

TEACHING IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS: POLICY VERSUS IMPLEMENTATION

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**A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree**

MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS

in

Learning and Teaching

at the

**North-West University
VAAL TRIANGLE CAMPUS**

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November 2012

DECLARATION

I, NICHOLA HARMUTH, solemnly declare that this work, TEACHING IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS: POLICY VERSUS IMPLEMENTATION, is original and the result of my own labour. It has never, on any previous occasion, been presented in part or whole to any institution or Board for the award of any Degree.

I further declare that all information used and quoted has been duly acknowledged by complete reference.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my study leader, Professor Grosser, and my husband, Rowan Harmuth, who offered me support and encouragement throughout this study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere thanks and gratitude go to the following people whose advice, guidance, support and motivation have helped me to complete this study.

- My supervisor, Professor M.M. Grösser, for her leadership, patience, guidance and support throughout the study period.
- Mrs Denise Kocks, for the professional language editing of the dissertation.
- Mrs Aldine Oosthuyzen, for the technical editing of the dissertation.
- All the teachers and learners who participated in completing the questionnaires.
- My parents for their unconditional love and support.

A very special word of thanks goes to my husband, Rowan Harmuth, for all his patience, love, support and understanding during the completion of this study.

SUMMARY

Inclusive education occupies a central place in the education policies of South Africa (SA, 2001). This study explored whether the principles of inclusive education as set out in White Paper 6, are becoming a reality in primary school classrooms in South Africa. A literature study was undertaken to highlight the importance and the policy initiatives and principles of inclusive education. The literature review provided the framework for designing the interview questions that were utilized to gauge the perceptions and experiences of teachers regarding the implementation of inclusive education by means of focus group interviews.

By means of a qualitative, phenomenological study, the focus group interviews were conducted with a convenient and purposively selected sample of primary school teachers (n = 18) in the Johannesburg South District of the Gauteng Department of Education.

The interview data revealed that teachers do have an understanding of the importance of inclusive education, and appear to be knowledgeable on what the inclusive education policy entails. Furthermore, the teachers attempt to provide differentiated teaching, learning and assessment to address the wide variety of learning barriers in their classrooms. However, comprehensive knowledge about the wide variety of strategies to accommodate all learning needs appears to be lacking. The teachers noted that their training, resources and facilities are not adequate for the effective implementation of the policy principles in South African classrooms. The findings revealed that although the inclusive education policy is positively accepted by the teachers, its implementation appears to be superficial due to the cited challenges faced by the participants. The study is concluded with recommendations on how to promote the implementation of the challenging inclusive education policy principles in order to minimize the gap between policy and implementation.

Key words: inclusive education, inclusive education policy, the implementation of inclusive education

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The implementation of inclusive education in South Africa has not been promoted as simply one more option for education, but as an educational strategy that can contribute to a democratic society (SA, 2001:8). After the demise of the Apartheid Era the new democratic government committed itself to the transformation of education and formulated policies and legislation stressing the principle of education as a basic human right as enshrined in the constitution (SA, 1996a). White paper 6: Special Needs Education, building an inclusive education and training system (SA, 2001), provides a framework for systematic change towards the development of inclusive education in South Africa. Inclusive education in South Africa embraces the democratic values of equality and human rights and the recognition of diversity (Engelbrecht, 2006:253). Engelbrecht, Oswald, Swart & Eloff (2001:293) state that since 1994, the demand to educate learners with special needs within mainstream classrooms in South Africa has continued to grow. The result is that an increasing number of learners with disabilities, including intellectual disabilities, are being included in mainstream classes, bringing additional changes and demands upon the teachers. The perceived needs of the teachers who are required to accommodate a diversity of learner needs in mainstream classes have to be addressed. In this regard, Engelbrecht *et al.* (2001a:297) and Engelbrecht, Swart and Eloff (2001b:257), assert that failure to address these needs and concerns may result in problems related to implementation, including high levels of stress.

In essence, inclusion is about accommodating the needs of all learners, irrespective of disability and cultural and socio-economic background (SA, 2001:6; Mtshali, 2005:1). Inclusion also refers to a change in attitude, behaviour, teaching and assessment methods, curricula and teaching and

learning environments, to accommodate all learners, as well as maximizing the participation of all learners (SA, 2001:6,7; Babane, 2002:13).

The literature is unanimous about the importance of the teachers in successful inclusion initiatives (Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden 2000:227; Daane, Beirne & Lathan, 2000:253; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001:304-310). In this regard, Avramidis *et al.* (2000:227), as well as Swart, Pettipher, Engelbrecht, Eloff, Oswald, Ackerman and Prozesky (2000:175), assert that teachers have inadequate knowledge, skills and training for effective implementation of inclusive education, which in my¹ opinion might also imply that the implementation of policy imperatives are problematic.

A Nexus and ProQuest search on recently completed national and international studies conducted the past five years regarding the implementation of inclusive education revealed that studies on inclusive education mainly focus on the following issues:

- the understanding of inclusive education and perceptions of inclusive education among school managers and teachers (Kim, 2006; Geduld, 2009; Mphunngoa, 2009; Gous, 2010; Korkmaz, 2011; Urdang, 2011);
- the implementation practices at secondary and primary school level (Ghesquiere, Moors, Maes & VandenBerghe, 2002; Engelbrecht, 2006, Kujwana, 2007; Molohe, 2008; Zulu, 2008; Boloka, 2010; Zulu, 2010);
- challenges affecting the implementation of inclusive education (Hlongwane 2007; Rakholile, 2007; Matela, 2008; Ladbrook, 2009; Stofile, 2009; Haihambo, 2010); and
- the attitudes of teachers and principals regarding the implementation of inclusive education (Machi, 2007; Mthethwa, 2008, Sims, 2008; Nkone, 2009; Tau, 2009).

¹ In the context of this study, which was qualitative in nature, the use of the personal pronoun is preferred to notate the researcher's personal, subjective involvement in the research process

In addition to the aforementioned studies, a few studies were located that focus on teachers' preparedness for implementing inclusive education (Naicker, 2008) and the management of inclusive education (Ferreira, 2008). Although research specifically indicates great concerns around the gap between policy and implementation of the inclusive education in South Africa and internationally (Engelbrecht, 2006; Dreyer, 2011), it is not clear whether the mentioned gap between policy and implementation should be contributed to a rejection of policy or a superficial implementation of policy. A lack of research clarifying this uncertainty, prompted me to explore the issue further, with specific focus on the primary school level. I could only locate one study that focused on the implementation of inclusive education policy in Lesotho (Johnstone, 2005), which revealed that the inclusive education policy is implemented on a continuum between superficial and deep implementation. The results of my study could be compared to the results of the study conducted by Johnstone (2005) in Lesotho and extend or confirm the present findings on the implementation of inclusive education policy initiatives. The results of my study could also contribute in providing some clarification regarding the gap between policy and implementation.

Based on the introduction, I formulate the problem statement for the present study in the following section.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Teachers are important role players for the successful implementation of inclusive education. Research reveals that teachers have inadequate knowledge, skills and training to implement inclusive education, and that there is an apparent gap between inclusive education policy initiatives and the actual implementation of policy. My research set out to explore this apparent gap between the inclusive education policy and the actual implementation practices of teachers at primary school level.

Based on the aforementioned problem statement, the purpose of this qualitative phenomenological research was to explore and better understand how the inclusive education policy is implemented in primary school

classrooms, by means of focus group interviews. By means of purposive, criterion sampling, primary school teachers (n = 18) from three conveniently selected primary school sites in the Johannesburg South District of the Gauteng Department of Education, were selected to take part in the study.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Flowing from the problem statement, the following central questions guided the execution of the study:

- What are the policy principles of inclusive education in South Africa?
- How do primary school teachers in South Africa understand the inclusive education policy?
- How are the principles of inclusive education policy implemented in primary school classrooms in South Africa ?
- Which inclusive education policy principles do primary school teachers in South Africa regard as the most challenging to implement?
- Which inclusive education policy principles do primary school teachers in South Africa regard as the most rewarding to implement?
- How can the inclusive education policy principles be implemented effectively in primary school classrooms in South Africa in order to minimize the gap between policy and implementation?

With the aforementioned research questions in mind, I formulated the following aim and objectives for the study.

1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The overall aim of this study was to explore how the policy principles of inclusive education are implemented in classrooms. The overall aim was operationalized as follows:

- by establishing the policy principles of inclusive education in South Africa;

- by gauging the understanding of primary school teachers in South Africa regarding the inclusive education policy;
- by exploring how the principles of inclusive education policy are implemented in primary school classrooms in South Africa;
- by exploring the perceptions of primary school teachers in South Africa on which inclusive education policy ideal they find most challenging to implement;
- by exploring the perceptions of primary school teachers in South Africa perceptions on which inclusive policy ideal they find the most rewarding to implement; and
- by suggesting ways in which inclusive education policy principles can be implemented effectively in primary school classrooms in South Africa in order to minimize the gap between policy and implementation.

In order to demarcate the present study, the conceptual framework that informed the study is defined and outlined below.

1.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The study was conceptualized in terms of the following conceptual frameworks: inclusive education and the policy principles of inclusive education.

1.5.1 Inclusive education

Inclusion, as explained in the policy, is about recognizing and respecting the differences among all learners and supporting all learners so that the full range of learning needs, which refer to learners' preferences to study and learning in a particular way, are accommodated (SA, 2001:17). The focus is on the development of good teaching strategies that will be of benefit to all learners. Inclusion is about including everyone, regardless of ability, gender, language or disability, so that all learners can belong at school and conditions are created by teachers to enable them to achieve the educational outcomes

that schools offer (Mittler, 2000:10; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001:306; Thomas & Loxley, 2001:118).

1.5.2 The policy principles of inclusive education

According to White Paper 6 (SA, 2001:16), the principles of inclusive education are conceptualized in the following imperatives:

- acknowledging that all children and youths can learn, and that all children and youths need support;
- accepting and respecting the fact that all learners are different in some way and have different learning needs which are valued equally and are an ordinary part of our human experience;
- enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners;
- acknowledging and respecting differences in learners, whether due to age, gender, ethnicity, language, class and disability or HIV status;
- acknowledging that learning also occurs in the home and the community, and within formal and informal modes and structures;
- changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methodologies, curricula and the environment to meet the needs of all learners;
- maximizing the participation of all learners in the culture and the curricula of educational institutions, and uncovering and minimizing barriers to learning; and
- empowering learners by developing their individual strengths and enabling them to participate critically in the process of learning.

The policy principles, reflected in White Paper 6 (SA, 2001:16), guided the execution of the study.

In the following section, the empirical research design that was utilized in the context of the study is briefly explained. A more comprehensive explanation of the motivation of the empirical research design follows in Chapter 3.

1.6 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH DESIGN

The empirical research comprised two phases, namely a literature review and data collection by means of empirical research. Each of the two phases are now briefly explained.

1.6.1 Literature review

The following databases were consulted to obtain primary and secondary resources related to inclusive education and its implementation in South Africa, namely Ebsco Host, Sabinet, Nexus and Google. I used the following key words and phrases to conduct the literature search: *inclusive education, inclusion, mainstream education, policy principles of inclusive education, realities of inclusive education, barriers to teaching, barriers to learning, Education White Paper 6; teaching in inclusive classrooms, assessment in inclusive classrooms.*

1.6.2 Empirical research

In this section, attention will be briefly paid to the research paradigm, the research design, research strategy, data collection methods, participant selection, data analysis procedure, criteria for trustworthiness and ethical principles that were utilized in the context of the study. An extended explanation of the empirical research design is provided in Chapter 3.

1.6.2.1 Research paradigm

This study was framed within an interpretivist paradigm (Creswell, 2009:8) as it was my intention to understand how teachers understand inclusive education policy and to explore how they implement the policy in their classrooms. Interpretive research acknowledges that people construct reality and the researcher needs to analyse the participants' discourses (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007:34). As I was concerned with understanding the

research problem from the participants' perspective (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:26; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:94) the interpretivist paradigm appeared to be suitable to frame my research.

1.6.2.2 Research design

In support of an interpretivist research paradigm, a qualitative research design was used to obtain data. Qualitative research aims to describe and understand research phenomena from the participants' point of view (Thomas, 2003:225; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:94). I selected a qualitative approach, as I aimed to gather information by interacting with selected participants in their natural settings (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:26).

1.6.2.3 Research strategy

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:26), qualitative strategies can be interactive or non-interactive. As I wanted to focus on face-to-face interaction with the research participants, I chose an interactive phenomenological strategy. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005:139) a phenomenological study is a study that attempts to understand people's perceptions, perspectives and understandings of a particular situation. In the context of the study, I intended to capture the participants' understanding and experiences related to the implementation of the inclusive education policy.

1.6.2.4 Data collection methods

I used focus group interviews to gather information from the participants. A focus group interview is an effective data collection method for widening the range of responses, activating forgotten details of experiences and releasing inhibitions that may otherwise discourage participants from disclosing information (Nieuwenhuis, 2007b:90). Nieuwenhuis (2007b:90) regards the use of focus group interviews as effective to obtain a better and holistic understanding of the implementation of inclusive education.

Questions used in the interview protocol were structured according to the question types suggested by Patton (in Merriam, 2009:96), namely:

- Experience and behaviour questions
- Opinion and value questions
- Feeling questions
- Knowledge questions
- Background/demographic questions

I explain how these questions were utilized in the context of the study in section 3.3.4.2.

Three focus group interviews with six participants in each group were conducted. I tape-recorded the interviews to ensure completeness of the verbal interaction and to provide material for reliability checks (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997:453). After the interviews were transcribed verbatim, they were typed before the data analysis took place. The interviews took place after school so as not to interfere with teaching and learning time. Each interview session lasted for approximately one hour, and on request of the participants, the interviews were conducted in English to accommodate all the participants. Focus groups were formed by clustering teachers who teach close to one another in a group, to avoid the inconvenience of travelling long distances.

During the interview, I took field notes regarding the proceedings and captured non-verbal cues (such as gestures, facial expressions and attitudes) about the group dynamics and roles that group members played. The field notes were important, as the oral data could be combined with the non-verbal data for a richer analysis of the data (Nieuwenhuis, 2007c:92-93).

In order to check whether the interview questions were clear, I conducted a pilot study with another group of primary school teachers who were not part of the sampled participants ($n = 10$) to check the questions for clarity and

understanding. The participants did not report any problems with the questions, and I decided to continue with the research, using the questions as set out in the interview protocol.

1.6.2.5 Research participants

The population for this study comprised all primary school teachers in South Africa teaching in inclusive classrooms. For the purpose of the study, all the primary schools in one cluster of the Johannesburg South District (D8) of the Gauteng Department of Education were identified to take part in the study. Due to time and financial constraints, three primary schools were conveniently (Creswell, 2009:231) chosen to take part in the research. A convenient sample implied that I selected schools that were willing and available to take part in the research. The schools included one Private School, an ex-Model C School and a Township School. Purposive criterion sampling was used to select six willing teachers at each of the identified schools ($n = 18$) to take part in the focus group interviews. The teachers comprised a group of female teachers from different cultural groupings, aged between 26 and 55. Purposive criterion sampling implies that participants, who would yield the most information about the topic under investigation, were selected to take part in the research (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:145, McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:319, Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007:115). For a detailed description of the biographical characteristics of the participants, see section 4.2.

1.6.2.6 Data analysis and interpretation

The interview data were analysed using deductive and inductive approaches. Deductive analysis implies that *a-priori* codes were identified before examining the data. Based on the literature review, I identified pre-set categories according to which I structured my interview protocol. These *a-priori* categories derived from the literature provided the direction for what I looked for in the data (Nieuwenhuis, 2007c:109). As I wanted to let the words of the participants speak for themselves, I also made use of an inductive analysis to avoid reading meaning into the words of the participants. An inductive analysis lets themes emerge from the data itself (McMillan &

Schumacher, 2006:364). A detailed explanation of how I conducted the data analysis is provided in Chapter 3 (*cf.* 3.7).

1.6.2.7 Quality criteria

To guarantee the trustworthiness of my data analysis, I adhered to the following criteria as coined by Lincoln and Guba (1985:301-327), namely dependability, confirmability, transferability and credibility. How I adhered to the criteria in the study is explained in detail in Chapter 3 (*cf.* 3.6). In addition to adhering to quality criteria, I also carefully considered my role as researcher in the collection of qualitative data to avoid compromise during data collection (*cf.* 3.6).

1.6.2.8 Ethical aspects

I complied with ethical aspects according to the guidelines set out by Creswell (2009:80-90), and paid attention to ethical issues in my research problem, in the purpose and question formulation, data collection, data analysis and interpretation, and disseminating the research results. I explain how I dealt with each of these aspects in the research in Chapter 3 (*cf.* 3.8).

1.7 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

By delineating the policy principles that appear to be problematic to implement, recommendations can be made to assist teachers in effectively dealing with the implementation of the inclusive education policy.

1.8 CHAPTER DIVISION

The dissertation unfolded according to the following structure:

Chapter 1: Introduction and statement of the problem

Chapter 2: Teaching in inclusive classrooms: policy principles and implementation challenges

Chapter 3: Empirical research design

Chapter 4: Data analysis and interpretation

1.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 1 presented a brief orientation to the study with the aim of preparing the reader for the subsequent chapters. In order to explore the implementation of the inclusive education policy in classrooms, I utilized a qualitative research design (*cf.* 1.6.2.2) and a phenomenological research strategy (*cf.* 1.6.2.3). I collected data by means of focus group interviews (*cf.* 1.6.2.4) from 18 willing teachers who were conveniently and purposively selected from primary schools in the Johannesburg South District of the Gauteng Department of Education (*cf.* 1.6.2.5).

The next chapter, Chapter 2, presents a concept clarification of the policy principles that teachers need to be implemented during teaching and learning.

CHAPTER 2

TEACHING IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS: POLICY PRINCIPLES AND IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, Chapter 2, a comprehensive overview of what inclusive education entails is provided. I take a brief look at the historical background and the development of inclusive education both internationally and nationally, and pay attention to the challenges that teachers' experience when teaching learners in inclusive classrooms.

The chapter explores the following topics:

- Inclusive education: historical background and development
- Inclusive education: a concept clarification
- Inclusive education and barriers to learning
- Policy principles of inclusive education
- Teaching and learning in an inclusive classroom
- Assessment in an inclusive classroom
- Inclusive education: implementation challenges
- Assisting teachers to deal with teaching in inclusive classrooms

It is important to explore the development of inclusive education first, in order to understand the policy principles that govern its implementation.

2.2 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT

Internationally, inclusion came into being because of the human rights culture worldwide. The human rights culture is based on broad principles such as dedication to building a more democratic society, a more equitable and quality education system and the belief that extends the responsibility of regular schools to accommodate the diverse learning needs of all learners (Dyson, 2001:27; Nel, Nel & Hugo, 2012a: 6, Swart & Pettipher, 2005:3, 4). According to Mittler (2000:10), inclusion is broadly about developing inclusive communities and education systems. Values that are celebrated by inclusive education are diversity, gender, nationality, race, language, socio-economic background, cultural origin and levels of education achievement or disability (Thomas & Loxley, 2001:118).

2.2.1 International development of inclusive education

Inclusive education started during the civil rights movement in the United States in the 1950s. The main aims of the movement is to provide equal opportunities for effective education to learners with disabilities, by creating schools that adopt a nurturing culture of acceptance and belonging, with the goal of meeting the diverse needs of all learners (Meng & Zhiyong, 2007:21).

The inclusive education approach received its first major input at the World Conference on the Special Needs Education 1994 in Salamanca, Spain. The Salamanca Conference aimed to promote the objectives of education as a fundamental human right that necessitated policy shifts to enable schools to serve all learners, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions (UNESCO, 1994:6). During 1994 at the World Conference on Special Needs Education, the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education was adopted (Nel *et al.*, 2012a:6). According to this document, every child has the fundamental right to education that takes their special needs and characteristics into consideration and provides access to regular schools (Nel *et al.*, 2012a:6).

Internationally, inclusion can be understood as an expression of the struggle to achieve universal human rights, which originated in the international human rights movement (Pijl, Meijer & Hegarty 1997:77; Mittler, 2000:12). Schools are influenced by economic, political and social developments. The developments and changes in society are reflected in what happens at schools. Schools and education are rapidly becoming outdated because of change in education, in society and in politics. Societies are becoming more diverse and multicultural, resulting in classrooms consisting of learners from diverse ethnic, linguistic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and with diverse abilities (Frederickson & Cline 2002:4), which requires an approach to teaching that will accommodate the aforementioned diversity.

According to Florian, Rose and Tilstone (1998:13), inclusion signals a paradigm shift from specialness of learners and the special forms of provision they were seen to need, towards the removal of obstacles within society and the participation of all people, especially those with differences, in the everyday life of society.

According to Downing and Peckham-Hardin (2007:16), inclusive education has gained increasing attention over the past 30 years. Inclusive education is supported by federal mandates set forth by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (United States Department of Education, 2004) and all previous versions of this act, as well as No Child Left Behind (2001). Inclusive education has become a common objective for families of children with special needs, although the majority of learners to be included full time in general education classrooms continue to be those having mild disabilities. Learners with severe disabilities are also gaining access to inclusive schools (McLeskey, Henry & Axelrod, 2009:56; Turnbull, Turnbull & Wehmeyer, 2010:127).

2.2.2 The development of inclusion in South Africa

In 1994 the South African government committed itself to addressing the educational imbalances of the past. They recommended that a community based inclusive education system should replace the systems of regular and special education. Inclusive education is defined by White Paper 6 (SA, 2001), as an on-going process of increasing learner participation and reducing their exclusion from cultures, curricula and involvement in communities. Inclusive education acknowledges that all children irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disabilities, HIV or other infectious diseases are in need of support. Inclusive education also acknowledges that learning occurs at home and in the community, within formal and informal settings; and that changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methods, curricula and environments are needed to meet the needs of all learners (SA, 2001:16). Provincial education departments have embarked on implementing inclusive education between 2001 to present, but with varied success (Beyers & Hay, 2007:387).

According to Engelbrecht, Bassett and Howell (2002:59), the development of education in South Africa, including education for children with disabilities, initially followed the same trends as in most other countries. However, the extent of complex contextual influences on education in South Africa distinguishes the development of education, including special education and the movement towards inclusive education, from that of other countries. The institutionalization of apartheid in every facet of South African life after the Apartheid government came to power in 1948 had a significant impact on education. Separate education departments, governed by specific legislation and fragmented along racial lines, reinforced the divisions in the education system (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2002:59).

Major changes, both internationally and nationally, regarding disability have influenced the inclusive education approach in South Africa (Dunbar-Krige & Van der Merwe, 2010:164). According to Dunbar-Krige and Van der Merwe, (2010:164), the changes implied shifts from a medical discourse to a social

rights and socio-ecological discourse (Dunbar-Krige & Van der Merwe, 2010:164; Nel *et al.*, 2012a:9), which I explore in the sections below.

2.2.2.1 Medical discourse

Medical discourse regards disability or handicap to be abnormal and a condition that is not remediable (Green, 2001:12; Johnstone, 2001:10; Michailakis, 2003:209). A handicapped person is regarded as disabled, and excluded from mainstream social and economic life (Naicker, 2001:13; Dunbar-Krige & Van der Merwe, 2010:164). Although medical information is important and cannot be ignored when learners experience barriers to learning, the medical approach is not accepted anymore as it is seen as discriminatory (Nel *et al.*, 2012a:9).

2.2.2.2 Charity discourse

In contrast to the medical discourse the charity discourse views those with disabilities as in need of care, assistance and pity and being dependent on others (Dunbar-Krige & Van der Merwe, 2010:164). Furthermore, they are regarded as in need of special and separate institutional care (Dyson & Forlin, 1999:24-42).

2.2.2.3 Lay discourse

According to Dyson and Forlin (1999:24-42) and Naicker (2001:14) this discourse focuses on isolating people who deviate from normal physical appearances. People who deviate from normal physical appearances are marginalized and regarded as dependent on the rest of society (Dyson & Forlin, 1999:24-42).

In the context of education, it is clear that medical, charity and lay discourses would support the view that learners who have special educational needs or who experience barriers to learning need to be excluded from the mainstream of education. In this regard, the social rights discourse provides a more positive stance to learners who experience barriers to learning.

2.2.2.4 Social rights discourse

The social rights discourse emphasizes equal opportunity, self-reliance, independence and wants rather than needs. All learners have the right to be educated together, regardless of their physical, intellectual, emotional, social, linguistic or other conditions (Naicker, 2001:14; Moŵes, 2002:34).

2.2.2.5 Socio-ecological discourse

The socio-ecological discourse focuses on removing obstacles within society and the environment of the learner that impedes learning (Nel *et al.*, 2012a:9). In this regard, Nel *et al.* (2012a:9) assert that teachers play an important role in identifying obstacles and providing support to learners.

It is clear from the aforementioned discourse descriptions that the social rights discourse and the socio-ecological discourse play prominent roles in inclusive education policy.

Linked to the aforementioned, the following section provides a detailed clarification of what inclusive education entails.

2.3 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: A CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

According to Engelbrecht (2006:253), inclusive education in South Africa should not be promoted as simply one more option for education, but as an educational strategy that can contribute to a democratic society. After the end of the Apartheid Era, the new democratic government committed itself to the transformation of education and key policy documents and legislation. The philosophy and concept of inclusive education in South Africa acknowledges the democratic values of equality and human rights, and the recognition of diversity (SA, 2001:8).

The South African Constitution and Bill of Rights adhere to the notion of a rights culture, embracing the democratic values of liberty, equality and human rights and implying an education system that is inherently capable of meeting the diverse needs of every learner and of preventing learner breakdown and

exclusion (SA, 1996a). The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (SA, 1996b) also asserts the right of equal access to education for all learners, without discriminating in any way. A learner may therefore not be denied access to any school on any grounds, including disability, language or learning difficulty. The South African Ministry of Education released White Paper 6: special needs education Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (SA, 2001) in July 2001. White Paper 6 outlines what an inclusive education and training system is and how it should be established in South Africa (Engelbrecht, Oswald & Forlin, 2006:121).

Inclusive education can also be linked to concepts such as mainstreaming and integration (Molope, 2008:13), which are explored below.

2.3.1 Mainstreaming

According to the Education White Paper 6, special needs education (SA, 2001:17); mainstreaming is about getting learners to fit in to a particular kind of system or integrating them into this existing system. According to Dreyer (2011:59), mainstreaming assumes that a learner must earn the opportunity to be placed in a mainstream class, by demonstrating the ability to keep up with the work. According to Swart and Pettipher (2005:7), the goal of mainstreaming is to return learners with barriers to learning to the mainstream of education as far as possible.

2.3.2 Integration

The term integration has been used to describe the process of the transfer of learners and young people to regular schools (Molope, 2008:13). Integration focuses on the transfer of learners to regular schools. According to Ainscow (1991:14), integration is about "*additional arrangements in schools which are essentially unchallenged*." Integration does not attempt to change or adapt the organization and provision of the school curriculum for all learners, and continues to focus on and address differences. The learner has to adapt to the school curriculum (Mittler in Dreyer, 2011:59).

In contrast to mainstreaming and integration, inclusive education focuses on the transformation of schools, and is not concerned with assimilation or accommodation of individuals within existing conditions (Dreyer, 2011:59).

Based on the aforementioned concept clarification, I regard inclusion as an educational practice that is based on the philosophy of acceptance of all learners regardless of ability, gender, language, ethnic or cultural origins, which are valued equally, treated with respect and provided with equal opportunities at school.

Inclusive education has to accommodate a number of barriers to learning in one classroom. The different barriers to learning are explored in the following section.

2.4 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND BARRIERS TO LEARNING

Any factor that may cause a breakdown in learning is referred to as a barrier to learning (Nel *et al.*, 2012a:15). Teachers need to understand the wide range of barriers to learning and development experienced by many of learners in their classes (SA, 2001:8). According to Nel *et al.* (2012a:15), barriers can be intrinsic or extrinsic in nature. Extrinsic barriers relate to conditions outside a learner that impedes learning, and comprise *inter alia* socio-economic, language, systemic and pedagogical barriers (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2006:121; Nel *et al.*, 2012a:15). Intrinsic barriers refer to conditions within the learner that obstruct successful learning, and comprise medical or health barriers (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2006:121; Nel *et al.*, 2012a:15). Inclusive classrooms are characterised by learners who experience a variety of the aforementioned barriers to learning, which will be discussed in the sections below.

2.4.1 Pedagogical barriers

Kruger and Adams (2002:215) believe that teachers need to characterize learners in such a way that their individual characteristics are adequately addressed. They advise that, in order to do this, teachers should acknowledge

the differences that exist among learners; recognize that such differences may effect on how learners learn; and plan and implement learning programmes, which respond to these differences. This identification should aim at supporting and promoting learning and not at labelling and stigmatizing learners. According to Nel *et al.* (2012a:15) pedagogical barriers can be linked to among others, insufficient support from teachers, insufficient support to teachers, inflexible teaching and assessment approaches, the language of teaching and learning and not accommodating the preferred learning style needs of learners (Jones & Bender, 2002:200-223; Nel *et al.*, 2012a:15).

According to Kruger and Adams (2002:211), Skogsberg and Clump (2003:177) and Visser, McChlery and Vreken (2006:98), human beings are not the same; they are unique, individual and different. In the teaching and learning situation, learners are also individual, unique and different from one another and because of this, they learn differently, according to their different learning styles.

There are three main learning styles, namely visual, auditory and kinaesthetic. A learner who prefers visual learning, learns best through what he sees; a learner who has a preference for auditory learning, learns best through hearing and a kinaesthetic learner learns best through moving, doing and touching (Nieman & Pienaar, 2006:84). If learning styles are not addressed, teachers might fall into the trap of stereotyping or favouring some learners at the expense of others (Kruger & Adams, 2002:211).

