CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED
BY
EDUCATORS
IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA

by

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SUPERVISOR:

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DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY

I declare that *Challenges experienced by educators in South African classrooms,* submitted for the fulfilment of the degree Master of Education to the University of South Africa, is my own work.

Without committing an oversight, I wish to acknowledge the shoulders upon which I stand. There are academics to whom I remain grateful. Some are referenced in the work, and many were inspiring agents. Sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

_____ _____

MW Ladbrook Date

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To Him be the glory

ABSTRACT

Resting against a background of local and international movements in respect of human rights, South African educators have had to implement a new curriculum, accept diversity and address inclusive education with little or no training, insight and knowledge. Challenges at all levels in education, impact on the successful education of children and the future of young adults who must as equal members of society enter a fast changing global economy. Challenges for educators in South Africa are unique. The lack of knowledge and training for educators and an inadequate infrastructure of the country present as some of the challenges for educators. This qualitative study deals with the subjective experiences of educators in primary schools. The research indicates that when these challenges are addressed educators will be both, better supported and disposed, towards the implementation of inclusive education idealised as the panacea for social transformation in South Africa.

Key words: South Africa; Education White Paper 6 Special Needs Education (2001); inclusive education; challenges; macro level; meso level; micro level; classroom educators; barriers to learning.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS and ACRONYMS

ANC	African National Congress
DOE	Department of education
DET	Department of education and training
E Learning and Curriculum Support Services	E-Learning and Curriculum Support Services. It includes four sub units: **E-learning** (electronic learning: computers, electronic assistive devices etc.), **ESS** (which consists of Sport, Youth and Culture, School safety, Values in education and HIV/AIDS) **LTSM and multi-media** as well as **ISS** (Inclusion and Special Schools unit).
HIV/AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
LTSM	Learner teacher support materials
LoLT	Language of learning and teaching
NAPTOSA	National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NCCIE	National Coordinating Committee for Inclusive Schools
NCESS	National Commission on Education Support Service
NCSNET	National Commission on Special Needs Education and Training
NECC	National Education Crisis Committee
NGO	Non government organisation
NEPI	National Education Policy Investigation
OBE	Outcomes based education
P1 educator	An educator on the first level
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
SAFCD	South African Council for Disability
SAIRR	South African Institute of Race Relations
SAIS	Strategies for Assessment, Identification and Screening
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SGB	School Governing Body
SBST	School Based Support Team
SEN	special education needs
SMT	School Management Team
THRASS	Teaching Handwriting Reading and Spelling Skills
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's fund

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CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY EDUCATORS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND, STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM, AIMS AND PROGRAM OF THE STUDY

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

During the last two decades there has been a worldwide move towards listening to the voices of the marginalised and the deprived. Human rights issues have been debated internationally and within South Africa, most robustly. Society has become more open and social relations less formal (Engelbrecht in Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker, Engelbrecht, 2003:7). Political, socio-economic and education transformation has followed. This has created many challenges for educators.

South Africa has obligations to the global order, as well as to its citizens. In 1994 South Africa held its first democratic elections and the new government introduced a long expected democratic constitution. South Africa has been re-imagined as an open state enjoying the right to dignity and equality for all her people. At the same time a trajectory of forces saw education change worldwide. The Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Education (UNESCO 1994) proclaimed that regular schools with an inclusive orientation were the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all. Inclusive schools are intended to provide effective education for the majority of children and improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the entire education system. Similar aims were soon to be pursued in South African education

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 lays the foundation for successive legislation and policy. In 1992, the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI), working on a broadly democratic and non racial premise, had set about developing proposals for restructuring the formal education system into a unitary system of education and training. The principles, upon which the report was premised, were non-racism, non-sexism, democracy and redress. Five goals for education were proposed: non-discrimination, democratic process

and governance, development of a unitary education system, and establishment of equality and effective redress. The Education White Paper on Education and Training (1995) was an important step towards meeting the five goals of the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) report**.** Laws and practices, asserted in the Bill of Rights, embodied in the Constitution and repeated in the South African Schools Act reaffirmed the values of equity and redress (SASA,1996:15). Moreover, the SASA (DNE, 1996:12) gives parents the responsibility of managing their children's schools. The National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training and the National Committee on Education Support Services published the NCESNET/NCESS report (DNE:1997) which informed the Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (DoE:2001). The White Paper 6 mandated that the new Curriculum 2000 implement inclusive education.

Schools had changed in terms of their learner population which had become culturally diverse from 1994 and in terms of curriculum and management, culturally responsive. Schools are public spaces. They have to recreate themselves as democratic public spaces. Educators and academics have a role to play in becoming "transformative intellectuals" as they guide learners towards a democratic society (Nel in Higgs, 1995:136). Nel states too, that a notion of democracy includes the acceptance of pluralism and the recognition of difference between groups. Differences should not be seen as deficits or reason for not belonging.

By 2005 the policy of inclusion, as an instrument for the promotion of social well being and a better understanding of others was being implemented, in varying degrees and levels, in schools in South Africa. Inclusion, as it is understood by academics and policy makers is a practice in education whereby the needs of individual learners are successfully and adequately met. It refers, in particular, to the meeting of learner's needs in mainstream classes. Inclusion indicates a thorough commitment to create regular schools, which are inherently capable of educating all learners. This entails a radical restructuring of schools as organisations, re-evaluation of the curriculum, and changes in pedagogical methodology (Engelbrecht, 1999:25). However, the implementation of inclusion in South African classrooms presents challenges for educators and learners.

The research considers challenges to the effective implementation of inclusion, at three levels, namely the macro, meso and micro level. At macro level the researcher looks at education from national perspective; at meso level the researcher looks at challenges from both provincial level and at district level. At micro level the researcher considers education within the sites of learning, namely the schools. The question arises as to whether schools are successfully implementing inclusion as defined by the Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: Building and Inclusive Education System (DoE 2001). The critical theorist, Skinner (in Higgs, 1998:277) considers the goals of NEPI and the subsequent implementation of new government policies. He contends that the implementation of new policies on education appears to have produced "a dichotomy between education *policy* as stated in broadly democratic and 'critical pedagogy' terms…and a very different market driven (and crisis-driven) *strategy*, tied to constraints of budgets, demands of economic development and hampered by inexperience, mismanagement and disillusionment".

At macro level, the researcher draws attention to the delay in the implementation of the Education White Paper 6, the lack of national funding and the impact of decentralisation which provides schools with the power to make decisions regarding their interpretation and implementation of inclusion policies.

Decentralisation provides the mechanism for giving communities the structural means to operate with a relatively strong degree of autonomy (Soudien & Sayed, 2004:105). These writers argue that, through this, the administrative leadership is consistently compromised by the nature and composition of those who implement it (Soudien & Sayed, 2004:105). With respect to education, the Department of Education, at national level, is responsible for the funding of the sites but is not involved in the management and the control of the sites. (DoE, 2001:37). Thus, the state is not responsible for delivery of education and for decisions taken at sites of learning. With the process of decentralisation, decisions are taken at micro level, which results in a variety of different dynamics, with regard to the implementation of inclusion in schools. Some decisions taken at micro level or at the sites of learning, according to Soudien & Sayed (2004:105), have brought about exclusion. Skinner (in Higgs 1998:284) says that the independence granted to local authorities could mean the entrenchment of local discrepancies in class and privilege in South African schools situated in privileged areas. Soudien & Sayed (2004:107-108) speak of the persistence of racial codes becoming barriers to inclusion in that they remain structures in the school which maintain diversity and

marginalisation. Such racial codes are discernable in policy implementation. One might see this in the governance and institutional ethos, in that the way schools govern and manage their activities based on their understanding of and the value given to the White Paper 6: Special Needs Education.

Accessibility concerns who obtains access to the school and what admission policies are implemented at school. In some schools, principals do not fully understand the implications of the policy on inclusion or they feel the educators are inadequately skilled to accommodate children with special needs (barriers to learning). Such children may be refused admission or tenure based on the strength of criteria as determined by the school governing body, management teams and principals. The curriculum and the ways in which teachers mediate this in relation to inclusion is another factor which may subtly bring about exclusion. The availability of qualified educators is an emerging barrier. According to the national audit conducted a decade earlier, the estimated number of new teachers required by the national system each year is approximately 20 000 but South Africa is producing as little as one sixth of this need. The scale of this inadequacy is escalating (Faller, 2006:4). Skinner (in Higgs, 1998: 277) says that the "validation of all marginalised minorities" causes schools to "become 'sites of struggle' or at least sites for providing a radical challenge to society as it is." These systemic barriers, not mentioned in the Education White Paper 6, may generate a struggle with which schools should come to terms.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Following the release of White Paper 6, teachers face challenges in the implementation of inclusion, in South African schools. The needs of learners with barriers to learning are not being adequately met in mainstream classroom settings as teachers have not had appropriate training and are still grappling with the implementation of Curriculum 2005. Inclusive education holds implicitly that education should take place within a system of formal and informal support (Doe, 2001: 21; 29; 30; 47; 49; Hall, Campher & Smit in Engelbrecht et al. 2003:157). Such support should be provided by districts and, in particular, the department for E Learning and Curriculum Support Services, formerly referred to as the Education Support Services, or ESS, by parents and by the community.

1.2.1 The research questions

The main research question is formulated as follows: What are the challenges experienced by educators in the implementation of inclusive education in classrooms of primary schools in South Africa?

The main research question is subdivided into several sub-questions as follows:

What are the aims and desired outcomes of inclusive education?

In the implementation of inclusive education, what key challenges are faced by policy makers and educators at macro, meso and micro level?

How do educators understand their role as primary implementers of inclusion and how do they experience the implementation process in schools?

To what extent are the educators effective in the implementation of inclusive education in primary schools and what assistance is required from the Department of Education to equip them to implement the policy of inclusion?

What guidelines can be suggested for the improvement of practice with regard to the implementation of inclusive education in South African primary schools?

1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The Education White Paper 6: Building an Inclusive Education System (DoE: 2001) acknowledges the need for further research on inclusion. It states that key levers for change must be identified. The successful implementation of the recommendations of the Paper as policy depends upon substantive understanding of the real experiences and capabilities of systems, institutions and settings (DoE, 2001:20). It requires that causes and effects of learning difficulties in 'ordinary classes' of mainstream education be addressed (DoE, 2001:26). It states that the success of the approach depends upon the education managers and educator cadre (DoE, 2001:29). The Paper calls for effective management, policy, planning and monitoring capacity in the Department of Education under senior management leadership

to guide and support the development of the inclusive education and training system (DoE, 2001:46). Implementation of the recommendations of the White Paper is behind schedule and, according to Wildeman and Nomdo (2007: 1-35), there is a lack of funding. These writers contend that provinces face funding and service delivery challenges due to the absence of a national conditional grant as proposed by the Education White Paper 6 as one of the short-term goals.

These factors stress the need for research and highlight the responsibility of the Department of Education for implementation of the policy. Factors at school level, district level and national level may influence the factors at school level which impact on the successful implementation of inclusive education.

1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to identify the challenges to the implementation of inclusion, as experienced by educators in primary school classrooms in South Africa.

The aim can be subdivided into several objectives:

To determine the aims and desired outcomes of inclusive education

To describe the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa and to identify key challenges at macro, meso and micro level

To investigate how educators understand their role as primary implementers of inclusion and how they experience the implementation process in schools

To determine to what extent educators are effective and what assistance is required from the Department of Education to assist and equip them with the implementation of inclusion

To provide guidelines to improve practice with regard to the implementation of inclusive education in primary schools in South Africa

1.5 RESEARCH METHOD

1.5.1. Literature study

The literature study includes literature on inclusion from global and local perspectives. Use is made of journal articles, books, legislation and sources derived from the internet. The literature study provides a theoretical framework for the empirical study.

1.5.2 Empirical study

An empirical study using a qualitative approach will be carried out. Three former Model C primary schools in a district of Gauteng were selected. This term, former model C schools, refers to state schools which before 1994 offered education to a homogeneous population group, namely white South African children. Since 1994, these schools have been open to all population groups. Primary schools provide education to children from age six to approximately thirteen years. Currently, these schools vary considerably, in terms of the management and the cultural background of learners and educators. Data collection will take place through individual interviews with three school principals and three focus group interviews. Focus groups comprised of between five and eight teachers from each school respectively. Using separate schools, a pilot study with a principal and with educators in a focus group is conducted to ensure that the questions in the guidelines for the interview deliver the data required. Participation in the interviews is voluntary. Principals were asked to request educators from their schools to participate in the focus groups and participants will include heads of department and educators with at least four years experience from both junior and senior sections of the primary school. The focus group interviews took place after school or at a most suitable time as negotiated by the researcher with school principals. Participants were assured that interviews will be approximately one and a half hours in duration.

1.6 DATA GATHERING

The theoretical framework adopted in this study using an epistemological interpretive paradigm as its standpoint. Starting from the premise regards perceptions about successful implementation of inclusive education as the product of personal involvement and the experience of the educators responsible for its implementation, a combination of focus group

and individual semi-structured interviews as involving the various participants. The method of interviewing has been chosen because the quality of data it produces and for its ability to allow the researcher to combine the benefits derived from interviews as well as from participant observation.

1.7 DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected in the form of interview transcripts, is coded and analysed with respect to the themes and issues identified through the literature review. The analysis is concluded in line with the objectives set out in the study. The data analysis process occurs concurrently with the data collection due to the exploratory nature of the study.

1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The following ethical considerations were adhered to:

The researcher assured participants of confidentiality and anonymity. She described the method of obtaining data as well as the intended use of data to participants. This was done through signed letters given the respondents of questionnaires and to the participants in individual and focus group interviews. Participation was voluntary and each participant agreed to the taping of the interview. Research sites were not revealed. Participants were cautioned that they should use discretion with regard to what they chose to say. Permission to undertake the study was acquired from the appropriate educational authority, the Gauteng Department of Education. The request for permission from the Gauteng Department of Education included a declaration of the research design, and method for data collection. The final report of the study is in accordance with recognised standards.

The researcher complied with professional standards governing the conduct of the research. Code of dress was professional and access to the participants was through respective gatekeepers at the research sites.

1.9 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Inclusive education

Inclusive education is education which ensures the right to education of all learners, irrespective of individual characteristics and difficulties, cultural diversity or language orientation, in order to build a just and equitable society. Inclusion acknowledges that all learners, with support, can learn and that all learners should have full access to and are enabled to participate using a common curriculum. Schools should not only be accessible but should also provide education which serves the needs of all learners.

Integration

The term *integration* has, in literature, been used interchangeably with *inclusion* but there are those who consider that each has a different definition. Integration pertains to mainstreaming of children as part of an ambition to integrate the disabled into the community in respect of the different spheres of community life. In the United States of America (USA) the term *mainstreaming* was used and in the United Kingdom (UK) *integration* was used. Children in special schools were *segregated* from the mainstream schools and those children with special needs who were in mainstream schools were *integrated* (Farrell, 2002:53). Integration means that there is an effort on the part of schools to recreate, in a mainstream setting, what special needs schools did for children.

Challenges

The use of the word challenges in this study refers to the factors which educators find difficult to deal with adequately. They are factors which are difficult to address and which make inclusive education ambiguous. It represents the factors which make significant demands upon educators who are the primary implementers of inclusive education.

Learners with barriers to learning

The term, *barriers to learning,* refers to scholars or children in sites of learning who are experiencing difficulty in accessing the curriculum as a result of one or more limiting variables which are not addressed. The term is used instead of Learners with Special Needs. Barriers preventing learners from accessing education may be found at all levels of the system, e.g. within communities, and centres of learning. Barriers may be considered to be extrinsic or intrinsic. Extrinsic barriers experienced by learners in South Africa include the following: environmental and socio economic factors, violence, poverty and environmental degradation and change. Prinsloo (in Landsberg, 2006:28) lists the following as relevant to the children in South Africa:

"The culture of poverty with its resultant under development, environmental deprivation, unplanned urbanisation, unemployment and negative expectations of the future; disintegration of family life, the effects of the decline of moral and value systems, the climate of violence and child abuse in contemporary South Africa, the HIV/Aids pandemic and its effect on the learning climate, language and cultural differences. It includes learners who are victims of abuse, street children, child labourers, learners affected by HIV/AIDS, and the children of refugees denied basic health and education facilities. Such learners are prone to a degree of intellectual impairment and academic backlog due to their deprived socio-economic circumstances."

One may include nomadic or migrant learners; learners who have inadequate schools or inappropriate curricula and teaching; or learners who are pregnant or have young children. In the category of intrinsic causes, are those individuals with medical or physical difficulties. Such are often accompanied by concomitant barriers resulting from emotional aspects. Included are, by way of example, pervasive developmental disorders (PDD). There are also specific learning disabilities; speech and hearing defects; spina bifida; multiple sclerosis; muscular dystrophy and cerebral palsy; visual and aural impairments; and chronic disease. Other conditions include skeletal and muscular impairment, epilepsy and psychological conditions (e.g., autism). There are children with emotional and behavioural problems; moderate learning difficulties and chronic illness.

The term, barriers to learning, is used in preference to the term Special Education Needs (SEN) used during the 1990s. In South Africa the term LSEN was used and meant Learners with Special Education Needs.

Barriers within the system at macro level

Macro level refers to the education system at central government level, namely, the level of national education. "At national level decisions are made regarding policy making and the funding of education. A central committee is usually responsible for the specialised education of the country. This committee determines the broad outline of the policy on specialised education for the entire country, and sees that "…policy is embodied in legislation" (Du Toit, 1997:140). It is at national level that decentralisation of power was considered necessary as a project for democracy.

Decentralisation might be considered a barrier. Decentralisation of power brings about dilution of pre-requisite knowledge and understanding with regard to the implementation of inclusion in centres of learning. There is the consideration that consultation, with academics that have suitable expertise regarding the implementation of inclusion, is inadequate. There are funding and service delivery barriers due to a lack of conditional grants by the government (Wildeman & Nomdo, 2007: 2).

Barriers within the system at meso level

At meso level, barriers include the slow implementation of recommendations of the White Paper 6 by the provincial departments and the districts which are, through decentralisation, moving at different paces and effecting change in different ways. Barriers at district level include inadequate human resources and financial constraints. Wildeman & Nomdo (2007:2-3) indicate that the shift in orientation towards the aims of the White Paper 6 is not understood. Other barriers include a lack of strategic planning and those barriers preventing the establishment of the full service schools and resource centres meant to be an integral part of inclusive education.

Barriers within the system at micro level

Within the schools, barriers include the following: inadequate understanding or the ability to implement the Outcomes Based Curriculum (OBE), negative attitudes of educators, inadequate curriculum management in centres of learning, inadequate support from the Education Support Services (ESS) due to lack of personnel, lack of knowledge or guidance pertaining to the implementation of inclusion, inconsistencies in the implementation of the role by Learner Support Educators where districts have these and the issue regarding conditions of service of LSEs who fill a new role in education. Oversized classes and classes containing learners of significantly varied age groups constitute further barriers for the learners and for the educators. This is particularly so in township schools. Another factor is inadequate resources, e.g. unavailability of psychological support or other service from ESS, now called E Learning and Curriculum Support, for abused and traumatised learners. It also includes the lack of resources such as text books, charts, and technology.

Medical model or medical deficit model

This model of thinking views the development of children from a psycho neurological perspective. The assumption is that a child develops and learns spontaneously and naturally and deviations to the process are considered as abnormalities or deficiencies.

Educational difficulties were once explained solely in terms of deficits within the child. Educationalists and educational psychologists subscribed to the belief that the deficits could be ameliorated or, if severe, the child would need specialised support. Children often received placement in special schools. The approach ignored systemic factors and the influence of broader socio economic factors in the manifestation of learning difficulties.

The systems theoretical approach

The systems theory approach is a theoretical approach used to eliminate the limitations of other approaches. It considers that human experiences and actions cannot be understood if the contexts in which they occur are not taken into consideration. It accommodates the intrinsic contexts of the medical approach and focuses on the interrelatedness of the systems and part systems pertaining to the individual. The individual is seen as part of the sub-systems of

society. It looks at extrinsic factors and their influence on the individual. It considers that intrinsic barriers to learning may be secondary to the barriers emerging in the sub-systems of which the individual is part. It holds that addressing barriers to learning on all levels and from all perspectives is necessary in order to support the learner. This holds implications for the view that a learners progress may be facilitated by modifications and accommodations to the curriculum mediated in a classroom.

Curriculum and hidden curriculum

Curriculum refers to the set of principles and guidelines which provide both the philosophical base and the organisational structure for curriculum development activities at all levels. The term includes all aspects of teaching and learning such as the intended outcomes of learning, learning programmes, assessment and methodology (Gultig, Hoadley & Jansen, 2002: 30).

The *hidden curriculum* is a term used by curriculum theorists for the teaching which takes place but which teachers do not intend or are not conscious of. It is the learning which is hidden from the learners and educators. Environments in schools often convey what the world is meant to be and not what it naturally is. Thus, learners see the world as it is presented to them. Sometimes "messages" are conveyed in the way classrooms are organised, or textbooks are written. Values associated with particular groups or societies may be conveyed more overtly than others. Sometimes learners are aware of what is conveyed through the hidden curriculum and reject this. This may be in the case of working class learners in a school projecting a middle class environment. Rejection may be evinced in the form of stubbornness or rebelliousness (Hoadley & Jansen, 2002:41). One may consider whether teaching methods bring about labelling, whether a Euro-centred selection of visual aids convey a message that the European world is more authentic than the African world, and management techniques may have implication for a learner's appreciation of the consequences of bad behaviour (Hoadley & Jansen, 2002:43).

Learner support educator

Learner support educators (LSE's) are employed by selected districts in Gauteng to service schools in the district with support to educators and learners. Learners identified as having barriers to learning are referred by the school to the learner support educators. The learning

support educators (LSE) provide support which includes tuition for the learners and individual educational programmes (IEP) for the respective classroom educators to implement. Theirs is a relatively new post, first created in the selected districts in Gauteng, in 2004, in an effort to implement the policy as outlined by the Education White Paper 6 (DoE: 2001). The minimum qualification required is a teaching diploma though most hold a further diploma or degree in Remedial Education or Special Needs Education. The post is school based, and a district dispensation post.

1.10 UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS

Assumptions are considerations or facts thought to be true without checking that they are or not. They are those items that the writer expects the reader to consider true without offering evidence (Hofstee, 2006:88). The following are assumptions made by the researcher in this work.

1. Educators do not meet all the needs of all the learners as idealised by the principles of inclusive education.
2. Educators would be better equipped to meet the challenges of inclusion if the problems they experience with the implementation thereof were addressed by policy makers.
3. The opinions of those at ground level, namely educators, should be heard and addressed.
4. The context of the former Model C primary schools holds similar and dissimilar challenges for educators in the rural and township schools.
5. The researcher assumes that challenges in inclusive education are common to all educators of primary schools in Gauteng and in South Africa generally. There are likely to be variations, just as there are variations in the contexts of schools and in districts.

1.11 THE PROGRAM OF THE STUDY

Chapter one provides the background to the problem, problem statement and aims of the study.

Chapter two provides a literature study of inclusive education and includes an overview of the aims and desired outcomes of this approach.

Chapter three discusses inclusive education in South Africa and highlights trials and tribulations.

Chapter four provides the design of the empirical investigation and covers approach, sampling, data collection and analysis procedures.

Chapter five describes the data analysis and interpretation of the data and presents the research findings.

Chapter six concludes the study and presents certain recommendations based on the findings of the literature study and the empirical inquiry.

1.12 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As a result of the small sample and the qualitative mode of data gathering the findings of this study cannot be applied to schools in all the provinces of South Africa. However, the aim of the study is not to indicate general trends or prove hypotheses. It seeks in-depth information from the point of view of the participants of the interviews.

1.13 CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study is to explore the challenges experienced by primary school educators in the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa**.** The researcher holds, as a premise, that inclusive education is implicitly aimed at social reconstruction, namely the building of a democratic South Africa. This aim, held by citizens in South Africa, is in harmony with the Constitution and education policy and legislation. Successful policy implementation relies on the identification of key levers for policy change and innovation

within the system (DoE, 2001:20). The White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001:29) acknowledges that the educator cadre is responsible for the success of addressing barriers to learning. The validation of marginalised minorities, diversity and special needs in the learning population of a public school renders schools sites of struggle. In chapter two, the researcher had, through the literature study, explored the concept of inclusive education, consider how it emerged and the intention it holds.

CHAPTER TWO

THE AIMS AND DESIRED OUTCOMES OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

New voices are heard and new horizons beacon

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A large amount of literature on inclusive education has emerged over the last decade. Internationally, theories on inclusion have become a key feature of discussions about the development of education policy and practice. In this chapter, the context in which the movement towards the development of inclusion in South African schools has taken place is described. Jordaan and Jordaan (1997:47-51) illustrate the importance of context as a prerequisite for the understanding of human behaviour and experiences. With the hermeneutic method in mind, namely that understanding and meaning are obtained through understanding of context, the research highlights international and local trends which have brought about the practice of inclusion.

A meta approach is used. This is an approach which holds that human experience and action occur as part of interactions of subsystems and are horizontally and vertically interdependent (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1997:46).

Human experience and action occurs as part of a wider human, political and ethical effort to secure a better life. These political and philosophical developments within a social system occur both globally and locally (Engelbrecht et al. 2003:4; Jordaan & Jordaan, 1997:51). In considering the cultural, economic and intellectual movements which may have impacted on education, one obtains an understanding of how inclusive education has emerged.

2.2 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PHILOSOPHY UNDERPINNING OF THE CONCEPT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

2.2.1 The path of social development towards post modernity

The modern era is characterised in the west, by entrepreneurial activity and the development of industry, trade and commerce. It saw the rise of capitalism. Modernity was founded on liberalism, which is to say, human rights. "The maxims of French and American republics

were *liberte, egalite, fraternite;* and *E plurbis, unum* respectively."(Hartley, 1997:17). Hartley says that "…rights could be exercised by the citizens so long as this did not contradict the good of the public." Implicit within modern endeavour is emancipation – social progress and technological progress.

Hartley, (1997:17) states that there is a difference between liberal democracy and capitalism as capitalism must realise inequality, rather than equality. Rights, as conceived in this time, protected the individual. With rights, constitutionally laid down in some countries, came responsibility to place the common good over the private interest. "There was coherence in the industrialization, bureaucracy and a sense of good running order in society" (Hartley, 1997:17). "During this period, says Hartley, (1997:17) science, reason and technology were thought to have all the answers.

The psychometric movement which had begun with the work of Alfred Binet (1847-1911), gathered pace in the early twentieth century. This was particularly so in America. People were classified and rank ordered according to normative criteria, thereby enabling education best suited for an individual's needs, as inferred from test scores (Hartley, 1997:75).

In its quest for certainty, modernism produced uncertainty in many forms, from race relations to religion and morality. "There was stratification in society, elitism, and, synonymous with capitalism, a distinction between the 'have-and have-nots.' There were distinctions between education systems, not only between countries but within strata in society" (Hartley, 1997:75).

As social theories of previous centuries were challenged, philosophy took on new dimensions and there was a turn to postmodernism. Post modernism is a western philosophy that began in the 1980s. It holds disillusionment in science and the scientific method in their claim to universal truth (Higgs & Smith, 2006:110). Critical theorists, such as Karl Marx (Higgs & Smith, 2002:69; Hartley, 1997:33) Jacques Derrida, (Higgs & Smith, 2002:83) and Michael Foucault (Higgs & Smith, 2002:75) sought to question power structures, powerful people, and powerful economies. Postmodernism proclaims disillusionment with science and scientific method and the claim to universal truth. It is a philosophy of the world we experience wherein values of previous years are challenged, society may be seen as holding ambiguities in knowledge and concepts of what reality really is (Higgs & Smith 2006:110). "The modern

world shows signs of disintegration…" (Hartley, 1997:17). Lacking clear divisions between modernism and postmodernism the philosophies seem, says Hartley (1997:17) to 'mix and merge.' "Trade, industry and technology appear, to the man in the street, to be in momentum but there has been transformation in society" (Hartley, 1998:17). Postmodernism is a period where many aspects of the human condition are examined (Higgs & Smith, 2002:144). A more open society with less formal relations was gradually brought about by a series of socioeconomic and cultural transformations. The political arena was swept by an optimistic and positive ideology, with critical views or inequalities and discriminatory practices still prevailing in Western societies (Engelbrecht et al. 1997:7). The development of and commitment to the democratic values of liberty, equality and civic rights have proposed a radically inclusive, participatory form of social discourse in which all modern and post-modern theoretical perspectives are either accepted or rejected on the basis of their contribution to realising democratic values in society (Engelbrecht et al. 1997:7). Societies became inclusive as the social divides were challenged and claims to equal rights established that resonate with discourses on democracy and social transformation.

2.2.2 Events that took place and contributed towards inclusive societies

Burden (1995:46) describes events that led to inclusive values and the implementation of an inclusive approach in education. These include the abuse of people before the Industrial Revolution; human tragedies experienced during World War II; the misuse of research findings concerning intelligence tests, genetics and other human issues; worldwide discrimination in respect of race and gender; and the marginalisation and separation of people such as during apartheid. These factors prevented people from experiencing life to the fullest extent. Society has been seen to exclude certain people through the use of incorrect criteria which simply failed to acknowledge and accommodate a wide variety of abilities and diversity in people who are part of normal creation. Burden (1995:46) writes that, from the perspective of disabilities, the idea of inclusion was historically introduced *inter alia* when in Jerusalem the Israelis established their national rights the 1967 and the policies of normalisation and integration which originated in Sweden and other countries such as Denmark, Norway and the United States, focused on reform in mainstream schools (Pijl, Meijer, & Hagarthy, 1997).

