PREPAREDNESS OF THE MAINSTREAM PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN IMPLEMENTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY IN NONGOMA CIRCUIT, KWAZULU-NATAL

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that "PREPAREDNESS OF THE MAINSTREAM PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN IMPLEMENTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY IN NONGOMA CIRCUIT, KWAZULU-NATAL" is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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ZULU P.D (Mrs)   **DATE**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated

to all

my family members,

my loving husband,

Prince J.B Zulu

as well as

my loving children,

Nkanyiso, Mpathwenhle, Lethiwe, Nqobile, Mongezi and Ongeziwe

Abstract

Inclusive Education has gained significant currency nationally and internationally. It demands that the teacher be able to meet the needs of learners with impairments in ordinary classrooms. The success of inclusive education rests on quality teacher preparation geared towards inclusive education. The focus of this investigation is on preparedness of mainstream primary school teachers in implementing inclusive education policy in the Nongoma circuit. The lack of teachers prepared to provide quality inclusive teaching to learners and the limitations of existing support structures both impact on inclusion. Through a questionnaire an effort was made to ascertain teachers' preparedness for inclusive education in the Nongoma circuit. This measure was utilized to determine the extent to which teachers are prepared for the implementation of inclusive education in the classroom. It was also used to describe the nature of training provided by District Based Support Team in an advancement of inclusive education practices in the classroom. The researcher also identified enabling strategies required for teachers in an inclusive classroom environment. Finally, recommendations on strategies for the successful implementation of inclusive education in the classroom were made. The data was collected through a questionnaire. The researcher selected three wards Nongoma circuit as research sites with all teachers in the selected schools participating.

KEY WORDS: Whole school approach, prepare, diversity, Nongoma circuit, primary school teacher, mainstream school.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS USED IN THIS STUDY

CES   : Chief Education Specialist

CSTL   : Care and Support for Teaching and Learning

DBST   : District Based Support Team

DCES   : Deputy Chief Education Specialist

DoE   : Department of Education

FSS   : Full-service School

HEI   : Higher Education Institutions

HOD   : Head of Department

HRBA   : Human Rights Based Approach

ILST   : Institution Level Support Team

ISP   : Individual Support Plan

LAHL   : Learn About Healthy Living

LSEN   : Learners with Special educational Needs

MiET   : Media in Education Trust

NCESS   : National Committee on Education Support Services

NCSNET   : National Commission on Special Needs Education and Training

SCCS   : Schools as Centres of Care and Support

SADC   : Swiss Agency for Development and Corporation

SASA   : South African Schools Act

SIAS   : Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support

SSRC   : Special School as a Resource Centre

UNESCO   : United Nations Organisation for Educational, Scientific and

                  Cultural Development

WP 6   : White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education: Building an   Inclusive

                  : Education and Training

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

1.1   INTRODUCTION

Developing a clear policy, and especially effective practices, around inclusive education is one of the most complex and urgent issues facing educators in many of the world's developing countries. In most developed countries laws now demand that all children receive appropriate education in the least restrictive environment that is consistent with their needs, and services have been developed for this purpose (Green, 1991). This is seen important for the rights of all children, whatever their impairment or difficulty in learning. They should be treated as normally as possible, and have the right to have their individual needs met within the regular school system as far as possible, to live at home, attend the school closest to them, and lead as normal a life as possible (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2002:295).

It is important to recognize that the practicalities of adapting classrooms to accommodate the learning needs of all children have fallen mostly on class teachers. Teachers have to deal with complex dilemmas both in and out of the classroom in the process of teaching children in a way which is relevant to the diverse needs of their learners (Engelbrecht, Oswald, Hall, Campher & Smit, and 2004:157). However, since teachers are the people who make learning possible, their own attitudes, beliefs and feelings with regard to what is happening in the school and in the classroom are of crucial importance (Engelbrecht, Green & Naicker, and 2004:69).

It is now 16 years since the Department of Education (DoE) framed Education White Paper 6 with the aim of ensuring that public schools accommodate learners with impairments, but inclusive education has not been fully implemented in public schools. Engelbrecht, Green and Naicker (2004:71) assert that, to support the inclusion of learners with special educational needs, teachers have to be sensitive not only to the particular needs of individual learners, but also to their own attitudes and feelings. They may need training in how to identify and address special educational needs.

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Major barriers to the provision of quality education for impaired learners in all educational contexts include the lack of early identification and intervention services, negative attitudes, exclusionary policies and practices, inadequate teacher training, particularly training of all regular teachers to teach children with diverse abilities, inflexible curriculum and assessment procedures, inadequate specialist support staff to assist teachers of special and regular classes, and failure to adapt to the school environment to make it fully accessible (Peters, 2004:47).

The training of educators to teach learners with varying impairments simultaneously has not begun in the circuit. A few *PowerPoint* presentations regarding inclusion have been made by the district office but this has frustrated educators as they do not have faith in inclusion and do not receive the adequate support promised by the Department, for example, Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) training, early identification and intervention strategies. Only the schools which were identified as full-service received such training. Most in the circuit are still struggling to implement inclusive education due to lack this specific training, therefore it is important that the strategies be investigated to prepare educators for the implementation of inclusive education.

1.1.1 The Research Context

Within the Department of Education, there has been a growing recognition of the value of using a right- based approach to build the system of inclusive education. Indeed, the Department's Inclusive Education's strategy provides a solid framework for the use of (HRBA) Human Rights Based-Approach (MiET, 2012:08). In the strategy, the Department expressed its commitment to realizing the child's right to education and providing educational opportunities for learners who experience barriers to teaching, learning and development are diminished so that effective teaching and learning can take place.

Argull, (2012) highlighted that, to strengthen the implementation of inclusive education between 2001 and 2005, the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands funded the Multi-Media Rural Initiative to help develop self-reliant and mutually supportive cluster of schools around 25 multimedia resource centres which include

provinces of KwaZulu- Natal, North West Province and Eastern Cape. In 1999 the Swiss Agency for the Development and Corporation supported MiET Africa in the implementation of the Learn about Healthy Living (LAHL) project in KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape. The project focused on assisting teachers with integration of HIV/ AIDS education, barriers to learning and vulnerability. The project proved that schools could be vehicles for communities to organize their responses to HIV/ AIDS and various soci-economic issues. It also demonstrated the value of combining the models of clustering schools around resource centres and using Schools as Centres of Care and Support (SCCS).

The field testing of SCCS was greatly enhanced by the full endorsement and participation of the Department of Education. It proved to be an appropriate strategy to provide care and support provisioning for learners at school, through its policy of inclusive education. The SCCS model that emerged from the field testing was later formally adopted by the government first in South Africa (nationally and provincially) and later the SADC Ministries of Education, in what it became known as CSTL-Care and Support for Teaching and Learning Programme. Thus, the elements of SCCS model were applied and tested in more than 1200 rural schools across KwaZulu-Natal, Northwest province and 32 schools in the Eastern Cape. These elements were used as building blocks for LAHL IV. Building the experiences of SCCS, LAHL IV used the model to strengthen 24 schools in the Nongoma area to function as inclusive centres of learning, care and support (MiET, 2012).

1.1.2   General information about Nongoma

Nongoma is located in the rural district of Northern KwaZulu-Natal. It is an area that is beset by poverty, unemployment and low income levels, and hard hit by high HIV infection and prevalence rates. Most of children in the area are partially affected and their basic right of education, health, safety and protection are often compromised. Most of the children also come from child-headed families. However, this study aims to explore the preparedness of mainstream primary school teachers in implementing inclusive education policy in Nongoma circuit, bearing in mind that some of the schools which participated in the study also participated in the pilot project of inclusive education which was conducted by MiET Africa and they serve as resource centre. It is assumed that schools which have been converted into resource centres

will have different foci and knowledge about inclusive education compare to other schools.

1.2 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

An essential aspect of the implementation of inclusive education is human resources development, as in an inclusive system of education there is a need to develop a set of skills to effectively respond to the increasing diversity in the class. This may appear to be complex due to the nature of educational change, and it is particularly challenging in the case of South Africa. The introduction of inclusive education emerged from a dual system of mainstream schools and special needs education in which support was provided on the basis of category of disability and race. Therefore, many educators in mainstream schools may feel less confident in dealing with the increasing learner diversity in often overcrowded classes, whilst the highly specialized educators deal with a small minority of learners in special schools. The long tradition of a dual system has exacerbated differences, prejudice and fear amongst educators, parents as well as learners. At the time of transformation such aspects may increase the complexities of change (Da Costa, 2003:23).

Teachers in South African schools are currently expected to make major changes in the way they understand teaching and learning in the process of adapting an entirely new curriculum. While this is enabling in many ways it does make new demands on teachers and it is understandable that it can be stressful for them (Engelbrecht, Green & Naicker, 2004:70). The South African education system as a whole, as well as the support system, has changed during the past few years. Previously, educators were only expected to teach ordinary learners in an ordinary classroom without accommodating those who experienced barriers to learning. Now however, they are expected to accommodate and give support to all learners in the classroom.

Teachers have to deal with complex dilemmas both in and out of the classroom in the process of delivering the curriculum in a way that is relevant to the diverse needs of their learners. This situation often creates stress and can exacerbate feelings of loneliness and isolation. Consequently, they are in need of concrete advice on handling difficult situations to enable them to cope. Not taking into account the

systemic variables in both the analysis of and intervention in these situations leaves the teacher in a situation in which trial and error strategies lead to more confusion, conflict and stress. Tired and anxious teachers are unlikely to adapt to change effectively and this has had negative implications for their learners (Hall et al., 2004:157).

The Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001:16) acknowledges that all children and youth are entitled to receive an education as well as support. It also acknowledges that learning is broader than formal schooling and takes place in the family and community. Learners can only be empowered by developing their strengths and enabling them to participate fully, as well as minimizing all barriers to learning (DoE, 2001:18). Educators are now expected to accommodate learners who experience barriers to learning in planning instruction delivery as well as assessment. They have to draw up Individual Support Plans (ISPs) to keep track of support given and progress made by learners (DoE, 2008:15). This means that educators have to pay attention on a one-to-one basis, however, before inclusion can be practiced, educators will need to experience a paradigm shift, one that will prepare them for the change from teaching in a mainstream class to teaching in an inclusive one (Hyam, 2004:34).

Support for teachers in their increasingly demanding roles within a whole-school approach is vital. Many classroom teachers feel that they do not have sufficient training or support to meet many of the challenges presented by the learners in their classes and the general problems facing the school as a whole. The development of collaborative relationships among teachers so that expertise may be shared is crucial to the success in meeting the diverse needs of all learners in inclusive education settings (Thousand & Villa, in Engelbrecht, Green & Naicker, and 2004:71).

The increasing demand to educate learners with impairments in mainstream classrooms has received little consideration. The lack of teachers prepared to provide quality inclusive teaching to these learners and the limitation of existing support structures both have an impact on inclusion. The education of learners with or without impairments relies on the commitment and effective support of teachers, resulting in mainstream teachers regarding inclusive education as being forced upon them, and many concerns being raised regarding its implementation (Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff & Pettipher, 2000:42).

Inclusive education raises additional issues when it states that an outcome-based approach has flexibility to accommodate inclusive practices. However, teachers are human beings with attitudes to difference and impairment formed in a context of prevailing social attitudes. Many may initially resist the notion of inclusion, because they bring their own personal realities to the work place with them. It is therefore important to acknowledge the link between their personal and professional realities. Susan (2004:17) states that the conditions of teachers' work are a fourth critical input in inclusive education programmes. Most implementation efforts focus on teaching teachers effective instructional strategies, but ignore the conditions in which they must carry them out. Only a few projects reported in the literature meet goals, due to teacher / staff turnover and transfers.

Supporting educators is a crucial part of the development of more inclusive centres for learning (UNESCO, 2003:23). To be prepared for inclusive education, teachers need support from all school structures, including Institution Level Support Team, School Management Team and District Based Support Team. According to the DoE (2005:34), the ILST will support educators who are experiencing problems and are not adequately equipped to cope with learners who experience barriers to learning in the mainstream classes. Teachers must therefore be prepared to teach and accommodate the diverse needs of learners in their classrooms. They will thus be able to leave their problems outside the school gate when they arrive at school. Their current realities, as well as their life stories shape the way they interact with learners in the classroom, resulting in them not being able to identify learners who have additional support needs.

1.3   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Inclusive education constitutes a challenge to the education system as a whole and in particular to teachers in mainstream classrooms. It requires teachers to be flexible in their thinking as well as innovative and creative in their approaches to teaching and learning. Teachers are expected to have the knowledge and skills to accommodate a range of diversity among learners, which means being able to use their judgment in selecting appropriate teaching strategies from their professional repertoire. To expect

teachers to manage all these challenges and changes on their own would be unrealistic. Support is required both in and outside the classroom (Engelbrecht, Green & Naicker, and 2004:94).

Since teachers are the ones who make learning possible, their own attitudes, beliefs and feelings with regard to what is happening in their classroom are crucial. Teachers in South African schools are currently expected to make major changes in the way they understand teaching and learning in the process of adapting to an entirely new curriculum. While this curriculum is enabling in many ways, it does make new demands on them and is understandably stressful (Engelbrecht et al., 2004:70). Most teachers in South Africa are faced with the challenge of having to teach learners in large classrooms. Excessively large classes, particularly those for the space available, can affect teaching and learning, as teachers find themselves in a situation in which they cannot identify learners who have additional support needs.

Equally important in inclusion is the issue of skills that educators should acquire in managing inclusive classes. Prinsloo (in Mpya, 2007:83) found that teachers lack the necessary knowledge, skills and expertise to understand and assist these learners, causing frustration, demotivation and serious feelings of inadequacy which disrupt effective teaching and successful learning. This was behind the recommendations made by Bothma et al. (2000:204) that teachers receive in-service education and training if they are to have the knowledge, skills and values necessary to cope with learners of varying abilities and diverse needs.

Educator preparedness in terms of implementing inclusive education in the classroom is critical, and this study attempts to fill this gap.

1.4   RESEARCH AIMS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aims to explore the preparedness of the mainstream primary school teachers in the implementing inclusive education.

Specifically, it attempts to achieve the following aims:

1. To determine the extent to which teachers are prepared for the implementation of inclusive education in the classroom.

2. To describe the nature of training provided by the District Based Support Team to advance inclusive education practices in the classroom.

3. To identify enabling support strategies required for teachers in an inclusive classroom environment.

4. To make recommendations on strategies for the successful implementation of inclusive education practices in the classroom.

The research question is:

- To what extent are mainstream primary school educators prepared for the implementation of inclusive education in the classroom?

The following research questions emanate from the above aims:

1. To what extent are teachers prepared for the implementation of inclusive education in the classroom?

2. What is the nature of training provided by District Based Support Team to advance inclusive education practices in the classroom?

3. What is the enabling support strategies required for teachers in an inclusive classroom environment?

4. What are the recommended strategies for the successful implementation of inclusive education in the classroom?

1.5   MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

This study is considered important because many teachers appear not to be prepared to teach learners with diverse needs in an inclusive setting and tend to think that it is correct to use a uniform approach to teaching. However, as Coetzee, Van Niekerk and Wydeman (2008:08) state, each learner has unique abilities and talents as well as

limitations, failure to recognize and accommodate which often leads to unsuccessful teaching. If teachers are prepared, trained and supported in the implementation of inclusive education, they will be able to meet the diverse needs of learners who have additional support needs.

The DoE (2009:04) called for a reorganization of the current education system to provide mainstream support and male it an integral part of the whole system. This would ensure that all learners have a full range of educational opportunities, including curriculum accessibility and flexibility, how it is taught and assessed, the reporting and certification of achievements, how learners are organized in schools or classrooms, general classroom practices, access to sport, leisure, as well as educational and recreational opportunities for all learners.

According to Engelbrecht, Green and Naicker (2004:71), to support the inclusion of learners with special educational needs, teachers have to be sensitive not only to the particular needs of individual learners but also to their own attitudes and feelings. They may need training in how to identify and address special educational needs. As well as skills, teachers also need to develop a critical understanding of common stereotypes and prejudices related to disability and reflect on how these have influenced their own attitudes. Clarity about their own strengths, vulnerabilities and needs is also a necessary step in preparing teachers for inclusion.

1.6   RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

The study primarily followed a quantitative approach, which employs measurement and collection of numerical data. It involved description of social structures and processes that were not directly observable.

A questionnaire was piloted, developed and used as an instrument to gather primary school educators' views and opinions on their preparedness for the implementation of inclusive education. A questionnaire was considered appropriate because a large number of people could be reached at relatively low cost. An advantage was that it is easy to reach a wide geographic area and remote locations

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse numerical data. Brink and Wood (1998:283) states that descriptive designs are used for the development of a database for any science and when the characteristics of a population are either unknown or only partially known.

The respondents were informed that participation was voluntary and that they had a right to withdraw for any reason, without consequences. The concept of anonymity and confidentiality would be advanced as the participants would not be required to reveal their true identities throughout the research process. The names of the participating institutions were altered to protect their identity for the maintenance of privacy; the data was kept in a safe place and locked away. Written consent was obtained from the respondents after the purpose of the study was explained.

1.7   EXPOSITION OF TERMINOLOGY

There follows an exposition of terminology used in the study.

The **whole school approach** is followed when ''an organization is constantly and systematically reflecting on its own practice and making appropriate adjustments and changes as a result of new insights gained through that reflection''Lazarus, Daniels& Engelbrecht, 2011). The focus in this study was on professional teacher development and organization development in order to equip the school to become more effective in its purpose and goals. This entailed focusing on the development of all elements of school life (Lazarus, Daniels & Engelbrecht, 2011).

To **prepare** means to get ready, thus to be prepared is to be ready or willing to do something or 'geared up' for it (Betty, 1996).

Diversity refers to differences, in the context of this study based on such factors as age, gender, language, religion, ethnicity, background, education and levels of literacy, ability and status (DoE, 2011).

Situated in the heart of the Zululand Municipality of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal, the **Nongoma Circuit** is mostly inhabited by Zulu-speaking people. The area boasts various heritage sites and royal residences. The Nongoma Education Circuit is one of

the five circuits within the Zululand Education District. Nongoma Circuit is geographically and demographically the largest, with 210 schools and sub-divided into seven education wards. The circuit is under the leadership of the circuit manager (Chief Education Specialist) who reports directly to the District manager (Director) while each ward has an average of 30 schools runs under the leadership of ward managers (Deputy Chief Education Specialist).

Nongoma circuit is a rural community troubled by poverty, unemployment and illiteracy. The vastness of the area, with sparsely populated places, dirt or gravel roads, and long distances between schools, makes travelling costly and time-consuming. The predominantly traditional lifestyle of the Nongoma people means that citizens are law-abiding, although there are also criminals. Human dignity is highly valued, but knowledge of human rights is still lacking. The position of the area, along with poor Internet connection makes accessibility to HEIs (Higher Education Institutions) difficult, thus crippling educational advancement of educators and post-matriculants, who can only resort to distance education for their studies. However, the introduction of education centres and full-service schools (FSSs) with such facilities begins to alleviate such challenges.

According to the South African Schools Act, Act No. 84 of 1996, a **teacher** is any person who teaches, educates or trains other people; who provides professional education services, including professional therapy and education psychological services at any public school, further education and training institutions, departmental office or adult basic education centres; and who is appointed in a post or any educator establishment under this Act (DoE, 2001).

Primary School teachers are teachers at primary institutions which cater for pupils from grade R to Grade 7 (DoE, 2005). The education system in the GET band is divided into three different categories or levels of education, namely the Foundation phase, Intermediate phase and senior phase, comprising grades 1 to 3; 4 to 6; and 7 to 9 respectively. The focus of the study was will be on Intermediate phase educators.

Most of the teachers mentioned above were under-qualified, and even those who were display a lack of full-time exposure to formal training. In their formal and informal educational background the notions of inclusivity and care and support, as part of

human upbringing, were taboo. They were faced with social ills, such as disease, indebtedness, alcohol (drug) abuse, crime, lethargy, stress, lack of skills, and de-motivation. They were taught Bantu education and therefore struggled to comply readily with democratic changes. They also had to teach learners from diverse psycho-social backgrounds and operate in schools lacking educational resources.

1.8 CHAPTER DIVISION

The contents of the dissertation are presented as follows:

Chapter 1 has introduced the study, presented the background, problem statement and the aims, and posed the research question. Key terms were clarified.

In chapter 2 literature on primary school educator preparedness for the implementation of inclusive education will be reviewed. A review of South African and international studies is also presented and discussed

Chapter 3 outlines the research design and methods employed in the study.

In chapter four, data analysis and interpretation will be discussed and presented.

