation of inclusive practices (Ainscow, 1999:163). According to Ainscow (1999:866), inclusive practices imply a habitual way of doing things; therefore, the ethos of a Full-service school should encourage educators to follow the inclusive practices in such a way that they become habitual (Dryfoos, 2002:393). Educators should have skills and knowledge to ensure the success of all learners, knowing how they learn, and what are their needs and individual differences.

2.4. AN INCLUSIVE POLICY FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

Policies play a valuable role in schools in providing guidelines for actions and procedures, and can be public statements that ensure accountability and provide the rationale and framework for change (Walton, 2006:68). Having a specific policy may be necessary to secure inclusion within the school's development plan (Hall, 2002:32) and ensure the implementation of inclusive practice. Such a policy could include the school's aims, practice, and provision for learners who experience barriers to learning. Lazarus, Daniels and Engelbrecht (2004:46-67) concur that the inclusive policy should reflect the values and principles of inclusion, for example, answering the question whether the development plan of the school includes aspects that will facilitate the development of an inclusive teaching and learning environment. Inclusive policy should thus promote the development of a barrier-free teaching and learning environment that accommodates the diverse needs of all learners.

Ainscow (1999:192) argues that an inclusive policy should describe the basic values and principles which form the basis of all further planning, and from which a clear vision can be derived. The composition and implementation of Inclusive Education was viewed as the point of departure regarding planning in the Full-service school. Westwood (1998:3) is also of the opinion that a policy should contain a view of the future, i.e., where the school wanted, formulated as a clear vision. The inclusive policy should foster the personal, academic and professional development of all learners in the school. This can be done by developing the learners in totality, including the personal, emotional, social and academic dimensions.

To advocate the development of an inclusive teaching and learning environment, Lorenz (2002:109) stresses that everyone in the school should be involved in the composition or adaptation of an existing school policy if it is to become inclusive. For Ainscow (1999:192), the whole school community should have a part to play, as policy would only influence practice if all those involved had ownership of the process. From this it can be concluded that all role-players should be involved to support both the educators and learners in promoting inclusion of all learners.

To ensure that all educators of the Full-service school take responsibility to support all learners, Daniels, Norwich and Anghlilen (1993:169) and Lorenz (2002:110) recommend that an inclusive policy should provide basic information about the school's expectations of how to address diversity and provide support to learners who experience barriers to learning. This could include information about the school's policies for identification, and assessment of and support for learners who experience barriers to learning. Therefore, it becomes clear that an inclusive policy should provide a framework for enhancing the learning and participation of all learners (Rogers, 1996:26).

Considering that much learning and teaching take place through the medium of language, and that language forms part of all spheres of human interaction and development, language has become a central component in addressing the development of Full-service schools (South Africa, 2005b: 18). The inclusive policy should therefore ensure that language needs of all learners in the school are met, primarily as an integral part of the curriculum.

2.4.1. The inclusive curriculum

The curriculum has been viewed as one of the most significant barriers to learning in the country's separate and ordinary schools (South Africa, 2009b:29), and as Msimango (2002:128) emphasizes, it is at the heart of the education and framing system, reflecting the values and principles of a democratic society. It is therefore important that it should be sufficiently flexible to accommodate all learners in the classroom, and its components, all of which are critical in facilitating or undermining

effective learning, understood. According to the DoE (South Africa, 2009b:29), these key components include:

- The content (i.e. what is taught)
- The language and medium of instruction
- How the classroom is organized and managed
- The methods and processes used in teaching
- The pace of teaching and the time available to complete the curriculum
- The learning materials and equipment used in the learning and teaching process.
- How learning is assessed, reported and certified.

The most important way of addressing barriers arising from the curriculum is to make sure that the process of teaching and learning is sufficiently flexible to accommodate different learning needs and styles. To do so, educators' teaching and learning methods are critical to an inclusive curriculum.

The DoE (South Africa, 2005d: 9) has emphasized that adaptation to the curriculum should not be viewed as creating a new or alternative one, but that adjustment to learning, teaching and assessment techniques and support materials would enhance a learner's performance, and allow at least participation in a learning activity. It further views (South Africa, 2005d:74) curriculum adaptation as a way in which the curriculum could be adapted to suit a range of learning styles, paces and needs.

To sum up, the curriculum should be structured in such a way that all learners can access it (UNESCO, 2001:90), for as Hanco (1999:75) wrote, its adaptation allows educators to determine the strengths of learners experiencing barriers to learning and enables the educators to develop situations in which learners can demonstrate the outcomes. The challenge for educators in Full-service schools is therefore to incorporate the learners' unique needs into the curriculum through adaptation of teaching and learning methods.

The White Paper 6 (South Africa, 2001:8) recommends that the implementation of Inclusive Education be underpinned by changes in attitudes, behaviour, teaching methods and curriculum within the educational institutions, so that diversity could be

recognized and the needs of all learners met. To this end, the classroom environment needed to be inclusive, in the sense that all activities taking place in this space must respect the differences in learners, whether due to age, gender or ethnicity, and accommodate them with the view to developing their abilities from their strengths. This meant that learning activities need to be age-appropriate, not gender- or ethnic-biased, allowing learners to identify themselves in learning activities.

The inclusive classrooms community was conceptualized by UNESCO (2001:23) as including respect, acceptance, collaboration and mutual support, where every member of the group has a sense of belonging and actively participates in all activities. UNESCO (2001:23) also defines Inclusive Education as a process of identifying any barriers within and around the school that hinder learning, and of reducing or removing these. The researcher will apply the aforementioned ideas within the inclusive classrooms to understand the teaching and learning methods in them, how the educators address diversity and how they view the classroom as a pedagogical space in which Inclusive Education is implemented.

To be accepted and to belong are basic human needs, yet research shows that many classrooms are highly structured places dominated by authoritarian educators, in which learners have few choices and limited opportunities to develop relationships with educators or classmates (Jubala, Bishop & Falvey, 1995:36). This leads to learners feeling that they are neither valued nor important members of their classroom. Bothma, Gravett and Swart (2000:202) contend that originally educators had a negative attitude towards inclusion as they were not trained to cope with learners who experience barriers to learning, and because their schools did not have the requisite facilities. According to Pettigrew and Arkhust (1999:225), schools need restructuring (change in physical buildings) and, most importantly, re-culturing (a paradigm shift of attitudes, beliefs and value systems), while the educators need in-service training for a successful inclusive classroom.

In an article titled "*Teacher preparedness for Inclusive Education*", Thompson (cited by Hay, Smith & Paulsen, 2001:214) emphasizes that the implementation of Inclusive Education depends on the high quality of professional preparation of educators at pre- and in-service levels to equip them for and update their knowledge

in meeting the needs of a diverse classroom population. From the Report on Inclusive Education field test: 2004-2009 (South Africa, 2009a: 6), presented to the Heads of Education committee, all educators in Full-service schools had received an orientation and basic training in Inclusive Education, but more was required, including part-time courses as part of a teacher development strategy.

Educators have authoritative power as managers of the classroom, but how they exercise it has a vital impact on the activities and relationships that occur within the classroom. Knowledge imparted also has an element of power, since those who are more knowledgeable than the others seem to have an influence on those who are less knowledgeable (Mweli, 2009:38). Lomofsky, Roberts and Mvambi (2007:87) contend that the social context and the interaction during the acquisition of knowledge in the classroom are of great importance, since they may indicate whether all learners' needs are accommodated and diversity amongst learners respected. Hence, the classroom is conceived as the place where most interactions that contribute entirely to the development of the learner take place. The classroom is a social phenomenon with inherent relationships and interactions, which are the basis for the learners' optimal development, and it must allow all learners to develop by interacting confidently and freely with each other, as well as with significant others, without being marginalized or excluded in any way.

2.4.2. Classroom ethos for inclusive teaching and learning

The DoE (South Africa, 2009b:35) identified the following as classroom ethos for inclusive classrooms:

2.4.2.1. *Establish mutual respect*

Educators and learners are equal participants in learning (Jubala, Bishop & Falvey, 1995:45), though some educators feel threatened by this concept, feeling that it could potentially undermine their authority.

2.4.2.2. Encourage participation

Participation can be achieved by focusing on learners' assets and strengths, as it determines the classroom ethos. In the past there was a focus on intelligence, as measurable by the intelligence quotient (IQ), as being the most important prediction of school achievement, but over the past twenty years Howard Gardner's (1993:12) theory of multiple intelligences has gained popularity in the psychology and educational fields, and contributed to the Education White Paper 6 (South Africa, 2001:8; South Africa, 2005c:112). Educators should no longer be encouraged to ask "How clever is the child?" but rather "How is the child clever?" The educator should always be aware of the learner's particular learning style and capitalize on it (Bornman & Rose, 2010:57). As learners possess different learning styles, the educators must consider them if they are not to become barriers to learning.

2.4.2.3. Provide decision making opportunities in the classroom

Children are more inclined to accept and follow classroom rules that they helped create, and to participate enthusiastically in projects that they helped design (Jubala, Bishop & Falvey, 1995:56). In order to achieve this, educators can introduce some self-management tools, e.g., to teach learners to hold class meetings, make collaborative decisions and arrange activities each week (Shaddock, Giorcelli & Smith, 2007:61). If learners can be given a role in decision-making it will allow them to take responsibility and ultimately increase their motivation.

2.5. BARRIERS TO LEARNING

For Visser (2002:9), barriers to learning prevent the learner from benefiting from education, and can be located within the learner, the school, or the education system itself (South Africa, 2002:39). This study is based on the external or extrinsic barriers, namely those factors that arise outside the learner but prevent him or her from benefitting from learning (Lazarus, Daniels & Engelbrecht, in Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker, & Engelbrecht 2007:54). These factors have to do with family and its

cultural, social and economic context, the school and education system, and society at large.

2.5.1. Socio-economic barriers

As effective learning is fundamentally influenced by the availability of educational resources to meet the needs of society, socio-economic disadvantages have had a negative effect on education. Poverty, underdevelopment and lack of basic services are contributors to learning breakdowns. Access to basic services is a great problem where these are sparse or non-existent, or because learners, especially those with disabilities, are unable to reach learning centres due to lack of transport and/or inferior or even absent roads. Poor living conditions, undernourishment, lack of proper housing and unemployment have a negative impact on all learners. Conditions may arise within the social, economic and political environment in which learners live in dysfunctional families, or even have to suffer sexual and physical abuse, civil war, violence and crime, or chronic illnesses, including HIV/AIDS. Baxen and Breidlid (2004:11) wrote of the social, economic and political factors then threatening the physical and emotional wellbeing and development of learners with special educational needs. From the researcher's experience, these socio-economic barriers are still prevalent in most areas, especially in rural areas of South Africa.

2.5.2. Attitudes

Negative and discriminatory attitudes in society towards differences in race, class, gender, culture, disability and religion become barriers when directed towards learners in the education system. A limited understanding of the needs of marginalized children, often based on deep-rooted cultural beliefs, resistance to change and ignorance, are perhaps the greatest barriers to Inclusive Education at all levels, from policymakers to local officials. Strategies for attitudinal shifts are generally based on experience foreign to them, so the need is to increase

understanding of how people are influenced in a given context, and so develop mechanisms and processes to make this a continuous process.

The DoE (South Africa, 2002:136) indicated that in the past learners used to be labelled as 'slow learners with special educational needs', resulting in exclusion or placement in a particular learning environment, not because they belonged there but due to the requirements and standards that were set by the ruling government of the time. The researcher argues that if educators and citizens could change their negative attitudes towards differences in the society, and could also adjust to change, then most of the barriers to learning may be overcome and the process of inclusion would stand a better chance of being successful.

2.5.3. An inflexible curriculum

The rigid and inflexible nature of a curriculum that does not allow for individual differences can lead to learning breakdown. Socio-economic disadvantages that have had a negative effect on education will include aspects such as lack of relevance of subject content, lack of appropriate learning materials, resources and assistive devices, inflexible styles of teaching and classroom management, and inappropriate ways of assessing learning (South Africa, 2001:31). One of the most serious barriers to learning can be found within the curriculum itself and relates primarily to its inflexible nature, preventing it from meeting diverse needs among learners. Materials used for teaching and learning, which constantly reflect only one culture or life experience, may lead to learners from other cultures and life experiences feeling excluded or marginalized. One of the most serious ways in which learners are prevented from accessing the curriculum is through inadequate provision of materials or equipment they may need for learning to take place. Such barriers often affect learners, especially with disabilities, who do not receive the necessary assistive devices to equip them for participation in the learning process. Ahuja (2007:6) wrote that learning breakdown also occurs through the mechanisms used to assess learning outcomes. The nature of the curriculum can be considered as involving a number of components (mentioned in the inclusive curriculum above); because they are all critical in facilitating or hampering effective learning. The

curriculum should be adapted to suit all the learners and the principle of learner-centeredness must also be taken into consideration.

2.5.4. Language and communication

In South Africa, teaching and learning takes place through a language that is often not the first language of the child. As a result, communication breakdowns can occur in the classroom, in turn leading to learning breakdown, as communication is essential for learning and development in both formal and informal contexts. Furthermore, second language learners are often subjected to low expectations, discrimination and lack of cultural peers. Ahuja (2007:5) contends that educators often have trouble in developing appropriate support mechanisms for second language learners. The DoE (South Africa, 2005d:17) strongly recommends that educators acknowledge and respect differences in learners and foster a determined effort to real strength. To realize this, it is important to obtain background information regarding the language development of learners

Learning is a social process and learners can develop greater knowledge and skills when working with others than they can on their own. There is therefore an increasing appreciation and promotion of the use of paired and group work. Being a member of a class community requires the ability to listen, understand, speak clearly, respond appropriately, express thoughts coherently, play and work co-operatively and empathize. Learning in a social context presents challenges for pupils with problems in the area of communication and interaction. The range of difficulties is wide and includes pupils with speech and language difficulties, specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and dyspraxia, hearing impairment, those who are on the autistic spectrum, and those with moderate, severe or profound learning difficulties. Brandon (2006:41-46) contends that overcoming speech, language and communication barriers to learning is recognized as crucial to enabling children to access the whole curriculum. Language and communication allow the learner to participate in various activities, for example, in cooperative learning groups and discussions.

2.5.5. Inaccessible and unsafe physical environment

The vast majority of learning institutions are physically inaccessible to many learners, especially those who have physical disabilities. In poorer, rural areas, most schools are often inaccessible largely because buildings are run down or poorly maintained. The schools are unhealthy and unsafe for all learners (Ahuja, 2007:9). Many of the school environments are unsuitable for education and are not adapted to the needs of learners with physical and/or sensory disabilities.

2.5.6. Inadequate and inappropriate provision of support services

Inappropriate and inadequate provision of support services in the system does not facilitate the development of learners. Another major compounding factor relates to the nature of human resource development of both educators and personnel who provide services to learners. Ahuja (2007:7) explains that lack of awareness, service provision that is fragmented and inappropriate to the context in which it takes place, and fear of dealing with diverse range of needs, all result from inadequate and fragmented development of human resources. For Brandon (2006:44), training tends to be fragmented, uncoordinated, inadequate, unequal and often inappropriate, and training needs of staff at all levels are not being adequately met. Little or no training and capacity-building opportunities exist for community resource personnel or caregivers.

2.5.7. Lack of parental recognition and involvement

Active involvement of parents in the teaching and learning process is central to effective learning and development. On the other hand, negative attitudes towards parental involvement, scant recognition of their role, lack of resources to facilitate involvement and lack of parental empowerment contribute to inadequate parental involvement in the education system. With the advent of Inclusive Education, parents are faced with a problem of returning their children to mainstream schools, which most prefer not to as they have already removed them from them. Engelbrecht &

Green (2001:174) explain that most parents think the worst of their learners' barriers to learning and do not trust mainstream teachers, thinking that the special school teachers are better trained for the work. If parents are not encouraged to be involved in their children's education or empowered on what is expected of them, they will lack interest in supporting the educators. As Engelbrecht & Green (2001:177) have claimed, recent policies and legislation in South Africa appear to support the involvement of parents in the education of their children.

2.5.8. Lack of protective legislation and policy

Despite the best intentions of government, however, the lack of protective legislation and policy hampers the development of an Inclusive Education and training system. The basic centralization of the education system has left a legacy of restrictive centralized control which inhibits change and initiative. Brandon (2006:39) claims that legal responsibility for decisions tends to be located at the highest level and the focus of management remains oriented towards employees complying with rules rather than on ensuring quality service delivery. Nor is there an accurate picture of the number of learners excluded from the school system, including those who have never attended school or who have dropped out. Only a small percentage of learners who were earlier categorized as having special educational needs receive appropriate education in ordinary schools or special settings. There is no support available for those learners who are outside the system, and existing provision after primary school is inadequate to meet the needs. The provision and the distribution of resources reflect the inequalities of the apartheid past. Brandon (2006:42) argues that learners who have historically faced barriers to learning have had few opportunities for further education at tertiary level.

2.6. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is informed by asset-based theory, a view of human construction appropriate to the topic of how educators and learners construct teaching and

learning, namely Vygotsky's (1978:36) social constructivist theory and Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

2.6.1. Asset-based theory within constructivism

The manner in which the classroom environment is being experienced (activities, interactions and relationships) by learners and how the educators view classroom environment (resource materials, organisation, design, teaching methodology and the number of learners in a class) in relation to the implementation of Inclusive Education is theorised within the social constructivist's paradigm. The classroom is conceived as the social context for learning, where learners acquire knowledge and skills through interaction with capable others (peers and teachers). The context in which these activities occur is of prime importance since it sets the scene for the type of learning and teaching that will take place. Classroom environment is theorized according to Gouws's (1998:97) view of the characteristics of constructivist theories, with learners actively constructing understanding, and being actively engaged in learning tasks. Learning is facilitated by social interaction, meaning that the primary goal of constructivist educators is to foster critical thinking, with groups of learners taking responsibility for their own learning through co-operative activities, and meaningful learning occurring within authentic learning tasks. In this sense, authentic learning tasks stimulate real-life problems and provide learners with practice in thinking in realistic situations.