2.4.2 Medical and health barriers

According to Hugo (2006:48), medical and health barriers call for attention to sensory barriers such as hearing loss and visual impairment, neurological disabilities such as cerebral palsy, epilepsy, learning barriers that are exhibited in academic learning difficulties, physical impairment (learners on crutches or in wheelchairs), communication disorders, attention and distractibility problems and memory problems. Medical barriers thus refer to perceptual and motor disorders, as well as health impairment and chronically sick learners (Nel *et al.*, 2012a:16, 17, 19), which threaten academic success.

Learning difficulties can arise from visual, hearing, motor or physical impairments or because of emotional, environmental and economic circumstances (Nel *et al.*, 2012a:17). These learning difficulties may manifest in a limited ability to listen, speak, read, write, spell, think or do mathematics (Nel *et al.*, 2012a:17). Cognitive and intellectual disabilities also form part of the group of medical barriers that can affect teaching and learning negatively (Department of Education, 2004:39).

Holtz and Lessing (2002:236) indicate that with inclusive education becoming a reality in South Africa, teachers have to face a new challenge such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

In addition, Landsberg (2005:335), Storbeck (2005:352) and Nel *et al.* (2012a:17) point out that when learners cannot use their senses to recognize, discriminate and interpret stimuli, it is indicative of poor perceptual development, which can manifest in the following areas:

- Visual and auditory perception: the ability to recognize and interpret visual or auditory sensory information.
- Visual and auditory discrimination: the ability to discriminate between sounds or one object from another.
- Visual and auditory memory linked to the ability to recognize and/or recall objects seen or sounds heard.
- Visual and auditory sequential memory that involve the sequence in which stimuli are received, like the order of letters in a word or the sequence of activities in a story.

2.4.3 Socio-economic barriers

Socio-economic barriers can differ from community to community and call for support to learners coming from backgrounds characterized by severe poverty, abuse, crime and violence (Hugo, 2006:46-47; Beyers & Hay, 2007:387-399). Poverty affects the learning process severely. When parents

are unemployed and cannot provide basic needs such as nutrition and shelter to their children, under-nourishment and emotional stress may affect learners to such an extent that they lose their ability to take part in the learning process effectively (Dunbar, Krige & Van der Merwe, 2010:179). In addition to the aforementioned, if a learner is physically, emotionally or sexually abused, emotional and physical damage could lead to frequent absences from school and eventually "drop-out" (Peterson & Hittie, 2003:73). Other risk factors in the community such as violence and crime can also disrupt learning (Peterson & Hittie, 2003:101).

2.4.4 Systemic barriers

The following problems in the educational system can contribute to conditions that may cause systemic barriers to learning: a lack of basic and appropriate learning support material, a lack of assistive devices, inadequate facilities at schools, overcrowded classrooms and a lack of mother tongue teachers (Hugo, 2006:46)

In order to guide the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa, teachers have to be knowledgeable about the policy principles set out in White Paper 6. In the following section, the policy principles of inclusive education are highlighted.

2.5 POLICY PRINCIPLES OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Lazarus, Daniels and Engelbrecht (2001:45-68) assert that inclusive education calls for schools to transform themselves to accommodate the diverse needs of all learners. Transformation requires a radical shift from one set of assumptions, beliefs, values, norms, relationships, behaviours and practices to another (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2006:122). The new set of assumptions should be based on moral values such as mutual acceptance, respect for diversity, and a sense of belonging and social justice. Accepting a new set of moral values will lead to a social integration, which implies a commitment to respect all people; combatting prejudice and discrimination; acknowledging the rights of all learners to have access to equal and quality

education (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2006:122). In order to uphold moral values as indicated, a flexible curriculum is required that accommodates the diverse needs of all learners (Lazarus *et al.*, 2001:45-68). Lazarus *et al.* (2001:48) further argues that social integration in a school context *inter alia* implies the facilitation of opportunities for learners and other members of the learning community to learn and work together in a cooperative environment and to view differences among learners as a rich resource to benefit all. Swart and Pettipher (2005:3) emphasise the importance of inviting and celebrating diversity arising from gender, nationality, race, language, socio-economic background and culture to foster collective belonging.

According to the policy on inclusive education, White Paper 6 (SA, 2001:16), inclusive education and training uphold the following policy principles:

- acknowledging that all children and youths can learn and that all children and youths need support;
- accepting and respecting the fact that all learners are different in some way and have different learning needs which are valued equally and are an ordinary part of our human experience;
- enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners;
- acknowledging and respecting differences in learners, whether due to age, gender, ethnicity, language, class and disability or HIV status;
- acknowledging that learning also occurs in the home and the community, and within formal and informal modes and structures;
- changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methodologies, curricula and the environment to meet the needs of all learners;
- maximizing the participation of all learners in the culture and the curricula of educational institutions, and uncovering and minimizing barriers to learning; and

- empowering learners by developing their individual strengths and enabling them to participate critically in the process of learning.

In addition to and linked to the preceding section that focused on the teacher's role in addressing barriers to learning, the Norms and Standards for Teachers (in SA, 2000a: 3) specifies that the teachers should also fulfil a community and pastoral role. As part of the pastoral role of the teachers, teachers should possess practical, foundational and reflexive competences to implement inclusive education effectively.

With regard to the practical competences, teachers should be able to equip learners with life skills and react towards societal and education barriers to learning. The foundational competences expect of teachers to be knowledgeable concerning barriers to learning and to be able to accommodate barriers to learning during teaching. Finally, the reflexive competences refer to teachers' ability to select suitable and appropriate intervention strategies to ameliorate learning problems (SA, 2000a:3).

It is important that teachers are life-long learners who should keep up with the latest education policies and trends to ensure that they can give their learners the best possible education. In addition to the pastoral role, the Norms and Standards for Educators (SA, 2000a:3) aptly describes a competent teacher as one who is a specialist in a particular learning area, subject or phase; a specialist in teaching and learning; a specialist in assessment; a curriculum developer and a leader, administrator and manager.

Against the background of the above-mentioned policy principles, it is clear that some learners may require more intensive and specialised forms of support to be able to develop to their full potential. An inclusive education and training system is organised so that it can provide various levels and kinds of support to learners and teachers (SA, 2001:16).

Bearing the policy principles of inclusive education in mind, the following section takes a closer look at the nature of teaching and learning in an inclusive classroom in order to achieve the policy principles.

2.6 TEACHING AND LEARNING IN AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

According to the Salamanca Statement, the fundamental principles that underpin teaching and learning in an inclusive school are that all children should learn together while their individual differences and learning needs are accommodated (UNESCO, 1994:3). In support of the Salamanca Statement, the Code of Professional Ethics of the South African Council of Teachers (SACE), acknowledge *"the uniqueness, individuality, and specific needs of each learner, guiding and encouraging each to realise his or her potentialities"* (SACE, 2006). Furthermore, the Department of Education (2009:24, 25, 27) emphasises that instruction in inclusive schools should *inter alia* be characterised by individualisation and multiple options for acquiring, storing and demonstrating learning, which points to the principle of differentiation.

The principle of differentiation is elucidated below.

2.6.1 The principle of differentiation in inclusive classrooms

According to Broderick, Mehta-Parekh and Reid (2004:194) and Walton (2012:119), differentiation can make inclusion a reality by welcoming all learners to participate and learn together at different levels of complexity and difficulty. Differentiation refers to the application of teaching and assessment strategies that enable all learners to access the curriculum (Arends, 2009:466; Walton, 2012:137).

Walton (2012:119, 120) is of the opinion that differentiation enables learners to experience success, prevents learning gaps from occurring, provides opportunities for cognitive development and reduces challenging behaviour in classrooms. In support of Walton (2012:120), I argue that differentiation will enable learners to do what they can do and avoid them being discouraged and frustrated with work that is too difficult. If learners can learn at their own pace, they will probably master concepts and knowledge fully avoiding gaps in their knowledge base to occur. The cognitive development of learners will be stimulated by giving them tasks at their appropriate level of cognitive development, gradually challenging them to attempt tasks that are more

difficult. Finally, when learners are engaged in tasks with which they are comfortable, disruptive behaviour could be minimised.

Although differentiated education is an imperative, Dyson and Howes (2009:156) point to the need to provide a common education to all learners to promote social justice and equality also.

The following section reflects on ways according to which a teacher can implement differentiation in the classroom.

2.6.1.1 The role of the teachers in implementing differentiation in the classroom

In line with the principles of differentiation, Walton (2012:124) suggests that teachers should also foster a number of following beliefs among learners. According to Walton (2012:14), these beliefs include the following: intelligence can be expressed in many ways because human beings are not the same. In addition, the differences among human beings are sources of enrichment and provide us with opportunities to view things from different perspectives. Finally, everybody can succeed with assistance and guidance. Walton (2012:16) argues that in order to differentiate successfully, teachers need to know their learners strengths and weaknesses, know the curriculum in terms of the knowledge and skills learners need to attain, and to plan and design lessons that will provide access to all learners from the beginning and not afterwards.

According to Walton (2012:126), there are many ways in which teachers can accommodate differences among learners and provide support to meet individual needs. Some of the ways in which teachers can accommodate differences include the following: providing extra classes, giving individual feedback and encouragement, providing different topic choices for projects and essays and using cooperative learning as a teaching strategy that focuses on providing learning opportunities for learners who prefer individual and collaborative learning (Walton, 2012:126). Teachers may also use different teaching modalities such as auditory, visual and kinaesthetic

modalities, vary whole-class, small-group and individual instruction and seating arrangements, provide multilingual resources and take cultural preferences into consideration when conversations are held (Walton, 2012:126).

Another way of providing differentiated instruction is by using multi-level teaching. In this regard Sapon-Shevin (2007:185, 189) suggests the use of multi-level teaching to ensure that learners are engaged in more inclusive ways. In essence, multi-level teaching implies the adaptation of a task according to individual strengths, needs, interests and concentration span of the individual learner. Walton (2012:126) explains multi-level teaching as the *"practice of teaching one concept or topic at different levels of complexity within the same classroom"*.

According to the Department of Education (2005a; 2005b:90), multi-level teaching, is an approach that assumes the principles of individualisation, flexibility and inclusion of all learners regardless of their personal level of skills. Teachers should unconditionally accept the learners who experience barriers and involve all learners in all classroom activities. In contrast to preparing different lessons for different learners, multi-level teaching advocates for one lesson with varying methods of learning, teaching and assessment. The lesson must include a variety of teaching techniques aimed at reaching learners at all levels. This means:

- considering learners' learning style when planning presentation methods;
- involving learners in the lesson through questioning that is aimed at different levels of thinking;
- acknowledging that some learners will need adjusted expectations;
- allowing learners to choose a method of their preference/or competence in demonstrating knowledge, skills and values;
- accepting that the different methods chosen by learners are equal in value; and

- assessing learners in terms of their differences.

Furthermore, time allocations for completing tasks and activities should be flexible and adapted to the needs of the individual learner. Baseline assessment tasks must be set at the beginning of a year in order to establish the nature and extent of barriers to learning. This will enable teachers also to establish the current level of performance of all learners (Department of Education, 2005a; 2005b:90).

According to Bender (2002:21-22) and Walton (2012:126-139) there are different ways of doing multi-level teaching:

- Grouping learners into ability groups according to their performance, abilities or readiness to learn and then to design teaching and learning activities according to the different groups.
- Using whole-class teaching to clarify important concepts and content, followed by different activities done in groups based on the different needs of the groups. The teachers provide support to groups while they are working on the tasks.
- Peer tutoring is used as a way of providing individual instruction to learners by using peers who have already mastered a concept or skill to teach others. Learners often find working with a peer more comfortable as they might feel freer to ask for more explanations.
- Teachers need to develop at least two worksheet activities for a section of content that would vary the difficulty level of the task.
- Teaching assistants, classroom facilitators, learning support teachers and parents, grandparents and community members can be employed to assist in meeting the support needs of learners in the classroom

In addition to differentiation, scaffolding also plays an important role during teaching and learning in inclusive classrooms. The role of scaffolding in enabling learning is discussed in the following section.

2.6.2 The principle of scaffolding in inclusive classrooms

Scaffolding involves the provision of support structures and frameworks to aid learners' understanding and completion of a task (Arends, 2009:393). These support structures and frameworks can include the following: additional explanations, modelling of skills, demonstrating the application of a skill, asking questions, providing prompts and clues to where answers can be found, allowing the use of dictionaries, providing illustrations and additional vocabulary lists (Walton, 2012:131). In addition to the aforementioned support structures, Bender (2002:21-22), the Department of Education (2005b:34), Frazer and Maguvhe (2008:2-3) and Walton (2012:132, 133) suggest that the following teaching strategies can be used to scaffold learning:

- allowing the learner to undertake the task at a later date;
- provide clear directions to help learners with learning problems to focus on the task;
- the provision of lesson outlines will assist learners to focus on the sequencing of learning content;
- making use of study guides to guide learners through learning content;
- making use of graphic organisers to visually present the main facts related to a topic dealt with;
- when doing reading, choose texts that have illustrations and that are easier to reinforce a concept;
- use a variety of types of tasks and texts that link and expand concepts;
- re-teach the content if necessary'
- create a more positive learning environment in which learners feel valued and encouraged to take risks;

- create a classroom atmosphere in which the learners' backgrounds and cultures are valued and recognized;
- adapt the teaching methodology to the needs of specific learners;
- read material orally;
- altering the conditions under which a task is performed, to *inter alia* allow extra time for completion of a task, reducing the volume of a task and giving learners a choice as to whether they work individually or in pairs on a task;
- highlight essentials in a listening or speaking text;
- marking concessions may be granted to learners to prevent their being penalised for handwriting and spelling mistakes that occur due to the barriers to learning they experience;
- provide enrichment learning activities for those who finish their work before the other learners or for gifted learners;
- differentiate within a task by including sections that progressively increase in difficulty;
- bearing "*partial participation*" (Walton, 2012:136) in mind. Learners should not be excluded from classroom activities, for example, a learner with a motor impairment who cannot manipulate equipment in a science experiment, could be asked to be responsible for reading the results of the experiment;
- replace visual material with equivalent non-visual material; and
- consider the format in which the task is presented, for example the complexity of graphs, diagrams, tables, illustrations and cartoons. A range of strategies can be followed to make these accessible to learners who experience barriers to learning of whatever nature, such as: using pictures or diagrams to replace written descriptions, supplement pictures or

diagrams with written explanations, replace pictures or diagrams with real items or models and reduce the amount of information given.

According to Walton (2012:132), the aforementioned strategies can assist teachers to differentiate for individual learners without changing the conceptual difficulty of a task.

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) or an Individual Support Plan (ISP) can also be regarded as a strategy to enhance differentiated learning, especially for learners who may need more structured and individualised interventions and support to cope with learning (Walton, 2012:135). The role and nature of an IEP/ISP is explored in the section below.

2.6.3 Individual Education Plan/Individual Support Plan

An IEP/ISP is a written plan describing the additional support needs, targets and actions to be taken to assist a learner (Walton, 2012:135). These plans are drawn up in consultation with the school support team, district support staff, parents, and if appropriate the learner too (Walton, 2012:135). In a classroom situation, working with an IEP/ISP can imply that there may be learners working on IEP/ISP targets, and not doing what the majority of the learners are doing. Teachers thus have to plan to give assistance to learners working on IEP/ISP targets as well.

Walton (2012:135) asserts that an IEP/ISP modifies the learning expectations stipulated in the curriculum policy document for a specific grade or subject to assist the learner in achieving the learning expectations. For example, to demonstrate their understanding of a specific topic/issue, learners could have a choice of presenting an essay, a speech, a model or a poster. This acknowledges different learning styles. The IEP/ISP also helps teachers to monitor a learner's achievement of the learning expectations, and the learner's progress is communicated to parents and to the learner. Teachers need to update the IEP/ISP when changes are necessary to assist the learner further in achieving the learning expectations (Walton, 2012:135).

In order for inclusive education to work, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment of Ireland (2009) asserts that learners should be actively involved in the learning process, regardless of any barriers that they may have. The following section explores the role of active learning in inclusive classrooms.

2.6.4 Active learning

According to the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment of Ireland (2009), active learning is the principal learning and teaching approach recommended for Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE). Active requires children to participate actively in their learning in a wide variety of ways, thereby increasing the possibility of internalising what they have explored and of being able to use the learning in their everyday lives. Active learning contributes significantly to fostering self-confidence, self-discipline and self-control in the learner (Fraser, 2006:16).

Active learning involves learners who participate meaningfully in their own learning, and places learners at the centre of the learning process (Monyai, 2006:125, 126). Learner become engaged in a process in which they can begin from what they already know, explore possibilities, question, draw conclusions and reflect on outcomes (Mahaye & Jacobs, 2007:175-176). Active learning can be promoted through independent work or by interacting with and learning from peers. In this regard, Monyai (2006:112-114, 126) suggests the use of inquiry learning and problem solving that allow learners to question, explore and discover. In addition, learners can be engaged in their learning at a physical level, emotional level and cognitive level (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment of Ireland (2009). Involvement at a physical level includes hands-on experiences such as making, constructing and designing, or simply in standing up or changing place as a response. Furthermore, learners can be involved at an emotional level as they explore their feelings about a particular topic, hypothesise or give a personal opinion (Pienaar, 2006:171). Finally, active involvement can also take place at a

cognitive level, where activities request of learners to analyse, question, reflect, negotiate or summarise.

Active learning promotes action, as learners take part in activities; they learn to transfer the learning to situations they may encounter in their everyday lives and to the decisions and choices that they make and problems that they might need to solve (Mahaye & Jacobs, 2007:175-176). Mahaye and Jacobs (2007:175-176) refers to active learning as being “*participative*” in nature. Interaction can take place between learners and teachers and between learners among one another.

In promoting active learning the teachers are required to guide and direct the work of learners. An active approach to learning implies that the teacher acts as a guide, and a facilitator of learning, who provides a variety of appropriate opportunities for children to engage in their own learning (Fraser, 2006:7). Active learning will be most effective when it takes place in an atmosphere of trust and flexibility (Pienaar, 2006:170). Children need to feel secure in giving their own point of view, knowing that they are respected as individuals and that their opinions are valued and taken into account.

A good strategy to get learners actively involved in class is by working in groups (Dednam, 2005:363). This can include many different types of group interaction, such as collaborative work in small or large groups, structured play activities in the infant classes or co-operative learning activities in twos and threes.

According to Dednam (2005:363), learning in a group can help learners to:

- develop a shared sense of purpose and achieve a common goal by using the diversity of talents within a group;
- acknowledge and appreciate others’ contributions;
- develop self-confidence and awareness of their own abilities;
- develop and practise language skills;

- develop a wide range of interpersonal skills, including leadership, communication, delegation and time management;
- operate as a social unit and learn from and with each other;
- develop an acceptance of each other and respect individual differences by learning to appreciate other points of view, by listening to others, and on occasions by conceding individual objectives in favour of the wider group purpose;
- develop a sense of democracy in the class, encouraging them to extend their relationships to those normally outside their circle of friends;
- develop higher-order thinking skills, such as asking relevant questions, solving problems in various ways, drawing conclusions, and making informed decisions; and
- become accountable and develop a sense of responsibility for the learning of others as well as their own learning.

The following section takes a closer look at the nature of assessment in inclusive classrooms in order to achieve the policy principles set out in 2.4.

2.7 ASSESSMENT IN AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

Teachers can adapt the routine way in which activities and assessment are planned, structured and conducted in many practical ways. The purpose of alternative or adaptive methods of assessment is therefore to minimize the impact of intrinsic and extrinsic barriers upon the assessment performance of the learner (SA, 2001:21; Department of Education, 2002:8-10). According to the Department of Education (2002:8-10), the Department of Education (2009:21), and Merckel and Van der Merwe (2010:121-122), teachers must *inter alia* consider the following when assessing learners who experience barriers to learning:

- Assessment needs to be multi-dimensional or systemic in nature, located within the framework of barriers at the individual level of the learner.
- Assessment must be fair, bias-free and sensitive to gender, race, cultural background and abilities.
- The teachers/school, learner and his/her parents must lead the assessment process.
- Assessment procedures need to be guided by the principle of respect for all concerned.
- The purpose of the assessment should be clear and open.
- Assessment needs to be appropriate and relevant to the realities and context of the person or institution concerned.
- Assessment needs to identify barriers to learning, with the purpose of identifying support needs that would improve the teaching and learning process.
- Assessment needs to be a continuous process that is built into the teaching and learning process.
- Assessment needs to be varied, including various forms and drawing from various perspectives.
- Assessment results must be clearly, accurately and timorously documented and communicated to those affected.
- All official decisions of learners who are eligible to have an Individual Support Plan that require an additional support allocation or an out-placement decision must be ratified by the District-based Support Team.
- In cases where learners have physical or sensory disabilities, the school must ensure that the DBST or relevant Health Professional who, at the

time of admission, provides the school with the information necessary to ensure that the learner receives appropriate support assesses the learner.

The support provision to learners should be continually tracked and monitored to ensure that it responds to the needs of the learner.

It is important that assessment strategies are adapted in order to enhance learner performance (Nel, Nel & Leleboane, 2012b:61). In this regard Nel *et al.* (2012b:61) argue that things should not be made easier, only possible, as it should be expected of all learners to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. The Department of Education (2005b:34), Dednam (2005:376) and Nel *et al.* (2012b2:61) mention the following examples of accommodations and adaptations to assessment:

- Allowing extra time to complete tests or examinations.
- Provide expanded opportunities to repeat tasks.
- Give learners who experience attention problems breaks during the completion of assessment tasks.
- Provide practical assessment tasks for those who experience problems with written or oral assessments.
- Audiotaping learners' answers or letting learners use computers with voice synthesizers.
- Allowing the use of a calculator instead of pencil and paper calculations.
- Rephrasing questions and instructions.
- Enlarging fonts of typed material.
- Ensuring adequate lighting for learners with visual problems.

In the context of the study, I utilized the policy principles and the nature of teaching, learning and assessment as discussed above (*cf.* 2.5, 2.6, 2.7) to guide the formulation of questions for the interview protocol (*cf.* Appendix C).

Unfortunately research shows that multifaceted societal changes, encompassing educational reforms and contextual changes, including the management of diversity in schools, have had a negative impact on the implementation of inclusive education (Beyers & Hay, 2007:396; Lethoko, Heystek & Maree, 2001:311) The following section delineates some of the challenges teachers are faced with when implementing inclusive educations.

2.8 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

There are many challenges for implementing inclusive education successfully in South Africa. Hay, Smit & Paulsen (2001:214); Lethoko *et al.* (2001:311); Engelbrecht *et al.* (2002:59-72); Akintola and Quinlan (2003:31), Engelbrecht (2006:253); Beyers and Hay (2007:396), Wildeman and Nomdo (2007:9); Ghesquiere *et al.* (2009:51) and Ngcobo and Muthukrishna (2011:360) highlight the following challenges:

- An inadequate culture of teaching and learning exists at schools. Poor grade 12 results, high absenteeism and irregular attendance of classes by both learners and teachers are some of the characteristics of this phenomenon that still persist, especially in the black community.
- There is a lack of a professional work ethics among many teachers. This could be a result of the history of trade unionism in South Africa, which has a culture of fighting the government of the day, and the roles of union members and employees of the Department of Education have become blurred.
- The ratio of teachers to learners, which is not conducive to effective learning, poses a challenge to the effective implementation of inclusive education. There are far too many learners in most classrooms that make individual attention to learners' problems difficult.
- There are a large percentage of teachers that is still under qualified and who lack knowledge and skills to implement inclusive education effectively. According to Florian and Rouse (2009:594), it is unrealistic to expect

teachers to be able to meet the needs of children who experience barriers to learning if they have not received the appropriate training.

- A low morale and poor ethos among teachers is a problem. The main causes of the low morale and poor ethos are *inter alia* poor salaries, large classes, a heavy workload, additional administrative responsibilities, a lack of resources, a lack of respect for the profession, poor discipline of learners and curriculum changes.
- There is a lack of discipline among many learners. Many teachers want corporal punishment to return. In addition, teachers report difficulties in motivating and controlling learners, as well as dealing with poor learner attitudes and reluctance.
- Inadequate provision of facilities, infrastructure and assistive devices.
- A lack of parental support.
- Learners who experience severe barriers to learning still need to be supported in special groups.
- Time constraints: teachers need more time to plan for the adaptation of the curriculum to accommodate a variety of barriers to learning.
- The confusion with regard to the implementation of inclusive education. It seems that the majority of education departments and schools in South Africa lack the management expertise to implement inclusive education in an effective and well-planned manner.
- Ineffective management of provincial education departments regarding the support provided to schools to implement inclusive education effectively.
- Insufficient education support service staff. One of the most problematic issues in South African education support services is the absence of support teachers. White Paper 6 (SA, 2001:43) envisaged that this would be investigated, but nothing in this regard has materialized. The district

based support teams are also stretched in terms of capacity, and often do not find it easy to fill posts such as those of speech therapists and psychologists.

Montaluta and Rukhadze (2008:352) state that there are important environmental considerations that challenge the implementation of inclusive education in rural or poor areas, namely:

- Poverty among parents creates a high level of stress and, in many cases, poor living conditions; crowded houses and rooms create the conditions for home violence and sexual abuse. Parents afford a low level of priority to education. In many cases, low expectations about children's level of education and schooling outcomes are encountered.
- Endemic and epidemic diseases affecting children and adults are more frequent than the average.
- Children are affected by illnesses that disrupt their schooling; they experience a lack of access to educational, cultural and other goods, a lack of space and quiet places for homework and study, a lack of support from parents with their homework, advice and moral support.
- Schools, teachers and teachers in general, often have low expectations for the disabled, and are often not responsive to various problems that children are facing. Negative stereotypes about learners and their families compound the aforementioned.
- Communities could have poor neighbourhoods with limited local services and facilities, which impact on anti-school attitudes, lack of confidence in education and schooling for success in life and an absence of role models.

Negative outcomes for children, resulting from the preceding environmental risk factors are the following: low self-esteem, a low capacity of work and learning, high incidence of exclusion, low educational standards and life attainments (Montaluta & Rukhadze, 2008:352).

Despite limited resources, Downing *et al.* (2007:16) argue that schools and communities need to ensure the successful implementation of inclusive education. In spite of the numerous challenges cited above, Kleiners, Gregor, Blandford, Owens and Miracle (2004:28-34) argue that inclusive education has a range of benefits for all learners. The authors cite the following benefits: children experiencing barriers to learning get the opportunity to mix with peers from whom they can learn new social and real life skills, and have an opportunity to develop friendships. Furthermore, children who experience barriers to learning get access to education in their communities and are not sent away to special schools or stay at home. Access to education in normal mainstream classrooms creates opportunities for learners who experience barriers to learning to use specific strategies used by others, respond to the respect and positive feedback from peers and teachers, and set their own goals. Learners who experience barriers to learning also get a chance to learn how to become more assertive and are exposed to support from their peers, despite the challenges they face. Including learners with barriers to learning in mainstream classrooms enables all children to adopt more realistic views and positive attitudes about children who experience barriers to learning

Linked to the noted challenges, the Department of Education (1997:38), Moŵes (2002:42), Swart and Pettipher (2005:12, 19, 20), Uys (2005:211-236) and Du Plessis (2007:35) argue that successful inclusive education depends on the following:

- A sense of community where teachers and schools foster a sense of belonging among all learners.
- Diversity is valued for the greater opportunities for learning that it creates.
- Learners are regarded as individuals, rather than labelled or categorized according to groups.
- Teachers are supported to make learning and assessment modifications and adaptations to accommodate different barriers to learning

- Interdependence and support networks are fostered among learners by creating opportunities for peer tutoring and the creation of supportive relationships.
- Resources from special and regular education settings need to be pooled to address diverse learning needs. These resources include staff, curriculum and teaching procedures.
- A classroom assistant, according to Hemmingson and Borell (2002:57-63), is one of the most important factors for successful inclusion, as well as availability and access to facilities and equipment that are appropriate to accommodate barriers to learning (Hemmingson & Borell, 2002:58).
- Funding is an important means in supporting the move towards inclusion. Education costs money and where learners with special needs are concerned, it can cost a great deal. The present funding formulas often promote separation.

In addition to the aforementioned, parents are regarded as important role players to educational change, and inclusive schools should encourage parental participation (Alant & Harty, 2005:84; Vosloo, 2005:12; Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2006:126). Hemmingson and Borell (2000:162) and Mukherjee, Lightfoot and Sloper, (2001:23) concur that where there is understanding and support from parents; teachers and friends inclusion is successful. The education of parents on inclusion contributes to the success of inclusion (Department of Education, 2005b:12; Vosloo, 2005:12). Children whose parents are involved generally have higher grades and test scores as well as more positive attitudes and behaviours.

According to Sasser (2009), parents are their children's first and most important teachers. As parents guide their children's behaviour, they teach and prepare them for school. Parents can be motivated to provide meaningful learning activities at home for their children, prepare, support and enhance what is taught at school. According to Prinsloo (2005:459) and Sasser (2009), parents can participate in educational programs that help them discover and

learn ways to create a supportive learning environment for their child. School-home communication should be enhanced in order to involve parents who attend and fully participate in parent-teachers conferences, respond to newsletters and other communiques from school representatives. Parents could be involved as volunteers who commit their time and energies in a wide array of school activities. These activities can include helping out in the office, serving as homeroom mother or father, being a member in booster organizations or serving as field trip chaperones, just to name a few (Prinsloo, 2005:459; Sasser, 2009).