Chapter 5 draws conclusions to the study, based on the findings, and makes recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION

Teachers are the role-players in determining the quality of implementation of any new education policy, including inclusion (Fullan, in Hay, Smit & Paulsen, and 2001:213). Often, change in education has failed because insufficient attention had been taken of the current practices and needs of those who are expected to put it into effect (Wearmouth, Edwards & Richmond, in Hay et al., 2001:214). It appears that the empowerment of teachers is once again being neglected in the South African policy documentation on inclusive education. If the implementation of changed policies fail in a so-called developed country such as Britain, in which teachers are generally adequately trained (Wearmouth et al., 2000), this could also be true of South Africa in which a large percentage are insufficiently trained.

Developing a clear policy, and especially effective practices, around inclusive education is one of the most complex and urgent issues facing teachers in many of the world's developing countries. In most developed countries, laws now demand that all children receive appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. This is consistent with their needs, and services have been developed for the purpose (Green, 1991). A limited number of studies on the attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education have been carried out in South Africa (Bothma, Gravett & Swart, 2000), but none have focused on the actual preparedness of teachers or taken an extensive sample of respondents from all districts of a South African province.

2.2   PREPARING TEACHERS FOR INCLUSIVE AND DIVERSE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

According to Florian, Young, and Rouse (2010:718), preparing teachers for inclusive education has not received sufficient attention from researchers. Studies have tended to focus on professional learning issues such as teacher attitudes, beliefs and teaching strategies, with only a few studies raising questions about the role and effects of

different types of training for different types of teachers (Pugach & Blanton, 2009 Young, 2008). There has been little systematic investigation of the content of these programmes and what they teach about inclusion or inclusive practice.

Although there is widespread support for inclusion at a philosophical level, there are concerns that the policy is difficult to implement because teachers are not sufficiently well prepared or supported to work in inclusive ways. Inclusion requires teachers to accept responsibility for creating schools in which all learners can learn and feel they belong. In this task, teachers are crucial because of the central role they play in promoting participation and reducing underachievement, particularly with learners who might be perceived as having impairments in learning (Rouse, 2007).

Da Costa (2003:23) argues that an essential aspect of the implementation of inclusive education is human resource development, as in an inclusive education system of education there is a need to develop set of skills to effectively respond to increasingly diversity in the class. Hall, Campher, Smit and Engelbrecht (2004:157) also state that teachers have to deal with a complex dilemma both in and out of the classroom in the process of delivering the curriculum in a way that is relevant to the diverse needs of their learners. For Engelbrecht, Forlin and Smith (2000), mainstream teachers were trained accordingly and the separate mainstream and special education teacher preparation programmers did not provide trainees in mainstream education with experience to develop the necessary skills and disposition to handle learners with impairments in their classrooms.

Oswarlt, Engelbrecht, Eloff and Pettipher (2000:42) found that the lack of teachers prepared to provide quality inclusive teaching to these learners and the limitations of existing support structures both impact on inclusion. The education of learners with or without impairments relies on the commitment and effective support of teachers. Providing quality education for all children in inclusive settings has been identified as perhaps the most challenging yet most important issue in education. There are few doubts, however, that inclusivity rather than exclusivity will characterize those schools of the next century. To be ready for that future, teachers must be prepared who can teach in settings that are inclusive, meeting the needs of all children. This will require a different model of teacher education (Withworth, 1999).

The clear implication of the inclusive education movement is that mainstream schools should seek to restructure so as to provide for an increasing diversity of educational needs and eliminate the problem of students who fail to fulfil their learning, Avramidis (inVlachou, 2008). However, despite the widespread advocacy of inclusion in educational discourse and policy guidance, the question of how children's divergent needs are best met with educational system remains a much debated and highly controversial issue. Authors (Ainscow, 2007; Dyson & Millward, 2000; Low, 2007, in Vlachou, 2008) have argued that the issue has been poor implementation of inclusive programmes rather than opposition towards the concepts of inclusion per se.

While it is generally agreed that teachers need to have an increasingly large repertoire of instructional strategies to meet learners divergent needs, little descriptive information is available regarding the types of instructional adaptations that are necessary in implementing an inclusive school programme. There is also relatively little information concerning the kinds and effectiveness of instructional adaptations in teachers' everyday practice within the mainstream classrooms for responding to learners' diversity. Therefore, the overall picture emerging from the majority of relevant studies suggests that mainstream education teachers do not usually differentiate between forms of instruction that meet learners' diversity in mainstream classrooms. In addition, few instructional adaptations are provided for those with identified learning impairments.

McLesley and Waldron (2002) regard mainstream teachers as being concerned about finding ways for responding to the learners without impairments, and increasing diversity in terms of academic background, level of mastery skills and interests. Mostly, they feel under resourced and ill-equipped to master this task, as the difficulty they already face in the teaching process increases considerably when learners with impairments are included in their mainstream classes.

2.3   UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY IN CLASS

According to the Department of Education (DoE, 2011), having diverse group of learners simply means recognizing that people are unique in their own way, for instance in terms of socio-economic status, language, culture, religion, ethnicity, race,

gender, sexual orientation and ability group. All learners attend school with different experiences, reflecting a rich diversity of the population the needs of which Allan (in Landsberg 2004:32) states the teacher must be prepared to understand. Learners with impairments have specific problems, way of learning and what is effective for learning. The teachers must be prepared to convey a message of unconditional acceptance and understanding or learners with impairments may feel stigmatized and consequently underachieve in an inclusive class. In all classrooms, learners have diverse needs, to which teachers must respond.

2.4 RESPONDING TO DIVERSITY THROUGH CURRICULUM

A new curriculum expects teachers in South African classrooms to accommodate learner diversity; however, making a success of inclusion requires more than a change of curriculum (Forrester, Mvambi, Janse, van Vuuren & du Toit, 2004:128). Teachers have a responsibility for making sure that learners from whatever background feel included and affirmed in the classroom. They should monitor their own beliefs, attitudes and behaviours when responding to learners, understanding that the most significant way to respond to learner diversity is through the curriculum. The National Curriculum Statement (NCS) sets out the content of what is to be taught, but it is up to the teacher to plan how he or she will teach it to different learners. One of the key strategies for responding to diversity is curriculum differentiation (DoE, 2011), not as an exception but rather as a central method of ensuring curriculum access (Gilbert & Hart, in Naicker, 2008).

2.5 CURRICULUM DIFFERENTIATION

According to the DoE (2011), curriculum differentiation is a key strategy for responding to the needs of learners with diverse learning styles and needs. It further involves a process of modifying, changing, adapting, extending and varying teaching methodologies, teaching strategies, assessment strategies and the content of the curriculum. It takes into account learners' ability levels, interests and backgrounds.

Curriculum differentiation can be conducted at the level of content, teaching methodologies, assessment and learning environment.

2.5.1 Differentiating curriculum content

An important aspect to be differentiated is the content, that is, what the teacher teaches and what the learner is expected to learn, know, understand and be able to do. It includes facts, concepts and skills that learners will acquire within their learning environment (DoE, 2011). This can be achieved by adapting the content of the curriculum in such a way that it is manageable for a wider range of learners. In addition, Landsberg (2006:76) states that learning support should commence on the learner's level (grade). If the learner finds it difficult to understand the content or to master it, the content from lower levels could be selected until the learner experiences success. Because of curricular demands and time constrains it is often a challenge for teachers to select content that is meaningful, meets the learners' needs and interests, suits the environment, is more than just learning facts and coheres with the learners' current levels of functioning.

In curriculum differentiation, teachers are encouraged to modify the content to some extent to help learners attain knowledge, skills and competences. Before they make decisions on how are they going to teach, and what they need to modify, they first need to identify the content. Thus, Mowes (in Naicker, 2008) adds that a flexible curriculum would allow for individualized instruction and would take into account the different rates of learning. Realizing that all learners will acquire different levels of skills and understanding of material / activities may help prepare teachers to welcome learners with impairments in their classrooms (Dowing, 2002:150).

2.5.2 Differentiating curriculum environment

It is teachers' responsibility to make sure that they make the learning environment as conducive to learning as possible and differentiation at this level is important (DoE, 2011). A learning environment is a place or setting in which learning occurs, referring not only to a physical classroom but also the characteristics of the setting. Two key dimensions of the learning environment are the psychosocial and the physical. Lomofsky, Roberts and Mvambi (2004:72) state that the classroom needs to provide a safe and supportive atmosphere in which all learners are prepared to take risks and

learn from their mistakes without being reprimanded or ridiculed. The inclusive classroom fosters acceptance, tolerance and caring in all learners. The teacher has the responsibility for creating and maintaining a classroom atmosphere which nurtures the personal, cognitive and social development of all learners.

The DoE (2002:140) is concerned about the inaccessible and unsafe environment in many centres of learning; hence it is conceptualized as the barriers to learning and development that needs to be removed. Lomofsky *et al.,* (2004:73) also commented that all barriers in the physical environment should be removed to make the classroom accessible to learners with physical challenges.

2.5.3 Differentiating teaching methods / strategies

When dealing with a diverse group of learners the teachers need to find ways to ensure participation of in the learning process. The teacher must be prepared to adapt the teaching strategies to suit individual needs and diverse learning styles with learners allowed to progress at their own pace. He or she must also be prepared to analyse the skills and needs of learners with impairments and then determine what adaptations are required (Vlachou, in Landsberg, 2006:53). They must be prepared to be creative and resourceful when teaching learners with impairments.

According to the DoE, the key to differentiated teaching methods is flexible use by teachers of a wide range of learning methods, methods of presentation, learning activities and lesson organization.

2.6 DIFFERENTIATING ASSESSMENT

Within a differentiated curriculum, assessment of learners and their learning is integral to the teaching and learning process. As with differentiated instruction, differentiated assessment is based on a belief that the needs of learners cannot be met in the same way (DoE, 2009). Archer, Roussouw, Lomofsky and Oliver (2004:99) state that the new mode of assessment and learning requires teachers to make these kinds of assessment and take them seriously so as to reflect on, interpret and evaluate judgments as part of understanding and facilitating learner growth and development.

To be broadly inclusive, assessment has to be continuous with teaching and learning. Teachers need to develop a conscious habit of reflecting on and interpreting everything that facilitates or obstructs learning for all in the classroom.

According to the DoE (2011:13), differentiating assessment involves rethinking the traditional practice of having all learners perform the same assessment tasks at the same time. In this new way of thinking teachers need an assessment approach and plan that is flexible enough to accommodate a range of learner needs. Differentiated assessment will enable learners of various abilities and with varied experience to best demonstrate what they know. As a teacher gets to know his or her learners, and as learner differences emerge, assessment needs to become more differentiated. The goal is to meet learners where they are and to help them progress to the next step in their learning. Thus, it is a cyclical process, and assessment and instruction support and inform each other.

2.6.1 Assessment Concessions

Curriculum 2005 Assessment Guidelines for Inclusion (2002) clearly outline the commitment of the education system towards the importance of alternative or adaptive methods of assessment in an attempt "minimize the impact of range of intrinsic and extrinsic barriers upon the assessment performance of the learner". (National Department of Education, 2002:09). Teachers need to become more cognisant of the nature and types of assessment concession that need to be considered in moving towards valid assessment of the abilities of children with severe disabilities. Of particular importance is the differentiation of different types of concessions, i.e. accommodations (including modifications and adaptations).

The Ministry is strongly committed to equality of opportunity and equity in its provision for all students and is supportive of all arrangements which will reduce barriers to learning and assessment, and therefore contribute to development of our children's full potential. Assessing the abilities of learners with barriers to learning is particularly difficult in the case of learners with severe physical difficulties or those who have little or functional speech. The use of different types of assessment concessions a basis for the development of more reliable assessment for those learners who are unable to participate in general assessment procedures.

The close link between teachers' understanding of the learners' ability and the teachers' skill in facilitating the development of new knowledge is at the heart of effective teaching. As teachers and parents become more aware of the barrier to assessing learners with a broad range of impairments, a more systematic reflection on the issue of assessment concession becomes important. (Alant & Casey, 2005:185-189).

2.7   TEACHERS' ATTITUDES

Since teachers are the ones who make learning possible, their own attitudes, beliefs and feelings with regard to what is happening in the school and in the classroom are of crucial importance. Teachers in South African schools are currently being expected to make major changes in the way they understand teaching and learning in the process of adapting to an entirely new curriculum (Lomofsky et al., 2004:70).

Baron and Byrne (in Maya, 2007:38) describe attitudes as "…internal representations of various aspects of the social or physical world representation containing affective reactions to the attitude project and wide range of cognitions about it (thought, belief, judgments)". The DoE (2002:136) indicates that in the past learners used to be labelled as 'slow learners' or 'learners with special educational needs'. They were excluded or placed in a particular learning environment, not because they belonged there but due to the requirements and standards set by the system of the ruling government. International research suggests that teachers with little experience of people with impairments are likely to have negative attitudes to inclusion (Coates & Mittler, in Lomofsky et al., 2004:71). To support the inclusion of learners with impairments, teachers have to be sensitive not only to their particular needs but also to their own attitudes and feelings.

Lomofsky et al. (2004:71) add that teachers need to be part of managing the change process rather than simply the recipients of new instructions. For Naicker (2008:28), teachers' attitudes towards learners with impairments determine their preparedness to embrace inclusive education. Teachers with negative attitudes towards inclusive education must be prepared to change and develop positive attitudes (Mowes, in Naicker, 2008:22). Teachers must be prepared to be role models in their attitudes

towards learners with impairments. Wade (2000:48) maintains that attitudes are affected by information. Teachers who are well informed about impairments will be more prepared and empowered to implement inclusive education. When teachers and learners increase their knowledge about 'learners with impairments' their attitudes improved. According to Talmor (2011:04), the primary condition for successful inclusion of learners with impairments in the classroom is change from negative to positive attitudes of mainstream teachers towards learners with impairments and their inclusion in the mainstream classroom. Another necessary condition for the successful implementation of inclusion is continuous support and assistance to teachers by others.

It is necessary to determine what factors influence teachers of inclusive education in South Africa. It is believed that by addressing reasons for negative attitudes among teachers and by supplying well-planned training that considers the constructs, and necessary support needs, positive attitudes to inclusive education could be established.

2.8   TEACHERS IN AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

Although the legislation represents a major step forward in the transformation and democratization of the South African education system, it is often asked whether teachers in the class are prepared and ready for inclusive education (Hay, Smit & Paulsen, and 2001:213). According to Forlin (in Rouse, 2007:11), teachers are crucial to determining what happens in classrooms, and he further states that, there are those who would argue that the development of more inclusive classrooms requires teachers to cater for different learning needs through modification or differentiation of the curriculum.

Teachers have an important responsibility for making sure that all learners from whatever background feel included and affirmed in the classroom. They should monitor their own beliefs, attitudes and behaviours when responding to learners. According to the DoE (2011:04) some of the ways in which teachers can do this are recognizing any biases or stereotypes they may have absorbed, treating each learner as an individual, and respecting each learner for who he or she is. They should avoid use of language that is biased and undermines any group of learners, refrain from

remarks that make assumptions about learner experiences, consider the unique needs of learners when designing learning programmes and lessons, and re-evaluate methods for teaching and assessing learners in a diverse setting. Teachers should consider different approaches, methodologies and strategies when teaching in the classroom, and create opportunities for all learners to participate.

Teachers are faced with serious challenges when teaching learners with diverse needs. They have to change their teaching strategies and create an environment that is conducive for all learners in the classroom. Learners diversity is inevitable in any classroom and teachers can expect variations in the pace and style of learning. Amongst the inclusive educational needs, for a variety of reasons, either intrinsic or extrinsic, have to be accommodated (Lomofsky et al., 2004:72).

Engelbrecht, Swart and Eloff (in Maya, 2007:21) warn that even though inclusive education has become a prominent item on the international educational agenda and has provided a framework for recognizing diversity and providing quality education for all learners within an inclusive education system it has also fallen prey to much criticism. Teachers are under stress because they are not acquainted with principles and management of inclusion.

From the above discussion, one may conclude that teachers lack competency in managing their inclusive classrooms is a serious problem as it makes them feel stressed and less confident. Van Zyl (in Maya, 2007:17) argues that it is not practically possible to overcome barriers to learning, but there may be a way of assisting all learners to benefit from inclusive classrooms, notably by empowering teachers in the following basic skills so that they may become competent inclusive teachers.

2.9   TEACHERS' NEEDS

According to Hay (in Naicker 2008:26), fulfilling teachers' needs has a direct impact on their preparedness to implement inclusive education effectively. Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001:18) maintains that they will be a primary resource for achieving

the goal of an inclusive education and training system. Continuing assessment of teachers' needs will make a critical contribution to inclusion.

2.9.1 Need for knowledge

According to Nell (in Naicker 2008:27), knowledge involves teachers being adequately prepared to assess impairments, to adapt curriculum content to the needs of the learners in the classroom, and to utilize special orthodidactic devices and instructional aids, as well as medical and paramedical assistive devices required by some of the LSEN. Also important is the use of appropriate teaching strategies based on the learners' total level of functioning. According to Levitz (in Naicker 2008:27), the aims of teacher education courses are to teach effectively in order to facilitate learning. Universities and training colleges need to present courses for diplomas in inclusive education.

There is a need to upgrade inadequately trained teachers, with in-service training preferably provided through distance education. Lewis and Doorlag (in Naicker 2008:28) point out that limited knowledge and experience can lead to the development of prejudice, non-accepting attitudes and a natural discrimination against learners who are different. Knowledge of learners with impairments does not necessarily have to be obtained from formal training, as knowledge can be gained in many ways. For instance, teachers can read, view films and video tapes and television programmers about learners with impairments. Also, simulations of handicapping conditions can be used to increase understanding. As more is learned about learners with impairments they appear less different, more familiar and more acceptable.

According to Landsberg et al (2006:66) teachers should be dynamic, competent and innovative in their teaching methods to accommodate the different learning styles of learners. Some of the knowledge that teachers need are the following:

Knowledge of learners who experience barriers to learning

i. Learning causes and characteristics of learners who experience barriers to learning.
ii. Know legislation regarding barriers to learning
iii. Foster social acceptance of learners who experience barriers to learning.
iv. Use assistive technology to enhance learning.

Knowledge and skills in curriculum

i.   Develop and modify teaching strategies for learners who experience barriers to learning

ii. Use a variety of teaching styles and assistive devices to teach learners who experience barriers to learning.

iii. Modify assessment strategies for learners who experience barriers to learning.

iv. Develop an individual learning support programme.

According to Landsberg et al. (2006:20), the ability to transfer knowledge into everyday classroom practice requires planned application and 'on the job' support, with time be set aside for teachers to work in teams and support one another.

2.9.2   Skills and competencies (training)

All teachers can teach all learners. Although some need additional support, there is no pedagogy needed for this, however, all educators will need new skills in curriculum differentiation, curriculum assessment, assessment of potential, collaborative teaching and learning, collaborative planning and sharing, reflection on practices and co-operation (DoE, 2005:30). Training does not always have to happen in formal workshops or through textbooks, as every teaching situation can also be used in training purposes to share ideas to support one another.

Van Zyl (in Maya, 2007:17-18) found that it is not practically possible to make specialists of all educators on all the diverse needs in overcoming barriers to learning, but there may be a way of assisting all learners to benefit from inclusive classes, that is by empowering competent inclusive teachers. This would require orientation on inclusive education and a paradigm shift from the medical model to a human rights model; training on learner-centred education and inclusive education management for principals, deputy principals and head of department; and training on how to develop school-based support services for special educational needs.

Other training would be given on methods and models of inclusive practice; collaborative teaching; management of differentiation in the classroom; how to adapt the curriculum to the individual learners' needs; flexible evaluation based on the learner's pace; being a resource rather than the sole source of knowledge in the

classroom; involving parents in learning activities; and creating a positive learning climate in the classroom by having high expectations from all learners, positive teacher attitudes, rewards and incentives, order and discipline, frequent and appropriate assessment of work and giving feedback on learners' work.

According to Dowing (in Naicker, 2008:28), the skills required for inclusive education involve being able to identify and assess impairments, adapting the curriculum content and teaching methods to assist learners with impairments and working in collaboration with colleagues, parents and broader community. Landsberg, Kruger and Nel (2006:58) regard it as essential for teachers to identify learners who are contending with such barriers as soon as possible, even before they reach school age. Many school teachers and schools actually follow a policy of routine screening in grades R and grade 1.

Scruggs and Mastropieri (in Landsberg *et al.,* 2006:61) note that teachers are of the opinion that successful inclusion requires teachers having more time to plan their teaching activities to include a diversity of learners. They need systematic and intensive training, either as part of their initial training or as well planned in-service training by competent and experienced people. Teachers need additional teacher assistants who can support them in teaching a diversity of learners as well as support from specialized people or advice and guidance, with adequate learning support materials and assistive devices appropriate for the needs of learners with impairments. Teachers agree that their class size should be reduced to a maximum of 20 learners to accommodate those with impairments.