Considering the point made above, the environment within a classroom must stimulate communication between learners and educators. This involves the organisation of seating patterns and relations where learners are able to communicate freely with each other and value norms of co-operative learning in which competition is discouraged. Every learner in this context should feel accepted and part of the group, and be motivated to contribute to meaning construction in a collaborative manner. This will in turn facilitate learning as a social action and enable learners to take responsibility for their own learning (Gagnon & Collay, 2006:105). Related to this idea, educators' skills in organising and preparing meaningful activities will enable learners to develop critical thinking and transfer the knowledge

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learnt in the classroom to real situations outside it. Thus, the researcher utilised constructivism as a broad paradigm, considering its main assumptions that learners construct their knowledge; that development cannot be separated from its social context; that all higher functions originate as social relationships, and that language plays a central role in mental development (Donald, Lazarus, & Lolwana, 2010:54).

2.6.2. Socio-cultural approach to cognitive development

According to Vygotsky's theory of social-cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978: 58), social interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of cognition (Donald, Lazarus, & Lolwana, 2010:52). Like Piaget (1980:135), Vygotsky believes that young children are curious and actively involved in their own learning, and in the discovery and development of new understanding. However, Vygotsky placed more emphasis on social contribution to the process of development, whereas Piaget emphasises self-initiated discovery (Donald, Lazarus, & Lolwana, 2010:52). According to Vygotsky (1978:68), much important learning occurs through social interaction with a skilful educator, who may model behaviour and provide verbal instruction for the learner, which Vygotsky referred to as 'co-operative or collaborative dialogue'. The researcher deduces from this that teaching should always lead to active learning, therefore, educators should search for effective teaching and learning methods to include all learners and to promote inclusive classrooms.

2.6.3. Vygotsky's mediation and language

The assumptions that learners construct their knowledge, and that cognitive development cannot be separated from its social context; all higher functions originate as social relationships; and that language plays a central role in mental development (Donald, Lazarus, & Lolwana, 2010:54) are clearly spelled out in Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where mediation is central to developmental process of the learners and stresses the importance of

communication with knowledgeable others in the process of meaning construction. Mediation is the process through which the learner appropriates, or takes possession of, the cognitive tools that make the construction of knowledge possible (Donald, Lazarus, & Lolwana, 2010:54). However, the learner cannot do this on his/ her own, but rather an educator, parent or other person who has already acquired those tools has actively to mediate the process. Development in this case occurs within a social context in which social relationships take place. In this process new skills and higher mental functioning are produced.

Constructivists believe that the learner's social context and the mediation he/she experiences shape the form and effectiveness of his/her cognitive strategies (Bruner, 1998:67). Constructivists also believe that knowledge is not passively received by human beings, but is actively constructed and developed at higher levels in each learner. This is achieved through engagement in experiences, activities and discussions which challenge learners to make meaning of their social and physical environments. Moreover, knowledge is created and re-created between people as they bring to bear their personal experiences and information, derived from other sources, on solving a particular problem (Wells, 2000:53). Understanding is thus constructed during the process of people working together to solve the problems that arise in the course of shared activities. This notion posits that a learner comes to school, not as a clean slate (tabula rasa), but as having knowledge acquired from home and community, to be used to relate to the school environment and the learning activities within the classroom.

According to the Vygotskian perspective (Vygotsky, 1986: 124), dialogue is central to the process of knowledge construction. Language is the key instrument that drives meaningful interactions within an activity and produces deeper understanding of the phenomenon with which the learner is engaged. Vygotsky (1986: 125) saw language as a primary mediator of knowledge for humans, while Lee (2000: 96) also pointed out that, according to the Vygotskian perspective, it serves as a conceptual organizer, a primary medium through which thinking occurs.

The objective of Inclusive Education as explained by White Paper 6 (South Africa, 2001:10) is that collaboration, support and active engagement of learners in the

learning process is the key to Inclusive Education. Thus, to achieve this objective, education requires the use of teaching methodologies driven by theories that promote collaboration and active participation. The constructivist approach provides a framework for understanding the role of learners, educators, parents and significant others as mediators in the process of learning.

The learner in this case is actively involved in meaning construction with the assistance of the educators, peers and parents. The educator plans activities and scaffolds learning process for the learner to progress and develop to his or her full potential. Parental roles in this process provide support for the learner by giving love, respect and acceptance, which form the basis for the development of self-esteem and self-confidence needed in the learning process within the classroom. Moreover, support as emphasized by the DoE (South Africa, 2001:9) is correlated to mediation, which Vygotsky (Vygotsky, 1986: 170) sees as the amount of support or intervention the learner receives from more knowledgeable others.

Social constructivists believe that reality is constructed through human activity (Kukla, 2000:79). In this sense, knowledge is also a human product, and learning can be regarded as a social process, taking place in a context that will allow social interactions and communication to lead to the construction of new meanings and further development. The classroom in this case is the social context for learning, and an environment that allows learners to develop together, think and draw knowledge from each other. Consequently, new skills are developed as learners interact and communicate with each other in the learning process.

The researcher deduces that educators need to encourage interaction in the classroom and they should be mediators. The study focuses on including all learners, to cater for all their learning needs and styles and to participate actively in the classroom. This theory is relevant to the study as it focuses on learners as active participants in the process of learning, as they interact with each other and capable others to construct new understanding of their reality. This theory allows the researcher to explore educators' involvement in teaching and learning and the methods they use, with a view to finding out how the classroom environment assists them in implementing Inclusive Education.

2.6.4. The Zone of Proximal Development

Vygotsky's theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978:120) provides the framework for effective inclusive teaching and learning in the classroom. According to this theory, learning is a path through the ZPD, with the term 'zone' referring to the space between that which a learner cannot do alone and that which he or she can do with the help of capable others, such as peers or educators (Pettigrew & Akhurst, 1999:125). In other words, the learner will be moving from the known to the unknown with the help of the capable others in his or her environment. From this, Rowlands (2006:89) argues that teaching happens most effectively when assistance is offered at those particular points in the ZPD where the learner requires help, and there is a distinction between what the learners have mastered and where they are in the process of learning.

According to Vygotsky (1986: 135), there are four stages through which learners must progress to reach their optimal development:

Stage one is where the learner has the ability to perform the task but has no understanding of how to do it. This stage can be compared to a child who, for the first time, is learning to ride a bicycle and has no idea where to start. The learner needs assistance from more knowledgeable others to mould behaviour and provide direct instruction, until such time that s/he is able to balance her/himself on the bicycle and pedal properly. This understanding develops through conversation during the performance of the task. Support rendered to the learner at this stage is vital for his or her further development (Pettigrew & Akhurst, 1999:86).

In the **second stage** the learner performs the task without assistance from others, even though performance has not fully developed. The learner uses inner speech (overt verbalization), that is the verbal instructions that have been passed on to him or her by more capable others. The learner, at this stage, talks to himself or herself to direct his or her own actions, in order to remind him or herself of what to do in the task (Pettigrew & Akhurst, 1999:87).

The **third stage** is where performance is developed and a task carried out smoothly and in an integrated way, which implies that performance has been internalized.

Assistance from capable others is no longer needed, as learning at this stage is self-directed. The learner is able to attempt and finish the tasks alone without mediation from the capable others. For example, if given a research project, he or she possesses the skills to carry on the task and knows all the necessary steps and procedures to conduct it, and is able to complete it without assistance from others (Pettigrew & Akhurst, 1999:132).

The **fourth stage** occurs when the learner may have fully developed a particular task, but suddenly discovers that he or she can no longer perform it automatically, due to intrinsic factors such as stress or illness, and any extrinsic factors, such as the learning environment not being conducive, and the necessary equipment or learning materials lacking. The learner at this stage might need some assistance (Lee, 2000:167).

It is worthwhile noting how educators and other capable others in the classroom, such as peers, intervene in this situation. The ZPD will assist in understanding learners' experiences as they progress through this path, and also in exploring the role of educators and peers in this process. The implementation of Inclusive Education will be explored through learner interaction with peers, teachers and the classroom environment as they progress through the ZPD.

Reid (2005:67) points out that at any moment of the child's learning there are some skills and knowledge that are attainable, but at the same time, some that cannot be accessed by the learner because he or she is not at the stage of preparedness to understand and implement them. Reid (2005:67) regards the skills attainable as according with the ZPD, which means that teaching in the classroom must ensure the learner is presented with tasks within his/her zone. Educators have an obligation to develop activities that will extend the learner's current knowledge to new knowledge, which can be absorbed and located within the learner's ZPD.

The ZPD thus provides a framework for effective inclusive teaching and learning in the classroom, and assists in understanding learners' experiences as they progress along the path. They also help in exploring the role of the educators and peers in the learning process. The implementation of Inclusive Education will therefore be

explored through the interaction with educators, peers and the classroom environment as they progress through the ZDP.

2.6.5. Scaffolding

With scaffolding, the learner is working with experts or more capable others (educators or parents) on challenging task that he or she could not solve independently. The experts model appropriate problem solving behaviours, present new approaches to the problem, and encourage the learner to use her or his embryonic skills by assuming responsibility for some parts of the task (Vygotsky, 1978:79). As the learner develops the abilities required, he or she should receive less assistance and solve more of the problems independently. Simultaneously, the learner will encounter yet more challenging tasks on which he or she will continue to receive assistance. Effective teaching-learning transactions thus establish successive zones of proximal development.

Wilkinson and Silliman (2001:99) identify two types of scaffold, the first being *supportive*, contemporary instructional applications of which directly mirror Vygotsky's notion of the ZPD. This approach is consistent with current recommendations for learner-centred instruction. Value learning, as a search for understanding, provides opportunities for responsive feedback, and views the educational process as occurring within a community of learners (Wilkinson & Silliman, 2001:87). The second type is *directive* scaffolding, which is the most prevalent and formal organizational unit of classroom interaction. According to Wilkinson and Silliman (2001:87), the directive scaffold parallels the direct instruction or skills-emphasis model of instruction. The researcher deduces that both types of scaffolding are important in promoting the inclusion of all learners and providing support to address their learning needs.

It has been found that "a source of academic difficulty for children with learning difficulties is a lack of cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies" (Wade, 2000:13). Wade (2000:13) went on to describe cognitive strategies as task-specific, i.e., used to achieve a certain goal. Meta-cognitive strategies are used to monitor and evaluate

cognitive strategies to assure that the goal has been reached, but these strategies, when used as a form of instruction, can increase the performance of learners with learning difficulties and can bring their achievement on academic tasks up to the same level as other learners who do not have learning difficulties (Wade, 2000: 15). The educators need to use these strategies as a means of scaffolding learners to reach a state where their academic performance is on par with that of their peers. In the case of Inclusive Education, the educators have to step into each learner's ZPD and scaffold them until they reach a state where they can perform without assistance. This calls for educators to understand fully each learner's potential, even that of learners experiencing barriers to education and those with special education needs. To this end, the DoE (South Africa, 2005d) provided learning styles that are remedial in nature, so that educators enter into a learner's ZPD and scaffold him or her to the appropriate level of potential development.

2.7.   CONCLUSION

The goodness of fit between the asset-based approach and constructivist paradigm lies in the learner being considered an active participant in the learning process. The context is regarded as an important contributory factor in the type of teaching rendered to learners. In line with Vygotsky's belief that cognitive abilities are formed through interaction with the social environment, the asset-based approach affirms that within any social context there are assets that can be utilized to promote effectiveness and the success of the project undertaken within it. In the same way, within any learning environment, there are assets that can be tapped to stimulate effective learning. Considering that barriers to learning within the learning context hinder the cognitive and social development of learners, the asset-based approach aims at addressing these within the learning context by tapping the assets within learners and learning environment to optimize achievement in the learning and teaching process. The approach is therefore primarily concerned with appreciation and recognition of all learners, of what they know and are able to do. This means that all learners are valued.

Central to both the asset-based theory and social constructivism is the concept of collaboration amongst learners in the learning process. This is evident when learners are actively engaged in a learning activity and communicating with one another. Gagnon and Collay (2006:47) affirm the power of collaborative thinking by stating that different experiences, expertise and skill are combined to complete the task and enable participants in the activity to view alternative solutions to the problem from different perspectives. This notion stresses the social constructivist belief that learners come to school with individual experiences and skills learned from home or society. It is these which the asset-based approach advocates need to be tapped during learning and teaching to enhance high performance in learning tasks. Hence, learners who are exposed to constructivist learning principles, and are learning in an environment that allows them to utilize their personal assets and environmental assets (classroom environment), develop individual thinking skills, are able to think collaboratively with others to make social meaning of learning events, and are able to pose and answer questions and think critically.

CHAPTER 3

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

"What we think, or what we know, or what we believe is, in the end, of little consequence. The only consequence is what we do".   (John Ruskin)

3.1.   INTRODUCTION

The previous chapters have established an understanding of inclusion of all learners in the teaching and learning perspective. Information gained from the literature will be used as a basis for the research to investigate the teaching and learning methods used in inclusive classrooms to address external barriers and to meet the learning needs of all learning. In this chapter the researcher will present the methodological paradigm and research design, research site, population and sampling procedures, as well data collection, analysis and interpretation methods. Details of adherence to ethical considerations, the quality assurance measures used and the limitations of the study will be provided.

3.2.   RESEARCH PARADIGM

Merriam (2002:27) explains that the research paradigm is derived from the orientation that the researcher conducts in the study, while for Guba (in Denzin & Lincoln, 2000:25) a paradigm is a set of beliefs that guide action. According to Babbie (2007:31), a paradigm is a fundamental frame of reference used by researchers to organise their observations and reasons. This study is based on collaborative human activities, whereby the researcher investigates how diversity is addressed in order to meet learning needs of all learners, as well the interaction between the educators and learners in inclusive classrooms, with the aim of gaining valid understanding. The research paradigm acknowledges that people's subjective experiences and activities are valid, multiple and socially

constructed, and therefore analysis of them falls within the constructivist paradigm (Eloff & Ebersohn, 2004:45).

Qualitative researchers, according to Creswell (2003:14), deal with socially constructed realities and qualities that are complex and indivisible into discrete variables. Their task, therefore, is to attempt to describe, understand and interpret how various participants in a social setting construct the world around them (Merriam, 2002:29). Accordingly, the researcher has based this study on a qualitative design because it employs an inductive strategy, which is not based on predetermined or preconceived ideas but on perspectives that emerge from the data itself. Qualitative research aims at the development of perspectives and understanding, in this case of how extrinsic barriers are addressed in order to meet the learning needs and styles of all learners and how inclusive classrooms are managed in the Foundation Phase.

The researcher took advice from Creswell's (2003:8) observation that in following a qualitative approach the inquirer often makes knowledge claims based primarily on constructivist perspectives, that is, multiple meanings of individual experiences, both socially and historically constructed, with the aim of developing a theory or pattern. The researcher will obtain the views and perspectives of educators, as key participants, on what they understand concerning Inclusive Education and the methods used to include all learners in order to address diversity.

Neuman (2011:72) argues that the interpretive approach in qualitative research analyses social actions in their natural setting, through direct and detailed observation, in order to understand and interpret how people create meaning in their social world. The researcher is therefore not only be concerned with the teaching and learning methods the educators use to include all learners, but also observes the interaction and the relationship between the educator and the learners, the classroom environment and how educators manage the inclusive classrooms. Because of the choice of the research design and the nature of the problem under investigation, the study follows an interpretive approach, allowing for greater understanding of educators' perceptions of Inclusive Education and how teaching and learning can be made to address the inclusion of all learners.

3.3.   RESEARCH DESIGN

Burton and Bartlett (2005:215) advise that it is important before undertaking research to create guidelines that give order and direction to the project, to assist the researcher not to lose focus. This is done through research design and methodology. The research design details all the issues involved in planning and executing the research project, and for Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004:31) it is a way of guarding against alternative interpretation of results. The researcher chose the qualitative research design because a holistic picture of inclusive classrooms at a Full-service school was required. According to Creswell (2003:179-181), qualitative researchers are interested in meaning, that is, qualitative methods aim to discover and understand how people construct meaning out of the way in which they perceive their lives. He adds that qualitative research takes place in the natural setting, enabling the researcher to develop a level of detail about the individuals in the actual experiences of the participants.

A case study was used to investigate the teaching and learning methods in inclusive classrooms in the Foundation Phase. Creswell (2003:15) describes a case study as a way in which the researcher explores in depth a programme, event, activity or one or more individuals. De Vos et al. (2005:272) concurs that it aims to gain an in-depth understanding of a practice or issues to facilitate informed decision-making, i.e., it examines a "bounded" (single) entity or phenomenon, over a specific time. The researcher therefore sought to gain an in-depth understanding of the case study, of what is done in the inclusive classrooms, to address external barriers to learning in order to accommodate all learners.

For Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:93), the strength of a case study design is that its effects are observed in a real context, recognising that this is a powerful determinant of both cause and effect. The researcher explored the inclusive classrooms as the context in which teaching and learning occur, investigating the methods used, whether diversity was addressed, and if the curriculum was flexible and accessible to all learners. The aim was to determine whether the classrooms were powerful determinants of the success or failure of Inclusive Education.

3.4. DESCRIPTION OF THE POPULATION

The guidelines for the implementation of Inclusive Education on Full-service schools (South Africa, 2005b:6) states that the DoE, in collaboration with the Provincial Department of Education designated 30 primary schools to become Full-service schools in the 30 districts that were part of the national district development programme. The North West Province is divided into four districts, with three Full-service schools having embarked upon the process successfully. From the schools, in the Bojanala, Bophirima and Southern districts, the researcher selected Bojanala because of her nine years teaching experience in the district. The district is divided into four Area Project Offices and the school is in the Moses Kotane APO. The nearest town for Moses Kotane is Rustenburg, which is home to much mining activity and consequently widespread migration. This has led to overpopulation, characterised by diversity of nationality, race, language and communication, socio-economic background, cultural origin and level of educational achievement. The population considered appropriate for this study was thus a Full-service school in the Bojanala region, in Rustenburg.

3.5. SAMPLING

For Strydom (in De Vos et al., 2011:194) a sample comprises elements of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study, or a subset of measurements drawn purposively from a population in which researchers are interested. The researcher limited the scope of the research, confined to purposive sampling of a Full-service school in the Bojanala Region. The data was collected over a period of three weeks. Such purposive sampling is based on the judgement of the researcher, in that a sample is composed of elements that contain the most characteristics representative or typical attributes of the population (Strydom, in De Vos et al., 2011:202). The researcher therefore selected a Full-service school, equipped and supported as it was to provide for the full range of learning needs amongst all learners. The researcher chose the Foundation Phase because of the experience and understanding of the context, and because it is regarded as the critical phase for developing the learner holistically and promoting an interest in education. Purposive

sampling is based on the assumption that the researcher wishes to discover, understand, and gain insight, and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learnt (Merriam, 2002:61).