Parents can also be involved in governance, decision making and advocacy. This parental involvement can range from parent-teachers organization participation and school improvement activities to holding office as a school board member. Finally, parents can be regarded as community collaborators who work to establish and maintain community business and organizational support programmes for education (Prinsloo, 2005:459). Parents should be adequately informed of their children's problems or progress, in order to participate in their children's development. Non-involvement and non-recognition of parents by the school system creates a lack of respect for parents as, informed role players in the teaching, assessment and future development of their children. General newsletters can assist in keeping parents informed of developments and programmes at the school. According to Sasser (2009), schools can run information sessions and workshops to enable parents to understand their children and their emotional and behavioural problems better.

The Department of Education (2005b:12) stipulate that parents should be respected as role players in the learning and assessment of their children. A lack of parental involvement can become a barrier to the successful implementation of inclusive education in the following ways:

- Parents might not be adequately informed about their children's problems or progress and therefore are often deprived of the opportunity to participate in their children's development.

- Due to a lack of involvement, parents might not be able to understand the emotional and/or behavioural problems of their children that may aggravate their barriers to learning.

The Department of Education (2005:a,b,c) provides a number of guidelines to address a lack of parental and community involvement in the implementation of inclusive education. Some of these guidelines include the following:

- At school level, partnerships should be established with parents in order to equip them with skills and knowledge to participate effectively in their children's learning and school life.
- Parents should also be fully involved and informed regarding the barriers to learning that their children experience.
- Parents should be encouraged to take an active interest in the teaching, learning and assessment of their children.
- Schools that use South African Sign Language are encouraged to run accredited SA Sign Language courses for learners, parents and teachers at other schools, to aid the communication with learners who are deaf.
- Braille courses should be run to enable parents and teachers to communicate with their children and assist them with homework, reading and writing in Braille.
- General newsletters can assist in keeping parents informed of developments and programmes at the school. This is particularly important for boarding schools where distance separates parents from the school.
- Schools can run information sessions and workshops to enable parents to understand their children and their emotional and behavioural problems better. Staff from district based support teams, including psychologists and social workers, could assist at such workshops.

- Where appropriate, school-based support teams should be strengthened with expertise from the local community, district-support teams and higher education.
- It is essential that schools maintain open channels of communication with families in order to render support to parents and learners wherever possible.

According to research conducted by Nel, Müller, Helldin, Bäckmann, Dwyer and Skarlind (2011:74-90), South African teachers are negative towards the inclusive education policy due to numerous barriers to learning they have to accommodate, language barriers that hamper effective teaching and learning and a lack of support services to help them to cope with the challenges of teaching in inclusive classrooms.

As explained above, teachers are faced with many challenges while teaching in inclusive classroom settings, which include among others, inadequate knowledge, skills and training to implement inclusive education effectively. In addition to the aforementioned, the application of teaching methods and assessment practices to address the needs of learners also appears to be problematic. The mentioned challenges could point to the fact that the teachers might not be able to implement the policy principles of inclusive education in their classrooms effectively, which could hamper learners in experiencing the benefits of inclusive classroom settings.

In order for teachers to cope with the challenges brought along by teaching in inclusive classrooms, literature highlights a number of measures that have to be taken in order to make the implementation of inclusive education effective. A few of these measures are discussed in the following section.

2.9 ASSISTING TEACHERS TO DEAL WITH TEACHING IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM SETTINGS

In the first place, Beyers and Hay (2007:398) are of the opinion that drastic measures will have to be taken to try to ensure that inclusive education

survives the HIV and AIDS pandemic. The authors point to the following important issues:

An education support services (ESS) staff member will have to be appointed at each school. This person will most importantly, be responsible for supporting HIV-positive learners and teachers, and for implementing preventative programmes. Indirect service delivery to teachers in terms of supporting HIV-positive learners will have to be a high priority.

District-based education support teams will have to be strengthened by a medical/nursing component that can render medical support services to HIV-positive and possible HIV-positive learners. The transformed system of primary health care clinics in the communities appears not to be focused enough on the needs of HIV-positive learners and teachers; the school remains the ideal place to render medical support services.

A crucial component of these services is the opportunity for possible HIV-positive learners to be tested. Only if learners are aware of their status can they make informed decisions regarding needs of a psychological, emotional and social nature.

Learner support structures will have to be established per school where learners support learners on emotional and behavioural levels. This will probably only be possible when the dedicated ESS member per school can drive the process. This peer group support is viewed as crucial to redirect a substantial load of the emotional/behavioural dynamics away from the inclusive classroom, in order to ensure a more focused educational approach in the classroom.

The most important way of addressing barriers arising from the curriculum is to make sure that the process of learning and teaching is flexible enough to accommodate different learning needs and styles (SA, 2001:18). The curriculum must therefore be made more flexible across all bands of education so that it is accessible to all learners, irrespective of their learning needs. One of the tasks of the district support team will be to assist teachers

in institutions in creating greater flexibility in their teaching methods and in the assessment of learning. The district support team will also provide illustrative learning programmes, learning support materials and assessment instruments (SA, 2001:18).

Bosma, Lynch, Munk and Van Laarhoven (2007:440-445) argue for a restructuring of teachers preparation programmes. The widespread practice of including learners with barriers to learning in general education classrooms has increased expectations for both special and general teachers. Along with the expanded responsibilities of teachers in inclusive environments have come cautionary reports suggesting that special and general teachers may not have the necessary attitudes or dispositions, or perhaps more important; the professional skills to instruct learners in diverse, inclusive classroom successfully (Avrimidis *et al.*, 2000:227; Swart *et al.*, 2000:175).

Although professional development for in-service teachers remains a prominent approach to preparing for inclusive education, increased emphasis has been placed on the roles and responsibilities of teacher's preparation programmes to prepare new teachers for teaching in inclusive classrooms. Restructuring of teachers preparation programme has been widely recommended as a means to prepare pre-service special and general teachers for inclusive settings more effectively (Bosma *et al.*, 2007:440).

Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff & Pettipher (2002:175-189) propose that teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education should change. There is overwhelming evidence that teachers are the key force in determining the quality of inclusion. They can play a crucial role in transforming schools/ or bring about no change at all. Petty and Saddler (1996:15), Avrimidis *et al.* (2000:210) and Daane *et al.* (2000:253) refer to numerous studies indicating the importance of teachers' attitudes for successful inclusion. The authors maintain that a school's philosophy and the attitude of the staff are crucial. Thus, an understanding of teachers' perspectives and their attitudes towards inclusion and the changes it requires is essential to the management and accomplishment of meaningful transformation in South African education.

For the purposes of this research, I argue that a teacher not only needs knowledge and skills to cope with learners who experience barriers to learning, but ideally teachers have to develop positive attitudes towards teaching learners who experience barriers to learning. However, Schechtman and Or (1996:137) argue that policy-makers, who tend to focus on knowledge, skills and practical support without giving much recognition to implicit needs and emotional inhibitions, ignore the emotional aspects that underlie teachers' beliefs about inclusion.

In general, mainstream teachers are of the opinion that they do not possess adequate training, skills and time or support networks to ensure quality education for all and that they are not empowered to implement inclusive education effectively (Prinsloo, 2001:344-348; Engelbrecht, 2006:253-264). It is however expected of teachers to address needs that link with a variety of factors such as physical, psychological, sensory, neurological and developmental barriers (SA, 2001:7), for which specific training is required.

Research conducted by Engelbrecht *et al.* (2006:127), Eloff en Kgwete (2007:351-355), Mogare, Kitching and Roos (2010:52-63) and Korkmaz (2011:182-183) indicate that the following aspects and coping strategies are essential for successful implementation of inclusive education and for enabling teachers to fulfil their community and pastoral role:

- adequate training in the implementation of inclusive education;
- reduced learner numbers in order to give effective individual attention to learners;
- adequate resources to implement inclusive education effectively (for example more teachers, support staff and physical resources);
- problem-solving strategies to make action plans and come up with solutions to learner problems;

- severe barriers to learning such as medical, emotional and behavioural problems need special instruction and cannot be provided in a regular classroom;
- collaborative strategies to seek help and resources from colleagues, learners' parents and the school principal; and
- emotion-focused strategies to maintain a sense of humour, try to look on the bright side of things and to seek spiritual and religious support.

Morrow (2005:56) and Hoadley (2007:254) are of the opinion that the community and pastoral role traditionally does not belong to the teachers, and prohibits the teachers from focussing on what the main function of a teacher is, namely to teach. Hoadley (2007:254) argues that teachers are already burdened by a heavy workload, and that the community and pastoral role adds an additional burden, which teachers will not be able to handle. According to Chisholm, Hoadley, Kivilu, Brookes, Prinsloo, Kgobe, Mosia, Narsee and Rule (2005:111-127), 60% of teachers suffer from stress and tension which could be contributed to an increase in workload. In general, Hoadley (2007:256-258) is not against the fact that a teachers should fulfil a community and pastoral role. She however stipulates a number of prerequisite conditions that have to be in place to ease the task of the teachers. The conditions refer to the following:

- reducing the teachers-learner ratio to secure proper individual attention to learners;
- extending and developing hostel facilities at schools to avoid the negative influence of parents;
- appointing temporary social works at schools to assist teachers in addressing barriers to learning; and
- developing a caring and supportive attitude at schools to enhance teaching and learning.

2.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 2 provided an exploration of what inclusive education entails (*cf.* 2.3, 2.4), with specific emphasis on the policy imperatives (*cf.* 2.5) and the challenges that teachers need to cope with in inclusive classrooms (*cf.* 2.6)

Inclusive education adopts a human rights and social justice perspective in order to eliminate exclusion of learners from normal mainstream classrooms, and is based on attitudinal changes regarding race, social class, ethnicity, religion and ability. Inclusive education policy imperatives centre on providing support to all learners. The support is linked to a change in attitude and approach toward teaching, which *inter alia* refers to flexible teaching and learning methodologies which allow for differentiated, scaffolded and active learning (*cf.* 2.6) and assessment practices that are adapted to enable all learners to take part in the teaching and learning process (*cf.* 2.7). Literature reveals that presently a number of challenges (*cf.* 2.8); hamper the successful implementation of inclusive education. For example, a lack of knowledge, skills and training of teachers to implement inclusive education effectively is a major obstacle in the way of effective implementation of inclusive education. A lack of knowledge, skills and training is compounded by numerous other factors that relate to inadequate support and assistance, inadequate resources and facilities, time constraints to plan for the adaptation of the curriculum and overcrowded classrooms with many learners who experience severe barriers to learning that call for special assistance (*cf.* 2.8).

In order to explore how well the policy imperatives are implemented in the classrooms of the teachers who took part in the research, the empirical research design that was utilized in the context of the study is discussed in the following chapter, Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 2, inclusive education was discussed in detail, with specific reference to the policy principles as set out in White Paper 6 (SA, 2001:16). The purpose of this chapter is to outline the research methodology that was used in this research to explore how the policy principles are translated into practice in the classrooms of the teachers who took part in the study.

The chapter will unfold according to the following structure:

- Aim and objectives of the study
- Research paradigm
- Empirical research: research design, research strategy, data collection method
- Research participants
- Quality criteria
- Data analysis and interpretation
- Ethical issues

3.2 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The overall aim of this study was to explore how the policy principles of inclusive education are implemented in classrooms. The overall aim was operationalized as follows:

- by establishing the policy principles of inclusive education in South Africa;

- by gauging the understanding of primary school teachers in South Africa regarding the inclusive education policy;
- by exploring how the principles of the inclusive education policy are implemented in primary school classrooms in South Africa;
- by exploring the perceptions of primary school teachers in South Africa on which inclusive education policy ideal they find most challenging to implement;
- by exploring the perceptions of primary school teachers in South Africa on which inclusive education policy ideal they find the most rewarding to implement; and
- by suggesting ways in which inclusive education policy principles can be implemented effectively in primary school classrooms in South Africa in order to minimize the gap between policy and implementation.

Before I could conduct my research, I had to identify a suitable research paradigm that would inform the choices I make regarding a suitable research design, research strategy, data collection methods and the selection of research participants.

3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM

3.3.1 Definition

A research paradigm may be viewed as a set of basic beliefs that guide our individual actions (Creswell, 2009:9). It represents a worldview that defines for its holder, the nature of the world, the individual's place in it, and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts.

Cohen *et al.* in Maree & Van der Westhuizen, (2007:31) state that research is about understanding the world and that one's understanding is informed by how you view the world, what you view understanding to be and what you see as the purpose of understanding. In this regard, Nirod (2005) argues that a

researcher must consider the following four questions when selecting a research paradigm and methodology:

- What is the nature or essence of the social phenomena being investigated?
- Is the social phenomenon to be studied objective in nature or created by the human mind?
- How can knowledge about the phenomenon be acquired and disseminated the best?
- What is the relationship of the individuals to be studied with their environment? Is the individual conditioned by the environment or is the environment created by the individual?

The above questions guided me in selecting a suitable research paradigm to answer my research questions. In answering the questions, I first had to investigate the assumptions of existing research paradigms, and align these with my assumptions regarding the research phenomenon.

3.3.2 Positivist paradigm

According to Creswell (2009:6), positivist research holds a deterministic philosophy in which causes probably determine effects or outcomes. The positivists also study a problem that reflects the need to identify and assess the causes that influence outcomes such as found in experiments. The positivist's knowledge is based on empirical observation and measurement of the objective reality that exists in the world and the world is understood through test and verification (Creswell, 2009:6). Henning, Van Rensburg and Smith (2004:17) point out that the positivist rejects metaphysics, and is intent on discovering knowledge through empirical means. Positivists are concerned with describing, explaining and making predictions about phenomena that are investigated. According to the preceding explanation, the research participants will not be subjectively involved in the research, and information or data will be collected objectively in the form of numbers. The

researcher takes on an external stance towards the research, with the main aim being to verify theory and to make predictions.

3.3.3 Post-positivist paradigm

Nieuwenhuis (2007a:65) asserts that post-positivism is a research tradition that falls between positivism and constructivism. Post-positivism is based on the assumption that knowledge is fallible and that reality exists, but may not be fully understood, as it is multiple, subjective and constructed by individuals. Post-positivists therefore relate with both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and believe that humans respond both mechanically to and initiate their own actions in the environment

3.3.4 Interpretivist or social-constructivist paradigm

According to Neuman (1997:69), an interpretivist paradigm is an approach that develops an understanding of social life and discovers how people construct meaning in natural settings. He further explains that an interpretive researcher wants to learn what is meaningful or relevant to the people involved in the research. Henning *et al.* (2004:19-20) mention that the interpretive researcher constructs knowledge by describing people's intentions, beliefs, values and reasons, meaning-making and self-understanding. The research phenomena and events are understood through a mental process of interpretation, which is influenced by social contexts. Furthermore, the collection of information takes place in natural settings through unstructured observation, open interviewing, idiographic descriptions and qualitative data analysis that are all ways of capturing insider knowledge that is part of an interpretivist methodology.

The interpretivist paradigm, in contrast to the positivist paradigm, involves participants directly in the research, and verbal data is collected from the participants. The researcher adopts an internal stance to the research and is directly involved with the participants in order to obtain a better understanding of the research phenomenon.

Nieuwenhuis (2007a:59) states that the interpretivist perspective is based on the following assumptions, which I supported in the context of my study.

- **Human life can only be understood from within.** Human life and experience are not observed from some external reality. It focuses on peoples' subjective experiences, on how people construct the social world by sharing meanings and their interactions or how they relate to one another.
- **Social life is a distinctively human product.** Reality is not objectively determined, but is socially constructed. The assumption is that by placing people in their social contexts, there is greater opportunity to understand the perceptions they have of their own activities.
- **The human mind is the purposive source or origin of meaning.** By exploring the richness, depth and complexity of phenomena, we can begin to develop a sense of understanding of the meanings imparted by people to phenomena and their social context. Through uncovering how meanings are constructed, we can gain insights into the meanings imparted and thereby improve our comprehension of the whole.
- **Human behaviour is affected by knowledge of the social world.** There are multiple and no single realities of phenomena and these realities can differ across time and place.
- **The social world does not "exist" independently of human knowledge.** Researchers' own knowledge and understanding of phenomena constantly influence the types of questions they ask, and in the way, they conduct their research. Our knowledge and understanding are always limited to the things to which we have been exposed, our own unique experiences and meanings we have imparted.

3.3.5 Critical theory

Henning *et al.* (2004:22) point out that critical theory aims at promoting critical consciousness and breaking down the institutional structures and

arrangements that produce oppressive ideologies and social inequalities. The lived experiences and social relations of participants guide critical theory, as this paradigm assumes that people can design their own worlds and aim at political emancipation (Henning *et al.*, 2004:23, 24, Creswell, 2009:9). It is evident that this paradigm involves research participants in data collection with the aim to create social awareness for change.

3.3.6 Pragmatic paradigm

Creswell (2009:11) asserts that the pragmatic worldview arises out of actions, situations and consequences rather than out of antecedent conditions. Pragmatists maintain that, rather than focusing on methods, researchers emphasize the research problem and use pluralistic, quantitative and qualitative approaches to solve a research problem (Creswell, 2009:11).

Against the background of the previous argumentation, my study followed an interpretivist paradigm, as it strove to understand how teachers in their everyday classroom settings construct meaning and explain what happens in their classrooms related to the implementation of the inclusive education policy (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a:60). In this research, I acknowledged that people construct reality and that I needed to analyse the participants' discourses to gain a deeper understanding of their teaching practices related to the implementation of inclusive education policy (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2007:34). I focused on how teachers construct their social world by talking to them. The best way to collect data would be to talk to the participants so that they could share their understanding of teaching in inclusive classrooms with me. By exploring and uncovering how the participants constructed meaning related to the implementation of the inclusive education policy, I gained insight into the different meanings, which enhanced my understanding of the implementation of inclusive education policy as a whole in the classrooms that took part in the research. In order to understand and explore the implementation of inclusive education policy, I had to collect data by exploring the real world of the participants. It was not possible to collect trustworthy data without involving the real life experiences of the participants.

Nieuwenhuis (2007a:58) concludes that the ultimate aim of the interpretivist researcher is to offer a perspective of a situation and to analyse the situation under study to provide insight into the way in which a particular group of people make sense of their situation or the phenomena they encounter.

The discussion below focuses on the empirical research design utilized in the context of the study.

3.4 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The empirical research comprised a literature review and an empirical study. Each of the components will be discussed below, and emphasis is placed on motivating the choice of the research design, research strategy, data collection methods and sampling strategy.

3.4.1 Literature review

The focus of the literature review was to elaborate on and explain the implementation of the inclusive education policy with regard to whether the principles of inclusive education become reality in the classroom.

The following databases were used in this study to obtain primary and secondary literature sources, namely EbscoHost, SAe Publications, Sabinet and Google. The key words and phrases used in this study to locate literature were *inclusive education, inclusion, mainstream education, policy principles of inclusive education, realities of inclusive education, barriers to teaching, barriers to learning, and Education White Paper 6*.

3.4.2 Empirical research design

Trochim (2006) states that a research design provides the glue that holds a research project together. A design is used to structure the research, to show how the major parts of the research project, namely the research strategy, methods of data collection and the sampling of participants, work together to try to address the central research question. Creswell (2009:3) identifies three types of designs, namely qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. I briefly

explain each of the designs below in order to clarify how I made my decision for a particular research design in the context of the study.

3.4.2.1 Qualitative research

According to Van Maanen (in Merriam, 2009:13), qualitative research is *"an umbrella term covering an array of interpretive techniques which seek to describe, decode, translate, and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world."* Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meanings people construct. That is, how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world. The researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis; the research process is inductive; and the product is richly descriptive (Merriam, 2009:13).

3.4.2.2 Quantitative research

A quantitative research design involves the execution of a research process that is systematic and objective in its ways of obtaining numerical data from only a selected subgroup of a universe (or population) to generalize the findings to the universe that is being studied. The intention of quantitative research is to establish, confirm or validate relationships and to develop generalizations that contribute to existing theories (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:94). The three most important elements in quantitative research are objectivity, numerical data and generalizability (Maree & Pietersen, 2007:145).

3.4.2.3 Mixed-method research

Creswell (2009:4) and Mertens (2009:164) describe mixed method research as an approach to inquiry that mixes both qualitative and quantitative research designs with the aim to solve a problem or to gain an in-depth and holistic understanding of a research problem. The mixed method is more than simply collecting and analysing both kinds of data. It involves the use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches to enhance the overall strength of a study.

I chose a qualitative research design for this study as this type of design involves an in-depth understanding and exploration of human behaviour, which I wanted to achieve with the objectives formulated for the study. I wanted to understand the experiences of teachers related to the implementation of inclusive education, and did not aim to establish, confirm or validate relationships. According to Henning *et al.* (2004:3), a qualitative design does not usually control for the influence of variables, but rather captures the natural development of action.

3.4.3 Research strategy

A research strategy is a plan of action that gives direction to your research efforts, enabling you to conduct research systematically, rather than haphazardly (Ferguson, 2005). In line with the qualitative research design, I chose a qualitative research strategy to give direction to my research.

According to Creswell (2009:12), there are various qualitative strategies of inquiry. They are the following:

- Ethnography studies the lived realities of an intact cultural group in a natural setting over an extended period. Data are collected primarily by means of observations and interviews.
- Grounded theory is a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher develops theory grounded in the views of participants. Multiple sources of data collection are used to develop the new theory.
- Case studies are a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in depth a programme, a process, an event or an activity linked to a specific group of people. A variety of data collection methods are used over a sustained period to do an in-depth exploration.
- Phenomenological research is a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher strives to understand the lived human experiences of participants with a specific phenomenon as described by participants. Mertens (2009:181) adds that the basic premise of phenomenology is that the perceiver

determines meaning, and therefore it is human perception, not external influences or objects in the material world, that is at the core of the analysis.

- When conducting narrative research, the researcher studies the lives of individuals by asking one or more individuals to provide stories about their lives. The researcher, in the form of a narrative chronology, then often retells this information. In the end, the narrative combines views from the participant's life with those of the researcher's life in a collaborative narrative.

The strategy that I chose for this study was a phenomenological research strategy, as it would enable me to achieve what I set out to achieve with the study, namely to understand and explore the lived experiences of a small number of research participants. Creswell (2009:13) and Merriam (2009:24) concur that phenomenology is a study of people's conscious experience of their life world, that is, their everyday life and social action, with the emphasis on experience and interpretation.

A detailed discussion of the data collection method utilized in the research, follows in the section below.

3.4.4 Data collection method

According to Ivankova, Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007:257), the qualitative researcher collects words and images about the central phenomenon. The main methods for collecting qualitative data include the following:

- Individual and focus group interviews
- Observations
- Documents
- Audio-visual materials
- Artefacts

As I wanted the participants to share their understanding and experiences regarding the implementation of the inclusive education policy with me, I regarded the interview as a suitable method for data collection.

In order to determine a suitable interview type for my study, I carefully examined the research literature before making a choice.

3.4.4.1 Interviews

According to Merriam (2009:87) and Nieuwenhuis (2007b:87), an interview is a two-way conversation in which questions are asked by an interviewer to a participant in order to collect data and to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participants. Interviews enable a researcher to see the world through the eyes of the participant.

Nieuwenhuis (2007b:87) and Merriam (2009:89) explain that interviews can be structured or unstructured in nature. The authors distinguish between unstructured, open-ended interviews, semi-structured interviews, structured interviews, focus group interviews and face-to-face interviews.

An **unstructured, open-ended interview** is more flexible and exploratory in nature with the intention that the researcher explores with the participants her or his views, ideas, beliefs and attitudes about certain events or phenomena (Nieuwenhuis, 2007b:87; Merriam, 2009:89). The **semi-structured interview** includes a mix of structured and less structured interview questions, which are flexible and require specific data from the participants (Merriam, 2009:89). Questions are not rigid and have no specific order. The researcher can respond to new issues and ideas as they emerge during the interview (Merriam, 2009:90). **Structured interviews** are conducted with pre-determined questions which are prepared and developed beforehand, and are not as flexible as the semi-structured interview which allows for responding to new issues that emerge during the interview (Nieuwenhuis, 2007b:87; Merriam, 2009:90)

In addition to the structured or unstructured nature of interviews, interviews can be conducted in a group or one-on-one. In the following sections, I distinguish between focus group interviews and face-to-face interviews.

Merriam (2009:93) asserts that **focus group interviews** are used to collect data on a topic with a group of people who have knowledge of the topic, and the data is socially constructed within the interaction of the group. **Face-to-face interviews** refer to an interview between a researcher and a research participant (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:188). Although high response rates are yielded by these interviews, they are time-consuming and expensive if travelling to participants is involved (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:188).

With the aforementioned information at hand, I decided to make use of semi-structured focus group interviews in the study. Although I wanted to gather data from the participants based on specific pre-determined questions, the questions allowed for flexibility during the discussion. I used group interviews, because I was of the opinion that group interaction would be productive in activating forgotten details of experiences and releasing inhibitions that may otherwise discourage participants from disclosing information (Nieuwenhuis, 2007b:90). Focus group interviews would also allow me to generate a large amount of data in a short time, look for a range of ideas, gain multiple viewpoints, uncover differences in opinion, create lines of communication and enable me to probe for clarification (Clarke & Richie quoted by Chaane, 2002:292; Krueger, 2003:5; Nieuwenhuis, 2007b:91).

In order to implement focus group interviews successfully, I had to acquaint myself with the theoretical principles that guided the use of this type of interview.

3.4.4.2 Focus group interviews

Focus group interviews were used to obtain information about inclusive education.

Interviews were conducted with six teachers from an ex-Model C School, a Township School and a Private School, respectively. Merriam (2009:93),

states that a focus group is **an** interview on a topic with a group of people who have knowledge of the topic. Since the data obtained from a focus group is socially constructed within the interaction of the group, a constructivist perspective underlies this data collection procedure. The composition of a focus group depends on the topic to be discussed. According to Merriam (2009:93), purposeful sampling should be used to include people who know the most about the topic, and she recommends that a focus group should comprise 6 to 10 participants.

According to Merriam (2009:90), a focus group discussion is focused on a particular topic that encourages debate and even conflict. The group dynamics become an important dimension, as the participants are able to build on each other's ideas and comments to provide an in-depth view not attainable from individual interviews. This allows unexpected comments and new perspectives to be explored easily within the focus group and can add value to a study.

Morgan (quoted by Greeff, 2002:306) states that there are three basic uses for focus groups:

- firstly, they are used as a primary method of data collection;
- secondly, they are used as a secondary and supplementary source of data collection; and
- thirdly, they are used in multi-method studies that combine two or more methods of data collection, in which no one primary method determines the use of the others.

This study made use of focus group interviews as the principal source of data collection.

Focus group interviews were used, as they were more practical and economical than individual interviews. Focus group interviews saved time and allowed the participants to hear other people's point of view and to argue theirs. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in the focus groups, as this

type of interview allowed the participants to explore the topic openly, but also to answer certain questions that needed to be answered for the study. According to Estenberg (2002:87), semi-structured interviews are much less rigid than structured interviews. The goal is to explore the topic more openly and to allow interviewees to express their opinions and ideas in their own words.

According to Greeff (2002:309), there are three approaches to focus groups:

- the exploratory approach is used to conduct a pilot-test to explore the operational aspects of an intended qualitative research project;
- the clinical approach centres on establishing the real causes of behaviour through the sensitive and clinical judgment of a trained professional; and
- the phenomenological approach is employed to understand the everyday experience of the participants.

As I aimed to understand and explore the everyday experiences of research participants, I utilized focus group interviews for a phenomenological purpose.

As a novice researcher, I had to become knowledgeable on the guidelines for conducting focus group interviews, before attempting an interview. I adhered to the following guidelines for conducting the interviews.

Guidelines for conducting focus group interviews

I made use of Estenberg's guidelines (2002:92) before beginning the interview process:

- The first decision that I made was to decide on whom my participants were going to be (*cf.* 1.6.2.5). I then prepared an interview guide that listed the main questions that I wanted to ask. The questions were open-ended and I avoided asking leading questions.
- The questions were then structured and ordered. I prepared a list of questions before the interview. The list of questions was flexible as I realized that I might not always be able to follow the order of questions and

need to allow for deviation, as unexpected issues that might contribute to the research problem could surface during the interview.

- Work colleagues who were knowledgeable in the field of study and my study supervisor were asked to read the questions to ensure that they were practical and that they made sense. I also conducted a pilot study with 10 primary school teachers who were not part of the sample, to make sure that the questions were suitable, clear and understandable. A location was established where each of the focus group interviews took place.
- I compiled a list of items that I had to bring along to the interview, including for example, face sheets to record biographic information, an interview guide, a tape recorder and pens.
- Before beginning the interview, I took time once more to explain the purpose of the study and the role that the participants had to play. I confirmed with the participants that they could decide to withdraw from the interview at any time or refuse to answer a question. I informed them that I was interested in their viewpoints and that there were no wrong and right answers. In line with Estenberg's (2002:93) guidelines for successful interviews, I also considered the following aspects during the interview process:
 - I did not start with the interview immediately, but tried to break the ice first by asking the participants how their day at school was.
 - I discussed some ground rules with the participants before the interviews commenced. The participants were made aware that dominance in a group was not allowed and they were requested to listen to questions carefully before giving their answers.
 - I made sure that I understood what the participants said, and did not judge or criticize participants' viewpoints.
 - It was important to keep the conversation rolling, so I made sure that there were no awkward silences and that all the questions were answered.