For Landsberg (2006:20), for teachers to teach in an inclusive school and collaborate they should use pre-service and in-service experiences to acquire a common vision, conceptual framework and language, and a set of instructional and technical skills to work with the needs of diverse learners. Professional development must prepare teachers for collaboration and support, and assist them in understanding their relative roles and responsibilities in the inclusion effort.

2.9.3 Emotional needs

According to Lomofsky, Robert and Mvambi (2004:07), teachers have individual attitudes to differences and disability, formed in a context of prevailing social

attitudes. However, to support the inclusion of learners with impairments they have to be sensitive not only to the particular needs of individual learners but also to their own attitudes. For Hargreaves, Liberman, Fullan and Hopkins (in Naicker 2008:31), they should be emotionally prepared for inclusive education, but often their beliefs, attitudes and perceptions are ignored by policymakers, who tend to focus on knowledge, skills and practical support without giving much recognition to the emotional needs of teachers. The consequences can be disastrous because emotions enter into all aspects of life. Fostering resentment will undermine and overwhelm rationally made decisions, teamwork will be poised by members with unresolved grudges and grievances, and curriculum planning will become stilted when teachers have to plan things about which they do not care (Swart *et al.,* 2002:178).

Hall and Engelbrecht (in Naicker 2008:31) stressed that most of the barriers to implementing inclusive education are embedded in emotional predisposition of teachers. These include opportunities for teachers both in mainstream and special schools to deal with feelings of anxiety, ignorance, confusion, scepticism, concern for personal loss of autonomy, security and job satisfaction as well as feeling of discomfort and fear of failure. They acknowledge different skills and experience of each teacher, and participation in the process of transformation through a shared vision and mission.

2.9.4   Support needs

Landsberg et al. (2006:19) acknowledges that support is a cornerstone of successful inclusive education, as inclusive schools and classrooms focus on how to operate as supportive and caring communities in which a sense of community prevails, with everyone in the school belonging and being accepted, supporting and being supported. No teacher, parent, education support personnel, learner or volunteer should have to handle significant challenges alone, thus collaboration is an important strategy of support for inclusive education

According to White Paper 6 (DoE 2001:17), inclusion is about supporting all learners, teachers and the system as a whole so that the full range of learning needs can be met. Teachers require support to cope with the challenges associated with inclusive education, as resistance to including learners with impairments may emanate from

fear of not being adequately prepared to teach LSEN (Goddard, in Naicker, 2008:32). For successful execution and provision of support to mainstream school, cooperation is an indispensable component. Referring to this, Tomlison, Brimijoin and Narvaez (in Nel et al., 2011:39) point out that parents must play a more central role in the school since teachers have to coordinate the parents of learners with barriers to learning in particular, so assisting their children to learn. Principals and teachers cannot be expected to address the problem on their own, but with the help of parents and the community the problems can be effectively addressed.

Many teachers feel the pressure of being unfairly treated by the government because they have no knowledge or skills of teaching and managing an inclusive classroom. Engelbrecht et al. (2003:40) found that teachers were more willing to work together to share ideas on how successfully to unfold learners' potential. However, Gordon (2003:13) recommends the development of collaborative relationships among teachers so as to solve problems informally.

According to Fullan (in Naicker 2008:32), teachers can be effectively prepared for inclusive education if they are prepared to commit themselves to inclusion process. Hay (2003:136) points out that inclusive education will function at its best if all parties from mainstream and special schools are strongly involved in the process. Teachers could then be encouraged to develop a shared commitment and vision for future development towards inclusive education and will be more committed to achieving that goal (Dowing, 2002:25).

2.9.4.1 Institutional Level Support Team

According to the DoE (2011:09), an institutional-level support team (ILST) is "a support structure at the school level that focuses on identification, assessment and support of areas needing development and support within the institution." This function is aligned to the whole school development plan. Nel et al. (2011:41) state that as part of the DoE's plan for gaining support to function effectively within inclusive education, ILSTs are being introduced in mainstream schools. As part of their task they are requested to help find solutions and approaches to problems, develop multilevel teaching in the classroom, provide training and support of teachers and develop a policy regarding the diversity of the school community. The DoE

(2009:11) underscores this in its statement that there should be an internal support team within the institution itself, and that this team should be responsible for liaising with a district-based support team (DBST) as well as other support systems at the school.

This ILST is required to study reports submitted by teachers regarding barriers identified in learners, follow them up by helping to develop a programme for teachers and parents, and, when necessary, implement support in the classroom. All support that is provided must be noted down in a formal report by the team for further follow-up action. Foreman (in Naicker 2008:33) regard it as imperative that the ILST become an integral part of the education system. The team's focus should be on prevention, rehabilitation, social integration and equalization of opportunities. The ILST is not there to remove the "problem" learner from the classroom but to act as a support system that empowers and prepares the teacher to succeed within the bounds of the classroom. The purpose of this team is to support teachers who are experiencing problems and are not adequately prepared to cope with LSEN in the mainstream classroom.

Key functions that relate to this include (DoE 2011:10) various forms of the classroom-based support that engages with all additional support needs of learners to promote access, retention and achievements within the framework of the screening, identification, assessments and support (SIAS) strategy, for example to support programmes for learners with impairments, implement assessment concession policy, support programmes to address psycho-social, health and behaviour, integrated school health programmes, develop a nutrition programme, accelerate programmes for learners with high potential, encourage sport and youth affairs, and run peer educator programmes.

2.9.4.2 District-Based Support Team

Naicker et al. (2008:34) state that support from district level can enhance a teacher's preparedness for inclusive education. According to Landsberg et al. (2006:63), this team's role is "to provide a coordinated professional support service that draws on expertise in further and higher education and local communities, targeting special schools and specialized settings, designated full-service and other primary school and educational institutions" (DoE, 2001:08). The DoE wishes to expand the effectiveness of support even further, and is instituting DBSTs to evaluate other programmers to diagnose their effectiveness and suggest improvements. Members will also be trained to provide support for all teachers who are working in mainstream classrooms and who face learners with barriers to learning (Nel et al., 2011:41). According to the draft guideline for the implementations of inclusive education, known as 'draft guidelines' (DoE, 2002:100) the core education support service providers at district level include support personnel, curriculum specialists, management specialists, administrative experts, specialists and support personnel, other government professionals and community role-players.

Naicker (2008:08) points out that the main focus of the DBST would be to ensure preparedness of teachers with a particular focus on curriculum and institutional development, and to ensure that the teaching and learning framework and environment is responsive to the full range of learning needs.

Forms of support can include training and support for teachers to respond to LSEN, curriculum development to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum responsive to different needs, and provision of teaching and learning materials and equipment to facilitate learning for all learners. Continuing support includes staff development for teachers and organizational development support for schools, for example policy formulation and implementation (DoE 2002:89):

2.9.4.3 The role of the special schools as resource centres

Nel et al. (2011:41) states that the role of special schools will be to provide better services to learners experiencing barriers to learning, when integrated into district support teams to enable them to give specialized help, especially when addressing cases relatively to curriculum assessment for mainstream schools in the district of the

resource centre (DoE, 2007). According to Bothma, Gravelt and Swart (in Naicker 2008:36), services of existing structures through collaboration and teamwork must be addressed. Collaboration between mainstream and special school teachers can play a significant role in providing quality inclusive education in South Africa. Special school teachers are encouraged to share the knowledge with mainstream counterparts who may otherwise not have excess to this knowledge. Despite existing individual skills and knowledge of both mainstream and special teachers and personnel, they do not have the necessary collaborative skill to share their expertise effectively. The historic division hampers effective collaboration.

According to the draft guidelines (DoE, 2002:25-33), the functions of special schools as resource centres are as follows (Landsberg, 2006:65):

- The special school as a resource centre should function as an integral and coordinated part of the DBST. Learning support teachers should regard special schools as resource centres to provide support to teachers on dealing with barriers to learning and provide support to particular learners if necessary.

- The special school as a resource centre should provide specialized professional support in curriculum, assessment and instruction to neighbouring schools. This includes training barriers to learning, management of inclusive classrooms development of learning support material, guidance to parents, early childhood intervention and development of life skill programmers to make learners who experience barriers to learning less vulnerable to abuse.

- The special school as a resource centre should coordinate support from the community, such as health and welfare, disabled people's organizations, and the business sector. The special schools as a resource centre should also make its human and physical resources available to community, for example, ABET programmes for people with impairments could be offered at a special school as well as outreach programmes for early childhood intervention.

Nel et al. (2011:4) point out that as part of the purpose of resource centres the DoE expects formal support to be in place, and those services such as those of psychologists and therapists will be made available on the premises. It will be the duty of the DBST to control the integration between the special schools or resource

centre and the community-based support system by involving the mainstream schools in the vicinity of the specific resource centre and other support systems that are already functioning in the vicinity. The DoE considers making a success of training as cardinal importance and it would like to make use of the trained staff at the special schools or resource centres to train teachers at the mainstream schools (DoE, 2006).

2.10   TEACHER PREPAREDNESS TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

According to Hay (2001:213), a limited number of studies on the attitudes of teachers toward inclusive education have been carried out in South Africa, but none have focused on the actual preparedness of teachers or on respondents from all districts of a South African province. Teachers have worked in relative isolation within their own classrooms and have been primarily responsible for being the instructional leader and manager in the classroom (Engelbrecht et al., 2006:05).

Research studies also reveal that in developing countries such as South Africa the process of creating inclusive system is more difficult. Factors such as lack of available funding, administrative and policy level support, overcrowded classrooms and trained personnel pose challenges that can slow down the progress.

Several mainstream teachers view the philosophy of inclusive education as an exciting challenge, the stresses associated with its introduction being seen as life-sustaining, enjoyable and beneficial. On the other hand, it has been noted that the experience of being an inclusive teacher is sufficiently challenging to cause teachers physiological and psychological stress (Suban, 2005:02). Other studies reveal that preparing teachers at the pre-service level to teach in inclusive settings is essential if schools are to teach all learners in truly inclusive, collaborative and diverse settings. To accomplish that they must begin designing and building an atmosphere of collaboration and inclusivity at the pre-service level, as well as develop practices that demonstrate to prospective teachers the possibilities and promise of an inclusive world (Whitworth, 1999:08).

2.10.1 International trends in Inclusive Education

Every educational system in the world needs to improve and work towards the best results.

Inclusion began in the United States and Europe as a special education initiative on behalf of students with disabilities as early as the 1980's. Now more than two decades later schools in these countries are changing as teachers, parents, politicians and communities try to prepare for the new challenges and promises of the twenty first century. The new educational conversation centres on how to design schools and student learning for a future that many teachers find nearly impossible to even imagine.(European Journal:2008, vol 23 issue 2).

The preparation of teachers for regular schools has clearly needed to undergo quite significant change in recent years. One major adjustment has been necessity to prepare teachers for progressively more diverse student populations as they will increasingly be required to teach in inclusive classrooms.

According to Forlin (in Subban, 2013:27) an Australian state, Victoria, is viewed as a strong and active advocate for inclusive education. Significant developments in inclusive education in Australia have included: The Ministerial Report of Educational Services for the Disabled (1984). The Cullan-Brown Report (1993) and more recently, the Blueprint for Government schools in Victoria (2003). All these policy documents have emphasized the need to include students with disabilities into regular schools program. It is largely because of these government initiatives that there are now more than 12 000 students with disabilities attending regular schools compared to less than 6 000 who attend special schools.

Peters (2004: 10) states that in Canada, all learners are accommodated in the mainstream schools with specialized support. The study by Porter (in Mahlo 2011:35) reveals that Canadian resource teachers are responsible for providing direct and effective support for the classroom teachers. She further quoted Thomas (2004:34) and highlighted that in India, the rapid increase in special schools has undermined the development of IE, whereas in United Kingdom there is still little or no commitment among teachers to it, though a good deal of practice in the classroom. Mexico has a lot of educational challenges combined with socially and economically complicated

contexts. It has signed every international statement about inclusion, and has promoted deep transformation.

Rieser (2013) commented that the universal primary education is a global goal. Providing education as a right is an obligation of all government and requires that they translate their national commitments into legislation. Rieser further stressed that this goal will only be achieved when universal right of education extends to individuals with special needs in the country. As defined by the Education Act 2012 and the Education development plan (2012-2017), the long term vision of the government of the Republic of South Sudan for the education sector is to build uneducated and informed nation. The mission is to introduce a series of reforms to improve quality access to, and funding for, and human capacity in the general education sub-sector and, in so doing, promote general education for all citizens of the Republic of South Sudan.

2.10.2 Developing Countries

Developing countries face many obstacles in the process of implementing inclusive education (IE).

Inclusive education in Bangladesh is far from being successful because inclusion is still the exception rather than the norm in the country (CISD, 2005). This is acknowledged also in government documents. "Providing education for children with special needs in Bangladesh is still in an early stage of development, (PEDPII, 2008: 16). Similar to Bangladesh, Tanzania has a relatively developed legislation on IE but national level coordination is lacking. Currently children with disabilities in Tanzania receive education mainly through integration in mainstream classes.

Papua New Guinea (PNG) endorsed its inclusive education policy entitled "National Special Education Policy, Plans and Guidelines (NSEPPG) IN 1993. It is one of the essential documents that PNG formulated in connection to international trends such as the 1990 World Declaration on Education for All and the 1994 Salamanca Statement that advocate that regular schools should accommodate all children regardless of their conditions Smith-Davis (in Torombe, 2013:i). However, PNG is a developing country and viewed by the outside world as somewhat inexperienced in adapting new ideas to make education accessible to all children. As a result it has received

considerable support from international organisations and interest groups to support the inclusion of disabled children in education in particular. Although there is an inclusive education policy to support education for disabled children, the area of inclusive education is still underdeveloped in research and rigorous investigation in this specific area has yet to be comprehensively undertaken, Mapsea, 2006, Rombo, 2007 (in Torombe 2013:18).

2.11   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A theoretical framework positions the research in the discipline or subject in which the researcher is working (Mahlo, 2011:20), enabling him or her to theorize about the research and make explicit the assumptions of the researcher about the interconnections of the way things are related in the world. The preferred theoretical framework is Bronfenbrenners' theory of ecological systems. In terms of this framework, a school is considered to be a system which is influenced by other societal systems.

Bronfenbrenner's theory is an example of a multi-dimensional model of human development which suggests that there are layers or levels of interacting systems resulting in change, growth and development, namely physical, biological, psychological, social and cultural. What happens in one system affects and is affected by other systems (Landsberg et al., 2005:10). As Mahlo, (2011:21) argues, human behaviour, experiences and actions cannot be understood if the contexts in which they occur are not often considered. However, this theory is relevant to the study because it emphasizes the interaction between an individual's development and the systems within the general social context.

Bronfenbrenner (1917-2005) developed a framework to map the many interacting social contexts that affect development, termed a bio-ecological model of development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). The 'bio' aspect of the model recognizes that people bring their biological selves to the development process, whilst the 'ecological' part recognizes that the social contexts in which we develop are ecosystems because they are in constant interaction with each other. Bronfenbrenner suggested that every person lives, learns and develops within a set of nested systems,

from immediate family to neighbourhoods and schools, to the community and society. The influences in all social systems are reciprocal (Woolfolk, 2010:19).

According to Landsberg (in Mahlo, 2011:21), Bronfenbrenner's ecological model explains the direct and indirect influences on a child's life by referring to the many levels of environment or contexts that influence a person's development. A major challenge to the present education system lies in understanding the complexity of the influences, interactions and interrelationships between the individual learner and multiple other connected systems. The learner does not exist in isolation from surrounding systems but rather helps determine success in his or her academic career, whether the system of education, teachers, the school or the curriculum. If all the systems work well together all learners in schools, even those who are experiencing barriers, should benefit (Mahlo, 2011:21).

Ecological theory is based on the interdependence and relationships between organisms and their physical environment. In addition, systems characteristically have sub-systems within them which interact with the entire system. The system itself also interacts with other parallel or wider systems outside it (David et al., 2002:47). For Mahlo (2011:21) an individual is seen as a part of sub-systems of society, which are also interrelated. There are challenges at all levels which impact on the preparedness of mainstream teachers in implementing inclusive education; therefore learners are affected in the process. The researcher considers teacher preparation to be an important aspect in ensuring that implementation of inclusive education is receiving priority in mainstream schooling.

Although most classroom teachers lack the necessary skills to accommodate learners with barriers to learning, Bronfenbrenner identifies five structures or environmental systems in which human beings develop, namely: macro, exo, meso, micro and chrono. Below is a brief description of each.

2.11.1 Micro-systems

According to Landsberg et al. (2005:10), a micro-system is the immediate environment in which proximal processes are played out. It is characterized by those individuals and events closest to one's life, and involves continual face-to-face contact with each person reciprocally influencing the other. In this study, the school,

ILST, DBST, SSRC and stakeholders with interest in education constitute the most immediate structure which should ensure that teachers are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skill for the best implementation of inclusive education. At this level, teachers were not coping with learners who are experiencing barriers to learning, so the ILSTs were established in schools. They are immediate structures which support teachers in screening, identifying, assessing and support of learners with barriers to learning and thus help in accommodation of all learners in the mainstream classrooms.

2.11.2 Meso-systems

A meso-system is a set of micro-systems associated with one another (Donald et al., 2002:52). It influences the relationship between the school, colleagues, ILSTs, districts and special schools. One may encounter differences even within the same province because of the differences in needs of the environments which different districts offices serve (Sethosa, in Mahlo, 2011:23). The way the ILST functions in one province differs according to the context in which it is based. Landsberg (2006:11) further states that implementing inclusive education is not possible without paying attention to developing relationship between the different micro-systems.

2.11.3 Exo-systems

Exo-systems are defined by Swart et al. (in Mahlo 2011:22) as comprising one or more environments in which an individual is not necessary directly involved as an active participant, but may influence or be influenced by what happens in the settings. Landsberg et al. (2002:11) identified challenges in this system that may hinder the preparedness of teachers to implement inclusive education. Challenges include the education system, health services, the media, family issues, financial matters, incentives and community organizations that are not readily available and that may delay the service delivery to provinces. For the best implementation of inclusive education it is clear that teachers should be equipped with adequate knowledge and skills of diverse needs of learners.

For the purpose of this study, the exo-system may refer to a system other than the one in which teachers are directly involved, for example, the ILST that is not functional because of problems in the schools. If the district and province are not providing

adequate skills to teachers this will in turn the implementation of inclusive education in mainstream schools and thus learners who are supposed to benefit from it.

2.11.4 Macro-systems

The macro-systems, according to Donald et al. (2002:53), involve dominant social structures, as well as beliefs and values that influence and may be influenced by all other levels of system. Mahlo (2011:22) states that in the South African contexts the macro-systems can refer to the level at which policy decisions about education are made, viz, the DoE. The education system has many policies in place, however, they are not being implemented and there are no strategies that are being followed to ensure successful implementation of inclusive education in mainstream classes.

2.11.5 Chrono-systems

The chrono-systems refer to the development timeframes which cross through the interactions between these systems and their influences on individual development (Landsberg et al., 2006:12). In this research, a school or any of the systems in which a teacher is involved may be seen in a process of preparedness, in turn interacting with teachers' progressive stages of preparedness to implement inclusive education in mainstream classrooms. Teachers' own perceptions of their contexts are central to understanding how they engage with them.

To ensure that every system is interacting with one another to prepare mainstream teachers to implement inclusive education, the DoE engages at macro level, where policies are formulated, the provinces at exo-system, where policies are being implemented according to the needs of the province, then at meso-level, where the districts are found. Finally, the school, where teachers are to implement inclusive education in the classroom, should interact so that a complete whole will be established. There should be monitoring and evaluation, feedback and reporting strategies from the lowest level of the system to the highest, to determine the development timeframe at chrono-system level, crossing through the interactions between these systems and their influences on teacher preparedness.

2.12   SUMMARY

Inclusive education constitutes a challenge to the education system as a whole and in particular to teachers in mainstream classrooms. Teachers are expected to have knowledge and skills to accommodate a range of diversity among learners, which means being able to use judgment to select appropriate teaching strategies from their professional repertoire. To expect the teacher to manage all these challenges and changes on their own would be unrealistic, so support is required both in and outside the classroom.

Teachers thus need to undergo a paradigm shift that would prepare them to change their beliefs, practices and expectations and be prepared to align themselves to deal with inclusive education positively. They must be prepared to have positive attitude, be flexible and open to new ideas and be creative and innovative in their approaches to teaching and learning. They must also be emotionally prepared since most of the barriers to implementing inclusive education are embedded in their emotional predisposition. They must be prepared to understand, differentiate and implement the curriculum appropriate for inclusive education. Teachers must be empowered with necessary knowledge, skills and competencies, whilst support structures must be in place in order for them to implement inclusive education effectively and successfully. Teachers can be empowered through the assistance of an ILST, DBST and special schools as resource centres. These support structures will contribute to their preparedness for implementing inclusive education.