The research participants were one Foundation Phase HOD and all six educators. The research focused on Grades One and Three classes, based on a rationale that the researcher had experience as class teacher and HOD in the Phase; that the foundation for schooling is effectively laid in Grade One; and that the exit examination and systemic evaluations are implemented in Grade Three.

3.6.   DATA COLLECTION METHODS

A qualitative case study employs data collection methods to obtain 'rich descriptions' (Henning et al., 2004:42), in this case of the teaching and learning methods used in inclusive classrooms and educators' views about the classroom environment in which Inclusive Education is implemented. For Creswell (2003:181), it employs multiple methods that are both interactive and humanistic, in this case observation, focus group interviews, field notes and document analysis, to establish a link between reality and the theoretical assumptions (Mouton & Marias, 2003:156). Observation was made of educators in action in their classrooms, teaching their learners, and conducted focus group interviews to hear the viewpoints of a number of participants. Field notes were taken to record what was heard, experienced, observed and thought about (Clandinin & Connelley, 2000:93). Verification was sought with the participants as to what had transpired. Document analysis is a technique that relies mostly upon a variety of written materials for data, insights, and judgements about programmes or events (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000:102). Various data collection methods were used so that methodological 'triangulation' would be possible, that is, information received from the various data sources should corroborate, elaborate and refute one another. For De Vos et al. (2005:362), the rationale for triangulation is that it helps ensure the project will be rigorous, credible and justifiable as research.

3.6.1. Observation

Observation was employed as a way of finding answers to the research questions (Engelbrecht et al., 2003:17), as it offered a firsthand account of the situation under investigation. For McMillan and Schumacher (2006:273) it involves the researcher seeing and hearing things and recording what is observed, rather than relying on a subject's self-report or responses to questions and statements. The researcher observed the methods used in inclusive classrooms to determine whether teaching and learning were flexible enough to accommodate different needs and styles. An observation checklist was used to record whether diversity was being addressed and whether educators were providing support during teaching and learning.

Strydom (in De Vos et al., 2011:329) qualifies the term as 'participant observation' in the belief that all forms are similar or dependent to a greater or lesser extent on the participants, thus necessitating direct contact with the subject of observation. He describes it as a qualitative research procedure that studies the natural and everyday set-up in a particular situation, and explains that researchers should then decide beforehand on the role they intend to play, since it can be placed on a continuum from complete observer to complete participant with degree of involvement in between. This researcher was a complete observer, observing without participating, and so able to explore topics that might be uncomfortable for participants to discuss (Creswell, 2003:186).

Researchers observe both human activities and the physical settings in which they take place (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000:133), in this case the inclusive classroom environment and the relationship and interaction between educators and learners. McMillan and Schumacher (2006:439) argue that when a researcher observes there are some non-verbal cues, such as facial expression, gestures, tone of voice, body movement and other non-verbal social interactions, which suggest the subtle meaning of language that the researcher registers.

3.6.2. Field notes

The researcher used field notes to report and reflects on everything observed and on the informal conversations with the educators. Denzin and Lincoln (2000:676) state that field notes should consist of everything the researcher sees and hears, whilst for Arkava and Lane (1998:177) they should contain a chronological description of what happens to the setting and the participants. The researcher wrote a report on the real observations on a day-to-day basis in the form of field notes.

Silverman (2001:143) suggests two practical rules for making field notes, namely, to record what the researcher sees as well as what is heard, and expand the notes beyond immediate observation. The researcher took notes regularly and promptly, to obtain a comprehensive account of the participants themselves, the events taking place, the actual discussions and communication, and the researcher's perceptions and feelings. This would assist the researcher when data was analysed. The researcher returned to the participants to verify what had transpired.

3.6.3. Focus group interviews

Focus groups provide access to group meanings, processes and norms (Bloor, Frankland, Thomas & Robson, 2001:245), and are a means of better understanding how people feel or think about issues, products or a service (Greeff, in De Vos et al., 2005:288). Krueger and Casey (2000:125) define the focus group interview as a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment. The focus group interview was used in this study to investigate the teaching and learning methods used in inclusive classrooms, and were aimed at collecting data on collective meanings made about the classroom experiences. In this way educators would provide a detailed account of how they managed the inclusive classrooms, how they addressed the external barriers to learning, and the support they provided to all learners. The researcher would also gain information on how the curriculum was adapted so as to be flexible and accessible to all learners.

Focus group interviews help yield a collective rather than an individual view (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007:134), and have the advantage that participants feel more relaxed and less inhibited in the presence of other colleagues (Bloor et al., 2001:228). Participants may feel empowered and supported in the presence of colleagues, making the interview session a learning space for all involved. Greeff (in De Vos et al., 2005:360) writes that participants are selected because they have certain characteristics in common that relate to the topic of study. The participants of this study were the Foundation Phase educators and the HOD of the same phase, and the group was focused in that all participants were teaching in the same phase in a Full-service school. The researcher used no more than 10 participants for the focus group interview, in line with Krueger and Casey's (2000:127) advice that one should consist of between six and 10 participants in order to get as many opinions as possible, whilst empowering each other with relevant phase-specific processes. The interviews were tape-recorded with the full permission and consent of the participants, to ensure that important information was not omitted.

3.6.4. Document analysis

In contrast to the above-mentioned three methods of data collection, document analysis is a non-interactive strategy for obtaining qualitative data with little or no reciprocity between the researcher and the participants (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:457). The researcher used the government policies on the implementation of Inclusive Education, the guidelines on Full-service schools, curriculum adaptation, assessment guidelines for inclusion, and all others policies concerning the implementation of Inclusive Education to determine whether they were being implemented correctly. The researcher also explored the extent to which the school had an inclusion policy and, if so, whether it covered all learners within the school. The researcher sought to determine whether the inclusion policy of the school was in line with that of the government, from which it should have been derived.

A variety of learners' and educators' records were collected, such as portfolios, workbooks, profiles, learning programmes, work schedules and lesson plans, to determine whether they were inclusive in nature. The researcher also examined the

curriculum for flexibility and accessibility to all learners. Departmental circulars were scrutinised for correspondence on Inclusive Education, and to see if the educators were receiving support. The researcher read the Foundation Phase minutes of previous meetings to learn whether the educators had reflected on what had been done and provided support to each other and to the learners. All the said documents were examined and analysed for emergent themes and a link to inclusion of all learners in teaching and learning.

3.7.   TRUSTWORTHINESS

According to Merriam (2002:198-199), research findings are trustworthy to the extent that there has been some accounting for their validity and reliability, that is, the extent to which they can be replicated in another study. This is problematic in social science research as human beings' behaviour is not static. To ensure trustworthiness of the data, the researcher conducted this investigation in an ethical manner and used data triangulation, as indicated above. The interviews were tape-recorded to allow for crosschecking with transcripts.

Internal validity is an important component of trustworthiness, obtained through the following strategies:

- The researcher increased the credibility of the focus group interview by implementing *member checking*, a process that allows participants to play an active role in the process by bringing in his or her own interpretations. The participants were requested to review the data and make comments, changes and suggestions where they felt necessary (Moen, 2006:85). According to Creswell (2003:188), member checking is a method of determining the truthfulness and correctness of the data.

- For Creswell (2003:197), *peer debriefing* is used to enhance the accuracy of the account and to resonate with people other than the researcher. The data was given to impartial colleagues with experience of qualitative research methods and processes, and the findings were discussed.

Once collected, data was made available to the participants to read and verify.

3.7.1. Credibility

Credibility in qualitative research is the extent to which data analysis takes into account the social and cultural contexts in which it is gathered (Creswell, 2003:196). For Moen (2006:156), a qualitative study is credible when it presents such accurate descriptions or interpretations of human experience that people who share it would immediately recognise the descriptions. In this study, credibility was obtained through sufficient engagement with the research participants in the field (Lincoln & Guba, 2000:290). The researcher engaged for two weeks in fieldwork in the school, obtaining credibility through transparency, consistency and communicability in the data collection process (Patton, 2002:188). Triangulation and member checking mentioned above were used to assess intentionality, correct factual errors, offer the participants an opportunity to add further information, provide summaries, and check the adequacy of the analysis (Cohen et al., 2007:140).

3.7.2. Transferability

Leedy and Ormrod (2009:13) define validity in terms of the accuracy, meaningfulness and credibility of the research project as a whole. Transferability depends on descriptive data, to allow for comparison by other researchers (Strydon, in De Vos et al., 2005:346). Creswell (2003:34), on the other hand, maintains that to ensure external validity, rich, thick and detailed description should be provided so that anyone interested will have a solid framework for comparison. To obtain transferability, the researcher ensured that data was supported by sufficient evidence, and compared it to quotations from the participants.

3.8. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data analysis is a method of categorising, ordering, manipulating and summarizing data to attain answers to a specific research question (De Vos et al., 2005:335). Merriam (2002:195) argues that data collection and analysis is a simultaneous activity in qualitative research, as emerging insights in one phase of the data collection leads to refinement in the next phase. De Vos et al. (2005:335) see data collection and analysis as typically being integrated so as to make a coherent interpretation of the data. The researcher began to analyse data as soon as engagement with the participants had ended.

A key characteristic of data analysis in research is the production of high quality, meaningful and relevant data that makes it possible for valuable insights to emerge within a social context. The researcher selected content analysis of transcribed textual data so as to comprehend the meaning of texts, activities and narrative through the process of interpreting the emergent themes (Creswell, 2003:203). The researcher starts with a set of data, for example, interviews which have to be transcribed verbatim, which are read for whatever themes might emerge (Henning et al., 2004:105). In order to organise data holistically, the researcher will reread the transcripts and field notes several times to identify units of meanings, then group, label, organise and sort the data. He or she then writes a narrative version of the participants' story, thus analysing the generated data to obtain a rich and descriptive account of the subjective experiences talked about.

The qualitative method of categorizing and coding information into themes was utilised to analyse data, since this process is systematic and allows for the interpretation of information to provide explanation of the phenomenon (Neuwenhuis, 2007:198). The researcher assigned codes to the themes for the purpose of analysis, through the process of 'open-coding', which involved locating themes and assigning initial codes in a first attempt to condense the data into categories (Neuman, 2011:461). The researcher read the field notes, transcribed interviews and noted all the themes.

3.9. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

According to Neuman (2011:116), ethical issues are the concerns, dilemmas and conflicts that arise over the proper way to conduct research. Ethics define what is or is not legitimate to do, or what moral procedure is involved. Taking cognisance of this indispensable requirement, this study was undertaken in accordance with the prescribed ethical principles of social legal research in terms of permission from and access to the institution, and acceptance by relevant education authorities, participants' informed consent, privacy, confidentiality and freedom from deception or betrayal.

Cohen et al. (2007:57) contend that social scientists generally have a responsibility not only to their profession in search of knowledge, but also for the subject they depend on for their work. It is important for the researcher to reveal fully his or her procedures of research to the subjects at the onset. The researcher therefore requested permission to embark on the research from the school principal, the governing body and the educators of the Foundation Phase. The researcher also submitted the project outline to the principal and the Foundation Phase HOD to avoid deception and betrayal, and to ensure anonymity, confidentiality and honesty about the purpose of the study and conditions of research. The participants were notified about the purpose and procedure of the study as well as how their contribution would be used. Consent forms were issued to the educators to request their participation, and in turn request them to indicate in writing on the forms whether or not they wished to participate in the study.

The code of ethics in research requires that measures to protect the identities of participants against exposure should be put in place (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000:113). The researcher explained to the participants that their identity and the information they provided would be treated with strict confidentiality to protect their identity and that of the school (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000:114). To assure anonymity and confidentiality of the participants, the researcher ensured that no identifiable information about them would be disclosed. The researcher used pseudonyms instead of real names when reporting the results of the interviews, to conceal the identity of the participants. The tape recordings were locked in a cabinet. The

researcher did and shall continue to comply with the rules and ethical requirements of the university.

3.10. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, a detailed description of the research paradigm was presented. The research design, sampling, data collection methods, data analysis and interpretation, quality assurance measures, ethical considerations and limitation of the study were discussed. The researcher also illustrated how evidence was constructed by integrating multiple data collection methods. This study therefore forms the pillars on which the following case study rest. The following chapter will present the data obtained, and analyse it through the theoretical framework established in the literature review.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

"I am the decisive element in the classroom.

It is my personal approach that creates the climate.

It is my daily mood that makes the weather.

As a teacher I possess tremendous power to make a learner's life miserable or joyous.

I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration.

I can humiliate or hurt or heal.

In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis

will be escalated or de-escalated, and a learner humanized or dehumanized"

(Dr Haim Ginott**)**

4.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the findings of the study are discussed, based on the data collected during the focus group interview, observations and document analysis, on the teaching and learning methods used in inclusive classrooms in the Foundation Phase. Revisiting the research questions and the aim and objectives of this study are the researcher's point of departure for this chapter, used to assist in exploring the respective categories and themes (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1. Research questions and aim of the study

Research questions
Which teaching methods do educators use to address diversity in inclusive classrooms in the Foundation Phase?
How is diversity addressed?
How is support provided?
What does the inclusive school policy say and is it implemented?
What competencies do educators use to manage the inclusive classrooms?
Research aim
To investigate the teaching and learning methods in inclusive classrooms in the Foundation Phase.
Objectives
See Chapter 1, 1.5: page 9

4.2. METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

According to De Vos et al. (2011:335), data analysis is a method of categorising, ordering, manipulating and summarizing data to attain answers to specific research questions. Data was collected by way of focus group interviews with Foundation Phase educators and observations in Grade 1 and Grade 3. Documents included educators' learning programmes; work schedules and lesson plans; intervention records; support needs assessment forms; reports on inter-sectoral collaboration committee meetings; minutes and reports of the institute level support team; minutes of the Foundation Phase meetings and departmental documents about Inclusive Education. The following process was followed in the analysis of data:

- After transcribing and coding of the interviews, field notes and document analysis, the researcher obtained a holistic sense by reading carefully through them all and examining the data (as discussed in Chapter 3).

- Data was grouped into concepts and categories then compared and similar themes grouped together under conceptual labels.

- A list of topics from all the sources was made and similar topics clustered together, in a process known as 'open coding'.

- The categories were then integrated and refined.

4.3.   RESEARCH FINDINGS

According to the responses based on the first question (See Appendix B of focus group interview), the kind of barriers educators experience are socio-economic, particularly domestic poverty, and this causes barriers to their learning and contributes to physical disability. Significantly, Respondents A and D gave more contextual details of their experiences, indicating their different cultures and languages: "*We have most of mix cultures, some are AmaZulu, and some are AmaXhosa, VaTsonga and Setswana speaking people* [sic]," and "*The most barriers that we experience, especially in Grade One classes, is the language barrier.*" These cause communication breakdowns because most learners are speaking IsiZulu, IsiXhosa and Xitsonga. (See Appendix B, Table 1).

In response to the second question, on how they address the barriers they experience, the respondents stressed the socio-economic barriers. Respondent B indicated that they provide after-school care to assist learners and guide them in doing their homework. ".... *so we address this issue of learners who stays with parents by providing after-school care. We guide them in doing their homework.*" The respondent also indicated that as a school they performed certain charitable deeds. "... *all the educators donate some clothes to those learners who are in serious need*".

Respondent C gave a detailed explanation of the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP), whereby learners are provided with a meal at school, which

has a positive impact on reducing absenteeism. One respondent said: "*To add on, the government is supplying the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP). Because the learners get a meal every day, at least which reduced absenteeism at school*". It was also indicated that the school had requested some donations from different sectors and that most learners had benefitted from the response: "*Most learners received donation of school uniform, jerseys, shoes, trousers shirts and school dress*". Respondent D also supported Respondent B's view of the feeding scheme: "*… of course [it] helps most of our learners, because most of them come to school without having lunch pack*".

Respondent E explained in detail about a supplementary project for the feeding scheme: "*There is a vegetable garden at our school, which also provides extra vegetables for the feeding scheme*". The researcher also observed that during their break all learners would be provided with a meal, even those who had their lunch packs, After which they appeared energetic, indicative of their having enjoyed the lunch (see all quotations to Appendix B Table 2).

In response to the third question, on how the LOLT was addressed in their classrooms, Respondents B and C gave more contextual explanations that they used code switching between Setswana and Zulu: "*We usually code switch. When we teach, we code switch from Setswana to Zulu*". Three of the respondents indicated that they used older learners or those who could speak the same language as the others to explain what was being said. Respondent C reported that they also allowed the learners to tell their stories in their home languages during oral time so that they would feel that their languages were also important. The respondent further indicated that they used older learners to explain what was being said to the whole class. It was mentioned that older learners are also used to explain some activities to the other learners who spoke the same home language, which was different from the LOLT. Respondent A gave a detailed explanation of how the LOLT was addressed in their classrooms: "*We also label the objects in the classroom in Setswana and English and explain to the learners what those objects are in their home languages*" (see Appendix B, Table 3).

To the fourth question, on how diversity is addressed in the classrooms, the respondent indicated that they understood diversity as being related to physical and intellectual disabilities only. Respondent A explained the seating arrangement in the classrooms, and indicated that learners with hearing problems would sit in front in the classrooms so that they could see the educator's lip movements and gestures. In addition, the teachers employed various strategies so that learners would understand the subject matter more easily: "*We always use gestures, facial expression and visible pictures for all learners to understand*".

Respondent B gave a contextual explanation of how they addressed diversity in their classrooms, indicating that they used differentiated lesson planning for those learners who experienced barriers to learning. Activities were carried out by some learners while others were doing those related to the grade's assessment standards. Respondent B stressed that learners were given activities according to their level of abilities.

Respondent C gave a detailed explanation of straddling the assessment standards of different grades in order to give the learners activities according to their level of ability. Respondents B and C mentioned that the activities given to the learners with barriers to learning were reflected in the differentiated lesson planning (see Appendix B, Table 4).