The resulting view of and move towards the implementation of inclusion was considered as a matter of human rights, the ideals behind which go beyond practical considerations. They are deeply rooted in liberal, critical and progressive democratic thought. The purpose of inclusive education is that all children grow to obtain normal and valued roles in that society. This is not a matter of all receiving the same opportunities but rather that all needs are met and the ideal reached. This is the essence of inclusion in all countries.

2.2.3 Socio political transformation and transformation in education

The socio-political transformation had concomitantly brought about growing understanding of the contextualisation of education and of schools as a reflection of society. The result was a profound effect on mainstream and on special education. Danforth and Rhodes (1997:357) suggest that language holds the key to theories and beliefs in respect of disability and categorization, and through language the social construction of disability may be contested. Social constructionists working within the field of special education argue that various forms of disability are not physical absolutes but social designations that are made by people in interaction and relationship. The voices of rights activists, parents of children with special needs and non government organisations (NGO) were increasingly heard. The segregation of special needs in separate schools was increasingly challenged. In 1960 Unesco held a convention against discrimination in education (Engelbrecht et al. 2003:29).

During the past fifteen years, inclusion leaders have advocated for the rights of disability labelled students to be treated as "fully fledged human beings" (Lipsky & Gartner, l987 in Danforth & Rhodes, 1997:357). This emerging view on the rights of the disabled is a reaction to exclusionary approaches that were believed to be discriminatory towards people classified as 'not normal', disabled or disadvantaged.

There was a move to establishing a unitary system by way of *mainstreaming* during the 1970s and 1980s where special needs learners were selectively integrated into mainstream schools on a case by case basis (Engelbrecht et al. 2003:7). At this time, it was believed that those with disabilities had problems within themselves, which could be changed by following certain techniques or strategies so as to fit in with or be made acceptable to the mainstream of society (Burden,1995:47). Discoveries in different scientific fields (medicine and psychology) were used to help such people. The mindset was to correct or ameliorate the difficulty or

disability. A powerful critique of the epistemological foundations of disability and impairment and of the knowledge of special education is provided by current studies in sociology of special education and disability. It is important that one maintains a balance in reflecting on the integrity and implications of knowledge of special needs in respect of the discourse for inclusive education. As the discourse on inclusive education grew in intensity concepts became defined by theorists and specialists in education.

The progress towards inclusion saw the defining of concepts related to the dynamics in the placement of children in mainstream schools. *Mainstreaming* carries the suggestion that the one who does not fit in must be helped to conform to certain criteria, eventually, through the use of strategies and techniques (Burden, 1995:47). Mainstreaming is related to the concept of *integration.* There are different degrees of integration ranging from full time placement of a child with disabilities in a mainstream class in the local school (functional integration) to placement of a pupil in a special class or unit attached to a mainstream school (Farrell, 2004:7). This arrangement exists in some schools, internationally as it does in some schools in South Africa. This and a similar arrangement, whereby children from special schools regularly visit mainstream schools and where special units are attached to mainstream schools are criticised by Farrell, as being a form of tokenism, preferably being described by him as *integration* rather than *inclusion* (Farrell, 2000:154). Farrell explains that even though learners with special needs are integrated there continues to be segregation. The term, *inclusion*, says Farrell (2004:7), describes the extent to which a learner is integrated and the extent to which a learner is welcomed and participates with peers. Inclusion expects society to facilitate the acceptance of those who are different, as they are (Burden, 1995:47). Inclusion is unconditional with programmes to fit the child rather than children fitting programmes (Burden, 1995:48).

Ainscow (in Farrell, 2000:154) provides further insight into the construct of inclusion by saying that mainstream schools should cater for all their pupils as 'inclusive schools for all'. Ainscow refrains from specific reference to labels such as special needs education (SEN). He says that learners will benefit from schools developing inclusive practices for all their pupils. Labels "…become subsumed within a wider agenda of school improvement or transformation in the pursuit of the constructs of equity and excellence for all pupils and as a contributory factor towards an inclusive community (Ainscow in Farrell, 2000:154). When children are fully included, they should take a full and active part in the life of a mainstream school. They

should be valued members of the school community and seen as integral members of it (Farrell 2000:154 and Farrell 2001:7). The concept of inclusion holds that there is implicit and reciprocal responsibility resting both in the school and greater community in terms of support that should be forthcoming.

Education for All (EFA) was the theme of the Jomtien World Conference of Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs (1990) where the world community pronounced their commitment to Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopting a rights based approach to the provision of education in their countries (Unesco, 2000:1). Inclusive education, which is also spoken of as Education for All, was seen as the most effective way of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming societies for all and building an inclusive society. Children with barriers or special educational needs (SEN) should be welcomed as full members of the group and valued for the contribution made, with value vested in diversity. Inclusion was seen as fundamental to the development of individuals and societies. It was seen as the principal means available to foster a more harmonious form of human development reducing poverty, exclusion, ignorance, oppression and war (Delors, 1996:11).

Quicke (1999:281) refers to Hartley in his critical consideration of the "*postmodern turn*" in education. Quicke gives a number of positives, the abandonment of "…elitist cultural forms, the deconstruction of bureaucracy and the opening of spaces for new voices" (Quicke, 1999:281). He alerts his reader to possibilities on "…the darker side" of post modernism, namely "…relativism, nihilism, the chaotic tendencies possibly leading to fragmentation and social breakdown, and, at the level of self, extreme self-centredness and the decentring of the unitary self." Quicke points out the value in what he calls "…an intellectually serious and rigorous analysis of present-day society ….which brings together the cultural, economic and intellectual movements" which have consequence for education.

Quicke (1999:283) discusses the contradictions emerging from the macro contradictions between capitalism and democracy prevalent in western society and the micro level approaches which are learner centred and promoting individual empowerment, and self-reflective and critical thinking citizens. These result in tensions and in contradictions in the implementation of pedagogy. Quicke (1999:284) suggests that "… if practical strategies are to be genuinely radically empowering, they need to be contextualised in ongoing debates in

particular locations where full account is taken of all aspects. This would contribute to the construction of the educational processes and experiences in the locality-the community context; national policies on the curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment psychologies, school traditions, the culture of teaching and material resources. Moreover, critical teachers need to be open to ideas and alternative interpretations of events, and to be aware of the indeterminacies of their own theories. (Quicke, 1999:284). Danforth and Rhodes (1997:357) criticise the inclusion movement for not articulating a logical and consistent philosophy that supports non-exclusionary education of all students. A consistent philosophy for inclusion must inform local policy making as it becomes more evident to educationalists, that, as Quicke concludes in his article and, Schoeman (2007:2) reiterates in hers, educationalists in different countries and indeed in different schools, must think globally and act locally. The Dakar Framework for Action (UNESCO: 2000) on Education holds congruency with this thought. It permits regional definition of policy and strategy more directly related to national realities. It also has obligation to ensure that EFA goals and targets are reached and sustained.

South Africa has a context not equalled anywhere in the world. Learners may have any of eleven official languages as a home language. The social backgrounds, the aspirations of parents and the potential, both, of and for learners in a given classroom are vastly different. South Africans have to find solutions to these unique challenges as well as those of a generalised nature. South Africa has at the same time, a responsibility to a global order. The country has been a role player in international developments in the field.

2.3 INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS CONTRIBUTING TO THE DEDVELOPMENT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations: 1948) asserted that education was a basic human right. This was reaffirmed in 1989 by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that Primary education should be made compulsory and available or free to all.

Guidelines with regard to bringing this about, the support for children and recognition of particular problems in ‘developing countries’ were given. The universal right to education and its extension to children, youth, and adults with disabilities are enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (UNICEF, 2004). Article 23 of the Standard Rules on the

Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (1993) covers the rights of disabled children and includes their right to education that is responsive to their individuality (United Nations, 2008:8).

In 1990 the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand culminated in the World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtien Declaration). Sponsored by a range of United Nations Organisations as well as the World Bank, the Jomtien Conference placed education on top of the international agenda and was an attempt to halt the decline of basic education which had taken place in the 1980s. At this time, many countries were forced to cut down on expenditure in education due to debt repayments and lower export earnings (Rix, Simmons, Nind & Sheehy, 2005:4). Ministers from 155 governments committed themselves at this conference to the principle of universal access to primary education. The conference made attainable, for the first time in history, the goal of basic education for all. It covered the need for education to meet basic learning needs, the development of society and the importance of education in equipping people to cope with the changes that are inevitable in time. It covered too, the need for societies to develop and for countries to prosper through lifelong learning. It stressed the importance of the transmission and the enrichment of common cultural and moral values in the provision of identity and worth for both the individual and society. The paper expanded on the concepts of the vision for basic learning: universalizing access and promoting equity; focusing on learning for the development of society; broadening the means and scope of education; enhancing the environment for education as it holds a place in the greater framework of society; and the strengthening of partnerships both in the educational field and society. It provided for the requirements in order to bring about these concepts. Those at the conference made a commitment to achieve the goals set out in the declaration through the agreed Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs (UNESCO: 2001). Jomtien marked the emergence of an international consensus that education is the most single vital element in the fight against poverty, the empowerment of women, promotion of human rights and democracy, protection of the environment and control of population growth, all significant concerns in respect of sustainable development for the twenty-first century.

The World Declaration on Education for All (UNESCO: 1990) focused on social barriers. This included the marginalised and those who were not receiving education (mostly women and girls). This was written against the background of problematic socio economic factors,

e.g., poverty, rapid population growth, war and civil strife, and crime which developing countries face. The participants at the World Conference on Education for All (1990) reaffirmed the right of all people to education, with a commitment to co-operation between governments and organisations.

The principle of inclusive education was adopted at the World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality (Salamanca, Spain, 1994) and was restated at the World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal, 2000). The idea of inclusion was further supported by the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (UNESCO: 2004) and proclaimed participation and equality for all.

In 1994 more than three hundred participants representing ninety-two governments and twenty-five international organisations met in Salamanca, Spain to further the aim of the world conference in Jomtien (1990) by considering what basic policy changes were needed to promote inclusive education, so that schools can serve all children, particularly those with special educational needs. This would be effectively achieved by including all children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, and linguistic conditions: the disabled and gifted; street and working children; those from remote and nomadic populations; children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities; and children from other disadvantaged or marginalised areas or groups (UNESCO, 1994: 6). Special efforts to encourage the participation of girls and women with disabilities in educational programmes should be made (UNESCO, 1994:14).

In the Salamanca Statement, the rights of the child were looked at in respect of more profound implications. The statement said that every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs (UNESCO 1994: viii). This called for adjustment and modification of curricula and teaching methodology in schools around the globe, as education services were to take into account the diversity of all children. It states that children with special educational needs "must have access to regular schools which with an inclusive orientation would accommodate all children with child centred pedagogy". These would be the most effective ways of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities and building an inclusive society and achieving education for all. Moreover, this would be cost effective for the entire education system. Governments were called upon to give the highest priority to

making the education system inclusive and the adoption of principles of inclusion as a matter of law or policy.

The Salamanca Statement of Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education and a Framework for Action (1994) were adopted by the conference. The Framework for Action outlines new thinking on special needs education and guidelines for action at national, regional and international levels. It proclaims that the fundamental principle of inclusion is that all children must benefit and that all should learn together, where possible, and that ordinary schools should recognise and respond to the diverse needs of their students, while also having a continuum of support and services to match the needs. Inclusive schools are declared as the "most effective" at building solidarity between children with special needs and their peers.

The Salamanca Statement had a powerful impact and influence in stimulating change on national and international levels, even in countries such as United Kingdom which generally held little interest in international proclamations (Rix et al. 2005:5). Dyson (1999:37) suggests that the Salamanca Statement maintains a "rights" based focus, overlooking areas that might better have been researched and debated. He argues that it is ambiguous, because it is the outcome of a political process and therefore subject to compromise between fundamentally different discourses. Research in the United Kingdom has revealed that there is a contrast between the ideological position of teachers and classroom practice (Rix et al. 2005:5). In South Africa this ideological position is still firmly entrenched in the pedagogy of teachers. Many have not yet understood the significance and far reaching effects of global developments which bring about change in education. Many educators have not being empowered to meet the new political initiative for inclusive schools introduced since 1994.

The Salamanca Statement (1994) reaffirmed the purpose of the Jomtien World Conference of Education (1990) with an expanded vision and renewed commitment. The focus of this paper was on those excluded due to socio economic factors and discrimination. The voices of those who originally sought to bring about inclusion for the disabled and those marginalised through disability had been heard. The world, including the millions who had been excluded from education in previous years as a result of societal circumstances to which they were born, was looking at a greater picture. Those disadvantaged through political, cultural and socio economic circumstances were given significant attention. The Standard Rules of

Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities of the United Nations General Assembly (1993) affirms the principle of equal primary, secondary and tertiary educational opportunities for children, youth and adults with disabilities, in integrated settings (United Nations: 2008).

At the World Education Forum held in Dakar, Senegal in 2000 the progress towards inclusive education of all countries was reviewed. The Dakar Framework is a collective commitment to action. Governments had an obligation to ensure that Education for All (EFA) goals and targets were reached and sustained. The forum laid emphasis on the needs of the poor and the disadvantaged, including working children; remote rural dwellers; nomads; ethnic and linguistic minorities; children, young people and adults affected by conflict, HIV/AIDS, hunger and poor health; and those with special learning needs. The task was to discuss a concrete means of action that might take education development forward, and this was done in respect of a number of themes which outlined clear guidelines for all stakeholders and affirmed the proactive role of UNESCO. Education was seen as having a key role in building lasting peace and stability and generating better standards of living. Equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes would ensure that the learning needs of all people are met.

The goal of the World Education Forum and in turn the Dakar Framework (2000) is to achieve 'education for all' by 2015. This would be achieved when all nations act upon their obligation to establish or reform public education systems so that they are accessible to, and meet the needs of, individuals with disabilities (UNESCO, 2007:1). The goal would be considered achieved, when all nations recognise that the universal right to education extends to individuals with disabilities, and when all nations act upon their obligation to establish or reform public education systems that are accessible to, and meet the needs of, these people.

Dakar +5 EFA was held in Dakar in 2005 for the framework review of the implementation of the Dakar World Education Forum (UNESCO: 2007). It saw an imperative to look back at educational development and change in Africa and to discuss concrete means of action that may take education development forward. Some issues addressed were the aspects of achieving universal completion of primary schooling, with the focus on policy and interventions; achieving gender parity in basic education; and interventions in the education sector to help address realities of HIV/AIDS.

Inclusion in Africa was now looked at from an African perspective. In Johannesburg, South Africa on 6 December, 1999, President Thabo Mbeki, in his opening speech at the Conference on Education for African Renaissance in the Twenty-first century, spoke of the 21st century as a truly African century, in which social and economic progress of the African people in a century of durable peace and sustained development in Africa is dependent on the success of the education system (UNESCO: 2007).

Though the thinking may be global in terms of what inclusion means, in Africa, actions have to be addressed in terms of local circumstances. Such include low adult literacy; gender inequality; early school drop out; refugees and internally displaced people; working children; ethnic minorities; those affected by HIV/AIDS; conflict and other emergencies which have spawned an increasing number of orphans and the overcrowding of schools (UNESCO: 2007). President Mbeki affirmed the values of previous international protocols on education for all in this speech, that education should be the collective responsibility of government, civil society and development partners, at all levels, to create dynamic learning organisations with a clear mission for social, economic and cultural development. The education and training sector should become an integrated system managing knowledge and human resources development. The major areas of focus at this discussion were: access and equity; quality and relevance; capacity building and partnerships with the overall aim of an education system providing lifelong learning opportunities to all. The forum dealt with the awareness and the determining of strategies for addressing local needs.

In South Africa there were important local responses to the international developments in the field of inclusive education. These included overcoming social differentiation and institutional fragmentation in education.

2.4 TRANSFORMATION IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

In keeping with the view that education must be seen against a background of the social structure in society and the researcher's intent to consider the impact of social structures in effecting inclusion in schools, an overview of the social and political structures in South Africa which had bearing on the new dispensation in education is given.

2.4.1 The period before 1994

The pre-1994 struggle, "…took place on the national terrain of developed capitalist economy, in which the black majority were subjected to simultaneous exclusion (racial) and inclusion (as consumers and as workers, or future workers, or the reproducers of cheap labour-power)" (Cronin in Pieterse & Meintjies, 2004:19). One might question the use of the term inclusion used in this statement, since in terms of the definition given for inclusion in this document, a more appropriate term may be integration. Racial division between black and white people existed in the workplace as well as in working conditions, social life and salaries and wages. Other indicators of the apartheid legacy in 1994 were the discrepancies in respect of income, housing and basic services, health, unemployment and economic control and share of wealth (Van Donk & Pieterse in Pieterse & Meintjies, 2004:39). In the period 1989-1990, the total expenditure on African education was R1 952 284 000 and, on white education,
R4 392 681 000 (SAIRR 1989/90:787 in Christie, 1992:144). The discrepancies in education were significant and through the 1980s black education went through a crisis which emerged from the seeds of discontent in the 1950s (Christie, 1992:228). In 1985 there was a state of emergency which, according to the sociologist, Wolpe, was a result of the unstable balance of power in South Africa (Christie 1992:274). The National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) was formed in 1986 and sought to address the boycott by black scholars of schools. The ideas and strategies of People's Education began to take shape as black scholars worked towards transformation in the Bantu schools through Bantu initiatives. The concept of People's Education, as a process, was linked to People's Power. According to Eric Molobi, Executive Director of the NECC, the concept of People's Power lay at the heart of the struggle for control over forces, structures and institutions that governed blacks' lives and led to the struggle for democracy in South Africa (Christie, 1992: 279-281). The NECC was banned and People's Education material was banned from the Department of Education and Training (DET) schools before it was developed (Christie, 1992: 287-290). Resistance to apartheid education, which taught a different curriculum to blacks from that that which was taught to whites had, for the most part, less qualified teachers, continued throughout 1988 with over nine hundred schools being affected by boycotts. The DET instituted regulations to provide control of student demonstrations. In the white schools there was Eurocentric education, which was seen as elitist and which prepared scholars for academic progress or for elitist positions in trade and industry; black education prepared scholars for work as labourers.

At the People's Education workshop held in July 1990, Pallo Jordan of the African National Congress (ANC) made a number of points about the future education system in South Africa. This speech explored the links between a democratic education system and society in future. In equipping individuals to live as equals - nationally and internationally- through the appropriate response to diversity, education can become a vehicle for uplifting the working class and preparing all South Africans to take their place in a productive economy (Christie, 1992: 296-297). This speech heralded the introduction of a newly structured education system.

2.4.2 Transformation in 1994

In 1994 South Africa held its first democratic election and the transformation of society commenced formally (Skuy, Youong, Ajam, Fridjhon, & Lomofsky, 2001:2). South Africans looked forward to an egalitarian lifestyle with better living conditions, better education and better opportunities for employment. The new Constitution (DoE: 1996) Act 108, possibly one of the most supportive state based instruments of transformation the world has ever seen, conveys strong assertions of social, economic and cultural rights (Kharam in Pieterse and Meintjies, 2004:124). Public policy and its outcomes are measured against the Bill of Rights. The continuing goal of South Africa is for a better life. The new government of 1994 had to effect transformation through the creation of a new political order, economic growth, industrial transformation and national unity.

2.4.3 The period after 1994

2.4.3.1 The social and economic situation in South Africa

Since 1994 South Africa has experienced the strongest sustained economic growth in its history. GDP grew by 3.5% per annum from 1994 through to 2006, which coupled with a 1.6% population growth rate has seen the South African income per capita increasing by 1.8% per annum for the same period[1] (South African Reserve Bank, I-Net Bridge 2007). However, poverty remains widespread as many find themselves in continuing patterns of unemployment. Foreign direct investment is low and the skills shortage has no direct solution. Although redistribution of wealth to the poor and to black people has taken place and

[1] All economic growth rates are disclosed in real terms. South Africa's nominal GDP and income per capita growth rates for the same period 11.2% and 9.6% per annum respectively.

economic empowerment has been implemented as government policy, poor households and communities often have difficulty sustaining these newly acquired resources. Long-standing and intractable social problems such as unemployment, unequal income distribution, the HIV/Aids pandemic, endemic violence, political uncertainty and continued social segregation, are problems which affect South Africans. Solutions continue in an ebb and flow of success and frustration. As South Africa moves from a racially segregated population to a democratic one, the population currently continues as a product of history, of differing values and one which holds memories of the struggle for equitable inclusion. Whilst South Africans look towards the future, they hold differing experiences, past and present, all of which impact on the perception of transformation as a process, as it continues today.

2.4.3.2 A radical change in education

Von Donk and Pieterse (in Pieterse & Meintjies, 2004:39) state that in South Africa, under the old dispensation, and in particular for those living in rural areas, the rate of illiteracy was highest among the African population, and as much as sixty-one per cent. In 1994 there were significant discrepancies between the pass rate of white and black school leavers. Across the country, learner: teacher ratios showed racial and spatial disparities (Von Donk & Pieterse in Pieterse & Meintjies, 2004:39). With regard to addressing of special needs of learners in education, there were wide disparities. Hartley (997:3) says that education is always set within the realms of the cultural, academic, economic and political context; never above them but always of them.

As part of the far reaching political, social and economic changes aimed at an egalitarian, viable and healthy society, the new political dispensation replaced the previous education policy with a constructivist, Outcomes Based Education (OBE) approach (Skuy et al. 2001:2). Taylor (in Gultig et al. 2002:89) states that the new curriculum takes as its starting point a clear political agenda and the need to transcend the curriculum of the past which perpetuated ethnic and cultural divisions. Outcomes Based Education emerged from the need to emphasise common citizenship and nationhood. The outcomes based curriculum allows for realisation of the values and principles held by the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) founded on a democratic state and common citizenship, holding the values of human dignity, rights and freedom. It sets out a constitutionally based building framework for national and provincial legislative action in the field of education. OBE provides for non-discriminatory basic and

adult education for all. It provides a shift from an 'elite', divided system which contributed towards social inequality to a more open system with more permeable boundaries. It has a single National Qualifications Framework, with multiple learning pathways and is characterised by the growth of new transdisciplinary subjects and programmes.

The outcomes based curriculum was launched in 1997 followed later by a revised version, Curriculum 2005, the National Curriculum Statement. The curriculum, as initially introduced was not easily received and implemented by educators. Kraak (in Gultig, 2002:156) described it as elaborate, complex and bureaucratic. The Revised National Curriculum is more easily implemented but remains the subject of debate amongst educators who have difficulty understanding a competence based curriculum as they had taught for many years using a curriculum which was systemic and contained regulatory features, with discrete subjects and disciplines. The new curriculum is intended to be the vehicle for inclusive education.

2.4.3.3 Developments in the field of special needs education

National education is guided by international trends

The Framework for Action (UNESCO, 1994: 5-47) sets out guidelines for action on a national level. These are listed as follows: policy and organisation which refers to legislation, policy at all levels, practices in education, and financing. School factors include flexible and adaptive systems which take a more adequate account of different needs of children, flexibility in curriculum and support, school management and the need for research. Other factors, on a meso level, include recruitment and training of educational personnel, namely pre-service and in-service training programmes for teachers so as to provide a positive orientation to special needs and inclusion and the advisory role of universities with networking. External support services from various agencies, departments and institutions (e.g., school psychologists, speech and occupational therapists) should be co-ordinated at local level. Priority areas include early childhood education, education of girls, and adult education with specific courses for those with specific types of disabilities. On a macro level the community perspectives, refer to parent partnership community involvement and the role of voluntary organisations or NGOs. Resource requirements state that the development of inclusive schools and achieving education for all must receive a privilege place in the nation's government agenda. There should be pooling of human, institutional, logistic, material and financial resources of various ministerial departments (Education, Health, Social Welfare, Labour, and Youth etc). Guidelines for action on a regional and international level are also given. This section affirms the role played through co-operation among governmental and non-governmental, regional and international organizations in the development of inclusive education.

South Africa is responsible to a global order and to a local need

The White Paper on Education and Training in a Democratic South Africa (DoE 1995) introduced key initiatives in response to inclusive education (Swart in Landsberg, 2005:17). These included the National Qualifications Framework (NQF); the new curriculum, Curriculum 2005; and the new language policy. It also announced the intention of the Minister of National Education to appoint a National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training and National Committee on Special Needs in Education and Training

(NCSNET/NCESS) (DoE 1997). In 1996 the Commission and the Committee were established and their task was to make recommendations on all aspects of 'special needs' and 'support services' in education and training. This had to be done according to the principles of democracy, consultancy and involvement in the public sector. South Africa has had to commit to a system answerable to the diverse needs of the country. The central findings of the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training and the National Committee on Education Support Services (NCSNET/NCESS) (DoE, 2001:5) were as follows:

Only a small percentage of learners in need of special education benefited from special education and support which was provided on a racial basis, with the best human, physical and material resources reserved for whites. The result was that most learners with special needs or with disabilities were excluded or mainstreamed 'by default' or oversight. The curriculum and education system as it was, could not adequately respond to all learners with differing needs and from diverse backgrounds, resulting in early school leaving through failure or by dropping out. Though some attention had been given to special needs in the schooling system, other bands of education had not made similar provision. Learners needed a system whereby they could all participate and all become active members of society (DoE 2001:5). The recommendation of the NCESS/NCSNET report was for an education and training system which would promote education for all and foster the development of inclusive and supportive centres of learning that would enable all learners to participate actively in the education process so that they could develop and extend their potential and participate as equal members of society.

The new education system would be guided by the principles outlined by the above mentioned document. It held the values of human rights and social justice for all learners; participation and social integration; equal access to a single, inclusive education system; access to the curriculum, equity and redress; community responsiveness; and cost effectiveness (DoE, 2001: 5).

South Africa has complex diversified conditions in the nine provinces. These pose a particular challenge to an inclusive education system. There are differences in terms of fiscal allocation; previously inherited disparate service provision; rural and urban disparities; and

infrastructures which present major impediments to a uniform system of inclusive education (Engelbrecht et al. 2003:20).

2.4.4 The challenges and solutions

2.4.4.1 The struggle to reduce disparities in society

Apartheid policies, poverty and illiteracy have left a legacy of severe disparities between white and black citizens in South African society. Consequently, learners of all ages find themselves in a society challenged to meet the most fundamental needs of all its citizens. This is reflected in the inability of poverty stricken families to meet their most basic needs such as nutrition and shelter. In educational contexts, socioeconomic related factors contribute to high teacher: learner ratios, shortages of textbooks and other resources and limited provision of school and district based educational support. South African learners are faced with personal and environmental stressors that put them at risk for emotional, behavioural and academic difficulties (Engelbrecht & Green in Engelbrecht et al. 2003:19).

Founded on the Constitution, the National Education Department takes up the summons and responsibility through policy building and guiding principles to provide for a caring and humane society in a democratic state with common citizenship. The obligation is to provide basic education for all. The education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (DoE, 2001:46) as informed by the National Commission on Special Needs Education and Training and the National Committee on Education Support Services (NCESS/NCSNET) describes these strategic areas of change.

2.4.4.2 A changed paradigm of thinking

Inclusive Education calls for a changed paradigm of thinking in order to accept the challenges in education. In South Africa inclusive education and training is clearly stated as, *inter alia*, education that acknowledges that all children and youth can learn and that all children and youth need support. The education structures, systems and methodologies should be enabled to meet the needs of all children. Differences in children, whether due to age, gender, ethnicity, language class, disability, HIV/Aids or other infectious diseases should be acknowledged. It acknowledges the role, responsibility and potential for community and family in settings, both formal and informal, in support of all learners. Attitudes, curricula,

teaching methods and environment should change in order to meet the diversity of learners. Maximising the participation of all learners in the culture and curriculum of education institutions and the identifying and minimising of barriers to learning are part of the defining principles of education in South Africa (DoE, 2001:7).

2.5 SOUTH AFRICA'S POLICY FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The Education White Paper 6. Special Needs Education. Building an inclusive education and training system (DoE: 2001) became the policy for change in special needs education in an effort to implement inclusive education.

2.5.1 The objective and goal of the white paper

The central objective of the White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (DoE: 2001) "is to extend the policy foundations, frameworks and programmes of existing policy for all bands of education and training so that education and training system would recognise and accommodate the diverse range of needs"(DoE, 2001:24). The development of an inclusive education and training system that would uncover and address barriers to learning, and recognise and accommodate the diverse range of learning needs is the long term goal as given in White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001:45). The purpose is to build an open, lifelong and high quality education and training system for the twenty-first century. The system should include a range of different institutions, such as special schools or resource centres, designated full service schools and centres for further and higher education and training (DoE, 2001:45). The short term and medium term goals should immediately focus on addressing weaknesses and deficiencies within the system, both past and current. The expansion of access and provision to children of compulsory school-going age, who are not accommodated within the education and training system, should also be addressed. The implementation of these goals was envisaged over for a period of twenty years (DoE, 2001:38).

2.5.2 A framework for establishing inclusive education.

The white paper describes the framework and funding strategy for the implementation of inclusive education. The researcher highlights some of the aspects covered in the paper. The aspects covered are relative to the implementation of inclusive education in the primary schools.

2.5.2 A synopsis of the funding strategy for inclusive education

The funding strategy proposed by the White Paper 6 took into account the country's fiscal capacity. An important feature of this is the emphasis on cost-effectiveness and exploiting the economies of scale [2] that result from expanding access and provision within an inclusive education and training system. The paper acknowledges the need to develop human resources, fiscal and institutional capacities. It acknowledges too the burden put on educators in terms of the learner: educator ratios and recognises the dependency the system will have on the skills from 'special needs' sector. It recognises the need for sourcing funding from provincial budgets, and local and international donor funding. The paper proposed that the national Government provide new conditional grant funding for non personnel resources. There is a 'revised resourcing model' to dedicate a pool of posts for the educational support system (DoE, 2001:40).