The next chapter will outline the research design and research methodology.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology. Research design, according to Leedy and Ormrod (2001:91), is the complete strategy of attack on the central research problem. It also provides the overall structure for the procedures that the researcher follows, the data that the researcher collects and the data analysis that the researcher conducts. It also indicates how the research is set up, explaining the methods that will be used to collect data and the procedure in general for conducting the study.

Research methods …''are the ways one collects and analyses data'' (McMillan & Schumacher, in Naicker, 2004). If methods refer to techniques and procedures used in the process of data gathering then the aim of methodology according to Kaplan (in Cohen & Manion,1994:39), is to describe and analyse the methods, throwing light on their limitations and resources, clarifying the presuppositions and consequences relating their potentialities to the twilight zone at the frontiers of knowledge. It may venture generalizations about the success of particular techniques, suggesting new formulations. He further suggested that the aim of methodology is to help us understand, in the broadest possible terms, not the products of scientific enquiry but the process itself. In this chapter the quantitative research design, sampling and data collection strategies that will be used in this research will be discussed.

3.2   RESEARCH DESIGN

The researcher employed a descriptive quantitative research design to investigate preparedness of the mainstream primary school teachers in implementing inclusive education policy. Quantitative inquiry, according to Leedy and Ormrod (2001:191), involves either identifying the characteristics of an observed phenomenon or exploring possible correlations among two or more phenomena. In every case, it examines a situation as it is, without changing or modifying the situation under

investigation. Nor is it intended to detect cause and effect relationships. Borg and Gall (1989:324) define research design as a process of creating an empirical test to support or refute a knowledge claim. A research design is a specification of operations for the testing of a hypothesis under a given set of conditions (Tuckman, 1978:13). Borg and Gall (1989:13) further explain research design as all the procedures selected by a researcher for studying a particular set of questions or hypothesis.

For the purpose of this study a quantitatitive research design was undertaken to explore teachers' preparedness in implementing inclusive education policy. However, Trochim, (2006) states that with quantitative research design (descriptive statistics) the researcher can use univariate analysis because it involves the examination across cases of one variable at a time. There are three major characteristics of a single variable that we tend to look at:

- The distribution

- The central tendency and

- The dispersion

The distribution is a summary of frequency of individual values or ranges of values of a variable. The simplest distribution would list every value of variable and the number of persons who had each value. The frequency distribution will be used to analyse data in this study.

3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Denzin and Lincoln (in Mahlo, 2011:79) define paradigm as a set of basic beliefs (or metaphysics) that deal with ultimate first principles, and represent the world view that defines for its holder the nature of the "world" , the individual's place in it and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts. A paradigm encompasses three elements , the first one is ontology, it raise questions of social reality external to the individual or is it the product of individual consciousness, the second is epistemology which concerns the bases of knowledge , its nature and forms, how it can be acquired and how communicated to other human beings. The

third is the methodology; it focuses on how we gain knowledge (Burrel & Morgan, 1979).

3.3.1. Positivistic Model

This study is mainly conducted under the positivist model as it is used as the paradigm of human knowledge. Positivists believe that human characteristics and processes that constitute a form of reality in that they occur under a wide variety of conditions and thus can be generalized to some degree. Different variables related to complex process may be studied independently. Using positivism helped the researcher to determine teacher preparedness for the implementation of inclusive education policy. Their knowledge and its nature helped the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of their preparedness.

3.4 PREPARATION FOR THE RESEARCH

The following steps were followed in preparing the research.

3.4.1. Permission and procedure to conduct research

Permission to conduct research was obtained from the Research Directorate of the KwaZulu-Natal Education Department, from the district office and the principals of the participating schools in the Nongoma circuit. The researcher visited the schools and explained the aim of the study and nature of data collection. Questionnaires were hand-delivered to six primary schools from Msebe, Buxedeni and Mona wards. The principals and deputy principals helped with the distribution and the collection of the returned questionnaire. All teachers in two selected schools in each ward were part of the study.

3.4.2 Sampling procedure

A non-probability method was adopted, such that not every element of the population (schools) had an opportunity to be included in the sample (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:218). The study was mainly conducted at the Nongoma circuit, in the Zululand District, because the researcher was working in the area and it was financially

feasible. The research was conducted in the following three wards in Nongoma circuit: Msebe, Buxedeni and Mona. Two schools per ward were selected, with all teachers in each school being selected to participate. A total of 100 respondents were purposefully selected, from wards situated deep rural areas and from the list of primary schools in each ward.

The targeted schools were defined by the following biographical considerations:

- Type of school : Primary
- Geographical Area : Nongoma Circuit
- Population : Educators
- Age of respondents : 30-60 years
- Gender : Males and Females
- Teaching experience : Two years or more
- Qualifications : Nature of qualification
- Formal and Informal training : Nature of formal and informal training
- Workshops and Courses attended : Number of workshops or courses attended on inclusive education

3.5   THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The following methods were used to conduct the research.

3.5.1   The questionnaire as research instrument

Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (in Mpya, 2006:41) defined the questionnaire as "a prepared question form submitted to certain persons (respondents) with a view to obtaining information". An ideal questionnaire possesses the same properties as law: it is clear, unambiguous and uniformly workable. Its design must minimize potential errors from respondents and coders, and since people's participation in surveys is voluntary a questionnaire has to help in engaging their

interest, encouraging their cooperation, and eliciting answers as close as possible to the truth, Davidson (in Cohen & Manion,1994:93).

Questionnaires are a way of obtaining data about persons by asking them rather than watching them behave or by sampling a portion of their behaviour (Tuckman, 1978:197). According to Opie (in Mthembu, 2009:29), a questionnaire is the most widely used procedure for obtaining information. It is relatively economical, respondents in distant locations can be reached, the questions are standardized, anonymity can be assured, and questions can be written for specific purpose. The researcher used the questionnaire as a research instrument because it is the tool that is supported by many authors as effective in collecting data, and is given to many people simultaneously, that is to say that a large population can be reached easily (Mdikana, 2007).

Therefore, it is of utmost importance that questionnaire design does not take place in a vacuum. Dane (in Naicker, 2008:42) states that the length of individual questions, the number of response options, as well as the format and wording of questions are determined by the following:

- Choice of the subject to be reached
- Aim of the research
- Size of the research sample
- Method of data collection
- Analysis of data

To determine whether the questionnaire is well designed, it is thus necessary to draw a distinction between question format, question order, type of questions and validity and reliability of questions.

3.5.2   Constructing a questionnaire

Leedy and Ormrod (2001:202) state that questionnaires appear simple yet can be difficult to construct and administer, with one false step leading to uninterruptable data or a low return rate. Questionnaire design is an activity that should not take place in isolation, so the researcher consulted and sought advice from colleagues and

specialists at all times during its construction (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, in Mpya 2007).

Questionnaires are used by researchers to convert into data the information directly given by a person (subject). By providing access to what is "inside a person's head" these approaches make it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person likes and dislikes (values and preferences), and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs). Questionnaires can also be used to discover what experiences have taken place (biography) and what is occurring at present. (Tuckman, 1078:197). Borg and Gall (1989:427) stressed that each item of the questionnaire must be developed to measure a specific aspect of one of the objectives or hypothesis. They further state that the researcher should be able to:

- Explain in detail why you are asking the question.
- How one will analyse the responses.
- Frame the questions in language that respondents will understand.

3.5.3 Characteristics of a good questionnaire

The researcher was guided by the characteristics of a good questionnaire listed by Leedy and Ormrod (2002:202) for developing a questionnaire that encourages people to be cooperative and yields responses one can use and interpret.

1. Keep it short – it should be as brief as possible and solicit only that information essential to research project.
2. Use simple, clear, unambiguous language –write questions that communicates exactly what you want to know.
3. Check for unwanted assumptions implicit in your questions.
4. Word your questions in ways that do not give clues about preferred or more desirable responses.
5. Check for consistency.
6. Determine in advance how you will code the responses.
7. Keep the respondents' task simple – make the instrument as simple to read and respond to as possible.
8. Provide clear instructions- communicate exactly how you want people to respond.

9. Give a rationale for any items whose purpose may be unclear.

10. Make the questionnaire attractive and professional looking.

11. Conduct a pilot test.

12. Scrutinize the almost final product carefully to make sure it addresses your needs.

3.5.4 Advantages and disadvantages of a questionnaire

Kidder and Judd (in Naicker 2008:45) point out that data can be gathered by means of structured questionnaire in, *inter alia,* the following ways:

A written questionnaire may be written and mailed, delivered or handed out personally. Each method has specific advantages and disadvantages which the researcher evaluates for its suitability to the research question and the specific target population being studied, as well as relative cost. The researcher used the written questionnaire as research instrument, taking into consideration certain advantages (Cohen & Manion, in Mthembu 2009:32).

3.5.4.1 Advantages of written questionnaire

One of the advantages of the questionnaire is that all respondents receive the same set of questions phrased in the same way. The questionnaire is time-saving and conducive to reliable results. Bless and Higson-Smith, Mahlanguand Cohen and Manion in (Mthembu 2009.32) list the advantages of the written questionnaire as follows:

- Affordability. It is the least expensive means of data gathering.

- It preludes possible interview bias.

- A respondent has sufficient time to consider answers before responding.

- Data provided by written questionnaires can be more easily analysed and interpreted than data obtained from verbal responses.

- Written questionnaires can be given to many people simultaneously; hence a large sample of a target population can be reached.

- A respondent can answer questions of a personal or embarrassing nature more willingly and frankly than in a situation with an interviewer who may be a complete stranger.

- Respondents can complete the questionnaire in their own time and in a more relaxed atmosphere.

- The administering of the questionnaires, and the coding, analysis and interpretation of data can be done without special training.

- The person administering an instrument (questionnaire) has an opportunity to establish rapport, to explain the purpose of the study and to explain the meaning of items that may not be clear.

- A questionnaire has unique advantages and, properly constructed and administered, it may serve as a most appropriate and useful data-gathering device in a research project.

- The availability of a number of respondents in one place makes possible an economy of time and expense and provides a high proportion of usable responses (Best, 1981:167).

3.5.4.2 Disadvantages of a written questionnaire

The researcher was also aware that the written questionnaire has important disadvantages. According to Van den Aardweg and Van Aardweg and Kidder and Judd (in Naicker, 2008:47); the disadvantages of the questionnaire are *inter alia* the following:

- Questionnaires do not provide the flexibility of interviews. In an interview an idea or comment can be explored. This makes it possible to gauge how people are interpreting the question. If questions asked are interpreted differently by the respondents the validity of the information obtained is jeopardized.
- People are generally better able to express their views verbally than in writing.
- Questions can be answered only when they are sufficiently easy and straightforward to be understood with the given instructions and definitions.

- The mail questionnaire does not make provision for obtaining the views of more than one person at a time. It requires uninfluenced views of one person only.

- Answers to mail questionnaires must be seen as final. Re-checking of responses cannot be done. There is no chance of investigating beyond the given answer for a clarification of ambiguous answers. If respondents are unwilling to answer certain questions nothing can be done to it because the mail questionnaire is essentially flexible.

- In a mail questionnaire the respondent examines all the questions at the same time before answering them and answers to the different questions can therefore not be treated as "independent."

- The researcher is unable to control the context of questions answering and specifically, the presence of other people. Respondents may ask friends of family members to examine the questionnaire or comment on their answers, causing bias if the respondent's own private opinion is desired.

- Written questionnaires do not allow the researcher to correct misunderstandings or answer questions that the respondents may have. Respondents might answer incorrectly or not at all due to confusion or misinterpretation.

- Questionnaires are often shallow, that is, they fail to dig deeply enough to provide a true picture of opinion and feelings (Borg 1981:86-87).

- Questionnaire provides no immediate feedback. Filling out lengthy questionnaire takes a great deal of time and effort. A written questionnaire is thus a most criticized data-gathering device as it has been referred to as 'the lazy person's way of gaining information'.

3.6   VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Hysamen (1998:1-3) points out that there are two concepts that are of critical importance in understanding issues of measurement in social science, namely validity and reliability. The quality of the instrument used is very important, for conclusions researchers draw are based on the information they obtain using instruments. However, Wallen and Fraenkel (1990:126) note that validity refers to the

appropriateness, meaningfulness, and usefulness of the inferences a researcher makes. Best and Khan (in Mthembu 2009:34) refers to validity as the degree to which evidence and theory support interpretation of test scores entailed by proposed uses of test.

Reliability refers to the consistency of scores or answers from one administration of an instrument to another, and from one set of items to another. According to Van Dalen (1979:153), to obtain reliable data, therefore, questionnaires must be carefully structured. If they are to be used to measure variables in an investigation they must be pre-tested, refined and subjected to the same evaluative criteria of validity, reliability and objectively as tests, scales, and other measurement instruments.

3.6.1   Validity of the questionnaire

Wallen and Fraenkel (1990:128) state that there are three kinds of evidence which a researcher might collect:

1. **Content- related evidence of validity –** refers to the nature of the content included within the instrument and the specifications the researcher used to formulate the content. How appropriate is the content? How comprehensive? Does it logically get at the intended variable?
2. **Criterion – related evidence of validity –** refers to the relationship between scores obtained during using instrument or measures (often called a criterion). How strong is this relationship? How well such do scores estimate present or predict future performance of a certain age?
   Construct – related evidence of validity – refers to the nature of psychological construct or characteristics being measured by the instrument. How well does this construct explain differences in the behavior of individuals or their performance on certain tasks?

De Vos (in Naicker 2007:50) added that one really poses three questions when one asks how valid an instrument is:

- How well does this instrument measure what one wants it to measure? (Content validity)

- How well does this instrument compare with one or more external criteria purporting to measure the same thing? (Criterion validity).

- What does this instrument mean, what is it in fact measuring, and how and why does it operate the way it does? (Construct validity)

The validity of the questionnaire as research instrument reflects the sureness with which conclusions can be drawn. It refers to the extent to which interpretations of the instruments results other than the ones the researcher wishes to make, can be ruled out. Establishing validity requires that the researcher anticipated the potential arguments that sceptics might use to dismiss the research (Cooper & Dane, in Naicker 2007:50).

However, the researcher employed the questionnaire as a method to establish mainstream primary school teachers preparedness in the implementation of inclusive education. From the interpretation of the results obtained and the sureness with which conclusions could be drawn, the researcher was however convinced that the questionnaire to a great extent did measure that for which it was designed.

3.6.2   Reliability of the questionnaire

Silverman (in Mpya, 2006:63) defines reliability as "….the degree to which the finding is independent of accidental circumstances of the research''. In addition, Sethosa (in Mpya, 2006) regards it as "… the degree of consistency with which the instrument or procedure measure whatever it supposed to measure". According to Best and Khan (in Mthembu 2009:35), reliability is the extent to which a procedure produces similar results under constant condition on accessions.

The reliability or stability of a test is usually expressed as correlation coefficient. Best and Khan (in Mthembu 2009:35) state that there are a number of types of reliability:

- Stability overtime (test-retest)
- Stability over item samples (equivalent or parallel forms)
- Stability of items (internal consistency)
- Stability over scores (inter – scores)
- Stability over testers
- Standard error of measurement.

In essence, reliability refers to consistency, but consistency does not guarantee truthfulness. The reliability of the question is not proof that the answers given reflect the respondents' true feelings (Dane, in Naicker, 2008:51). When the questionnaire is used as an empirical research instrument there is no specific method, for example, the "test- retest" method, to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. Therefore, it was difficult to establish the extent to which answers of the respondents were reliable. The researcher, however, believes that the questionnaire in this investigation was completed with the honesty and sincerity required to render the maximum possible reliability (Naicker 2007:52).

3.7   **PILOT STUDY**

According to Mertens (in Mpya 2007:54), pilot testing is about trying out the research procedure with a sample similar to the intended group of participants. Dane (in Naicker 2007:52) also refers to a pilot study as an abbreviated version of a research project in which the researcher practices or tests the procedures to be used in the subsequent full-scale project. Best and Khan (in Mthembu 2009:35) suggest that the questionnaire should be tried on a few friends and acquaintance. They further state that it is also good idea to pilot test the instrument with a small group of persons similar to those who will be used in the study. A pilot study gives a researcher an idea of what effects (intended or not intended) it is likely to have, by generating many of the practical problems, by changing procedures, instructions and questions.

The number of participants in the pilot study or group is normally smaller than the number scheduled to take part in the final survey (Dane, in Naicker 2007:53). Participants in the pilot study and the sample for final study must be selected from the same target population. For the purpose of this study the researcher conducted a pilot study on 20 teachers, to determine whether the questionnaire would be understood by population to be surveyed. No quantitative analysis of data was carried out.

Some of the purposes of a pilot study are listed by Welman and Kruger (in Mthembu 2009:36). These are also the aims of the researcher in this study:

- To detect possible flaws in the measurement procedures

- To identify unclear or unambiguously formulated items.
- At the same time such a pilot study allows researchers or their assistants to notice non-verbal behaviour that possibly may signify discomfort or embarrassment about the content or wording of the questions.

Plug, Meyer, Louws and Gouws (in Naicker 2007:53) also list some of the purposes of the pilot study as:

- It provides the researcher with ideas, approaches and clues not foreseen prior to the pilot study.
- It greatly reduces the number of treatment errors because unforeseen problems revealed in the pilot study resulted in redesigning the main study.
- Questions and / or instruments that were misinterpreted were reformulated.
- It permits a thorough check of the planned statistical and analytical procedures, thus allowing and appraisal of their adequacy in treating the data.
- It saves the researcher major expenditures of time and money on aspects of the research, which would have been unnecessary.
- The approximate time required to complete the questionnaire was established.

3.8   ADMINISTRATION OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Mulder (in Naicker 2007:54) stressed that if properly administered, the questionnaire is the best available instrument for obtaining information from widespread sources or large groups simultaneously. The researcher personally delivered questionnaires to selected respondents (teachers) and collected them afterwards. This method of administration facilitates the process and response rate.

The questionnaire was designed to determine preparedness of the mainstream primary school teachers in implementing inclusive education.

Section required biographical information about all teachers. It included item A1 – A11.

Section B gathered information regarding previous experience in teaching in an inclusive classroom and was covered by items B1 – B2.

Section C gathered information regarding previous experience and training in teaching in an inclusive classroom and included items C1- C2.

Section D gathered information regarding the nature and frequency of support received in assisting learners with additional support needs. This information was covered by items D1- D2.

3.9   DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS

After collecting data it then had to be captured in a format that would permit analysis and interpretation. This involved the careful coding of 100 questionnaires completed by teachers in mainstream primary schools in Nongoma circuit. The coded data was subsequently transferred onto a computer spreadsheet using *Microsoft Excel*. A descriptive method of data analysis was employed. Frequency distribution method was used to organize data obtained from questionnaires, with percentages were derived to make sense of the data

According to Best and Khan (in Mthembu 2009:36), descriptive statistical analysis limits generalization to the particular group of individuals observed. No conclusions are extended beyond this group and any similarities to those outside the group cannot be assumed. The data describe one group and that group only.

Descriptive statistics serve to describe and summarize observations (Van Rensburg, Landman, & Bodenstein, in Naicker 2007:54). It transforms a set of numbers or observations into indices that describe or characterize the data. Descriptive statistics are thus used to summarize, organize and reduce large number of observations. Usually the reduction result in a few numbers, derived from mathematical formulae to represent all observations in each group of interest. The use of descriptive statistics is the most fundamental way to summarize data and it is indispensable in interpreting the result of quantitative research (McMillan & Schumacher, in Mthembu 2009:37).

According to Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (in Naicker 2007:54); frequency distribution is a method to organize data obtained from questionnaires to simply statistical analysis.

3.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The investigation was constrained by a number of factors that may have influenced the reliability and the validity of the questionnaire. Firstly, there was a possibility that some of the questions might not have been answered truthfully and frankly as the respondents could have felt threatened by possible identification, even though anonymity was assured. Secondly, although teachers were asked to complete the questionnaire confidentially, it is possible that one of the staff could have discussed it with others and so they arrived at a common response.

3.11 SUMMARY

The research methodology, which includes research design, which was applied in the empirical investigation, was discussed in this chapter. The questionnaire as a research instrument was also comprehensively described. The aim was to try and produce a well descriptive data that hopefully would explain the complexity and prepare teachers for inclusive education implementation.

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

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the data that was collected from the completed questionnaires will be analysed and discussed, findings interpreted and some comments presented. The data comprised biographical information, knowledge of concepts related to inclusive education, experience in teaching in an inclusive classroom, ways the teachers would like to learn more on teaching in an inclusive classroom, the nature and frequency of DBST support that teachers receive to assist learners with additional support needs, and the characteristics of an inclusive teacher. Teachers completed about 100 questionnaires.

In this study, homothetic descriptive research was employed with the aim of establishing preparedness of mainstream primary school teachers in the implementation of inclusive education in the classroom.