Responding to the fifth question, on how the curriculum was adapted in order to be accessible to all the learners, all gave detailed explanations of the activities used to accommodate all the learners. More emphasis was placed on what was taught and the pace of teaching and learning. They also explained assessment as it is integrated with teaching and learning. Respondent A reported that they did not rush to finish the curriculum, but educators considered the pace of teaching in order to accommodate every learner in the classroom. Respondent A further mentioned the issue of straddling the assessment standards of the grades so that educators could also give those learners with barriers to learning the activities on their level of ability.

Respondent B reported on the reasons for using differentiated lesson planning, stating that learners' levels of ability are a priority to teaching and learning, and that they can also be assessed orally using pictures and objects or body expression.

Respondent E gave a detailed explanation of the activities and the resources used for teaching and learning, and mentioned that the resources used were visible and colourful so that they would arouse the learners' interest.

Respondent D also gave contextual details of the activities with which learners were provided, indicating that they planned for the week with the aim of reinforcing language skills, such as listening with understanding, speaking, reading and writing. Respondent D gave some examples of one theme that was also observed in grade 1, that is when learners were actively involved and activities were carried out in a real-life situation. For example, each learner was given a chance to make the sound of any animal and the other learners were supposed to say which one it was. The researcher also observed that learning was usually done through play and learners participated actively (see Appendix B, Table 4 for responses).

Based on the sixth question about the methods used to teach in inclusive classrooms, all the respondents indicated that they were using different methods and, inter alia, they identified multi-level teaching, storytelling, learning through play, songs, rhymes, group work, individual work and cooperative learning. Respondent C gave a detailed explanation of the methods they used, identifying the multi-level methods and also explaining the reason for using them. Respondent C further mentioned that learners varied according to their learning styles and abilities, and that some learned best through songs, others with rhymes, whilst some could understand while the educator was teaching. The respondent also mentioned that they allowed learners to use the method of their choice in order to learn effectively.

Respondent D explained that they included all learners in the lessons, and that learners were given group activities that varied according to the groups and level of ability, so that they could all participate. For most of the time the learners were fully involved and participated fully in the activities. Respondent E reported that they used cooperative learning, especially in solving problems, making projects and reading. They included good learners in each group so that they could assist those who experienced barriers to learning, and further elaborated that the learners were free when working in groups because they were able to share ideas and interact. Respondent A spoke largely of the activities they gave the learners, explaining the

use of 'big books' and shared reading to reinforce the learners' listening, speaking skills and language use, especially in Grade 1.

In response to the seventh question, on how inclusive classrooms were managed, all the respondents mentioned the classroom arrangements, resources and the positive reinforcement used to arouse the learners' interest in learning, as well as the teamwork of the whole phase. Respondent A mentioned the seating arrangements of the learners, especially for those who had hearing problems and those who were short-sighted. Respondent A further explained how she managed discipline in the classroom, indicating that she called the learners by their names and drew their attention to the lessons frequently. She stressed the importance of giving the learners activities to keep them busy and would walk around the class, which had been divided into groups, to monitor and guide the learners on the activities given.

Respondent B believed that inclusive classrooms should accommodate all the learners, irrespective of any barrier or disability, stating that the classrooms were sufficiently spacious to accommodate wheelchairs. This was substantiated by the researcher's observation, in two classrooms at least, that some of the learners were using wheelchairs. Respondent B said that they also accommodated learners with intellectual barriers so long as they were not severe, and she gave an example of such a learner in her classroom.

Respondent E mentioned using positive reinforcement to motivate and to arouse the learners' interest in learning. This was also observed in the Grade 1 and Grade 3 classrooms, in which the educators gave stickers to every learner for their efforts and progress. Respondent C spoke of the teaching aids used in their classrooms and indicated that they improvised in many ways to make resources that were relevant, attractive and learner-friendly, so that every learner would have access to them. Respondent D described the teamwork as a Phase and how they shared ideas on handling problems.

The researcher asked a follow-up question, based on two respondents' statements about assistive devices they used. Both respondents B and C mentioned the wheelchairs and devices used by those learners with hearing difficulties. Respondent C spoke of the inclusiveness supported by the infrastructure of the school,

specifically the ramps around the buildings, including for the toilets (refer to Appendix B, Table 8). Observation of the school grounds confirmed this.

Responding to the eighth question, on how the classrooms were organised, all the respondents stressed the teaching and learning resources used in their classrooms and how they were utilised. All mentioned that the resources, especially the pictures and other objects, were visible for every learner and were colourful and attractive. Respondent B noted that the teaching aids were used for incidental reading and to accommodate each individual's learning needs.

Respondent E provided a contextual explanation of the resources in the classrooms, saying they made the learners feel very special and they were attracted to them. The educator mentioned the 'nature table,' on which the learners displayed their projects and different cultural activities; a 'patriotic corner,' in which they displayed the national symbols, flag and transcripts of songs, as well as pictures of the president and provincial leaders; and the 'birthday chart,' which was the most special area for the learners, all being represented on it and having access to it, especially on their birthdays. This was also observed in the Grade 1 classroom, on one of the learners' birthday, as he put his name on the chart, took seven pictures of candles to put on a picture of a cake to show his age, and was serenaded with a birthday song from the other learners.

Responding to the ninth question, on what support the educators and the learners received from the school, all the respondents were positive, mentioning that the school provided them with all the resources needed in their classrooms. Respondent B agreed that the school provided them with resources and the management organised workshops for them, according to Phases, Grades or Learning Areas. Respondent C also note the workshops, provided for them by different service providers, for example one recently attended on the theme of addressing learners who were short sighted or blind.

Respondent D gave a detailed explanation of the support they received from the school and from each educator. All the educators were cooperative and willing to assist each other. Respondent D also noted the computer workshops that all the educators attended, and how they used computers effectively for teaching and

learning. The educational programmes were downloaded for different Grades, activities and level of ability.

Respondent E acknowledged the support they gave each other as a Full-service school, so that they could manage and implement inclusive education successfully. Four of the Foundation Phase educators were members of the Institute Level Support Team (ILST), which is a benefit for the Phase as they receive support from them (Refer to Appendix B, Table 10).

On this subject of the ILST, the researcher asked a follow-up question, as it was noted that four Foundation Phase educators were members of the team. The question related to the way in which the ILST supported both the learners and the educators. Respondent C gave a detailed explanation of the support provided by the ILST, and mentioned that it worked cooperatively with the educators as well as the District Base Support Team (DBST). Respondent C further explained that the ILST mostly assisted with identifying and addressing barriers to learning, and that they designed support programmes for those learners who experiencing barriers to learning.

Respondent E indicated that educators are supposed to make interventions for the learners who experience barriers to learning and should also provide support to them. She indicated that the educators only referred those learners to the ILST if there was no progress during the intervention. The ILST would then call the parents of those learners to interview them in order to get their family background relevant information on the learner. The ILST made sure that the educators did not simply "dump the learners on them" without providing intervention or support. The ILST therefore looked at the records of interventions and support as evidence that that they had done something for those learners who experienced barriers to learning.

Respondent C indicated that if the cases were severe the ILST would ask the DBST to intervene so that the learners could be supported or referred to relevant institutions. Respondent A mentioned that the ILST had an individualised education plan to provide individual support to those learners, and that parents were should be more involved in such cases. However, problems did arise when parents did not respond when they are called.

Respondent D confirmed that the ILST provided support to the learners as well as the educators, on any work-related problem, and it followed up to check if the problems had been solved (Refer to Appendix B, Table 11 for responses).

The researcher asked another follow-up question on what support the ILST and the school received from the DBST (see to Appendix B, Table 12). Respondent E gave an explanation of the support they receive from the DBST, saying that it was because of their efforts as a school that the DBST was so supportive. The respondent further mentioned that before the school was selected to be Full-service, they were networking with the DBST because of the problems that they were experiencing as a school.

Respondent C indicated that the DBST organised workshops on Inclusive Education matters, such as Screening, Identification, Assessment and support (SIAS). All the respondents agreed to the effectiveness of this workshop, saying they now knew how to screen, identify, assess and support the learners who were experiencing barriers to learning. Respondent B indicated that they knew that there were some learners who could only be assessed orally but that they were now able to assess them.

Respondent D indicated that the DBST also assisted in requesting sponsorship for the school from different sectors. The DBST assisted the school in obtaining sponsorship for wheelchairs.

4.4. DISCUSSION OF THE THEMES EMERGING FROM THE FINDINGS

As detailed above, focus group interviews were transcribed and data grouped into initial patterns, categories and themes (see Appendix C, Tables 14). These are discussed in this section.

4.4.1. Language of learning and teaching

According to the DoE (South Africa, 2005b:12), the common barriers associated with language and communication are related to the following: Learners are forced to

communicate and learn in a language which they do not usually use at home and are not competent to use for effective learning. The language of learning and teaching (LOLT), which is Setswana, was seen as a barrier to learning, especially in the Foundation Phase, because it is not the learners' home language. Three respondents mentioned that most of the learners came from multicultural families and so were speaking different languages, such as IsiZulu, IsiXhosa and Xitsonga. The following statements were given: "*The most barriers that we experience, especially in Grade One classes, is the language barrier. These cause communication breakdown because most learners are speaking IsiZulu, IsiXhosa and Xitsonga. And you find that I, as the educator cannot talk the learner's language, especially Xitsonga.*" They indicated that the learners communicated mostly in their home languages, even during break time when they were playing. All the respondents agreed that the learners, especially in Grade 1, found it difficult to communicate in Setswana and they could not express themselves.

4.4.2. Parental involvement

All the respondents complained about the lack of parental involvement and support in teaching and learning. It was indicated that there was a lack of parental support and negligence, some accusing the parents, especially those of learners who experienced barriers to learning, of being uncooperative: "*When learners are given homework, some of them come to school without doing it. There is no parental involvement. The parents are not involved in their children's education*". They indicated that most of the parents were illiterate and, again, most learners were staying with their grandparents, who could not help them with their schoolwork. They gave examples of homework not being done.

All the respondents expressed the opinion that the worst problem they experienced was with parents being called to school to discuss their children's problems and progress but not responding. This made the intervention process very difficult for the educators: "… *and that makes intervention to be difficult for us, because every time the parent is called, he/she does not respond*". Mweli (2009:75) argues that lack of parental support and negligence in teaching and learning create barriers to learning,

which teaching practice is aimed at identifying and addressing, so that the learners' diverse needs are accommodated within the inclusive curriculum.

4.4.3. Poverty

Poor living conditions, undernourishment, lack of proper housing and unemployment have a negative impact on all learners. According to UNESCO (2005:16), poverty often determines whether or not a child can attend school. Because of their financial burden, poor parents are often pressed to provide even the basic necessities of life.

Poverty was also identified as a barrier to learning, the respondents saying that most of the learners were from extended families and depended on their parents' pension grants. It was also indicated that some were orphans and did not receive proper care: "*The other barriers that we experience, Mam, is socio-economic, poverty at home, the situation that they are phasing at their homes*"; "*Poverty is also the dominant problem in our school. Most learners depend on their grandparents' pension grants. We also have orphans who are not well cared of*"; "*Due to this poverty; most of the learners come to school being very tired and hungry*".

The respondents indicated that the learners could not concentrate for a long time because of fatigue and hunger. Two stated that they had experienced absenteeism due to poverty, and others that some learners did not have a school uniform because their parents could not afford to buy one. Learners do not learn well if they are ill, hungry or malnourished, and often these factors lead to their being absent. If they do not receive attention they may feel that they are not members of the class and so drop out of school.

4.4.4. Code switching

As indicated, the language of learning and teaching is one of the barriers that the respondents experienced, especially in the Foundation Phase. They all indicated that they addressed this barrier by code switching between Setswana, Zulu and English. The DoE (South Africa, 2005e:12) states that when learners enter a school in which

the LOLT is not their home language, the educators of all the learning programmes or learning areas in the school should provide support and supplementary learning in the LOLT until such a time that learners are able to learn effectively through that medium.

The respondents stated that they code switched between the aforementioned languages when they taught so that the learners could understand the content and what was being taught: "*We usually code switch. When we teach, we code switch from Setswana to IsiZulu*"; "*Yes, we code switch most of the time as my colleague has mentioned. The other thing is during oral time, we usually let them tell their stories in their own home languages and one who speak the same language to explain to the whole class*"; "*Yes we use older learners or learners who are bright who speaks the same language to explain what is said to the others*". They also mentioned that they used older learners or those who could speak the language mostly used by the learners, in this case IsiZulu, because those learners who spoke it also understood it, and those who also spoke Xitsonga were exposed to IsiZulu as the commonly used language in the community. It was also used to explain to other learners.

Some of the respondents indicated that they allowed learners to tell their daily stories during oral time in their home language, so that they could feel that their languages were also important. In this case an older learner who spoke the same language or who understood it would explain to the whole class what the learner was saying.

Relating this argument to Vygotsky's theory of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 81:1978) and the asset-based theory, whereby the classroom is conceived as the social context for learning and where learners acquire knowledge and skills through interaction with capable others (peers and educators), the educators code switch and also use older learners to explain some contents to those who do not understand the LOLT. In this way, the aim of inclusive education to accommodate all learners to cater for their learning needs is achieved.

The respondents also indicated that to supplement the code switching they used pictures and gestures when they taught, so that the learners could have a better understanding of what was being said. The following quotations support the

statement: "*I normally use gestures and pictures to explain difficult concepts that the learners seem to not understand, but I also let them try to use the language frequently even if they are doing mistakes*"; "*We also label the objects in the classrooms in Setswana and English and explain to the learners what those objects are in their home languages*". It was indicated that they labelled all the objects in their classrooms in Setswana and English and explained those objects in the learners' home languages.

The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (South Africa, 1996b: 36) recognizes that the country's cultural diversity is a valuable national asset and hence is tasked, among other things, to promote multilingualism. According to Viljoen and Molefe (2001:29), an educator has to overcome all educational challenges associated with multilingualism and multiculturalism. The educators have therefore the challenges to incorporate the learners' unique cultural and language needs in the curriculum. It was observed that the respondents were accommodating the learners' language needs.

4.4.5. Content (What is taught)

For a classroom to be fully inclusive, educators need to make sure that the curriculum is accessible and relevant to all learners in terms of what is taught (content); how the educators teach it; how the learners learn best (process); and how it relates to the environment in which the learners are living and learning (UNESCO, 2005:20). According to the reports from all the respondents, it is indicated that they are flexible in their approaches of teaching and in the activities they give the learners. The respondents said that they considered the learners' level of ability and gave them different activities. They also spoke at length about differentiated lesson planning and differentiated teaching, whereby scaffolding of activities is done so that they can differ according to the learners' abilities, as shown by the differentiated lesson plans: "*We use differentiated lesson planning. the differentiated lesson planning assist in the case of the learner who experiences barriers to learning, when we are busy with the other learners, it indicate what the learner with barriers to learning will be doing*"; "*But we as educators, we create many activities to accommodate every learner in the classroom*"; "*What we are doing is that every*

learner is provided with activities that are of his/her level and assessed on them. Hence there is differentiated and individual planning".

According to the data and the observations, more emphasis is put on listening and reading in Grade 1. The respondents gave the reason that most of the learners were unfamiliar with the LOLT, which was Setswana. It was observed that they followed the milestones as set out by the foundations for learning for all the learning programmes, but they implemented them inclusively to accommodate all the learners.

The milestones for Literacy are as follows:

- Listening and speaking

Oral presentation: whereby the learners tell their own stories of what they did the previous day or before coming to school. In Grade 1, learners were given the chance to tell their stories to the whole class. In Grade 3 they shared their stories in groups or pairs, with one learner retelling what the previous one had said.

- Shared reading

Both Grades were observed used 'big books' for shared reading, the contents of which differed according to the grades. The Grade 1 'big book' had limited text but many pictures, for example different farm animals performing different actions. The example of the text was: *kgogo* (a hen). *Kgogo e beela mae* (a hen is laying eggs); *Kgomo* (a cow). *Kgomo e nwa metsi* (the cow is drinking water). The activities the Grade 1 learners were given on the shared reading differed according to their level of ability. One group was given an activity of cutting out pictures of different farm animals and writing their names; one group was supposed to write a name for each picture; another to fill in the missing letter/s to complete the name of the animal in the picture, e.g. *kg_m_;* another to cutting out all the animals and paste it next to the correct name. The educators also introduced songs and rhymes about the animals. It was observed that most of the learners enjoyed the lesson.

- The 'big book'

The theme was on fruit and vegetables. There was much text (a paragraph). The educator first discussed with the learners the pictures, and then read the text to the learners and later with them. The educator then gave one group an activity to write a paragraph on any fruit or vegetable they liked and why; the other group was given an activity on differentiating the pictures according to fruit and vegetables; the other group was given an activity to write a sentence on given words of fruit and vegetables; the other group was supposed to cut and paste different fruit and vegetables and to write their names.

- Sounds and Phonics

The researcher observed that a letter was taken from the shared reading text to teach sound and phonics.

Grade 1: The *kg* sound was taught for the whole week, but using different activities. The educator introduced the sound by giving a sentence with repeated sound in it, e.g.: *dikgomo tsa kgosi di kgaotse dikgole tsa rakgadi*. The educator repeated the sentence several times by using pictures and gestures and asked the learners to identify the repeated sound they heard. The learners identified the *kg* sound. One learner instead identified the *–di* sound, but this was not wrong because the *-di* sound was also repeated several times. The educator praised that learner because he/she was very observant, but then told the learners that they were going to learn the *kg* sound. The learners were requested to give all the words they know which had the *–kg* sound. The educator wrote them on the chalkboard as they learners gave them, e.g., *kgomo* (cow); kgamelo" (bucket); *kgole;* (rope); *nkga* (smell). The educator read the words with the learners and later allowed them to read them alone. They were given homework to cut out pictures of all the words with the *kg* sound. The learners were given activities to write a word for each picture; another group was given an activity to fill in the missing letter; another of writing a simple sentence using the words given; another of tracing on the dotted words given.

The learners were asked to identify a sound that appeared repeatedly in the text from the 'big book' in Grade 3. It was a *tlh* sound. The learners were then requested

to write all the words starting with the tlh sound, e.g., *tlhapi* (fish)*; tlhaga* (grass); *tlhogo* (head); *tlhotlhora* (wipe); *tlholego* (nature); *tlhasela (attack)*, after which they were asked to read the words several times. The educator gave each group an activity to do, with one group to write a sentence with a repeated sound in it; another to write sentences using the words given; another to match pictures with words; the other to fill in the missing words to complete a sentence.