2.5.2.2 A synopsis of the intention of the White Paper 6 at different levels in education

At *macro* level, National Education is responsible for policy formulation and implementation. A critical role would be played by the National Department of Education in conjunction with the nine provincial departments of education in the laying of the foundations for an inclusive education and training system. The Minister of Education, within the principles of co-operative governance determines the national policy on norms and standards for establishing the inclusive education and training system. Together with the nine Members of the Provincial Executive Councils responsible for education, the Minister oversees the laying of foundations of the inclusive education and training system. The Ministry reviews all existing policies and legislation for general, further and higher education and training to see that these

[2] Economies of scale mean that if costs are spread over more of the product, the cost per product becomes lower. In the context of inclusive education, if normal schools are able to accommodate learners with barriers, the cost of educating these learners is reduced.

are consistent with policy proposals put forward by the white paper. Policies are to provide the basis for overcoming causes and effects of barriers to learning (DoE, 2001:27). The Ministries of Health and Welfare, in collaboration with the provincial Departments of Education, plays a role in early identification of learners with severe barriers who require learning support. The Ministry would play an advocacy role in communicating the proposals of the White Paper 6 to collaborate and communicate with community based NGOs, with organisations for the disabled, health professionals and other members of the public who play an essential role in supporting and building the inclusive system. HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases would be dealt with by the Ministry on an ongoing basis so as to analyse the effects on the education and training system. Programmes, identifying orphans and co-ordinated care for learners, would be put in place. Referral procedures for educators and support strategies would be provided to educators.

The intention is that all learners would be accommodated in appropriate settings (DoE, 2001:27). Urgent attention would be given to barrier free physical environments to provide accessibility to learners with disabilities. The education support systems would be strengthened through district based support teams and institution level support teams (DoE, 2011:29).

Meso level refers to the district offices which work under the provincial office as the head office. The role of the provincial departments of education is to build capacity and manage its introduction. Effective management systems would be established in respect of strategic planning, management information systems, financial management and curriculum development and assessment (DoE, 2002:46).

District based support teams, as the centre of the education support service, would be comprised of staff from provincial, district, regional and head offices, and from special schools. Their function is to evaluate and build capacity in schools, early childhood and adult basic education and training centres, tertiary colleges and further and higher education institutions. The primary function is to support the learning and teaching process by identifying and addressing learner, educator and institution needs through the establishment of institution level support teams. The district support teams and institutional-level support teams would be required to provide curriculum, assessment and instructional support in the form of illustrative learning programmes, learner support materials and equipment,

assessment instruments and professional support for educators at special schools/resource centres and full service schools and other institutions" (DoE, 2001:49). Through supporting teaching learning and management, district based support teams would build capacity of schools (DoE, 2001:29). The district based support teams should provide a full range of education support services which include not only human resources such as para-professionals, but professional development for the institution based support teams.

Micro level is institution level and includes schools and special schools. At this level, the researcher looks at the proposed development of the infrastructure at institution level and at the strengthening of the capacity of the educator cadre.

South Africa historically had mainstream schools and special schools for learners with special education needs. These schools specialised in a particular category of special need such as schools for the deaf or schools for children with learning disability or schools for the blind. At the outset, the paper clearly indicates that special schools hold an important position in education and they would be strengthened rather than abolished. South Africa, like the UK and the US, plans a two track system together with inclusion in mainstream or ordinary schools (DoE, 2001:3). Special schools would cater for the severely disabled and as part of the district support services, play a role as resource centres for all schools. Primary schools would be designated for conversion to full service schools so that provision can be expanded and accessibility improved for those learners with special needs. The full service schools would be provided with improved and suitable resources so that a wide range of learners would be accommodated. Full service schools should be incrementally developed and thus the development of models for inclusion would characterise first steps in the implementation of inclusion (DoE, 2001:4).

The White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001:32) affirms that the situation that existed prior to the intention to develop inclusive education and wherein remedial classes, special schools and programmes provided for the special needs of learners, is inappropriate as it fails to be cost effective and to provide participation for learners (DoE, 2001:32). Programmes would need review that they provide comprehensive education, are cost effective and provide for the psycho-social needs of the learners (DoE, 2001:32). The researcher acknowledges that this calls for a radical rethinking of the existing structures in terms of service delivery which must provide for appropriate life skills and programme-to-work linkages.

The Ministry recognises that the success of the approach to addressing barriers to learning rests with the education managers and education cadre. Through the collaboration with provincial departments of education and the departments at district level, access should be provided to educators for appropriate pre-service and in-service training and professional support services. The Ministry affirms that norms and standards for educator training would include competencies in addressing barriers to learning as well as provide specialised competencies such as life skills, counselling and learner support (DoE 2001:29). Developing the professional capacity of educators in curriculum development and assessment would be addressed through the support of district support teams.

The inclusive system in South Africa has been initiated and structured through National Education and carries a message of support from the 'top down' to the classroom with networking on all levels, between departments and corroboration with community, both NGOs or non official organisations. Inclusive education is a system with a network of support. All learners do the same curriculum and all are expected to reach the same critical outcomes, as formulated by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA l997). The curriculum is aimed at producing a prosperous, truly united, democratic and internationally competitive country with literate, creative and critical citizens leading productive, self fulfilled lives in a country free of violence, discrimination and prejudice (Gultig et al. 2002:89). These are high ideals and noble initiatives for a new and prosperous South Africa.

2.6 CONCLUSION

The researcher has shown how the panoply of economic, social, political and cultural trends and relations - globally and locally - have impacted on the transformation of education in South Africa. Education not only refers to the building of schools and establishing curricula but is implicitly part of the environmental forces and influences. South Africa is integrated into the global economy which has brought about a renewed commitment to, and articulation of, approaches to education. This is seen to be an investment in human capital.

Inclusive education is a system wide development demanding a wide range of changes involving the whole of the education system and bringing about reform in a number of areas such as the education system as a whole; the reform of the position of disabled people and

marginalised groups in society as a whole; as well as being part of a fundamental democratic reform (Landsberg & Gericke, 2002:28). In South Africa the intention is two fold, namely, to give equal rights to persons of all abilities as well as social reconstruction. Education towards social reconstruction, and towards meeting diversity and multiple abilities is considered to be achievable through the new National Curriculum (2005).

Skuy et al. (2001:1) states that education previously emphasised compliance, conformity and passive absorption of information. In the light of the skills needed in the workplace, the curriculum needed to be reviewed. The new political dispensation in South Africa has replaced the content-orientated, rote learning based curriculum of the previous regime with an Outcomes Based Education (OBE) approach. The new curriculum was followed by South Africa's policy for inclusive education.

When one considers the changes that education must undergo for the implementation of inclusion, one must consider whether these are realistic and implementable in the current context of South Africa. Each country implements inclusion within the context of that country. One may refer to the Salamanca Statement in considering why inclusion should be held as an ideal and one must look at the Education White Paper 6 in considering all aspects of the theory of implementation of inclusion in South Africa. Engelbrecht (in Engelbrecht et al. 2003:9) quotes from UNESCO (1994: ix) on The Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education "…regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all, moreover they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system". Some continue to hold that it is the right of a child to have specialised education, yet South Africa has not enough of these schools. Many children with barriers to learning are in mainstream schools and are not receiving the education suited to their needs.

In the following chapter, the researcher addresses challenges to the successful implementation of inclusive education in South African schools. Challenges are considered from within the context of education in South Africa.

CHAPTER THREE

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS

South Africa is a current living social experiment.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher looks at factors which appear as challenges for educators in the implementation of inclusion in South African classrooms. This is done in respect of the desired outcomes that the implementation of inclusion is meant to achieve within a South African context. To achieve this there needs to be a clear concept of the paradigm that would serve as the framework from which this chapter will emanate. The researcher considers the meaning of education; reflects on what is meant by inclusive education and identifies factors which impact on the successful implementation of inclusive education. The objective is to determine some of the factors which ought to be addressed in order to enable educators to successfully implement inclusive education in South African primary schools.

Although inclusion in South African schools is officially in effect, factors within the system adversely impact on its implementation as conceived of in the policy documents of the South African Education Department. The researcher contextualises inclusive education in South Africa and against this background, considers challenges at macro level, meso level and micro level. Challenges exist at the different levels of education. They cannot all be individually isolated as to deal solely with one of the three levels described, but interact in a dynamic way. This research deals with some of the factors at macro and meso level which impact on educators and in turn learners, as the schools, at micro level, implement inclusive education.

3.2 THE METAMORPHOSIS OF EDUCATION AS IT BECOMES INCLUSIVE EDUCATION.

Education is defined in the Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary (1981:412): as the "bringing up or training, a child: instruction: strengthening of the powers of the body and the mind: culture". One may bring to mind the Critical and Specific Outcomes of the National Curriculum statement (DoE, 2002a). They reflect values and objectives held by the nation as set out in the Constitution and seen as able to provide for a new and transformed South African society. The National Curriculum statement tries to ensure that all learning areas

reflect principles and practices of social justice, respect for the law and human rights as defined by the Constitution. In particular, the curriculum attempts to be sensitive to issues of poverty and inequality, race, gender, disability and HIV/AIDS.

Prinsloo (2001:344) describes the predominant objective of an education system as the provision of quality education for all learners in order to enable them to realise their full potential and therefore meaningfully contribute to and participate in society. This is iterated in the White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001: 7). Inclusive education is meant to uncover and eliminate social, cultural, and political barriers that prevent access to employment, academic, recreational and residential opportunities previously afforded to those without impairment or disability (Baglieri & Knopf, 2004: 525; DoE, 2001: 5).

Inclusive education is conceptualised as a shared value, accommodating all learners in a unified system of education, empowering them to become caring, competent and contributing citizens in an inclusive changing and diverse society. Although inclusion is a legal and moral imperative in promoting social justice, some exclusive practices continue to marginalize those students with barriers to learning. Baglieri and Knopf (2004:526) describe an inclusive school as follows: "A truly inclusive school reflects a democratic philosophy whereby all students are valued, educators normalize difference through differentiated instruction, and the school culture reflects an ethic of caring and community." Prinsloo (2001:344) describes the key components of the new South African education policy as: meeting the needs of all learners and actualising the full potential of all learners. Inclusion carries both a value and a purpose. Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff and Pettipher (2002:176) say that inclusive education has different meanings in different contexts. Emerging varieties of inclusion have developed in different countries and offer different solutions, but all varieties hold the fundamental principle of the right to quality education for all.

Education must be appropriate to learners' needs and delivery should be given in a supportive and inclusive environment. If these objectives are realised, the 'barriers to learning and development would essentially be removed' (Prinsloo 2001:344). Different schools, due to their differing circumstances, mediate education differently. With democracy came the process of decentralisation. Thus, power to make decisions rests very much with the management personnel of a school and school governing bodies. Education authorities step in when there is a contention and the ruling of the education authority is in favour of the law and

Constitution of South Africa (Soudien & Sayed, 2004:106). For inclusion to take place in all of the many differing school contexts, supporting structures need to be in place. This is critical for the classroom educators who mediate the curriculum.

3.3 A SYNOPSIS OF THE FUNCTION OF EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS AT THE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF EDUCATION

At macro level the Department of Education formulates policy and the new curriculum. It sees that policy is embodied in legislation and decides how specialised education may collaborate with other departments. There are consultations with stakeholders such as the South African Council for Disability (SAFCD), and national councils (Unisa 1997:140).

Structures at meso level are the Provincial Government Department of Education, and the regional districts which fall under the Provincial Government Department of Education. Provincial departments are responsible for implementing policy, coordinating services and responsibly managing fiscal matters. District departments should have a "team of experts to act as consultants to schools, help with organising and assist schools, provide in-service training, and to mobilise services in the community." The team may comprise any or all of the following paraprofessionals: school psychologists, counsellors, experts on learning problems, an expert in the field of educating the disabled, possibly a social worker, speech therapist, physiotherapist and occupational therapist. Such a service should be supportive of inclusive education (Unisa, 1997:141). The researcher highlights certain issues experienced within districts. The Inclusion and Special Schools department which is a part of the E Learning and Curriculum Support service is particularly focused upon. The changing role of the staff in this department is considered. The E Learning and Curriculum Support service includes four sub units: E Learning, Education Support Services (ESS), the Inclusion and Special Schools unit (ISS) and learner-teacher support material and multi media (LTSM). The interaction of this department with schools is 'top down' and provides guidance and support.

At micro level the researcher deals with the challenges as experienced by educators within schools and the environment within which they practise their profession. The micro level also includes special schools or resource centres and parent and community support and Non Government Organisations (NGO's). Educational needs arise from a range of factors inherent within learners. In South Africa these factors are termed 'barriers to learning' (2001:18). Such

factors include physical, mental, sensory, neurological and developmental impairments, psycho-social disturbances, differences in intellectual ability and socioeconomic deprivation (DoE, 2001: 7). The researcher acknowledges that these are challenges for educators, but it is the factors within the system with which the researcher is concerned in this chapter. These factors are the challenges which effectively form barriers which constrain basic education for all learners. Some of these are within the system of education; others within the societal and cultural systems of the people of South Africa. Both constitute systemic barriers and are challenges to educators.

Factors within the system have a direct impact on educators in their roles in inclusive classrooms. Such challenges include: the lack of resources, inadequate learning resulting from various factors such as poverty and socio-economic deprivation, disease (e.g. HIV/AIDS) and various cultural and traditional forces. These are compounded by learning in a language other than mother tongue; crime and violence such as women and child abuse; xenophobia; migrant populations; marginalisation of learners and families; and political and racial tensions.

3.3.1 Putting policy into practice

Implementing the policy on inclusion as mandated by the White Paper 6 is dependent upon a funding strategy (DoE, 2001:37). Although fiscal realities are such that funding is inadequate, the time frame proposed by the White Paper 6, by which inclusive education should be implemented, is twenty years. Conditional grants were proposed in the White Paper 6 for the first five years (DoE, 2001:40). Budgets would be reviewed and reformulated. The expanding of special schools/resource centres, full service schools and district support teams were envisaged as being achievable by 2008. In all schools, change and transformation has been taking place (Wildeman & Nomdo, 2007:1-34). The single most important change for education brought about by national education was a new curriculum.

Education is provided through a curriculum. A curriculum may be described as “the authority structures of schools and their internal organizations, as well as the content and structure of school syllabuses, textbooks and examinations which prepare children for adulthood, in a functional and productive role and in the broader society” (Graham-Jolly in et al. 2002:25).

Thus, the context in which the achievement of societal change is envisaged is through the new curriculum. It advocates and provides for inclusive education within an inclusive society.

In the National Coordinating Committee for Inclusive Schools (NCCIE) draft document, Guidelines for Special Schools/Resource Centres September 2007, the principles underpinning inclusion are listed as follows: the promotion of inclusion and full participation of all learners with cost effective utilisation of resources; placement seen as therapeutic with the aim to reintegrate learners; and district support as a whole and effectively managed programme.

3.4 CHALLENGES AT THE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF EDUCATION

3.4.1 Challenges at macro level

At macro level, the researcher considers the following four aspects relating to the strategies for establishing the inclusive system:

a) The slow roll out of the policy document the Education White Paper 6: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (DoE: 2001)
b) The network of support for educators
c) The lack of financial support
d) The delay in developing the resource centres/special schools and full service schools.

Although it is the task of the Provincial Government to implement these aspects, it is the final responsibility of the Education Department to provide the necessary funding and to oversee the establishment thereof. For this reason the researcher regards the matter as a challenge at macro level.

3.4.1.1 The slow roll out of the Educational White Paper 6

The Education White Paper 6 (DoE: 2001) is the policy mandating inclusion and guiding decision making and change in education. It affirms that all children and youth can learn and that all need support. It acknowledges and respects difference in learners, whether due to age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disability, HIV/AIDS or infectious diseases. The Education White Paper 6 affirms that the government would give particular attention to policies,

legislation and frameworks of schools and college systems which would provide the basis for overcoming the causes and effects of barriers to learning (DoE, 2001:27). The key strategies, as listed by the Education White Paper 6, are the qualitative improvement of special schools with phased conversion to resource centres; overhauling the process of identification, assessment and enrolment of learners at special schools; the mobilisation of out-of-school disabled children and youth of school going age; staged conversion of selected primary schools to full service schools and targeting early identification of learning needs; establishment of district based support teams (DBST) and a launch of a national advocacy and information programme (DoE, 2001:8). Currently, many children are out of school, primary schools have not been converted to full service schools, and special schools are not functioning as resource centres. District Some Based Support Teams (DBST), are in their infancy and hold different infrastructures; some understaffed; and some with appointees who lack academic qualifications. Laauwen (2007) described the roll out of the paper as being far behind the proposed time frame.

Measures developed to support learners who experience barriers to learning, specifically learners with disabilities, must be part of the bigger system of sufficient supply and appropriate utilisation of both teaching and non-teaching staff. Norms have to be developed to ensure that posts for support and special needs are distributed in a cost effective and appropriate way to a range of sites where support must be available. These support sites are the special schools, full service schools and ordinary schools. Posts are presently being provided in the different district for DBST. The researcher recognises an urgent need to put funding for support for learners with disabilities and those experiencing barriers to learning, on a sound and adequate footing while the full strategy on inclusive education is being finalised.

3.4.1.2 The network of support

The White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001) affirms that education is broader than formal schooling and acknowledges that learning occurs in the home and community and within formal and informal settings and structures (DoE, 2001:16). It seeks to maximise the participation of all learners in the culture and the curriculum of educational institutions and to minimise barriers to learning (DoE, 2001:7 &16). It suggests that transformation takes place as follows: disabilities should not be used to segregate learners who should rather be included on every

level. The method of education should be based on the learner's need for support. Inclusion carries the corollary of support. There should be overhauling of screening; identifying and assessing; and enrolling learners in special schools. The latter is to be replaced by a method which acknowledges the central role played by educators, lecturers and parents (DoE, 2001:7). Recently published is a document entitled: Screening, Assessment, Identification and Support (SAIS) (DoE, 2007). To date it has not been implemented though it is currently underway as a pilot study in a district in Gauteng (Du Preez 2008: Personal interview November 2008).

3.4.1.3 Financial support

Funding and service delivery challenges are to be confronted. The White Paper 6 proposed grants as a short term goal, yet by 2007 nothing had come of it (Wildeman & Nomdo, 2007: 2). The writers say that the "absence of the national conditional grant has weakened the quest for funding for inclusive education and special schools" (Wildeman & Nomdo, 2007: 2). At the time of writing, Wildeman & Nomdo (2007:2) stated that there was no clarity on when the prerequisite norms and standards for the funding requests would be published. The writers continue that there is no strategic campaign and integration strategy for inclusion of the marginalised children and youth with disabilities. Provision of 'top down' support from district offices, should be to the classroom through strategies and interventions and capacity building. Special schools should act as resource centres for educators and schools in areas. Conversion of special schools into resource centres, and public primary schools into full service schools planned for 2008 is now thought to be achievable by 2009 (Wilde& Nomando, 2007: 3). Setbacks are expected, say the writers, in that there will have to be considerable improvements to the infrastructure of the schools. This lack of ordinary or mainstream schools has had a negative impact on educators, particularly those educators in mainstream education, as well as on the learners. This is because schools have large classes and some children receive education under trees and in schools lacking adequate infrastructure. There is a lack of financial resources at Provincial Government to build schools (Serrao in The Star, 2007:5). Wildeman & Nomdo (2007:2) state that poor funding is an important delay in the non implementation of policies.

3.4.1.4 Conversion of special schools to resource centres

Conversion of special schools to resource centres would have to take into consideration the context of individual schools (NCCIE, 2007: 2). Some of the most difficult factors to address are the ownership of school buildings, partial ownership of buildings in schools, partially qualified and partially skilled teachers, inadequate staffing, especially non teaching staff and care professionals in hostels, lack of learner teacher support material (LTSM) and material resources, and the reliance on the disability grant for payment of school fees by learners.

Currently, special schools seek to retain their particular area of expertise. They carry specialised equipment which reinforces their role within their area of specialisation. These schools plan to admit only learners with a need for high levels of support. Documentation is currently speaking of Levels 1 to 5 in level of need for children with barriers (SIAS 2007). The highest levels are Level 4 and 5 (NCCIE: 2007). At national level, there is ongoing work being done in conjunction with union members and leaders from special needs schools.

The National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (DoE : 2007) is a document drawn up to provide a strategic policy framework for all learners experiencing barriers to learning and development within the education system, including those enrolled in special schools. The purpose is to develop a profile for each learner from the day of entry to school. It is structured so as to enable teachers and schools to understand the support needs of all learners and to enhance delivery of the National Curriculum Statement. It is a process to enable assessment at the level and extent of support needed to maximise learner's participation in the learning process (DoE: 2007).

During the International Special Education Congress 2000 (ISEC) held in Manchester in July 2000, groups of learners were listed as still being excluded from education. These included those who had enrolled in schools but did not achieve adequately; those who could participate if more schools were better equipped to respond to diversity of the learners in communities; and those with impairments who were in need of additional support (Prinsloo, 2001:344). It was acknowledged at the conference that, in spite of a decade of international policy documents, countries have accepted educational approaches that have led towards local policy

making in respect of inclusion and in turn, inclusive practices more responsive to local or domestic contexts.

Considering the local context of inclusive education, the researcher quotes Prinsloo (2001:344) who states that the "operationalisation of inclusive education is hampered by many problems: the need to assess the effectiveness of policy documents to protect individual rights adequately; the need to hear all voices, namely the excluded and marginalised as well as of those experiencing inclusive education; the lack of parent and community response; monitoring effectiveness of teaching strategies in response to individual needs and inclusive practice and the need to evaluate the effectiveness of inclusive education".

The researcher argues that the new education system in South Africa, is still in its infancy and as schools become more responsive to inclusive education, the country would be able to find answers to emerging and unique needs. Challenges and needs, as determined and experienced by schools, should provide the insight for the implementation of inclusive education. Many challenges need to be identified and in turn, addressed at the national level of education where appropriate decisions are made.

3.4.2 Challenges at meso level.

In this study the researcher deals with the Department of Education at provincial level under the heading: provincial level. The districts are referred to under the heading: district level. The researcher considers some factors that impact on the successful implementation of inclusive education.

3.4.2.1 Provincial level

There is not much research on the effectiveness of inclusive strategies at the provincial level of education. The researcher commented above on the goals for provincial education in respect of those held by national education under the heading: Macro level.

a) Strategic goals challenge the Gauteng Provincial Office

At the National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA) Special Schools Conference, 2007, Dr Herman Laauwen, director for Inclusion and Special Schools (ISS) in the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE), discussed the strategic goals as listed at the Gauteng provincial offices, by the provincial director for inclusion for the GDE. They are as follows: the implementation of the approved curricula and special learning programmes in all schools; the monitoring of learner performance; to implement the South African School's Act, 1996; to ensure institutional development and support; to monitor institutional performance at institution level; the establishment of special schools as resource centres; and the support of public schools in relation to learners who have been included in the public ordinary schools as part of the inclusion process.

Laauwen (2007) stated that progress in respect of the above list was far behind the proposed time frame as given in the Paper. Furthermore, there are long waiting lists of children for placement at special schools. Still more children have no place in any site of learning. These strategic goals acknowledge the responsibility of provincial education for policy development, financing, human resource development and monitoring.

b) A lack of knowledge and skills is debilitating in terms of the implementation of inclusion

Wildeman & Nomdo (2007: 2) found that, at both national level and provincial level, there was "no consensus about the parameters of the interventions that were intended to eliminate systemic barriers to learning". Many interviewees who formed part of their research project did not understand the shift in orientation required by the Education White Paper 6. Some believed "it meant a complete overhaul of the system and for others; simply bolstering the special needs schools**"** (Wildeman & Nomdo, 2007:2). This is a concern to educationalists, since it is to the top structures that many educators are turning for guidance and it is the top structures which, through decentralisation, leave many choices and decisions to the districts and schools.

3.4.2.2 District level

At district level the researcher considers in particular the Inclusion and Special Schools unit of the E Learning and Curriculum Support Services. It includes the learner support educators (LSE's) who play a role in the support of educators and learners in implementing inclusive education. The redeployment of specialist teachers as LSE's is in accord with the White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001: 39; 49). This has taken place in a few districts albeit not from the cohort of educators from the special schools, as envisaged by the White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001) but rather those from mainstream experience with special needs who hold a qualification accrediting them as specialist teachers. These learner support educators service several schools but all the necessary structures for their roles are not in place and they themselves finance travelling expenses which impact on sustained service delivery (based on own experience of the researcher as a LSE). There is not yet legislation legitimising their new role and such service is only in effect in certain districts. Learner Support Educators work with the school based support teams (SBST). The SBST represents the first tier for formal intervention at schools and utilises all available community resources. As a vehicle for change, it plays an important role in the paradigm shift to inclusive education.

The White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001) places the process of addressing barriers to learning and participation at the core of education transformation in South Africa. Education support in an inclusive education and training system is described as support of all learners within a systemic and developmental approach. Strategies for developing an inclusive system of support include a focus on collaborative support, e.g. school based support teams, district support teams and incorporation of educational psychologists, school counsellors and also existing special schools as resource centres (Engelbrecht, 2004:22). Special schools had little direction and had been left much to their own devices with regard to their role as resource centres (Du Preez 2007: Personal interview September 2007, Boksburg.) Some special schools have presented courses to educators from mainstream schools but the content has had limited value for many of these educators, who do not as yet have children with the degree of disability catered for by the special schools. Educators in mainstream schools currently seek solutions for the children with barriers most commonly found in their classrooms. The barriers most commonly experienced are behavioural problems, problems synonymous with socio-economic factors and language difficulties (Arentsen 2007). The public schools, also called ordinary or mainstream schools, are left to implement their own interpretation of

inclusive education as they have to seek solutions themselves (Arentsen 2007). Members of staff at district offices have found that their roles have changed. Wildeman & Nomdo (2007:3) state that in some districts there has been "an attempt to reconfigure existing support services to service a broader client base". These writers consider that "… the trend left for districts to develop their own models, is a dangerous trend." Wildeman & Nomdo (2007) also found that interviews reveal "that there is very little common ground binding the main movers of inclusive education, namely those at provincial level". It would then follow that districts are not necessarily receiving guidance based on common initiatives.

a) The role of the district based support team

"In order to come to terms with the new role for the ESS has had to make a shift to an African relevant support service" (Hay, 2003:135). Hay suggests that the origins of the ESS rest in Western education culture and that the service may not be relevant enough for the African continent**.** The philosophy of inclusive education can in many ways not be reconciled with the way the ESS has functioned for the greater part of the twentieth century (Hay, 2002:135). Currently, both roles merge, as the districts seek to support schools in inclusive practice and assist parents in choices appropriate to the needs of the child. The strategy of support by service professionals is to consider the learner holistically, looking at family, school and community functioning (Hay, 2003:136).

The district and especially the district based support team (DBST) which is currently part of a newly created department called E Learning and Curriculum Support Services, have an important role to play in supporting educators at school. The day to day demands of educating diverse groups of children within a limited educational budget is challenging. Educators feel the effect of the lack of training necessary, to implement inclusion. Educators consider the lack of adequate and consistent support structures as contributing to their lack of enthusiasm for the new paradigm in education, namely inclusive education (Engelbrecht et al. 2005:462). District departments have had to restructure themselves in terms of service delivery as changes have taken place in the schools. Results of the study by Engelbrecht et al. (2003:306) confirmed the absence of support services and indicated that educators were in real need of effective continuous support services in an inclusive classroom and school. Support programmes need to respond effectively to the demands of the inclusive system. Authorities

need to render support at school level where educators lack skills and experience (Naidu & Govender 2008; Sunday Times, 28 September 2008:15).

Key role players in the district based support team (DBST)

District based support teams ideally should include therapists such as occupational therapists and speech therapists, along with counsellors and psychologists. Provision is made for such posts but they not easily filled because positions are more attractive in the private sector.

Educational psychologists, who are key role players in the DBST, have had to rethink their role and the effectiveness of their practice in the system's E Learning and Curriculum Support Service. Their approach has moved from a child-centred approach to an ecological and multi level systems approach, suggesting a wider scope of analysis and action as defined by an inclusive approach. Roles include that of collaboration and consultation. The knowledge base of educational psychologists is unique, enabling them to serve as consultants on a number of issues. The credibility of educational psychologists, says Engelbrecht (2004:25), depends upon many variables. These include the extent to which expertise is shared, the provision of feedback and the implementation of problem solving strategies. Educational psychologists continue to provide an important service with regard to behavioural consultation in the many instances that arise in schools. Their service moved from individual diagnostication and provision of individualised strategies to change in learners. This should result from self-identified changes made by the learners themselves.