4.2 BIOGRAPHICAL AND BACKROUND INFORMATION

The following biographical features were noted.

4.2.1 Gender of the respondents

Table 4.1: Frequency distribution according to the gender of respondents.

Gender	Frequency	%
Male	39	39%
Female	61	61%
TOTAL	100	100%

According to Subban (2005:27), other studies that investigated teacher attitudes towards inclusion of children with impairments into regular settings found that female teachers are inclined to have more favourable attitudes and appeared to have higher expectations of learners with impairments than their male counterparts. She further explained that findings linking gender as a variable to investigate reactions to inclusive education are often linked to cultural factors, with some cultures ascribing the care of students with impairments to female teachers. Table 1 confirms this statement in showing that most of the respondents (61%) in this investigation were females.

Chetty (in Mthembu, 2009:36) states that statistical data of the DoE shows that 70% of the teaching staff in schools are females. Possible reasons for this finding are the following:

- The research sample involved mostly teachers from primary schools (cf.4.2.8).

- Most primary schools have female teachers (Reay & Dennison, in Naicker, 2008:58).

- A female teacher represents a motherly figure and is more acceptable to younger children in primary schools as in *loco parentis.*

- Research show that female teachers show more empathy with LSEN (Brodin, 1997:139)

4.2.2 Age of respondents

Table 4.2: Frequency distribution according to the age of the respondents.

Age group	Frequency	%
30-35	27	27%
36-40	32	32%
41-45	22	22%
46-50	09	09%
51-60	05	05%

Older than 60	05	05%
TOTAL	100	100%

According to Table 2, the majority (81%) of teachers were in the age group of 30-45 years. This may be because not many school leavers were pursuing a career in the teaching profession due to breakdown in the culture of teaching and learning. However, Subban (2005:27) argues that some studies record that older teachers appear to foster less positive attitudes than younger teachers. Younger teachers appear more accepting of inclusive trends than their more experienced counterparts. It would also seem that the most experienced teachers have the lowest level of acceptance.

4.2.3 Qualifications of respondents

Table 4.3: Frequency distribution according to the qualifications of the respondents.

Qualifications	Frequency	%
Academic qualifications	38	38%
Professional qualifications (degrees, diplomas and certificates)	62	62%
TOTAL	100	100%

Table 3 shows that the majority of teachers (62%) possess professional qualifications (degrees, diplomas and certificates) and the minority (38%) possesses academic qualification. This may be because they are in primary schools. The contents and curricula of teaching diplomas and certificates are more practical than theoretically oriented courses and are therefore more appropriate for teaching younger primary school children (Mthembu, 2009; Naicker, 2008).

4.2.4   Years of teaching experience

Table 4.4:   Frequency distribution according to the teachers' total number of teaching experience.

Total number of years' teaching experience	Frequency	%
0-2 years	06	06%
3-5 years	09	09%
6-10 years	12	12%
11-15 years	25	25%
16-20 years	15	15%
21-25 years	15	15%
26-30 years	14	14%
30 years +	04	04%
TOTAL	100	100%

Table 4 shows that a large number of teachers (69%) had 11 years or more teaching experience. It appears that most teachers in this investigation had adequate experience for the task of implementing educational change. Also, they needed the necessary skills to empower them to meet the challenges, demands and responsibilities imposed on them in an inclusive classroom. The more experience and training teachers have the more confidence, motivational skill and expertise they will have achieved over the years to become competent teachers. Woolfolk (2010:21) maintains that the more experienced teachers are the more they can move on to concerns about professional growth and effectiveness with a wide range of learners. According to Briton (in Mthembu, 2009:39), experience together with adequate training is needed for the responsibilities and the demands imposed on teachers.

4.2.5   Post level of respondents

Table 4.5:   Frequency distribution according to the post level of teachers

Post level	Frequency	%
Principal	11	11%
Deputy principal	05	05%
HOD	13	13%
Teacher level 1	71	71%
TOTAL	100	100%

Table 5 shows that 71% of the respondents are post level 1 teacher. This is consistence with the composition of teachers in most schools (DoE, 2002:2-8).

4.2.6   Type of post held by respondents

Table 4.6:   Frequency distribution according to the post held by teachers

Type of post	Frequency	%
Permanent	76	76%
Temporary	20	20%
Part Time	04	04%
TOTAL	100	100%

Table 6 reflects that the majority (76%) of the respondents were in permanent posts. Most of the participated schools were in rural areas. Being in a permanent post gives security to teachers and might improve commitment to learners with impairments. Chetty (in Naicker 2008:63) maintains that to be on the permanent staff has the following advantages:

- Permanent staff is entitled to housing subsidy, which enables them to buy a house or rent.

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- They can provide for their retirement, as they are contributors to the pension fund.

- They can join a medical aid benefit scheme to which the employer contributes a percentage of the monthly premium.

Generally, level one teacher comprised a little over 70% of the teaching personnel in schools (DoE, 2002:02).

4.2.7 Respondents's employers

Table 4.7:   Frequency distribution according to the employer of the teachers

Employer	Frequency	%
Department of Education	95	95%
Governing Body	05	05%
TOTAL	100	100%

Table 7 shows that 95% of teachers were employed by the DoE. This finding corresponds with the finding in Table 6 in that most schools had permanently appointed teachers. Only 5% of the respondents were employed by the governing bodies to reduce the class size and the work load of permanent staff.

4.2.8   Classification of schools

Table 4.8:   Frequency distribution according to the classification of schools.

Type of school	Frequency	%
Pre-primary	02	02%
Primary	92	92%
Combined	06	06%
Intermediate	-	-
TOTAL	100	100%

Table 8 reflects that the researcher randomly included pre-primary, primary, combined and intermediate schools in this research. About 92% of the respondents were from primary schools, 2% from pre-primary school and 6% from combined schools. Inclusive education has to be implemented as early as in pre-primary schools because identifying children with impairments in their early developmental stages will help teachers as well as families to support the child up to his/her life time growth and development and for scholastic achievement (Woolfolk, 2010:77). Pre-primary, primary and combined schools were therefore included in the sample to make it more representative of the teacher population.

4.2.9   Training in special educational needs

Table 4.9:   Frequency distribution according to training in special educational needs.

Training for teaching learners with impairments	Frequency	%
Teachers with training	21	21%
Teachers with no training	79	79%
TOTAL	100	100%

From Table 9 it is evident that the majority (79%) of teachers had no training to teach learners with impairments. According to Schechman and Or (in Naicker 2008:66), teachers need to receive in-service education and training to gain the necessary knowledge, skills and values to cope with learners of varying abilities and diverse needs. According to the DNE (1997:87), the lack of training to equip teachers to deal with diversity has not only disadvantaged many learners but has often left teachers feeling inadequate. Mowes, Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff and Pettipher (in Naicker, 2008:66) also found that teachers who were fully trained as special teachers had more realistic views towards placement decisions. Professionals also agreed that teachers would be more willing to accept LSEN if they had received training in special education.

Subban (2010:27) argues that possessing previous experience as an inclusive teacher appears to positively predispose teachers towards inclusive education. She further states that it would appear that previous experience in this field allows mainstream teachers to feel more comfortable within the inclusive classroom. Hall et al. (2011:157) agree that many teachers feel that they do not have sufficient training or support to meet many of the challenges presented by learners in their classes and the general problems facing the school as a whole.

4.2.10 Type of training received

Table 4.10: Frequency distribution according to type of training received by teachers.

Type of training received	Frequency	%
Formal training	43	43%
Informal training	57	57%
TOTAL	100	100%

Table 10 shows that more than half percent (57%) of teachers had not received formal training. This finding corresponds with those in Table 9 in that majority of teachers had no training to teach learners with impairments. Woolfolk (2010:480) argues that effective teaching for learners with impairments does not require a unique set of skills but a combination of good teaching practices and sensitivity to all learners.

4.2.11. Workshops or courses attended on inclusive education

Table 4.11:   Frequency distribution according to the workshops or courses teachers attended on inclusive education.

Workshops or courses attended	Frequency	%
Teachers attended workshops or courses	45	45%
Teachers not attended workshops or courses	55%	55%
TOTAL	100	100%

Table 11 shows that half (55%) of teachers had not attended workshops or courses on inclusive education. According to Ali, Mustapa and Jelas (2006:8), the inclusive education programme could be successfully implemented if the level of the teachers' competency were increased. Thus, the opportunities to attend workshops or courses that are related to the inclusive education programme have to be created especially for those who lack of exposure and training in special needs education.

4.3　TEACHER PREPAREDNESS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE CLASSROOM

The following factors of teacher preparedness were found from the data collected.

4.2.12 Knowledge of concepts related to inclusive education

Table 4.12:　Frequency distribution according to the knowledge of concepts

Question number	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	TOTAL
2.1	65	19	16	100
	65%	19%	16%	100%
2.2	85	-	15	100
	85%	-	15%	100%
2.3	48	16	36	100
	48%	16%	36%	100%
2.4	68	10	22	100
	68%	10%	22%	100%
2.5	21	44	35	100
	21%	44%	35%	100%

Inclusive education (2.1)

As more learners with impairments and those who have experienced some form of learning breakdown are accommodated in ordinary classrooms, teaching is likely to become more demanding. Landsberg (2006:21) maintains that a South African inclusive education system can and should be an important tool for creating a truly democratic society. On the other hand, in the South African context (DoE, 2001:17) inclusion is a form of support for all learners, teachers and the system as a whole, so that the full of learning needs can be met. This research indicates that the majority (65%) of the respondents believed that they had knowledge of the concept of inclusive education.

It is, however, more important that before teachers are supported in their classrooms they should acquire knowledge of what inclusive education is about and its implications. Their knowledge and understanding of the concept of inclusion will assist in attitudinal change. Lomofsky et al. (2011:70) stressed that teachers need the time and the psychological space to re-examine their general understanding of teaching and learning. They may need support in order to be able to focus on the positive rather than the negative aspects of change.

Mainstreaming (2.2)

A majority (85%) of the respondents were familiar with the concept of mainstreaming. According to Landsberg (2006:07), the goal of mainstreaming is to return learners with impairments to the mainstream of education as much as possible, alongside normally developing peers. This indicates that teachers' role in mainstream classes should be that of making a difference in the lives of individual learners by their active efforts to adapt learning environment in creative ways.

Whole school approach (2.3)

Nearly a half (48%) of the respondents believed they had knowledge of the concept of whole school approach.

Special school (2.4)

A majority of the respondents (68%) felt they knew what a special school was and its implications. The special school as a resource should provide specialized professional support in curriculum, assessment and instruction to neighbouring schools. This includes training of teachers regarding barriers to learning, management of inclusive classrooms, and development of learning support material, guidance to parents, early childhood intervention and development of life skills programmers to make learners who experience barriers to learning less vulnerable to abuse (Landsberg, 2006:64-65).

Full-service school (2.5)

A larger percentage (44%) of the respondents in this research indicated that they did not have adequate knowledge of the concept of full-service school. 21% agreed while more than half (35%) were uncertain. According to the draft guidelines (DoE, 2002:44-46) the role of full-service schools is to provide support in the school to learners and teachers by means of competent and experienced learning support teachers; support neighbouring schools with knowledge, information, and assistive devices regarding barriers to learning; and work in close collaboration with the DBST to coordinate support.

4.2.13 Experience in teaching in an inclusive class with impairments

Kapp (2002:72) states that in order to teach a child with impairment adequately, the teacher has to have sufficient knowledge of the implications which each type of impairment has for a particular child's learning and growth towards adulthood.

The following table shows levels of experience in teaching inclusive classes with learners with impairments.

Table 4.13: Frequency distribution according to experience in teaching in an inclusive class.

Question Number	No Experience	Little Experience	Moderate Experience	More than average	Vast Experience	TOTAL
3.1	51	24	14	07	04	100
	51%	24%	14%	07%	04%	100%
	49	19	21	08	03	100
3.2	49%	19%	21%	08%	03%	100%
	44	28	15	11	02	100
3.3	44%	28%	15%	11%	02%	100%
	11	12	45	26	06	100
3.4	11%	12%	45%	26%	06%	100%
	58	31	05	03	03	100
3.5	58%	31%	05%	03%	03%	100%
	75	15	04	04	02	100
3.6	75%	15%	04%	04%	02%	100%
	89	03	04	02	02	100
3.7	89%	03%	04%	02%	02%	100%
	34	41	15	06	04	100
3.8	34%	41%	15%	06%	04%	100%
	88	08	02	02	-	100
3.9	88%	08%	02%	02%	-	100%
	76	21	01	02	-	100
3.10	76%	21%	01%	02%	-	100%
	94	04	01	01	-	100
3.11	94%	04%	01%	01%	-	100%
	98	02	-	-	-	100
3.12	98%	02%	-	-	-	100%
	88	09	02	01	-	100
3.13	88%	09%	02%	01%	-	100%
	92	04	02	01	01	100
3.14	92%	04%	02%	01%	01%	100%

Woolfolk (2010:480) argues that effective teaching learners with impairments does not require a unique set of skills but is a combination of good teaching practices and sensitivity to all learners. Naicker (2008:79) states that many teachers have limited knowledge of inclusive education and have obtained their information from

newspapers, pamphlets, educational programmers and informal discussions. They have not been trained (pre-service or in-service) and they possess little knowledge of official policy documents. According to Hay, Smit and Paulsen (2001:214), Swart and Pettipher (2000:85), Mowes (2002:75-86), Idol (1997:387-389) (in Naicker 2008:79), lack of knowledge leads to negative attitudes and labelling.

Teaching in an inclusive class with severe intellectual impairment (3.1)

More than half (51%) of respondents did not have experience in teaching learners with severe intellectual disability, whereas less than half (24%) felt that they had little experience and 14% had moderate experience. This does not mean that teachers in a mainstream class have knowledge and skills in dealing with this impairment. Du Toit (in Kapp, 2002:317) argues that the popular idea that teachers of intellectually disabled children only need a lot of patience and love is not true. Besides these characteristics, the teacher also needs specialized knowledge and skills. These are acquired through specialized training for the particular form of education.

Teaching in an inclusive class with mild intellectual impairment (3.2)

According to Landsberg (2006:387), the most important skills required from teachers are the roles of team players and mediators. Teachers often have to interact with several other people in different teams to serve the interest of the learners. Less than half (49%) of respondents had no experience in teaching children with mild intellectual disability whereas about 19% had little experience and 21% and fewer had moderate or vast experience.

Teaching children with severe learning impairment (3.3)

Forty-four (44%) of respondents in this research indicated that they had inadequate experience in teaching learners with severe learning disability, more than a quarter (28%) little experience and 15% more than average experience, whereas 2% had vast experience.

According to Kapp (2002:404), the task of an ordinary teacher with regard to the learning impaired child is a dual one, namely identification and rendering of aid. Both these aspects are highly specialized fields of study. He further states that to be able to

perform these roles it is necessary for the ordinary teacher to have some knowledge of both identification and the rendering of aid.

Teaching children with mild learning impairment (3.4)

As teachers have to accommodate learners experiencing learning impairments in the classrooms they should be motivated to support them (Landsberg 2006:371). Less than a quarter (11%) of respondents indicated that they had not taught learners with mild learning impairment, less than a quarter (12%) had little experience while about 45% had moderate experience. More than a quarter (26%) had more than average experience and 6% had vast experience.

Teaching children with physical impairment (3.5)

Fifty-eight percent (58%) of the respondents in the research indicated that they had no experience in teaching children with physical disability and more than a quarter (31%) had little experience. This finding indicates that most of the children with physical disabilities were not admitted in mainstream schools since a special educational provision for these learners was made in special schools in South Africa (Kapp, 2002:444). Physically disabled children require education which is geared to their particular problems and potentialities and is offered by specially trained teachers with the help of medical and paramedical personnel who co-operate closely with parents (Smith, in Kapp, 2002:419). According to Botha (2002:278), teachers should be trained to teach and, where necessary, to devise specialized teaching procedures so that the child can understand what is explained and can acquire the necessary cognitive and other skills.

Teaching gifted children (3.6)

The finding indicated that the majority (75%) of the respondents had not taught gifted children and about a quarter of respondents had little or vast experience. This might be there are shortcomings in South Africa regarding educational provision for gifted learners, or a serious shortage of available, specialized and professional teaching personnel (Nel, 2002:154). Karnes (in Booyse, 2002:154) writes that there are apparently a large percentage of gifted and "talented" children who are not identified because teachers and experts in the field of giftedness do not give much attention to

the problem. He adds that lack of knowledge and understanding of the impairment explains this neglect. Shortcomings in the training of teachers with regard to the gifted cause them to have no understanding of their specific characteristics, needs and problems.

Teaching children with neurological impairment (3.7)

Most of the respondents (89%) confirmed that teachers had no experience in dealing with children who are neurologically disabled. This is also maintained by Frostig and Maslow (2002:255), that it is the teacher who must exploit the opportunities to improve the brain functions, a factor made possible by so-called, 'plasticity' of the brain. Thus, one can but hope that teachers who have basic knowledge of how interwoven the working of the brain is with all human actions, capabilities and limitations will show greater understanding of the child and his or her problems.

Teaching emotionally / behaviourally impaired child (3.8)

About 34% of the respondents said that they had insufficient experience in teaching emotionally/ behaviourally impaired children, whereas less than half percent (41%) of the respondents agreed that they had sufficient experience; 15% had moderate experience and less than a quarter had vast experience. This finding indicates that teachers do not have knowledge and skills to identify children who are emotionally or behaviourally disturbed. Kapp (2002:112) suggests that children with emotional and behavioural problems can, with specialized assistance from qualified persons in the psychological services of various provincial education departments, be successfully accommodated in mainstream education. Teachers need to refer such learners to the psychological services because they themselves do not have adequate skills to support them.

Teaching children with visual impairment (3.9)

The majority (88%) of the respondents in this research admitted that they had insufficient experience in teaching learners with vision problems, whereas 8% and fewer had sufficient or vast experience. This could be the reason that the teacher in a regular class is not trained to work specifically with blind or partial sighted children (Pauw, in Kapp, 2002:375). Nor does the school provide the special aids which such a

child may need, thus placing great responsibility on the teacher to be on the lookout for possible causes of unsatisfactory progress, behavioural problems, symptoms of stress or poor health, and an inability or unwillingness to concentrate on reading tasks.

Teaching children with hearing impairment (3.10)

Seventy six percent (76%) of respondents in this research indicated that they had no experience in teaching learners with hearing impairment. Less than a quarter (21%) agreed that they had little experience and 3% had moderate or vast experience. This finding indicated that although it can generally be accepted that these children may be successfully integrated into a regular school there are problems to take into account. It is therefore the task of the teacher to create a favourable learning environment for partially hearing children, that is a place of safety, rich in learning opportunities in which, under the protective guidance of the teacher, he/she can begin to discover his/her life world. Kapp (2002:345) writes that partially hearing children may receive education in regular schools. With well-informed and sympathetic teachers, special assistance from itinerant specialists (e.g., remedial teachers, therapists, teachers trained in teaching children with hearing problems), the use of hearing aids and appropriate seating in the classroom, they may be taught in a regular school in the same way and with the same measure of success as children with normal hearing.

Teaching autistic children (3.11)

The majority (94%) of the respondents confirmed that they had no experience in teaching autistic learners. Only 4% had little experience and 2% had vast experience. This may because teachers are relatively ignorant about the general problems of autistic children, with little known of early identification of the borderline cases and especially those who show evidence of only slight observable signs. There is little to offer these children with regard to a warm, understanding, supportive, ortho-pedagogical climate and purposeful assistance, at present (Kapp, 2002:445).

Teaching children with speech impairment (3.12)

Ninety-eight percent (98%) of the respondents indicated that teachers did not have experience to deal with learners who have speech impairment; whereas only 2% said

that they had little experience. This finding indicates that teachers in mainstream classes were not trained to teach sign language.

Teaching learners who are environmentally deprived (3.13)

Close to 90% (88%) of the respondents said that they lacked experience or rather had not taught environmentally deprived children. Some 9% agreed that they had insufficient experience whereas 2% and fewer had vast experience.

Other (3.14)

The majority (92%) of the respondents indicated that they had inadequate experience in teaching other impairments other than those mentioned above. Less than a quarter (08%) had insufficient or vast experience.

4.4 WAYS TEACHERS WOULD LIKE TO LEARN MORE ON TEACHING IN AN INCLUSIVE CLASS

Table 4.14: Frequency distribution on ways teachers would learn more on teaching in an inclusive class.

Question number	Agree (1)	Disagree (2)	TOTAL
4.1	07	93	100
	07%	93%	100%
4.2	72	28	100
	72%	28%	100%
4.3	54	46	100
	54%	46%	100%
4.4	79	21	100
	79%	21%	100%
4.5	98	02	100
	98%	02%	100%

One day workshop (4.1)

The minority (07%) of the respondents agreed that they would like to learn more on teaching in an inclusive class by attending only a one day workshop. The majority (93%) disagreed that a one day workshop would be insufficient for them to learn more on teaching in an inclusive class.