- I ensured that I had follow-up questions to clarify responses in order to obtain additional information.
- I was mentally prepared for the focus groups, and prepared to act if unexpected issues were raised during the interview. I was familiar with all the questions used for the focus groups.
- I checked that all my equipment was working before the interview and I had spare batteries for the tape recorder.
- I was friendly and confident, in order to make my participants feel at ease. I did not appear to be rushed and was prepared for all my questions.
- I kept on track, but allowed for some leeway if the participants went on to an unrelated topic, making sure to get the interview back on track by redirecting a question or changing a question if necessary so as not to waste too much time.
- The interview was tape-recorded, and I took field notes that captured information regarding non-verbal behaviour like gestures between group members, eye contact, posture and fidgeting during discussions (Merriam, 2009:110). The field notes were integrated with the data obtained from the interviews and were taken into consideration in identifying the trends and patterns in the data (Greeff, 2002:317-318).
- I made use of the guidelines provided by Merriam (2009:96) to construct my interview questions.

In the following section I explain how I constructed the interview questions.

Questions for the focus group interviews

The interview questions were based on the reviewed literature and formulated to obtain answers to my research questions (Greeff, 2002:314). I structured the questions according to the question types suggested by Patton (in Merriam, 2009:96). The following types of questions were included in the interview protocol.

- Experience and behaviour questions that related to actions and activities in the classroom (*cf.* Appendix C: questions 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13).
- Opinion, feeling and value questions, to establish the participants' viewpoints and opinions about teaching in inclusive classrooms (*cf.* Appendix C: question 2, 3, 6 10, 14, 15).
- Knowledge questions, which elicited participants' actual factual knowledge about their understanding of inclusive education *policy* (*cf.* Appendix C: questions 1, 4, 5, 8 10).
- Background/demographic questions referred to the particular demographics (gender, age, qualification, type of school, teaching experience) of the participant (*cf.* Appendix C: question 1).

The questions were worded in familiar language and jargon free to ensure understanding.

In the following section, I explain how I decided on the number and size of the focus groups.

The questions were formulated to elicit information regarding the eight policy principles of inclusive education (*cf.* 2.5). The interview protocol in Appendix C indicates the policy ideal addressed by each of the questions.

Number and size of focus groups

According to the criteria identified by Greeff (2002:311) and Babbie, and Mouton (2002:292-293), I determined the size and number of focus groups that would take part in the study as follows:

- The size of the group should preferably include six to ten participants. My groups comprised six participants each, who all honoured their interview appointments. The size of the groups was manageable and not challenging in terms of discipline.
- In order to ensure that I obtained information from each participant, I made sure to give each participant an opportunity to express his/her views on a

question. This avoided only certain participants contributing to the discussion.

- I separated teachers coming from the same school and mixed them with participants from other schools to ensure that they were not influenced by a perception held at a particular school, or afraid to voice a different opinion among colleagues from the same school.
- A number of three to five groups at most are suitable to get adequate data. I formed three groups, which was in line with the aforementioned suggestion.
- Groups must be heterogeneous to avoid idiosyncratic characteristics clouding the data. My focus groups were heterogeneous in terms of type of school, culture, age and teaching experience.

I am aware that focus group interviews do not only hold advantages for data collection. In the following section, I highlight the advantages that motivated me to continue using focus group interviews, but also indicate some of the disadvantages noted in the literature that can affect data collection.

Advantages of focus group interviews

Greeff (2002:319) argues that the strength of relying on focus groups is the ability to produce concentrated amounts of data on precisely the topic of interest, and the reliance on interaction in the group to produce the data. The various opinions of the participants provide valuable insight into a research problem. The group may provide a stimulating and secure setting for participants to express their views without fear of criticism. Focus groups create a fuller, deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

Disadvantages of focus group interviews

I took cognizance of the following disadvantages as mentioned by Greeff (2002:319). Conducting focus group interviews requires a highly skilled researcher. Focus groups are often difficult to assemble and individual responses might not be the product of independent thought, especially if

friends are grouped together. Because the group is purposively selected and small, the results may not be representative of the general population. If participants are outspoken, it might be difficult to assess the viewpoints of less assertive participants, which could lead to bias in the data collected. Focus groups do not guarantee the anonymity of a participant either, which might contribute to compromise in data collection.

In order to counteract some of the mentioned disadvantages, I put the following measures in place. By negotiating with the participants, the focus groups were composed in such a manner that it enabled the participants to reach the interview venue with ease. I specified ground rules according to which the interviews were conducted, and purposefully requested responses from all participants to avoid certain participants from dominating responses. Participants were made aware of the fact that anonymity cannot be guaranteed in a group, and they had a choice to withdraw from the focus group if they wished to do so.

In the next section, I elaborate on the sampling strategy used to recruit research participants.

3.5 RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Merriam (2009:77) states that there are two basic types of sampling, namely probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling selects research participants randomly, and allows the researcher to generalize results of the study from the sample to the population from which it is drawn. Probability sampling is more appropriate for quantitative research studies, as this type of sampling enables a researcher to generalize findings. As generalization of findings is not a goal for qualitative research, this sampling method is not used in qualitative studies.

Qualitative researchers view sampling processes as dynamic, rather than static, and therefore non-probability sampling (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:321) was chosen as the sampling strategy for this research. The most appropriate non-probability sampling strategy for qualitative research is purposive criterion sampling. Purposive sampling is a sampling strategy with

which a researcher wants to obtain the richest possible source of information from which the most can be learned (Nieuwenhuis, 2007b:79). In the context of the study, the research focused purposively on the application of the inclusive education policy in primary school classrooms. In addition, Nieuwenhuis (2007b:79) and Merriam (2009:77) indicate that purposive sampling implies that participants are selected because of some defining characteristic or criteria that make them the holders of the data needed for the study. In the context of the study, the participants had to be primary school teachers who teach in inclusive classrooms.

The target population for this study comprised all teachers who teach in inclusive classrooms. Due to time and logistical constraints, the sampling frame constituted 18 primary school teachers who were purposively selected from three conveniently selected primary schools in the Johannesburg South District of the Gauteng Department of Education. I approached three schools with whom I had good working relationships in order to recruit participants who would take part in the focus group interviews. I addressed the school principals and staff members at the various schools during a break about the purpose of my research, and explained to them what their involvement in the research would entail. I asked for six willing participants at each of the schools to take part in the research. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:321), purposeful samples can range from 1 to 40 participants or more. I decided to select additional participants only if saturation of data was not reached after the interviews with the 18 participants. As I conducted qualitative research, the sample was smaller, because it was also not the intention of the researcher to generalize to a larger population. The aim of this research was to conduct an initial investigation that could be followed-up with research conducted with larger groups in order to determine how well the principles of the inclusive education policy could become a reality.

For the purpose of the interviews, the participants were clustered into three focus groups of six participants each. The groups comprised a heterogeneous grouping (various genders, age groupings, cultures, levels of experience, type of school and qualifications) of participants from various schools. Focus

groups were formed by clustering teachers who teach close to one another in a group, to avoid the inconvenience of travelling long distances. The focus group interviews were conducted after school hours at times convenient to all the participants in a particular group, and lasted for approximately 90 minutes each.

In order to ensure that the data collection and analysis procedure complied with criteria for trustworthiness, I adhered to the following quality criteria in the context of the study.

3.6 QUALITY CRITERIA

According to Babbie and Mouton (2002:276), the key criterion or principle of good qualitative research is found in the notion of trustworthiness, which *inter alia* refers to neutrality of the findings that emanate from the study. I guaranteed trustworthiness in this study by adhering to the criteria identified by Lincoln and Guba (1985:301-316) and Lincoln and Guba (in Babbie & Mouton, 2002:276-278).

3.6.1 Credibility

I aimed to achieve credibility by adhering to the following procedures:

- **Prolonged engagement:** I stayed in the field until I was sure that data saturation occurred.
- **Referential adequacy:** I used a tape recorder so that all the detail of the participants' verbal responses was captured accurately. I also took field notes during the interviews to make sure that non-verbal data were also captured. I attached evidence of my verbatim transcripts and coding procedure at the back of the dissertation to provide evidence of how I derived at the themes identified from the responses of the participants (*cf.* Appendix C & D).
- **Peer debriefing:** I made use of a knowledgeable colleague in the field to verify my interpretations and initial findings.

- **Member checks:** I consulted the participants again to confirm and check that my verbatim transcripts and interpretations corresponded with what they noted during the interviews sessions.

3.6.2 Transferability

Lincoln and Guba (quoted by Babbie & Mouton, 2002:277) assert that a qualitative study cannot be regarded credible unless it is also transferable. Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings can be applied in other contexts or with other participants. I guaranteed transferability according to the following criteria identified by Babbie and Mouton (2002:277).

- **Thick description.** My findings were based on three focus group interviews, which contributed to a rich database.

In a qualitative study, transferability depends on **similarities between the sampled participation and the population**. I collected sufficient data in relation to the biographical variables and context of the participants in order to allow judgments about transferability to be made by researchers in other contexts (*cf.* 4.2: Tables 4.1 - 4.4). The background detail of the participants might allow for some degree of transferability to other classroom contexts with similar background detail.

3.6.3 Dependability

In order for research to be dependable, it is important for a qualitative researcher to provide evidence that findings would be similar if the research were to be conducted with the same participants in the same context (Babbie & Mouton, 2002:278). To enhance the dependability of my study, I adhered to the following criteria according to Lincoln and Guba (1985:316-318):

- My study leader did an inquiry audit. The inquiry audit involved an examination of my interview transcripts, coding and field notes, as well as my interpretations for accuracy, credibility and acceptability.

- The **member checking** sessions with the participants guaranteed that I based my interpretations on the words of the participants and not on my own insights.

3.6.4 Confirmability

Research findings should not be based on the biases of a researcher (Babbie & Mouton, 2002:278), and a researcher should leave evidence to enable somebody to trace the interpretations and findings made (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:318). The audit trail included in Appendix C and D will assist a reader to determine if the conclusions, interpretations and findings that I formulated are really supported by my interview data. I also made use of an independent coder who was knowledgeable in the field of inclusive education policy to verify the identification of codes, axial codes and themes.

The researcher is an instrument in qualitative research and can threaten the validity of research (Creswell, 2009:177). I had to clarify my role as researcher to eliminate aspects that could threaten the validity of the data collection and analysis.

The role of the researcher in qualitative research

According to Merriam (2009:15), a second characteristic of all forms of qualitative research is that the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Since understanding is the goal of this research, the human instrument, which is able to be immediately responsive and adaptive, would seem to be the ideal means of collecting and analysing data. Other advantages are that the researcher can expand his or her understanding through nonverbal as well as verbal communication, process information immediately, clarify and summarize material, check with participants for accuracy of interpretation, and explore unusual or unanticipated responses. However, the human instrument has shortcomings and biases that might have an impact on the study. Rather than trying to eliminate these biases, it is important to identify them and monitor them as to how they may be shaping the collection and interpretation of data (Merriam, 2009:15). According to Creswell (2009:177), a researcher has to consider the following range of

ethical and personal issues that could compromise the collection of trustworthy data, namely historical, social and cultural experiences, status, race, gender, assumptions, personal connection to the site and sensitive ethical issues.

Historical, social, cultural experiences

My historical, social and cultural background was similar to the backgrounds of many of the participants, which enabled me to understand their way of thinking. However, many of the participants involved in the study teach in previously disadvantaged Township schools, where the teaching is often equated with poor quality. I do not have any experience of teaching in a Township school, and had to take care not to let existing assumptions about poor quality teaching in Township schools cloud the data collection and interpretation.

Status (race/gender/socioeconomic)

I am a white female teacher who teaches in the same district as the participants. As part of conducting honest research, I made the participants aware of my position and ensured them that the data was purely for research purposes and would not have any influence on their positions at their respective schools. What I think counted in my favour is the fact that I am faced with the same challenges as the participants regarding the implementation of inclusive education policy and could relate to their experiences. I tried not to create the impression that I was in a superior position or more knowledgeable on the topic which might have created a threat causing the participants to feel inferior or afraid to respond.

Assumptions

I had to state my assumptions regarding the research that I was going to undertake upfront to make sure that my assumptions did not cloud my interpretations. According to Gilgun (2006:440), personal experience is part of researchers, which cannot be set aside when they design, implement, interpret and disseminate their research. Based on what I have read in

literature where the challenges and problems related to the implementation of inclusive education are widely reported, I expected and assumed that the participants would be negative about the implementation of the inclusive education policy. My own experiences with the implementation of inclusive education are quite negative and I had to take care to highlight positive as well as negative perceptions regarding the implementation of inclusive education that transpired from the interviews. I had to be aware of my assumptions in order to avoid their clouding my judgment, or making me overlook and ignore responses that did not support my assumption or imposing my personal experiences on the participants and the research findings.

Personal connection to site/participants

I acknowledge that some of the participants were known to me as colleagues, and that our personal connection could have compromised data collection. They might have felt uncomfortable to share their opinions with me freely, or afraid that their opinions might be made known to other colleagues. On the other hand, they might have wanted to impress me and could possibly have given answers I looked for. My personal connection to some of the participants can be regarded as a limitation in the study.

Sensitive ethical issues

The study did not focus on sensitive ethical issues and in order to protect the identity of the participants, numbers were used to identify them.

In the next section, I elaborate on the procedures followed to analyse and interpret the interview data.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Verbatim transcripts of the interviews were compiled immediately after each interview. Thereafter, deductive and inductive content analyses of the data were undertaken (Nieuwenhuis, 2007c:99). The deductive analysis implied that *a-priori* codes based on the literature review were identified, which guided

the examining of the data. (Nieuwenhuis, 2007c:99). According to Thomas (2003:2), the inductive data analysis approach is a systematic procedure for analysing qualitative data where the analysis is guided by specific objectives. The primary purpose of the inductive approach is to allow research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant or significant themes (*cf.* 4.3) inherent in raw data, without restraints imposed by structured methodologies. Other purposes of the inductive approach are to:

- condense extensive and varied raw text data into a brief, summary format;
- establish clear links between the research objectives and the summary findings derived from the raw data to ensure that these links are both transparent and defensible; and
- develop a model about the underlying structure of experiences or processes, which are evident in the text.

The researcher followed the following procedures for an inductive analysis of qualitative data as described by Thomas (2003:5) and Creswell (2009:183-190).

Step 1: Preparation of raw data files for data analysis

I transcribed and typed the verbatim data as well as the field notes.

Step 2: Close reading of the data

I obtained a general sense of the information and reflected on its overall meaning as to what general ideas participants were expressing, by immersing myself into the verbatim transcripts and reading through them several times. Close reading of the data was important to obtain an impression of the overall depth, credibility and the use of the information.

Step 3: Analysis of data by identifying open codes and axial codes

I analysed the data by open-coding segments on the verbatim transcripts that enabled me to answer the interview question posed to the participants. I did this by highlighting the parts in the responses of the participants that

contributed to answering the question asked. I placed the relevant open codes in a column created for open coding (*cf.* Appendix C). I repeated this procedure for each of the focus group interviews. Thereafter, I labelled the information with axial codes (*of.* Appendix C). Then I made a list of all the topics reflected in the axial codes across the three focus group interviews and clustered similar topics/axial codes together. I re-coded existing data where it was necessary. During the coding process, I looked for expected codes (reflected in the literature and known) as well as novel and surprising codes that I did not expect to find.

Step 5: Identifying categories and themes

I used axial coding to generate a description of themes for interpretation. By using different colours, I could group codes that were similar in meaning (*cf.* Appendix D).

Step 6: Presentation and interpretation

In narrative form, I presented the findings of the data analysis. The interpretation of the data involved a comparison of the interview findings with information extracted from the literature review (Creswell, 2009:189).

Step 7: Visual representation

I structured visual representations to summarize the findings obtained for each of the interview questions, and to indicate the major themes that emerged from the interview data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:365) (*cf.* Figure 4.1- 4.15).

Step 8: Writing a composite

Finally, I constructed a composite that summarized the major findings of the research.

Before I conducted the research with the participants, I had to adhere to a number of ethical issues as clarified below.

3.8 ETHICAL ISSUES

Firstly, I obtained ethical clearance from my university to conduct the research, and thereafter I sought the approval of the Department of Education (*cf.* Appendix A).

I adhered to the following ethical principles according to Creswell (2009:88-91).

3.8.1 Ethical issues in the research problem

According to Creswell (2003:63), when conducting a research study, the researcher has to identify a significant problem or issue to study and presents a rationale for its importance. During the identification of the research problem, it is important to identify a problem that will benefit individuals being studied and not marginalize anybody. A study related to the implementation of the inclusive education policy is a relevant and contentious issue in South African classrooms and suggestions to improve the implementation of policy could benefit all teachers.

3.8.2 Ethical issues in the research questions

Ethical questions are apparent today in such issues as personal disclosure, authenticity and credibility of the research report, the role of researchers in cross-cultural contexts, and issues of personal privacy through forms of Internet data collection (Israel & Hay, in Creswell 2009:87). According to Creswell (2003:63), when developing the purpose statement and the questions for a study, researchers need to convey the true purpose of a study to the participants. Deception occurs when participants understand one purpose for a study, but the researcher has a different purpose in mind. The purpose of this study was described to the participants and it was carried out as discussed with them. The participants had an opportunity to look at the transcriptions of their interviews to ensure that I did not change what they had answered.

3.8.3 Ethical issues in data collection

During the data collection process, I adhered to Creswell's (2003:64) guidelines for protecting the rights of participants as follows:

- Participants had the right to participate voluntarily and the right to withdraw at any time. Participation in the research was voluntary, and the participants were not coerced into participation.
- The purpose of the study and what their involvement will entail was explained verbally to all participants, and added to the informed consent form which all participants signed before they took part in the research (*cf.* Appendix B). This was done in order for them to understand the nature of the research and its likely impact on them.
- Participants were given an opportunity to ask questions about the research and it was agreed that they would obtain a copy of the research results after the examination of the study. The participants' privacy was respected by not using any names during the data analysis and the interpretation of the findings.
- The participants were made aware of the benefits of the study, namely that recommendations could result to assist them to implement the principles of the inclusive education policy more effectively.
- The consent form that the participants had to sign before-taking part in the study indicated the potential benefits of the study, the type of involvement, the guarantee of confidentiality, and that they can withdraw at any time, as well as contact details of the researcher, should problems and questions arise (*cf.* Appendix B). Participants were made aware of the fact that taking part in a focus group interview could not guarantee complete anonymity, as the other research participants would know their views. Data collection did not take place during school hours, to avoid infringing on teaching and learning time (Creswell, 2009:89).

3.8.4 Ethical issues in analysis of data

According to Creswell (2009:87), research involves collecting data from people about people. Researchers need to protect their research participants; develop trust with them; promote integrity of research; guard against misconduct and impropriety that might reflect on their organizations or institutions; and cope with new challenging problems (Israel & Hay in Creswell 2009:87) The above information was taken into account as part of the ethical implications of this study. I considered the following issues identified by Creswell (2003:66) and Creswell (2009:91):

- Anonymity was guaranteed by identifying participants and schools with numbers.
- Data, once analysed, need to be kept for a reasonable period of time. Investigators should then discard data so that it does not fall into the hands of other researchers who might appropriate it for other purposes. In line with the ethical requirements of the university, data will be kept for a minimum period of seven years.
- Member checks were used to make sure that the interpretation of data accurately reflected the views of the participants.

3.8.5 Ethical issues in writing and disseminating the research

In line with the guidelines of Creswell (2009:92), I did not report the findings of my research in language that was biased against the participants based on gender, school, culture, age or experience. I also avoided falsifying or inventing findings, by basing my interpretations solely on the opinions and views of the participants. Through the consent form, participants were asked permission to use the research findings for publication and conference presentation purposes.

3.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the research design for the study was presented.

This study was conducted from an interpretivist paradigm (*cf.* 3.3), and made use of a qualitative research design (*cf.* 3.3.3) with a phenomenological research strategy (*cf.* 3.3.4). Focus group interviews were used as method of data collection (*cf.* 3.3.5.2) with 18 purposively selected primary school teachers from three conveniently chosen schools in the Johannesburg South District from the Gauteng Department of Education (*cf.* 3.4). Trustworthiness of the study was guaranteed by considering criteria for credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability (*cf.* 3.5). Deductive and inductive content analysis procedures were utilized to analyse the verbatim transcripts of the focus group interviews (*cf.* 3.7). Ethical issues were taken into consideration by means of obtaining ethical clearance, permission to conduct the research and informed consent from all the participants (*cf.* 3.8)

The next chapter, Chapter 4, focuses on the data analysis and interpretation of the focus group interview data.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I analyse and interpret the qualitative data which I collected by means of three focus group interviews with eighteen (n=18) participants. As outlined in Chapters 1 and 4, I first compiled verbatim transcripts (*cf.* Appendix D) of the interview data after which the data was coded. Similar codes were grouped together by means of colour coding (*cf.* Appendix E), and translated into themes, which highlight the reality of the implementation of the policy on inclusive education in the classrooms that took part in the research.

The chapter unfolds according to the following structure:

- Biographic information of the participants
- Interpretation of the focus group interview data
- Composite

In order to support the possible transferability of the research findings, the biographic information of the participants are firstly presented.

4.2 BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

In Tables 4.1 – 4.4, I report the biographic data of the participants who took part in the study.

Table 4.1: Biographic information of participants: Age

Age	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	60+
Group 1	2	2	2		
Group 2	3	2	1		
Group 3	1	4	1		
Total	6	8	4		

According to Table 4.1, the participants comprised very young as well as mature teachers. The perceptions of the teachers were representative of a wide variety of age groups.

Table 4.2: Biographic information of participants: Gender

Gender	Male (n)	Female(n)
Group 1		6
Group 2		6
Group 3		6
Total		18

It is clear from Table 4.2, that only female teachers took part in the research, which poses a limitation to the research (*cf.* 5.7). The research findings might not be similar when male participants' viewpoints are explored.

Table 4.3: Biographic information of participants: Teaching experience

Teaching experience	1-5 years	6-10 years	11-20 years	20-30 years	30+ years
Group 1		4	1	1	
Group 2	3	1	1	1	
Group 3	1	2	3		
Total	4	7	5	2	

The data in Table 4.3 indicate that the perceptions of the participants would be representative of teachers who were very experienced, but also of teachers who were less experienced.

Table 4.4: Biographic information of participants: Qualifications

Qualifications	4 year diploma	3 year diploma + ACE	Degree + HED	B.Ed-degree	Postgraduate qualifications (Honours, Masters, PhD)
Group 1	1		1	2	2
Group 2			1	4	1
Group 3	4	1			1
Total	5	1	2	6	4

According to Table 4.4, all of the participants had a teaching qualification, some qualifications being more advanced than others are.

The following section highlights the themes that emanated from the interview data.

4.3 INTERPRETATION OF THE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW DATA

The findings from the interviews are presented as themes in a synthesised way according to each of the interview questions. In the interpretation of the data, reference is made to the number of the focus group, and the row numbers in the Appendix to support and substantiate the interpretations made, for example 2 (23), where 2 indicates the number of the focus group and 23 the row number in the verbatim transcript. The three focus groups who took part in the interviews are identified with numbers, namely group 1, group 2 and group 3.

4.3.1 Question 1: What is your understanding of inclusive education?

I regarded the responses to this question as very important, as a thorough understanding of what inclusive education policy entails, is a prerequisite for

being able to translate the policy principles into practice. What emerged from the data is that all the teachers appeared to understand what inclusive education implies. The following themes emerged from the data.

4.3.1.1 Theme 1: Enabling education for all learners without discrimination

The major theme that was extracted from the data was that of inclusive education making education possible for all learners, as evidenced in the following response: *enabling all learners regardless of race, language, disability to be taught in the same school or class* (1(3)). Other responses obtained in this regard included the following: 1(4): *including different types of children in a mainstream class*

1(5): *school accepts learners that have special needs into their mainstream classes*

1(6): *including all kinds of learners in a school, it does not matter if they have special needs or are physically handicapped.*

1(7): *accepting different learners into a mainstream setting*

1(8): *including children that have barriers to learning in a normal class*

2(3): *having learners with any barriers to learning in a mainstream school*

2(4): *when everyone is included*

2(5): *all learners with or without disability can go to the same school*

2(6): *all learners, even those with special needs, must be taught in the same class or school*

2(7): *including different learning abilities in your class*

2(8): *allow children with disabilities to be part of a normal classroom*

3(2): *when all learners have different abilities intellectual or physical challenge learn in the same school*

3(3): *an education, which accommodates all learners able or disabled*

3(4): *an education, which accommodates all learners able or disabled on a normal school with the physical environment, which will accommodate all of them*

3(8): *it is when we include everyone in our education despite of his status, abilities, and disabilities*

These responses are in line with what the policy on inclusive education reveals, namely that learner participation should be increased by adapting curricula and teaching and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, class or disability (SA, 2001:16) (*cf.* 2.3.1).

The responses of the participants also support what is stipulated in the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (SA, 1996b, c), namely that all learners have the right to equal access to education without being discriminated against in any way. A learner may therefore not be denied access to any school on any grounds, including disability, nationality, socio-economic background, language or learning difficulty (Thomas & Loxley, 2001:118; Swart & Pettipher, 2005:3) (*cf.* 2.2).

4.3.1.2 Theme 2: Accommodating different needs and abilities in mainstream education

The participants indicated that inclusion refers to learners with different needs and abilities who need to be accommodated in mainstream classes. The following responses were received from the participants:

1(4): *including different types of children in a mainstream class.*

1(5): *school accepts learners that have special needs into their mainstream class.*

1(7): *accepting different learners into a mainstream setting.*

2(3): *having learners with any barriers to learning in a mainstream school*

2(6): all learners, even those with special needs, must be taught in the same class or school

3(4): an education, which accommodates all learners able or disabled on a normal school with the physical environment, which will accommodate all of them

According to the Education White Paper 6, the policy on inclusive education (SA, 2001:17), Swart and Pettipher (2005:7) and Dreyer (2011:59) mainstreaming is about getting learners to fit into a particular kind of system or integrating them into this existing system by giving some learners extra support so that they can be integrated into the normal classroom routine (cf. 2.3.1). Based on the teachers' responses, it is evident that they understand that inclusive education implies that learners are mainstreamed.

4.3.1.3 Theme 3: Accommodating barriers to learning in mainstream classrooms

The participants indicated that inclusion implies that learners with different barriers to learning are accommodated in the same classroom. The responses of the participants noted the following:

1(4): including different types of children in a mainstream class.

1(5): school accepts learners that have special needs into their mainstream classes.

1(6): including all kinds of learners in a school it does not matter if they have special needs or are physically handicapped

1(7): accepting different learners into a mainstream setting, they could have physical or mental disabilities

1(8): including children that have barriers to learning in a normal class.

2(3): having learners with any barriers to learning in a mainstream school

2(4): it is when everyone is included

2(5): *all learners with or without disability can go to the same school.*

2(6): *all learners, even those with special needs, must be taught in the same class or school*

3(2): *different abilities intellectual or physical challenge, without been discriminated*

3(6): *it is a place where every learner belongs is accepted and his educational needs are met; including learners with barriers in mainstream; all types of learners are included irrespective of race, and disabilities.*

3(7): *to have learners with different barriers.*

3(8): *it is when we include everyone despite of his status, abilities, and disabilities.*

According to White Paper 6 (SA, 2001:1), inclusive education accommodates a wide variety of barriers to learning in a classroom. A barrier to learning is something that stands in the way or prevents the learner to fully participate and learn effectively, namely societal, pedagogical, systemic and medical barriers (Nel *et al.*, 2012a:15) (*cf.* 2.4). Based on the aforementioned responses, I assumed that teachers were cognizant of the fact that inclusive education implies accommodating the aforementioned variety of barriers to learning in one classroom. In support of Smit and Mpya (2011:25-32), the responses showed some insight into the knowledge and practice of inclusive education (Smit & Mpya, 2011:25-32).

In summary, the responses from all the participants indicated that everyone seems to have a good basic understanding of what the focus of the inclusive education policy is. The responses of the teachers support the social rights discourse that emphasizes equal opportunity, self-reliance, independence and wants rather than needs. All learners have the right to be educated together, regardless of their physical, intellectual, emotional, social, linguistic or other conditions (Naicker, 2001:14; Moûes, 2002:34) (*cf.* 2.2.2.4).

The participants did not mention any of the eight major principles that provide detail regarding the practical implementation of the inclusive education policy (SA, 2001:16) (*cf.* 2.5). If participants only appear to have a basic understanding of what inclusive education entails, they might only be able to implement the policy superficially.

The main trends noted in the data are summarized in Figure 4.1 below.