These were only a few of the activities and milestones carried out and observed in Grades 1 and 3. Most of the activities, especially in Numeracy and Life Skills were done practically. For example, for oral counting, learners were using abacuses and other objects to count. For problem solving activities, they were involved practically, for example in the Grade 3 classroom they were solving problems on measurement, and the educator allowed them to use different measuring instruments, such as a cup and bottles with different sizes. The same applied to the Grade 1 learners, who were learning in a 'fun' way.

Bornman and Rose (2010:75) argue that when planning a differentiated teaching lesson, the content of the instruction should include the same broad concept, principles and skills for all learners, for instance, in the example of teaching the *-kg* sound, learners were given different activities, but the main content was on the sound. Another example was on storytelling about farm animals. The educator told the story using facial expressions and gestures, and varied the tone of her voice. The learners were enjoying the story and could even dramatise it. Different activities were given from the story, with some learners having an activity to cut out all the animals mentioned in the story; others were matching the animals with their homes; others making sounds of different animals and the others saying which animal it was.

From the story itself, learners were taught different things, such as the sounds of animals, where they lived, what they fed on, and how they could help people.

4.4.6. Methods of teaching and learning

Regarding teaching methods, the respondents indicated that they were using different ones, particularly multi-level teaching because they were aware that

learners differed according to their level of ability: "*We use different types of methods. We use multi-level teaching because learners vary according to their level of ability*".

The DoE (South Africa, 2005a:67) states that in applying teaching methods educators should bear in mind that there is no single classroom in which all learners will be exactly the same or learn in the same way and at the same pace. As a result, they were required to be creative in the use of a variety of teaching methods to reach all the learners. The respondents identified different methods that they were using to teach in inclusive classrooms, such as storytelling, songs, rhymes, dramatisation, learning through play as well as questions and answers: "*We also use storytelling, whereby an educator tells a story, using pictures and a big book for that matter, and we also allow the learners to retell the story and also dramatise it*"; "*Some learners learn best through songs; others like rhymes; and others can understand and cope by listening while the educator is teaching*"; "*Some can even formulate a game from an activity, especially in Numeracy, when they count. The learners grasp a lot as they play. It is learning through play*".

Teaching through songs, rhymes, dance, poems, and acting is much fun. For educators this means that when they are planning lessons they need to use visual materials (such as posters, pictures, drawings); to use tasks that involve discussion (listening and speaking); and to provide opportunities for movement of some form (e.g. drama and dance). The respondents added that they accommodated all the learners' learning needs and styles of learning: "*Some learners learn best through songs; others like rhymes; and others can understand and cope by listening while the educator is teaching. So we use songs, rhymes, colourful pictures and real objects when we teach*". They said that they usually used gestures, and body and facial expression when they taught so that the learners would better understand.

The respondents added: "*We also use co-operative learning so that learners can work together, especially in solving problems, in making projects and in reading*"; "*We include learners who are good in each group so that they can assist those who experience barriers to learning. Learners are free to share ideas and to interact with*

each other". Cooperative learning occurs when learners share responsibility and resources, as well as when they work towards common goals.

According to what was observed, the respondents were using cooperative learning properly because they usually explained the instructions to the groups and provided guidelines and resources needed to do the activity or project, while they would just facilitate and guide the groups: "*As educators, we walk around to guide them and facilitate and also to control discipline*". They served as facilitators who provided the right environment and opportunity for all to learn actively.

The respondents stated that they also use individualised and group work: "*When we group the learners; we put them in a circle group of six*"; "*We involve them all by giving them group activities, and the activities we give them vary according to the groups and level of ability so that they can all participate*". They added that the learners liked to work in groups and all participate. One respondent indicated that in order to involve all the learners in the group work she used to give each a responsibility for the same activity: "*We try to give each one an activity based on the topic of course, so that everyone can participate fully*". The respondents emphasised that they just facilitated the group so that the work could be done: "*Most of the times, the learners are the ones who are fully involved in the lessons and activities; we just facilitate and guide them, and also provide support*". This statement indicates that the approach of teaching used was learner-centred.

It was observed that the respondents taught some of the learners on a one-to-one basis, which is individualised teaching. They said that they would scaffold the activities for those individual learners so that they would be able to attain the skills and knowledge. The respondents stated that they also allowed learners to use the methods they preferred so that they could learn effectively: "*We also allow learners to use the method of their choice in order to learn effectively. According to the researcher's observation, the respondents are dedicated at their work and try by all means to include all the learners in teaching and learning*".

4.4.7. Pace of teaching

According to the statements from the respondents, in order for them to accommodate all the learners in the classrooms they would consider the pace of teaching and the time available to finish the curriculum and so cater for every learner's learning needs: "*We usually consider the pace of teaching and the time available to complete the curriculum. If a learner cannot cope with the assessment standards of the grade he/she is in, we then straddle to the lower Grade, as one colleague has mentioned*"; "*We do not rush to finish the learning outcomes and assessment standards, what we are doing is that every learner is provided with activities that are of his/her level and assessed on them. Hence there is differentiated and individual planning*".

The respondents explained that they assessed the learners differently according to different activities and assessment standards, so that they could accommodate their level of abilities. According to the observations, differentiated plans had been made, but for formal assessments, especially for those learners who experienced barriers to learning, there was no alternative or differentiated assessment. The educators only gave differentiated assessment after the learners had struggled, and that would be de-motivating.

UNESCO (2005:17) argues that all classrooms are diverse because all learners are unique, and that they can have positive benefits for all learners. Learners have different experiences, skills, knowledge, and attitudes, and all can contribute and bring some ingredient to the learning experience (UNESCO, 2005:17). The educators should thus accommodate every learner, irrespective of his or her disability. Relating this argument of straddling between grades to Vygotsky's theory ZPD (Vygotsky, 81:1978) and scaffolding, it was strongly emphasised by the respondents, and observed, that assessment standards were scaffolded into manageable steps, allowing sufficient time for learners who experience barriers to learning to demonstrate their attainment of the skills, knowledge, values and attitudes practically. The respondents said that they gave lower activities to those learners who experienced barriers to learning. They also admitted that they did not

assess the learners in the same way, but according to their level of ability, hence differentiated planning was emphasised frequently.

4.4.8. Classroom organisation and management

The researcher made observations in Grades 1 and 3 classrooms for two weeks. The seating arrangements were conducive to teaching and learning, with sufficient space for free movement during group activities and also for both the learners and educators to access the resources easily: "*Our classrooms are spacious enough to accommodate even wheelchairs. In some classes there are learners, who are using wheelchairs and they feel at home*"; "*The advantage with our classrooms is that they are not overcrowded*". Learners were seated in groups and there was enough space among the arranged seating.

The respondents said that they usually considered the learners who experience physical disabilities when they arranged seating, explaining that they let the learners with poor eyesight or hearing problems sit where they could see the chalkboard and the educator clearly: "*As we mentioned earlier, we arrange learners according to their disabilities. Those who are short sighted, sit in the front*". "*In terms of disabled learners who are using wheelchairs, we usually create more space in the classrooms so that they can move freely and also are in position to be near the resources and chalkboard*"; "*Learners who are hard of hearing, we put them where they can see the educator clearly, to see the educators lips and gestures when she speaks*".

The respondents indicated that there were different teaching corners and tables in their classrooms that aroused the learners' interest in learning, such as 'nature tables', 'patriotic corners', 'reading corners' and 'birthday corners', where birthday charts were displayed: "*We have different things that attract the learners and that make them feel special. We have nature tables, whereby we allow learners to display their own projects and also different object that are used by different cultures. We have Patriotic corners, where we display the national symbols, flag and song, our president and the premier of our province and reading corners, where they display different readers, picture books and word cards for incidental reading. There*

is also birthday chart, which we use to make the learners feel special. All learners observe this chart, every day if there is a learner who is his/her birthday, we display his name on the chart and all learners sing a birthday song for that learner". This aspect was also discussed in the field notes for observations.

As far as the organisation is concerned, it was observed and supported by the respondents that they tried by all means to keep the learners busy with interesting activities that suited their level of ability: "*To manage discipline, we draw the learners' attention most frequently. We involve them in many interesting activities so that they are always busy*"; "*The ways our classrooms are organised, and the way we involve the learners in teaching and learning, make them to come to school every day being happy*". The respondents explained instructions clearly to the learners so that they would not cause confusion or disruption. The respondents also indicated that they walked around the class in groups to facilitate the lesson and to guide and support the learners.

The respondents mentioned praising the learners for their effort and progress, so as to motivate them to learn: "*The other thing that we are doing to arouse the learners' interest in learning, is that we praise them for every effort they took in their activities and in responding to questions or instructions*"; "*I give a sticker to every learner for every progress or effort he/ she has done. The learners feel so proud and free Oh!*" The respondents explained that learners felt accommodated and could participate freely in the lessons.

One indicated that for them to organise and manage their classrooms effectively required teamwork as a Phase: "*The way we manage our classrooms, makes our work easier for us as educators. I like the teamwork that we have as a phase. We share ideas on how to handle situations that we might come across. The way my colleagues explained is what we are all doing and it works best*".

4.4.9. Resources

The theme relates to all the resources that are used in the inclusive classrooms in order to accommodate all the learners. Based on the evidence gathered during the

focus group interview, as well as observations in Grades 1 and 3 classrooms, the respondents were very positive about the issue of resources and how they were utilised, mentioning the use of visible and colourful pictures and posters when they taught the learners to have a better understanding of the subject matter: "*When teaching, we use pictures, puppets and other relevant resources to arouse the learners' interest*"; "*We use shared reading, whereby we use a big book which has got visible pictures with limited text*"; "We *use pictures and real objects*". "*Whenever we teach, we use relevant teaching aids. We make sure that the teaching aids are attractive and visible enough*"; "*Mam, Not to say that I'm speaking for my school, but you can see that our classrooms are typical inclusive classrooms. They are bright, attractive and full of visible teaching aids on the walls. The teaching aids are also used for incidental reading for the learners and most importantly to arouse their interest and to accommodate each individual in learning*".

One respondent said that they improvised in many ways to make resources that were relevant and attractive: "*We improvise in many ways to make the resources that are relevant and attractive to arouse the learners' interest in learning. We make sure that the resources are learner-friendly and that every learner can use them*". The respondents indicated that their classrooms were typical inclusive and stimulating places for teaching and learning.

As discussed under the theme of classroom organisation and management, there were display areas in each classroom, such as patriotic corner, the nature table, reading corner, birthday corner and weather charts: "*We have nature tables, whereby we allow learners to display their own projects and also different object that are used by different cultures. We have Patriotic corners, where we display the national symbols, flag and song, our president and the premier of our province. There is also birthday chart, which we use to make the learners feel special*". The respondents recounted that they had attended computer workshops, and used those computers effectively for the programmes given for different grades, activities and level of ability: "*We also use those computers for different activities because there are educational programmes that are loaded for all the grades and for different levels of ability*".

Every learning programme had its site on the wall where they displayed resources such as posters, pictures, word cards, and letters of alphabets, according to their learning programmes (Refer to Annexure B on Field notes). Apart from the pictures, posters and other resources named above, the respondents also used chalkboards as their common resource for writing.

4.4.10. Support

Because both the learners and the educators received support differently, a number of methods of support were categorised into sub-themes.

4.4.10.1. Support to learners

The respondents indicated that they were using differentiated lesson planning in order to address every learner's level of ability and learning needs most frequently. They mentioned that they were having different activities to accommodate the learning needs of all learners in their classrooms. This was evident during the classroom observations in Grades 1 and 3, as well as the focus group interview, in which all stressed on differentiated planning and straddling of assessment standards of different grades as a way to help those learners who experience barriers to learning.

According to the researcher's observations, the respondents were not yet sure of using the differentiated plan accordingly, to cater for every learner's needs, especially in Grade 3 when they wrote formal assessment. There was no formal alternative assessment for those learners who experience barriers to learning, as had been claimed when they said they used differentiated planning. All the learners wrote the same examination and the educator gave those learners who experience barriers to learning different activities to do for supplementing the formal task. The researcher concludes that it was too much for the learners and was also frustrating because they could not even attempt to carry out any single activity from the formal

assessment. Differentiated or alternative assessment should also be made for formal tasks.

It is evident that learners were given individual support, whereby the respondents also indicated that they were making interventions for those learners who experienced barriers to learning: "*We intervene in a way, so that that learner can also cope in an activity*"; "*The educator intervenes and provides any support to the learner*".

The respondents mentioned that there were learners who did not do their homework because they were not given assistance or support from home. The teachers indicated that they provided after-school care to guide and assist those learners as well as those who were unable to complete their activities in class. It was also observed that during the after-school care those learners who experienced barriers to learning were given individual attention.

Regarding those learners who were physically disabled, support was provided, with space for learners in wheelchairs to move freely in the classrooms and to use the resources freely. It was observed in the Grade 3 classroom that a learner with cerebral palsy was provided with special stationary, such as carpenter pencil and books with large lines to help with writing. The educator provided the learner with individual activities and always guided her.

The respondents indicated that they used gestures and pictures to accommodate those learners who had hearing difficulties: "*Learners who are hard of hearing, we put them where they can see the educator clearly, to see the educators' lips and gestures when she speaks. We also allow them to use the assistive devices*"; "*We always use gestures and visible pictures for all learners to understand*"; "*In terms of disables learners who are using wheelchairs, we usually create more space in the classrooms so that they can move freely and also are in position to be near the resources and chalkboard. For learners who are short sighted, we also put them in front in the class so that they can see clearly*".

Intervention records were kept for individual learners, with all given activities according to their level of ability. The learners were also provided with well explained

instructions and resources, such as pictures, scissors, glue, work sheets, crayons and word cards. This was observed during document analysis on the intervention record forms as well as the support provided.

The respondents said that they supported each other as educators, and usually met once a week to assist each other in the problems they had encountered or to workshop each other on some curricular matters. Through the teamwork they were having as a Phase, the educators were able to share ideas on how to handle or address some of the problems they experienced in their classrooms.

The respondents indicated that they also provided extrinsic motivation to their learners for every effort they took or for every progression they showed. They gave stickers to those learners and even clapped hands to motivate them and to arouse the learners' interest in learning.

4.4.10.2. Support from the school

All the respondents were very positive about the support they received from the school and the management team, indicating that the school provided support to both learners and educators. They talked about the National School Nutritional Programme (NSNP) from the government, which provided food for the learners as well as the vegetable garden as a supplement. They indicated that the feeding scheme has alleviated absenteeism at school because learners received a healthy meal once a day. The feeding scheme was helpful especially for those learners who did not bring lunch packs due to the poverty they experienced in their homes: "*The government is supplying the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP). Because the learners get a meal every day, at least that reduced absenteeism at school*"; "*If I can add, the feeding scheme of course helps most of our learners, because most of them come to school without having lunch pack. So they get something to eat for the day. If the feeding scheme can be stopped, it's going to be a great disaster*". It was related that when undergoing an educational trip, the school subsidised the learners by giving them food packs for the trip and also paying transport for those from very poor families.

The respondents indicated that the management team made every effort to request donations and raise sponsorship from different sectors and companies. It is evident from the documents analysed that the school was striving to accommodate every learner in the school. A document on the progress of the school as a Full-service school recorded the sectors that sponsored it, including *Teba bank*, *Sun City hotel*, and *Airport Company South Africa* (Pilanesberg international airport). From these companies they received donations for the school vegetable garden, school fund for all those learners from low socio-economic backgrounds, school uniforms, furniture that was accessible to all learners who were physically disabled, wheelchairs and funds for refurbishment of other buildings.

The respondents said that the school bought all the resources necessary for teaching and learning and that every educator wrote his/her classroom requisitions and gave them to the educator responsible for learning and teaching support material (LTSM): "*In terms of teaching aids, every educator writes his or her class requisitions that will be used such as big books, pictures of different contexts, charts, and other valuable resources*".

From the evidence received during the focus group interview, the respondents noted that the school organised workshops on inclusive education for them with different service providers. They also mentioned that it provided them with transport and money for food when they had to attend departmental and provincial workshops.

From what was observed and what the respondents indicated in the focus interviews, there was cooperation among all the educators within the school and they assisted each other. During the interview it was indicated that four of the Foundation Phase educators were among the respondents who were members of the institute level support team (ILST). The respondents indicated it was to their advantage that those educators were members of the ILST because they benefitted greatly from them.

4.4.10.3.   *Support from the institute level support team*

The respondents gave a detailed explanation of the support provided by the ILST, stating that it worked cooperatively with the educators as well as the DBST. They

further explained that it assisted mostly in identifying and addressing barriers to learning, and that they also designed support progress for those learners who experienced barriers to learning.

As explained above (see page 76) that educators were supposed to make interventions for learners who experienced barriers to learning, which was done, and learners were only referred to the ILST if there was no progress during the intervention process. The ILST would then follow up the case by interviewing parents to get their family background information. It controlled the learners' portfolios as record of evidence so as to provide support to them.

It was indicated that the ILST liaises with the DBST in terms of severe cases and they work cooperatively to refer those learners who had severe barriers to relevant institutions. The respondents mentioned that the ILST had an individualised education plan for the learners who experienced barriers to learning in order to provide individual support for them. It was indicated that parents were more involved in this case, and that it is where they encountered problems because some of the parents did not respond when called.

All the respondents supported the statements that the ILST did provide support to the learners as well as the educators. They indicated that the ILST also provided support to the educators on any work-related problem and made follow-ups to check if the problems had been solved.

The DoE (South Africa, 2001:42) emphasises that the key function of the ILST is to support all learners and educators by identifying support needed and design support programmes to address the challenges experienced by the educators as well as the learners. The documents that were analysed in accordance with the support provided by the school and the ILST are as follows:

- Intervention record forms

- Support needs assessment forms

- Reports of the Full-service school about the Inclusive Education process

- Year plan and reports of the ILST

- Year plan and reports of the inter-sectoral collaboration committee

- Reports of the visits by the Provincial support services.