Engelbrecht (2004:26) says that a child, "…is seen as being part of systemic factors and much care is needed during consultation". He means that the disparities in socio-economic levels and the cultural differences hold value for consideration in assessing children. Engelbrecht (2004:26) says that "educational psychologists, as mental health consultants, can assume key roles in the development, implementation and evaluation of school-based mental health programmes extending primary health facilities in South Africa by using the school as a basis for service delivery. The role of the educational psychologists places them in a strategic position to develop schools, not only as organisations within a changing educational context, but also in turn to contribute towards the development of a healthy teaching and learning environment". This includes a culture of tolerance in curriculum development and within inclusive schools (Engelbrecht, 2004:26). If effective, "the programmes can provide learners with comprehensive, accessible and co-ordinated educational psychological support involving

the resources and strengths of professionals, families and communities" (Engelbrecht, 2004:26).

b) Transformation and human resources

Hay (2003:136) makes the point that although many South Africans of colour have moved into ESS management positions, the majority of registered psychologists and therapists are still white. Hay said that "two problems are created. On the one hand, the new managers had not always come through the ranks, which as a result of lack of knowledge and qualification, impedes management functioning. On the other hand, the white ESS members of staff often did not blend with their clients because of language and cultural issues and thus service delivery to all sections of the population was compromised". Finding suitable leaders at district level has been a challenge. Dave Balt (Sunday Times, 2008:15) said that "far too many have been appointed from normal teacher-level posts straight into senior positions".

c) Change in the service delivery from districts is called for

Hay (2003:137) suggests that service delivery should change by making certain paradigm shifts, some of which are described as follows: to effect change in classroom teaching, there should be training programmes in respect of inclusive principles. Learners should be kept and supported in inclusive classrooms, rather than referred to special schools. Service delivery should be seen in terms of the educational support service rather than psychological services. Implicit here is that staff members, and in particular, a specialist educator - the learner support educator (LSE) - should support both learner and teacher. Further, the inclusion specialists of the district based support teams should have the prerequisite knowledge and skills to render a proactive supportive service to all schools. This implies a huge shift requiring substantive creativity and assistance to those teachers who refer children for placement in other settings. Educators often do not recognise the authority vested by district departments in the LSE's who hold the same post level as the classroom educators do. Hay (2003:137) says that the staff at district offices need to be knowledgeable, educationally trained and hold experience in classroom teaching. The researcher is of the view that LSE's should be adequately provided for in terms of number so as to adequately service all schools in respect of the schools' needs. Another point made by Hay (2003:137) is that the ESS (now part of the E Learning and Curriculum Support Service) at district offices, should work closely with all the adults

involved with the children as a child is seen as part of the ecosystem. Hay (2003:137) said that one should be aware of a fixed diagnosis which becomes "disfranchising", and "legititimizes" the individualized pathologies from which, in terms of inclusive education rhetoric, one would wish to move away. Districts need to render proactive support based on a sound knowledge of inclusion as constructed locally and internationally, and of the policy documents in the country.

3.4.3 Challenges at micro level

Skinner in Higgs (1998:277) say that schools become sites of struggle as educators validate "all marginalised minorities, accept diversity in culture and ability and have many new challenges to face".

In research by Wildeman & Nomdo (2007:8), 'public schools' or mainstream schools "were seen by policy makers, government and a range of non governmental organizations as the natural conduit through which inclusive education could develop". These writers consider it necessary to pay extensive attention to the role of public schools in the realisation of inclusive education. Upon this premise, it follows that the challenges of educators should be heard of by policy makers. Swart et al. (2002: 175) researched those areas which need to be addressed in order to equip mainstream teachers for their challenging task in implementing inclusive education. Two of those listed by these researchers are the training for the implementation of inclusive education and insufficient facilities and resources. The researcher adds a negative learning environment; stress factors inhibiting work fulfilment, negative attitudes; and lack of parental and community involvement. The researcher extrapolates upon these factors as they are discussed, in further detail hereunder.

3.4.3.1 A lack of training for the implementation of inclusive education and the struggle without knowledge and skills

Educators have not received formal training in respect of the implementation of inclusive education either from either pre-service or district offices. The researcher is of the view that quality and definition of service delivery is relative to the training and skills of educators. Educators are described in the Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001:18) as the primary resource for achieving the goal of an inclusive education and training system. It must

therefore be in the interests of education that educators are adequately trained for new demands in education.

Knowledge and skills are two fold. Educators need a knowledge base for inclusive education as, in the very least conceptualised by the policy documents. Moreover, they need knowledge and skills for teaching diversity in the classroom. The latter includes an understanding of barriers in order to modify and adapt teaching methodology in the classroom. Educators need support from knowledgeable management teams at institution level and from personnel in district offices, in order to implement inclusive education. Conversely, a resistance to the concept of inclusive education does not predispose an educator to a willingness and confidence to make significant modifications to her teaching methodology.

Faller (2006:5) talks of an inadequate training of teachers saying that "universities are ill equipped to provide adequate teacher training programmes for all school phases". Rural teachers who come to "…better equipped universities in cities often become urbanised and do not return to rural areas" (Faller, 2006:5). From the above it may be reasoned that the educator cadre is not well trained and prepared for current challenges in schools. Moreover, there is a lack of leadership and expertise as well as increased class size ratio for those already in schools.

Wildeman & Nomdo (2007:18) consider a "…blind spot…. in the Education White Paper 6, to be the lack of discussion of the role of public schools in realising delivery goals." Educators in the schools lack knowledgeable and competent support from higher levels in education. Theories (Slee, 1997:409) on special education which must be grafted into mainstream education leave educators challenged as they face unaddressed ambiguities in their personal constructs of inclusion and perceptions of how to implement it. Moon addressing the Teacher Education at a Distance Conference (Unisa 2008) stated that 85% of teacher education was pre-service education. This means that an educator in the profession for a possible thirty year period may not receive any further professional development.

Prinsloo (2001:345) says that South African schools need to be restructured and she quotes Weeks (2003:23), who claims that community based involvement is essential as skilled and experienced staff can effectively bring about better delivery of the curriculum, and actualise the full potential of the learners. Educators need to be trained in pre and in service

programmes to focus on the strengths of learners and to regard the different cultural and ethnic backgrounds of learners as having the potential to stimulate a richer learning environment. They also need to understand the diverse needs of the learners in their classrooms, to identify their problems and to be able to give support to all their learners in order for them to learn and develop optimally (Prinsloo, 2001:345). Possibly the single greatest challenge facing education is the re-education, the training of educators to think and work from a new frame of reference, as it is they who deliver the service and they who bring the curriculum to the learners. The need to 'support teachers' in the implementation of inclusion is accepted internationally. The White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001:29) recognises this need. The Education White Paper 6 Special Needs Education (DoE, 2001:18) states that it is critical for staff development, and ongoing assessment of educator's needs to take place at both school and district level.

Landsberg (2005:61) quotes Scruggs and Mastropieri, saying that for inclusive teaching, teachers need systematic and intensive training, either as part of their initial training, or as well-planned in-service training by competent and experienced people. Many educators do not feel adequately prepared to understand and cope with the multitude of demands made upon them in respect of teaching children from contexts far removed from their own. Educators experience challenges through inadequate and ineffective training. As key to successful implementation of an inclusive system, educators will need time, on going support and in-service training. Thus, change needs a long term commitment to professional development (Swart et al. 2002:175). The Education White Paper 6 (2001:18) speaks of curriculum and institutional barriers to learning. These include the content; the language or medium of instruction; the organisation of the classroom; methods and processes used in teaching; the pace of teaching and time available to complete the curriculum; the learning materials and equipment used; and assessment.

Within the former model C schools, there are tensions with regard to the change of curriculum and management of the curriculum. Teachers and the management staff consider that the new curriculum is turning out less educated children with lower level of skill or competency in the three R's. The policy documents on assessment appear to not be sufficiently explained. In turn

they are not understood and explained by management teams.[3] The result may be a limited understanding of the teachers in respect of policy and the curriculum and the essence of how curriculum might be mediated.

This would not only bring with it a sense of struggle in schools for those learners who have education in a second language but becomes a challenge for teachers who are without training and knowledge necessary to understand cultural differences or how to modify curriculum for learners with a home language different from the language of teaching. Currently, in schools where English is the language of learning and teaching (LoLT), the curriculum has a Western orientation and learners from African cultures are forced into this. Learners with communication difficulties due to cultural differences which inherently have different home languages from the LoLT in English-medium schools, have difficulties in understanding and conceptualisation. This constitutes a challenge for educators lacking training in addressing cultural differences in the mediation of curriculum.

The quality and nature of teaching practice varies between schools. This is dependent upon resources within the schools, leadership and management and the attitude and ability of teachers. Many teachers are competent but, through lack of understanding of the national curriculum and its corollary, inclusive education, lack not only the confidence but proficiency and desire in teaching the new curriculum. Many may fail to understand the essence of what inclusion is meant to be, namely the participation of all learners and addressing the needs of those with diverse abilities and backgrounds.

3.4.3.2 An inadequate infrastructure

a) ***Resource insufficiencies***

The term 'resources' is used within the context of regular schooling or mainstream schools and refers to material and human resources available to the educators from within the school or given them from the districts. Resources should increase the range of options for a range of identities and differences in schools. These are mediated through curriculum, pedagogy and school organisation. Teaching inclusively requires the "grafting of traditional special

[3] In South African Schools the school management team (SMT) is responsible for, amongst other tasks, the implementation of curriculum in the classrooms. The team gives educators guidance and support with regard to curriculum matters.

education practices and additional material and human resources" into mainstream schools (Slee, 1997:409). Material resources include funding; classroom resources such as books, visual aids and computers; availability of programmes for learners with barriers; and assistive devices. Human resources include adequately and appropriately trained educators in every school; the ratio of educators to learners and the network of support within the school educator cadre (White Paper 6: 2001). This includes a functioning school based support team (SBST). Human resources include expertise available from district personnel, especially the DBST which is part of the Inclusion and special schools department (ISS). The requisite resources should be in place alongside the learners in the mainstream environment in order to achieve inclusion (Slee, 1997:412). Material resources are discussed under the heading, financial resources. Human resources are discussed in respect of educator supply and the support for educators from DBST as educators at schools face pressure to deliver a better infrastructure and service delivery for all learners.

Lack of financial resources

At the 1990 World Conference on Education for All in Thailand (Unesco1990), it was said that national governments in developing countries typically lack the tax generated resources to fund education on an adequate level. South Africa, in the mid 1990s, and consistent with the progressive new constitution, which identified basic education as a right for all citizens, had made nine years of education compulsory for all children (Fiske & Ladd in Chisholm, 2004:57). At the same time, the government made an explicit decision to encourage state schools to supplement public funds with school fees. This was done even as the African National Congress (ANC) during the final years of the struggle declared that all children should have access to free basic education. This policy has had to continue in South Africa, in spite of global pressure to eliminate school fees. Two of the reasons given by Fiske and Ladd (in Chisholm, 2004:58) are the limited availability of public resources and the pressure for local control over education.

The setting of school fees is optional in the sense that a school can impose such fees only when authorised to do so by a majority of parents attending a budget meeting at the school (RSA, 1996:21). Once fees are approved, all parents are obliged to pay these. An exception stood for those who under the provision added in 1998, are exempted from doing so by the action of the school governing body (SGB) because of their low income.

Wildeman & Nomdo (2007:11) argue that Education White Paper 6 fails to acknowledge that real resources are needed to implement inclusive education and modestly precludes the Department of Education from carefully delineating new costs associated with policy changes. Wildeman & Nomdo (2007:18) say that these schools are under pressure to deliver better infrastructure facilities for their learners. Infrastructure facilities include the buildings, the pedagogic resources as well as the ratio of educator to class size. The writers say that the White Paper 6 argues that additional funding should be channelled towards non-personnel expenditure. The national conditional grant meant to address this need, was a short term goal, but did not materialise (Wildeman & Nomdo, 2007:29). Where socio-economic related factors contribute to high teacher-learner ratios, there are text book and other resource shortages with limited provision for school and district based educational psychologist support (Engelbrecht, 2004:21).

Lack of human resources

Human resources, in this context, refers to the educator cadre both in school and in top structures who are responsible for guiding and supporting educators who are in schools. The topic pertains to knowledge and skills, quality of service delivery and the supply of teachers.

Lack of educators

Faller (2006:5) talks of the looming crisis in South Africa in its failure to "produce sufficient number of new teachers to meet the demand." She (2006:5) lists the negatives as, "… increasing levels of occupational stress and job dissatisfaction brought about by perceptions of heavier workloads, new and often poorly understood curriculum and assessment practices which many teachers regard as intimidating and an intrusion into their habitual ways; large classes and often poorly disciplined and disrespectful learners". She considers a "… critical element in the crisis of recruitment as the low self-esteem of the profession as a whole" (Faller (2006:5).

Wildeman & Nomdo (2007:18) found in their research that "…resource difficulties become insurmountable as top structures restrict their service delivery mandates to 'the old special needs education' mode." Poorer provinces are unable to attract and retain suitably qualified professionals to constitute professional support teams (Wildeman & Nomdo, 2007:26). In some cases support services were but reconfigured to support a broader client base (Wildeman & Nomdo, 2007:32). These researchers' work revealed that in top structures

"…little common ground binding the main movers of inclusive education". Adequate funding directly impacts on sustainable and adequate service delivery. The lack thereof must impact on the efficacy of educators in schools.

3.4.3.3 A negative learning climate caused by poverty and emotional deprivation

Schools are increasingly challenged to maintain academic standards as they hold the responsibility to meet the needs of learners and the public (Prinsloo, 2001:344). Children come into schools with limited experiences, background knowledge and foundation skills. A challenge lies in the negative climate caused by poverty and emotional deprivation (Prinsloo, 2001:345).

In South Africa, poverty manifests in adverse factors such as ill health, under nourishment, deprivation, backlogs in education, unsupportive environments, communication and language deficiencies (Prinsloo in Landsberg, 2005:28). There is family disintegration and loss of values and increase of disease. Stressors to which these children are exposed include violence, abuse, under-nourishment, HIV/AIDS, ineffective development transitions and commercial exploitation (Engelbrecht, 2004:22).

An environment such as this is not conducive to the education of children (Prinsloo in Landsberg, 2005:30)**.** The exposure of learners to stressors as described above, as well as the inadequate need fulfilment, put them at risk for emotional, behavioural and academic difficulties (Prinsloo in Landsberg, 2005:33). The poor environmental experiences manifest in inadequate language acquisition, poor cognitive skills, especially for abstract thinking and reasoning, bad behaviour and negative social skills. In poverty stricken families, there is an inability to meet the most basic needs such as a safe environment, good nutrition and shelter. These factors hold implications for both the development of intelligence and the degree and level of support from home so vital for children in the critical first five years of life but also in the primary school years. It becomes incumbent on educators and therapists to develop strategies and skills to meet ever-demanding needs of learners. Schools should implement feeding schemes, support places of safety for children who have no homes to which they may return after school or if they return to child headed families which result from loss of parents due to the pandemic HIV/AIDS. Such children might be included in schools, but are rarely

receptive to education when their emotional lives are unsettled, their home lives insecure and they are deficient in nutrition and good parenting.

3.4.3.4 Stress factors inhibiting job fulfilment

A stressor may be described as a factor that emanates from the environment, acts upon an individual and results in one or more of emotions such as low morale, negativity and lack of commitment. The hermeneutic thread running through this work is brought to mind when considering the writing of Moen, Gudmundsdottir and Flem (2003:359) who say that though we exist in the present, we unavoidably bring with us our past, which is always part of our present. Some of this is conscious and accessible to our memory but, there is too, that which is unconscious and buried and "the two remain indissolubly linked" (Moen et al. 2003:359). As we exist in the present, we also bring the future, which is included because our acts in the present have a purpose, and point into the future. Rather than each being a different reality, the past, present and future are interwoven (Moen et al. 2003:359). It follows then that our educators as they are in the present, bring with them their individual experiences of a past education system, memories of their own schooling, their socio-cultural perspectives and experiences peculiar to the South African context. South African teachers have been subjected to a trajectory of forces or developments in society and in education, and they now find themselves in a new and inclusive education system. This has inevitably brought with it, stress and adjustment issues for many educationalists. Educators though diverse in background, competency and plurality, hold closely similar desires and expectations for their learners, and for their own imagining of themselves as professionals. Differences in the mediation of the curriculum are dependent upon the learner, the educator and the availability of resources in the school. Engelbrecht et al. (2003:294) say that what makes occupational stress for teachers especially significant is that it may not only affect teachers, but may have a negative impact on their learners and the teaching profession as well. Therefore, it is important that the stressors in the lives of teachers be identified and understood (Engelbrecht et al 2003:294). The researcher discusses the following stress factors for educators: class size, unsafe learning environment and administration factors. Others sources of stress for educators are the lack of knowledge and skills and of resources as discussed above.

a) Class size

Swart et al (2002:184) found in research conducted in South Africa, that "large classes were perceived as the most difficult obstacle to the successful implementation of inclusion". In South Africa, schools in townships and rural areas may have fifty or more in a class and very often the group is comprised of learners of different ages. For educators the stress of the challenge of large classes is often compounded by the teaching of children, who have limited support from home and are frequently considered by educators to lack identification with authority traditionally invested in their role as educators.

Educators are further stressed by the robust assessment schedules and extra mural demands. This does not allow a teacher much energy or time to address the needs of those children with barriers to learning. For many educators a learner with barriers is still seen from the medical perspective. If different from other children due to a barrier, the learner is thought to have a problem and therefore not appropriately placed in the mainstream class. If the barrier is not addressed, the learner will not progress adequately and will feel marginalised in the classroom. Such learners may be excluded from certain school activities or the classroom itself. If the teaching environment remains inaccessible to children with barriers, there will invariably be drop out (UNESCO 2000:27).

Inclusive education demands new competency in teaching methodology which requires recognition of multiple intelligences and learning styles and welcomes difference. Responsible pedagogy no longer allows educators to teach as if all learners learn in the same way or at the same pace. Outcomes Based Education is meant to empower teachers to achieve success in their newly defined, inclusive classrooms, but it has not been met with much enthusiasm as for one thing, it involves considerably more administration. This is a stressor for educators.

b) The necessity to fulfil many roles

Educators have found that over the last decade there has been an increase in the demand to fulfil many roles for the learners. They need, more than ever before, to be psychologist, nurse, social worker and specialist teacher and are left with little incentive to fulfil their roles as parent and spouse in their own families (Arentsen: 2008).

c) Unsafe learning environments

There is violence and a lack of discipline in schools (Otto 2008).The culture of fear and aggression amongst learners is becoming increasingly evident from media reports of learners who bring knives and screwdrivers to school and both educators and learners are in unsafe environments. (Mtshali in The Star 2007).

Schools currently address the need to exercise tighter methods of security and monitoring of their pupils than ever before. The heightened need to be alert to anti social behaviour in the schools, as well as to situations of child abuse, presents as stressors for educators who find their roles newly modified in a changing society.

d) Administrative factors

Educators are fast losing the joy of teaching, as they are continually required to change, revise and redo paper work as new ideas are brought into the schools from the district offices. These changes are implemented by district officials whom some educators perceive as having less classroom experience or background knowledge of principles of education than they. The researcher postulates that stressors for educators engender negative attitudes just as negative attitudes might dispose educators towards experiencing situations as stressful.

e) Cultural differences as a challenge

Inclusive education is synonymous with social inclusion (Muthukrishna & Sader, 2004:17). South African schools welcome all children from all cultures, local and foreign, into classrooms but this holds challenges for educators and learners. Nel (in Higgs, 1995:123) considers Bourdieu's theory on culture. The 'cultural capital' into which children have been socialised is consonant with the education children receive. Bourdieu's concept of 'cultural capital' refers to "manners, language usage, habits style and demeanour…" (Higgs, 1995:135). They are the resources and skills necessary to access elite social relations and are the product of education (Muthukrishna & Sader, 2004: 18). In acquiring the skills and resources, a child acquires a particular culture and is socialised into a particular form of behaviour. Therefore, Nel (in Higgs, 1995:135) considers it not surprising that children from wealthier classes, are more 'at ease with education', and achieve better in life. A child from

within a culture of education and a background of rich experiences will achieve better in an education institution which perpetuates the education and values of the culture. Children from different cultures have different values, manners and frames of reference. Inequalities in educational and cultural capital manifest as challenges for educators.

3.4.3.5 Negative attitudes

Allport (in van den Aardweg & van den Aardweg, 1999:28) defines attitude as "… a mental or neural state of readiness, organised through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations to which it is related". Laauwen (2007) spoke of the "hearts and minds" of people which must be changed. Swart et al (2002: 177) say that the school's ethos and the attitude of educators are crucial to successful inclusion. They say that policy makers tend to focus on knowledge, skills and practical support of educators without giving recognition to implicit needs and emotional inhibitions (Swart et al. 2002:178). The researcher considers both the attitudes towards inclusive education and towards the learners with barriers to leaning as contributing to unsuccessful implementation of inclusive education in classrooms. Swart et al. (2002:183-185) summarise their research by highlighting the following contributors of negative attitudes towards inclusive education: inadequate knowledge, skills and training of educators for effective implementation of inclusive education; lack of educational and teacher support; and insufficient facilities, infrastructure and assistive devices.

Research conducted by Jordan and Stanovich (2004:25) concerning the effect of attitudes on teaching style of teachers, revealed that the attitudes if divided into two categories directly relate to instructional characteristics which contribute to the success or failure of learners with special needs in an inclusive setting. The research was conducted over two years in an effort to determine which factors predict difference in regular elementary teachers' classroom practices. The focus was on the teacher's practice with learners with disabilities as they relate to difference in teachers' beliefs about their roles and responsibilities and not only on including children with barriers in their classrooms but also for fostering learning for all of their learners. A factor which predicted the origins of differences in teachers' classroom practice included the prevailing beliefs of the fellow members of staff in the school. Another factor was the collaborative support provided for inclusive practises within the school.

a) Attitudes of educators towards learners with special needs

Cook (2004:316) found that educators adjusted expectations for learners "…with severe or obvious disabilities and therefore develop relatively low accountability and concern about the academic and behavioural performance of these students". This research was particularly concerned with learners with 'hostile behaviours which trigger teacher rejection'. The writer found that when educators had a paraprofessional or teaching aide in the classroom, the educators' attitude changed and they were less rejecting of learners. He found that more teaching experience related to fewer rejections of children with special needs. Thus, educators through enhanced experiences are more effective in coping with problems arising from inclusive education. He found that support from higher authorities saw a rise in educators' expectations for learners with special needs. Cook (2004:317) said that it was possible that the combined effect between variables such as "…resources, parental support, larger budgets and greater availability of special service personnel' contributed to improved attitudes in educators.

Educators have individual attitudes, differences and abilities and many resist the notion of inclusion. Lomofsky (in Engelbrecht et al. 2003:71) mentions that international research suggests that teachers with little experience of people with disabilities are likely to have negative attitudes to inclusion. Lomofsky adds that findings indicate that experience tends to change attitude. Prinsloo (20001:345) refers to the National Committee on Educational Support Services (NCSNET) Document (DoE, 1997:12-19) wherein it is stated that the absence of ongoing in-service training programmes leads to insecurities, uncertainties, low self-esteem and lack of innovative practices which in turn impact on the attitudes of the teachers.

3.4.3.6 Lack of parent and community involvement

Implicit in the philosophy of inclusive education is the significance of the role that parents hold in making decisions about their children and in the support of the children through their education (Engelbrecht et al. 2005:462). Shared ownership among educators, administrators, parents and learners; the shared responsibility for nurturing the development of all learners; and making sure all needs are met; is a critical element in inclusive schools. The White Paper 6 of 2001 (DoE) states that the active involvement of parents in the teaching and learning

process is fundamental to effective learning and development. Parents are a central resource as primary care givers of their children in the education system. Parents are considered partners with teachers and other professionals in ensuring appropriate education for children (Engelbrecht et al. 2005:462).

The South African Schools Act (DoE: 1996) stipulates that the rights and wishes of parents must overrule the admission policy of any governing body of a school, thus giving parents a choice in the placement of their children. The Act embodies the constitutional right to equal access and the right of parents to choose for their children, indicating an understanding that rights are entitlements, not favours (Engelbrecht et al. 2005:461). These values contribute to the expectations of parents that inclusive education can more effectively meet their children's needs and that they will be considered equal partners with professionals in ensuring an appropriate education for their children with disability.

In the research by Engelbrecht et al. (2005), it was found that there are vastly different understandings amongst parents and differences in the degree of involvement of parents with the teachers and schools. In many instances the positive involvement has facilitated the education of a child with barriers, through communication, commitment, equality and respect for successful relationships, in an inclusive school. It is also the experience of many educators, that many parents are neither willing, nor able, due to a variety of reasons, to support their children in the schooling situation. This provides enormous stress for teachers who are experiencing the addressing of the needs of all learners as difficult and impossible in their large classes. The result is that learners fall behind and in due time are referred to the district for placement. Shared ownership and better understanding among professionals, parents and learners for inclusive education is critical though not the only determinant for successful inclusive schools. Laurel, Duhaney and Salend (2000:121) refer to Reichart et al (1989) saying that parents "can be instrumental in the success of inclusionary placements for their children". They can collaborate with school districts and community members to create and support inclusive education programmes and encourage other parents to support inclusive programmes. Laurel et al (2000:121) refers to research by Bronfenbrenner (1974) in saying that parental involvement in schools is related to children's increased academic achievement. He believed the intervention strategies were more effective in improving academic performance than those where parents are not included. In South Africa many parents lack the knowledge and insight for proactive involvement in the education of their children. Of

working parents and in particular in single parent homes, there is a lack of time and energy to put into the educational needs of their children and educators complain of a culture of non-involvement amongst parents (The Star: 2007).

Some learners in South Africa are from 'child headed' families. Some educators effectively use parent support in creative ways but a true presence of positive involvement is not significantly felt in schools as yet. It is still considered by some parents that it is the role of educator to address inclusive education.

3.5 CONCLUSION.

Educators as the principal implementers of inclusive education, hold the key to its successful implementation. It is they who have to educate each and every learner in their care. Their challenges are multi-faceted. Challenges are the stressors under which so many crumble. Today some children have a shaky schedule of values; lack positive and ideal role models; and come from divorced and single parent homes. Apart from their roles as educators, teachers duplicate roles of mother and psychologist, social worker, nurse and minister or spiritual guide, counsellor and friend. Educators feel ill equipped to face those challenges of broken homes, child headed families, child abuse, rape, incest, drugs, licentiousness, violent crime and very much on the increase, the challenging behaviour in the classroom. Educationalists as part of a dynamic and multi-level eco-system need to have all areas of need addressed that they might successfully face the challenges before them. South Africa is volatile and ambiguous, and her challenges demand courage and fortitude. The end point is not known, but educators must hold firm in their belief in the values held in the Constitution of South Africa, and ideals held by the profession. We are currently living a social experiment. In the next chapter the empirical research design is discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The intent of the research is to determine some of the challenges experienced by educators in the implementation of inclusive education in South African schools. The study uses applied research. The findings derived from applied research aimed at contributing towards practical aspects of problem solving, decision making, policy analysis and community development (Terre Blanche et al. 2006:45). McMillan & Schumacher (2001:19) state that applied research focuses on research problems common to a given field. Such research is concerned with the application and development of research based knowledge about a practice. It is research which provides knowledge relevant to providing a solution to a general problem. In this case it is the generalizability of the findings research which are limited to a delineated field. Educational research focuses on knowledge about educational theories and practices (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:19). The intention is to advance research and methodology in a given field (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:18).

In chapter one, the researcher acknowledged the purpose of inclusive education as being social reconstruction in a democratic South Africa. This development in education is in step with international trends. However, it is not without challenges to educators who are responsible for the effective implementation of inclusive education in their classrooms. The intent is to determine the challenges, as experienced by educators in primary schools, and to consider what changes might be made in order to address these challenges.

4.2 THE RESEARCH PARADIGM

All scientific research is conducted from within a specific paradigm, or theoretical framework, which is the way research material is viewed (de Vos, 2004:45; Henning, 2005:25). It is the basic orientation to both theory and research (Kuhn in Neuman, 2006:81). A research paradigm is described by Kuhn (in Mouton & Marais, 1990:145) as the model or pattern, according to which the social scientist views the objects of research. Kuhn suggests that researchers view scientific knowledge as sets of exemplars or paradigms. A paradigm dictates the research agenda by defining what problems count as legitimate scientific

problems and what constitutes acceptable solutions to the problems (Mouton, 2001: 16). The research paradigm for this research is discussed in depth in 4.3.1 of this chapter.

Research may be viewed as a process consisting of five stages:
Stage 1: defining the research question
Stage 2: designing the research
Stage 3: data collection
Stage 4: data analysis
Stage 5: writing a research report.

4.3 THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The questions which shape this investigation are defined as follows:

- What are the challenges that educators in South African primary schools face as they implement inclusive education?

- Which factors should be addressed in order to bring about more successful inclusive education in South African schools?

4.4 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The researcher explored the research questions through the selection of an appropriate research design. A research design specifies the plan for the execution of the research. A research design with a combination of methods and procedures is determined by the research problem and the questions to which answers are sought. Terre Blanche et al (2006: 37) state that a valid and coherent research design takes into account the decisions made and is relevant to the following four dimensions: the theoretical paradigm informing the research, the purpose of the research, the context or situation within which the research is carried out, the research techniques employed to collect and analyse the data.

In this chapter the design of this applied research is discussed in detail under the following headings:

- The theoretical paradigm
- The purpose of the research
- The context of the research
- The research techniques

4.4.1 The theoretical paradigm

Paradigms are central to research design because they impact on both the nature of the research question and on the manner in which the research question is to be studied. Research designs must be coherent with the findings and conclusions as embedded in a paradigm.

This hermeneutic study has typically been embedded in an interpretive and constructivist paradigm (Mouton, 2001:113). Hermeneutics begins with the premise that our task as inquirers in the human sciences is that of understanding the other (Piper & Stonach, 2004:31). Piper and Stonach, (2004:32) consider that understanding requires that one has objective knowledge of which there is scientific grasp and which is based on dichotomous thinking (Piper & Stonach, 2004:33). Interpretive designs highlight the meaningfulness of human action and thinking. They advance a new interpretation on existing text. In this research, it is the reality of inclusive education in purposefully selected former model C schools. A constructivist paradigm assumes that knowledge is socially constructed by people and this has implications for their lives and, through their interactions, with the lives of others.

Paradigms operate within certain dimensions. These dimensions are *ontological, epistemological* and *methodological* (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006:6). Using an *interpretive paradigm*, the *ontological dimension* acknowledges that internal reality consists of the subjective experiences of individuals, and that lived experience should be taken seriously. From the perspective of a *constructivist paradigm,* the *ontological dimension* accepts that reality is socially constructed through discourse. Thus, the *ontological* perspective of the research acknowledges that perspectives of the individual exist as a result of subjective experience and socially constructed realities and that lived experiences should be taken seriously (Terre Blanche et al. 2006:6). Using an *interpretive paradigm*, the *epistemological dimension* maintains that understanding is gained through interaction and empathetic listening. The constructivist paradigm considers that versions are constructed by the observer.