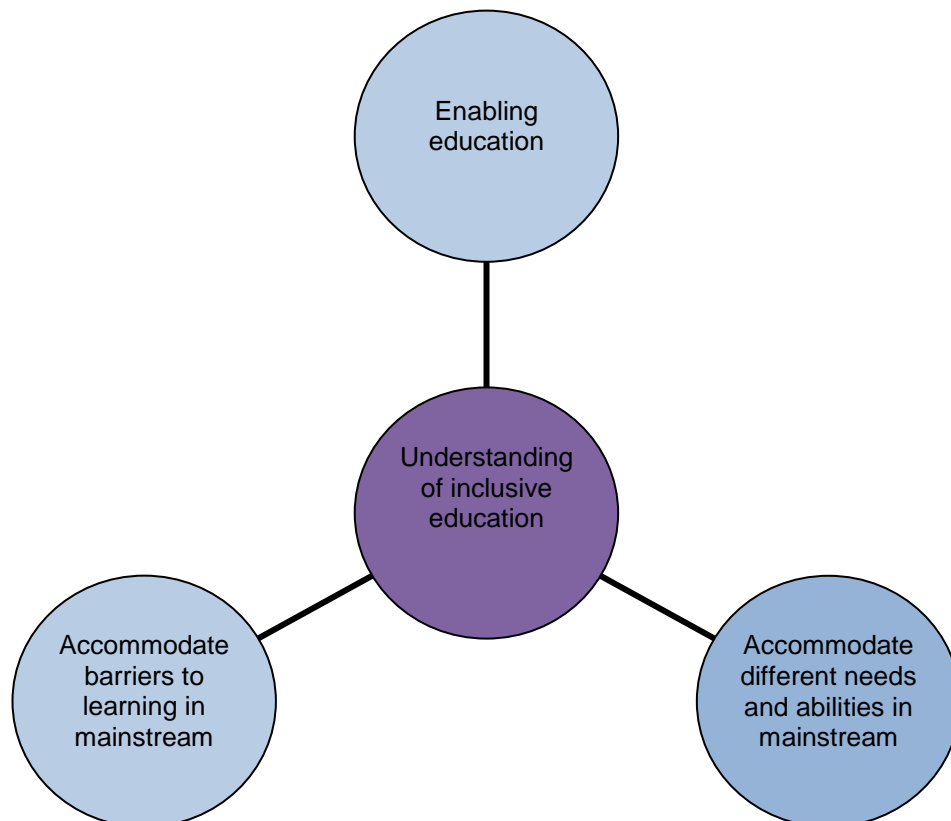


Figure 4.1: Understanding of inclusive education

4.3.2 Question 2: Do you think that inclusive education can work in South African classrooms?

This question was posed to the participants to mainly explore their attitude towards the implementation of inclusive education. A positive attitude towards inclusive education is essential for the effective and meaningful

implementation of the inclusive education policy (Lethoko *et al.*, 2001:311; Swart *et al.*, 2002:175-189; Wildeman & Nomdo, 2007:9) (*cf.* 2.8). Based on the responses obtained for question 2, the following themes were identified.

4.3.2.1 Theme 1: Training teachers

Both the literature and the responses from the participants revealed that most teachers need training to implement inclusive education successfully. The responses noted the following:

1(10): if the disability is too severe not all schools will have the necessary training and equipment

3(11): most teachers were not trained to teach in that kind of environment

The literature reveals that it is unrealistic to expect teachers to be able to meet the needs of children who experience barriers to learning if they have not received the appropriate training (Florian & Rouse, 2009:594) (*cf.* 2.8). The responses support the viewpoints of Hay *et al.* (2001:214), Ghesquiere *et al.* (2002:51), Swart *et al.* (2002:175-189), Akintola and Quinlan (2003:31), Engelbrecht (2006:253) and Johnstone (2010:40) (*cf.* 2.8) who assert that a lack of knowledge, skills and training of teachers to implement inclusive education effectively threatens the effective implementation of inclusive education

4.3.2.2 Theme 2: Reducing learner numbers

The participants indicated that the number of learners in a class was too big which hampered the success of implementing inclusive education. In this regard, the participants noted the following:

1(12): there has to be a line drawn as to when a child should go to a “special school”. It is not always fair on the child to be put into a mainstream school. Nor is it fair to the teachers or the other children. Our classes are big enough as it is.

1(15): *depends on what barrier the child has, would he be happy and would he cope in a big class.*

3(13): *due to our classroom environment, it is overcrowded and it is difficult to teach or include inclusive education.*

3(15): *we are still having such big numbers in classes*

The responses support the view of Lethoko *et al.* (2001:311), Hugo (2006:46), Beyers and Hay (2007:397) and Korkmaz (2011:182-183) (*cf.* 2.4.4, 2.8) who highlight overcrowded classrooms as a factor that can hamper the successful implementation of inclusive education. The authors argue that the ratio of teachers to learners is not conducive to effective learning poses a challenge to the effective implementation of inclusive education, and that there are far too many learners in most classrooms.

4.3.2.3 Theme 3: Appropriate facilities and adequate resources

The participants indicated that whether inclusive education would work or not depended on the provision of adequate resources and facilities. The responses of the participants pointed to the following:

1(10): *if the disability is too severe not all schools will have the necessary training and equipment*

2(10): *don't have the necessary facilities*

2(14): *we don't have the resources*

3(14): *if the department of education provide us with enough and relevant resources.*

The responses are in line with the literature where it is stated that insufficient facilities, infrastructure and assistive devices influence the successful implementation of inclusive education and may cause barriers to learning (Hay *et al.*, 2001:214; Akintola & Quinlan, 2003:31; Engelbrecht, 2006:253; Johnstone, 2010:41) (*cf.* 2.8). There are many challenges for implementing inclusive education successfully in South Africa. Lethoko *et al.* (2001:311) and

Beyers and Hay (2007:396) (*cf.* 2.8) highlight that a low morale among teachers can *inter alia* be caused by large classes and a lack of resources.

According to the Department of Education (1997:38), Moŵes (2002:42), Swart and Pettipher (2005:12, 19, 20), Uys (2005:211-236) and Du Plessis (2007:35) (*cf.* 2.8), successful inclusive education depends among others on the pooling of resources from special and regular education to address diverse learning needs. These resources include staff, curriculum and teaching procedures.

4.3.2.4 Theme 4: Thorough planning

The literature emphasizes that thorough planning is necessary for inclusive education to work (Kruger & Adams, 2002:215) (*cf.* 2.4.1) In this regard one participant noted the following:

3(12): *yes, with proper planning, instruction and an implementation process*

Kruger and Adams (2002:215) believe that teachers need to characterize learners in such a way that learners' individual characteristics are adequately addressed. They advise that, in order to do this, teachers should acknowledge the differences that exist among learners; recognize that such differences may influence the way in which learners learn; and plan and implement learning programmes, which respond to learner differences. This identification should be done to support and promote learning and not label and stigmatize learners.

4.3.2.5 Theme 5: Success depends on the severity of the barrier to learning

The interviews revealed that inclusive education could work in some cases and not in others, depending on the severity of the barrier to learning. The participants noted the following:

1(10): *if the disability is too severe, not all schools will have the necessary training or equipment.*

1(11): *depends on the disability of the child and whether they and the teachers will cope.*

1(12): *there has to be a line drawn as to when a child should go to a “special school”. It is not always fair on the child to be put into a mainstream school. Nor is it fair to the teachers or the other children. Our classes are big enough as it is.*

1(13): *still a place for special needs schools but we can also include learners that we did not in the past.*

1(14): *depends on the severity of the disability; could help a child with a sight problem.*

2(11): *sometimes, a deaf child could do some work*

2(15): *yes for certain disabilities but no for most*

Research conducted by Engelbrecht *et al.* (2006:127), Eloff en Kgwete (2007:351-355), Mogare *et al.* (2010:58-59) and Korkmaz (2011:182-183) indicate that severe barriers to learning such as medical, emotional and behavioural problems need special instruction and cannot be provided in a regular classroom (*cf.* 2.9). The responses of the participants appear to support this viewpoint.

According to White Paper 6 (SA, 2001:21), special schools will still play a role in an inclusive education system and will ensure that learners who require intense levels of support receive these services since mainstream schools will be unable to provide them. The responses of the participants’ support the role that special schools need to play in providing support for learners who experience severe barriers to learning.

In essence, the responses of the participants did not point towards a negative attitude. However, the participants were clear that the successful implementation of inclusive education would depend on a number of factors as summarised in Figure 4.2 below.

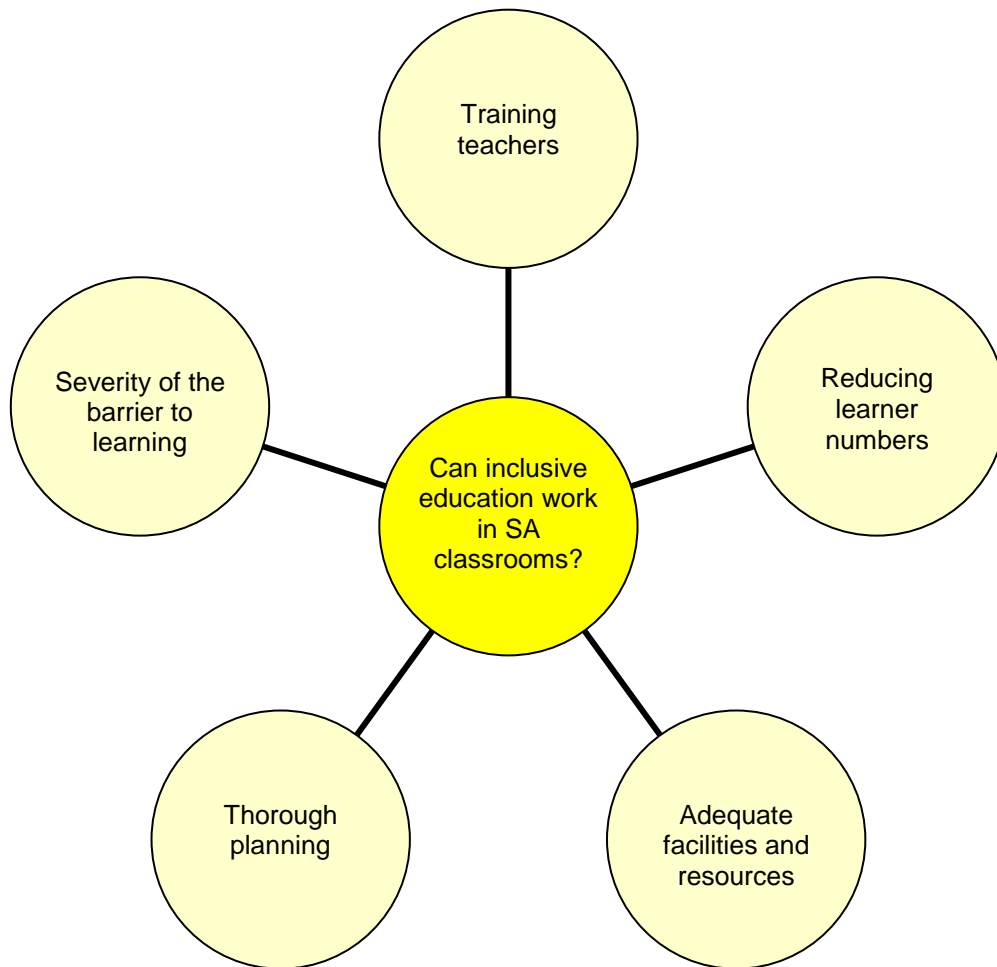


Figure 4.2: Factors to promote successful inclusive education

4.3.3 Question 3: What training did you receive to assist you with acquiring knowledge and skills regarding the implementation of inclusive education? Explain the nature of the training? Was the training adequate?

It was important to obtain information regarding the extent of the training that teachers received to implement inclusive education. Adequate knowledge and skills regarding the theory and practical application of inclusive education is essential for the smooth implementation of the inclusive education policy (Avramidis *et al.*, 2000:253; Daane *et al.*, 2000:253; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001:306; Swart *et al.*, 2002:175) (*cf.* 1.1). The interview data revealed that not all the teachers who took part in the study were trained adequately to

implement inclusive education. The following themes were extracted from the data.

4.3.3.1 Theme 1: Inadequate training

Many of the participants did not receive any formal training on inclusive education, which could point to the fact that they might have inadequate knowledge and skills regarding the implementation of inclusive education. The following responses were received:

2(17): *at varsity I needed to attend a special needs course*

2(18): *no training for inclusive education*

2(19): *received a book on how to accommodate learners with special needs*

2(20): *I only received training at university but it was limited.*

2(21): *training material*

3(19): *not done any training*

3(20): *no, I have not been trained*

3(21): *The government has not trained us in this*

3(22): *the only training I received was at university but it was very limited*

3(23): *I have not received any courses for inclusive education*

Both the responses from the participants and the literature review concur that many teachers lack the sufficient training in order to implement inclusive education effectively (Avramidis *et al.*, 2000:228; Daane *et al.*, 2000:253; Prinsloo, 2001:344-348; Engelbrecht, 2006:253-264) (*cf.* 1.1, 2.9). Lethoko *et al.*, (2001:311), Beyers and Hay (2007:396), Wildeman and Nomdo (2007:9) and Ngcobo and Muthukrishna (2011:360) (*cf.* 2.8, 2.9) also comment on the large percentage of teachers who are still under qualified to implement inclusive education.

4.3.3.2 Theme 2: Supportive school environment

Some of the participants responded that they have read about inclusive education or attended talks on it at their schools. The participants responded as follows:

1(17): *our school has also done talks on it as we are partially inclusive*

1(20): *the school has had talks on it*

1(21): *several talks have been done at our school*

2(19): *we received a book with examples on how to accommodate learners with special needs. We had to learn it and write a test on it*

2(21): *training material and school support helps me deal with disabilities*

3(19): *some articles at school*

3(20): *I hear about this from my colleagues and we received some documents from the Department of Education*

3(23): *they sent the White Paper 6 and some articles to our school to read*

Lazarus *et al.* (2001:45- 68) (*cf.* 2.5) argue that social integration in a school context *inter alia* implies the facilitation of opportunities for everybody to learn and work together in a cooperative environment. It appears that the schools who took part in the research provide opportunities to support their staff in gaining knowledge regarding inclusive education.

4.3.3.3 Theme 3: University and college training

A number of the participants received formal university training on inclusive education as evidenced in the following responses:

1(18): *I received training at university*

1(19): *I have been trained at university*

2(17): *at varsity I needed to complete a special needs course as part of my training*

2(20): *I only received training at university*

3(22): *only training received was in university but it was limited*

The responses support research that show that teacher training needs to be adapted and specific changes need to be made to ensure that learners studying to become teachers are trained in inclusive education (Bosma *et al.*, 2007:440-445) (*cf.* 2.9). The implication of the aforementioned argument is that present teacher training apparently does not adequately equip prospective teachers to deal effectively with inclusive education. Avrimidis *et al.* (2000:227), Swart *et al.* (2000:175) and Bosma *et al.* (2007:44) (*cf.* 2.9) argue for the restructuring of teacher training programmes to enable teachers to deal with barriers to learning in general education classrooms. Secondly, training programmes need to equip teachers with professional skills to instruct learners in diverse, inclusive classroom successfully.

4.3.3.4 Theme 4: Self-enrichment opportunities

A number of the participants noted that they attended courses on inclusive education.

1(17): *I have been on a course from the IEB and I have attended conferences such as SAALED.*

1(18): *have been to talks and the SAALED course*

1(20): *have attended courses on it*

1(21): *I have been to a course and several talks*

1(22): *I attended the SAALED course*

3(18): *I did a course on it*

The responses support the notion that it is important that teachers remain life-long learners in order to keep up with the latest education policies and trends

to ensure that they can give their learners the best possible education (SA 2000a:11). The Norms and Standards for Educators (SA, 2000a:3) (*cf.* 2.5) aptly describe one of the prerequisites of a competent teacher as someone who is *inter alia* a scholar and lifelong learner. It appears that the participants who took part in the study live up to this ideal.

Figure 4.3 below summarizes the main trends that emanated from the responses of the teachers regarding their training to implement inclusive education.

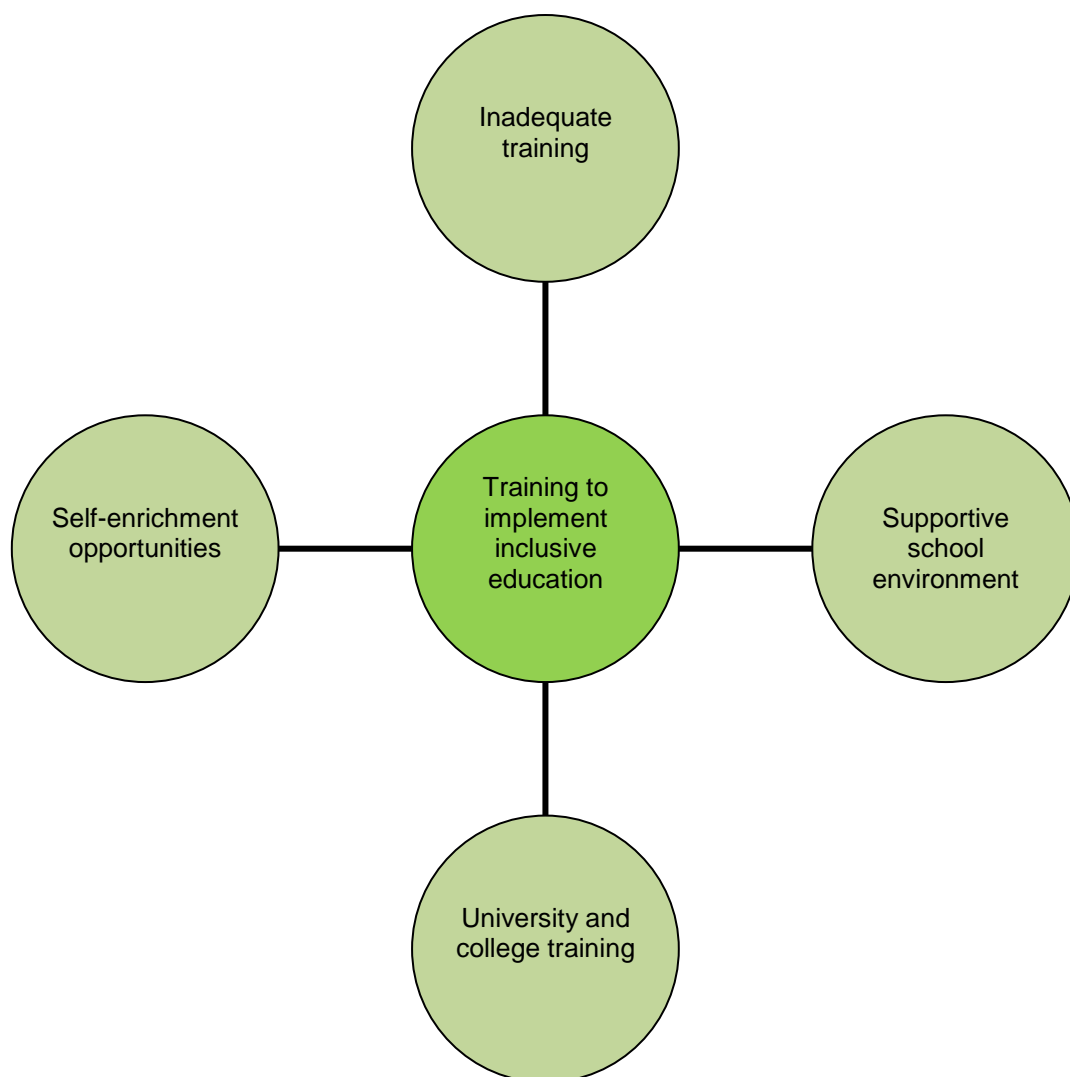


Figure 4.3: Training to implement inclusive education

4.3.4 Question 4: Do you make use of policy documents to gain knowledge on what is expected of you regarding teaching in inclusive classrooms? Which policy documents do you consult?

For the effective implementation of the inclusive education policy, participants had to be acquainted with White Paper 6. The following themes emerged from the interview data in relation to the policy documents that the participants consult to guide the implementation of inclusive education.

4.3.4.1 Theme 1: Inadequate consultation of inclusive education policy documents

Many of the participants either have not seen any policies or have not yet enquired which policies the school has to follow with regard to inclusive education. The following responses were obtained:

2(23): *no*

2(24): *none*

2(25): *no*

2(26): *no*

2(27): *no*

2(28): *no*

3(28): *no, I don't look at any documents*

3(29): *no, but our school has books on different barriers*

3(30): *no, I don't consult any documents*

3(31): *no, the policies are difficult to get, we don't have them all and we don't have time. They always change*

It is disturbing to note that many of the participants might not be aware of what the inclusive education policy exactly stipulates, due to limited access to the

policy document. This response could point to the fact that the implementation of the inclusive education policy in schools might not being carried out the way in which the Department of Education would like it to be, and that teachers might not have a deep understanding of what the implications of the policy imperatives are for their classroom practice. This response could support the concerns of Engelbrecht (2006) and Dreyer (2011) (*cf.* 1.1) that there is a gap between the inclusive education policy and its implementation and that teachers might not be fully prepared for implementing inclusive education (Naicker, 2008) (*cf.* 1.1).

4.3.4.2 Theme 2: Becoming acquainted with White Paper 6

A few of the participants revealed that they had access to the White Paper 6 (SA, 2001), or their school's policy that guide the implementation of inclusive education, but no other documents or material on inclusive education to consult. The following responses were noted:

1(24): *school has a policy and we follow that*

1(25): *I follow the schools policy*

1(26): *I try to accommodate all learners as per the school policy*

1(27): *I follow the school's policy*

1(28): *we have to follow the school's policy*

1(29): *the school policy is followed*

3(27): *I know about the documents from university like the White Paper 6 but that is all I have used*

Access to White Paper 6 (SA, 2001), is essential in order to understand what the policy principles of inclusive education entail. It appears that in contrast to the previous response that indicated limited access to the policy, some of the educators have access to White Paper 6. A matter of concern is the fact that schools apparently do not provide access to additional resources or material

to enrich the teachers' knowledge and skills base regarding the implementation of inclusive education.

Based on the aforementioned responses, Figure 4.4 points out the two major issues that emanated from the question related to the use and consultation of the inclusive education policy document.

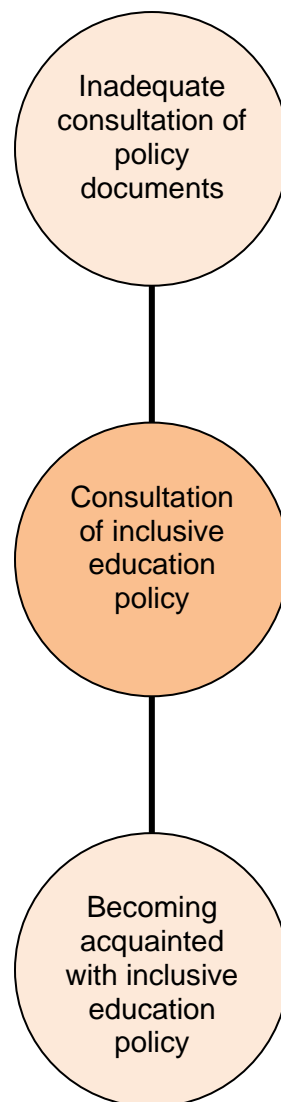


Figure 4.4: Consultation of inclusive education policy

4.3.5 Question 5: What type of barriers to learning do you have to deal with in your classroom? Explain these barriers.

The responses to question 5 enabled me to obtain a picture of the various barriers to learning that the teachers who took part in the research were faced with. Based on their responses to question 7, I would be able to establish whether their adaptations to the curriculum are in line with the barriers to learning reported in response to question 5.

In response to question 5, the participants mentioned that they were faced with numerous barriers to learning in their classrooms.

4.3.5.1 Theme 1: Medical barriers

The participants reported the following medical barriers: sensory problems, hearing problems, learning difficulties, attention deficit disorders, concentration problems, emotional problems, health problems. The responses revealed the following:

1(31): *I have an ADD, ADHD, a bursary learner from a poor background*

1(32): *concentration problems*

1(33): *I have a few children with concentration problems and a child who wears hearing aids*

1(34): *two girls that need a lot of remedial support*

1(35): *concentration problems with two girls. One girl has a speech problem*

1(36): *I have a child with sensory problems, two girls have to go to therapy*

2(30): *bad concentration, ADD and ADHD*

2(31): *ADD and ADHD are the only barriers*

2(32): *bad concentration*

2(33): *I just have a few concentration problems*

3(33): *the children are often sick*

3(37): *I the intrinsic barriers are the disabilities from the mind, they are severe for example, fear, stress, anger, phobias, aggression, etc.*

3(39): *hearing problem: the children can't hear what I am saying*

The responses confirm the literature that medical and health barriers that refer to sensory barriers, neurological barriers, physical barriers and attention barriers are a reality in inclusive classrooms (Landsberg, 2005:335; Storbeck, 2005:352; Hugo, 2006:48; Nel *et al.*, 2012a:16-18) (*cf.* 2.4.2). In support of Holtz and Lessing (2002:236) (*cf.* 2.4.2), the participants also noted ADHD as a challenge they have to deal with.

4.3.5.2 Theme 2: Pedagogical barriers

The participants reported the following pedagogical barriers in their classrooms:

1(31): *a learner from a poor background who has a language barrier, learners are weak and are in three therapies*

1(32): *I have two language barriers and some children that would normally be in a remedial school*

1(34): *two girls that need a lot of remedial support*

1(35): *language is a barrier to some learners*

1(36): *language is a problem for two girls; there are two girls that have to go to more than one therapy*

2(34): *language barriers*

3(35): *the barriers are language; we don't have the time or resources*

3(38): *there is no time and too many children*

3(39): *language problem-we have so many children from different languages*

Based on the responses, it appears that language is a major pedagogical barrier in the classrooms that took part in the research (Jones & Bender, 2002:223; Nel *et al.*, 2012a:15) (*cf.* 2.4.1). The responses did not reveal any pedagogical barriers that can emanate from insufficient support and inflexible teaching and assessment approaches to accommodate all learners. From the responses, I carefully conclude that the teachers who took part in the research seem to manage to provide flexible teaching and assessment that address the needs of all learners.

4.3.5.3 Theme 3: Socio-economic barriers

A number of participants stated that the environment from which a child comes, can be a huge barrier to learning. In this regard, the participants cited the following:

3(33): *I deal with health, environment and poverty barriers*

3(34): *the physical environment and no resources is a big barrier*

3(35): *language, institution, overcrowded classrooms, lack of resources, drug abuse, unstable place of residence*

3(36): *poverty, violence, crime, HIV and AIDS, disability*

The responses concur with the literature that societal barriers can differ from community to community and include learners from backgrounds characterised by poverty, abuse, crime and violence (Peterson & Hittie, 2003:101; Hugo, 2006:40-47; Dunbar- Krige & Van der Merwe, 2010:179) (*cf.* 2.4.3). Montaluta and Rukhadze (2008:352) (*cf.* 2.8) also note the detrimental effects of poor environmental conditions. The authors assert that poverty among parents creates a high level of stress and, in many cases, poor living conditions; crowded houses and rooms create the conditions for home violence and sexual abuse. In many cases, low expectations about children's level of education and schooling outcomes are encountered as well as a lack of community and parental involvement and support in education. The aforementioned argument highlights an area of concern that the schools who

were involved in the research might have to take note of. Poor environmental conditions could also lead to poor study conditions and illnesses that impact on academic performance and school attendance (Montaluta & Rukhadze, (2008:352) (*cf.* 2.8). Negative environmental factors can also predispose learners to develop low self-esteem, a low capacity to work and learn, low educational standards and low life attainments (Montaluta & Rukhadze, (2008:352) (*cf.* 2.8).

4.3.5.4 Theme 4: Systemic barriers

Lack of resources, overcrowded classes

Some of the participants felt that the schools lack of facilities, resources and overcrowded classes were barriers to learning. The responses were as follows:

3(34): *no resources is a big barrier*

3(35): *overcrowded classrooms, lack of resources*

3(38): *too many children*

In support of Hay *et al.* (2001:214), Lethoko *et al.* (2001:311), Ghesquiere *et al.* (2002:51), Swart *et al.* (2002:175-189), Akintola and Quinlan (2003:31, Engelbrecht (2006:253), Hugo (2006:46), Beyers and Hay (2007:396), Wildeman and Nomdo (2007:9), Johnstone (2010:40) and Ngcobo and Muthukrishna (2011:360) (*cf.* 2.4.4, 2.8), the responses indicate that barriers related to facilities and resources apparently are a reality in the classrooms that took part in the research. Furthermore, Lethoko *et al.* (2001:311), Beyers and Hay (2007:396), Wildeman and Nomdo (2007:9) and Ngcobo and Muthukrishna (2011:340) (*cf.* 2.8) also report that the ratio of teachers to learners is not conducive to effective learning, and poses a challenge to the effective implementation of inclusive education. There are far too many learners in most classrooms.

The mentioned barriers to learning noted from the responses of the participants could point to the fact that the teachers might not be able to

implement the policy principles of inclusive education in their classrooms effectively, therefore minimizing the opportunities for learners to experience the benefits of inclusive classroom settings. Against the background of the previous responses that indicated inadequate training and limited access to the inclusive education policy and additional resources on inclusive education, doubt is created as to whether the participants will be able to accommodate the reported barriers to learning as expected from the inclusive education policy effectively.

In summary, Figure 4.5 displays the variety of barriers that the participants who took part in the study have to accommodate during teaching and learning.