In-service training (4.2)

Schechtman (in Naicker 2008:78) suggests that teachers need to receive in-service training to gain the necessary knowledge, skills and values to cope with learners of varying abilities and diverse needs. Some 72% of the respondents agreed that in-service training would help them acquire the necessary knowledge and skills that are required in an inclusive class. About 28% disagreed that they do not need in-service training. In-service training includes professional development for teachers who are already working in the classroom. In addition to developing skills of professionals before entering the workforce it is essential that teachers already teaching be provided skills and techniques for inclusive education (Vietnam, 2010:3).

Certificate course (4.3)

More than half (54%) of the respondents indicated that a certificate course would make a difference in making sure that they were competent in an inclusive education, whereas fewer than half (46%) do not think that a certificate course would help them acquire the necessary skills to deal with learners with impairments. This finding confirms Vietnam's view (2010:3) that building the capacity for inclusive education must include awareness-raising activities as well as integrated pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes to ensure that teachers are aware, ready and willing to bring inclusive education into action.

Diploma in inclusive education (4.4)

A higher percentage (79%) of the participants in this research agreed that they would like to have a diploma certificate in inclusive education. Less than a quarter (21%) does not need a diploma course in inclusive education. This maybe because many teachers felt that they did not have time for LSEN and were under pressure to plan for

their work adequately. They had to attend to classroom commitments, extra-curricular duties, lesson preparation, assessment and the marking of learners' work, and provide academic assistance to learners Chetty, in Mthembu, 2009:54).

All (4.5)

The majority (98%) of the respondents in this research agreed that they would like to have all of the above trainings to equip them with the adequate knowledge and skills needed in an inclusive education. Only 2% of the respondents disagreed.

4.5 NATURE AND FREQUENCY OF DBST TRAINING SUPPORT THAT TEACHERS RECEIVED

Table 4.15: Frequency distribution according to the nature and frequency of DBST support that teachers received.

Question number	Regular (1)	Sporadic (2)	None (3)	TOTAL
5.1	52	30	18	100
	52%	30%	18%	100%
5.2	84	02	14	100
	84%	02%	14%	100%
5.3	02	83	15	100
	02%	83%	15%	100%
5.4	48	21	31	100
	48%	21%	31%	100%
5.5	74	24	02	100
	74%	24%	02%	100%
5.6	10	04	86	100
	10%	04%	86%	100%
5.7	66	06	28	100
	66%	06%	28%	100%
	13	07	80	100

5.8	13%	07%	80%	100%
	04	88	08	100
5.9	04%	88%	08%	100%

Teachers are to a great extent dependant on support structures as they are still grappling with educational changes imposed on them. According White Paper 6 on Building an Inclusive Education and Training System, the main focus of the DBST should be to support teachers, with a particular focus on curriculum and institutional development, to ensure that the teaching and learning framework and environment are responsive to the full range of teaching needs (DoE, 2001:29).

Scholastic assessment (5.1)

More than half (52%) of the respondents agreed that the DBST support was available in their school for scholastic assessment. More than a quarter (30%) said that the support was sporadic, and less than a quarter (18%) said it was insufficient.

Learning support (5.2)

According to the *draft guidelines* (DoE, 2002:102-105), the core function of the DBST is to link the institutions with formal and informal support systems so that needs and barriers can be addressed (Landsberg, 2006:64). A high percentage (84%) of the respondents indicated that support from the DBST is regular, fewer (02%) that it was not enough, and 14% that they did not receive any learning support.

Counselling skills (5.3)

A lower percentage of the respondents (2%) said that the DBST support on counselling skills was irregular. A majority (83%) agreed that they received counselling skills but only sporadically, whilst 15% did not receive any counselling skill workshop.

Collaborative consultation skills (5.4)

Friend and Cook (in Landsberg, 2006:20) acknowledge that collaboration is difficult, but note that it is rewarding. Less than half (48%) of the respondents indicated that

they were supported on consultative consultation skills, whereas nearly a quarter (21%) said that they were supported but only sporadically, and 31% they were not supported on such skills. For the successful implementation of inclusive education there is a need for special schools and mainstream school teachers, as well as other stakeholders with an interest in inclusive education, to collaborate and share information. It is the DBST's responsibility to support teachers on these skills. According to Mahlo (2011:175), the importance of collaboration between the units and an established protocol that reflects the hierarchy within the system cannot be neglected if the vision of inclusive education is to be realized.

Referrals (5.5)

Most of the respondents (74%) indicated that the DBST support on referrals was regular, nearly a quarter (24%) that it was sporadic, and 2% were not trained for referrals.

Concession training (5.6)

Previously, concessions were known to be granted to learners in higher grades, especially grade 12. Since the policy of inclusion has come into practice, concessions are now granted in all grades, from grade 1 up to the university level. This is reflected in the minority (10%) of the respondents' indications that there was concession skill support from the DBST, and perhaps because it is still new in primary schools. A smaller percentage (04%) said that the support was sporadic while the higher percentage (86%) did not receive support from DBST on concession skills.

Parental guidance (5.7)

Parents need to make an extra effort in helping teachers overcome challenges facing learners with impairments. There are some parents who feel it the responsibility of the teacher alone to see that their children are able to perform well in all activities at school. More than half (66%) of the respondents indicated that the parental guidance support was regular, while less than half (28%) disagreed. It is important that parents provide necessary information about their children, because it helps teachers to facilitate support of learners who experience barriers to learning (Mpya, 2007:79).

Mahlo (2011:192) recommended that:

- Parents are taken in the process of screening of learners. Participation in the screening, identification, assessment and support (SIAS), will help them understand the reason for saying their child has a barrier and that it affects his or learning, and therefore requires help.

- An advocacy campaign on awareness of learning barriers is recommended in this situation because if parents know that the problem could affect the learner in future they would respond appropriately.

Networking skills (5.8)

Fewer than a quarter (13%) of the respondents indicated that there were opportunities for networking between special school, sister departments and mainstream school teachers, while 80% disagreed that they received support in relation to networking skills. This is an area that needs attention. All teachers should have the necessary skills to work cooperatively (Naicker, 2008:74).

Special school and mainstream teachers should actively plan for skills transfer, team teaching, direct small group instruction in mainstream schools, special education settings and training peer tutors (Lipsky, Gartner, Phillip & McCulloch, in Naicker 2008:74).

Case conference skills (5.9)

The majority (88%) of the respondents in this research indicated that they were not supported or trained on case conference skills. This finding is supported by the above paragraph (5.8) on network skills, where the majority (80%) disagreed that they received such skills. If teachers lack networking opportunities they cannot have case conference skills, and this is where problems and challenges faced by teachers concerning learners with impairments are being discussed. A case conference may include the following: class teacher, management specialist, parent, support personnel specialist support personnel and the learner if needed.

4.6 CHARACTERISTICS OF AN INCLUSIVE TEACHER

Table 4.16: Frequency distribution according to the support strategies for the implementation of inclusive education

Question number	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	Total
6.1	59	10	31	100
	59%	10%	31%	100%
6.2	94	04	02	100
	94%	04%	02%	100%
6.3	100	-	-	100
	100%	-	-	100%
6.4	98	-	02	100
	98%	-	02%	100%
6.5	28	70	02	100
	28%	70%	02%	100%
6.6	78	02	20	100
	78%	02%	20%	100%
6.7	44	32	24	100
	44%	32%	24%	100%
6.8	12	32	56	100
	12%	32%	56%	100%
6.9	10	66	24	100
	10%	66%	24%	100%
6.10	100	-	-	100
	100%	-	-	100%

MacAulay (1990) and Hamacheck (1995) (in Donald et al., 2002:172) have identified teacher characteristics that are generally found to provide a positive influence in the classroom. These include warmth, friendliness, being supportive, having good communication skills (in particular, being a good listener), being empathetic, being orderly in control, having respect for students, providing positive feedback to students, rewarding students for positive behaviour, and being fair. They also point

out that a democratic style of leadership and management in the classroom helps to foster a positive learning environment.

Have trust (6.1)

Although more than half (51%) of the respondents in this research agreed that the teacher in an inclusive class should have trust in the educability of learners with impairments, the minority (10%) disagreed with the statement, while more than a quarter (31%) were uncertain. Hay, Smit, Paulsen (in Naicker 2008:68) recommends that the teacher be prepared to trust the LSEN's ability to achieve by providing opportunities to do things on their own and allow them to take responsibilities for their own efforts.

Accept LSEN unconditionally (6.2)

More than 90% (94%) of the respondents indicated that all learners with barriers to learning should be accepted unconditionally. A smaller percentage (04%) of the respondents disagreed, while 02% were uncertain. According to Engelbrecht et al., (2006:70) teachers need the time and the psychological space to re-examine their general understanding of teaching and learning. They may need support in order to be able to focus on the positive rather than the negative aspects of change. An inclusive teacher must be prepared to create and maintain a classroom atmosphere which nurtures the personal, cognitive and social development of all learners, including LSEN. Good teaches are caring and supportive and as such realize the need for unconditional acceptance for all learners. In this sense, teachers have a responsibility for creating a more tolerant society and one that accepts diversity (Naicker 2008:68).

Respect all LSEN (6.3)

Lazarus, Daniels and Engelbrecht (2002:46) argued that respecting diversity in the learner population (and other role-players in the learning community) means acknowledging and supporting the rights of all learners and others to full participation in the learning and teaching process. This is confirmed by all (100%) respondents in this research, who indicated that teachers must respect learners with impairments. This finding indicates that teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of LSEN in the mainstream classes are gradually becoming positive. Since teachers are people who

make learning possible, their own attitudes, beliefs and feelings with regard to what is happening in the school and in the classroom are of crucial importance. (Engelbrecht, 2006:70). Thus, respecting all LSEN would one sign of attitudinal change.

Have faith in LSEN (6.4)

The higher percentage (98%) of respondents agreed that a teacher in an inclusive class must have faith in all LSEN, while a smaller percentage (2%) was uncertain.

Understand emotional problems of LSEN (6.5)

Learners with severe and multiple disabilities experience far more anxiety than typically developing learners because they cannot meet the demands of the activities (Landsberg 2002:414). More than a quarter (28%) of respondents agreed that they understood the emotional problems of the learners with impairments. A higher percentage (70%) does not understand their emotional problems, while 2% were uncertain.

This finding indicates that teachers are not well qualified. They lack knowledge of different teaching methods and are demotivated by the large number of learners in the classrooms, by the lack of parental involvement in the learning process, and by challenges of new policies imposed on them (Landsberg 2006:450). Herward and Orlansky (in Kapp 2002:117) also directed the following message to teachers: "Have a fair attitude for individual differences in interests and abilities; do not force every child to fit in a narrow mould".

Treat all LSEN the same way (6.6)

Landsberg (2006:457) believes that teachers should always remember that consistency is perhaps the most important factor in enforcing classroom rules. All learners must be treated in the same way when enforcing the rules. They must also be helped to understand that rules are expectations of positive behaviour and not a list of "do nots". The majority (78%) of the respondents agreed that learners with impairments should be treated the same way, 2% disagreed, while nearly a quarter (20%) were uncertain. The framework which accompanies the statement defines the scope of inclusion in the following terms, as UNESCO (in Engelbrecht et al.,

2004:32) states that: "The guiding principle that informs this framework is that schools should accommodate all learners regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions." Thus, the above statement gives teachers no choice but to treat all learners the same way.

Punish all LSEN the same way (6.7)

Less than half (44%) of respondents in this research agreed that all learners in an inclusive class should be punished the same way, while 32% disagreed and nearly a quarter (24%) were uncertain. This finding indicates that lack of skills and knowledge of learners with impairments leave teachers unsure if it is good or not to punish these learners.

Challenging behaviour in the school and classroom forms a serious barrier to learning in the present school situation. The general climate of undisciplined behaviour and increasing aversion to the acceptance of authority in schools necessitates the urgent attention of teachers and policymakers. Teachers have to be empowered to meet these challenges in such a way that the academic performance of learners is no longer adversely affected (Landsberg 2006:464).

Understand their needs (6.8)

According to Lomofsky, Roberts and Mvambi (2002:94), inclusive education, in the context of outcomes-based education (OBE) constitutes a challenge to the education system as a whole and in particular to teachers in mainstream classrooms. It requires teachers to be flexible in their thinking and innovative and creative in their approaches to teaching and learning. The research sample indicates that 12% of the respondents agreed that they understood the needs of learners with impairments while more than a quarter disagreed. More than half (56%) were uncertain. This finding indicates that teachers were not sure if they understood LSEN's needs or not. Lomofsky et al. (2002:94) add that teachers are expected to have knowledge and skills to accommodate a range of diversity among learners. This means being able to use judgment in selecting appropriate teaching strategies from their professional repertoire. To expect teachers to manage all these challenges on their own would be unrealistic. Support is required both in and outside the classroom. Vietnam (2010:09) suggests that inclusive education should be a compulsory subject for all teacher

candidates and an integral part of teacher training curricula. Fundamental knowledge and skills of inclusive education, such as understanding needs and abilities of children with impairments and pedagogical skills such as instructional accommodation and activity differentiation, should be provided widely to teacher candidates.

Understand their experiences (6.9)

Pelser (in Kapp 2002:106) stressed that because the child experiences repeated learning failures and his/her learning achievements are evaluated and declared inadequately by and in the presence of other persons (e.g., friends, parents, teachers) he/she easily assess him/herself and his/her own possibilities and abilities unrealistically. The above statement was supported by the minority (10%) of respondents in this research, who indicated that they understood the experiences that learners with impairments had. A majority (66%) did not undestand the learners' experiences while nearly a quarter (24%) is uncertain. He adds that it is important for the teacher to take into account the total situation of the child during all steps of the assistance.

Schechman and Or (in Mthembu 2009:51) maintain that teachers need to receive in-service training to gain the necessary knowledge and skills needed to change teaching aids in order to accommodate LSEN in their classrooms. Policymakers must therefore focus on skills and practical assistance rather than attending to teachers' needs and emotional inhibitions.

Support all LSEN to her ability (6.10)

Landsberg (2006:19) points out that support and collaboration is the cornerstone of successful inclusive education. The total number (100%) of respondents in this research agreed that a teacher in an inclusive class should support all learners. This is also supported by Kapp (2006:75), who argues that the teacher be able not only to identify impairments but also to render support up to a certain level. He or she should be able to set individual objectives and adjust the content and the rate of progress expected. In addition, this may mean that such children should receive attention on one-to-one basis.

4.7 SUPPORT STRATEGIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Table 4.17: Frequency distribution according to the support strategies for the implementation of inclusive education.

Question number	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	TOTAL
7.1	18	80	02	100
	18%	80%	02%	100%
7.2	74	02	24	100
	74%	02%	24%	100%
7.3	83	07	10	100%
	83%	07%	10%	100%
7.4	18	55	27	100
	18%	55%	27%	100%
7.5	10	69	21	100
	10%	69%	21%	100%
7.6	-	96	04	100
	-	96%	04%	100%
7.7	02	88	10	100
	02%	88%	10%	100%
7.8	91	02	07	100
	91%	02%	07%	100%
7.9	48	31	11	100
	48%	31%	11%	100%
7.10	42	25	33	100
	42%	25%	33%	100%

A school-based assessment Team (7.1)

Although a small number (18%) of respondents agreed that their school had a school-based support team to assist teachers in their inclusive classrooms, the majority (80%) disagreed. This finding indicates that most of the schools did not have an SBST. The formation of the teams is noted by Landsberg (2006:66), together with the education support services of the district, as being to take responsibility for the in-service

training of teachers in the identification, assessment and support of all learners including learners who experience barriers to learning; and establishing networks that promote effective communication between learners, teachers and parents as well as with NGOs and the welfare, health and justice departments. He adds that every learner can learn and that the teacher should make provision for every learner to succeed. To achieve this, teachers need support from the SBST. On the other hand, teachers should be innovative and energetic. They should experiment with new teaching strategies to involve all learners in the teaching and learning process.

Record of all learners with additional support needs (7.2)

Most of the respondents (74%) agreed that a record of learners with additional support needs is available in their schools. A smaller number (02%) of disagreed while almost a quarter (24%) were uncertain. Naicker (2008:72) suggests that it is important for teachers to keep records of LSEN. The record should reflect the learners' personal particulars, such as name, age, parents' telephone numbers and medical history. There should be all observations made and all assessments done. Such records will assist in keeping track of the LSEN's progress. It will assist the teacher in the formulation of relevant learning and assessment programmers. The record should be passed on to the following teacher as the LSEN progresses to the next grade. This will ensure that LSEN is always effectively catered for.

Institution-level support team (7.3)

A higher percentage (83%) of the respondents agreed that an ILST was available in the schools, while the least number (7%) of respondents disagreed.

In-service opportunities (7.4)

The larger number (55%) of the respondents indicated that in-service training opportunities were not available for mainstream teachers to assist them with challenges of inclusion. According to Mpya (2007:105), teachers need training concerning the background of the barriers to learning, its causes, the type of curriculum to be followed, the materials to be used, content, teaching strategies and how to overcome these barriers that learners experience. Without proper training it is going to be difficult if not impossible for teachers to manage inclusive classroom. She

further suggests that in-service for teachers and the training programmes for parents and learners should be implemented in order to create a positive inclusive learning environment in all areas towards building an inclusive education system. Nell (in Naicker, 2008:73) points out that successful inclusive education has major implications for pre-service and in-service training of teachers. Appropriate preparation of all educational personnel is vitally important. In-depth knowledge of the philosophy of inclusion and the need for teachers to develop the commitment and caring required to accommodate LSEN as much as possible in the mainstream classes should be developed during pre-service and in-service training.

Sufficient funds (7.5)

The majority (69%) of the respondents in this research disagreed that their schools do not have adequate funds for the successful implementation of inclusive education. According to Engelbrecht and Hall (in Mthembu 2009:46), one of the main issues in the successful implementation of inclusive education seems to be the availability of financial resources. Most of the schools lack financial support from the DoE. Nell (in Naicker 2008:73) is also of the opinion that many parts of the country have to cope with large classes, inadequate or lack of support facilities, a lack of ortho-didactic materials as well as a lack of expertise amongst teachers to deal with learners with impairments. Schools need to have personnel specifically trained for the different impairments. They also need to purchase assistive devices such as books, adapted material, overhead projectors, hearing aids, computers, wheel chairs and Braille. Schools need to be better resourced and equipped before inclusive education can be implemented and teachers are trained to use such resources.

Opportunity for networking (7.6)

Some 96% of the respondents indicated that there were no opportunities for networking between special school teachers and mainstream teachers. The reason might be that there are many more mainstream school than special schools, thus it is difficult for mainstream teachers to use special school as a resource centre. This is one of the areas that need more attention. For the successful implementation of inclusive education, teachers in mainstream schools and in special school should work together as team. Lipsky and Gartner (in Naicker 2008:74) believe that special school and

mainstream teachers should actively plan for skills transfer, team teaching, directing small group instruction in mainstream schools, special education settings and training peer tutors.

A network between schools could assist in sharing valuable knowledge and expertise as well as providing support through the process of problem solving, mainstream and special school teachers can use their collective expertise in a collegial, equal status relationship.

Management team with knowledge (7.7)

The majority (88%) of the respondents indicated that the management teams in their schools lacked knowledge of learners with impairments. This finding is evidence that school management teams lack the support and necessary knowledge and skills to equip them for the implementation of inclusive education in schools. Landsberg (2006:66) argues that teachers should be dynamic, competent and innovative in their teaching methods to accommodate the different learning styles of learners. Morrison (in Landsberg 2006:66) believes that learning can be offered in a holistic way involving all stakeholders including management. The management team should be equipped with the following leadership and management skills:

- Plan and manage the learning environment to accommodate learners who experience barriers to learning.

- Manage behaviour of all learners.

- Motivate all learners to accept others as they are.

- Use a "buddy" system to help a learner who experiences barriers to learning when necessary.

School policy on inclusion (7.8)

A school policy to eliminate discrimination will ensure that LSEN are treated in a fair manner (Naicker 2008:74). A higher percentage (91%) of the respondents agreed that the school policy on inclusion was available in their schools. This is supported by the NCSNET / NCESS report (DNE, 1997) and emerging policy paper on *Quality*

education for all: addressing barriers to learning and development ("special needs and support") which express a commitment to the development of inclusive sites of learning. This is in the context of commitment to integrating learners who have been excluded from ordinary schools (e.g., learners with disabilities) and fostering inclusion of all learners within schools, with an emphasis on accommodating the diverse needs of the learner population (Engelbrecht et al., 2006:46).