This *methodological dimension* seen from the *interpretive paradigm* relies on the subjective relationship between the researcher and the participants. In the *constructivist paradigm,* the researcher's methodology is deconstruction and includes analysis of discourse and text. The researcher attempts to find the meanings attached by educators, to the phenomenon of inclusive education as implemented in their classrooms and schools. In this inquiry, the researcher describes the lived experience of participants as revealed through focus group interviews and individual semi-structured interviews with principals.

This research examines the phenomenon of inclusive education in South Africa and its implementation. The focus is to make meaning of the constructions held by policy makers, principals, teachers and role players in the specific context of the schools in present day South Africa through the process of interpretive understanding. This work reveals a strong thread of argument according to the ontological perspective which is hermeneutic and mainly inductive in logic. As such, it is interpretive and constructionist rather than positivist.

4.4.2 The context of the research

In qualitative research, the context is accepted in a naturalistic way, the researcher is usually physically present. The context is acknowledged as having an impact on the participants and on the data collected. It holds the idea, in social science, that the meaning of human creations, words, actions and experiences can only be ascertained in relation to the context in which they occur. Personal and social contexts are included (Terre Blanche et al. 2001:275). "The commitment to understanding human phenomenon in context, as they are lived, using context-derived terms and categories, is at the heart of interpretive research, and the development of methodologies for understanding human phenomenon 'in context' is arguably the central achievement of qualitative methodology" (Terre Blanche et al. 2001:276). Meaning depends on context and must be related to the position of perspectives of different participants.

The contexts of this research are both personal and social. The personal views of principals are revealed through interviews. Through focus group interviews, the social context of teachers is revealed. The researcher has analysed these interviews from within the context of inclusive education.

Dey (1993:32) says the need is to take account of contexts: it is a recurrent theme in qualitative research. He continues by saying that contexts are important as a means of situating action, and grasping the importance of wider social and political aspects. The understanding of context is essential to conveying meaning authentically or correctly (Dey, 1993:32).

4.4.3 The purpose of the research

Decisions regarding the implementation of the research are taken by considering the object of the study and the type of study that is implicit in the research question.

4.4.4 The object of study

The purpose of the design refers to both the object of the study, and the type of study conducted. The object of the study is also known as the unit of analysis. The object of this study is the challenges experienced by educators in the implementation of inclusion in South African classrooms. The features studied were those variables which emerged as challenges to educators in the context of the classrooms of four schools purposefully selected by the researcher. Thus, the unit of analysis comprised the group of individuals who were the participants in the research: the individuals who formed the focus groups and the group of principals who were interviewed individually.

4.4.5 The type of study

Along with focus on the object of enquiry, the purpose of a study is reflected in what the researcher aims to attain through the study. Terre Blanche et al (2006:47) and McMillan et al (2001:397) state that further decisions regarding all three of the following types of research must be made by the researcher: a) exploratory, descriptive and explanatory, b) applied and basic and c) quantitative and qualitative.

4.4.6 Descriptive and explanatory research

Studies of a descriptive explanatory nature aim to describe phenomenon and the causal explanations thereof. Descriptive studies seek accurate observations and the research design should focus on validity (accuracy) and reliability (consistency) of the observations (Terre Blanche et al. 2006:45). The focus of an explanatory study designs should be the eliminating of plausible rival hypotheses. Terre Blanche et al (2006:45) states that in the social science community many positivist researchers believe all qualitative research to be exploratory, and that of description and explanation to be the work of quantitative researchers.

This research seeks to describe the challenges experienced by educators and to provide opportunity to initiate social action. It is descriptive, explanatory and emancipatory. It seeks to describe and explain the challenges experienced by educators and seeks to provide direction for those who seek to facilitate and enhance the implementation of inclusive education.

4.4.7 Applied and basic research

This distinction refers to the uses to which the research will be put (Terre Blanche, 2006:45). Findings derived from *basic* research are typically used to advance our fundamental knowledge of the world (Terre Blanche et al. 2006:45). Such knowledge takes the form of general theories about the operation of psychological, social and physical processes and events (Terre Blanche et al. 2006:45). Findings derived from *applied* research have immediate practical application as it is aimed towards practical issues of problem solving, decision making, policy analysis and community development (Terre Blanche et al. 2006:45). Both study the same phenomenon but the approach is done from different perspectives. By definition, applied research is congruent with the aim and intention of this research.

4.4.8 Quantitative and qualitative research

The distinction between quantitative and qualitative research marks a series of differences in approaches to the research. Quantitative research is linked to positivism and qualitative to phenomenology and interpretivism. Qualitative research is known for its in-depth inquiry.

Interactive qualitative research is inquiry in which the researcher collects data in a face-to face situation by interacting with selected persons in their settings (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001: 395). Individual and collective social actions of people are described and analysed through qualitative research. This is done through the interpretation by the researcher, of phenomena in terms of the meanings brought by people to the situations (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001: 395). The importance of such research lies in the potential it holds for theory generation; policy development; educational practice and involvement; the illumination of social issues; and stimulus to social action (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001: 395).

In this research the approach is phenomenological in that it deals with the meanings and essences of the lived experiences of the educators in their settings and interpreted by them against their personal paradigms of thinking and value systems held. The constructivist paradigm upon which this qualitative research is built, assumes, that reality as interpreted by individuals is multilayered, interactive and a shared social experience (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001: 396). The goal is to determine the social phenomena from the perspective of the participants. This is done through more than one strategy with the researcher being immersed in the situations of the participants. Because the settings in which the participants experience their teaching vary, context sensitivity is important, which implicitly holds that interpretation is done in respect of the contexts of the participants.

This applied research study aims to explore the object, which is to determine the challenges experienced by educators. The type of study used is explanatory in that it identifies relationships between the phenomenon, namely inclusion, and the challenges experienced by those implementing it. It is also emancipatory as it creates the opportunity for social action.

4.5 TECHNIQUES

The research design should provide the plan for action. This includes information on techniques employed in the research, namely sample selection, data collection and data analysis.

4.5.1 Sampling

Sampling refers to the selection of research participants from an entire population and involves decisions about which people, settings, events, behaviours and/or social processes to observe. The unit of analysis has bearing on whom or what is selected for the sample. This should be representative of the population about which the researcher aims to draw conclusions. The size should be large enough to allow a researcher to make inferences about the population. Interpretive and constructivist research typically does not draw large or random samples (Terre Blanche et al. 2006:49). A researcher usually chooses between either comprehensive sampling or purposeful sampling. The latter provides a strategy where groups are usually large and resources not plentiful (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:401). The chosen sampling strategy for this research is purposeful sampling. The participants were chosen through identification from prior information so as to enhance data quality. The participants are information rich in that they have all had experience of teaching in an inclusive situation.

The researcher selected a few information rich cases from four different government schools from within a district in Gauteng. The schools were primary schools, all former model C schools, which formerly had entire populations of white learners and educators. Today cultural and racial diversity among the learners and educators in these schools has been established in differing ratios.

Table 4.1 gives the features of the participants.

Table 4.1 Racial group pertaining to participants in the focus groups

School	Number of educators	Educators: Black	Educators: Coloured	Educators: Asian	Educators: White
1	6		3		3
2	7			1	6
3	5				5
4	6	1	1	1	3

4.5.2 Data collection

Qualitative researchers study participants' perspectives with interactive strategies. This requires close involvement between the researcher and the participants who affect one another through mutual interaction. It is possible that there will be diverse perspectives on the phenomenon or variable studied. The qualitative framework requires triangulation through the use of multiple methods of data collection. This increases the reliability of findings. Qualitative studies typically use three main methods of data collection: observation, interviews and reviewing of documents and records.

Research strategies are flexible using various combinations of techniques to obtain valid data. Combination of techniques allows for observation from as many angles as possible which provides for enhanced validity. Strategies include, amongst others, prolonged field work, participant verbatim language, low inference descriptors, participant researcher and participant review (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:407). Qualitative design validity also involves issues of ethics and feasibility because of the variety of designs, research questions and situations. Terre Blanche et al (2001:276) says that qualitative researchers often reject 'objective' measures because social phenomenon are context-dependent; the meaning of whatever the researcher is investigating depends on the particular situation an individual is in.

Mouton (2001:111) lists a number of methodological criteria that ought to be followed during the process of data collection. These include: suspension of personal prejudices and biases; systematic and accurate recording of the observations; establishment of trust and rapport with the interviewee; and creating optimal conditions in terms of location or setting for the collection of the data.

4.5.3 Design and piloting of interview schedules

The researcher used two methods of obtaining data, namely individual semi-structured interviews with principals and focus group interviews with educators. Initially the researcher decided to pilot the questions compiled to guide the interviews and selected a suitable school for the purpose where a focus group interview and principal interview was conducted. However, the pilot study interviews yielded significant data and the questions were demonstrated to be suitable to elicit rich data from the participants. For this reason, it was

decided to add the school to the three other selected schools (thus expanding the sample to four schools) and incorporate the data into the data set. This kind of adjustment is typical of qualitative research which works with an emerging research design.

The researcher is the primary instrument for both collecting and analysing data. Terre Blanche et al (2001:276) say that the researcher must undergo personal change in order to do this. Skills of interpreting and listening and describing and interpreting are difficult to develop and hold the challenge of excluding bias. One uses subjective experiences to make proper sense of phenomenon being studied (Terre Blanche et al. 2001:277)**.**

The interviews with the principals were undertaken with the use of a schedule of questions given to the principals prior to the interview for consideration. Four principals from former model C schools were selected. Focus groups were comprised of between six and eight participants from each school respectively. Four focus group interviews were conducted. Participants were given the question schedule ahead of time so that they might prepare and consider their input for the interview. The researcher used both a dictaphone and a tape; the latter for back up purposes. Transcriptions were made of each of the interviews.

Table 2 gives the demographic features and the gender of the participants from both the focus group interviews and the interviews with the principals.

Table 4.2 Particulars pertaining to participants interviewed

School	Number of educators in focus groups	Gender of educators in focus groups	Principal interview	Gender of principal
1	6	1M 5 F	1	M
2	7	7 F	1	F
3	5	1M 4 F	1	M
4	6	6 F	1	F

4.5.4 Data analysis

The aim of data analysis is to transform information or data into an answer to the original research question. Qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organising the data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among the categories, most of which emerge from the data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:461). The type of data analysis should match the research paradigm and data should answer the research question (Terre Blanche et al 2006:52). An analytical style may be structured or emerge as intuitive but a commonality is that most qualitative researchers employ an interpretive and subjective style (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:461). The systematic process involves selection, categorisation, comparisons, synthesis and interpretation to provide explanations about the single phenomenon of interest (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:462). In this research, the phenomenon of interest is those challenges experienced by educators as they implement inclusion in four former model C schools in South Africa.

Social constructionist methods are qualitative, interpretive and concerned with meaning. Where understanding and interpretive traditions focus on subjective understandings and experiences of individuals or groups, social constructionist researchers want to show how such understandings and experiences are derived from and feed larger discourses. Interpretive approaches treat people as though they were the origin of their thoughts, feelings and experiences. Social constructionist approaches treat people as though these thoughts, feelings and experiences were the products of the systems of meaning that exist at a social level rather than the individual level (Terre Blanche et al. 2001:278). The research sought information from individuals in the social context of a focus group and the interviews dealt with the social phenomenon of inclusion.

4.6 ISSUES OF RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY IN THE PRESENT STUDY

Measures to enhance *reliability* involve a complete description of the research process, so that independent researchers may replicate the same procedures in compatible settings. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:408) add other factors to establish reliability: consistency of the researcher's interactive style; data recording; data analysis, and interpretation of

participant's meaning from the data.

Validity is concerned with the accuracy of scientific findings and can be divided into internal and external validity. *External validity* refers to the degree to which findings can be generalised to the population from which the participants were drawn. The present study is not concerned with generalisation or prediction, therefore external validity is not an issue. *Internal validity* is the degree to which research findings can be distorted by extraneous factors and is an important consideration in this research. High validity depends on the data collection and analysis techniques used (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:407). Issues of reliability and validity applicable to this study are discussed below.

4.6.1 Reliability in data collection

Qualitative researchers commonly use a combination of possible strategies to reduce threats to reliability.

Factors discussed by McMillan and Schumacher (2001:408-409) applicable to this research include:

- Prolonged and persistent field work. Interim data analysis and corroboration were done to ensure the match between findings and participant reality.
- Multi-method strategies. During data collection and data analysis triangulation was achieved.
- Low inference descriptors. Detailed descriptions of the people, time, and place where events or interviews took place were recorded.
- Mechanically recorded data. A tape recorded to record all interviews – individual and focus group interviews was used.
- Participant researcher. Participant recorded perceptions in anecdotal records were done for corroboration.
- Member checking. The researcher checked with the participants to ensure that data were collected accurately.
- Negative cases. The researcher searched for exception to the patterns found in the data by interviewing a principal from a different district and from a different racial group.

4.6.2 Internal validity

The following are recommended by McMillan and Schumacher (2001:407-410) to improve internal validity.

- Lengthy data collection period. This is said to provide opportunities for continued data analysis, comparison, and corroboration to refine ideas and to ensure the match between research-based categories and participant realities. The present research was conducted over a period of twelve weeks. The total period during which the implementation of inclusive education in primary schools was researched, conforms to *this* criteria.

- Participant language. In this research participants were encouraged to tell their stories 'in their own words', thereby contributing to the internal validity of the research.

- Field research. The participant observation and in-depth interviews took place in 'natural settings' all taking place in the schools involved in the research. The interviews were planned to be undertaken within the educational context and so participants were not interviewed in their homes.

- Disciplined subjectivity. Researcher subjects all phases of the research process to continuous and rigorous questioning and re-evaluation. This was done throughout this research.

4.6.3 Triangulation

There are three recognized forms of triangulation relevant to this study. In the first place, a form of triangulation occurred by comparing data from focus group interviews with teachers with data drawn from teacher practices in the classrooms. Secondly, comparison of teacher interview data was also made with interview data from the principal in each school. In the third place there was also opportunity for triangulation from one area/district to another in the sense that data obtained from the principals in the area of choice was compared to the data as collected from a principal from outside that district.

4.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Qualitative researchers need to be sensitive to ethical principles because of their "research topic, face-to-face interactive data collection, an emergent design and reciprocity with participants" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:420).

4.7.1 The research site

Cresswell (2008:12) describes the need to honour research sites, saying it is important to respect the site where research takes place. Respect is shown by gaining permission before entering a site, by disturbing as little as possible during the study, and viewing oneself as a guest at the place of study. In this study, to approach the gatekeepers was the first step. This was to approach the Gauteng Department of Education which gave its approval for the research. Consent was sought from the principals who approved the interviews with the staff. Teaching schedules and school timetables were respected and the interviews did not interfere with educators' commitments to teaching practice.

4.7.2 Informed consent

Informants must be fully informed about the research and should give informed consent to participate (Henning 2005:73). They need to know that their privacy and sensitivity will be protected and they need to know how the information they have imparted will be used.
Assurances of confidentiality and anonymity with a description of the intended use of data were given to gatekeepers and participants. Each participant in the study was informed of the purpose and assured of confidentiality and anonymity in dialogue. Informing the participants was done in a manner to encourage voluntary participation. Emphasis was placed on accurate and complete information so that participants could fully comprehend the investigation and were consequently able to make a voluntary, reasoned decision about their participation.

4.7.3 Confidentiality and anonymity

Settings and participants were not identified in print. Features of settings were disguised in such a way as to make them appear similar to several possible sites. Participants' confidences were protected from other persons in different settings where private information might enable identification. Participants were protected from identification in every possible way.

4.7.4 Guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality

Guaranteed anonymity must be respected and the researcher must obtain signed consent forms which must be treated with discretion. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:421) list the following potential ethical dilemmas.

4.7.5 Deception, privacy and empowerment

Deception is a violation of informed consent and privacy. Participants were communicated with honestly and the implications of participation in the research were communicated to the participants.

4.7.6 Harm, caring and fairness

Participants were protected from experiences of humiliation or violation of interpersonal trust. The researcher's thinking and activities were underpinned by a sense of caring and fairness for the participants. The researcher was open for discussion with any participants in respect of activities or information shared the nature of which might have been cause for concern to the participants.

4.7.7 Reporting research fully and honestly

Data was reported honestly and fully without changes to possibly satisfy certain predictions or interest groups. Further, this ethic requires the researcher to make every effort to communicate the practical significance of the research to the community of researchers and practitioners so that inquiry will be encouraged (Cresswell, 1993:13).

4.8 CONCLUSION

This qualitative inquiry was conducted according to a constructivist and interpretive paradigm. It is applied research and seeks to portray meaning as seen by selected information-rich participants with the purpose of providing emancipator information and insight for educators in the implementation of inclusion in South African schools. In the following chapter the data generated is analysed and interpreted.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Educators hold the key to a door yet to be opened.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the themes that emerged from the data collection are discussed. The themes elicited from the data reflect the experiences of the selected educators who are confronted with the implementation of inclusive education in their classrooms. The researcher interviewed classroom educators from four different schools in focus groups and school principals from the same four different schools were individually interviewed in semi-structured interviews.

As the research progressed, the researcher considered the possibility of circumstances being different in a different district. All principals in the four schools which were initially used for the research were white and appointed prior to 1994 or close to this time. In order to cross check the data and enhance triangulation, the researcher decided to interview a younger black female principal, from outside of the district and appointed to her school after 1994. This brought the number of principals interviewed to five.

All interviews took place during school time and the focus groups were accommodated by the management of the school. The time chosen for interviews was at the discretion of the respective school principals.

The researcher provides a background to the schools and to each of the participants in the interviews (cf the relevant tables). An analysis of the findings of the interviews follows. In this chapter references to participants are as follows: Principals' codes are prefixed with the *P*. Principal *P2a* refers to School two; the *a* indicates the order in which the principal was interviewed.

5.1.1 Description of the participating schools

The first four schools are English medium former model C primary schools in a particular district. The first school is situated in a blue collar area and learners are coloured and black with a very small proportion of white children. The children come from homes in the environment and from the nearby informal settlement. The principal interviewed is a white woman. Academic staff is coloured and white. The second school is in a middle class suburb of a small city. The academic staff is white with the exception of an Indian male teacher. The principal interviewed is a white man. The third school has only black learners who live in the townships, the informal settlements and the inner city. All educators are currently white. The school uses parents to work as teacher assistants in the grade 0 and grade one class, as many children are not proficient in English when they enter school. The language of learning and teaching (LoLT) was Afrikaans some years back, but has been changed to English at the behest of the school governing body. The principal interviewed is a white man. The fourth school was a senior primary school for children from grade four to seven. The junior school adjoining it is on the same block. The researcher interviewed only educators from the senior school in the focus group interview. The academic staff of the fourth school is diverse as is the learner population. Children are from the inner city and townships; there are also learners who have emigrated from other parts of Africa. The principal interviewed is a white woman.

Principals were all in the forty to fifty nine years age group and educators in the twenty five to fifty five years age group. The fifth school from outside the district is a former model C school, in a middle class suburb which draws children from two neighbouring townships. She indicated that ninety seven percent of her educators were white and most of the learners were non-white. This principal was in her thirty's and in her second year as head of the school.

5.2 INTERVIEWS WITH PRINCIPALS

Principals were given the questions ahead of time so that they could consider the content in preparation for the interview. However, the researcher modified the questions during the interview to show sensitivity to the individual and the context of the school.

5.2.1 Information on principals

Table 5.1 Particulars pertaining to principals and their schools.

School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4	School 5
Principal: P1b	Principal: P2a	Principal: P3c	Principal: P4d	Principal: P5e Different district
Age Group: 50-55 *Race:* white *Gender:* F *No of learners in school:* 640 *Average number of children in classes:* 35 *Years teaching experience:* 29 *Years as head of the school:* 6 ** Number of GDE posts:* 23 *** No of SGB posts:* 7 *Other information:* This principal was -+empathetic to children with barriers. In confronting the significant issues of diversity in the school, she and two heads of department completed further diplomas in remedial education. They head the remedial committee in the school. This was an innovative step to address diversity.	*Age Group:* 40-50 *Race:* white *Gender:* M *No of learners in school:* 850 *Average number of children in classes:* 30 *Years teaching experience:* 25 *Years as head of the school:* 13 *Number of GDE posts:* 21 *No of SGB post:* 15 *Other information:* This principal is actively involved with other principals in the community where issues in education are discussed and solutions sought. His school offers many extra murals requiring much extra mural involvement from the staff. He had a resistant attitude to inclusive education as he considered the school unsupported by government.	*Age Group:* 60-65 *Race:* white *Gender:* M *No of learners in school:* 880 *Average number of children in classes:38* *Years teaching experience:35* *Years as head of the school:16* *Number of GDE posts): 21* *No of SGB posts:9* *Other information:* This principal empathised strongly with his educators who felt particularly challenged by the learners, most of whom came from economically deprived environments. Issues of diversity were enormously challenging and solutions did not seem forthcoming in present educational structures.	*Age Group:* 50-60 *Race:* white *Gender:* F *No of learners in school:* 713 *Average number of children in classes:36* *Years teaching experience:* 28 *Years as head o the school:* 3 *Number of GDE posts: 23* *No of SGB posts:* 5 *Other information:* This principal was facing the challenges of inclusion head on, the school doing as best they could though lacking resources. She was innovative and democratic in her management of the school. Her educators networked in support of diversity.	*Age Group:30-40* *Race:* black *Gender:* F *No of learners in school:* 892 *Average number of children in classes:* 34 *Years teaching experience:* 15 *Years as head of The school:* 2 *Number of GDE posts:* 19 *No of SGB posts:* 19 *Other information:* This principal had recently completed post-graduate studies in special needs education. She was positive and forward thinking holding the precept that educators were accountable for continued learning and skills development.

5.2.2 Findings of interviews with principals

Against the background of policies, the most significant factors considered during the interviews, as contributing to successful inclusion were as follow.

5.2.2.1 Conceptual knowledge

It is necessary for educators to be familiar with Education White Paper 6 and to understand that inclusive education is conceived from a socio-critical perspective of thinking rather than the traditional *medical model* or deficit model, which locates difficulties within the learner. The new paradigm provides an appropriate conceptual framework necessary to lead the educators in the implementation of inclusive education. A supportive environment necessarily contributes to the development of conceptual knowledge. A *supportive climate* is conceived of as the system within which all the educators work, namely the supporting structures in the school, the district and support from parents. It also includes availability of resources. Questions covering the resources dealt with both financial resources and human resources which are necessary predisposing factors for successful inclusive education.

5.2.2.2 Lack of comprehensive knowledge in an environment of inadequate support

It was found that each of the four principals initially interviewed lacked a comprehensive knowledge base of inclusive education. They had attended a course wherein the White Paper 6 (2001) was presented. Regarding the White Paper 6, the response was: "Yes, a long time ago…they went through the White Paper with us…had a wonderful spread, read through the White Paper and said we must 'put into them' but that was the last we heard..." (P2a). A second principal said: "No training from the district office. Only from … (provincial) and that was 2002 about…we went to Gold Reef City and that was the only one (training) I ever went to." (P4d). A principal who had attended the same function as described by the other principals said, "I attended one workshop and that wasn't enough to equip me." (P4d). The principals said that there was neither discussion invited nor task teams constituted the implementation of the Paper. One principal said, "I agree with the root but wouldn't say I have a comprehensive knowledge…We are moving from our own experience...but there are many loopholes." (P4d).

Practical advice of implementing inclusion had not been given. Responses by all principals were in the negative: "No, I can't think of anything like that." And

"…not at this stage." (P3c).

Principals felt that the district personnel had not made the necessary paradigm shift and were still thinking in terms of their traditional role which was mainly that of managing placement options for learners with barriers to learning. One principal described the sole psychologist from E Learning and Curriculum Support services at the time of the interview as follows: "She's got tunnel vision. She hasn't changed her paradigm." (P2a).

Principals still think in terms of the medical model whereby some children have problems which need to be identified and addressed by specialists in special schools. A decentralisation of power brings about dilution of pre-requisite knowledge and understanding (see par 1:1).

The principal from the fifth school had studied further and her responses indicated that she had an understanding of the concept of education. "I have a comprehensive knowledge…did my honours with learners with special needs." (P5e). She said that she personally had to undertake further studies in order to prepare for the change in education. "I've attended many, many workshops." (P5e).

5.2.2.3 Principals' provision of support in the schools

When asked what innovative initiatives the principals had taken towards implementing inclusive education, one said: "Very little". His school "…accommodated them (learners with special needs) via feeding schemes…and supporting eight families." (P2a). Another said the school had closed down the LSEN class. Educators could see an improvement since the LSEN class had been too large and had comprised children of different age groups who had developed behaviour problems. She felt it was a positive move for both the school and the learners (P4d). A principal of a school with only black learners said that they had opened three reception year classes to assist children in acquiring some knowledge of the LoLT before formal schooling. One principal said, "We do brainstorm and… in the grade meetings, or with the heads of department as well. But you know, the answers are not there, it is not enough, it just doesn't work." (P4d). Some schools had set up remedial support: "We have the *THRASS* programme. But it is not enough." (P4d). "We use the teachers who have further qualifications…we're the ones that head the remedial programme…they try to give the

teachers a little bit of assistance there. So we try and use the teachers, and you know, to help out those who have got very little knowledge of remedial." (P4d).

The fifth principal from outside the district indicated that her school governing body was paying for the services of paraprofessionals in support of the educators and the learners. "The parents have employed their service providers." (5e).

5.2.2.4 Inadequacies in the support from personnel at district.

District support teams are mandated by the Education White Paper 6 to support schools in the implementation of inclusion. Support from district was considered negligible. "District hasn't got their act together." (P2a). This principal considered district personnel dictatorial and not supportive. He said, "District office has become *them* and we've become *us* so we're not unity…" (P2a). Principals preferred the idea of mutual problem solving and communication between district personnel and schools. "We have got a vision of how education should go and they've a vision and we're not marrying…we are continuing on our path and they are continuing on their path…we need to be part of decisions." (P2a).

"They never consult the teacher on the ground. They just come with a lot of things and put a lot of work on our shoulders and we must just carry on…That's why it doesn't work." (P3c).

Another principal said, "They just send you on these courses that half the time is a waste of time." This principal commented, "They just presume… especially former model C schools that we will provide…we will see the need and we will provide." (P1b).

One principal spoke of a lack of competency and professionalism: "We've had facilitators here and I've asked them: What have you been doing before becoming a facilitator? The one was a nurse! How can she be a facilitator? She's just been a nurse! She doesn't have teaching experience." (P3c).

Regarding service delivery in the form of workshops for staff training, a principal said: "The facilitators were late; some (educators) were sent home because they didn't have facilitators. So that's the type of thing. That happens as well." (P4d). Principals all considered that appointments at the district offices were political rather than based on merit. "When they stop

making political appointments and make educational appointments, then things will be done for the right reasons." (P2a).

"At the district everything is political. Most of the things are political." (P3c).

Principals continually mentioned that personnel at district level did not have the knowledge required to support inclusive education. "They don't have the authority to sort out the schools…they don't have the knowledge. They don't have the drive. They're not even coping with what they are doing. How can they come around now and tell us to do inclusivity? They put policies in place, but they don't have the knowledge or the manpower to implement them, so they become farcical." (P2a).

The concept of inclusive education calls for a network of support involving the school and district offices. District office support to the school was considered inadequate as described by this comment. "I see support as not when you get called out, it is when you are available and they're not available…. They come out to put out fires." (P2a). Schools needed support not only for emergencies and high priority needs but support that was empowering and consultative. Learner support educators (LSE's) work in the schools and represent the districts. Their tasks are differently implemented: some LSE's commute between schools; others are based on school premises. One principals described the LSE in the school as "nothing really" (4d). Schools required the support of multidisciplinary services but nothing was available from the district. Such posts are not filled. "There's no support from the department." (5e).

On the topic of the training of educators for implementing inclusive education, the responses were "nil" or "nothing" (P1b). However, all acknowledged that they had received training in HIV/AIDS: "Yes, especially HIV/AIDS and drug and child abuse." (P2a, P3c, P4d). But this training was described as "single vision sort of training"; "academic" not "practical" and "not realistic for the classroom in terms of educators' needs and their understanding of learners…It is just giving you the facts. Making sure you have policies in place and that's as far as it goes." (P2a).

5.2.2.5 Support for inclusive education and educator capacity

On the topic of the capacity of educators and the stressors experienced by educators, principals held that their educators were inadequately prepared for the diversity in education. Educators had difficulty dealing with the administrative requirements of the new curriculum and teaching had become stressful. Principals said:

"These people that went in (to teaching) they didn't choose to do specialised education cause they can't cope with teaching a child with disabilities and you can't begrudge or frown at that person who is a good teacher." (P2a).

"Teachers' backs are going to be put up and our teachers are taking a tremendous amount of strain at the moment…they are chasing assessment." (P2a).

"They are not equipped for these learners. I think the teachers are not trained to be part of inclusion…Stress...the teachers just don't feel comfortable with it (inclusion). It's not working." (P3c).

Principals considered that knowledge would provide educators with the confidence and capacity to manage inclusive teaching. Without appropriate training educators were negatively predisposed to inclusivity in education.

"They are stressed…all the teachers…teachers are negative towards changes." (P3c).

Principals were not convinced that school based support teams (SBSTs) worked. One commented: "The SBST can only work once it is part of a system that is working. It's just an area for people to complain about children. They are not addressing the problems. They are complaining...telling why they can't work with the problem. And they support each other in saying that it can't work." (P2a).

5.2.2.6 Support through provision of resources

Every principal complained of inadequate resources and they all listed a lack of financial and human resources. Human resources include specialist educators; professionals and personnel from the district. Large classes were a result of the lack of both financial and human resources.