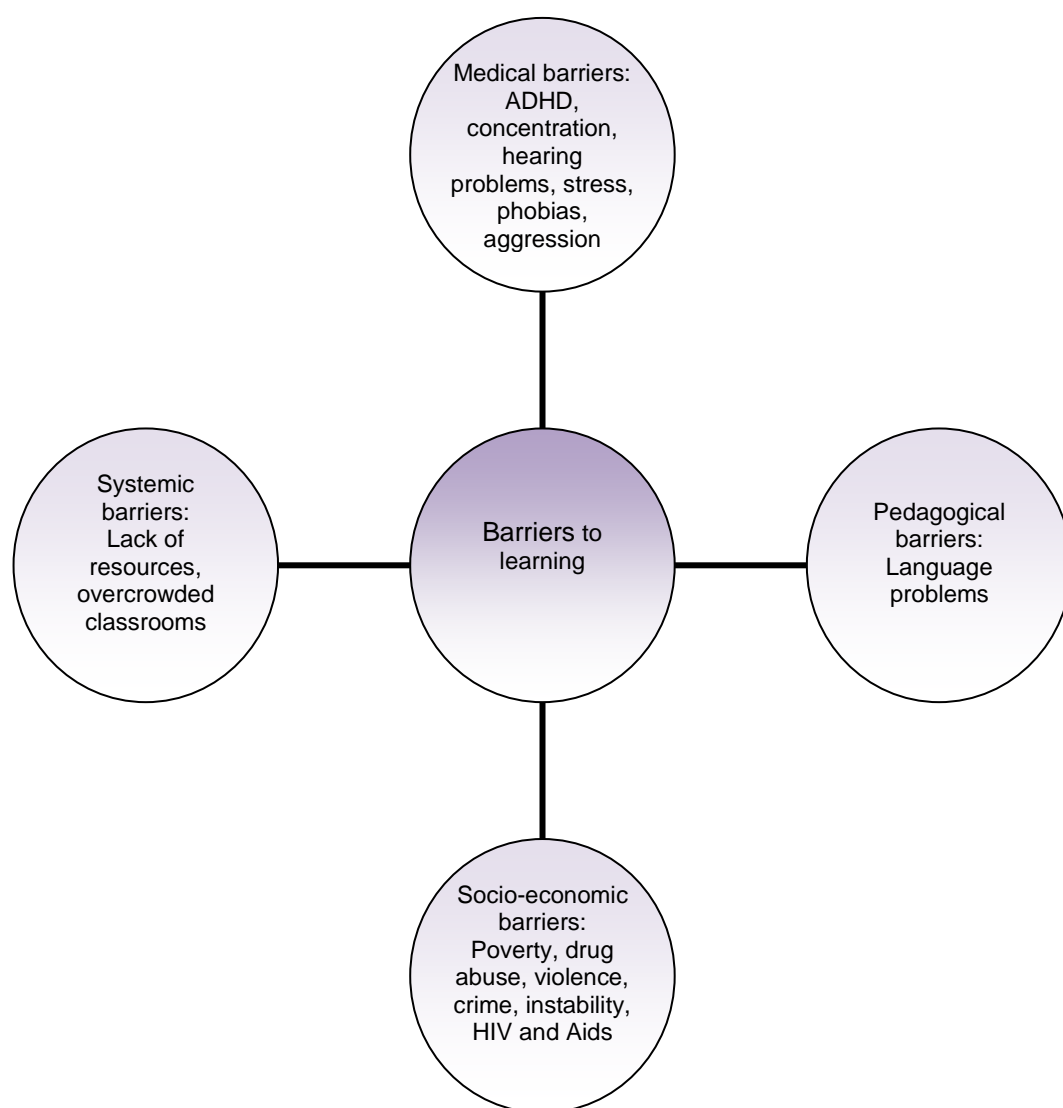


Figure 4.5: Barriers to learning

4.3.6 Question 6: To what extent does your school have adequate resources and facilities necessary for inclusive education? Provide practical examples.

Adequate human and physical resources are important for the implementation of inclusive education policy initiatives (Hemmingson & Borell, 2000:162-170; Akintola & Quinlan, 2003:31; Ghesquiere *et al.*, 2002:51; Engelbrecht, 2006:253; Johnstone, 2010:41) (*cf.* 2.8).

In response to question 6, the participants had divided opinions. Although there were human resources available to assist the participants with the

implementation of inclusive education, they experienced a lack of physical resources. In both instances, human and physical resources appear to be inadequate to support the successful implementation of inclusive education initiatives.

4.3.6.1 Theme 1: Availability of human resources

A number of the participants have access to various therapists on site but this is at an extra cost to the parents. The second school has access to social workers and community helpers but this does not help with the implementation of inclusive education in the classroom. The responses of the participants revealed the following:

1(38): *We have various therapists and remedial teachers on sight.*

1(39): *On sight therapists and remedial teachers*

1(40): *We have all therapists and some learners have facilitators*

1(42): *The children can go to therapists during school time*

2(37): *An occupational therapist on the premises to whom learners can be referred and a remedial teachers*

2(40): *There are therapists but parents have to pay for that*

2(42): *Remedial class in the morning*

3(45): *Yes, we have social workers, nurses, police officer, priest and a psychologist to assist our learners with barriers to learning*

3(47): *we only have an aid teacher*

One of the most problematic issues regarding the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa is the provision of support services. In this regard, Lethoko *et al.* (2001:311), Beyers and Hay (2007:396) and Wildeman and Nomdo (2007:9) (*cf.* 2.8) mention that the district-based support teams of the education department are also stretched in terms of capacity, and often struggle to fill posts for speech therapists and psychologists. Hemmingson

and Borell (2000:162-170) (cf. 2.8) also point out that classroom assistants are important to enable teachers to implement inclusive education successfully. The responses of the participants clearly indicate that there is a need for human resources to assist the teachers in dealing with barriers to learning in order to teach more effectively.

4.3.6.2 Theme 2: Inadequate physical resources

The interview data also indicated that there is a need for adequate resources to implement inclusive education optimally. The following resources and infrastructure appear to be lacking in most schools: special equipment, facilities, teaching and learning resources and classroom size. The participants cited the following:

1(38): *our school is not yet wheelchair friendly throughout*

1(41): *we don't have special equipment for blind or deaf children though*

1(43): *not all learners can be accommodated*

2(38): *school does not have facilities*

2(39): *our school has none*

2(40): *we do not have any special resources*

2(41): *we do not have any special resources*

3(43): *many classes cannot accommodate everyone at this stage*

3(44): *no*

3(46): *no, we do not have any special equipment or the space in our classrooms*

3(47): *no*

The responses concur with the literature that reports inadequate facilities, equipment, assistive devices and infrastructure as challenges that obstruct the

implementation of inclusive education (Hemmingson & Borell, 2000:162-170; Akintola & Quinlan, 2003:31; Ghesquiere *et al.*, 2002:51; Engelbrecht, 2006:253; Johnstone, 2010:41) (*cf.* 2.8).

In summary, the responses focusing on the resources available to implement the policy initiatives of inclusive education appear to be problematic, and picture schools as being ill equipped for inclusive education. Figure 4.6 summarizes the gist of the responses obtained.

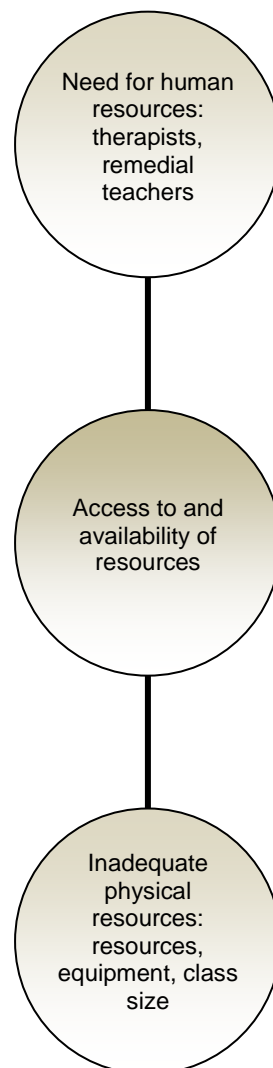


Figure 4.6: Resources and facilities

4.3.7 Question 7: How do you adapt the curriculum for learners who experience barriers to learning in your class? Provide practical examples.

The responses to question 7 enabled me to conclude whether the teachers are able to adapt their instruction to accommodate diverse learning barriers as reported in response to question 5, and in so doing adhere to the following policy principles set out in White Paper 6:

- (providing) enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners;
- changing attitudes, behaviours, teaching methodologies, curricula and the environment to meet the needs of all learners; and
- maximizing the participation of all learners (SA, 2001:16) (*cf.* 2.5).

The following themes were identified from the responses of the participants.

4.3.7.1 Theme 1: Flexible instruction

Although there was not a lot of information in the data about adapting the curriculum, many of the participants appeared to have a limited understanding of the principles that play an important role in adapting the curriculum in inclusive classrooms. The responses reported the following:

1(46): *we have differentiated work cards in class*

1(49): *I have differentiated work cards, so that the weak and the advanced learners can be stimulated*

2(44): *differentiation of work sheets*

2(46): *I use differentiation*

2(47): *teach work in an easier manner, teach new concepts in small groups*

2(48): *I give learners easier readers, worksheets and spelling words*

2(49): *I make the lesson easier so that he can have a sense of achievement*

3(50): *you can group them*

3(51): *treat them the same as others*

3(52): *provide activities according to their performance*

3(53): *by giving them different work activities according to their abilities*

3(55): *plan a program that will cater for all*

The responses revealed to some extent that differentiation, which is an important principle for teaching in inclusive classrooms, is applied (Arends, 2009:466; Walton, 2012:124 (*cf.* 2.6.1.1). Limited evidence of multi-level teaching, active learning, scaffolding learning and individualized instruction is also evident (Jones & Bender, 2002:21-22; Department of Education, 2005b:34; Walton, 2012:126, 132, 133) (*cf.* 2.6.2).

The responses did not reflect the use of a variety of techniques aimed at reaching learners at all levels, as mentioned by Jones and Bender (2002:21-22) and Frazer and Maguvhe (2008:3) (*cf.* 2.6.2). The authors state that the following alternative approaches to curriculum adaptation and delivery can be applied to the teaching of learners who experience barriers to learning:

- setting a substitute task of similar scope and demand;
- replacing one impossible or unfriendly task with a task of a different kind;
- allowing the learner to undertake the task at a later date;
- using another planned task to assess more outcomes or aspects of outcome than originally intended;
- giving the learner concessions (extra time) to complete a task;
- using technology, aides or other special arrangements to undertake assessment tasks;

- considering the format in which the task is presented

4.3.7.2 Theme 2: Individualized instruction

Many of the participants reported the use of individual education plans with differentiated learning tasks for learners, which, according to Walton (2012:136) (*cf.* 2.6.3) is an important way to assist learners. In this regard, the participants mentioned the following:

1(45): *Individual Education Plan for the child that is carefully monitored and adjusted throughout the year*

1(46): *we use IEP'S and differentiated work cards in class*

1(47): *I assess the learner on the same outcomes by using easier questions*

1(48): *I use an IEP*

1(49): *I use IEP and differentiated work cards*

1(50): *I use IEP and I assess the learner on the same outcomes by using easier questions*

2(44): *Differentiation of worksheets and one-on-one re-teaching*

2(45): *one on one work*

2(46): *I use differentiation*

The use of IEP's could point to the fact that the participants are trying to maximize the participation of all learners during teaching and learning, an minimizing the threat of pedagogical barriers related to task difficulty and inflexible teaching methods (Jones & Bender, 2002:200-223; Nel *et al.*, 2012a:15)) (*cf.* 2.4.1). The responses of the participants appear to support the belief of Kruger and Adams (2002:215) (*cf.* 2.4.1) that teachers need to characterize learners is such a way that they adequately address their individual needs.

Although the responses provide evidence that teachers are trying to support individual learning needs, the responses are not rich in examples to illustrate the curriculum adaptations that are made. No mention was made for example of providing more visual learning, re-teaching content, allowing learners to choose a method of their preference or altering the conditions under which a task is performed (Jones & Bender, 2002:21-22; Frazer & Maguvhe, 2008:2-3; Walton, 2012:132-133) (*cf.* 2.6.2).

Bearing in mind the barriers to learning that were cited by the participants in response to question 5 (*cf.* 4.3.5), the responses to question 7 do not seem to bear sufficient evidence of how the teachers address all the noted barriers to learning, namely concentration problems, language problems, learners coming from socially deprived backgrounds and a lack of resources. I am of the opinion that teachers might be able to identify the barriers, but lack knowledge and skills of how to deal with all the barriers to learning during teaching. Figure 4.7 displays the summary of the responses obtained in relation to how the teachers adapt the curriculum to address barriers to learning.

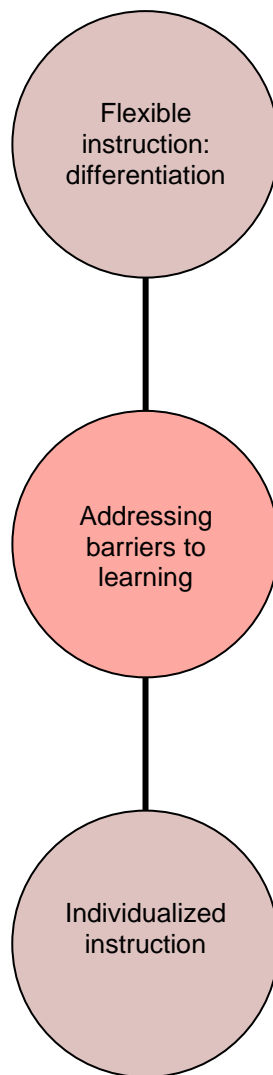


Figure 4.7: Addressing barriers to learning

4.3.8 Question 8: Which teaching methods do you use to accommodate different learning styles in an inclusive classroom? Provide practical examples and explain which methods suit which learning styles.

With this question, the teachers were probed to mention the specific teaching methods that they employ to accommodate all learners. The responses to this question would reveal whether the teachers adhere to the following policy principles set out in White Paper 6:

- providing enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners;

- changing attitudes, behaviours, teaching methodologies, curricula and the environment to meet the needs of all learners; and
- maximizing the participation of all learners (SA, 2001:16) (cf. 2.5).

I derived the following themes from the interview responses.

4.3.8.1 Theme 1: Balancing the application of different teaching methods

What emerged from the interviews is that most of the teachers apparently understood how to accommodate the different learning styles. The participants remarked as follows:

1(52): *some learners are visual so I use pictures, the projector, physical examples*

1(53): *some learners are verbal so we read stories, I explain verbally, we listen to tapes*

1(54): *kinaesthetic and tactile- some learners need to move so they sit on a sensory pillow's or a gym ball, build things.*

1(55): *I use a mixture of different teaching methods that suit the learning styles*

1(56): *you can't only teach verbal or visual methods, you must also do hands on practical lessons*

1(57): *I teach using the different methods. Most of the lessons are both visual and verbal. The kinaesthetic and tactile learners cannot be accommodated in every lesson but we do move around a lot and we often make practical examples.*

1(59): *I incorporate the four styles and I ensure that my lessons are rich in content and are varied. I teach a new concept using all of the different styles.*

2(54): *visual- I use pictures, Verbal- stories and speeches, Written- learners write in their books*

2(55): *I use visual and auditory methods. I use pictures and I read stories.*

3(59): *a variety of methods will have to be applied. Like visual and auditory methods.*

3(61): *visual style- the learner has to do practical demonstrations, use pictures; Auditory style- the teachers should read aloud, explain, repeat, discuss, use tapes; kinaesthetic- do things practically, use tactile experience, write; Tactile- learners have to feel things by touching.*

According to the Department of Education (2005b:90) (cf. 2.6.1.1), multi-level teaching, will bring a balance of the application of different teaching modes. Furthermore, this approach assumes the principles of individualisation, flexibility and inclusion for all learners regardless of their personal level of skills. Lessons must include a variety of techniques aimed at reaching learners at all levels. This *inter alia* means considering learners' learning styles when planning presentation methods. The responses of the participants provide evidence of accommodating different teaching modes during teaching. If learning styles are not addressed, teachers might fall into the trap of stereotyping or favouring some learners at the expense of others (Kruger & Adams, 2002:215) (cf. 2.4.1). The responses of the participants provide evidence that stereotyping apparently does not occur in the classrooms of the teachers who took part in the study.

4.3.8.2 Theme 2: An individualized approach to teaching

A few of the participants believed that differentiation of work and adjusting work according to the level of the learner accommodated different learning styles. The participants noted the following:

2(58): *talk to them individually*

2(60): *adjust myself according to the learner's performance*

2(62): *putting the learners in different groups and giving them different work*

2(63): *design different activities based on the same theme*

3(51): *differentiation of work sheets*

3(52): *I see the learners in the afternoon for extra lessons*

3(53): *I use differentiation in my lesson*

3(56): *I have a boy with sight problems so I let him sit in front*

The responses obtained to this question rather reflect ways in which curriculum adaptations can be made, and not how learning style needs can be addressed. Based on these responses, I argue that some teachers who took part in the research apparently do not know how to select and vary their teaching methods and strategies to address learning style needs.

4.3.8.3 Theme 3: An adaptive/flexible approach to teaching

Many of the participants indicated that in order to accommodate different learning styles an adaptive/flexible approach to teaching is required. The responses of the participants referred to the following aspects:

1(55): *I use a mixture of the different teaching methods. You can't only teach verbal or visual methods, you must also do hands on practical lessons.*

1(56): *I try to have a balance when teaching.*

1(57): *I teach using the different methods*

1(58): *I use a lot of visual and verbal aids and we do a lot of hands on practical work*

1(59): *I incorporate the four styles and I ensure that my lessons are rich in content and are varied. I teach a new concept using all the different styles.*

2(51): *differentiation of worksheets*

2(53): *I use differentiation in my lesson plan*

3(58): *I feel that learners learn differently. There are those that you give instruction they will understand. But also those who need me as an educator to talk to them individually.*

3(59): *one must be flexible and adaptable. A variety of methods will have to be applied like visual and auditory methods*

3(60): *I will adjust myself according to the learners performance*

3(61): *visual style-use pictures, auditory style- the teachers should read aloud, kinaesthetic- do things practically, tactile-learners have to feel things*

3(62): *putting the learners in different groups and giving them different work that you monitor*

3(63): *design different activities based on the same theme*

In order to teach in a flexible manner, teachers need to employ different teaching modalities such as auditory, visual and kinaesthetic modalities and vary whole-class; small group and individual instruction (Dednam, 2005:363; Nieman & Pienaar, 2006:84; Walton, 2012:125) (*cf.* 2.4.1, 2.6.4). From the responses, teachers appear to use different modalities, but are not specific about the teaching methods they actually apply. I argue, that the teachers might not be knowledgeable on the application of among others, group work, to enhance the teaching and learning in inclusive classrooms.

Figure 4.8 summarizes the responses of the teachers regarding their teaching practice to accommodate diverse learning style needs.

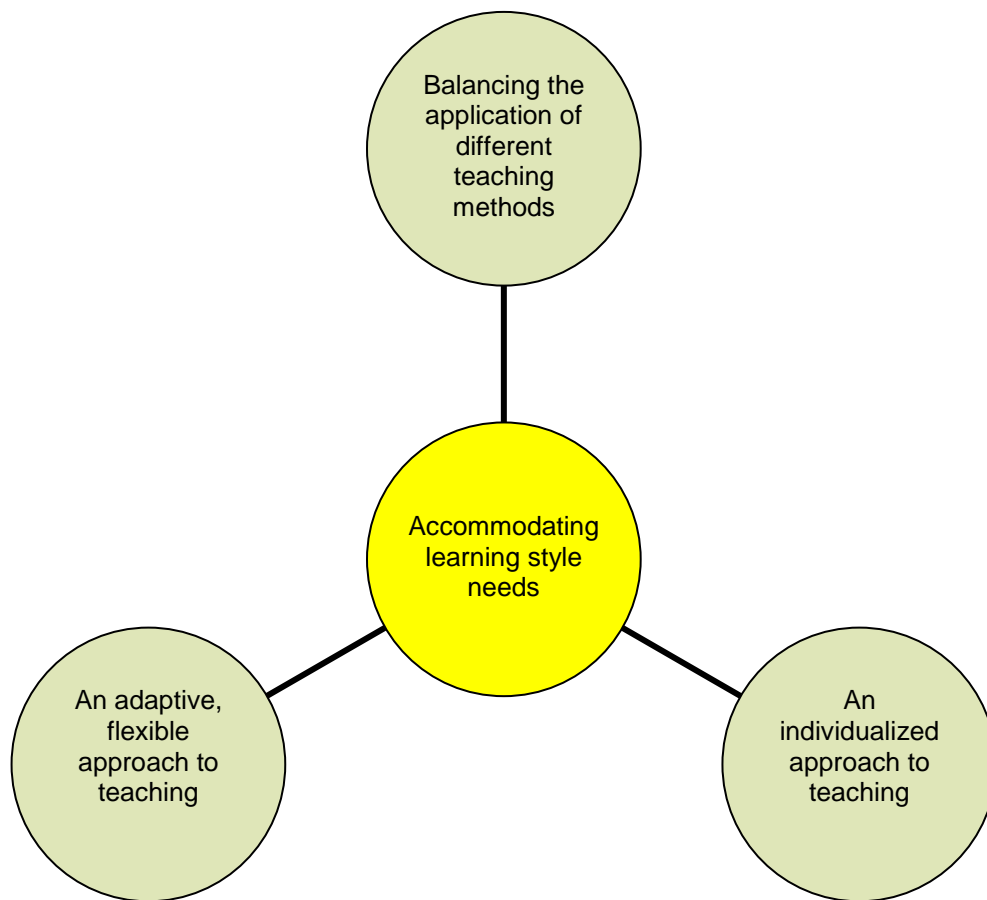


Figure 4.8: Accommodating learning style needs

4.3.9 Question 9: How do you adapt your assessment strategies to meet the needs of all learners in your class? Provide practical examples.

According to the policy on inclusive education (SA, 2002:8-10), assessment should be sensitive to the needs and abilities of all learners. The responses to this question would provide information regarding how well the teachers who took part in the study adhere to the assessment policy on inclusive education.

The following themes were extracted from the interview data.

4.3.9.1 Theme 1: Making use of alternative methods of assessment

A few of the participants adapt their assessment tasks by allowing certain learners who have difficulty with writing to be assessed verbally. In this regard, the participants responded as follows:

2(65): *I assess some of the learners verbally*

3(61): *I allow some children to answer something verbally*

I carefully conclude from the aforementioned responses that a limited number of teachers apparently uphold the policy principle of assessment that has to be multi-dimensional and varied (Department of Education, 2002:8-10) (*cf.* 2.7). The wide variety of ways in which adaptations can be made to assessment (Dednam, 2005:576; Nel *et al.*, 2012b:61) (*cf.* 2.7), were not cited by the participants.

According to the responses of the participants, I argue that teachers need to be trained and guided to adhere to the principle of assessment that should be multi-dimensional and varied in nature. It appears as if the teachers are only aware of substituting written assessment with verbal assessment as an alternative method of assessment, which affects the trustworthiness of the assessment.

4.3.9.2 Theme 2: Making adaptations to assessment

Although the participants appear to lack knowledge on a wide variety of alternative assessment methods, their responses indicated that they are aware of making adaptations to assessment to accommodate a wide variety of learner needs. They noted the following: providing more time, providing additional explanations and support, translating assessment into the home language of the learner, allowing learners to ask questions and varying the difficulty level of questions as strategies that they employ to make assessment more accessible to all learners. Each of the mentioned aspects is elucidated below.

More Time

Some of the participants adapt their assessment by giving the learners extra time to complete assessment tasks. The following responses were noted:

1(61): *they have to complete the same assessments but extra time is given*

1(62): *they are also given extra time*

1(63): *they are given extra time*

1(64): *they are given extra time*

1(65): *extra time*

3(66): *I give some learners more time*

3(68): *I also give some learners more time*

3(69): *I allow some learners to take longer to finish*

Additional explanations and support

Some of the participants adapt their assessment by explaining the assessments individually more than once to the learners who need it. The following responses support the provision of additional explanations to learners during assessment.

1(62): *the same assessments are completed but they have been given a lot of extra support*

1(63): *I often explain the assessment individually*

1(64): *they also ask questions when they get confused*

1(65): *I explain more*

1(66): *they received extra support to meet the assessment standards*

2(62): *often learners cannot read in front of the whole class so I allow them to read to me*

3(66): *I give some learners more time and I explain the work a little more*

3(69): *I allow some learners to take longer to finish and I have to assist them more with their work*

Translations into home language

One of the participants believes that a learner should be assessed in his home language, as they are not proficient in their second language:

3(70): *language is a problem as not all the learners understand the work properly. I have to translate work into their home language*

Allowing learner questions

One participant indicated that learners should be able to ask questions during an assessment to ensure that they understand what is being asked in an assessment:

1(64): *they also ask questions when they get confused*

Varying difficulty level of questions

The participants mentioned that in order for all learners to have a sense of achievement, differentiated questions and worksheets should be used. According to the responses, one can conclude that assessment tasks should comprise a certain number of low order, high order and application questions. The responses noted the following:

2(58): *I use differentiation so that all learners can achieve*

2(60): *I use differentiation*

2(63): *I give them easier questions*

2(67): *some learners have to do easier questions on the same topic*

2(68): *ask some learners easier sums*

2(70): *I give some learners different questions that are easier*

Based on the responses, I conclude that the teachers seem to adhere to many of the accommodations and adaptations that could be made to assessment as reported by the literature (Department of Education, 2002:8-10; SA, 2005b:34) (*cf.* 2.7).

It is disconcerting that nobody mentioned other ways of assessment, such as: providing expanded opportunities to improve performance, opportunities for practical assessment, enlarging fonts of typed material, giving learners with attention problems breaks during the completion of assessment tasks and the use of audiotapes for verbal instead of written assessment (SA, 2005b:34; Merckel & Van der Merwe, 2010:121-122; Nel *et al.*, 2012b:61) (*cf.* 2.7). If teachers do not provide fair assessment opportunities, they might create pedagogical barriers to learners (Kruger & Adams, 2002:215) (*cf.* 2.4.1).

In order to summarise the major trends in the data received for the ways in which teachers adapt their assessment to accommodate all learners, Figure 4.9 is provided.

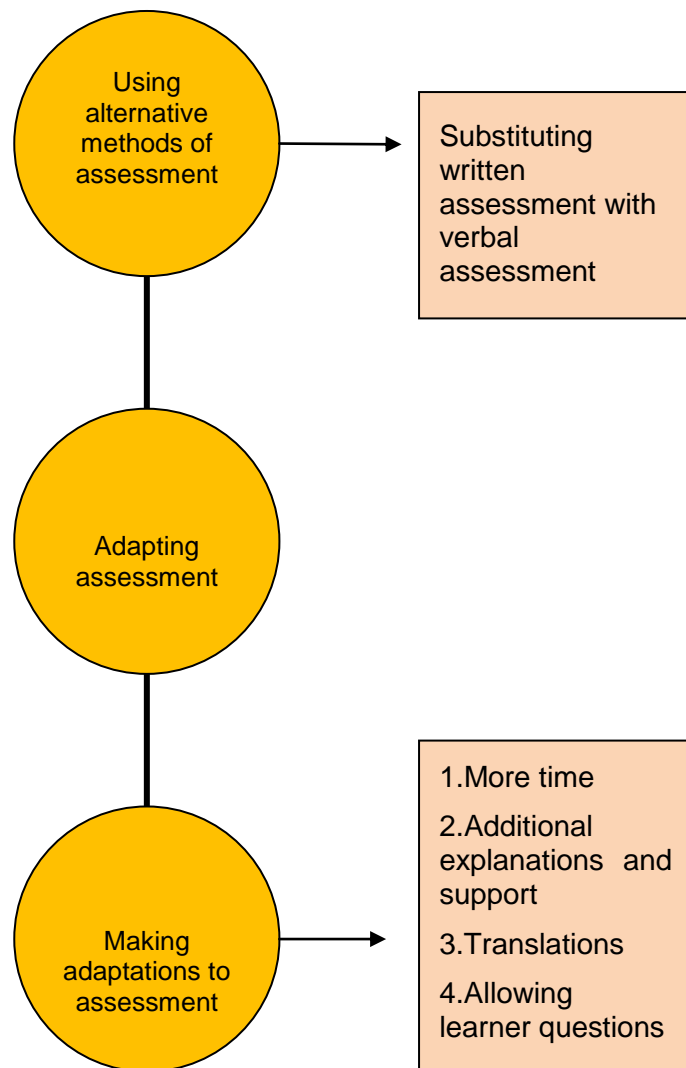


Figure 4.9: Adapting assessment

4.3.10 Question 10: What is your view on the following statement in the policy on inclusive education (White Paper 6): “*all children and youth can learn and all children and youth need support*”

The response to this question would reveal the teachers’ attitudes towards the inclusive education policy. The following themes could be identified from the responses.

4.3.10.1 Theme 1: Positive that some learners can learn and succeed with support

The general belief among all the participants about this statement is that it is true, but that some learners need more support than others do. The responses indicated the following:

1(68): *yes, some children just need more support*

1(69): *I agree but some children need more support than others*

1(70): *yes, but not all children learn the same, some need more help*

1(71): *I agree but everyone needs different levels of support*

1(72): *I agree but some learners need more support*

1(73): *I agree but some learners need additional support*

2(65): *some learners would certainly gain more by learning in more specialised and focused environments. All learners need support.*

2(66): *I believe that all learners can achieve*

2(67): *all learners can learn but they can't be in the same kind of school always*

2(68): *I agree but some children need more support*

2(69): *very true*

2(70): *absolutely, even children without a disability need support*

3(73): *I agree but it is not always easy*

3(74): *yes, definitely but we need more resources and training*

3(75): *yes, but it is difficult to support everyone with such big numbers in our class*

3(76): *I agree but we need to be trained properly in inclusive education*

3(77): *I think that all children can learn but some take a lot longer and need a lot more help than others*

3(78): *I agree with the statement but it is not easy in our school. We don't have the facilities or training to help all the children*

All the teachers support the statement captured in the inclusive education policy where it is stated that all children and youths can learn and that they can succeed (SA, 2001:16) (*cf.* 2.5). It is apparent from the responses, that the positive attitude of the participants could be regarded as a key force in the successful implementation of inclusive education policy initiatives (Avrimidis *et al.*, 2000:210; Daane *et al.*, 2000:353; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001:304-310) (*cf.* 2.9). The responses also signal support for the viewpoints of Babane (2002:13) and Mtshali (2005:1) that teachers should plan responsive lessons that differentiate instruction for all students. It is however important to note that a number of challenges cited by the participants, such as inadequate training, and a lack of proper facilities and resources could obstruct the implementation of inclusive education and impact negatively on the positive attitude and morale of the teachers (Hay *et al.*, 2001:214; Ghesquiere *et al.*, 2009:51; Johnstone, 2010:41) (*cf.* 2.8).