4.4.11. Educator - learner relationship

An inclusive classroom implies a sense of belonging and acceptance; therefore there should be a mutual relationship between the educators and the learners. The respondents indicated that they had a positive relationship with their learners, whereby they even felt secure when they were in the classrooms. All the respondents mentioned that they gave care and love to their learners, which was also observed in the classrooms. There was a positive relationship between the learners and the educators, as they interacted easily with each other and were free to ask questions and to raise issues which they needed clarifying.

There was a day when one learner in a Grade 1 class was very quiet and reserved and even cried. The educator called her and hugged her and asked her what the problem was. The educator called the parent to come and take the learner to the clinic, and wrote a letter to the clinic informing them of the problem. This was evidence that learners receive warm and loving care from the educators.

4.4.12. Challenges experienced by the Foundation Phase

All the respondents indicated that even though they were dedicated to their work, there were some challenges that they came across. For instance, they complained that they were overloaded with work in their classrooms, and sometimes learners needed more attention on specific activities. The teachers therefore also needed support in their classroom for teaching and learning. The respondents believed that the DoE should provide each class with a learner support teacher to assist in some learning areas and activities: "*I think that as ILST members, especially the Foundation Phase educators, we have a challenge, we are the ILST, at the same time class teachers who should always be in classrooms as we teach all the Learning Areas. It is a challenge to, as I can say, we need support, more support to*

be able to maintain what we are doing and even to work more in order to strengthen inclusive education"; "*Yes, that's definitely the truth; we need support in our classrooms, as a Full-service school, it is important to have assistant teachers in our classrooms to work in partnership with teachers to provide extra support to learners with barriers to learning. I think the government should consider that so that Inclusive education should be implemented successfully*".

From the researcher's point of view it is true that those educators, especially of the Foundation Phase, should be provided with either assistant teachers or learner support teachers, as it is the case in Gauteng Province.

The respondents also indicated that they need a remedial teacher in the school to assist them with those learners who experienced barriers, especially in language. They noted that most of the learners experienced barriers in reading and spelling and felt that the remedial teacher would assist them to address that subject matter. The following was quoted in the focus group interview: "*The other challenge is that, yes we have attended many workshops on Inclusive Education or how to address and support learners with barriers to learning, but I think we also need a remedial teacher at school. The remedial teacher can assist the whole school for those learners who cannot read, write and spell. I know that we do our best and that we assist each other, but I think that can also be important*".

The respondents pinpointed another problem that they experienced, namely from the neighbouring schools, which referred all their learners who failed to them because they were a Full-service school, without making any effort to address the barriers the learners' were experiencing. The respondents indicated that they ended up having too many learners in their classrooms: "*Talking about remedial teacher, since our school was selected as a Full-service school, other schools around the area tend to take our school as a remedial school. They often transfer their learners who failed at their schools to our school and we end up facing a difficult situation of handling more learners*".

4.5. CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher has discussed the findings of the qualitative inquiry. The respondents who participated in the focus group interview were five Foundation Phase educators. The data collected was then classified into patterns, categories and themes. The themes that emerged from the analysis are: language of learning and teaching; poverty; parental involvement; code switching; content; teaching and learning methods; pace of teaching; classroom organisation and management; resources; support; teacher-learner relationship and challenges experienced by Foundation Phase educators.

The focus group interview, as well as the observations made in Grades 1 and 3 classrooms revealed that the educators used different methods to accommodate all learners' learning needs and levels of ability. The data that was analysed also revealed that the educators used differentiated lesson plans and activities to include all the learners in teaching and learning.

The next chapter will draw conclusions, list limitations of the study and make recommendations arising from the study.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

"The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires" (William A. Ward)

5.1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the teaching and learning methods in inclusive classrooms in the Foundation Phase. The researcher explored and discussed the literature pertinent to the research topic in order to provide a reference point from which data could be collected and analyzed in an attempt to answer the research questions and achieve the aim of the study. The summary of the findings, recommendations and the limitations of the study will be discussed in this chapter in order to provide evidence that the research questions of the study have been addressed.

5.2. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The findings of the research can be broken down into several themes.

5.2.1. Full-service schools

Inasmuch as Full-service schools are being introduced in South Africa, it is evident from the findings that the principles of inclusion in the learning process are implemented in the classrooms. The literature study in Chapter 2 reveals that Full-service schools provide quality education to all learners through flexibility, and meet the full range of learning needs in an equitable manner, with increasing participation of the learners and educators. The findings affirm the Education

White Paper 6 (South Africa, 2001:22), that calls for schools to be equipped and supported to provide for the full range of learning needs among all learners, in the sense that differentiated planning and alternative activities are provided for those who experience barriers to learning (See 2.3.2 and 4.4.5)

5.2.2. Language of learning and teaching

From the findings of this study, it was apparent that the LOLT is one of the barriers to learning because learners come from different cultural backgrounds. It is indicated in Chapter 4 (See 4.4.1) (DoE, South Africa, 2005c:12) that the common barriers associated with language and communication are related to forcing learners to communicate and learn in a language which they do not usually use at home and are not competent to learn effectively.

Based on the findings, it was indicated that learners come from different ethnic groups such as Nguni, Tsonga and Sotho. The LOLT in the Foundation Phase is Setswana, which causes a barrier to learning for most learners. It is apparent that the School Governing Body (SGB) did not understand the language policy so that they were able to choose the language predominantly used in the community as the LOLT of that school. (See 4.4.1)

5.2.3. Parental involvement

Literature in Chapter 2 reveals that active involvement of parents in the teaching and learning process is central to effective learning, whilst negative attitudes towards involvement, scant recognition of their role, lack of resources to facilitate involvement and lack of parental empowerment contribute to inadequate parental involvement in education. The findings indicated that parents are not interested in their children's education, especially those whose children experience barriers to learning, and therefore do not want to be involved in the teaching and learning process, causing a barrier to educators in terms of finalizing the intervention process (See 4.4.2).

5.2.4. Poverty

It is evident from the findings that poverty contributes towards barriers to learning, whereby most of the learners come from extended families and depend on their grandparents' pension grants. Some are orphans who are not well cared for. The Literature review confirms that poor living conditions, undernourishment, lack of proper housing and unemployment have negative impact on all learners (See 2.5.7).

5.2.5. Code Switching

As noted that the language of learning and teaching is one of the barriers to learning, the findings reveal that code switching is seen as a way of addressing it. This affirms what was found in Chapter 4 (4.4.4), that the DoE (South Africa, 2005b:12) stated that when a learner enters school in which the LOLT is not his/her home language, the educators of all language programmes or learning areas in the school should provide support and supplementary learning in the LOLT until such time that the learner is able to learn effectively through that particular language.

It is also evident from the findings that educators use older learners or those who can speak the same language to explain to the other learners. Rowlands (2006:89), in Chapter 2, argues that teaching happens most effectively when assistance is offered at particular points in the zone of proximal development, where learners require help (See 2.6.2). The findings reveal that code switching is supplemented with pictures, gestures, posters, body expression and labelling of objects in the classrooms (See 4.4.4). Based on the findings, it is evident that the barriers of language of learning and teaching are addressed.

5.2.6. Content

From the findings, it is apparent that differentiation with regard to lesson planning, assessment standards and activities is carried out, thus assuring flexibility in teaching and learning in the sense that learners' level of ability is accommodated.

This confirms the literature study in Chapter 2, that for classroom to be fully inclusive, educators need to make sure that the curriculum is accessible to and relevant for all learners in terms of what is taught, including content, how the educators teach, and how the learners learn best. The findings also reveal that scaffolding, in terms of assessment standards and activities between grades, is provided for learners who experience barriers to learning activities that suit their level of ability and their learning needs (See 4.4.5).

5.2.7. Teaching and learning methods

The findings reveal that teaching and learning is flexible because differentiated methods such as multilevel teaching, songs and rhymes, and storytelling using pictures, puppets and big books are used. Learners were also allowed to dramatize the stories to show that they understood what was said. Cooperative learning was used for problem-solving and project activities so that learners could work together. Learners were also attended individually and in groups. It is apparent from the findings that teaching and learning is learner-centred.

The findings confirm the DoE (South Africa, 2005b:67) statement that there is no single classroom in which all learners are exactly the same, or learn in the same way or at the same pace; as a result, educators are required to be creative in using a variety of teaching methods to reach all the learners (See 4.4.6).

5.2.8. The pace of teaching

The literature study revealed that the curriculum should be flexible enough to accommodate all learners in the classroom. The findings affirm that the pace of teaching and the time available as a component of the curriculum is considered in the sense that educators do not rush to finish the assessment standards, but every learner is provided with activities that suit his/her level of ability. This is done by straddling of assessment standards between Grades.

It is apparent that differentiation is carried out in lesson planning, assessment standards and activities, but the researcher observed that during the annual national assessment (ANA) that is prepared by the Department as part of the formal assessment tasks, all the learners wrote the same tasks, and there was no differentiated formal assessment. Learners were only given differentiated formal tasks that were prepared by the educators, revealing that the ANA does not accommodate diverse learning needs of all learners (See 4.4.7).

5.2.9. Classroom organization and management

It is evident from the findings that the classrooms environment is inclusive. The seating arrangement for learners who are using wheelchairs, those who have hearing problems and those who are short-sighted, is such that all can be in contact with the educators and have access to the resources. The findings also reveal that the classrooms are well-resourced, with different teaching corners, pictures, posters, word cards and displays, according to the Learning Areas.

The findings show that extrinsic motivation is provided by way of appreciation, giving star stickers for every learner's effort and progress, and also to arouse their interest in learning. Confirmation was also made of the effectiveness of classroom organization and management, because of the team work among educators as a Phase (See 4.4.8).

5.2.10. Resources

The findings affirm that the classrooms are well-resourced with all relevant and colourful pictures, posters, big books, puppets, readers and other concrete objects. The educators also confirm that they go to the extent of improvising to make resources that are attractive to arouse the learners' curiosity and that are also learner-friendly, so that every learner can have access to use them. Computers are used as resources for educational programmes for different learning Areas (See 4.4.8).

5.2.11. Support

It is apparent from the findings that support is offered to all the learners, educators and the school by educators themselves, ILST, DBST and the inter-sectoral collaborative committee. Intervention programmes are run for learners who experience barriers to learning and extra classes are also given for those learners and those who do not get help at home with their homework. The findings indicate that the school as well as the DBST requested sponsorship from different sectors for wheelchairs, school uniform and funds to sustain the vegetable garden, and to buy other resources for use by learners who are physically disabled. Learners are provided with a meal from the NSNP and from the school garden.

The findings also revealed that the ILST supports both learners and educators by identifying and addressing barriers to learning, in the process of intervention and in designing support progress for those who experience barriers to learning. The ILST also works cooperatively with the DBST and the inter-sectoral committee in terms of supporting learners who experience barriers to learning. The findings reveal that in terms of severe cases, the DBST intervenes and refers those learners to relevant institutions (See 4.4.10.3).

5.2.12. Challenges experienced by the Foundation Phase educators

It is apparent from the findings that the Foundation Phase educators experience challenges that also create a barrier to them in teaching. It was revealed that they are overloaded with administrative work, which hampers effective teaching and learning. The educators also revealed that they were members of the ILST and had to attend meetings, workshops, address barriers to learning and provide support to the learners and the educators, whilst also having to be in their classrooms full-time, because they taught all the Learning Areas. All these factors confirm that they were overloaded with work and therefore need support in their classrooms in teaching learners, especially in terms of specific activities that need more attention for learners who experience barriers to learning.

Based on the statement by the DoE (South Africa, 2010:23), it is mentioned that if a Full-service school has more than 500 learners it must have a full-time learner support educator who is trained to support and learners; and that teacher assistants need to be appointed at those schools with clearly identified roles. The educators therefore felt that there is a need of learner support educators or teacher assistants. The findings also revealed that the educators mentioned having a remedial educator at the school to assist learners who experience barriers in reading, spelling and writing. This explains why those educators were not aware that the same remedial educators are learner support educators, implying that they are unaware of all the policies, principles and terminology of Inclusive Education.

The findings revealed that neighbouring schools were not cooperative in the sense that they did not want to utilize the Full-service school as a resource to have knowledge and skills on addressing barriers to learning, but on the other hand they referred all their learners who failed to the same Full-service school (See 4.4.12).

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are suggested for effective teaching and learning in inclusive classrooms in Full-service schools:

- It is recommended that the decision on LOLT should be based on language that is predominantly used in the community. The SGB and school management team (SMT) should be informed by the language policy to decide on the LOLT.

- Parents should be made aware that their services are very important in the education of their children; this can be done by encouraging them to volunteer to teach skills and values, such as telling stories from a different cultural background; telling stories about different special ceremonial practices, and teaching learners about different traditional food, songs and dance. This will motivate other parents to be involved in their children's education. The school should also organize and provide training and workshops on addressing

barriers to learning and support their children.

- Differentiated teaching, lesson planning and assessment should be provided continuously, not only for intervention purposes. The formal assessment tasks, including the annual national assessment set by the DoE, should also accommodate learners who experience barriers to learning, that is, alternative tasks should be provided for those learners as their formal tasks.

- There should be strong and active collaboration between the school, parents, stakeholders and NGOs.

- Full-service schools should be provided with learner support educators or assistant educators, without considering the number of learners in a school, because there are cases that need special attention for learners who experience barriers to learning.

- Full-service schools should have their own norms and standards so that teaching and learning can be effective and accommodate diversity.

- The DoE should continuously train educators on identifying and addressing barriers to learning and should be provided with relevant documents to monitor the process.

- Higher Education institutions need to adopt the Full-service schools for the continuing professional development of the educators on Inclusive Education.

5.4. LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER STUDY

There were a number of limitations to the study. Firstly, it only involved one Full-service school, which was one of the pilot schools for implementing Inclusive Education in the Districts, and this might be problematic to generalize the findings. Generalizing, however, is not the purpose of the study.

Secondly, the findings represent only the Foundation Phase and not the Intermediate Phase, and these might not be a true reflection of the entire school. Classroom

observations were only made in two Grades, 1 and 3, due to the limited scope of the study, therefore one cannot conclude that all the Foundation Phase educators are involving and accommodating all the learners in teaching and learning.

Thirdly, although the introduction of Full-service schools is still a developing process in South Africa, no research was conducted on the teaching and learning methods to evaluate if all learners were being accommodated. The researcher therefore relied on existing research on the implementation of Inclusive Education, the guidelines and principles of Full-service schools, and the inclusive learning programmes.

5.5.   CONCLUSION

The aim of the study was to investigate the teaching and learning methods in inclusive classrooms in the Foundation Phase. This chapter has therefore brought the research to its conclusion, in which the questions formulated in Chapter One have been investigated and the aims met.

By summarizing the main findings and the data collected, the researcher was in a position to outline the teaching and learning methods used to address the diverse learning needs and to accommodate all the learners in the classrooms.

The data analysis indicated that the classroom environment; classroom organization; resources; teaching methods and the knowledgeable others, in this case are the educators as well as the peers are the assets to learners who experience barriers to learning. That means the educators made sure that all learners should be accommodated in teaching and learning. Differentiated teaching, scaffolding of assessment standards, lesson plans and activities were provided to accommodate the diverse learning needs of all learners.

Even if the development of Full-service schools is still a working process in South Africa, the findings indicate that teaching and learning addresses diversity.

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APPENDIX A

PERMISSION TO DO RESEARCH AND INFORMED CONSENT

<div align="right">

5020 Tambvekie Street
Birch Acres X 32
1618
18-04-2011

</div>

The Area Project Office Manager Moses
Kotane East APO Department of
Education Mogwase

S
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r

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH PROJECT AT ONE SCHOOL IN THE MOSES KOITANE EST APO

I hereby request permission to conduct a research project at one school at Moses Kotane East APO. I am employed at University of South Africa (UNISA) and also studying Masters in Education on Inclusive Education. The Topic of my research is: Teaching and Learning methods in inclusive classrooms in the Foundation Phase. The purpose of the study is to investigate if teaching and learning methods which are used in inclusive classrooms are flexible to accommodate different learning needs and styles. The objectives are:

- To investigate whether diversity is addressed when these teaching and learning methods are used.
- To explore the educators' competencies in managing the inclusive classroom.
- To establish whether an inclusive school policy is developed and the development of an inclusive school policy.
- To conduct a literature study on full-service schools and the development of an inclusive school policy.
- To conduct a literature study on external baniers to learning
- To explore the challenges that educators experience that might also cause barriers to teaching and learning in their classrooms.

I purposefully selected Mphuphute School because it was selected as one of Full service school for implementing Inclusive Education.

I hope my request will be considered

For more information you are free to contact me or my supervisor: Professor
MW Maila
Mailamw@unisa.ac.za
012   429
8030

Yours Faithfully

JMC Motitswe (Mrs)
Motitjmc@unisa.ac.za

LETIER TO THE SCHOOL The

School Manager Mphuphuthe

Full-service school Ledig

Dear Sir/ Madam

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH PROJECT AT YOUR SCHOOL

I hereby request permission to conduct a research study in your school. I am studying for Masters in Education at University of South Africa (UNISA). The topic of my study is: Investigating teaching and learning methods in inclusive classrooms in the Foundation Phase. The purpose of this research is to explore the teaching and learning methods used in inclusive classrooms to address diversity and to include all learners. I have purposefully selected your school for this study because it is one of the schools that were selected to be a Full-service.

The findings of the study will help to provide information that will facilitate in the implementation of Inclusive Education to all schools. You are welcome to review my research, however, participants responses will be recorded anonymously and their identity will not be revealed.

The methods that will be used to collect data will be classroom observation, focus group interview and document analysis. I would like to focus on Grade 1 and Grade 3 classrooms. I also assure that there will be no classroom disturbance during the project. I have already requested permission from the APO manager and have been granted permission thereof.

For more information feel free to contact me or my supervisor on the below contact details:

Professor M. W Maila	Motitswe J. M.C
Mailamw@unisa.ac.za	Motitjme@unisa.ac.za
012 429 8030	012 429 6117/os2 865 4043

Thanking you in advance

Yours faithfully

JMC Motitswe

CONCENT LETIER

To whom it may concern

1 am conducting a research for a Masters degree at the University of South Africa. My research topic is: Investigating teaching and learning methods used in inclusive classrooms in the Foundation Phase.