"There are not enough people in the district to go around…to really provide the support we need." (P4d).

"I've never seen district personnel coming to our school; we don't have enough support from them coming with the problems and all those things under E learning…" (P4d).

All principals mentioned that no multidisciplinary support was available from district. The principal from outside of the district said that the school's governing body employed a psychologist and a social worker. "The parents have employed their main service provider…social workers and those things." (P5e).

"With forty in a class, they can't meet the requirements of that child. There must be '*pull out'* on a regular basis." (P2a).

Concerning financial resources**,** a principal spoke of the indigent in the school and said teaching resources sorely needed but many homes could not afford school fees so schools were not in a position to supply the resources needed. "We need to buy more, you know, the aids that you need…we definitely need more money." (P1b). Another principal said, "Not all parents can afford to pay like fees and all those things. They are from disadvantaged backgrounds…they are poor." (P5e). She also remarked, "If you don't have those books, we cannot, I mean *cannot* afford books and necessary teaching aids… that's why I keep on saying finances, finances." (P5e).

5.2.2.7 Educator stress

When given a list of challenges and a list of possible causes of educator stress were given to the principals to rate, they each identified a different order of significance for each respective list. Language and socio economic challenges were chosen as the more significant challenges followed by intellectual barriers, behaviour difficulties and learning disabilities. As the most prevalent cause of educator stress, principals identified competency issues. Accountability for learners needs was followed by lack of parent support: "Socio economic factors…very often there is a lack of support especially from the parents of these children because very often the parents are like that themselves, and they can't help the children at home. And that's a problem for us." (P1b). These factors were followed by educator training in multi-level assessment and adjustment of unit plans. All principals complained of large classes. "Total number of learners in the classrooms – that's a huge barrier" (P1b). Another principal said, "How can I develop five different learning programmes for five different children? They are chasing assessment …with forty in a class…teachers are taking tremendous strain." (P2a).

5.2.2.8 Future expectations of principals

Factors, which emerged as principals considered the future of inclusive education, included the present frustration among educators contrasted with a belief that the future of inclusive education could be seen positively. Suggestions for the success of the implementation of inclusive education were made within a context relative to South African schools.

5.2.2.9 Frustration and negativity

Principals were not confident about what was happening with regard to inclusive education**.** This principal thought that, in the interests of meeting financial constraints, the government was failing to meet the children's needs. "From a pure government political perspective, it is informed by the constitution but it's mostly a financial reason. It's got nothing to do with the interests of the child….it cannot work…Never, never, never in the history of South Africa will you ever have true inclusion." (P2a). This principal felt that principals were not predisposed to implementing inclusion: "There are some principals who are adverse to it. They are protecting their teachers from stress and it won't be implemented properly…" (P2a). This principal maintained there was not enough planning, research and thought behind the

implementation of inclusive education at school level. “It’s got to be thought through properly.” (P2a).

Principals sought to return to the old system which, in their view, had functioned effectively and to compensate by building more special schools. “Go back to the old system that worked - extra special schools, teachers that are trained to handle those learners.” (P3c).

Principals held that there might be a future for inclusive education, but it depended upon training and education. The principal from outside the district suggested principals should play a role in this, “You have to change the minds, mind set of people…and you have to convince them. You must show them all these policies, the national protocol, refer them to circulars, make copies, let them read, you know, you must negotiate with them…where there is change, there will always be resistance.”(P5e). All considered that with the support in terms of training, there would be a future, “If they believe more in us, we can do wonders…if we actually get trained…” (P1b).

5.2.2.10 Barriers within learners which most challenged educators

On the topic of the most significant barriers experienced in the classrooms, all principals said the language barrier was the most worrying and would need substantial intervention. Improving language for learners whose home language was different from that used for teaching was critical. The researcher found there were two opinions. One was that the children must adapt to the language of education of the school as it had always functioned, “Their language to be improved and bring them [learners] back into mainstream…” (P2a). The other opinion, held by the black principal, was that the school should adapt to the language of the learners. “Implement a language policy and start teaching black languages.” (P5e). This principal said too, that her educators were significantly challenged by “socio-economic factors.”

Principals spoke of the need for financial resources to make adaptations to the school buildings. “They would have to make a lot of changes to the structures in the school.” (P1b).

A principal noted that the high schools were not continuing the efforts made by the primary schools. “They should be catering for the children up to grade eight or nine, but it is not really

happening." (P4d). The high schools appeared to select learners according to undeclared and illegitimate criteria, namely ability, conduct and the ability to pay school fees. A principal said, "School fees is playing a huge role, and it will be denied emphatically, but it is the learners who are disadvantaged because they cannot afford to pay fees." (P4d).

5.2.2.11 Principals seek the following forms of support

In order that schools implement inclusive education, principals were unanimous in the call for the following means of support from top structures: better communication and appropriate and relevant training for educators.

"They just send you on courses that half the time is a waste of time." (P1b).

The principal from the neighbouring district said she had personally undergone further studies through the university and had attended many workshops through the district so felt knowledgeable. She said that workshops gave a "background" but not a "deep knowledge". It was apparent to the researcher, that the district offices stress training in respect of identification of barriers and addressing these but give very little in respect of classroom practice for inclusive education.

A principal saw the need for proactive involvement of specialists in the classrooms and schools, "They've got to have people available…to come to the schools and spend time with the child…remedy the problem put him back into mainstream. There must be '*pull out'* on a regular basis and try and solve the problems… and it's got to be taught and shown hands on to the teachers in the classroom… for them to be part of a team…" (P2a).

Principals generally held the same opinions and perspectives on the questions posed. Principals all required training and better support from district personnel for their educators.

5.3 INTERVIEWS WITH EDUCATORS

All educators were interviewed following negotiation with principals who chose the time and venue for the interviews. The principals chose the educators according to guidelines given by the researcher who requested that each educator had more than five years experience and that there would be at least one head of department. Educators welcomed the opportunity to express their concerns. Educators were from both different socio-economic, educational backgrounds and language backgrounds. Home languages were English, Afrikaans and African languages. All participants were given the questions for the interviews ahead of the event that they might think about the topic and possible responses.

5.3.1 Information on educators

Table 5.2 Particulars pertaining to educators

School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4
Participant a (1a) *Age group:* 30-40yrs *Race:* white *Gender:* F *Position held at the school:* Head of department: Junior school *Years teaching experience:* 11 *Years at the school:* 11 *Years in position held:* 5 *Grade(s) currently teaching: 1& 3* *Class size: 31* Other roles: She heads the junior school based support team (SBST) and the	Participant a (2a) *Age Group:* 50-60yrs *Race:* white *Gender:* F *Position held at school:* Head of department *Years teaching experience:* 28 *Years at the school:* 27 *Years in position held:* 9 *Grade(s) currently teaching:* 6 *Subject currently teaching:* Maths *Class size:* 30 *Other roles:* As a cluster leader, she is trained by departmental personnel	Participant a (3a) *Age Group:* 40-50 *Race:* white *Gender:* M *Position held at school:* Deputy head. *Years teaching experience:* 24 *Years at the school:* 11 *Years in position held:* 11 *Grade currently teaching:* 7 *Subjects currently teaching:* First additional language: English *Class size:* 38 *Other roles:* Involved as a facilitator for the training of educators for	Participant a (4a) *Age Group:* 30-40 *Gender:* F *Race:* black *Position held at school:* P1 educator. *Years teaching experience:* 3 *Years at the school:* 3 *Years in position held:* 3 *Grade(s) teaching: 4* *Subjects currently teaching:* all *Class size:* 35 *Other roles:* Assists with translation for immigrant and children

remedial programme Other information: She recently obtained a further diploma in remedial education. The educator was confident during the interview and held firm opinions on the questions discussed.	and then conveys the information to educators of other schools. She gives academic guidance to educators who teach cultural subjects and mathematics. She is involved with children who have emotional and behavioural problems and facilitates disciplinary hearings and works with the department in this regard.	implementation of the Revised National Curriculum (RNCS). He has trained and worked for firms in the surrounding area in adult basic education (ABET). He is involved in athletics, soccer and cross country as well as much of the running of the school.	unable to converse in the language of learning and teaching. Involved with remedial lessons. She was reticent during the interview and was questioned directly in order to get her to participate. She was happy in the school and felt supported.
Participant b (1b) *Age group:* 40-50 years *Race:* coloured. *Gender:* M *Position held at school:* P1 educator *Years teaching experience:* 26 *Years at the school:* 6 *Years in position held:* 6 *Grade(s) currently teaching:* 5 *Subject currently teaching:* science *Class size*: 35 *Other roles:* He is part of the remedial team. He coaches athletics, soccer and cricket. The principal describes him as "in touch" with the children and	Participant b (2b) *Age group:* 20-30 *Race:* white *Gender:* F *Position held at school:* P1 educator *Years teaching experience:* 5 *Years at the school:* 5 *Years in position held:* 5 *Grade currently teaching:* 6 *Subject currently teaching:* Afrikaans *Class size:* 29 *Other roles:* Involvement with non-sporting extra murals such as quiz evenings and the eisteddfod.	Participant b (3b) *Age Group:* 40-50 *Race:* white *Gender:* F *Position held at school:* Head of Department: Guidance. *Years teaching experience:* 27 *Years at the school:* 25 *Years in position held:* 13 *Grades taught or currently teaching:* 6&7 *Subjects currently teaching:* Afrikaans *Class size:* 38 *Other roles:* Involved with the school's disciplinary committee, safety and security committee, and feeding scheme for the indigent. Her morale was	Participant b (4b) *Age group:* 40-50 *Race:* Asian (Indian) *Gender:* F *Position held at school:* *P1 educator* *Years teaching experience:* 14 *Years at the school:* 10 *Years in position held:* 10 *Grade(s) teaching: 4* *Subjects teaching:* all *Class size:* 37 *Other roles:* Involved with the school's *Youth Club* which helps the disadvantaged pupils. She was the first educator of colour to be employed in the school.

"incredibly sensitive to children from the community and one who gets to the problem, picks up the problems and is instrumental in solving them.."		extremely low and she worked very hard.	
Participant c (1c) *Age group:* 30-40yrs *Race:* coloured *Gender:* F *Position held at school:* P1 educator *Years teaching experience:* 12 *Years at the school:* 12 *Years in position held:* 12 *Grade currently teaching:* 1 *Subjects currently teaching:* all *Class size:* 21 *Other roles:* Involved with remedial programmes. She coaches mini cricket. The principal described her as "very in touch with the community and children with problems". She lives in the coloured community.	Participant c (2c) *Age group:* 40-50 *Race:* white *Gender:* F *Position held at school:* P1 educator *Years teaching experience:* 25 *Years at the school: 10* *Years in position held:* 25 *Grade currently teaching:* 6 *Subjects currently teaching:* English & mathematics *Grades taught or currently teaching:* 6 *Class size:* 29 *Other roles:* Involved with badminton and eisteddfod and is on the school's IQMS committee.	Participant c (3c) *Age Group:* 20-30 *Race:* white *Gender:* F *Position held at school:* Head of Department: Junior School. *Years teaching experience:* 17 *Years at the school:* 17 *Years in position held:* 3 *Grade currently teaching:* 1 *Subjects currently teaching:* all *Class size:* 32 *Other roles:* Involved in the school based support team (SBST) and the safety and disciplinary committee.	Participant c (4c) *Age group:* 40-50 *Race:* white *Gender:* F *Position held at school: P1 educator* *Years teaching experience:* 21 *Years at the school:* 11 *Years in position held:* 11 *Grade(s) teaching: 5* *Subject(s) teaching:* Afrikaans *Class size:* 35 *Other roles:* Acting head of department. Involved with cultural activities. A little reticent during the interview and had to be prodded to participate.
Participant d (1d) *Age group:* 30-40yrs *Race:* black	Participant d (2d) *Age Group:* 40-50 *Race:* white	Participant d (3d) *Age Group:* 20-30 *Race:* white	Participant d (4d) *Age group:* 30-40 *Race:* white

Position held at school: P1 educator *Years teaching experience:* 8 Years at the school: 3 Years in position held: 3 Grade currently teaching: 2 Subjects currently teaching: all Class size: 32 Other roles: Involvement with remedial programmes. She teaches mini cricket.	*Gender:* F *Position held at school:* P1 educator *Years teaching experience:* 24 *Years at the school:* 11 *Years in position held:* 24 *Grade currently teaching:* 7 *Subjects currently teaching:* English and Life orientation (LO) *Class size:* 28 *Other roles:* Involved in the eisteddfod, organises swimming galas, head of house for athletics, standard controller for grade sevens. She had firm beliefs which were non negotiable that children with barriers should receive placement and specialised help.	*Gender:* F *Position held at school:* P1 educator *Years teaching experience:* 9 *Years at the school:* 3 *Years in position held:* 3 *Grade currently teaching:* 2 *Subjects currently teaching:* all *Class size:* 32 *Other roles:* Part of the SBST, involved with sporting and cultural activities.	*Gender:* F *Position held at school:* P1 educator *Years teaching experience:* 8 *Years at the school:* 5 *Years in position held:* 5 *Grade(s)teaching:* 4 *Subjects currently teaching:* all *Class size:* 37 *Other roles:* Involved with sporting activities in the school.
Participant e (1e) *Age group:* 40-50 *Race:* White *Gender*: F *Position held at school:* P1 educator *Years teaching* experience: 20 Years at the school: 7 *Years in position held:* 20 *Grade currently teaching:* 4	Participant e (2e) *Age group:* 40-50 *Race:* Asian (Indian) *Gender:* F *Position held at school:* Head of department: Guidance. *Years teaching experience:* 16 *Years at the school:* 5 *Years in position held:* 5 *Grade currently teaching:* 7	Participant e (3e) *Age group:* 40-50 *Race*: white *Gender:* F *Position held at school:* P1 educator *Years teaching experience:* 29 *Years at the school:* 20 *Years in position held:* 20 *Grade(s) currently teaching:* 2	Participant e (4e) *Age group:* 50-55 *Race:* white *Gender:* F *Position held at school:* Head of Department *Years teaching experience:* 31 *Years at the school:* 9 *Years in position held:* 9 *Grade(s) teaching:* 4

Subjects currently teaching: English *Class size*: 34 *Other roles:* She teaches soccer, hockey and athletics. She is described by her principal as " able to differentiate through group work and builds children up…knows her children inside out"	*Subjects currently teaching:* maths and LO *Class size:* 29 *Other roles:* Involved with counselling for learners, co-ordinator of the school based support team (SBST). She has a child with a syndrome and whom she kept in mainstream education. She taught in the House of Delegates for eight and a half years. She is responsible for teaching of *life orientation* (LO) and *arts and culture* (AC) in the school.	*Subjects currently teaching:* all *Class size:* 38 *Other roles:* Union representative and responsible for the ordering of books for the school.	*Subjects currently teaching:* all *Class size:* 35 *Other roles:* 'Standard controller' for the grade. Involved with cultural activities.
Participant f (1f) *Age group:* 40-50 *Race:* white *Gender*: F *Position held at school:* Head of department Guidance. *Years teaching experience:* 28 *Years at the school:* 27 *Years in position held:* 23 *Grade(s) currently teaching:* 7 *Subjects currently teaching:* Science and Life Orientation *Class size:* 28	Participant f (2f) *Age group:* 40-50 *Race:* white *Gender:* F *Position held at school:* P1 educator *Years teaching experience:* 8 *Years at the school:* 4 *Years in position held:* 4 *Grade(s) taught or teaching* 3 *Subjects currently teaching:* *Grades currently teaching:* all grade 4's.		Participant f (f) *Age group:* 50-60 *Race:* white *Gender:* F *Position held at school:* Post level 3. Deputy head. *Years teaching experience:* 30 *Years at the school:* 28 *Years in position held:* 11 *Grade(s) teaching: 7* *Subjects currently teaching:* Life orientation. *Class size: 35* *Other roles:* She is involved with sporting and cultural

Other roles: She heads the School Based Support Team and the remedial department. . She is the 'control teacher' for maths and science in the school.	*Class size:* 30 *Other roles:* involved with athletics and netball. *Other:* The educator has a firm conviction about the inadequacies in the government and is currently waiting to relocate to Canada. She has organised a mother from a child in her class, who has a mild handicap to work as an assistant in her classroom. This is the only teacher in any of the schools interviewed to have set this strategy in place. She tries very hard to implement inclusive strategies and interacts actively with parents.		activities and the running of the school.
	Participant g (2g) *Age group:* 40-50 *Race:* white *Gender:* F *Position held at school:* P1 educator *Years teaching experience:* 26 *Years at the school:* 15 *Years in position held:* 15 *Grade currently teaching:* 1 *Subjects currently teaching:* all *Class size:* 28 *Other roles:* Involved		

	with soccer, T ball, and eisteddfod. She holds a remedial qualification and tries hard to address barriers but at times feels overwhelmed by those she has to address.		

5.3.2. Findings of interviews in focus groups

5.3.2.1 Lack of a comprehensive knowledge base

Two types of knowledge emerged throughout the interviews. They are both covered within this theme. The first type was the knowledge base for inclusive education as conceptualised by the policy documents and the second type of knowledge is the experience and skills needed for teaching diversity in the classroom. A lack of a comprehensive knowledge of inclusive education was evident in all interviews.

a) ***A lack of conceptual knowledge***

Inclusive education was seen as necessary for social reconstruction and a basic human right. Educators did understand the primary reasons for inclusive education. They knew that the reason for inclusive education was first to bring about equal education and equal opportunity for all, and to promote social reconstruction and interaction between cultures. "To get kids to socialise with different types of people is important." (2e).

"I think it is a new constitution where all people will have an access to equal education. It's in line with our constitutional values." (3b).

"It's for equitable education…" (1a).

Some did not understand that inclusion in principle means the opening of the doors to all children. "Does it include the Down's Syndrome child? Good, I didn't know that." (2d).

All educators held that it was implemented without adequate consideration for implications for educators. “That all the children from social and economic groups can have equal opportunity, get a good education. I suppose that is why they include them and to make teachers’ lives difficult.” (2f).

One educator’s concept of equality in education was that it should acknowledge difference and provide for all difference equally. “It is part of the legacy of refusing to acknowledge that all people are not equal. They might have equal rights under the law but nobody’s made equal.” (3e).

(i) Inclusive education is cost effective

Inclusive education was seen as cost effective in a country without adequate financial and human resources to provide for special schools. “It makes financial sense” (1 a; 2c). “It saves money for the government.” (2a).

Some thought that it was a solution to a problem which the country cannot provide the right schools for diverse learners. “There aren’t enough qualified people to have different schools.” (2a).

“We don’t have enough teachers in this country…we don’t have enough money.” (3d).

Educators thought inclusive education was the result of negligence and reluctance to see the need in the country. “There is a reluctance of the people in education that hasn’t seen the needs. They don’t realise what they are doing.” (3a).

(ii) Inclusive education acknowledges the needs of all learners within the classroom

Educators did not see inclusive education as education which essentially met individual differences. They regarded it from an unchanged educational paradigm whereby mainstream education provided for ordinary and normal learners while those with barriers needed something different but were in the classroom by default. Inclusive education was understood as result of changed thinking and the human rights movement but educators considered that difference should be acknowledged through the provision of specialised schooling.

Participants still thought in terms of the medical model and spoke of classifying and placement of learners. Some educators thought that it was emotionally detrimental for a learner not to receive specialised education "They're made a fool of in an environment where they can't cope…growing up with an inferior feeling in the mainstream circles." (2d).

The following suggests that some educators simply accommodate the learner believing no further progress will be made and that placement was the panacea for all barriers. This is in conflict with the White Paper 6 which holds that all learners can learn and that it may be achieved through inclusive education. One educator suggested that there was reduced expectation from her or for the learner. "There comes a time when you can't go further, you're fine because you'll (the learner) either being retained or move away. There's no pressure." (4c). Educators thought that children left in mainstream waiting for the wheel to turn was a waste of time for the learner and ideally the learner should be identified early and placed immediately, "Only by that year they are being tested…it means it's a waste of that learner's education…then when they go to a special school for learning, …it takes two years…and to me the system is wrong in that sense." (4c).

"It might be better if they can solve the problem earlier...get the learners classified." (4e).

Educators were referring in particular to those who had to be retained twice over two phases, before placement could take place.

b) Experience and skills needed for teaching diversity in the classroom.

Lack of training contributes to lack of confidence and capacity and a poor attitude towards inclusive education. On reflection, educators claimed that when they entered the profession, they had not chosen to teach children with barriers. They considered that they were not adequately trained to teach such children. "I didn't want to be a person who actually deals with all these, these special needs that the kids have. I haven't been qualified and quite frankly it's not what I wanted to do. I want to educate…not nurture children with special needs." (2f).

"We have a four year diploma and we can all of a sudden handle… this inclusion?" (2d).

Educators thought it impossible for effective education to take place in South African schools where demands were overpowering and debilitating. “I don’t think I’m resistant. I just don’t see the time in thirty-five minutes to accommodate the children.” (2d).

“It’s not actually fair to the other children. We can’t help these children. How many of us are trained really to do this…I’m not trained.” (3a).

Some felt they were moderately successful with integrating certain learners in their classrooms. “He was brilliant at maths but he had a language barrier and he came from another school and they classified him as LSEN. We put him in a LSEN class for one year, then we put him in mainstream, and eventually he became deputy head boy.” (4c).

Educators, although they had tried inclusive strategies such as curriculum adaptation and multilevel teaching, did not lay claim to effective inclusive strategies.

“Everyone is actually doing what they think is right.” (3c).

“Multilevel teaching does not work…” (3d).

Educators felt neither skilled nor willing to teach learners with barriers. They acknowledged that from an academic perspective, inclusive education was to the detriment of learners “We are not qualified to do the job. We are causing as much good intentions we have, we are causing more damage than we are doing good because we are not qualified in doing this and why, why must we do it? …we don’t get paid child psychologist fees. We don’t get paid these remedial fees…” (2f). “They must realize that we are teachers and we are not here to do this inclusion.” Educators did not think it was practical that they should be expected to meet the needs of learners with barriers. “If there is a child who really needs my attention, say for example a Downs Syndrome child, how am I going to teach that child something, plus satisfy the needs of my very academic child?” (2d).

“It’s actually quite scary because I wasn’t in my teaching taught how to deal with kids with special needs. If I wanted to teach children with Down’s syndrome, I would’ve specialised in that field. I’ve been pushed into doing something that I’m not qualified for… I wanted to be

and educator, I didn't want to be a person who actually has to deal with all these, these special needs that kids have." (2f).

Educators felt that they should have smaller classes if they were to teach children with barriers to learning. "Do we have classes small enough to have this variety of children? We don't." (2e).

Educators held the government responsible for neglect of such learners.

"I'm not dealing with the real problem…at the end of the day, the children …are discriminated against in a society where they should be protected. It's criminal!" (2d). They must put these children where people are trained and are skilled to do this job because our children are going down the drain." (3b).

5.3.2.2 Deficiencies considered by educators to rest with the department.

a) Criticism of intention of the government

Educators saw themselves as alienated in terms of the support they needed from the department and the government. All educators spoke of the department as *them* and or *they* and of themselves as *us*. This indicated to the researcher feelings of alienation and distance. Not one spoke in terms of *we.* This might have suggested being part of a united education fraternity with common goals and values. The criticism of the government was extensive. "If you think you live in a democratic society, where I do think there is a certain abuse towards children from the education department's side because they can't provide for us [the children and educators]" (2d).

"They want to chase the children through school then the constitution has done its part." (3a).

"It starts at the top. Our superiors, the people that are fast dictators; they don't know what's going on in our classes." (3b).

"They expect one teacher to do three or four teachers' jobs. And it is ridiculous! How do they think we're going to cope?" (3d).

"There is no more assistance for you if you have to deal with a child who has to be referred to district." (2d).

"Now you have nothing, and we are expected to manage everything." (2c).

b) The need for guidance and support: in a South African context has a higher level of needs than do first- world countries

Educators thought there was little awareness in the department of the problems in the classrooms and little support or training for inclusive education. "They haven't actually attempted to...give us guidance in what they want implemented."(2d).
"They don't know what is going on at ground level." (3b).

Educators felt the enormity of the problems in South Africa that they face could never be adequately addressed even with some training for educators. "We are not qualified and never could be, really, to deal with all these problems adequately, never mind successfully." (2c).

Criticism included the fact that South Africa was trying to implement inclusive education in line with other countries but was unable to do so as the country lacked the infrastructure and expertise." Because the people who are actually making the rules know for a fact it won't but they are trying to follow first world country examples that's been set and it's failed maybe there as well for all you now…why haven't they attempted to …give us guidelines in what they want implemented?" (2d).

Educators in need of training included district personnel, educators and specialist educators. "The big thing is to train the educators." (2d, 3a and 3b). "They must bring the old systems back because that is what really worked." (3b).

The following remark was made by an educator who believed that authorities in education were unable to guide the educators in schools so were waiting to see what would happen before they provided answers or direction to educators. "Why haven't they actually attempted to give us guidance in what they want implemented? The reason why? It is easier to say: You do it before we're actually going to attempt to try." (2d).

"There are a lot of problems unique to our country and they have not addressed those problems and until they address those problems inclusion in our country just won't work." (2b).

One educator commented on theft in schools. In a description of schools visited in Australia where inclusive education was working to some extent, the educator commented, "They had computers standing in the passages, I mean unsupervised. Honestly! They don't have the crime problems we have." (3e).

An educator who has been a frequent visitor to the United Kingdom and the United States of America drew comparisons based on her tours abroad. "Many overseas countries, they have the system, but they have assistants and specialists in the field to take children out (remove from the class for remedial lessons or therapy) to do this kind of thing." (2c).

5.3.2.3 Educators from the former model C schools are aware of disparities in the quality of service delivery between their schools and township schools

Some educators saw a problem in respect of the larger picture and spoke of education in township schools. "What they do in some of the other schools …is another story." (3b).

Educators considered that discrepancies in the quality of service delivery need to be addressed to ensure that all learners receive quality education. Often children would come to a former model C school having begun education in a township school. This was problematic for the former model C educators, because often the children were not prepared for the level of education delivered in the former model C schools. "In the black schools there is nothing going on there." (3b).

"They are not on the same standard of education. They don't get proper training." (3b).

The following educator noted that inadequately trained educators, in spite of help from others, provided learners with a lower standard of education. "Yes, we are helping each other but your child in the township school, they are still discriminated against hugely, and at the end of the day, it's not fair to them." (2d).

"They are worse off now than what they were, besides the fact that years ago they were given a syllabus that teachers could understand…" (2d).

"They were unable to understand the new curriculum because they were not coping with the language. They didn't understand the terminology." (3d).

Participants spoke of their concern for the standards of student teachers from disadvantaged backgrounds. Their skills level were inadequate but they had to qualify, so in due course, would be in the schools. "The black teachers we get, they can't even read little ones in grade two that English story. They can't even read an English story and I mean, but they must train, they must be the educated on the classes. So what is going on in the system? People can't read, they can't write, they can't do maths." (3b).

5.3.2.4 Educators consider that inclusion without support puts learners at a disadvantage

The educators agreed that the support from the education department was ineffective. "No one is prepared to take responsibility." (2b).

The absence of adequate support was considered criminally negligent. The only solution for learners with barriers was to seek professional support from without the education department.

"The only people who do get helped in this society will be people who will have the money … the children, are discriminated against in society. They should be protected …they (government) should look after them." (2d).

"This new education system is actually providing absolutely nothing at all…in those days there was something and you felt you had support and resources, but now you have nothing and we are expected to manage everything." (2c).

"This is criminal...these kids are not getting help." (2d).

“It’s wrong…it’s very wrong.” (2c).

“People giving the instructions, people with the power to delegate don’t know what they’re doing….the problem is so enormous…you cannot expect the impossible from teachers.” (3c).

Educators consider that a lack of responsibility and accountability from the department has resulted in educators having to implement policy without adequate professional support. “All the people out there…the psychologists they got rid of them.” (3a) “Inclusion is passing the buck…having taken away the professional support systems and provided some inadequate alternatives.” (2f). “If they are so worried about inclusion and wanting to help these children with cultural problems, emotional problems why do they close down the Child Protection Unit.” (2f).

“No one is prepared to take responsibility… You feel you’ve got a barrier to teaching because you’ve got all these things to deal with and no one to help you deal with them.” (2b).

Inclusive education was seen by the department as a quick fix solution for getting children through schooling with little responsibility for ensuring a sound education. The lack of support from department was seen as going deeper than an inadequately structured service. It was seen as the result of a lack of competence and knowledge to equip them to train and guide educators.

Furthermore, placement in positions of employment was seen as too compliant to the equity act but not responsive to concepts to representivity.

“Because, they are not on the same standard of education. They don’t get proper training… they apply for the same posts and they get it before us…They’re not trained enough and they don’t care.” (3b).

“The government has take all the white people away who could do the job properly and they’ve put in people – doesn’t matter your colour, or anything – but they put in people, inadequate people, anything, …and they are getting the salary and they don’t know how to do anything?” (3d).

“They are not equipped, not trained to take the lead. If they can’t lead us, how must we lead our people?” (3b).

“Why haven’t they attempted to give us guidance in what they want implemented?” (2d).

Not only is there a lack of knowledge but there is ignorance of the scenario in the schools. “Our superiors, the people that are fast dictators, they do not know what are going on in the classes. You can’t ask them anything…they are sitting there with their mouths open and they can’t answer you.” (3c).

“We need people who can train these people (district) so that they can do the work**.”** (2d). “It must come from top down. Not just expect us to make miracles work here.” (2b). One educator mentioned that if those in the district offices lack proper training, they are not in a position to train those in management positions in the schools. This left classroom educators insecure and unprepared for the challenge of inclusive education. “If they’re not properly trained…how must we train the teachers? So there’s no stability. There’s nothing to fall back on to.” (3c).