4.3.10.2 Theme 2: Conditions necessary to provide support to all learners

Many of the participants felt that the present conditions in their schools do not cater for the implementation of inclusive education. In this regard, the participants mentioned the following:

2(65): *some learners would certainly gain more by learning in more specialised and focused environments*

2(67): *all learners can learn but they can't be in the same kind of school always*

3(74): *yes, definitely but we need more resources and training*

3(75): *yes, but it is difficult to support everyone with such big numbers in our class*

3(76): *I agree but we need to be trained properly in inclusive education*

3(78): *I agree with the statement but it is not easy in our school. We don't have the facilities or training to help all the children*

The responses confirm what the Department of Education (1997:38), Moêes (2002:42), Uys (2005:211-236), Engelbrecht *et al.* (2006:127), Bosma *et al.* (2007:440) Eloff en Kgwete (2007:351-355), Du Plessis (2007:35) and Korkmaz (2011:182-183) (*cf.* 2.8, 2.9) claim, namely that successful inclusive education depends among others resources to address diverse learning needs. These resources include staff, curriculum and teaching procedures. Furthermore, the authors cite adequate training for the implementation of inclusive education as an important prerequisite for the effective implementation of inclusive education. Furthermore, the authors mention reduced learner numbers in order to give effective individual attention to learners, as another important prerequisite for the effective implementation of inclusive education.

Figure 4.10 summarizes the teachers' perceptions as to whether all learners can learn and need support to learn.

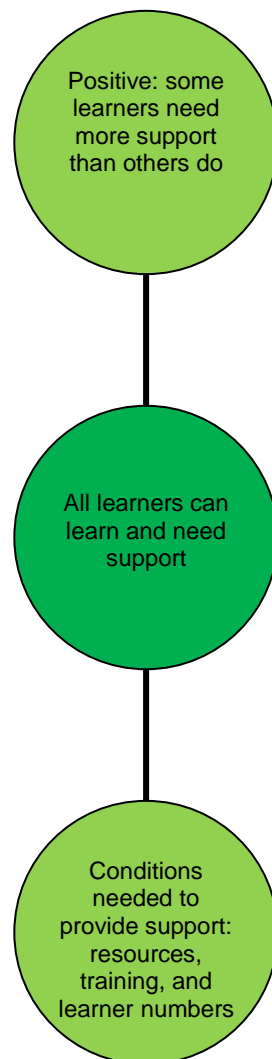


Figure 4.10: Teacher perceptions regarding whether all learners can learn and need support

4.3.11 Question 11: How do you determine the strengths and weaknesses of learners? What do you do to advance their strengths or address their weaknesses? Provide practical examples.

In response to this question, it would be possible to understand whether the teachers are implementing the policy ideal of empowering learners by developing their individual strengths (SA, 2001:16) (*cf.* 2.4). The following themes were derived from the responses of the participants.

4.3.11.1 Theme 1: Determine strengths and weaknesses through assessment, tests and observation

The participants stated that they use assessment, tests and observing class work in order to determine the strengths and weaknesses of learners. They mentioned the following:

1(75): *baseline assessment*

1(76): *baseline assessment, continuous assessment*

1(77): *assess verbally*

1(78): *baseline assessment, learner's continuously assessed,*

1(79): *baseline assessment*

1(80): *baseline assessment*

2(72): *Baseline assessment in the beginning of each year,*

2(73): *I determine this with tests*

2(74): *I use tests*

2(75): *tests and written work*

3(80): *with assessment*

3(81): *assessing their work*

3(82): *easier to see the weaknesses than the strengths*

3(83): *test the children, see it when you do classwork*

3(85): *know the children*

In support of the Department of Education (2002:8-10) (*cf.* 2.7), teachers apparently utilize assessment to identify barriers to learning. In addition, their responses also support the use of baseline assessment to establish strengths and weaknesses, which is noted as an important way to establish the nature

and extent of barriers and the current level of learner performance (Department of Education, 2005b:90) (*cf.* 2.7).

4.3.11.2 Theme 2: Ability and mixed ability grouping

One of the approaches used to address the strengths and weaknesses of learners was that of ability and mixed ability grouping of learners. The participants noted the following:

3(80): *I put the learners in groups according to their abilities*

3(81): *I also put learners in groups according to what they can do*

3(83): *I put the children in groups according to their abilities*

3(84): *I group the learners with a learner who knows what to do*

3(85): *It is easy when you know the children. Then you can group them as some groups need more assistance from the teachers*

Lazarus *et al.* (2001:45-68) (*cf.* 2.5) argue that social integration in a school context *inter alia* implies the facilitation of opportunities for learners and other members of the learning community to learn and work together in a cooperative environment and to view differences among learners as a rich resource to benefit all (*cf.* 2.5). Based on the responses one can conclude that the teachers apparently support the provision of opportunities for social learning. The application of multi-level teaching also promotes the use of ability groups (Walton, 2012:126-139) (*cf.* 2.6.1.1) as appropriate in inclusive classrooms. According to the responses some of the teachers seemingly apply multi-level teaching by using mixed and ability grouping where peers who have mastered the content teach others (Walton, 2012: 126-139) (*cf.* 2.6.1.1). Mixed ability grouping regards differences among learners as a rich source to benefit all (Lazarus *et al.*, 2001:45-68; Swart & Pettipher, 2005:3) (*cf.* 2.5).

4.3.11.3 Theme 3: Strategies to address weaknesses

In terms of the strategies that the participants use to address the weaknesses of learners, they reported the following: re-teaching, revision, repetition, additional work, enrichment, individual work, systematic work, differentiation and adapting assessment strategies to advance strengths. In support of the aforementioned, the responses revealed the following:

1(75): *we re-teach certain things and we give extension work to the bright children*

1(76): *you have to re-teach certain concepts and you have to differentiate work cards*

1(77): *I do a lot of repetition and I try and make learning a positive experience*

1(78): *some children need additional support and other children need to be challenged more. I take small groups to the carpet to do extra work*

1(79): *work must be re-taught in a different way*

1(80): *The learners who are strong are given extension work. I do a lot of revision for the weak learners*

2(72): *additional worksheets are given to learners to reinforce knowledge. Enrichment worksheets are given to the above average learners. Differentiation is implemented*

2(74): *one on one work*

2(75): *I help the learners at their desks and explain again. I praise learners. I use differentiation*

2(76): *by additional work*

2(77): *work with them step by step. You work with them individually*

3(82): *easier to see the weaknesses than the strengths, help the weak learners more*

According to Sapon-Shevin (2007:185, 189), Frazer and Maguvhe (2008:2-3) and Walton (2012:126, 131, 133, 135) (*cf.* 2.6.1.1) differentiated teaching and assessment that includes multi-level teaching, scaffolding teaching and learning and individualized instruction are necessary to meet the diverse strengths and weaknesses of all learners in the class. The responses bear evidence that some of the teachers who took part in the study seem to advance learner strengths and weaknesses through differentiation, scaffolding and individualized instruction. Based on the limited responses, I carefully conclude that not all of the teachers who took part in the study appear to be knowledgeable on the application of differentiation, scaffolding and individualized instruction in inclusive classrooms.

The summary provided in Figure 4.11, presents the essential facts related to the participants' responses regarding the measures that they take to identify and address learner strengths and weaknesses.

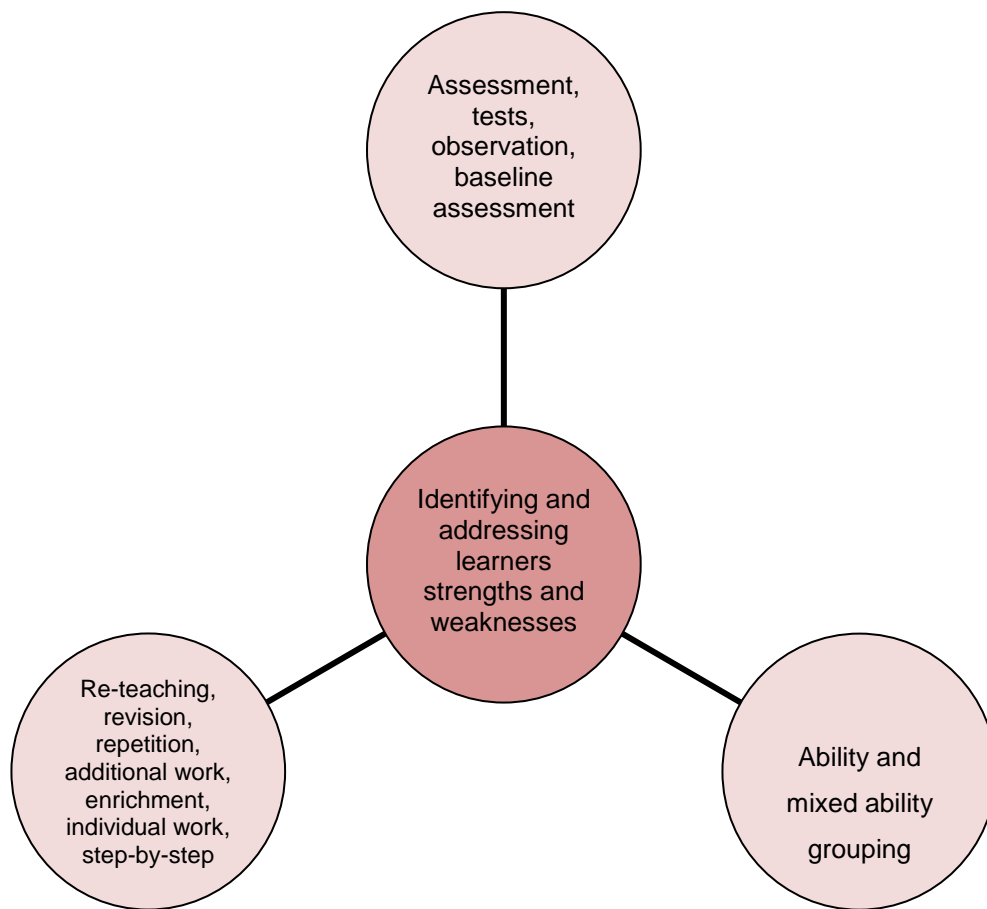


Figure 4.11: Identifying and addressing learners' strengths and weaknesses

4.3.12 Question 12: How do you enable learners to get critically involved in the learning process? (to give own opinions, own viewpoints). Provide practical examples.

In response to this question, it would be possible to understand whether the teachers are implementing the policy ideal of enabling learners to participate critically in the process of learning (SA, 2001:16) (*cf.* 2.5). The following themes were derived from the responses of the participants.

4.3.12.1 Theme 1: Activities to promote critical involvement

The participants indicated that they use the following activities to promote critical involvement of the learners during teaching and learning: solving real life problems, speeches, debates, projects, creative writing, group work, drama, completing work sheets, role-play, demonstrations, answering questions. The participants mentioned the following:

1(82): *they must work out the problem or find the solution. We solve things practically*

1(83): *the learners must be actively involved at all times. Everyone gets a chance to answer questions or to demonstrate something.*

1(85): *learners must be actively involved. They must answer questions and pose problems*

1(86): *Learners can't just sit and listen, they must contribute to a lesson*

1(87): *My lessons involve the children a lot. We do a lot of role-plays, speeches, group work, practical examples and so on*

2(79): *real life problems are the method used to introduce new concepts. Learners need to discuss and solve these problems in order to gain and understand new knowledge*

2(80): *we have open debates*

2(82): *they have to do speeches, projects and work out problems in groups*

2(83): *I use creative writing, they must write poems on their opinions*

According to the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment of Ireland (2009) (cf. 2.6.4), active learning is the principal learning and teaching approach recommended for teaching in inclusive classrooms. It requires learners to participate actively in their learning in a wide variety of ways, such as small-group activities, play activities, reflecting on content, making, constructing and design activities, giving a personal opinion, analysing,

questioning, negotiating or summarising learning content (Mahaye & Jacobs, 2007:175-176; Monyai, 2006:125-129) (cf. 2.6.4). Active learning increases the possibility of internalising what has been explored and being able to apply what has been learned. Active learning contributes significantly to fostering self-confidence, self-discipline and self-control in the learner (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment of Ireland, 2009) (cf. 2.6.4). Although the responses did not include all of the aforementioned activities, evidence is if active learning is indeed reality in the classrooms that took part in the study.

4.3.12.2 Theme 2: Strategies to promote critical involvement

There was consensus among the research participants that all learners should be involved in learning. The responses indicate the following activities according to which the teachers promoted learner involvement:

1(83): *Everyone gets a chance to answer questions and to demonstrate something*

1(84): *I try to make them feel safe and they don't get moaned at if they make a mistake*

1(85): *They must answer questions and pose problems*

2(82): *They have to do speeches, projects and work out problems in groups*

2(83): *I use creative writing, they must write poems on their feelings*

3(88): *I allow learners to answer questions and to show me examples*

3(89): *The learners must answer questions and write on the board*

3(90): *The learners have to read aloud, answer questions, complete group work activities.*

3(91): *I allow the learners to answer questions, give their opinion, ask a question*

3(92): *Learners must complete written or verbal tasks, do group work and drama*

3(93): *The learners must ask and answer questions. They have to complete worksheets.*

Linked to the responses of the teachers, I carefully conclude that the teachers employ a variety of ways to nurture learners' critical involvement during teaching and learning. Learners are allowed to explore, work in groups, express their own ideas, question, draw conclusions and make sense of learning for themselves. Furthermore, the aforementioned activities underpin the fact that a classroom climate of trust and respect is apparently created to assure learners that their opinions are valued (Dednam, 2005:363; National Council for Curriculum and Assessment of Ireland, 2009) (*cf.* 2.6.4). It is clear that the activities utilized by the teachers could promote the development and practise of language skills, interpersonal and social skills, higher-order thinking skills such as asking relevant questions and drawing conclusions (Pienaar, 2006:159-173; National Council for Curriculum and Assessment of Ireland, 2009) (*cf.* 2.6.4).

In summary, Figure 4.12 depicts the ways in which the teachers who took part in the study promote the critical involvement of learners during teaching and learning

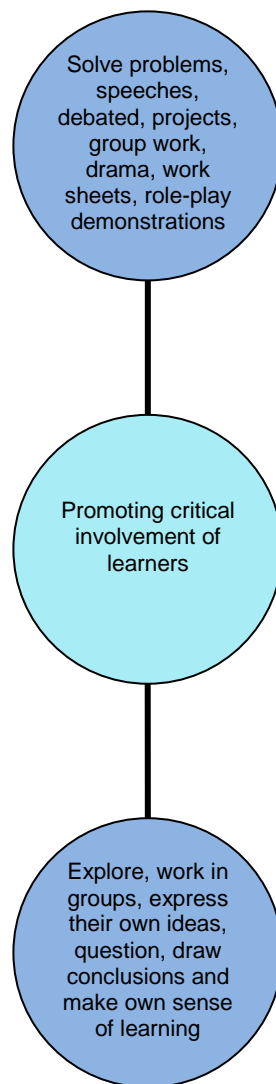


Figure 4.12: Promoting the critical involvement of learners

4.3.13 Question 13: What do you do to accommodate different cultural, language and gender groups in your class? Provide practical examples.

In response to this question, it would be possible to understand whether the teachers are implementing the policy ideal of acknowledging and respecting differences in learners related to gender, ethnicity and language (SA, 2001:16) (*cf.* 2.5).

The following themes emanated from the interview data.

4.3.13.1 Theme 1: Avoiding discrimination during teaching

The responses mainly expressed the view that teaching and learning should represent entire spectrum of cultures, that tolerance should be practiced, bias, labelling and favouritism should be avoided and a variety of presentation methods should be utilized during teaching. The following responses were noted:

1(89): *I am very tolerant and I try to use media and visual aids that represent diverse country*

1(90): *explain in a different way*

1(91): *use pictures or names of one race in my work, we also learn a lot about different cultures*

1(92): *we learn about each other and learn to respect each other*

1(93): *our work reflects the diversity in our country*

1(94): *I am very tolerant of all the different learners. I choose learning material that reflects our diverse society*

2(88): *I am sensitive towards everyone and I understand their beliefs*

2(89): *I understand the different beliefs and I am sensitive towards them*

2(90): *we learn about different cultures and we talk about their views*

2(91): *I am very tolerant about the different cultures and beliefs*

3(95): *I have to teach in three different languages*

3(96): *I am very tolerant of different cultures. I speak in more than one language*

3(97): *I treat all the children equally and I try to speak different languages*

3(98): *I welcome all the children in my class. I am not bias in any way. I often have to teach in more than one language*

3(99): *all the children are equal in my class, I don't favour certain children*

3(100): *I tolerate all the children and I try and teach in more than one language. I use pictures and visual aids when doing lessons to help*

Lazarus *et al.* (2001:45-68) (*cf.* 2.5) assert that inclusive education calls for schools to transform themselves to accommodate the diverse needs of all learners. Assumptions, beliefs, values, norms, relationships, behaviours and practices related to teaching, learning and assessment need to be transformed (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2006:122), and values such as mutual acceptance, respect for diversity, a sense of belonging and social justice accepted. Accepting a new set of moral values will lead to a social integration, which implies a commitment to respect all people; combatting prejudice and discrimination; acknowledging the rights of all learners to have access to equal and quality education. The responses of the teachers support the aforementioned transformation process. The teachers appear to support and promote learning that is not aimed at labelling and stigmatizing learners based on their gender, culture and language (Kruger & Adams (2002:215) (*cf.* 2.4.1). What is missing from the responses of the participants, is evidence of how diversity is celebrated in the classrooms that took part in the research (Swart & Pettipher, 2005:3) (*cf.* 2.5), which could point to the fact that teachers need to be assisted in fostering collective belonging among all learners (Swart & Pettipher, 2005:3) (*cf.* 2.5).

Figure 4.13 displays the major trends that emanated from the data in terms of how differences in gender, culture and language are accommodated in their classrooms.

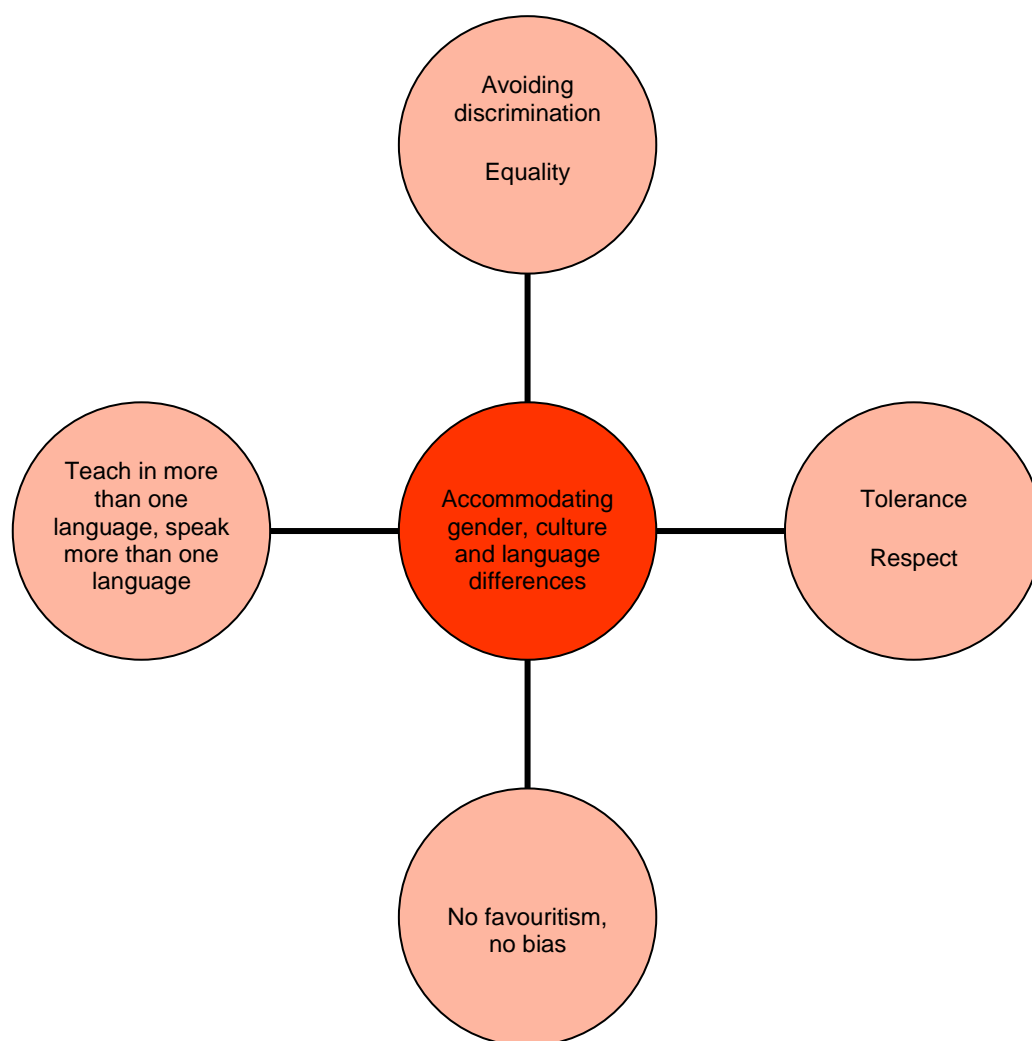


Figure 4.13: Accommodating gender, culture and language differences

4.3.14 Question 14: In what ways are the homes and communities of learners involved in the teaching and learning of learners? Provide practical examples.

In response to this question, it would be possible to understand whether the teachers are implementing the policy ideal of acknowledging that learning also occurs in the home and the community (SA, 2001:16) (*cf.* 2.5).

The interview responses showed different levels of parental and community involvement in the schools of the participants, which are explored in the themes below.

4.3.14.1 Theme 1: Parental involvement related to learning support

The following responses indicated that a few parents provide support to learners regarding their schoolwork. The following responses were noted:

2(95): they do homework, help with research for themes and help with speeches

2(96): the parents help with homework and tasks

2(97): parents help the children with homework

In support of the literature the responses support the notion that parents are important role players in effective educational change, and inclusive schools encourage parental participation through family support services, (Alant & Harty, 2005:84; Vosloo, 2005:12; Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2006:126; Sasser, 2009) (*cf.* 2.8). Hemmingson and Borell (2000:162-170) and Mukherjee *et al.*, (2001:23) (*cf.* 2.9) concur that where there is understanding and support from parents, teachers and friends, inclusion is successful. The education of parents on inclusion contributes to the success of inclusion (Vosloo, 2005:12). It is disconcerting that only a few participants noted parental involvement, and I conclude that parental involvement in academic schoolwork should be advanced in all the schools that took part in the research.

4.3.14.2 Theme 2: Parental involvement related to extra-curricular activities

Many of the responses noted the help of parents help with extra-curricular activities at the school:

1(96): we have a lot of help from parents, they run our puzzle library, cover books, we have class moms, and they run charities. Our community helps by listening to reading.

1(97): They help with outreach programmes

1(98): We are never short of volunteers and a lot of parents help at our outreach projects

1(99): *We have great support from the parents; fundraisers*

1(100): *The parents are very involved. We have mums that make costumes for plays, Dads help set up sound and build props.*

1(101): *The parents help with outings and they come in and do talks*

In support of Prinsloo (2005:459) and Sasser (2009) (*cf.* 2.8), the parental involvement at the schools who took part in the study does not always refer to involvement in academic learning. There are many ways for a learner's parent to be involved at school, namely include helping out in the office, serving as homeroom mother or father, being a member in booster organizations or serving as field trip chaperones. Parents can also be involved in governance, decision-making and advocacy as a school governing body member, or act as community collaborators who establish and maintain community business and organizational support for the school.

Although assistance with extra-curricular activities is important to assist teachers in dealing with a heavy workload, I argue that assistance in the classroom and dealing with barriers to learning is just as important to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning, as parents are the learners' first and most important teachers (Sasser, 2009) (*cf.* 2.8). Parents can provide meaningful learning activities at home for their children, prepare, support and enhance what is taught at school (Department of Education, 2005b:12; Vosloo, 2005:12; Sasser, 2009) (*cf.* 2.8).

4.3.14.3 Theme 3: Limited involvement by parents

Some participants reported that the parents at their schools are involved to a limited extent.

2(93): *it is my opinion that there is minimal support from homes and learners are left on their own*

2(94): *there is not a lot of help from the parents*

2(98): *not all parents help at home*

3(102): *the homes are not very involved as both parents work. The children are looked after by a relative or friend because their parents passed away.*

3(103): *there is very little parental involvement.*

3(105): *I don't often see parents as they normally both work.*

3(106): *the parents are too busy to come to school*

The aforementioned responses could be linked to the possible influence of societal barriers that can differ from community to community and call for support to learners coming from backgrounds characterized by severe poverty, abuse, crime and violence (Hugo, 2006:46-47). In response to question 5 (*cf.* 4.3.5), the participants reported that many of the learners come from poor socio-economic backgrounds.

Montaluta and Rukhadze (2008:352) (*cf.* 2.8) note that deprived environmental conditions could lead to low expectations about children's level of education as well as a parental involvement and support in education. The aforementioned argument highlights an area of concern that the participants who noted limited involvement by parents will have to address in their respective schools.

According to the Department of Education (2005b:12) (*cf.* 2.8), the lack of parental involvement is a barrier to inclusive education. Parents, who are not involved, are often not always adequately informed about their children's problems or progress, and deprived of the opportunity to participate in their children's growth and development.

According to Mukherjee et al. (2001:23), Hemmingson and Borell (2002:57-63), Alant and Harty (2005:84) and Sasser (2009) (*cf.* 2.8), parental involvement in children's education is crucial, and a key to learners achieving well in school. Parental involvement can range from providing meaningful learning experiences at home to volunteering to help with school activities (Vosloo, 2005:12; Sasser, 2009) (*cf.* 2.8).

4.3.14.4 Theme 4: Limited community involvement: church, police, St Peters school, relatives and friends

According to the responses of the participants, there is also limited community involvement at some of the schools that relate to involvement by the church, police, relatives friends and other schools, as evidenced in the responses below:

3(102): *the children are looked after by a relative or friends as their parents passed away. We have a soup kitchen that is run by a church and we get help from St Peters every Tuesday in our classes.*

3(103): *we get help from the church and St Peters.*

3(105): *we get help from the church as they have a soup kitchen at our school. St Peters also donates stationary and helps us teach on a Tuesday.*

3(106): *the church helps us feed the poor children. We get donations from the wealthy schools like St Peters.*

3(107): *we have a good soup kitchen that is run by the church and we get help from St Peters on Tuesdays. The police also help if we need them for something.*

Despite poor socio-economic backgrounds, Downing *et al.* (2007:16-30) (*cf.* 2.8) argue that it is up to the community and school to ensure that inclusive education is successful. Inclusive education is a highly individualized approach that requires teamwork (regardless of location) with teachers, therapists, community members, family members and peers and takes advantage of the natural resources that exist.

Based on the limited evidence for community involvement in the schools that took part in the research, it appears that schools will have to think of efforts to mobilise their communities in becoming involved in the implementation of inclusive education.

In order to summarise the major trends in the responses of the participants regarding parental and community involvement in the implementation of inclusive education, Figure 4.14 is provided.

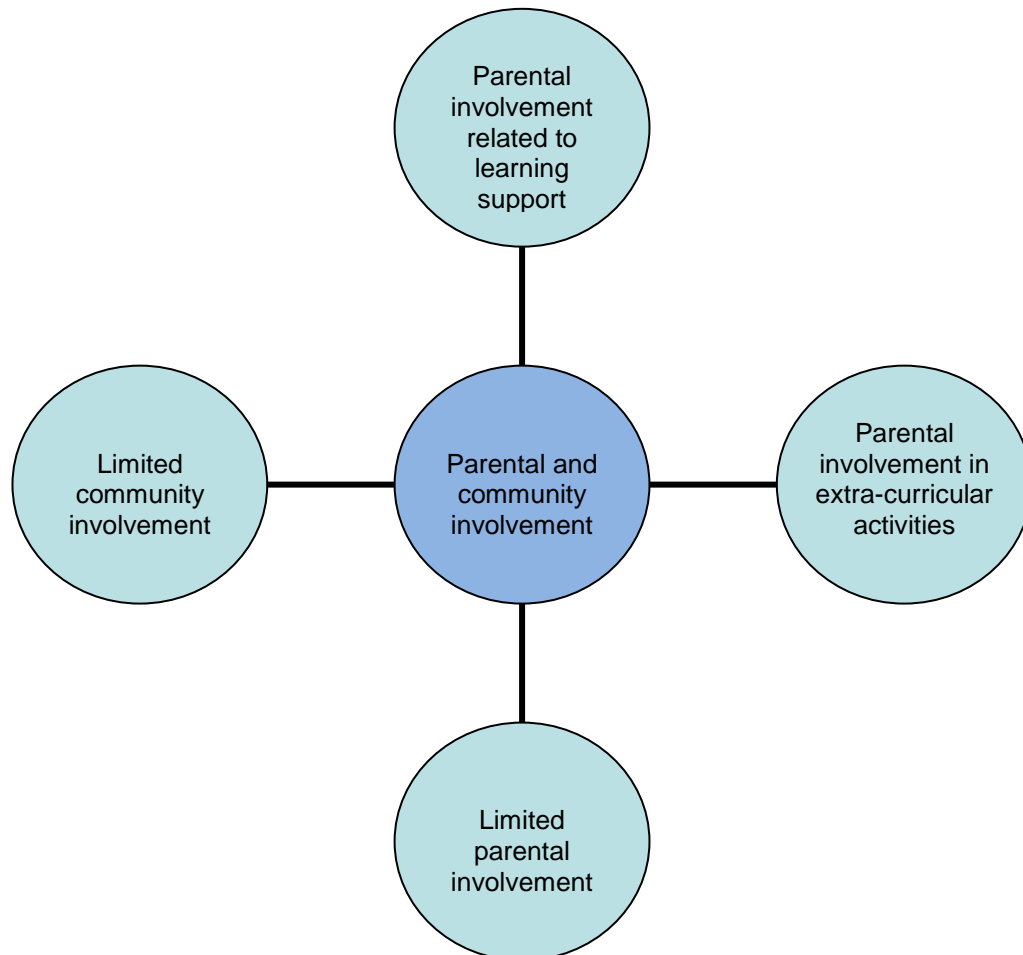


Figure 4.14: Parental and community involvement

4.3.15 Question 15: What do you find the most challenging and the most rewarding about teaching in inclusive classrooms?

With this question, I hoped to explore the participants' feelings about teaching in inclusive classrooms. The following themes were identified from the responses of the participants.