1 would like to request you to take part in a focus group interview session of this study. The purpose of the research is to explore the teaching and learning methods used in inclusive classrooms to address diversity and to include all learners.

You will be required to share your experience and your views about teaching and learning and other activities that occur within the inclusive classroom. Data from this session will be tape recorded. There are no potential benefits derived from participating except the feeling of adding new knowledge to the existing about inclusive classrooms. The information gathered in this process will be kept in a safe place at the university for five years, after this period the document containing data will then be destroyed.

Participation in this research is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no negative or undesired impact by so doing. As a participant in this study, your identification will remain anonymous. All information shared in the session will remain confidential and will not be used for any other purpose other than for the purpose of this research.

For more information feel free to contact me or my supervisor on the following contact details

Professor M. W Maila   Motitswe J. M. C

Mailamw@unisa.ac.za   Motitjmc@unisa.ac.za

012 429 8030   012 429 6117/082 865 4043

Yours faithfully

JMC Motitswe

1-- am aware of the purpose and procedures of this study and hereby agree to participate. I am also aware that the results will be used for course purposes only and that my identity will remain confidential, and that I can withdraw at any time if I so wish.

_____   _____

Signature   Date

101474   Mphuphuthe Full Service School

P.O. Baratheo

Ledig

25 May 2011

In re: J.M.C. MOTITSWE RESEARCH

Mphuphuthe school community has a pleasure of allowing Jacomina Mokgadi
Christine Motitswe to conduct her research in the school.

We hope the research will not only be of benefit to her, but also to the school community.

Should there be an opportunity once more for her to conduct a research, she is welcome to approach us.

Yours

faithfuHy

M.E. Moflo

Principal

2011 -05- 2 5

APPENDIX B

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW DATA

Table1. Question 1: **What kind of barriers to learning do you experience as a Full service school?**

Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
Our language of teaching and learning is Tswana in the Foundation Phase and English in the Intermediate phase, so most of the learners, I think language is a barrier to them, especially in our school. We have most of mix cultures, some are Zulus, and some are Xhosas, Tsonga and Tswana speaking people. When coming to the Foundation Phase, they struggle because at home they speak those different languages, so when they come to school they are supposed to learn in Setswana. During break time, when they play they use Zulu, Xhosa, Tsonga, whatever. When they go to the Intermediate phase I've realised that they cannot express themselves in English.	The other barriers that we experience, Mam, is socio-economic, Poverty at home, the situation that they are phasing at their homes causes barriers to their learning.

2. Add on after all responded

When a learner is having problem in the class, we call the parent to discuss the problem with him/her and also to get the learner's background. Some parents do not respond. So you don't know how to connect with the parent to get the information. Parental involvement is not so active, especially when a parent can be called alone, he/she won't come. | The other barrier is the physically disabled learners, some are short sighted, and some are hard of hearing and we also have a few learners who have cerebral palsy problems.

Add on after first response.

When learners are given homework, some of them come to school without doing it. There is no parental involvement. The parents are not involved in their children's education.

1. Add on after all responded

When we give homework, we expect that parents should assist the learners at home so that when the learner comes to school the following day, he/she should know something on the subject content given. Some parents absent their children for no valid reason from | Yes, those are the barriers that we experience the most that my colleagues have mentioned. The most barriers that we experience, especially in Grade One classes, is the language barrier. Theses cause communication breakdown because most learners are speaking Zulu, Xhosa and Shangaan. And you find that I as the educator cannot talk the learner's language, especially Shangaan.

3. Add on after all responded

And that makes intervention to be difficult for us, because every time the parent is called, he/she does not respond. The only time that parent avails himself/ herself is when we have parents meeting or when he/ she comes to collect and sign for the child's progress report but during the year the parent | Yes, the medium of instruction is a problem because learners cannot express themselves. But poverty is also the dominant problem in our school. Most learners depend on their grandparents' pension grants. We also have orphans who are not well cared of. |

		school. That makes learners to draw back. That's the barriers we encounter.	won't come to see the child's progress. It makes intervention to be very difficult.	

Table 2 Question 2: **How do you address those barriers?**

Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
To add on, when we talk about the barriers to learning. I've seen in most of the parents, how I can put it, ehh... Ge eke batla gore gab a rutega... Yes, because most parents are illiterate, they are unable to help learners at home. You'll see that the kid can cope when he/ she is with you as the educator, but because parents do not help them, the kids the struggle or do not write their home work when given. Like my colleague has mentioned that most learners are staying with their grandparents, that's one of the barriers we encounter.	OK let me take that of socio-economic barriers. We try to help the learners; we take them and interview their parents in order to hear their background. Some of them are orphans; some are staying with grandparents, of which they don't actually help them in homework. Due to this poverty, most of the learners come to school being very tired and hungry. So we address this issue of learners who stays with parents by providing after school care. We guide them in doing their homework. On the issue of poverty, we as a school, all the educators, donate some clothes to those learners who are in serious need. We sometimes even provide food where possible.	To add on, the government is supplying the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP). Because the learners get a meal every day, at least that reduced absenteeism at school. It is there and there where you may find that the learner cannot come to school, as educator B has mentioned that some are staying with grandparents. But when coming to the issue of food, they have something to eat at school. The school has also requested for sponsorship for clothing and food. Most learners received donation of school uniform, jerseys, shoes, trousers shirts and school dress.	If I can add, the feeding scheme of course helps most of our learners, because most of them come to school without having lunch pack. So they get something to eat for the day. If the feeding scheme can be stopped, it's going to be a great disaster. And we can tell you, those learners like school so much, we do not experience a big number of absenteeism.	There is a vegetable garden at our school, which also provides extra vegetables for the feeding scheme. So learners are provided with a healthy meal every day; like, one vegetable; porridge or meal rice; soya mince or fish; and one fruit per day. It depends on the menu, but there is one vegetable and one fruit every day.

Table 3 Question 3: **Coming back to the issue of LOLT (language of teaching and learning). Because you mentioned that in Foundation Phase the LOLT is Setswana, and that most learners are speaking different languages, how do you address it to accommodate all the learners?**

Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
We also label the objects in the classroom in Setswana and English and explain to the learners what those objects are in their home languages. Every day in the morning, the first 15 minutes is story time, whereby learners tell stories on what happened or what they did the previous day, the intention is to reinforce their listening and speaking skills for Setswana.	We usually code switch. When we teach, we code switch from Setswana to Zulu. Learners do learn from each other. A Zulu speaking learner learns from a Tswana speaking one, especially during break time, when they play, we told them to use the Setswana most of the time to can develop the language skills. We also ask older learners who speak the same language to explain the content or activity to the others in the classroom.	Yes, we code switch most of the time as my colleague has mentioned. The other thing is during oral time, we usually let them tell their stories in their own home languages and one who speak the same language to explain to the whole class. We want them to feel that all languages are important. We try by all means to accommodate all learners and involve them all in every activity done.	Yes we use older learners or learners who are bright who speaks the same language to explain what is said to the others. I normally use gestures and pictures to explain difficult concepts that the learners seem to not understand, but I also let them try to use the language frequently even if they are doing mistakes. I rectify their mistakes by saying the sentence again in the correct way.	The other way of teaching the LOLT in a simpler way and also to develop the learners speaking and listening skills in Setswana, we teach sounds and phonics using pictures and gestures for the learners to get a better idea and understanding of what is said. For example, when I teach phonics, I stress the sound of that weekly phonic in a sentence, like: "*dikgomo tsa kgosi di kgaotse dikgole tsa rakgadi*". The learners can easily identify the most frequent sound mentioned. The learners also find it easy to create their own sentences whereby they use a sound frequently

Table 4 Question 4: **How do you address diversity in your classrooms to accommodate all the learners?**

Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
Learners who are hard of hearing, we put them where they can see the educator clearly, to see the educators lips and gestures when she speaks. We also allow them to use the assistive devices. And all the learners in the whole school have been told to accept and respect them. We always use gestures and visible pictures for all learners to understand.	In order to accommodate all learners, especially learners who are mentally, no, what is the correct word for this? Yes, for learners who are intellectually not well and those who are physically disabled, we are trained to handle them. We try; we try by hard to accommodate them all. We use differentiated planning for those learners who are intellectually disabled. So that when we are busy with other learners who are normal, or who do not have barriers to learning, then it will show from the differentiated lesson plan that those with intellectual barriers will do another different activity from the other ones. We take it right from the grassroots For example, I'm in Grade 2, if there are such learners, I take a grade R or One	To add on what my colleague has just said, To accommodate all learners, even those who experience barriers to learning, we usually straddle on grades, that means we usually take assessment standards of the lower grades, and assess a learner who experience barriers so that we can accommodate every learner's diverse needs. This will be indicated on that differentiated lesson plan of the learner.		Diversity in terms of disability or? I don't understand if you are saying diversity In terms of disables learners who are using wheelchairs, we usually create more space in the classrooms so that they can move freely and also are in position to be near the resources and chalkboard. For learners who are short sighted, we also put them in front in the class so that they can see clearly.

activity; depending on the level of ability of the learner, so that I can try him/her on that and also assess him/her on that activities.				

Table 5 Question 5: **How do you address the issue of curriculum? Or to put it easier, how do you adapt the curriculum in order to be accessible for all the learners?**

Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
We usually consider the pace of teaching and the time available to complete the curriculum. If a learner cannot cope with the assessment standards of the grade he/ she is in, we then straddle to the lower grade, as one colleague has mentioned. We do not rush to finish the learning outcomes and assessment standards, what we are doing is that every learner is provided with activities that are of his/ her level and assessed on them. Hence there is differentiated and individual planning.	Hey, this is a challenge, We use differentiated lesson planning. the differentiated lesson planning assist in the case of the learner who experiences barriers to learning, when we are busy with the other learners, it indicate what the learner with barriers to learning will be doing. For instance, when we assess the learners, we do not assess them in the same way. We assess them according to their level of ability. If a learner is able to do oral activities only, we do assess him/her orally.	But we as educators, we create many activities to accommodate every learner in the classroom. Like for instance, if a learner cannot concentrate or cope, I usually give him/her a lower activity and the others will get more activities. I intervene in a way, so that that learner can also cope in an activity. When we read, I usually put them in a heterogeneous group. That means I pair or group those who can read well together with those who cannot read so that they can assist them.	We usually plan for a week. We give different activities on that week's theme to reinforce the language skills, speaking, reading, writing and language use. For example, when the theme is animals, for the whole week, we'll be reading from the big book about animals; the sounds the animals are doing; where they live; writing word vocabularies on animals, and teaching phonics by selecting a letter that appears the most on different vocabulary, such as p sound, the learners will then name all words starting with p sound, like *podi; pere; pitsa; panama; pula;* e.t.c. Even the one who has got learning barrier will do at least one activity from all the different activities done.	We also use different teaching aids which are attractive and visible for all the learners. When teaching, we use pictures, puppets and other relevant resources to arouse the learners' interest. We make sure that every learner's needs are accommodated and addressed.

Table 6 Question 6: **Which teaching and learning methods do you use to include all the learners?**

Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
We use shared reading, whereby we use a big book which has got visible pictures with limited text, especially for the Grade 1. We put more emphasis on listening and speaking because we want to develop these skills in order for them to understand the language of learning and teaching, which is Setswana. In each lesson, we usually do so many activities to reinforce listening, speaking and language use	We also use storytelling, whereby an educator tells a story, using pictures and a big book for that matter, and we also allow the learners to retell the story and also dramatise it. Some can even formulate a game from an activity, especially in Numeracy, when they count. The learners grasp a lot as they play. It is learning through play.	We use different types of methods. We use multi-level teaching because learners vary according to their level of ability. Some learners learn best through songs; others like rhymes; and others can understand and cope by listening while the educator is teaching. So we use songs, rhymes colourful pictures and real objects when we teach. We also attend to the learners individually. We also allow learners to use the method of their choice in order to learn effectively. For example, a learner can draw instead of writing sentences or can also sing. We also accommodate oral presentation.	When we teach we include all learners in the lessons. We involve them all by giving them group activities, and the activities we give them vary according to the groups and level of ability so that they can all participate. When we group the learners; we put them in a circle group of six. We try to give each one an activity based on the topic of course, so that everyone can participate fully. Most of the time the learners are the ones who are fully involved in the lessons and activities, we just facilitate and guide them and also provide support.	We also use co-operative learning so that learners can work together, especially in solving problems, in making projects and in reading. We include learners who are good in each group so that they can assist those who experience barriers to learning. Learners are free to share ideas and to interact with each other. As educators we walk around to guide them and also to control discipline.

Table 7 Question 7: **How do you manage inclusive classrooms?**

Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
As we mentioned earlier, we arrange learners according to their disabilities. Those who are short sighted, sit in the front. An inclusive classroom should also be well equipped with assistive devices. The advantage with our classrooms is that they are not overcrowded. We are able to manage and control our learners. To manage discipline, we draw the learners' attention most frequently. We involve them in many activities so that they are always busy. We also walk around the class, in groups to guide and assist them	Actually, an inclusive classroom should accommodate all the learners, irrespective of any barrier or disability. All kind of learners, it might be culturally; socio-economically or disability, should feel that they are accommodated. Our classrooms are spacious enough to accommodate even wheelchairs. In some classes there are learners who are using wheelchairs, and they feel at home. We also accommodate those learners who are intellectually not well, as long as they are not severe. For example in my class, I have such a learner who is intellectually not well, Sometimes the child just stand up and shout if he is attracted by some noise on the road. I always keep him busy so that he can concentrate on what he is given. I always call them by names if they become disruptive or pay attention to	We are trying to get as many learning aids as possible. We improvise in many ways to make the resources that are relevant and attractive to arouse the learners' interest in learning. We make sure that the resources are learner-friendly and that every learner can use them. For example, for those learners who can learn visually can be able to learn through the resources. We put the pictures on the wall for every learner to have access on them.	The way we manage our classrooms, makes our work easier for us as educators. I like the teamwork that we have as a phase. We share ideas on how to handle situations that we might come across. The way my colleagues explained is what we are all doing and it works best.	The other thing that we are doing to arouse the learners' interest in learning, is that we praise them for every effort they took in their activities and in responding to questions or instructions. I usually use stickers, and I'm sure that my colleagues are also doing this, as it is one of the things we agreed on in order to accommodate every learner. I give a sticker to every learner for every progress or effort he/ she has done. The learners feel so proud and free Oh!

		something outside the classroom.			

Table 8 Follow- up Question: **I heard one of you mentioned about assistive devices. Which devises are you using and how are you using them?**

Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
	Up to now I think we have the most important devises that our learners really need. Such as wheelchairs and devises for learners who are hard of hearing. We can use them. We are still waiting for others to come. I hope that we will be trained to use them because for now we have not yet been trained to use all the devises.	Our classrooms have got ramps for the wheelchairs as you can see Mam. The toilets also have ramps. So for the learners who are using wheelchairs is easy for them even to play outside and to move around the school buildings		

Table 9 Question 8: **How do you organise your classrooms?**

Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
Our classrooms are inclusive in nature. We use pictures and real objects. Whenever we teach, we use relevant teaching aids. We make sure that the teaching aids are attractive and visible enough. We make sure that the learners will be attracted and will enjoy the lessons.	Mam, Not to say that I'm speaking for my school, but you can see that our classrooms are typical inclusive classrooms. They are bright, attractive and full of visible teaching aids on the walls. The teaching aids are also used for incidental reading for the learners and most importantly to arouse their interest and to accommodate	Yes that's true. Our classrooms are organised in such a way that every visitor or whoever can see that they are inclusive classrooms. Learners are always occupied with activities. They use to keep themselves busy, either reading or looking at picture books, or even drawing or any activity that a learner	The ways our classrooms are organised, and the way we involve the learners in teaching and learning, make them to come to school every day being happy. It is only in cases whereby maybe a learner is sick or something negative has happened to him/her if that learner feels reserved for that day.	I think we mentioned a lot on this issue. The other thing that I want to mention is that in our classrooms, we have different things that attract the learners and that make them feel special. We have nature tables, whereby we allow learners to display their own projects and also different object

	each individual in learning.	can do.		that are used by different cultures. We have Patriotic corners, where we display the national symbols, flag and song, our president and the premier of our province. There is also birthday chart, which we use to make the learners feel special. All learners observe this chart, every day if there is a learner who is his/her birthday, we display his name on the chart and all learners sing a birthday song for that learner.

Table 10 Question 9: **What support do you receive from the school?**

Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
When we arrange educational trips for our learners, the school subsidise the learners by making some food provision for every learner. In terms of teaching aids, every educator writes his or her class requisitions that will be used. Such as big books, pictures of different contexts, charts, and other valuable resources.	We receive a hundred percent support from the school, mam. The school buy all the resources that we need to use in our classrooms. As we mentioned that there is a vegetable garden, the school makes it a point to provide food for every learner. The school management	The school organises workshops for us with different service providers to workshop us on addressing different barriers for learning. For example, last year, (2010), the school organised a workshop on addressing learners who are short sighted and also blind learners. That is a typical example	We do not feel overloaded with work because of the support we receive. All educators are co operative and willing to assist each other. For in case if I have a problem in preparing a lesson for any learning area, For example, Numeracy, I don't have problems of teaching aids, I just go to the next educator or we address the problem as a phase or a	As a Full-service school, it is every one's responsibility to be there for each other so that we can manage to accommodate and address diversity in our school. Four out of six Foundation Phase educators are members of the Institute Level Support Team

	together with the governing body provide support to all the educators. The school also arrange in-service training for educators. This is done per Phase, per Grade and per Learning Area.	of support we receive from the school.	grade. We are given extra time to meet as a phase to discuss or to workshop each other. All educators also attended workshops on computer literacy. We also use those computers for different activities because there are educational programmes that are loaded for all the grades and for different levels of ability.	(ILST). Therefore we as the whole school support each other. For instance, yesterday we organised workshop for the whole school to assist in teaching reading. The educators from our phase were the ones who led the workshop to assist the intermediate phase educators, especially for those learners who experience barriers.