“The people giving instructions, people with the power to delegate don’t know what they’re doing.” (3e).

An educator drew attention to the fact that some who hold positions of authority in district offices come from a background of an education system which was disadvantaged. This is possibly why the standards are low for those who were used to better education. They felt this should be addressed. “… A lot of people in our district and our running of our offices for teaching come from previously disadvantaged backgrounds. So that maybe everything that is happening to them feels so… more than what they’ve got. So you’ve got to remember we are working from their experience and we’re working from ours and ours was better, we feel now is worse, but theirs was far worse, but now they’re feeling better. So maybe somewhere along the line they have got to have training as well on lifting them up so that they can come to the required level…” (2a).

Educators were not inherently adverse to change. They opposed change for the sake of change and change which did not bring in something better but rather something more difficult, more

obtuse and far more exhausting. Furthermore, it did not instil confidence in the top structures. "The government that's currently governing our country changed everything in all aspects, because we are talking about education, this is a very important factor for me. They took what was already on the table, whether it worked or not and just changed it. And they changed it again, and they changed it again, and they changed it again… So the whole thing of inclusion is they do not know how to handle this because they threw out all the things… and the people… and now they can't rectify it." (3a).

The practice at district of refusing to allow retentions is seen as a further show of irresponsibility and of ignorance. Educators saw retentions as a solution to providing for a better educated learner and criticised the department for 'pushing the children through' a grade. "They benefit from retention, because it's absolutely amazing, with rare exceptions, how well they do the second year… the kids that would have benefited the most from retention are now left to flounder in the next years. The percentage of kids that are really coping having not benefited from retention is very small." (3e).

"The learners are pushed through from grade R to grade 9 because then the constitution has done its part…because there is no pass rate… no criteria. You can, just go to the next grade. The next teacher has to pick the learner up where he or she is. There are forty learners, there are forty levels, and it's impossible to teach… People are missing the whole point." (3a).
"They want to disparage us to fail learners. If we send a list of learners to be retained, then they put a question mark on *our* education. What is wrong with our school? Why are so many learners failing?" (3b).

Some educators discussed the current practice of the use of different criteria for the race groups who apply for admission to universities. The educators thought that this encouraged an attitude of false confidence and lack of commitment among learners. "I can't read, but one day I'll be a doctor because everything changes between white and black … marks (criterion for university admission) are different, everything is different." (3d).

Retentions were considered delaying the inevitable and earlier assessment and identification would benefit a learner far more than retention in mainstream where through lack of appropriate teaching methods, they fall further behind than they were year before, "…'cause

now it takes two years for the learner to be classified or tested. Because they have to fail first and then, by the end of the next year retained. …the system is wrong in that sense." (4c).

Though ideas are considered good in theory, it was felt that there had not been enough planning and consideration of all the problems. "I heard a president's advisor actually say that often the government has good ideas but they don't think it through and I think inclusion is one of those things." (2b).

Educators considered that there were weaknesses in the district offices and at national level and these created weaknesses in their service delivery. "Things need to have a huge big shake up …and they need to work." (2f). They felt that authorities were unaware of the trials and tribulations they faced. Moreover, as a democratic country the children's rights were not protected since no efforts had been made to train educators to deal with diversity in education. Such diversity was more than barriers within the learner, but included different cultures, socio economic backgrounds and home languages.

5.3.2.5 Lack of financial and human resources are a challenge for educators

Under the heading, human resources the researcher considers the following: human resources as support from within the school and human resources as support from district. Under the heading, financial resources the researcher deals with the development of the infrastructure needed to provide for diversity in education from the financial perspective. Human resources and financial resources are interrelated in respect of provisioning of professional support.

Educators thought that inclusive education was the result of a lack of resource**s** in the country. "I don't think there's enough qualified people to have different schools…that is why they put them into mainstream schooling and expect us to cope." (2a).

"We don't have enough teachers…we don't have enough money." (3d). "Now they want us to teach sixty kids in a class plus real hard cases." (3d).

a) Human resources as support from within the school

A school's management team (SMT) and the school based support team (SBST) are pertinent resources for the implementation of policy. These should provide guidance and support based on knowledge and expertise. Educators did not choose to criticise either of these structures in any way.

(i) Support from the school management team (SMT)

At one school, participants thought that they had real support when democratic schooling was first implemented and the schools used a benchmark in order to determine the appropriate level for a learner who was then placed in an appropriate grade. This practice was disallowed by the Department of Education soon after. "I think in the beginning only thirty children applied… We tested them to see what levels to begin with…on our testing, they seemed to cope…so the transition was quite smooth." (2a). A school had held workshops at the time of the transition and topics covered cultural differences in customs and communication. Educators in the school offering remedial lessons felt confident that these lessons given after school supported learners. Unfortunately some children had transport difficulties and were therefore unable to stay for the lessons.

One focus group thought there was a very democratic management with sharing of ideas and ongoing workshops at their school. This was perceived as very helpful. "In this school there is too much support. Everybody is supporting straight from the principals to the teachers." (4a). Educators in this school were more positive and felt they had achieved some successes in inclusive education but still held the belief that ultimately children with barriers should be placed in special schools. "I've seen that we can actually cope with them and they have got a lot to offer….but in terms of learning abilities there comes a time when they must be allowed to do something else." (4b). Some participants said that they were using inclusive strategies. "We do multilevel teaching a lot in this school." (4e). One school said that multi-level teaching did not work. In the school where they perceived little support, educators were less positive. From this school it was said, "…nobody helped us. Nobody helped anybody." (3e). A participant said that educators shared experiences and knowledge concerning different cultures "…and how to deal with them and this made it easier." (1g). Schools which employed culturally diverse educators considered that the change to multicultural classes had

been facilitated by the employment of educators from different cultures. "You get a better understanding…and that's very helpful". (4d). "It is helpful to get insight from others." (1a).

(ii) Support from the school based support team

A human resource within schools considered to be critical in facilitating inclusive education is the school based support team (SBST). Educators neither criticised their personnel which comprised the SBST nor acknowledged that it was supportive. In all cases they either said that it did not work or spoke within a context that it was impotent and essentially comprised of educators who like themselves did not have training in special needs education (2f). Some saw it as yet another structure which was not working and there was not the skill and knowledge for it to work effectively. "…we have an established SBST but it is only working on paper so that we don't go into trouble…it (looks) lovely but I'm telling you, it's only working on paper." (3b). Committee members cannot help because they have not got the knowledge base and resources to draw on to help others in the classroom. "I cannot help him…he cannot help me." (3b).

Educators felt they lacked support. They felt there should be trained professionals to assist with the children. "We want people from the district who are qualified speech therapists…those are the people that must be on our school based support team (SBST) "We are not supposed to be our own school based support team." (3e).

"We don't have the structures (psychologists, speech therapists) there to support us." (3b).

b) Human resources as support from district

Support from the department in terms of the provision of professionals when needed and in terms of training educators or consultative service, seen in general terms was deficient or absent**.**

"This new education system is actually providing nothing at all." (2c).

One of the educators was upset because by the time the department attended to a request to see a child who was suicidal, several months had passed. This testified to understaffing at the

district level. The concept of a lack of resources included a lack of trained educators to service learners with special needs “They must realise that we are teachers and we are not here to do this inclusion…they must put these kids where people are trained and skilled to do the job because our children are going down the drain.” (3b).

Educators felt that the services of psychologists, occupational therapists and speech therapists should be provided. “Is a life orientation teacher a qualified psychologist? No, she is not.”(2f). Criticism was levelled at the department for apparently dispensing of these services once more readily available. “All the people that were in the department; the psychologists and all the people that could help them, they got rid of them.” (3a).

“In the past…we had many of these people coming here, occupational (therapists)…for free which helped children. Now we must do all that.” (3e).

Remedial teachers are the alternative available to some schools through the role of learner support educators. An educator spoke of the ineffectiveness of such provision. “Where is my remedial teacher? Oh, she’s at some other school at some other place. When do I see her? Once in two weeks if I am lucky. You understand the frustrations we have? …spread her so thin between ten schools?” (2f).

Class size is determined by policy makers. Large classes resulted in educators neglecting the needs of learners. “There isn’t time for that child and if you try to give time to that child you are short changing the other kids. And that really is an effort to be fair; a huge injustice has been done to these kids.” (3e). The disparities in terms of ability are a challenge.

“We’ve got one child that can do it and is way ahead, we’ve got one child with a behaviour problem…then the special needs children who really need you. How do we actually do it with 30, 40, 50 children in the class?” (2e).

“Actually all learners in the class need supportive tuition… it’s a battle.” (3c).

c) Financial resources for the development of an infrastructure: school buildings and the environment to accommodate learners with physical disabilities.

The matter of meeting the needs of children with physical disabilities was of concern. One focus group mentioned that practically it would not work in a school not designed for such children and educators were resistant to having to meet the day to day needs of such children, "How can you come now to the schools and tell *us* now *we* must build ramps for that child?" (3a).

d) Classrooms need to be better resourced for inclusive education: Learner teacher support material (LTSM)

Inclusive education by definition welcomes children from all strata of society. Currently schools are receiving children from previously disadvantaged families and from poor socio economic circumstances as they have opened their doors to a multicultural society. Educators consider that they need far more resources to assist with the development of concepts and knowledge in the learners. "I think due to the fact, the inclusive policy, we really need a lot more teaching aids." (4e). This is especially critical for the environmentally deprived learners. "Our educators do not have enough pictures and you know, visual equipment, even simple pictures to show them that this is what it actually looked like. For instance, the word 'archaeology'. What does an archaeologist do? You must have those pictures available, to show them." (4c). The implication of lack of resources is especially pertinent for educators in schools in the centre of environmentally deprived areas. "So it's not just our school or any other school in town, and what about the bigger picture in the country? …rural schools don't have the facilities." (4c).

Many educators are unable to source their teaching aids due to their particular circumstances. "A lot of our educators take transport with taxis to go to their houses. So there is no time for them to pop in at other places in the afternoons after extra murals to go and look for resources." (4c).

Educators mentioned how much more was available to the learners in the previous dispensation. "We also went to the museum where they actually learned a lot about the learning …excursions is also very important." (4e). Children lacking basic concepts were in

schools which could not support concept development without adequate resources. "There are no resources any more for us in the media…our media centre has run out of resources." (4f).

"People are just handing out text books - that is all we get." (4b).

During the past dispensation, former Model C schools had received material through the services of a central media centre to which they applied for selected material. Schools are not in a financial position to supply same quantity, quality and variety of what had been previously supplied by such a service provider. This service has been discontinued. Schools went on field trips sponsored by the education department. This is presently unaffordable for many schools which have to pay for the transport. "We don't have access and they haven't sent anything." (4b).

Classroom resources are considered critical by diligent and experienced educators. Learners, who come from deprived environments and have little foundation knowledge on which to build concepts, need adequate resources.

5.3.2.6 Lack of support from parents

For educators, the lack of parental support is considered a perennial problem. This problem has increased and become a significant stressor for educators. Educators were most vocal in their criticism of parents. Lack of responsibility and inadequate parenting skills negatively affect the progress of the learner.

Factors pertaining to parenting problems mentioned by educators were: family breakdown, single parents and working mothers; child headed families; delegation of responsibility to aftercare facilities; lack of education and resources of parents; differing values caused by the generation gap; and a general lack of educational accountability and responsibility; deficient parenting skills and the need for parenting courses; and the lack of parent involvement as a stressor for educators.

a) ***Family breakdown, single parents and working mothers***

From an educational perspective, children with parents of whom both are working, single parents as a result of divorce, death of a partner or unmarried mothers unavoidably have their children at risk. This is due to the fact that the time for engagement and parenting and educational support is reduced and very often emotional factors emerge for children caught up in the dynamics of broken homes. "I think it is family breakdown that's actually causing problems we are having in our classrooms." (2e).

"Their parent's don't see them…we've got kids (in grade two) who stay on their own, with brothers and sisters younger than them and their grannies and parents just go off." (3c). Working parents lack the opportunity to see and discuss their children's progress with educators. An educator commented, "Minimum communication. The parents are working…so it's difficult for them to take time off their work." (4c).

Concerning parents from a poorer socio-economic background, an educator said that parents, especially single mothers, are trying their best to give their children a better life than their own. This was emotionally draining and challenging for the parent, "But these women are going away from home to try find a job to, provide the family with enough money to live off and the family unit is completely shattered and its extremely difficult for these mothers, and if you really start talking to them, they start crying because they've become hard and learnt to hide their feelings. That's why they bring their kids here. They are killing themselves to give their children a better life…and it's difficult and they don't understand the structures." (3e).

b) ***Child headed families***

Educators are aware and sympathetic to the circumstances of parents especially when the parents are struggling against difficult circumstances.

'They really have a difficult life…these children are raising one another." (3e).

"Their parent's don't see them…we've got kids (in grade two) who stay on their own, with brothers and sisters younger than them and their grannies and parents just go off. Do whatever." (3d).

c) Delegation of responsibility to aftercare facilities

Schools have set up aftercare facilities as a support for parents who return late from work to collect their children and who receive little support in terms of homework supervision from the personnel employed in the facility. Educators consider that many parents are abandoning responsibilities such as assisting with homework or supervising study.
"I also think, a lot of parents see aftercare facility now as the parent having the parent's role and as they do with the teachers. They hand over the role to anyone but themselves they're not taking responsibility." (2a).

d) Parents' lack of education

Another educator mentioned that parents who lack education often do not realise the extent of the curriculum, the amount that their children have to learn and what must be achieved. They have not experienced schooling as their children are experiencing it. They came from an era where their own education was considerably less structured. "I have a great deal of sympathy for our parent body because they didn't have the opportunities and they want to give these children the opportunities and they don't know how to help… We intimidate them terribly because they know their education is inadequate. They spend a little time with us and then they realise…" (3e).

"They lack the capacity to help due to their lack of education and lack of time as working parents. To support the children has implications for the progress of the learner. The parents sometimes cause more confusion in an effort to help, or they don't help at all." (3e).

"Even though you go to the parents and say this and this and that; you're not getting as much support as you need." (2g).

Sometimes, however, parents surprise the teachers. Teachers do not expect parents to react positively when they require resources because in general parents do not have access to resources. "I asked them to bring a map. Where are they going to find a map? I asked a fellow teacher do you think they will bring it. She said to try it. I tell you, everybody except one child in that class brought a map! So, it was like an eye opener. I think the support from the parents is there even though we don't always see it." (2c).

e) Differing values because of the generation gap

Educators consider that 'bridging the gap' is in itself a challenge. Parents today are 'different' because "…they were brought up differently from our generation and we are beyond where they are today." (2e). Educators feel the generation gap and present day parents have a different value system from what their generation held. "Our expectations are different and we cannot take this young group of parents into our time …or we get into their time to create a balance between us and them ….we need to function together for the benefit of the child." (2e).

Educators felt they had to teach children what parents were failing to do.

"These children do need certain life skills taught to them because it is not coming from the home any…parents that are too busy working and not even there with their children. Some children do need basic life skills. You have a very aggressive mentality amongst some children these days and to me that is not normal…and we need to teach them little things like acceptable behaviour and things like that." (2e).

Some parents are seen to hold different values from those held in previous generations. The increasing use of drugs result in the break down of family structures and children develop emotional and behaviour problems. Children lose respect for parents and educators felt that children no longer regard educators with respect. "They don't listen to their parents because their parents didn't listen to their parents when they did their own thing. It's a vicious circle…and why would they listen to their teachers if they don't listen to their parents?" (2f). Children difficult to discipline are considered an emerging problem in schools. What they very much know is that we may not give corporal punishment." (3b).

"Parents have become friends with their children…and discipline will break down once you become your child's friend …you want to go out and party and you actually go out and drink with your child. So your child is going to look at you as if you are his mate and is going to treat you like that. And that is often why you'll find that the parents will come up for their children even though their child is so wrong. They stand up against us. Now parent and child against you as the teacher" Why? Because they have befriended their kids. They don't want to

admit that they have to take responsibility and discipline their children. And that is where a lot of learning problems come from." (2d).

f) A general lack of accountability and responsibility

Although there are parents who are motivated and support their children, those who are apathetic are often the parents of children who are underperforming.

One teacher thought it was "more the white parents who were apathetic than black parents" (2c). Educators from all focus groups complained of the problem of apathy and lack of responsibility.

"Parents don't really know how little work the children… are doing. So when we bring things to their attention they just simply don't attend to it…the parents don't care whether they work or not." (2a). "The other thing is also the parents, they don't care. They just want to say their child is in X Primary. We must do all the work; we must take all the responsibilities." (3b).

"They may often pretend that they're going to and they're going to do everything but often if they do take it any further and have their child tested and that's as far as they go and then they hand over to someone else. There just seem to be a lack of responsibility and accountability generally." (2c).

g) Parenting skills are deficient and parents need parenting courses

Educators believe that parenting courses would contribute to better parenting and understanding between educators and parents. "Parents need to be taught how to be parents. It doesn't mean if you have a child that all of a sudden, oh I know how to be a parent. You don't!" (2f).

h) Lack of parent involvement is stressful for educators

Educators felt that their roles as educators were both onerous and very stressful due to lack of parenting and lack of parental responsibility to seek professional support such as speech therapists, occupational therapists and psychologists as supplementary to the service of

educators. “At the end of the day, you’ll have to take on more responsibility with their children to accommodate them in their way of being irresponsible to their kids.” (2d). If educators did not have to cope with such challenges, they might be more fulfilled. An educator said, “Would it be *fairer* to then say that the irresponsible teacher would then be a happier teacher because they can cope with the irresponsible child?” (2e). “When you write a special invitation to the parents for parents’ evening, because the child has a problem, they don’t pitch. You work out programmes for these children to help them with their reading skills or whatever, they don’t get done.” (2g).

Parents neither understand the implications that inclusive education holds for educators nor their role as support and partnership for the children. “They don’t understand the teacher’s responsibilities. They don’t understand our pressure because they feel we’ve got half a job. They don’t understand that inclusion is very difficult for us and I think part of the problem is they’ve got the perception that because of inclusion the government has shifted their responsibility of looking after their child onto us solely as teacher, where it should be partnership.” (2b).

5.3.2.7 Low morale of educators

Departmental policy, lack of knowledge and adequate service delivery is seen as the cause for stress and low morale amongst teachers. With a low morale, educators lack enthusiasm and this has implications for the achievement of learners. Low morale is often underpinned by the educator’s feeling of being overwhelmed and no longer able to meet the academic standards previously achieved within the school. Adding to this is the new curriculum, badly behaved learners, empowerment of learners and the restrictions on educators to enforce learning.

When discussing expectations held by the department of educators, the educators identified the lack of competent and informed guidance as stressful. “I attend a lot of meetings, important meetings where I must come back and to the school and report to my department, but at the one, they give you certain information. At the next meeting, the next lady that’s doing the meeting, running the meeting, she gives you the opposite kind of information. Now next time you go to the third meeting and it’s never the same. …how can we implement it correctly if we didn’t have the training? Nobody knows what is right. So how can they expect us to make a success of it?” (3c).

“But it feels to me, I’m not a normal teacher anymore. I teach the whole time, like I’m teaching a remedial class. Not remedial for four or five. You know what I am saying?” (3c). “Morale is low because educators feel inadequate and overwhelmed by the work load. “We are drowning really, we are drowning.” (2d).

“How are you expected to cope with everything at the end of the day, you know so much is just loaded on you?” (2d).

“We are supposed to be a ‘jack of all trades’ but other countries have assistants and specialists in the field to take children out to do this kind of thing.” (2c).

“Teachers are killing themselves trying to get through their year programme.” (3b).

“I was excited in the beginning and believed it was going to work. The practical situation was so different and I thought it’s not going to work so now I’ve just kind of resigned that this is how it is going to be.” (4b).

“We are nothing…we have ‘no’ rights. We are getting fed up…Our white teachers must also start burning down the schools, burning the books, that’s the only time they’ll listen to us, really. We sit with broken marriages, we sit stressed up, on medication and really we can’t keep it up anymore. We don’t get down to ground level like when we had a syllabus…and learners were all on the same level when they went to high school.” (3b).

The low self-esteem was seen as a cause for the attrition of educators. “We get lower and lower in self-esteem and more leave the teaching profession.” (2c). “They’re not putting the system in place.” (2f).

“If you apply for a job in Australia or New Zealand, they grab you and you get the same salary as a doctor in those other countries and here we are level to the gravel.” (3b).

5.3.2.8 Classroom factors which bring about educator resistance towards inclusive education.

Educators considered the following to present significant challenges in the implementation of inclusion.

a) The demands of the outcomes-based curriculum

The presently used curriculum requires an enormous amount of administration at the cost of good teaching. The structure of the curriculum does not allow for enough time for important academic subjects and creates much repetition or over-emphasis on other areas. It is also a curriculum which has failed in other countries yet held on to in this with a unique context where there are less supporting structures and more challenges.

"Inclusion creates a lot more work for the teacher not even mentioning the paperwork." (2b).

"This OBE is rubbish, just paperwork, paper and paper and paperwork, names and names and names, words, words. It's very nice but on the ground floor there is no teaching going on. The system is wrong. OBE is not working!" (3b).

"There are too many learning areas and that scenario will have to be revised." (2d).

"It is not just coping with the volumes, it's also that we've lost a lot of time in important learning areas like English...mathematics, due to the implementation, you know, of the new learning areas. You can't do it properly." (2d).

b) The multiple roles expected of educators are a challenge.

Educators have to take on some of the work of paraprofessionals, namely remedial teachers, occupational therapists and counsellors.

"You are here to teach but then we must solve all these social problems and all these behaviour problems and we don't have the structures that are there to support us." (3b).

c) The negative learning environment

The negative learning environment, caused by poverty and emotional deprivation is considered a significant challenge confronting educators who consider that the general knowledge of learners from such circumstances is very inadequate leaving no time for deeper level learning. Sound conceptual development requires a sound knowledge base. "We don't have time to go to a deeper level and they don't have in-depth thinking and teaching… you tell them about resources, mining, coal, diamonds, they have no idea what you are talking about, especially in the areas very difficult to teach" (4c).

d) The lack of professional support is disempowering.

Educators consider that many children should be given the opportunity to repeat a year but the personnel from the district offices override decisions.

"The benefit from retention is absolutely amazing with rare exceptions…but when passed they are left to flounder in the next year and by the time they hit number one [assessment number for weakest achievement] in grade six or seven the percentage of kids that are really coping… is very, very small." (3e).

"We are forced to take learners...we never get any learner profiles." (3c)

e) Language barriers, attitude and behaviour

Language barriers, negative attitude and poor behaviour were listed as learning barriers which were important challenges for educators. This was so in all focus group interviews.

"I ask my clever kids to help, but children are arch manipulators...they either start doing the work alone or the clever kiddie is harsh enough to hold back and then the child with barriers can't cope and they become naughty so I drop my level of teaching for my whole class there is no such thing as stimulating extra work for the bright child anymore because my whole focus is on the bottom of the class." (3c).

"When I go and help them one group the others sit and talk Zulu, Xhosa, Tswana and they're being naughty so there is no work being done there." (3b). "They just do rubbish work to go outside." (3d).

“Even seven year olds throw chairs on to teachers. How do we cope?” (2e).

5.3.2.9 Looking towards the future

Educators from all interviews consider that at present the learners with barriers who are in mainstream classes are getting an inadequate education and that what is happening is amoral. “We cannot, with the best intention in the world be fair to these children. We are completely stealing from them, stealing their futures because we cannot give them what they need.” (3e). All educators considered that they need training which is more structured, thorough and includes demonstration lessons.

“A week’s demonstration lesson of how, from the department’s side, they expect us to do that. Invite teachers to your courses. Show us how you cope with your paper work, with your extra workloads, extra murals, and discipline problems. Then we can talk business.” (2d).

“We are taking every opportunity away from a child because we are not equipped to deal with them.” (3e).

Educators require classroom assistants, a measure controlling a balance between learners with barriers and those without. Some want the CPU re-established and all want the support of paraprofessionals. All expressed the need for better resources, both human and financial. All educators believed that children with barriers should receive placement in special schools “…in an environment where they can help.” (2f). “It is a basic human right, sorry!” (2a). All saw previous structures as ones that worked and were more desirable than what they now have.

“They must go back to the old system, the old methods that we knew works for us.” (3b). Educators considered that they were being led by personnel who had inadequate knowledge and expertise and therefore they could not be expected to be successful in their teaching.

“Nobody knows what is right so how can they expect us to make a success of it” (3c).

Educators want to be heard, their situation known to policy makers and those in authority. An educator drew attention to the fact that as stakeholders, their voices are not sought by the department. “The downfall of our system is we are not allowed to be heard.” (2d).

5.4 CONCLUSION

The purpose of the research was to determine what challenges faced by educators in the classrooms of primary schools. In this chapter, the researcher presented a synopsis of the empirical research done through semi-structured interviews with principals and focus group interviews with educators. From the interview with a principal from outside the district, it was ascertained that challenges were consistent with those experienced in the district where the research was first undertaken. Her positive approach and confidence in the concept of inclusion indicated that knowledge and training might prepare one for the changes taking place in education. Her district had undertaken some training of educators which she considered was helpful in bringing about change.

In the following chapter the findings of the research project is summarised, conclusions will are drawn and recommendations for the improvement of practice and for further research will be discussed.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Quo vadis?

(To where do we go from here?)

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In South African schools, educators have particularly challenging contextual factors with which they contend as they are expected to implement inclusive education. Fourteen years after their first experience of plurality and diversity in education, South African educators remain challenged by factors which negatively impact on their service delivery. This holds implications for learners for whom they hold the responsibility to meet critical and developmental outcomes as described by a new curriculum. Learners with barriers to learning, may not all receive an education which is appropriate to their needs. Barriers may be found within a learner, as well as within the system. Systemic barriers render challenges for educators who are the primary implementers of inclusive education.

In this research, the researcher has undertaken to determine the challenges to principals and educators from four former model C schools in a particular district. The researcher has also interviewed a school principal from a neighbouring district to determine differing insights and experiences outside of the delimited area of the particular district as used for the research. School principals, who manage educators and schools, are in touch with educators and the emerging day to day challenges.

This qualitative applied basic research was interpretive and constructivist in nature and it explored the phenomenological aspects of educators who struggle with the implementation of inclusive education. The empirical study was undertaken through semi-structured individual interviews with school principals and focus group interviews with educators of different ages, contextual experiences and race. To determine challenges, as faced by educators, which will be useful to policy makers and authorities who are responsible for implementing inclusive education. The researcher maintains that the findings of this research will provide insight into the barriers which are challenges to educators in the classrooms of primary schools. Such

insight has value for immediate practical application in the reformulation of policy and determination of strategies appropriate for facilitating inclusive education.

6.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

6.2.1. A tabulated comparison of the findings from the literature study and of the empirical research

Table 6.1 Comparison of the findings from the literature study and of the empirical research

FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE RESEARCH	FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL STUDY
Key challenges for educators on all levels of education	Key challenges for educators
The development of a network of support for educators is still inadequate and ineffective. Educators at school level are inadequately supported by the network of support envisaged by the policy documents. This includes the school based support teams and the district support teams. The slow roll out of policy as iterated in the Education White Paper 6 (DoE 2001) has delayed policy implementation at provincial, district and institution level. Goals include the fiscal policy for restructuring of schools; the conversion of schools and identification of out of school youth. At the level of provincial education, there are strategic goals which are challenges to be addressed. These include the implementation of curricula; development of learning programmes; monitoring of school performance and implementation of policy. Lack of knowledge and understanding of the shift in orientation required by policy continues at all levels of education. Placements continue as individual pathologies are legitimised and school educators remain ill prepared to effectively implement inclusive education. There is a lack of understanding at both	According to all interviewees a comprehensive knowledge of the aims and required outcomes of inclusive education remains undeveloped in an inadequately supporting environment. Principals and classroom educators continue to think in terms of the medical model which views learners in terms of deficiencies or individual pathologies. Educators acknowledge that they do not have the experience and skills needed to adapt to an inclusive education. Educators struggle without adequate knowledge or skills. There are ambiguities in educators' personal constructs of inclusive education. Support for inclusive education from outside the environment of the school is inadequate. This refers to both the district and the community. Challenges that emerge are the lack of capacity building for educators; lack of programmes for learners; inadequate resource provision; and emerging negative attitudes as a result of stressors. The inadequate provision of resources posing challenges holding ramifications into a number of educational aspects impacting on inclusive

provincial and district levels of education for the shift in orientation and bolstering special schools. Decentralisation holds both positive and negative implications for inclusive education. Capacity building of educators is envisaged as taking place through support from district based support teams and school based support teams; resource centres and special schools; the community and other government services e.g. social services and non-government organisations. Research points out that educators consider such support as behind schedule for implementation and currently inadequate. The inadequate provision of resources directly impacts as challenges at all levels of education. Financial resources The poor funding causes delay in implementation of policy; there are no prerequisite norms and standards for funding requests; no strategic campaign or integration strategy for inclusive education namely the marginalised youth with disabilities and no plans for the improvements to infrastructure of the schools in order to accommodate children with barriers. There is a lack of teaching resources such as stationery books and technology in schools. Human resources Post provisioning is in place but some posts are unfilled and some are filled by those who lack the knowledge and skills necessary to lead inclusive education. Districts are not training educators in the real skills necessary for implementation of inclusive education. At institution level, there is an inadequate supply of specialist educators: LSE's, each of whom would previously have worked in a given school, have currently been redeployed to service many schools. This is not successful in terms of efficient and adequate service delivery and job satisfaction.	education. Principals and educators consider that there is inadequate support in terms of provision of both human and financial resources. Both principals and classroom educators consider as a challenge human resources in management and supervision on the macro and meso levels of education. Their experience of these levels is that they are ineffective and impotent. Some challenges emerged as a need for guidance and support in the South African context and the need to address disparities in the quality of service delivery for former model C schools and township schools. The challenges to implement inclusion in the classrooms are a source of stress for educators. This is acknowledged by both principals and classroom educators alike. These include the outcomes based curriculum, the socio-economic challenges and the cultural and language factors which make teaching ineffective. It is a challenge for educators who are required to develop high standards of excellence in traditional academic subjects while still embracing an inclusive agenda. Other stressors include the lack of parent support; family break down; single parents and working mothers which result in learners receiving inadequate guidance and support (parents ignore their responsibility and hand responsibility over to after care facilities); child headed families (many children grow up in homes without parents) and the lack of education and resources of parents. Classroom educators consider that the contradictory values found in a generation gap bring about conflicting goals in education between educators

A negative learning environment results in stressors for educators. These include the negative socio-economic challenges; the lack of support from parents and communities; the inadequate support from the education system; class size and problematic administrative factors.	and learners and their parents. A general lack of accountability and responsibility at meso level is considered by educators as the cause for failure to meet educational needs of all children. This manifests in terms of a lack of support for educator initiatives and their needs as well as a lack of support for learners on all levels of education. Educators consider lack of parent involvement as stressful. Parenting skills for an increasing amount of families are considered deficient and parents are believed to be in need of guidance. Principals and educators emphasised that frustration and negativity do not provide for happy teaching environments or proactive teaching and learner support. Educator attrition is a result.