District Based support team (7.9)

According to DoE (in Landsberg 2006:64), the main focus of the DBST is on indirect support to learners through supporting teachers and the school management to ensure that the teaching and learning environment is responsive to full range of learning needs. Nearly half (48%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that the DBST support was available in their school while 31% disagreed with the statement. The table shows that a significant percentage (11%) of teachers was not sure. Naicker (2008:75) states that teachers are to a great extent dependent on support structures as they are still grappling with educational changes imposed on them.

Procedure to deal with harassment (7.10)

A smaller percentage (25%) of the respondents agreed that there were procedures to deal with possible harassment of learners at their schools. Prinsloo (in Mthembu 2009:48) points out that the learner with impairments is vulnerable to discriminate in a class with "normal learners". It is thus the responsibility of the teachers to ensure that learners with impairments are protected at all times. The South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996 states that, "… a public school must admit learners and serve their educational requirements without discriminating in any way" (RSA, 1996:6). A policy to address harassment of LSEN should be part of the school's mission statement.

4.8   SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher's aim was to give some order to range of information provided by the teachers in their answers to questions in the questionnaire. Some of

the data collected was of a demographic nature which enabled the researcher to construct a broad of the sample selected for the investigation. The data collected regarding preparedness of the mainstream primary school teachers in the implementation of inclusive education in the classroom was organized in frequency distribution tables. The responses to the questionnaire were interpreted and the findings discussed. Generally, the findings of this study indicate that a greater percentage of teachers are not yet prepared for the implementation of inclusive education in the classroom

The next chapter presents a summary, gives the most important findings and makes recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to explore the preparedness of mainstream primary school teachers in implementing inclusive education. In this final chapter a summary of the previous chapters will be given. This will be followed by findings from the literature review and empirical research, with recommendations and criticisms that emanate from the study.

5.2   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem addressed in this study concerned preparedness of mainstream primary school teachers in implementing inclusive education in Nongoma circuit, KwaZulu-Natal. This includes preparing teachers with adequate knowledge and skills, sufficient training and adequate support. Teacher's preparedness for inclusive education is also largely determined by the ability to deal effectively with learners with impairments. From the literature study it was evident that mainstream primary school teachers are not equipped with adequate training, knowledge, skills or support networks to cope with diversity in mainstream classrooms. Mainstream teachers generally felt that they were not adequately trained or possessing necessary skills or knowledge to meet the special educational needs for learners with impairments. Teachers' negative attitudes towards inclusive education were caused by feeling of incompetence and lack of professional support to assist them in implementing inclusive education effectively.

5.3   LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature study revealed that teachers were the ones who make learning possible, and that their attitudes, beliefs and feelings with regard to what is happening in the

classroom are crucial. Teachers are the agents for change in the formal education of the child, thus, the successful implementation of inclusive education is largely dependent on the teacher in the classroom. The lack of teachers prepared to provide quality inclusive teaching to learners with impairments and the limitation of existing support structures both have an impact on inclusion. However, before inclusion can be practiced teachers need to make a paradigm shift, one that will prepare them for the change from teaching in an inclusive classroom. Those who are prepared have a more positive attitude towards inclusive education are in a better position to embrace inclusive education.

Teachers have an important responsibility in making sure that all learners from whatever background feel included and affirmed in the classroom. Some of the ways in which teachers can do this are:

- Recognizing any bias or stereotypes they may have.
- Treating each learner as an individual and respecting him or her for who he or she is.
- Avoiding use of language that is biased and undermines certain group of learners.
- Refraining from remarks that make assumptions about learner experience.
- Considering the unique needs of learners and assessing learner in a diverse setting (c.f. 2.8).

The literature study revealed that teachers are the agents of change. They are therefore required to rethink their roles, construct new knowledge and acquire new skills and competencies. Teachers have to be prepared to change the following:

- Attitudes
- Opinions
- Paradigms
- Perspectives (c.f. 2.5)

For the successful implementation of inclusive education they have to understand that the most significant way to respond to learner diversity in classroom is through the curriculum. Teachers must be prepared in terms of understanding the curriculum

appropriate for inclusive education. One of the key strategies for responding to diversity is curriculum differentiation, for instance at the level of:

- Differentiating curriculum content
- Differentiating curriculum environment
- Teaching methods/strategies

The literature indicated that teachers are faced with serious challenges when teaching learners with diverse needs. Research suggests that teachers with little experience of people with impairments are likely to have negative attitudes to inclusion. They must therefore be prepared to change and develop positive attitudes. It is not surprising that mainstream teachers generally express negative attitudes towards learners with impairments of which they have inadequate knowledge.

An important aspect of the teacher's preparedness for inclusive education is their relationship with LSEN. For inclusive education to be successful, the teacher must be prepared to have a positive relationship with them. An inclusive teacher has the characteristics that are generally found to provide a positive influence in the classroom. The literature indicated that teachers in a mainstream school revealed that they lack knowledge and experience of learners with impairments, thus they are incompetent and lack the following inclusive teacher characteristics:

- Having trust
- Accepting LSEN unconditionally
- Having faith in LSEN.
- Understanding emotional problems of LSEN
- Treating and punishing all LSEN the same way
- Understating their needs and experiences
- Supporting all LSEN to their ability

Teachers who are not prepared to actualize the above characteristics will contribute to an undesirable educational situation and a resistance towards implementation of inclusive education. The literature review showed that teachers in mainstream classes felt less confident in dealing with the increasing learner diversity, thus generally expressed negative attitudes towards inclusion for the following reasons:

- Overcrowded classes

- Lack of knowledge of learners with impairments

- Lack of skills and competence to deal with LSEN

- Inadequate or no support

- High stress.

Teachers needs have to be taken into consideration as fulfilling them has a direct impact on their preparedness to implement inclusive education effectively. The literature study indicated that teachers are the primary resource for achieving the goal of an inclusive education and training system. Continuous assessment of teachers' needs will make a critical contribution to inclusion. It is imperative that the teachers' needs are taken into consideration.

These needs of teachers are as follows:

- Need for knowledge

- Need for skills and competencies

- Emotional needs

- Support needs (c.f. 2.9)

5.4   PLANNING OF THE RESEARCH

The study utilized a questionnaire, constructed by the researcher as a means to obtain a database. The information sought for this investigation was not available from any other source and had to be acquired directly from respondents. The questionnaire aimed at principals, deputy principals and heads of department, and teachers from primary and pre-primary schools. With the aim of administering the questionnaire to the respondents, the researcher had to obtain permission from the circuit manager (CES) of the Nongoma circuit, KwaZulu-Natal. The researcher then visited the principals of the selected schools to make arrangements for administering the questionnaire to teachers. The composition, administration and data analysis of the questionnaire were also dealt with. The principle of pilot study was addressed as well as the limitations of the study.

5.4.1 Presentation and analysis of research data

The purpose of chapter 4 was to statistically analyse and discuss the data collected from the questionnaires completed by 100 mainstream primary school teachers. Comments were offered and interpretations made of findings. At the outset an explanation and description was provided as to the methods employed in the categorization of the responses and the analyses of the data. This was followed by the presentation and discussion of the responses to question in the questionnaire. The data presented was calculated in frequencies and percentages, known as 'relative frequency distribution'. This was conducted in order to clarify the presentation of data in that it indicates the proportion of the total number of cases which were observed for a particular question. The findings from the frequency tables were interpreted and recommended upon.

5.4.2 Aims of the study

The researcher formulated specific aims (c.f.1.4) to determine the course of the study.

- ✓ To determine the extent to which teachers are prepared for the implementation of inclusive education in the classroom.

- ✓ To describe the nature of training provided by the District Based Support Team to advance inclusive education practices in the classroom.

- ✓ To identify enabling support strategies required for teachers in an inclusive classroom environment.

- ✓ To make recommendations on strategies for the successful implementation of inclusive education practices in the classroom.

These aims were realized through the literature study, which was made from various sources available nationally and internationally. An empirical survey consisting of a structured questionnaire as a basis was used together with the literature study, to determine preparedness of mainstream primary school teachers in implementing

inclusive education. On the basis of the findings of this study certain recommendations are offered.

5.5   FINDINGS

The following are the findings based on the research.

5.5.1   Findings from the literature study

From the available and relevant literature it was found that the success of inclusive education largely depends on effective preparedness of teachers. Teachers need to be prepared in terms of the following:

Teachers need in-service training to empower them with the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies required to teach in an inclusive class. Based on the literature review in chapter 2, Engelbrecht, Forlin and Swart (2000) mainstream teachers were trained accordingly and the separate mainstream and special education teacher preparation programmes did not provide trainees in mainstream education with experience to develop the necessary skills and disposition to handle learners with impairments in their classrooms. (c.f.2.1.). Based on the above statements it is evident that mainstream primary school teachers still need in-service trainings to empower them with necessary knowledge, skills and competences.

Teachers must be prepared to engage in a positive relationship with LSEN as the success of inclusive education is largely determined by the ability of teachers to effectively deal with LSEN. This deems it necessary for the teacher to have trust in LSEN, to accept LSEN unconditionally, to respect, punish and treat LSEN the same way, to understand their emotional problems and to understand their needs. According to the Department of Education (2011:04) teachers have an important responsibility in making sure that all learners from whatever background, including LSEN, feel included and affirmed in the classroom. They should monitor their own beliefs, attitudes and behaviours when responding to learners (c.f.2.8.). Thus, it is very important that teachers guard against their attitudes and

emotions since the success of LSEN depends largely on them as policy implementers.

Teachers need to acquire experience in teaching in an inclusive class with LSEN. The literature revealed that teachers are faced with serious challenges when teaching learners with diverse needs. They have to change their teaching strategies and create environment that is conducive for all learners in the classroom (Lomofsky et al., 2004:72). Engelbrecht, Swart & Eloff (in Mpya. 2007: 21) also argue that teachers are under a lot of stress because they are not acquainted with principles and management of inclusion c.f.2.8.). This draw up the conclusion that mainstream teachers lack experience in teaching in an inclusive classrooms and have insufficient knowledge and skills for LSEN.

Teachers need to be positive in terms of their attitudes, beliefs, opinions, paradigms and perspectives towards LSEN and inclusive education. According to Lomofsky, Roberts & Mvambi (2004:07) teachers are human beings with individual attitudes to differences and disability, formed in a context of prevailing social attitudes. However, to support the inclusion of learners with impairments teachers have to be sensitive, not only to the particular needs of individual learners, but also to their own attitudes and feeling. (c.f. 2.11.) Based on the above findings and literature review, it is clear that teachers need to undergo a paradigm shift that will prepare their humanity.

They need adequate support to respond to the challenges that present themselves in an inclusive class. Teachers need support from colleagues, principals, institution level support team, district based support teams, special school as a resource centre and other stakeholders with interest in education. White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001:17) acknowledges that inclusion is about supporting all learners, teachers and the system as a whole so that the full range of learning needs can be met. Teachers need support to be prepared to cope with the challenges associated with inclusive education. Resistance to including learners with impairments may emanate from fear of not being adequately prepared to teach LSEN, Goddard (in Naicker, 2008:32), (c.f.2.11.). Without adequate and relevant support of teachers

inclusive education does not seem to be effectively implemented especially in mainstream classes.

Teachers need adequate resources to facilitate the successful implementation of inclusive education. Da Costa (2003:23) says that an essential aspect of the implementation of inclusive education is the human resource development. (c.f.2.1.). Resources can be divided into: human resource, material resources and access to information and knowledge. A lack of resouces is perceived a barrier to inclusion across cultural, geographical and economic boundaries. It is therefore important to understand what we meant by resources and begin to tackle the problem

Teachers need to be emotionally prepared. Policymakers tend to focus on knowledge, skills and practical support without acknowledging teachers' emotional needs. They need emotional support to alleviate anxiety, fears and concerns associated with including LSEN in the mainstream classes. The literature reveals that most of the barriers in implementing inclusive education are embedded in the emotional predisposition of teachers. These include inter alia, the following:

➢ Opportunities for teachers both in the mainstream and special schools to deal with feelings of anxiety, ignorance, confusion, scepticism, concern for personal loss of autonomy, security and job satisfaction, as well as feeling of discomfort and fear of failure.(c.f.2.9.4.).

This brings to the attention that when policy makers at national level take decisions, emotional needs of teachers also need to be taken into consideration because if their emotional needs are being ignored, the consequences can be disastrous because emotions enter into all aspects of life, Hargreaves, Librman, Fullan & Hopkins (in Naicker 2008:31).

5.5.2   Findings from the empirical study

From the empirical study the following information was obtained:

The larger percentage (79%) of respondents that participated in the study indicated that they did not receive training in teaching LSEN (c.f. 4.2.9). According to literature reviewed in section 2.2, mainstream teachers were trained accordingly and the separate mainstream and special education with experience to develop the necessary skills and disposition to handle learners with impairments. Based on the literature and empirical study the following could be made by that inclusive education and special education has been viewed as two separate thing and training were done accordingly. Section 2.8 from the literature reviewed Mpya (2007:17) indicated that teachers lack competency in managing their inclusive classrooms and this is a serious problem as it makes them feel stressed and lack confidence. If teachers are not confident in their teaching it means that the success of inclusive practices will be a failure and this will lead to LSEN being disadvantaged.

Fifty-seven percent (57%) of the respondents stated that they did not receive formal training to teach in an inclusive class (c.f.4.2.10). The literature reviewed in chapter 2.9.2, Landsberg (2006:20) revealed that for teachers to teach in an inclusive school and collaborate for the needs with one another, they need to acquire through pre-service and in-service experiences, a common vision, conceptual framework and language, and a set instructional and technical skills to work with the needs of diverse learners. From the above literature and empirical investigation it is evident that more still need to be done in order to acquainted teachers with formal training to be able to teach in an inclusive classes.

Fifty-five percent (55%) of teachers stated that they did not receive any workshop or course on inclusive education (c.f.4.2.11). According to Pughach and Blanton, 2009, Young, 2008 in section 2.2 the literature revealed that few studies have raised questions about the role and effects of different types of training for different types of teachers, but there has been little systematic investigation of the content of these programmes and what students learn from them about inclusion or inclusive practice. Based on these findings it could mean that a lot of workshops and courses should be

provided by the department to support mainstream primary school teachers to be competent in inclusive settings.

About 65% of the respondents in this research indicated that they had knowledge of the concepts related to inclusive education (c.f.4.2.1).

The larger percentage (79%) of the respondents who participated in the research indicated that they did not have any training to equip them with knowledge, skills and competencies to teach LSEN (c.f.4.2.9). According to literature reviewed in chapter 2.9.1 Naicker (2008:28) pointed out that limited knowledge, experience can lead to the development of prejudice and non-accepting attitudes and to natural discrimination against learners who are different. Based on the above findings larger percentage about lack of training to equip teachers with skills, knowledge and competence, it is evident that necessary trainings equipping teachers to teach in inclusive classes has not yet reached the average standards of implementing inclusive education in mainstream schools.

The majority of teachers who participated in this study indicated that they did not have experience in teaching in an inclusive class with the below LSEN (c.f.4.2.13):

- ✓ Severe / mild intellectual disability (51%)
- ✓ Severe / mild learning disability (44%)
- ✓ Physical disability (58%)
- ✓ Gifted children (75%)
- ✓ Neurologically disability (89%)
- ✓ Emotionally / behaviourally disturbed (34%)
- ✓ Visual impairment (88%)
- ✓ Hearing impairment (76%)
- ✓ Autistic children (94%)
- ✓ Speech impairment (98%)
- ✓ Environmentally deprived learners (88%)

The study reviewed in Chapter 2.2, Mc Lesley &Waldron (2000) state that mainstream teachers seem to be concerned about finding ways for responding to the learners without impairments increasing diversity in terms of academic background,

level of mastery skills and interests. Mostly they feel under resourced and ill-equipped to master this task. The amount of difficulty they already face in the teaching process increases considerably, when learners with impairments are included in their mainstream classes. The above literature reviewed and empirical findings revealed that although there is a widespread support of inclusion at a philosophical level, there are still some concerns that the policy of inclusion is difficult to implement because teachers are not sufficiently well prepared and supported to work in an inclusive ways. They lack knowledge, skills and competency to teach LSEN.

More than 90% of the respondents disagreed that a one-day workshop would be enough to acquire knowledge on teaching in an inclusive classroom (c.f. 4.1).The majority of the respondents 72% agreed that in-service training would ensure that they acquired the knowledge and skills required in an inclusive class (c.f.4.2).More than half (54%) of teachers indicated that a certificate course would make a difference in ensuring that they are competent in an inclusive class (c.f.4.3).The larger percentage (79%) of the participants in this research agreed that a diploma certificate in inclusive education would equip them for the successful implementation of inclusive education (c.f.4.4).The majority (98%) of the respondents in this research agreed that they would like to be equipped with all of the above trainings in order to acquire the knowledge and skills needed in an inclusive classroom (c.f.4.5).Many classroom teachers (79%) feel that they do not have sufficient training and support to meet many challenges presented by the learners in their classes and the general problems facing the school in general. In Chapter 2.9 Naicker (2008:26) commented that it is imperative that teachers needs are taken into consideration. Hall and Engelbrecht identified the needs of teachers as:

- ✓ Needs for knowledge

- ✓ Needs for skills and competencies (trainings)

- ✓ Emotional needs

- ✓ Support needs.

Based on the above findings from literature reviewed and empirical study the majority of teachers would like to be more equipped with knowledge and skills in order to be competent in inclusive classes.

5.6 IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS

In this section I will discuss the findings and to what extent they address each research question. The research questions are therefore restated followed by the discussion of their implication.

5.6.1 Research Question 1: To what extent are teachers prepared for the implementation of inclusive education in the classroom?

Teachers highlighted a number of opinions on their preparedness for the implementation of inclusive education policy in their classrooms. Findings in this research confirmed a lack of pre-service and in-service trainings that would empower teachers with necessary knowledge, skills and competencies required to teach in inclusive classes. With the appropriate support, teachers would gain experience in teaching in an inclusive class with LSEN. The literature study in Chapter 2 Van Zyl (in Mpya,2007: 17) stressed the fact that it is not practically possible in overcoming barriers to learning, but there may be a way of assisting all learners to benefit from inclusive classrooms , that is by empowering teachers in following basic skills so that they may become competent inclusive teachers.

Mainstream teachers generally feel that they are not adequately trained nor do they have necessary skills or knowledge to meet the special educational needs for learners with impairments. Teachers emphasized a need to make a paradigm shift, one that will prepare them for the change to teaching in an inclusive classroom. They also agree that teachers who are prepared have more positive attitude towards inclusive education and are positive to embrace inclusion. However, this appears not to be happening with most of the mainstream teachers. The study reviewed in Chapter 2 indicated that teachers express negative attitudes towards learners with impairments because they have inadequate knowledge of the impairments. The researcher's view is

that for the successful implementation of inclusive education, teachers need to be prepared to change their attitudes, opinion, paradigms and perspectives.

According to (Wade 2008:87) teachers must be prepared in terms of understanding the curriculum appropriate for inclusive education. Many teachers still tend to think tat it is correct to use "one size-fits-all" approach in teaching. This means that teachers are not adequately equipped to differentiate the curriculum whereas curriculum differentiation should not be an exception but rather a central method of ensuring curriculum access. It is also teachers' responsibility to make sure that they make the learning environment as conducive to learning as possible and differentiation at this level is important (DoE, 2011).

According to Department of Education (2011:13) differentiated assessment involves rethinking the traditional practice of having all learners do the same assessment task at the same time. This study identified gaps when assessments are done in mainstream schools. Teachers still assess learners using same tasks for learners not bearing in mind that learners in their classes have diverse needs and their learning abilities and styles are not the same. Preparing teachers for the diverse needs of learners in their classrooms will enable learners of various abilities and with varied experience to best demonstrate what they know.

5.6.2 Research Question 2: What is the nature of training provided by the District Support Team to advance inclusive education in the classroom?

This study found that the majority of teachers in mainstream schools did not receive training in the advancement of inclusive education. Only schools which participated in the pilot project for inclusive education which was conducted by MiET Africa and SADC and those schools which were converted into Full Service schools. The trainings which were provided by DBST, teachers are experiencing frustrations as these trainings provided by district officials do not equip all teachers in the circuit and the officials do not monitor the implementation of what is supposed to be implemented. However, the literature reviewed stressed that all teachers should be prepared to work in inclusive education in their initial training and then have access to further, in-service training later in their careers in order to develop the knowledge and skills to enhance inclusive practice in their settings. It is however evident that the

nature of trainings provided by DBST in advancement of inclusive education did not equip teachers in mainstream schools with knowledge and skills to teach in inclusive classes.

5.6.3 Research Question 3: What is the enabling support strategies required for teachers in an inclusive classroom environment?