Table 11 Follow- up Question: **You mentioned about Institute level support team, Could you please elaborate on the support you provide to the learners as well as the school?**

Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
We also do individualised education plan for learners who experience barriers to learning to provide individual support. That's also where the parents are involved. We interview the parents to get the learner's information and family background.	And again, we usually ask educators to assist each other in the intervention process. For example, how another educator deals with problems related to the one another is encountering on a particular learner, maybe is about solving problems, or reading or it might even be	The ILST work cooperatively with other educators as well as the DBST. The DBST is only involved in severe cases. The ILST assist mostly in identifying and addressing the barriers the learners experience and we also design support programmes for those learners. As my	We get a lot of support from the ILST about interventions and how we should provide support to learners. But the ILST also provide support to the educators as well, because if I maybe encounter a problem on anything related to my work in teaching, they guide us and also support us, and even make follow-up to see if the problem has been solved.	OK, the educators are supposed to, and they do of course, whenever they find that there is a learner in a class who cannot cope. The educator intervenes and provides any support to the learner. If there is no progress, the educator then involves the ILST. The ILST then call

| | absenteeism. We always seek advises from each other. | colleagues mentioned we seek advice from each other (the whole school is involved), in order to support those learners. | | the parent to ask some questions in order to get the family background as well as the learner's information. We, as the ILST make sure that the educators do not dump the learners to us without providing intervention or support. We also look at the records the educators did for those learners as evidence that they have done something. If the problem of that learner is severe, we involve the DBST, which is the District Based Support Team to intervene so that at the end that particular learner is referred to a relevant institution. |

Table 12 **Follow- up Question: Another follow up question, for interest sake. You also mentioned about the relationship between the ILST and the District-based Support Team. Could you please tell me about any support you receive from the DBST?**

Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
We were workshopped on how to screen, identify, assess and support learners who experience barriers to learning. We now have the skills and knowledge of the process.	At first we didn't know how to screen learners and how to differentiate that this learner has got such kind of a barrier and how to assess such a learner. Presently we now know that some learners can be assessed orally only and can also be given activities that suit their level of ability. Add on after all responses Yes the DBST help us also with the year plan, sometimes they check on what we are planning to do and what we are running short of.	Yes we were trained on how we should screen and identify learners with barriers to learning and how to assess them. The DBST also organised a workshop for us on learners who are short sighted and those who are blind. We were taught how to use brails for blind learners and which resources to use when we teach those learners. But up to so far we do not have blind learners at our school; we only have those who are short sighted.	The DBST also assist us in year plans and also on looking for sponsors for the school. They assisted us to get sponsorship of wheelchairs. They are always available for us if we need assistance	Yes, we do receive a lot of support from the DBST. And I think it is because of the efforts we took as a school. For this school to be selected as a Full-Service school is because we were networking with the DBST so that they could assist us with the problems we encountered at school. The DBST arrange workshops for us, like the latest one we attended on SIAS, which is Screening, identification, Assessment and Support

Table 13 Question: **Thank you so much for your efforts, patience and the time you gave me to present this interview. If maybe there is something to talk about you are most welcome**

Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
Yes I just want to highlight the challenge that we are facing at school, more so as a Full-service school. I think that as ILST members, especially the Foundation Phase educators, we have a challenge, we are the ILST, at the same time class teachers who should always be in classrooms as we teach all the Learning Areas. It is a challenge to, as I can say, we need support, more support to be able to maintain what we are doing and even to work more in order to strengthen inclusive education. Researcher requested for a detailed explanation To have support teachers, to support or to assist the educators in their classrooms, for example to assist in terms of assisting the class teacher with other learners, to give them specialised or individual tasks as we are doing. So you find that we are phased with our classroom activities, and there comes problem or case that needs to be attended urgently, as ILST members, we have to leave our classes and mid you,	Yes, that's definitely the truth; we need support in our classrooms, as a Full-service school, it is important to have assistant teachers in our classrooms to work in partnership with teachers to provide extra support to learners with barriers to learning. I think the government should consider that so that Inclusive education should be implemented successfully.	The other challenge is that, yes we have attended many workshops on Inclusive Education or how to address and support learners with barriers to learning, but I think we also need a remedial teacher at school. The remedial teacher can assist the whole school for those learners who cannot read, write and spell. I know that we do our best and that we assist each other, but I think that can also be important.	Talking about remedial teacher, since our school was selected as a Full-service school, other schools around the area tend to take our school as a remedial school. They often transfer their learners who failed at their schools to our school and we end up facing a difficult situation of handling more learners.	I think Inclusive Education can only be sustainable if all parents can be actively involved. Again, if the government can make sure that what we do at Primary schools, concerning Inclusive Education and on addressing the barriers to learning can be escalated straight up to secondary schools so every learner can be accommodated, that can also reduce the rate of drop out. If Inclusive Education can be escalated from FP up to secondary school IE will be successful.

Foundation phase classes, to attend to the matter. That is why I say we need support teachers so that we should not be left behind with our classroom activities.				

APPENDIX B

FIELD NOTES OF DATA COLLECTED AT MPHUPHUTHE FULL-SERVICE SCHOOL

GRADE 1 Classrooms (Two classrooms for Grade 1) and Grade 3 (1 classroom for Grade 3)

THEME	NOTES
Classroom environment	- All the classrooms are well equipped with resources that are visible and attractive for all the learners. - Each Learning Area has got its site around the classroom wall where the relevant teaching aids for those Learning Areas are displayed on the wall. The pictures that are displayed are big enough for every learner to see them well and colorful. - Letters of the alphabet are also displayed, the letter name and a picture for each letter to show that letter's sound, e.g. **A,** underneath there is a picture of an **apple** and the name next to the picture. - On the Numeracy site, there are number charts and number names and objects to represent the number. There are also pictures of money, shapes and others. - There is a nature table, where they display learners' projects; and other objects that represent different cultures. - There is a patriotic corner, where they display the national symbols, flag, and the national anthem. They also displayed the picture of the president and the provincial leaders. - There is reading corner, where they displayed picture books and different readers for learners to

read during flexi time or for extended activities.

- There is a birthday corner, where they displayed a birthday chart, which is attractive, with a big cake picture with candles on top. The chart has a space for a learner's name who is his/her birthday on that day: Today is Tuesday; It is the 10th of May; Happy birthday Thapelo . The learners feel so special about it. All the learners' then sing a birthday song for that particular learner/s.

- Weather chart, this also attracts all the learners' interest because every learner is engaged on it. Every day in the morning, before story time, one learner who is his/ her turn, put the relevant day and a picture with the vocabulary word for the weather of that day. E.g. Today is Monday; It is a sunny day.

- Rhymes and songs with pictures are also displayed on the wall.

- Classroom rules are also displayed on the wall. The learners' observe and abide by the rules. If a learner behaves inappropriately and is against the rules, the other learners or any learner who identifies it call that particular learner to order and ask him about the classroom rules. What I observed, the learners are well disciplined.

- The classrooms are attractive and arouse every ones interest in teaching and learning.

- All the classroom objects, such as chalkboard, windows, doors, chairs, etc, are written names in Setswana and in English, for example, *letlapakwalelo- chalkboard; lebati- door; letlhabaphefo-window;* etc. It becomes easy for learners to learn the classroom word vocabularies.

Classroom organisation and management	• The classrooms are well organized. Tables and chairs are arranged in circle groups. In each group there are six learners, they are seated in such a way that it allows group and paired activities.
	• There is enough space for free movement of both learners and educators, and also to have access and to use the resources easily.
	• The educators use gestures and pictures when they teach for those learners who have got hearing problems and also for other learners to understand what is being said.
	• Most of the activities are done in groups and in pairs. Learners are actively involved.
	• Teaching and learning is learner- centered and activity-based. Learners are pre occupied with different activities according to their level of abilities. Educators move around the groups to control and guide the learners. Educators call learners by their names when asking questions and also when they want to draw the learners' attention on the lessons.
	• Educators use secondary reinforces to motivate and to arouse the learners' interest in learning, such as stickers and also clapping hands for every success of every learner, being small or brilliant. Every learner is being praised and motivated for what he/ she has achieved.
Educator- learner relationship and interaction	• Positive relationship between the learners and the educators. The learners interact freely with the educators, they were free to ask questions and to raise issues which they need clarity on them. There was a day when one learner in a Grade 1 class was very quiet and reserved and even cried. The educator called her and hugged her and asked her what the problem was. The educator called the parent to come and take the learner to the clinic. The educator wrote a letter

	to the clinic so that they can attend to the learner. Learners receive a warm and loving care from the educators. This was observed in all the three classrooms.
Teaching and learning	• Learning Programmes, work schedules and lesson plans are used for all the Grades. Educators use Milestones as set out by Foundations for Learning, but emphasis is on including all learners in teaching and learning.
	• Educators do not follow the Grades Assessment standards; they provide activities to suite each and every learner's level of ability. Learners who experience barriers to learning are given activities of their level of abilities and their learning styles are also considered. Educators used songs, rhymes, pictures, radio and learners also dramatize some of the activities given. (Visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning styles are catered for.)
	• Educators used differentiated lesson planning for those learners who experience barriers to learning, when they are busy with other activities for learners who can cope well in teaching and learning, the activities for those who experience barriers to learning are shown on the differentiated lesson planning.
	• Educators also repeated the previous work that was done the last day to link the activities that are supposed to be done on that done with the previous and also to see if learners understood what was done previously.
	• The contents that are in the big books are related to learners' environment. Asked the Grade 1 educator how they selected the books and she responded that they use to select contexts related to learners environment and the community. She also indicated that the contexts for the Learning Areas are the same for each Grade.

Shared reading and big book	• The texts and pictures vary according to Grades, for example, in Grade 1the pictures are big enough with limited text. The educators indicated that in Grade 1 more emphasis is put on listening and speaking skills because the language of learning and teaching is not a home language for all learners. Example of the text in the big book for Grade 1: The Theme was on *Diphologolo tsa legae* (*Farm animals*). A big picture of a hen laying on eggs. *kgogo (Hen). Kgogo e beela mae* (The hen is laying eggs). Another picture of a cow, *kgomo (A cow). Kgomo e nwa metsi (*The cow is drinking water), etc. The educator also taught the learners a song on animals. Some individualized activities given to those learners with barriers to learning were: drawing or cutting pictures of farm animals, coloring pictures of animals and tracing the word to write it correctly. Other learners were given an activity of completing sentences and completing words, e.g. *kgomo e ----------*; *kgogo e ------*; and *–omo; --ogo; po*--; etc. • In grade 3 more emphasis is put on reading and writing, the text gradually increases; therefore the pictures on the big book are more with more text. Examples of the text in the big book: The theme was on Plants: Fruit and vegetables. Learners write or create a paragraph about the picture. The educator asked questions to involve all the learners. The learners then read the text from the big book. The educator gave some individual activities for those who could not read. • The educators attended to all the learners learning styles and needs, by using simple words, songs, rhymes and rote play. The educators also allowed learners in Grade 1 to make any sound of an animal and the other learners should say which animal it is. In Grade 3 learners were given pictures to group the plants according to fruit and vegetables.

Sounds and Phonics	• In all the Grades that I observed, a sound and phonic was taught for a week, using different activities. In Grade 1, they taught the <mark style="background-color:magenta">*kg*</mark> sound and in Grade 3 the <mark style="background-color:red">*tlh*</mark> sound was taught. The sounds were taken from the shared reading.
	• **Grade 1:** The educators introduced the sound by giving a sentence with repeated sound and asked the learners to identify the sound they heard the most. E.G. *dikgomo tsa kgosi di kgaotse dikgole tsa rakgadi*. Most of the learners identified the kg sound. But there was one learner who identified the <mark style="background-color:red">*di*</mark> sound and the educator in that class appreciated the learner. The educator then indicated that they will focus on the <mark style="background-color:magenta">*kg*</mark> sound. Learners were then asked to list all the words that have the kg sound and the educator wrote them on the chalkboard. The educator read the words together with the learners. Learners were then requested to read the words on their own. Learners were given homework to cut pictures or to draw a picture of the words.
	• The other activities that were given on the same sound were as follows: to match the words with the pictures; to write words for the pictures and to complete the word by writing the sound, e.g. –*omo*; --ole; *ra—adi*; etc. The educator gave oral activities to the learners who could not write properly.
	• Grade 3: the educator asked the learners to identify the letter which repeated itself the most from the text (the paragraph that they read) in the big book. Learners identified the <mark style="background-color:red">*tlh*</mark> sound. The educator ten requested the learners to name all the words that has the <mark style="background-color:red">*tlh*</mark> sound and wrote them on the chalkboard. Learners were then requested to make sentences using the words that were written on the chalkboard. The educator also gave activities for those learners who experience barriers to learning on drawing or cutting pictures for the words; tracing the words given down;

	- matching pictures with words and saying sentences using the written words orally. - Some activities that were given on the phonic were as follow: Writing sentences with repeated phonic and sound; writing words for the pictures and filling in the correct letter/ sound/ phonic to complete the word.
Hand writing	- Hand writing was done in both Grades but using different activities. - Grade 1: Every time before writing, the educator emphasized on the skills and ways of writing. The educator emphasized that learners should start writing from the left to the right; and from up to the bottom of the book and also how letters should be written, because they are using Irish and margin books the letters will not be written on the same lines, e.g. <mark style="background-color: yellow">a; i; m;r</mark> <mark style="background-color: cyan">f; l; t;k;h;</mark> <mark style="background-color: magenta">p;g;j; y</mark>; etc. Learners who experience physical barriers such as short sighted and cerebral palsy were using books with big lines and thick pencils. - Grade 3: Learners were given a paragraph to transcribe it in their books. The educator also gave those learners who experience physical barriers to trace on the jointed words or letters given.
Numeracy	- Grade 1: Oral counting was done in the first 10 minutes of the period. Learners counted orally, but the educators also allowed some of the learners to use their abacuses to count. Every learner was provided with an abacus. Educators used objects and pictures for problem solving activities. The learners learn numeracy through play in most of the time. - Grade 3: Oral counting was also done in the first 10 minutes, where learners counted up to 200 orally in 2s; 5s; 10s and 20. The educator allowed those learners who experience barriers to count up to where they can. Objects were also used for problem solving, measurement and estimations. The educator also involved play.

Life skills	• Learners seem to enjoy the Learning area because they were all actively involved. The educators allowed learners to be creative. They learn using songs, rhymes, drawings, designing, projects, physical exercises and dramatizing activities.
Support	• Learners are given support individually. The educators gave the learners who experience barriers activities of their level of abilities.
	• The educators praise every learner for what he/she has achieved or for any progress that a learner has shown. All the educators are using stickers to praise or appreciate the learners.
	• Interventions were done individually.
School environment	• The school buildings are inclusive; there are ramps all over the school and also at the toilets.

APPENDIX C

Table 15

Patterns; Categories and Themes relating to the teaching and learning methods used in inclusive classrooms in the foundation phase

PATTERNS	CATEGORIES	THEMES
Language of teaching and learning. Communication breakdown. They speak different languages at home Learners cannot express themselves.	Language of teaching and learning Language and communication	Language and communication
No parental involvement. Parents do not respond. Parent does not respond. Most learners depend on grandparents grant. Not well cared of. Parents are illiterate. Orphans stay with grandparents, of which they don't actually help them in homework. Parents are illiterate. Grandparents don't help in doing homework. If all parents can be actively involved.	No parental involvement Parents do not respond Most learners depend on grandparents pension grants Parents illiteracy	Parental involvement

Poverty. Poverty. Depend on grandparents' pension grants. Poverty. Very tired and hungry. NSNP, most of them come to school without having lunch packs.	Poverty Depending on grant parents pension grants	Poverty
Code switch. Code switch. We let them tell stories in their own HL and one who speaks the same language explains to the whole class. Explain to the learners what the objects are in their HL. Use older learners who speak the same language to explain what is said. Use older learners who speak the same language to explain. We let them tell their stories in their own HL and one who speaks the same language to explain.	Code switch One learner who speaks the same language to explain to the whole class Use older learner to explain what is said	Code switch

Learners tell stories on what happened to reinforce listening, speaking skills. Explain difficult concepts. Teach sounds and phonics. When I teach phonics, stress sounds. Reading from the big book, the sounds, word vocabulary, teaching phonics, writing words. Use shared reading.	Activities Activities Activities Activities	Content (what is taught)
Different types of methods. Use multi-level teaching. Learn through songs, rhymes. Use co-operative learning. Giving group activities. Attend learners individually. Allow learners to use the methods of their choice. Use differentiated planning. Use differentiated lesson planning. Use story-telling. Learn through play. Accommodate oral	Teaching methods Learning methods Learning methods Learner centred	Teaching and learning methods

presentation. Free to share ideas and interact with each other.		
Create many activities to accommodate every learner. Give different activities. Give a lower activity. Do so many activities. A learner can cope in any activity. Involve them in many activities.	Different activities to accommodate all learners	Pace of teaching
We put them where they can see the educator clearly. We usually create space in the classrooms. We also put them in front in the class so that they can see clearly. We arrange learners according to their disabilities. Our classrooms are spacious enough to accommodate even wheelchairs They are not overcrowded. We walk around to guide them and also to control discipline.	Organization Organization Organization	Organization and management

Will be attracted and will enjoy the lessons. To arouse their interest. Classrooms are organized.		
We usually straddle on grades. I take a grade R or One activity; depending on the level of ability of the learner. The pace of teaching and the time available to complete the curriculum. Straddle to the lower grade. Do not rush to finish. Who has got learning barrier will do at least one activity from all the different activities done.	Straddle on grades Pace of teaching	Pace of teaching
Different teaching aids. We use pictures, puppets and other relevant resources to arouse the learners' interest. Pictures and a big book. Using wheelchairs. Using wheelchairs. Make the resources that are relevant and attractive.	Different teaching aids Wheelchairs	Resources

Resources are learner-friendly. Put the pictures. Wheelchairs and devises for learners who are hard of hearing. Use pictures and real objects. Bright, attractive and full of visible teaching aids on the walls. Nature tables, Patriotic corners and birthday chart.		
There are physically disabled learners. Hard of hearing. Physically disabled Using wheelchairs Physical disability such as short sighted and cerebral palsy	Physically disabled learners	Physical barriers
Challenge phased by Foundation Phase educators. Need support in classrooms. Challenge: need a remedial teacher at school. Other schools transfer their learners who failed to our school: school facing a difficult situation of	Challenges experienced by Foundation Phase educators	Challenges

many learners.		
Praise every learner. Using sticker to appreciate learners.	Teacher- learner interaction and relationship	Teacher-learner interaction and relationship