6.2.2 Researcher's comment

The comparison of the information gained through the literature study and through the empirical research indicates that the challenges for educators were consistent through all interviews.

6.3 DEGREE TO WHICH THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY HAVE BEEN MET

The aim of the study was to identify the challenges to the implementation of inclusion, as experienced by educators in the classrooms of former model C primary schools in South Africa.

The aim was subdivided into several objectives:

- To determine the aims and desired outcomes of inclusive education

The researcher completed a literature study which was discussed in Chapter two. This study successfully covered the advent of inclusive thinking in terms of trends in society and developments in education that have taken place internationally. The aim and desired outcome of inclusive education is to provide equal quality education for all children and to achieve, through this, social reconstruction.

- To briefly describe the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa and to identify key challenges at macro, meso and micro levels.

In chapter three the researcher continued a literature study in order to consider inclusive education in South Africa. Although policy documents have been drawn up and the process of developing an inclusive education system is in place, the development is slow and challenges are still to be overcome. Challenges at macro, meso and micro levels of education affect the implementation of inclusive education for the educator in the classroom. Key challenges for education as highlighted in existing research are discussed in this chapter.

- To investigate how educators understand their role as primary implementers of inclusion and how they experience the implementation process in schools.

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with principals in four schools and focus group interviews with educators from those schools. Through the interviews, the challenges experienced by educators were identified. The challenges from both the perspective of school principals and the educators were dealt with under themes as presented in chapters five and six.

The researcher decided to interview a principal from without the delimited area in order to determine whether the scenario was any different in a former Model C school in a different district. This principal differed in age, race and training from the first four principals. This was done as part of the triangulation process.

- To determine to what extent educators consider they are effective in the implementation of inclusion and what assistance they require from the Department of Education to assist and equip them with the implementation of inclusion

The educators interviewed used the opportunity to express their opinion on the effectiveness of their implementation of inclusion and they expressed their need for assistance from the Department of Education in clearly defined statements.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.4.1 Recommendations to improve practice in schools

It was established that the challenges experienced by educators prevent effective implementation of inclusive education with negative implications for most learners. It was also established that there are learners with barriers to learning in every educator's class. Challenges must be identified, acknowledged and addressed at all levels of education. The provision of support is an indispensable factor called for by successful implementation. On every level, inclusion should be based on the need for support. It is about maximising participation of all learners and minimising barriers.

The following recommendations are made:

All educators and all personnel at all levels of education must receive adequate training in terms of the conceptual background for inclusive education.
This might be in terms of:

- Principles and school management teams at institution level should receive a comprehensive training programme as they are the primary movers for change within the schools.
- Short programmes conducted by universities.
- Master Educators and specialist educators, which are newly implemented categories for educators, might be used for training of educators at sites of learning through cluster meetings and workshops scheduled in proactive programmes.
- Specialist educators might be used to model inclusive strategies for windows of time in classrooms as they collaborate with educators.
- Suitably qualified and skilled personnel should be shared among districts for capacity building at all levels
- Parenting programmes should be facilitated through school governing bodies using NGO's or paraprofessionals.

- Special schools should network with ordinary schools in terms of support provision.
- Educators are also stakeholders. Their voices are important to the knowledge necessary for top structures to address inclusion in respect of contextual factors.
- Research, consultation with universities and engagement with experts on this aspect of education is important to the rights of all learners.

The need for support must be met in terms of financial and human resources.

- At institutional level financial resources should include a budget allowance for each child identified as having a learning barrier. This budget could provide for resource provision. Learner teacher support material is a need to be addressed.
- At schools with sufficient (a given) number of learners with language barriers, post provision should allow for a specialist educator to teach the language of leaning and teaching (LoLT).
- Schools should endeavour to have multicultural staff as the research has indicated that educators consider that their insight into and understanding of children from different cultures are enhanced by their interaction with members of staff from other cultures.
- Educator training programmes are a priority for consideration. Schools should insist on training programmes for the educators. At best, these should be formulated by academics at university level. Although this should be a priority for the Department of National Education, if motivating such a programme does not occur at this level, the school governing bodies should take responsibility for motivating such programmes for educators. A body of learner support educators or specialist educators from special schools might form part of the personnel used to present training programmes.
- The cohort of Learner Support Educators should be increased in size so that they might be more effective in a few schools rather than relatively ineffective in many. Improved service delivery will be provided for when conditions of service for these educators is given consideration.
- Post provisioning at district level should be considered in terms of both representivity and academic qualifications that all schools might have the service of those who are best qualified and experienced. A level three educator employed at the district offices, should ideally hold a minimum of a university honours degree. Qualifications should be appropriate to the work to be undertaken. Staff should ideally be trained in the eco-

systemic perspectives of special needs and in inclusive education. Staff composition at all levels should be representative of all South Africans.

- Best practice from other countries should be considered and modified to suit the context of South African schools. Educators need support assistants in the classrooms. Such personnel may include translators as well as support for scholastic skill development for learners.
- District personnel should be visible, proactive and empowering for educators at the sites of learning.

6.4.2 Recommendations for further research in the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa

The research was limited by the fact that only former model C school educators in one education district were interviewed. These educators teach in the better resourced government schools found in peri-urban and suburban areas in the province of Gauteng. The government schools in townships have significantly different contexts and though some challenges are common to all educators in all schools, the findings of the research are not necessarily applicable to educators in township schools or to educators of other provinces. This situation suggests that further research might be conducted in schools with different contexts, possibly township and rural schools.

Further research could include a longitudinal study on the academic progress and affective development of children with barriers to learning who have received education in mainstream schools. A study to determine the effectiveness of inclusive education on learners with barriers who have been included in mainstream schools is also recommended.

Recommendations for future research include:

The effectiveness of capacity building programmes for educators. A comparative study might be made between the perceptions of educators on the effectiveness of inclusion in their classrooms between different schools in different provinces or between private and government school educators.

An attitudinal study might be made giving the views of both learners in classrooms who have barriers and those learners who have not.

A comparative study might be undertaken on the use of curriculum adaptation strategies for inclusive education in the classroom.

A comparative study on the educator's experience of success in implementing inclusive education: one group having received a training programme involving theory and skills development and another exposed to only policy documents and theory behind inclusive education.

6.5 CONCLUSION

Education in South Africa is vital to social transformation and the building of an industrially and commercially strong country which can find a place alongside first world countries. Inclusive education is envisaged as the panacea to social exclusion and marginalised minorities. Classroom educators are primary implementers of inclusive education. It is their hearts and minds which must need change as they hold the key to the door still firmly closed to an education system which should be fair and just to all.

South Africa has called on the educators to implement inclusive education. They are at the interface, they are experiencing significant challenges. Their voices have been heard. They require training and solid structured support, at all levels and from the wider community in order that they may meet the needs of all learners.

Answers lie too, in ongoing research, addressing barriers in a systemic way and through open communication and support, both up and down the ranks in education, so that all educators may once again hold faith in their profession, see hope in the future and raise the prospects for all children equally.

Ei id dixerunt!

(They have said it!)

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Appendix A

UMnyango WezeMfundo
Department of Education

Lefapha la Thuto
Departement van Onderwys

Enquiries : Shadrack Phele (MIRMSA)
Tel. no. : [011] 355 0285

Thursday, March 26, 2009

Mrs Maughreen Winifred Ladbrook

Dear Mrs Maughreen Winifred Ladbrook

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: PROJECT

The Gauteng Department of Education hereby grants permission to conduct research in its institutions as per application.

Topic of research	: "Challenges experienced by educators in the implementation of Inclusive Education in primary schools in South Africa."
Nature of research	: M.Ed.
Name of institution	: University of South Africa [UNISA]
Supervisor/Promoter	: Prof. E. Prinsloo

Upon completion of the research project the researcher is obliged to furnish the Department with copy of the research report (electronic or hard copy).

The Department wishes you success in your academic pursuit.

Yours in Tirisano,

p.p. Shadrack Phele [MIRMSA]

Ms Mmapula Kekana
Chief Director: Information Systems and Knowledge Management
Gauteng Department of Education

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF DIRECTOR
INFORMATION & KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT
Room 1501, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001 P.0.Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000
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Appendix B

Sample letter from the district office, to a school principal requesting support with the research

The Principal

To whom it may concern.

This serves as a letter of introduction to confirm that Mrs Ladbrook works for the District, ……., and is presently preparing for a Masters Degree through the University in South Africa.

She is presently interviewing school principals and also doing focus groups with educators. It is with consent of the Department of Education. Any participation in an interview would be voluntary. Anonymity is guaranteed.

I would appreciate it if you would support her with this work.

Kind regards

Acting DCES (District)

Appendix C

Sample of letter to school principal for permission to undertake focus group interview.

The Principal

I request permission to please undertake a focus group interview with educators from your school for the purpose of completing my research in education for a Master's Degree through Unisa.

The research covers the key challenges educators experience in the implementation of Inclusive Education following the publication of the Education White Paper 6 Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (DoE:2001).

The research will inform policy makers regarding aspects of inclusive education which present as challenges to those who are the primary implementers of education to our diverse population of learners. It will provide information on supportive strategies which might be considered for capacity building of educators and the empowerment of schools.

The Gauteng Education Department has issued approval for the research. I request that you, as principal of your school, grant me permission to undertake the research with your educators as participants. Each participant would be a voluntary participant and letters affirming confidentiality and anonymity will be issued.

Kind regards

MW LADBROOK

Appendix D

Sample of letter to an educator inviting participation in a focus group interview.

Dear

My research for my Master's Degree, concerns the key challenges you as an educator experience in your classroom in the implementation of inclusive education. This research is set in the context of educators in former Model C schools and the purpose is to inform policy making as well as provide insight to those who deliver service to schools in support of educators. It is an opportunity for you to view your opinion and enter into discussion with fellow educators from your school. Permission to undertake the research has been provided by the Gauteng Department of Education.

The procedure will take place in the form of a focus group and the discussion will be recorded and transcription made for the research. All participants are guaranteed anonymity by the researcher and the university, and the school will not be identified in the work.

Would you please be kind enough to be a participant in the research project?

The pertinent details are as follows;
Date:
Venue:
Time:

Duration of the focus group is expected to be an hour.
Kind regards

MW LADBROOK

Appendix E

Sample letter confirming anonymity to participant in the interviews.

Dear _____

Thank you for agreeing to be a participant in my research. This is to assure you that your anonymity will be protected by me as the researcher and by the university, UNISA.
Neither you nor your school will be identifiable through the work.

Kind regards

MW LADBROOK

Appendix F

Guidelines for the focus group interviews: Paper handed to educators.

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

PARTICIPANTS: EDUCATORS

PREAMBLE:

Each year educators are faced with a task that is becoming increasingly difficult; namely meeting the educational needs of all students. It seems unlikely that inclusive education can be accomplished through traditional, teacher centred instruction or standardization of the past. Educators were given a new curriculum with some training but to meet the challenges of inclusive education the challenges need to be identified and steps taken to support teachers who are instrumental and accountable for successful implementation of inclusion in the classroom. This research, for which you have volunteered to be a participant, is structured to ascertain the challenges you as an educator face in your classroom as a result of inclusive education. The purpose is to make these challenges known with the hope that they might be addressed and that there will result, a better support system for educators. This is a research designed to have a strong connection with educators in the classroom.

To many inclusion is about all children receiving the same curriculum. There is little attention given to social and economic disadvantage, cultural diversity, discrimination oppression and their influences on access to educational entitlement. To some South Africans it means that every child should be given admission to the nearest school to which the child lives.

To many the concept of inclusion is problematic as it involves a paradigm shift. Internationally there are differing concepts some seeing it as mainstreaming with support, others as adaptation of mainstream education to the individual. It is generally considered different from integrating into mainstream as this concept suggests that the child copes with mainstream as best she or he can and needs to change to what is considered acceptable in mainstream. Inclusion suggests there are no deficits as it is normal in society to have differences and therefore society must be welcoming and accommodating of all.

For purpose of this interview, we will acknowledge that in South Africa, at present, we have a multicultural society, diverse in culture, language, socio economic back ground as well as disabilities and differences due to the inherent or intrinsic make up of a child. Therefore, differences exist on all levels. Educators have been compelled to accommodate these differences and diversity. This presents challenges. It is these challenges we wish to discuss in the focus group interview.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED, OR BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE NECESSARY, FOR PURPOSE OF THE FOCUS GROUP.

Inclusion

Inclusion as an educational approach is a new concept educators and policy makers are coming to grips with. It is a policy applied in other countries and in South Africa new policy documents have in principle opened the way for implementation. Inclusion represents a radical paradigm shift, not only for educators but for life as a whole, based on a sociocritical perspective. This perspective accepts that disability stems from the failure of structured social environment to adjust to the needs and aspirations of citizens with disabilities rather than from the inability of a disabled individual to adapt to the demands of society. It accepts that all people including those with disability form part of "normal" society. New terms are used in education, *differentiation, multi-level teaching*, *meeting diversity* and so on. For many, inclusive education is a recreation of the special needs education under a new banner, namely, "Inclusion". Effectively, it is a radical new way of looking at education not only of people with disabilities, but all children. General and Special educators work together for the good of all children.

Exceptional Needs/ Special Needs/LSEN/ Children with Barriers to Learning.

These terms are used for the same group of children though they carry slightly different concepts and connotations. The last means that though a child has a barrier, it is believed that all children can learn. The others suggest that the children have challenges which render them in need of specialised teaching, care and facilities and that many may not learn adequately if adequacy is measured by the norm for the average child.

This represents the group of children who experience difficulty in education due to any condition which renders them disable or unable to manage in mainstream education with a traditional curriculum and teaching methods. The barrier may exist within the child, e.g. Dyslexia, Chronic Illness, syndromes e.g. Autism, sensory impairments e.g. visual and aural disabilities. Other barriers may be outside of the child and in the environmental. This may be disadvantages due to socio economic conditions, an inadequacy within the school, or in the home.

Socio economic disadvantage and Poor Socio Economic Background

Paucity in environmental stimulation and conditions, alcoholism, poverty, abuse, poor nutrition and inadequate or deficient parenting represent some of the socio economic conditions found in poorer or disadvantaged communities.

Of course, some of these conditions mentioned, are found in middle class and affluent homes as well. These factors impact on the learning of children, as well as on their affective and social lives.

Disability and Learning Disability and Problems which constitute barriers

Disability refers to permanent shortcomings in a person's make-up or constitution and is usually congenital or caused by a detrimental factor such as illness or accident. Disability may be sensory, physical, mental or intellectual or multiple disability. Other forms are numerous and include epilepsy, autism and various forms of communication and behavioural disorders.

A *learning disability* usually refers to those children in particular who have perceptual, motor and cognitive disabilities. They often have difficulty with concentration and may be dyslexic. Often they are of average and above average in intelligence but find it hard to master the tasks their peers are able to master. They may have difficulty in one or more than one subject or certain sections of a given subject.

Intellectual impairment refers to those who have intellectual barriers.

Emotional problems include anxiety, nervousness, depression and tension. *Behavioural problems* may be attention seeking behaviour, talking out of turn to most disruptive and aggression. Manifestations include thieving, truancy and similar social problems. We have *at risk* learners, *underachievers*, and *disadvantaged* learners.

Scaffolded Instruction

This refers to support in instruction for a child who is less able than peers. Such support may be in the way of modified curriculum. Teacher or peer support during tasks wherein other children work independently. The idea is to slowly remove the scaffolding as the learner obtains confidence, or skill. It is material that allows for learning to take place e.g. reading given to match the reading level of the child, supports to ensure understanding takes place.

Collaborative support and Collaborative Learning.

This refers to support, interaction and consultation patterns between staff members in the school.

Collaborative learning refers to learning through interaction in group work. This is often confounded through differing learning styles and personalities which do not work well together.

Deep understanding/ Deep learning

In order for learning to be effective it is crucial that the learner obtains a deep understanding of the material to be learnt. A deep understanding will ensure that the concepts relating to the material to be learnt are fully understood and this will help comprehension and the transfer of learning to other areas and to future learning situations.

Types of teaching: cursory, transmissive and elaborative.

Cursory teaching is represented when the teacher delivers, checks and moves on.

Transmissive teaching is that in which the teacher directs the students on the basis of the content of the students work to date, with no student response and interaction. Elaborative teaching, is that in which the teacher asks questions that permit response and the teacher calibrates instruction in response to the student's questions and answers. This teaching is usually found in teachers who acknowledge differences in learning ability and recognise their responsibility for meeting the needs of all learners.

Differentiated Instruction. Because of the unique characteristics of children, differentiated instruction provides for meaningful and effective instructional delivery for not only those "at risk" but the average and gifted children. It is done through, differentiated instruction, interdisciplinary curriculum, use of technology, student collaboration and peer mediated instruction, supports and accommodations for curricular inclusion, teaching responsibility, peace making, and self determination and authentic assessment performance. Differentiated instruction has three distinct curriculum access points – content, process and product. Content concerns what is taught, process concerns how learners demonstrate what is learnt and product the content of what, or the skill that has been learnt.

GUIDELINES FOR PARTICPATION IN A FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW:

You might be considering the following questions:

- What is a focus group?
- How does it work?
- What about my anonymity and confidentiality?

A focus group is a group of participants who have agreed to take part in a research project. The focus group is a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment. It allows a researcher to investigate multiple perceptions in the defined area of interest through listening and observation.

Participants are asked to sit together and in a spirit of open discussion to participate in the answering of questions and developing ideas as people share ideas and feelings and points of view. It provides a forum for the uncovering of issues, beliefs and emotions that may be but often not explored in general discussion. It requires respect and acceptance of the thoughts and beliefs of others, allowing for turn taking and avoidance of interruption in discussion.

The researcher provides assurance of anonymity and confidentiality at the outset, before the participants agree to participate. Preventing identification of individuals and venues is an undertaking of the researcher in the final synthesis of the data that emerges from the focus group interview.

There will be a recording of the focus group interview. Participants are required to give consent for this recording.

This is from an article which I recently came across and the extract given below is something I should like us to discuss, or bare in mind in our discussions, as it talks of factors about which many educators strongly identify.

--low morale amongst teachers (lack of enthusiasm for new ideas and ‘not keen to put themselves out’)

--Rigidity of management (conceptually narrow-focused, top down decision- making, inflexibility')

--Time constraints, particularly in relation to heavy work loads which are being exacerbated by the retrenchment of teachers;

--Lack of commitment, responsibility and accountability of teachers in general…

Ref: De Jongh, T. 2008. The Educational Psychologist and school organisation development in reconstruction of education in South Africa: Issues and challenges. *S.A. Journal of Psychology*, 26(2) 114:118.

The questions cover the following categories:
Those pertaining to your paradigm shift over the years, your understanding of inclusive education and the expectations held of you.
Your challenges, in particular, and your needs and view on the implementation of inclusion.
Your insights gained from your experience over the last ten years, of implementing the new curriculum and being a primary implementer of inclusion. Consider, 'the way forward'.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Inclusive education is not yet legislated but in terms of the White Paper 6 Special Needs Education Building and Inclusive Education and training system 2001 it is slowly being implemented in our schools. Since 1994, when equitable education came into effect, we have had multicultural classes. In such classrooms, we not only have cultural diversity but are faced with the responsibility of teaching those who formally might have received placement in special schools. We are now in an inclusive education system. You have been given a new curriculum, which is believed to be one which supports inclusive education.

1. What do you understand as being the reason (s) for inclusive education?

2. Describe the changes you underwent in terms of your values and your approach to education as a result of the new paradigms.

3. How was the change to a multicultural classroom having children with diverse backgrounds and all that this entails, facilitated by your management team?

4 Do you personally believe that a child with special needs or with barriers to learning but on a level which will demand sustained time and effort, should be in a mainstream classroom as we have these in South Africa? Please motivate your answer.

5 Think about the three types of education explained in the preamble, namely *cursory, transmissive* and *elaborative*. It is probable that teachers move between the three types. Have you ever evaluated your teaching in terms of these categories? As you reflect on your teaching and those factors which influence your level of teaching, do you think you have sufficient time for elaborative teaching in your day as you face the challenges of the new curriculum namely the assessments and content to be covered?

6. What are the challenges and stressors you experience in terms of understanding and working with the new curriculum which is supposed to be designed to allow educators to teach inclusively. What are the practical challenges and stressors to do with curriculum delivery that you experience in the classroom as you encounter diversity?

7. List or explain the nature of the five barriers you find most challenging, amongst the children in your classroom.

8. What other professional development or *INSET* training have you received for the new curriculum and for the changes brought about with inclusive education?

9. What supports do you receive from the school and from district in respect of collaborative support for the teaching of children with barriers to learning?
In which ways were these either adequate and empowering or inadequate and inappropriate?

11. What strategies suggested which allow for inclusive education, do you employ in the classroom. Listed in the preamble are some of the following and others are terms you have probably heard. These are scaffold instruction, multi level education and differentiation, collaborative support or/and learning and curriculum modification/ calibration of teaching.

12. Do you think you would be ready to try multilevel teaching and reporting, and differentiation in your classroom given support from a Learner Support Educator (*LSE*), or from your Management Team (*SMT*) or the School Based Support Team (*SBST*).

13. What type of capacity building would you consider most acceptable for you in view of the expectations held that you are a primary implementer of inclusion?

a) informal two way discussion during or after morning meetings at school, whereby you are kept abreast of new thinking, new policies or just general enrichment regarding strategies, concepts, developments
b) informed guidance from the SBST
c) both of the above plus *INSET* training arranged by the school

d) provision of training from district in respect of understanding, strategies etc

e) other

14. What are the factors you consider necessary, or, the variables which should be in place, for successful inclusive education?

15. Do you find that on the whole the parent involvement is satisfactory?

16. Thinking of your experiences, talk about the view of parents in respect of inclusive education. Discuss the view of those with children experiencing barriers to learning as well as the view of those with children who do not, towards inclusive education.

17. How has your school made changes to make the environment within your school welcoming and affirming of all cultures, abilities and languages?

18. What are the innovative collaborative student centred practices in your school or in the classroom for children with exceptional needs?

19 What are the positive aspects that you consider have come about through inclusive education in South Africa? And negative aspects?

20. Please comment on the following quotation.

Quote: …the greatest challenge is for educators "to strive on chaos"…to leap out of an existing system of order to understand the educational implications of emerging characteristics of the societal environments in which we are embedded….The provocation of this challenge is dealing with uncertainty and ambiguity and, above all understanding the nature of chaos….a metaphor which aptly captures this: It's like walking through a maze whose walls rearrange themselves with every step you take. South Africa's educational maze as never before offers unparalleled occasion for innovation.

BACKGROUND NOTES FOR INTERVIEWER:

Research: Parents can be instrumental in the success on inclusionary placements for their children. They can collaborate with school district personnel and community members to create and support inclusive educational programmes, offer insight's into their child's disabilities and needs and communicate regularly with educators…

Parents that scrutinize system level factors include administrative and organisational factors, curricula, adequately trained administrators, teachers and related personnel, availability of special education and related services, on their children's educational and development.

The psychologist Bronfenbrenner reported in 1974 that parent involvement in schools is related to children's increased academic achievement. He believed that intervention strategies that involved parents were more affective in improving children's academic performance than those not including parents.

Parents of children without disabilities - felt that integration was beneficial and promoted the acceptance of children with disabilities and exposed them to the real world. Socialising benefited both groups.

Concern – whether children would emulate the negative behaviours of those with disabilities
Respondents in research agreed – self concepts of both groups improved, it promoted positive social contact among children, and did not influence children without disabilities to behave in immature manner or engage in inappropriate behaviour.
It was found that integration of children with physical and sensory disabilities posed less concern to parents surveyed than for children with severe disabilities, mental retardation, emotional disturbance and behaviour disorders.
Most parents expressed desire for integration in the future.

It was considered…. important that assessment strategies provide parent's with data regarding the impact of the program on student's academic, social and behavioural development.

Variables concerning school organization.

Identity (vision, culture)

Strategies (goals, planning evaluation)

Structures and procedures (information flow and formal relationships)

Technical support (resource and financial management, administration)

Personnel (human resources development, informal relationships conditions of service)

Appendix G

Sample of interview questions for school principal

GUIDELINES FOR INTERVIEW: HEAD of SCHOOL

Preamble

The following questionnaire is designed for headmasters who are willing to take part in the research entitled Challenges Experienced by Educators in the Implementation of Inclusive Education in South African Schools. Each headmaster or headmistress, has been assured anonymity and that all measures to prevent the identification of site of learning will be implemented.

Your confidentiality and anonymity will be protected by the researcher and the university.

Thank you for volunteering to be a participant in this research.

Definition of terms used in the questionnaire

A *challenge* may be something which evokes feelings of anxiety and stress though the educator copes adequately or as best she can or something requiring support from outside e.g. SMT or SGB.

Socio Economic factors refer to variables which disadvantage the learner. Such are environment deprivation, alcoholism and drug abuse, lack of adequate education in the homes and poor social structures.

Diversity refers to differences in race, culture and religion, language, ability and economic differences. Inclusion is about addressing the educational needs of a diverse cohort of children.

Curriculum modification This refers to the modification of work to meet the diverse needs and levels of the children in the class. It also refers to differing assessment techniques and reporting, depending on the ability of the children. It is calibrating teaching to the level and ability of the child.

Instructions for the answering of the questionnaire.

The following questions pertain to yourself in your role as the head of your school.

Part A

1. Have you personally had any training or orientation given to you by the department in respect of the implementation of inclusive education?

2. From your general knowledge gained from the White Paper 6 and articles you have come across, do you consider that you have a comprehensive knowledge of the conceptual background and the rationale behind the implementation of Inclusive Education in your school?

3. Tick or cross:

Have you in your capacity as headmaster received adequate support, under these categories, in respect of the implementation of Inclusive Education, from your District offices.

- Financial
- Learner Support
- Educator Support
- ESS Services in addressing problems
- Support Material /Teaching Aids /Resources for educators.
- Multi Disciplinary Support Services
- Training of educators in respect of instructional and management skills for addressing barriers to learning.
- Training of Educators in respect of Socio Economic Barriers most commonly found in the schools at present. These include Chronic Illness such as HIV/AIDS and social economic factors such as alcoholism and drug abuse and child or parent abuse in the home.

4. What measure, put in place by the department has been considered by your educators as supportive in respect of their roles as the primary implementers of inclusive education?

Part B

These questions pertain to your staff, but require your view as headmaster.

1. What three things do you consider the biggest challenges for your educators as they implement inclusion?
2. What have you done to support your staff in their implementation of inclusion?
3. Which **one** of the following represents the greatest challenge for your educators?
    - Behaviour disorders
    - Intellectual barriers (Low intelligence)
    - Learning Disabilities e.g. dyslexia, dyscalculia, perceptual disabilities.
    - Barriers related to diversity e.g. socio economic factors.
    - You may wish to list another of your own choice if there is something you consider more significant and not listed.
4. Rating 1-3

What **three** of the following causes most stress amongst your educators?

- Accountability for Learners' Needs
- Competency issues. Teachers feel/are inadequately trained.
- Adjusting Unit Plans. (Curriculum modification)
- Inadequate in-service training ('in-house' or from district)
- Poor Communication skills due to language competency.
- Sustaining an active learning environment for learners with disabilities.
- Large classes

5. I am going to list three measures that educators may still require you put in place in your school in support of preventing stress, increasing competency and facilitating inclusive education. Please rate them in order of importance.
    - Provision of Resources – age appropriate
    - Training in Modification/ Adaptation of curriculum to learners' needs

- Training in Multi Level Assessment

Part C Your opinion

These questions pertain to your opinion on an issue or to your staff or to your school and again, require your personal view as a headmaster or headmistress.

1. What do you consider are the reasons that there is a slow roll out of inclusion in our schools?

2. What measures would you like to be put in place, from district and/or provincial level, so that you might be able to implement a more responsive inclusive school?

3. Have you received invitations to meet in discussions, as a stake holder, with those who are taking decisions about inclusive schools?
   If so, please describe the nature of the occasion.

4. Please describe your ideas of structures you need to see in place so that inclusive education may be successfully implemented in mainstream schools?

5. What would you like District to do for your educators, in terms of capacity building, to assist them with the implementation of inclusive education?

Please describe the structures *you* have put in place, and the measures you have taken to support your staff in respect of their challenges in addressing diversity including education of children with barriers?

Is there anything you would like to add concerning your challenges in the implementation of inclusive education?