Findings from the study reveal that teachers are not provided with adequate support to respond to the challenges that present themselves in an inclusive class. Landsberg (2006:17) acknowledges that support is cornerstone of successful inclusive education. Teachers indicated that they need support from colleagues, principals, ILST, DBST, SSRC and other stakeholders with interest in education. It is also evident that teachers lack emotional support in order to reduce their stress and improve their confidence I teaching LSEN. It is thus recommended that teachers be fully supported because without adequate support for teachers inclusive education will remain a theory and inclusion of learners with impairments into mainstream classrooms will additionally viewed as nurturing increased feeling of tolerance and respect among teachers with inclusive settings.

5.6.4 Research Question 4: What are the recommended strategies for the successful implementation of inclusive education in the classroom?

Based on the findings of the research, the following recommendation may be made.

5.7   RECOMMENDATIONS

5.7.1   Pre-service and in-service training

Based on the literature study as well as the empirical investigation it is evident that teachers in mainstream schools need to change their attitudes in order to ensure implementation of inclusive education effectively and successfully. The majority of teachers in this study felt that they did not have sufficient knowledge to teach in inclusive classes. (c.f.2.9.4) their lack of knowledge and skills led to negative attitudes and misconceptions concerning inclusive education. (c.f.2.7) for teachers to work effectively in inclusive settings they need to have the appropriate values and attitudes, skills and competencies, knowledge and understanding. It is therefore

recommended that at pre-service level special needs should be integrated into all teacher education causes. More importantly, however, teachers who are already in service should be provided with in-service training.

Inclusive education requires that teachers have additional skills to be able to design inclusive lessons with a variety of activities that cater for diverse learner needs (Vietnam, 2012:16). Preparing teachers with essential knowledge and skills for inclusive education also requires the commitment of all actors. Preparing teachers does not simply mean providing prospective teachers with inclusive education skills, it is also important to provide training and support for existing teachers.

Building the capacity for inclusive education must include awareness-raising activities as well as integrated pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes to ensure that teachers are aware, ready and willing to bring inclusive education into action (Vietnam, 2010:31). If teachers in mainstream classrooms are to implement inclusive education they should have the appropriate attitudes, training, support and resources. In-service and specialist teacher trainings should aim to prepare mainstream class teachers for inclusive practice.

For inclusive education to succeed it is vitally important that teachers, principals and other educational stakeholders maintain a positive attitude towards inclusion. In order to build human resource in the field of education, training must be offered both at pre-service and in-service levels. All teachers should be prepared to work in inclusive education in their initial training, and have access to further, in-service training later in their careers in order to develop the knowledge and skills to enhance their inclusive practice in inclusive settings.

Some important aspects in the training of teachers must include the following:

- Training for inclusion should involve the acquisition of knowledge and skills on differentiation and meeting diverse needs that allows a teacher to support individual learning in classrooms.
- Training for inclusion should involve the acquisition of knowledge and skills in working collaboratively with parents and families.
- Training for inclusion should involve the acquisition of knowledge and skills in collaboration and teamwork that facilitate teachers' working effectively in

teams with other teachers as well as a range of educational and other service professionals working within and outside of the school.

- Teacher training systems should provide opportunities for the training of specialized teachers in order to maintain and develop specialist resources for supporting all teachers in inclusive settings.

- Teacher training systems should provide opportunities for shared training opportunities for professionals from different services and sectors in order to facilitate effective collaborative working.

- Trainings should provide opportunities for school/educational organizational leaders in developing their leadership skills and vision in line with the promotion of inclusive values and practices.

- Trainings should provide opportunities for training routes and possibilities for teacher trainers in inclusive education in order for them to deliver the initial and in-service teacher education programmes that promote quality in inclusive education.

- In-service training programme should involve the following aspects:
  - ✓ Screening, identification, assessment and support skills
  - ✓ Case conferences
  - ✓ Demonstration of methods and materials
  - ✓ Conferences
  - ✓ Coaching
  - ✓ Case study discussions
  - ✓ Co-teaching which includes: parallel teaching and alternate teaching.

5.7.2 Support for teachers

Based on the literature study as well as the empirical survey, the researcher has reason to motivate for improved support for teachers in terms of preparing them for the change from mainstream education to inclusive education. The education of learners with or without impairments relies on the commitment and effective support of teachers. (c.f.2.1). Thus, teachers have to deal with complex dilemmas both in and out of the classroom in the process of delivering the curriculum in a way that is relevant to the diverse needs of their learners.(c.f.1.1, 2.1).

Teachers are central to the success of inclusion. The new curriculum expects those in South African classrooms to accommodate learner diversity. Inclusive education is the ultimate acceptance of diversity; however, making a success of inclusion requires more than a change of curriculum (c.f. 2.4). Teachers must be prepared in terms of understanding the curriculum appropriate for inclusive education (c.f.2.4).

To support inclusion of learners with impairments, teachers have to be sensitive not only to the particular needs of individual learners but also to their own attitudes and feelings (c.f.2.4). Support for teachers is the cornerstone of successful inclusive education. Many teachers feel the pressure of unfairly treated by the government because they have no knowledge and skills of teaching and managing inclusive classrooms. If teachers are not adequately supported, they become demotivated, unsure and have negative attitudes towards change.

From the available and relevant literature study and the scientific data from the empirical investigation it is evident that teachers need to be empowered with necessary knowledge, skills and competencies. Without adequate support for teachers, inclusive education will remain a theory and inclusion of learners with impairments in mainstream classrooms will be additionally viewed as nurturing increased feelings of tolerance and respect among teachers within an inclusive setting.

In order to ensure that all teachers are trained and feel able to assume responsibility for all learners, whatever their individual need, an adequate teacher training in initial teacher training or through in-service is an essential prerequisite.

The following recommendations are made with regard to support for mainstream teachers in an inclusive classroom:

- School principals need to accept ownership of all learners and support inclusive placement, in order to inspire these feelings among other school staff.
- Teachers need support from, and to be able to co-operate with a range of colleagues with the school as well as professionals from outside the school.
- Opportunities for teachers to work in teams, where there is possibility for collaboration, joint planning and sharing experiences. This is a strategy for supporting inclusive practice in general.

- Teachers should be empowered and supported through the assistance of institutional level support team, district based support teams and special schools as resource centres. These support structures contribute towards their preparedness for inclusive education.
- An institution level support team should be formed and must be made of learners, parents, teachers and representatives from the community, NGOs and neighbouring schools.
- An ILST could support teachers in the following ways:
  - ✓ Keep records of all learners with additional needs
  - ✓ Support in SIAS
  - ✓ Discuss cases in case conferences
  - ✓ Meet on a weekly basis with teachers who need support.
- District based support teams must be available to provide support to schools and other learning sites. This team will consist of a core of education support personnel with competencies to fulfil their roles in the schools in the district, as well as a network of support resources in the area concerned.

They could assist in the following ways:

- ✓ Make behavioural consultations.
- ✓ Hold clinical consultations to identify and assess learner problems.
- ✓ Assess the entire school system and assist teachers in resolving identified concerns.
- ✓ Ensure accountability, legal and ethical practices and encourage collaborative skills.
- ✓ Governing bodies to be informed of the latest policies which support inclusive education, such as:
  - o Parent empowerment programmes
  - o Health-promoting initiatives
  - o Whole school evaluation
  - o Community-based approaches to education.

5.7.3   Further research

It is recommended that further research be conducted on the following.

1.   Motivation

Inclusive education has been internationally recognized as a philosophy for attaining equity, justice and equality education for all children, especially those who have been traditionally excluded from mainstream education for reasons of disability, ethnicity, gender or other characteristics. While inclusive education has been implemented successfully in many countries, other countries are still in the process of achieving this goal. South Africa is one which is still in the process of achieving the goal. However, the successful implementation of inclusive education is largely dependent on the teacher in the classroom. It is clear from the research that many mainstream schools are still grappling with the changes imposed on them, with a lack of teachers prepared to provide quality inclusive teaching to LSEN and the limitations of the existing support structures that both have an impact on inclusion.

This study was quantitative in nature in terms of understanding educator preparedness for the implementation of inclusive education in the classroom. Further research of qualitative nature is highly recommended as it will assist in the in-depth or deeper understanding of the topic with the aim of developing strategies to equip and prepare mainstream teachers with knowledge, skills and be competent with inclusive practices in schools.

5.8   SHORTCOMINGS OF THE STUDY

The researcher noted the following shortcomings in the study:

- The challenge facing teachers with regard to inclusive education cannot be accurately determined by a questionnaire alone. A structured interview, as a supplementary source of information might have provided a more reliable perspective.
- The sensitive nature of items in the questionnaire might have elicited false or misleading responses and influenced the reliability of the results.

- Although anonymity was required in the questionnaire the possibility exists that, because of teachers' cautiousness, they might not have been frank and fruitful in their responses.

- It can be presumed that many of the teachers who completed the questionnaires drew their responses regarding preparedness of teachers for inclusive education from the media and relevant policy documents. It can be assumed that they provided responses which they felt would be correct rather than exist, such that the majority of teachers indicated what was theoretical rather than what is practical.

- Due to heavy workload of teachers they may have completed the questionnaire in haste.

5.9   FINAL REMARKS

The central focus of this study was to establish whether mainstream primary school teachers in Nongoma circuit are prepared for the challenges associated with the implementation of inclusive education. The study focused on whether they have knowledge, skills, competencies, experience, attitudes, training and access to support structures. Based on available data about teacher preparedness for implementation of inclusive education, it appears that mainstream primary school teachers are not prepared for inclusive education in their classrooms because they lack knowledge, skills and competencies. Teachers also felt that they do not receive adequate support from district officials. These imply that primary school teachers in Nongoma circuit still need adequate support, training and motivation from district and provincial support teams. It is hoped that this study will be of value to all stakeholders in education and that recommendations made concerning training and the improvement for teacher support structures will enhance the successful implementation of inclusive education.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A   Letter requesting permission to conduct research

APPENDIX B   Permission letter: Circuit

APPENDIX C   Permission to conduct research in the KZNDoE

Institutions

APPENDIX D   Letter requesting permission to conduct research:

Schools

APPENDIX E   Letter requesting participation in the study

APPENDIX F   Consent form

APPENDIX G   Questionnaire

APPENDIX H   Language Editing Certificate

P.O Box 1188
Nongoma
3950
20 June 2013

The Circuit Manager
Nongoma Circuit
Department of Education
Private Bag X 5092
Nongoma
3950

ATTENTION: MR. JM Masondo

Dear Sir

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am currently conducting a Research Project aimed at examining **Preparedness of the mainstream primary school teachers in implementation Inclusive Education in Nongoma circuit, kwaZulu-Natal.** This research is towards a M.Ed. degree, and is being carried out under the supervision of Mr. A.A Mdikana and Dr F.D Mahlo at the University of South Africa.

I will need to administer a questionnaire to teachers in the primary schools in the Buxedeni, Msebe and Mona wards in the Nongoma circuit. All information will be dealt with strictest confidentiality and anonymity is assured.

I therefore, request your kind permission to conduct the above mentioned research. The information gathered in this research project is of most importance to all stakeholders with an interest in education in South Africa.

Yours faithfully

Zulu P.D (MRS)
Contacts: 0358310229 / 0822612521

education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

Mrs P. D. Zulu

P O Box 1138

Nongoma

3950
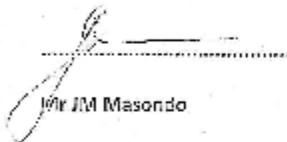
10th September 2013

Dear Mrs PD Zulu

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: NONGOMA CIRCUIT

1. Your letter dated 20 June 2013 has reference.
2. Your request for permission to conduct research in the Primary Schools in the Buwodene, Mecba and Mona Wards is hereby granted under the following conditions:
2.1 That teaching and learning may not be disturbed at any time.
2.2 That appointment be made with principals of these schools to discuss the program with them and arrange for a suitable time.
2.3 That the research results be made available to the District Office.
3. The Circuit Office wishes you all the best with your research.

Yours faithfully

Mr JM Masondo

CES: Circuit Management

Nongoma Circuit

Date

education

Department:
Education
PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

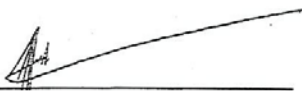| Enquiries: Sibusiso Alwar | Tel: 033 341 8610 | Ref.:2/4/8/555 |

Mrs. Phindile Doreen Zulu
62 Kommissie Street
VRYHEID
3100

Dear Mrs. Zulu

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct a pilot and research entitled: **Preparedness of the Mainstream Primary School Teachers in the Implementation of Inclusive Education in Nongoma Circuit, KwaZulu Natal**, in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education Institutions has been approved. The conditions of the approval are as follows:

1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research and interviews.
2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the intended research and interviews are to be conducted.
6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 January 2014 to 31 January 2016.
7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are under no obligation to participate or assist you in your investigation.
8. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey at the school(s), please contact Mr. Alwar at the contact numbers below.
9. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office of the Department. Please address it to The Director-Resources Planning, Private Bag X9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200.
10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to the school/s and/or institution/s in the Nongoma Circuit of the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education.

Nkosinathi S.P. Sishi, PhD
Head of Department: Education

...dedicated to service and performance
beyond the call of duty

KWAZULU-NATAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
POSTAL: Private Bag X 9137, Pietermaritzburg, 3200, KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa
PHYSICAL: Office G25, 188 Pietermaritz Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201. Tel. 033 3418610 Fax : 033 341 8612
EMAIL ADDRESS: sibusiso.alwar@kzndoe.gov.za; CALL CENTRE: 0860 596 363;
WEBSITE: www.kzneducation.gov.za

62 Kommissie Street
Vryheid
3100
September 2013

The Principal

Dear Sir / Madam

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH AT……………….Primary School

I hereby request permission to conduct research at your school. I am registered for M.Ed. (Inclusive Education) with the University of South Africa (UNISA) under the supervision of Mr. A. Mdikana and Dr F. Mahlo, telephone no: 012 4298212 . The research is about ''Preparedness of the mainstream primary school teachers in implementing inclusive education in Nongoma circuit.'' The objectives of the study are:

1. To determine to what extent teachers are prepared for the implementation of inclusive education in the classroom.

2. To describe the nature of training provided by the district support team to advance inclusive education practices in the classroom.

3. To identify enabling support strategies required for teachers in an inclusive classroom environment.

A quantitative design will be used in conducting the research and the methods for data collection will be in the form if questionnaires. Respondents in the study will be teachers from mainstream primary schools.

Be assured that principles of confidentiality, anonymity and privacy will be adhered to. I have already requested permission from the KZN-Provincial Department of Education and the circuit, been granted permission thereof. (See attached permission).

Thank you in advance.
Yours Truly

P.D Zulu (Mrs.)
Tel: 035 8310 229

APPENDIX E

Dear Teacher

Consent to participate in the research study.

I am presently engaged in a research project towards my M.Ed. degree at the University of South Africa under the supervision of Mr. A. Mdikana and Dr F.D Mahlo. The research is concerned with mainstream primary school teacher's preparedness for implementing inclusive education.

Your response to the attached questionnaire is of most importance in assisting me to determine preparedness of the mainstream primary school educators in implementing inclusive education in Nongoma circuit.

<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:10px;">

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information will be regarded as **CONFIDENTIAL**, and no personal details of any respondent will be mentioned in the findings, nor will any of the results be related to any particular teacher or school.

</div>

You cooperation will be highly appreciated**,**

Yours faithfully

PD Zulu (Mrs.)
Tel: 0358310229

APPENDIX F

CONSENT FORM

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH STUDY

Name: ………………………………………………………….

I hereby give consent to participate in the research study conducted by Mrs. P.D Zulu on Preparedness of mainstream primary schoolteachers in implementing inclusive education in Nongoma circuit, KwaZulu-Natal.

Signed: ………………………………..

Date: ……………………………………

APPENDIX G

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

QUESTIONNAIRE

PREPAREDNESS OF THE MAINSTREAM PRIMARY
SCHOOL TEACHERS IN IMPLEMENTING
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY IN NONGOMA
CIRCUIT, KWAZULU-NATAL

P.D ZULU
SEPTEMBER 2013

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE RESPONDENTS

1. **This questionnaire consists of five sections. SECTION A to SECTION E.**

2. **Please read through each statement carefully before giving your opinion.**

3. **Please make sure that you do not omit a question or skip any page.**

4. **Please be totally frank when giving your opinion.**

5. **Please do not discuss statements with any one.**

6. **Please return the questionnaire after completion.**

Kindly answer **all** the questions by supplying the requested information in writing, or by marking a cross (X) in the appropriate block.

SECTION A: **BI0GRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

A1. Gender

	Code
Male	1
Female	2

A2. Age group

Age group		Code
30-35		1
36-40		2
41-45		3
46-50		4
51-55		5
56-60		6
Older than 60		7

A3. Qualifications

	Code
Academic qualification(s) (e.g. B.A, M.ED etc.)	1
Professional qualification(s) (e.g. HDE, FDE, PTC etc.)	2
Qualifications in Inclusive education	3

A4 .Total number of teaching experience in the teaching profession

Number of years		Code
0-2		1
3-5		2
6-10		3
11-15		4
16-20		5
21-25		6
26-30		7
More than 30years		8

A5.Post level

Post		Code
Principal		1
Deputy Principal		2
HOD		3
Educator		4

A6. Type of position held

		Code
Permanent		1
Temporary		2
Part time		3

A7.Employer

		Code
Department of education		1
Governing body		2

A8. Work setting

		Code
Pre-primary school		1
Primary school		2
Combined school		3
Intermediate school		4

A9.Did you receive any training in teaching learners with impairments?

		Code
Yes		1
No		2

A10.If your answer to A9is 'yes' specify the type of training you have received

Training		Code
Formal		1
Informal		2

A11.Did you attend any workshops or courses on an inclusive education?

		Code
Yes		1

No		2

If you answer to all is 'yes' specify the type of workshop or course you have attended.

SECTION B: KNOWLEDGE OF CONCEPTS RELATED TO
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

B1.Do you understand the meaning of the following concepts?	Yes	No	Uncertain
Inclusive education			
Mainstreaming			
Whole school approach			
Special school			
Full service school			

SECTION C

C1: Do you have experience in teaching in an inclusive class with any of the following difficulties?

Categories	No experience	Little experience	Moderate	More than average	Vast experience
Severely intellectual disabled					
Mildly intellectual disabled					
Severe learning disabled					
Mild learning disabled					
Physically disabled					
Gifted learners					
Neurologically handicapped					
Emotional and behavioral handicapped					
Visually impaired					
Hearing impaired					
Autistic learners					
Speech impaired					
Severe environmentally disadvantaged					
Other					

C2: Indicate if you have had any substantial training in implementing inclusive education in the classroom

	Code

Yes	1
No	2

SECTION D

D1: Indicate ways you would like to learn more on teaching in an inclusive classroom.

	Yes	No
One day workshop		
In-service training		
Certificate course		
Diploma in inclusive education		
All		

SECTION E

E1: The nature and frequency of DBST support that you received to assist learners with additional support needs in their classroom

	Regular	Sporadic	None	Total
Scholastic assessment				
Learning support				
Counseling skills				
Collaborative consultation skills				
Referrals				
Concessions training				
Parental guidance support				
Networking skills				
Case Conference skill				

E2: Support strategies for the implementation of inclusive education

	The following facilities/strategies to make educators more prepared for inclusion are available at my school	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain
1.	An assessment team to evaluate learners with impairments for special teaching methods.			
2.	A record of all learners with additional support needs to help educators with the identification of a specific impairment.			
3.	An institution level support team to assist educators with learners with additional support needs.			
4.	In-service training opportunities for mainstream educators to better cope with LSEN.			
5.	Sufficient funds for resources to facilitate effective teaching of LSEN.			
6.	Opportunities for networking between special and mainstream educators.			
7.	A management team with sufficient knowledge to implement inclusive education.			
8.	A school policy to eliminate discriminatory attitudes towards LSEN.			
9.	A district based support team to assist the school with inclusion challenges.			
10.	Procedures to deal with harassment of LSEN.			

E3: Characteristics of an inclusive educator

	The educator in an inclusive classroom must:	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain
1.	Have trust in the educability of the LSEN.			
2.	Be prepared to accept LSEN unconditionally.			
3.	Show similar respect towards all learners including LSEN			
4.	Have faith in the LSEN 's learning ability			
5.	Understand the emotional problems of the LSEN (e.g. negative self-image).			
6.	Treat all learners in the same way (e.g. not show sympathy with LSEN).			
7.	Punish all learners in the same manner (.not be lenient towards the LSEN.)			
8.	Understand the special educational needs of the LSEN.			
9.	Understand the Len's experience of being different (cerebral palsy)			
10.	Support LSEN to the best of his/her ability			

Appendix H

Acknowledgment of Language Editing

Date: Thursday, 12 June 2014

This is to certify that Language Editing has been carried out on the following:

Preparedness of the mainstream primary school teachers in implementing inclusive education in Nongoma circuit, KwaZulu-Natal

by

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