4.3.15.1 Theme 1: Systemic barriers pose challenges: small venues and lack of resources

The participants found the following aspects the most challenging about inclusive education, namely overcrowded classes and lack of resources as reported in the responses below.

1(107): *our classes are too small*

3(111): *there are many challenges like, lack of resources and facilities*

3(112): *the most challenging is the lack of resources*

There are many challenges for implementing inclusive education successfully in South Africa. Lethoko *et al.* (2001:311), Engelbrecht (2006:253), Beyers and Hay (2007:396), Johnstone (2010:40), Mogare *et al.* (2010:58-59) and Korkmaz (2011:182-183) (*cf.* 2.7, 2.8) support the responses of the participants by highlighting the following challenges:

- inadequate provision of facilities, infrastructure and assistive devices;
- insufficient teaching and learning resource material; and
- the ratio of teachers to learners which is not conducive to effective learning poses a challenge to the effective implementation of inclusive education. There are far too many learners in most classrooms.

4.3.15.2 Theme 2: Pedagogical barriers pose challenges: time, large numbers, different needs and abilities

The participants noted that a lack of time, large learner numbers and the variety of needs and abilities among learners that have to be addressed, are challenging. The responses indicated the following:

1(103): *the most challenging is lack of time*

1(104): *difficult to have such mixed abilities in one class, it is not always easy to accommodate everyone's needs*

- 1(105): *the most challenging is having such extremes in one class*
- 1(106): *language is a big challenge*
- 1(107): *we have a lot of children*
- 1(108): *the most challenging thing is to make sure that everyone is included*
- 2(100): *practical implementation and time*
- 2(102): *some learners need a lot of attention*
- 2(103): *learners with special needs do not get the attention they need*
- 2(105): *challenging to re-teach over and over*
- 3(109): *the large number of children in our class is the biggest challenge*
- 3(110): *big classes and languages is the most challenging.*
- 3(111): *there are many challenges like, language, big numbers and lack of time.*
- 3(113): *the most challenging is the number of learners in our classes*
- 3(114): *the different languages of the learners and big numbers are very challenging*

Differentiating instruction appears to be a challenge for the teachers who took part in the research. This problem is compounded by a lack of time. The literature reveal that teachers need more time to plan for the adaptation of the curriculum to accommodate a variety of barriers to learning (Hay *et al.*, 2001:214; Swart *et al.*, 2002:175-189; Akintola & Quinlan, 2003:31; Ghesquiere *et al.*, 2002:51; Engelbrecht, 2006:253; Johnstone, 2010:40) (*cf.* 2.8). Furthermore, reduced learner numbers would guarantee more effective individual attention to learners, and severe barriers to learning need special instruction and cannot be provided in a regular classroom (Eloff & Kgwete, 2007:351-355; Mogare *et al.*, 2010:58-59; Korkmaz, 2011:182-183) (*cf.* 2.9).

To avoid pedagogical barriers, teachers should plan responsive lessons that differentiate instruction for all learners from the outset (Broderick *et al.*, 2004:194; Walton, 2012:119) (*cf.* 2.6.1). The responses could also indicate that the teachers require additional knowledge and skills to implement inclusive education successfully, and that they might lack knowledge and skills regarding teaching methods and assessment practices to accommodate learners with diverse learning needs (Hay *et al.*, 2001:214; Akintola & Quinlan, 2003:31; Ghesquiere *et al.*, 2002:51; Engelbrecht, 2006:253; Florian & Rouse, 2009:594; Johnstone, 2010:40) (*cf.* 2.8).

4.3.15.3 Theme 3: Making a difference in the life of a child

The interviews showed that the most rewarding part of inclusive education was watching a child smile, helping a child, seeing a child suddenly grasp a concept and when a child feels that he is capable, as reported in the responses below:

1(103): *seeing a child succeed*

1(104): *I love it when a child feels that he is capable*

1(105): *it is rewarding when you see children help each other*

1(106): *I love it when children come to school with a smile*

1(107): *I love it when you see a child progress*

1(108): *it is great when a child suddenly grasps a concept*

2(100): *to witness the success*

2(101): *when a child suddenly understands*

2(102): *learners succeed at something*

2(103): *help them solve problems*

2(104): *every day is very rewarding*

2(105): *it is rewarding when learners understand the work*

3(109): *watching children smile at school*

3(110): *when a child is happy in class*

3(111): *when a child learns something new*

3(112): *the children are happy and feel safe at school*

3(113): *when a child succeeds at something in class*

3(114): *when you help a learner*

In spite of the numerous challenges mentioned earlier by the participants, Kleiners *et al.* (2004:28-34) (*cf.* 2.7) argue that inclusive education has a range of benefits that bring along success and happiness for all learners. It is possible that the happiness could emanate from the fact that the children are not sent to special schools. They therefore get the opportunity, despite their barriers to learning, to mix with peers from whom they can learn new social and real life skills, and to develop friendships.

In summary, the responses regarding the most challenging and rewarding aspects of inclusive education from the participants' point of view are summarized in Figure 4.15.

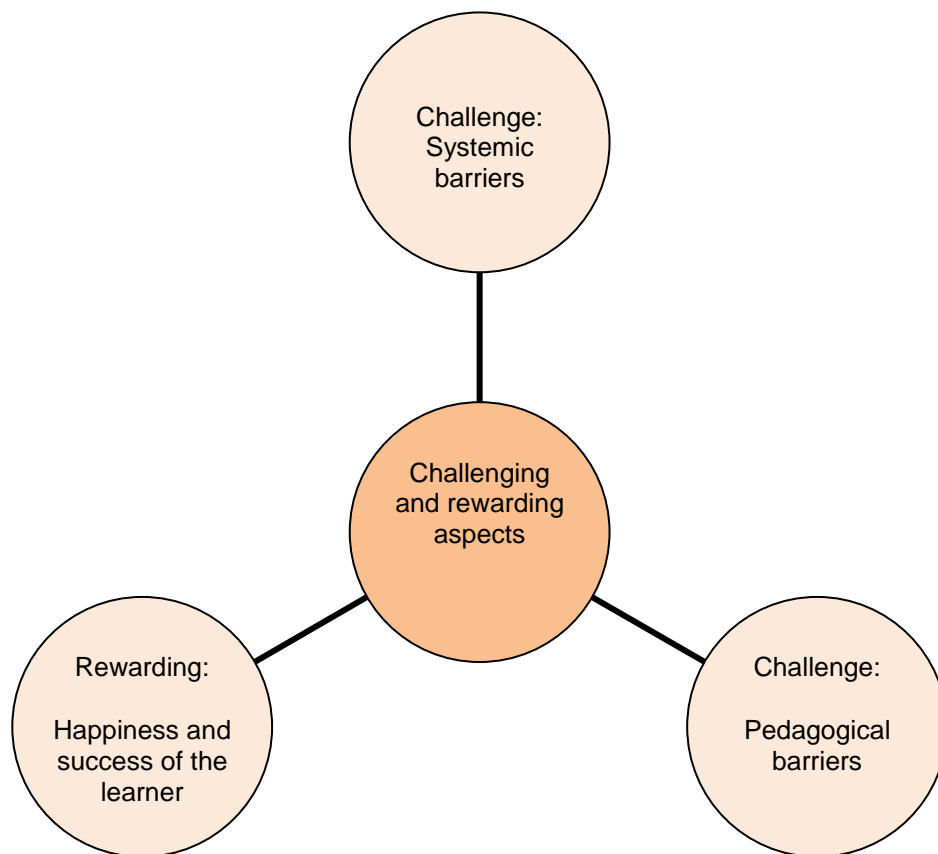


Figure 4.15: The most challenging and rewarding aspects of inclusive education

Based on the analysis of the interview data, I construct the following composite to reflect on whether the data indicated that the inclusive education policy principles and initiatives are implemented effectively in the classrooms that took part in the research.

4.4 COMPOSITE

Based on the data, I conclude that the teachers who took part in the study are not negative towards or reject the inclusive education policy principles. On the contrary, they appear to exert themselves to implement the policy principles as well as they can, in spite of the number of challenges that

obstruct the effective implementation of the inclusive education policy initiatives. However, the implementation of the policy seems to be superficial as it was clear from the responses that the teachers require comprehensive knowledge regarding all the possible ways according to which differentiation, multi-level teaching, active learning and individualized instruction could be presented. In addition, it also seems reasonable to assume that the teachers who took part in the study require comprehensive knowledge regarding the adaptation of assessment task.

The field notes that I gathered during the interviews did not indicate that the participants were negative about the implementation of inclusive education. The participants were also willing to share their experiences and opinions with me.

Table 4.5 below, summarizes the essence of the research findings related to how well the policy principles of inclusive education become a reality in the classrooms that took part in the research.

Table 4.5: Policy principles versus implementation realities

Policy principles		Implementation realities
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acknowledging that all children and youths can learn and are in need of support 2. Accepting and respecting the fact that all learners are different in some way and have different learning needs which are valued equally and are an ordinary part of our human experience 3. Enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners 4. Acknowledging and respecting differences in learners, whether due to age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disabilities, HIV or other infectious diseases 5. Acknowledging that learning also occurs at home and in the community, within formal and informal settings 6. Changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methods, curricula and environments to meet the needs of all learners 7. Maximizing participation of all learners in the culture and curricula of educational institutions and uncovering and minimizing barriers to learning 8. Empowering learners by developing their individual strengths and enabling them to participate critically in the process of learning. 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The teachers are positive that all learners can learn and succeed with additional support. Some learners require more support than others do 2. Teachers acknowledge the fact that learners have different needs, abilities and experience different barriers to learning 3. Teachers put in efforts to provide flexible and individualized instruction and make adaptations to their teaching methods and approaches to assessment to meet the needs of a variety of learners 4. Teachers try to avoid discrimination, bias, labelling and favouritism during teaching in order to respect and be tolerant towards all learners 5. Parental and community involvement are regarded as important by the teachers, but the reality indicates that both parental and community involvement need to be enhanced 6. Teachers provide various activities and opportunities to allow learners to become critically involved during teaching and learning 7. Teachers determine learners' strengths and weaknesses and employ activities to advance the strengths and weaknesses 8. Teachers cited numerous challenges that obstruct the achievement of the inclusive education policy principles: inadequate training, lack of resources and facilities, large learner numbers, lack of time to plan, lack of parental involvement

4.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter focused on the analysis and interpretation of the data that was collected by means of focus group interviews. The major tentative finding that emanates from my research is that the teachers who took part in the study appear to be positive and supportive of the inclusive education policy, but there appears to be a gap between inclusive education policy and the effective implementation of all the policy initiatives. The gap between policy and its effective implementation could be contributed to the number of challenges in terms of inadequate training, lack of time to implement inclusive education, large learner numbers and a wide variety of barriers to attend to, a lack of resources and adequate infrastructure and facilities, that were cited by the participants.

The following chapter, Chapter 5, concludes the study with a summary, findings and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This study was conducted with the purpose of exploring how well the policy principles of inclusive education become a reality in classrooms. It was important that the literature review and the data collected by means of the focus group interviews contributed to answering the problem question on which the study was based, and assisted the researcher to achieve the overall aim and objectives of the study. The chapter provides information regarding the following:

- An overview of the study
- Findings from the literature review
- Findings from the empirical research
- Findings in relation to the aims of the study
- Recommendations
- Limitations of the study
- Suggestions for further research
- Contribution of the study

5.2 AN OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The overview of the study intends to provide a brief summary of the gist of the preceding chapters of the study.

5.2.1 Chapter 1

The purpose of this chapter was to orientate the reader regarding the aim and objectives of the study and the empirical research design utilized to collect data in order to answer the research questions.

The main aim of the study, focused on exploring how well the policy principles of inclusive education become a reality in classrooms. Framed within an interpretivist research paradigm (*cf.* 1.6.2.1), a qualitative research design which utilized a phenomenological research strategy to collect data by means of focus group interviews, was employed (*cf.* 1.6.2.3, 1.6.2.4). The research was conducted with 18 purposively selected teachers from the Johannesburg South District (D8) of the Gauteng Education Department, and the data obtained from the focus group interviews were content analysed to identify themes within the data.

5.2.2 Chapter 2

This chapter focused specifically on the literature review, which provided insight into the inclusive education policy, and what teaching in inclusive classrooms entail.

The chapter provides a historical background and overview of the development of inclusive education internationally and nationally (*cf.* 2.2.1, 2.2.2). The literature revealed that inclusive education focuses attention on a paradigm shift to remove obstacles or barriers that pose a threat to learning (Dyson, 2001:27; Swart & Pettipher, 2005:34).

Inclusive education moves away from the medical discourse that regards disability as not remediable to a social rights discourse that emphasizes that all learners have the right to be educated together, regardless of the barriers to learning they experience (Green, 2001:12; Naicker, 2001:13, Dunbar-Krige & Van der Merwe, 2010:164) (*cf.* 2.2.2.1, 2.2.2.4).

The barriers to learning that can impede learning were explored, and comprise pedagogic, medical, socio-economic and systemic barriers (SA,

2001:8, Jones & Bender, 2002:83; Hugo, 2006:48; Nel *et al.*, 2012a:15) (*cf.* 2.4.1-2.4.4).

The principles of inclusive education as found in the policy on inclusive education, White Paper 6, were identified. In essence the policy initiatives centre on acknowledging that all children can learn and need individual support, which implies a change towards differentiated teaching and assessment approaches to suit all learner needs (SA, 2001:16) (*cf.* 2.5).

Teaching and learning in inclusive classrooms require that teachers apply the principles of differentiation, active learning, multi-level teaching, scaffolded learning and individualized instruction (Monyai, 2006:125; Dyson & Howes, 2007:156, Mahaye & Jacobs, 2007:175-176, Sapon-Shevin, 2007:185-189; Frazer & Maguvhe, 2008:3; Walton, 2012:119-139) (*cf.* 2.6).

Assessment in inclusive classrooms promote the principle of varied, alternative and adaptive methods of assessment (Department of Education, 2002:8-10; Dednam, 2005:376; Nel *et al.*, 2012b:61) (*cf.* 2.7).

A number of challenges were noted that create obstacles in the way of successful implementation of inclusive education. These challenges *inter alia* refer to teacher-learner ratio, lack of knowledge, skills and training to implement inclusive education, inadequate resources and facilities, a lack of parental support and a lack of time to adapt the curriculum to accommodate the wide variety of barriers to learning that learners experience (Lethoko *et al.*, 2001:311; Engelbrecht, 2006:253; Beyers & Hay, 2007:396; Montaluta & Rukhadze, 2008:352) (*cf.* 2.8).

Finally, the chapter explored ways in which teachers can be assisting to deal with inclusive education more effectively. The following issues were mentioned: training, support to assist teachers with the adaptations to the curriculum and guiding teachers to obtain greater flexibility in their methods of teaching and assessment (Prinsloo, 2001:344-348; Swart *et al.*, 2002:175-189, Bosma *et al.*, 2007:440) (*cf.* 2.9)

5.2.3 Chapter 3

This chapter elaborated on and motivated the choice of the empirical research design used to investigate the research problem. Qualitative phenomenological research was employed as a deeper understanding of the participants' viewpoints regarding inclusive education and the implementation of inclusive education policy initiatives was the main aim of the study (*cf.* 3.4.2).

Focus group interviews were conducted with 18 willing and purposively selected participants from three conveniently selected primary schools in the Johannesburg South District of the Gauteng Department of Education. The focus groups comprised a heterogeneous grouping of the 18 participants from the convenient selected schools (*cf.* 3.4.4.2, 3.5).

Criteria for trustworthiness were adhered to and involved guaranteeing credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of the research findings (*cf.* 3.6). The data analysis involved a deductive and an inductive content analysis that culminated in visual presentations that summarized the gist of the research findings (*cf.* 3.7, Figures 4.1-4.15, Table 4.5).

The research complied with ethical principles and took cognizance of ethical issues in the research problem, ethical issues in the research questions, ethical issues in the data collection, ethical issues in the data analysis and ethical issues in writing and disseminating the research (*cf.* 3.8).

5.2.4 Chapter 4

The data obtained from the literature and interviews with the participants were analysed and interpreted in this chapter. I first compiled verbatim transcripts of the interview data after which the data was coded. Similar codes were grouped together under themes, which highlight the reality of the implementation of the inclusive education policy principles.

The major tentative finding that emanates from my research is that the teachers apparently have positive attitudes towards the implementation of

inclusive education, and do not reject the policy (cf. 4.3.2-4.3.10). To a certain extent, the teachers adapt teaching, learning and assessment by applying differentiation and individualized instruction (cf. 4.3.7-4.3.9). However, the research findings highlight that there indeed seems to be a gap between the inclusive education policy principles and the extent to which the principles are implemented effectively. The number of challenges cited by the participants that *inter alia* include inadequate training, lack of time to implement inclusive education, large learner numbers, a wide variety of barriers to attend to, a lack of resources and adequate infrastructure and facilities could possibly hamper the effective implementation of the policy initiatives (cf. 4.3.3, 4.3.5, 4.3.6).

5.3 FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review was conducted to clarify the principles of the inclusive education policy, and to highlight skills and knowledge required from teachers during teaching, learning and assessment to be effective with the implementation of the policy.

White Paper 6: Special Needs Education, building an inclusive education and training system (SA, 2001:1), provides a framework for systemic change for the development of inclusive education. The philosophy and concept of inclusive education in South African acknowledges the democratic values of equality and human rights and the recognition of diversity and acceptance of the basic rights of all South African children (SA, 2001:1) (cf. 2.2)

Inclusive education supports a social rights discourse that moves away from the medical discourse that regards disability as not remediable and emphasizes that all learners have the right to be educated together, regardless of the barriers to learning they experience (Green, 2001:12; Naicker, 2001:13, Dunbar-Krige & Van der Merwe, 2010:164) (cf. 2.2.2.1, 2.1.2.4).

The barriers to learning that teachers have to accommodate during teaching and learning were explored, and comprise pedagogic, medical, socio-economic and systemic barriers (SA, 2001:8, Jones & Bender, 2002:208;

Landsberg, 2005:335; Storbeck, 2005:352; Hugo, 2006:48; Dunbar-Krige & Van der Merwe, 2010:179; Nel *et al.*, 2012a:15) (*cf.* 2.4). Pedagogical barriers are created if fair assessment procedures, flexible curricula and linking teaching to the preferred learning style of the learner are not accommodated during teaching and learning (*cf.* 2.4.1). Medical barriers that require special attention during teaching and learning are sensory disabilities, physical disabilities and cognitive disabilities (*cf.* 2.4.2). Socio-economic barriers require that learners coming from poor backgrounds characterized by poverty, abuse, crime and violence, need additional support to ensure that their learning is not hampered by their negative background circumstances (*cf.* 2.4.3). Finally, avoiding systemic barriers, require adequate facilities at school and adequate teaching and learning support material to implement inclusive education effectively (SA, 2001:8, Jones & Bender, 2002:208; Hugo, 2006:48; Nel *et al.*, 2012a:15) (*cf.* 2.4).

The literature review revealed a number of teaching, learning and assessment principles that that teachers have to be knowledgeable on to implement inclusive education successfully and to accommodate the diverse needs of all learners. These principles refer to differentiation, multi-level teaching, active learning, scaffolded learning and individualized instruction and group work (Jones & Bender, 2002:21-22; Dednam, 2005:363; Monyai, 2006:125-126; Pienaar, 2006:171; Dyson & Howes, 2007:156, Mahaye & Jacobs, 2007:175-176; Sapon-Shevin, 2007:185-189; Frazer & Maguvhe, 2008:3; Arends, 2009:466; Walton, 2012:119-139) (*cf.* 2.6.1-2.6.4). Assessment in inclusive classrooms should be guided by the utilization of varied, alternative and adaptive methods of assessment (Department of Education, 2002:8-10; Dednam, 2005:363; Merckel & Van der Merwe, 2010:121-122; Nel *et al.*, 2012b:61) (*cf.* 2.7).

The present implementation of inclusive education is characterized by a number of challenges that pose threats to the success of inclusive education. A number of challenges were noted that create obstacles in the way of successful implementation of inclusive education. These challenges *inter alia* refer to teacher-learner ratio, lack of knowledge, skills and training among

teachers to implement inclusive education, inadequate resources and facilities, training of teachers to provide them with adequate knowledge and skills to adapt their methods of teaching and assessment, and a lack of parental support and a lack of time to adapt the curriculum to accommodate the wide variety of barriers to learning that learners experience (Lethoko *et al.*, 2001:311; Prinsloo, 2001:344-348; Swart *et al.*, 2002:175-189; Engelbrecht, 2006:253; Beyers & Hay, 2007:396; Bosma *et al.*, 2007:440; Montaluta & Rukhadze, 2008:352) (*cf.* 2.8).

5.4 FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The following findings were formulated based on the interview data. I link the findings to the literature in order to indicate how the findings of the research supports what is revealed in the literature.

- What emerged from the data is that all the teachers appeared to have a good understanding of what inclusive education implies. Their responses referred to inclusive education as enabling education, accommodating different needs and abilities, education that is free from discrimination and education that accommodates different barriers to learning (*cf.* 4.3.1). The responses of the teachers show some insight into the knowledge and practice of inclusive education as contained in the policy on inclusive education (SA, 2001:16) (*cf.* 2.5).
- The interviews revealed that inclusive education could work if the barriers to learning are not too severe, if teachers are trained properly, if adequate resources and facilities are available, and if learner numbers in a classroom could be reduced (*cf.* 4.3.2) (Hay *et al.*, 2001:214; Prinsloo, 2001:344-348; Swart *et al.*, 2002:175-185; Beyers & Hay, 2007:397; Johnstone, 2011:41) (*cf.* 2.8).
- The interview data revealed that not all the teachers who took part in the study have been trained adequately to implement inclusive education (*cf.* 4.3.3) (Avrimidis *et al.*, 2000:228; Prinsloo, 2001:344-348; Engelbrecht, 2006:253-306; Beyers & Hay, 2007:396; Wildeman & Nomdo, 2007:9) (*cf.* 1.1, 2.9).

- Not all of the participants had access to the White Paper 6 or any other documents, which they could consult to obtain information regarding inclusive education (*cf.* 4.3.4). Some of the participants worked according to a school policy on inclusive education, but the data revealed that there were schools who had no policies in place for guiding the implementation of inclusive education (*cf.* 4.3.4)
- The data revealed that the participants have to address a variety of barriers to learning in their classrooms (*cf.* 4.3.5). Pedagogical barriers that relate to language, a lack of teacher training to accommodate the needs of all learners effectively, were cited (Jones & Bender, 2002:223; Nel *et al.*, 2012a:15) (*cf.* 2.4.1). The systemic barriers that were noted include a lack of resources and overcrowded classrooms (Wideman & Nomdo, 2007:9; Ngcobo & Muthukrishna, 2011:340) (*cf.* 2.4.4). Poverty and environments characterized by violence and crime comprise some of the socio-economic barriers that learners bring along to the teaching and learning situation (Peterson & Hittie, 2003:101; Dunbar-Krige & Van der Merwe, 2010:179) (*cf.* 2.4.3). A number of learners also experience medical barriers such as sensory problems, hearing problems, concentration difficulties, attention problems and emotional problems (Landsberg, 2005:325; Storbeck, 2005:352; Hugo, 2006:48) (*cf.* 2.4.2). In spite of the numerous barriers mentioned, the teachers do not appear to be paralyzed by the diverse barriers (Mogare *et al.*, 2010:60), but demonstrated the ability to adjust their teaching practices to accommodate the diverse barriers. However, as suggested by Mogare *et al.* (2010:60) the competences of the teachers who took part in the study need to be strengthened at workshop training sessions.
- The interviews revealed that most schools do not have adequate resources to implement inclusive education optimally. The following resources are lacking in most schools: special equipment, facilities, teaching and learning resources and classrooms to accommodate large learner numbers (*cf.* 4.3.6) (Lethoko *et al.*, 2001:311; Ghesquiere *et al.*, 2002:51; Swart *et al.*, 2002:175-189) (*cf.* 2.4.4, 2.8).

- Two of the schools participants have access to various therapists on site but this is at an extra cost to the parents. The third school has access to social workers and community helpers but this does not help with the implementation of inclusive education (*cf.* 4.3.6). It is therefore clear from the data that support services are needed at the schools who took part in the research.
- The data did not reveal that the teachers had comprehensive knowledge on how to adapt the curriculum and effectively apply the principles of differentiation, multi-level teaching, active learning, scaffolding learning and providing individualized instruction (*cf.* 4.3.7) (Avrimidis *et al.*, 2000:227; Swart *et al.*, 2000:175) (*cf.* 1.1). It is evident that there might still be complexities regarding the application of teaching strategies to address diverse learner needs in the classrooms that took part in the research.
- What emerged from the interviews is that most of the teachers understood how to accommodate the different learning styles by providing visual, verbal and kinaesthetic learning (*cf.* 4.3.8) (Jones & Bender, 2002:200-223; Nieman & Pienaar, 2006:84; Net *et al.*, 2012a:15) (*cf.* 2.4.1).
- Some of the participants adapt their assessment by giving the learners extra time to complete assessment tasks, additional explanations, and vary the difficulty level of the assessment tasks (*cf.* 4.3.9). A few of the participants adapt their assessments by allowing certain learners who have difficulty with writing to be assessed verbally (*cf.* 4.3.9). The data however reveal that more comprehensive knowledge on adapting assessment tasks for diverse learners seem necessary.
- The participants were in accord that it is possible that all children and youths can learn and all children and youths need support, but added that some learners need more support than others (*cf.* 4.3.10).
- The participants stated that assessment, tests and monitoring class work needed to be done in order to determine the strengths and weaknesses of

learners (*cf.* 4.3.11). In order to advance the strengths or address the weaknesses the teachers suggested that differentiated tasks should be given, work must be re-taught en repeated, additional enrichment work should be given to learners, and attention paid to individual, systematic work (*cf.* 4.3.11) (Walton, 2012:135) (*cf.* 2.6.3).

- Active learning and learner involvement during learning was supported strongly by the participants (Monyai, 2006:126; Pienaar, 2006:171) (*cf.* 2.6.4). Learners should among others, work out problems practically, answer questions, take part in debates, drama and role-play demonstrate, what they know, ask and answer questions and give their own opinion on work (*cf.* 4.3.12).
- What emerged from the interviews was that all learners must be treated equally; teachers should avoid bias, labelling and favouritism and be tolerant towards different cultures, use a variety of presentation modes and media and visual aids that represent our diverse country (*cf.* 4.3.13) (Naicker, 2001:14; Moêwes. 2002:34) (*cf.* 2.2.2.4).
- The interview responses showed different levels of parental and community involvement in the schools that took part in the study. The involvement related to learner support with academic work, support with extra-curricular activities, limited parental involvement and limited community involvement (*cf.* 4.3.14) (Department of Education, 2005b:12; Prinsloo, 2005:459) (*cf.* 2.8).
- The interviews showed that the most rewarding part of inclusive education was observing children who are happy, watching a child smile, helping a child, seeing a child suddenly grasp a concept and having children in class who feel that they are capable. The most challenging aspects noted by the participants are the small classes to accommodate the large learner numbers, a lack of resources and facilities to implement inclusive education successfully and accommodating the wide variety of learner needs and abilities (*cf.* 4.3.15).

In summary, I argue that the findings revealed that in support of Johnstone's research (2005), the implementation of the inclusive education policy in the primary school classrooms that took part in the research, appears to be on a continuum between superficial and deep implementation. Further provisions are needed in the schools that took part in the study, to cater for learners with complex needs. In addition, the lack of comprehensive knowledge and skills appear to be predictors of ineffective policy implementation. I also argue that the teachers who took part in the study might lack a clear interpretation of the policy, as many of them reported limited access to the policy documents (*cf.* 4.3.4).

5.5 FINDINGS IN RELATION TO THE AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main aim of this study was to explore how the principles of inclusive education policy are implemented in primary school classrooms in South Africa.

In order to achieve the overall aim, a number of objectives were identified at the onset of the study (*cf.* 1.3). The researcher endeavours to revisit the aim and objectives of the study in order to ascertain whether they have been achieved.

Objective 1: establishing the policy principles of inclusive education

This objective was achieved through the literature review.

Inclusive education is explained by the inclusive education policy, White Paper 6 (SA, 2001:16) (*cf.* 2.4), aiming at achieving the following:

- increasing learner participation;
- reducing learners exclusion from cultures, curricula and involvement in communities;
- acknowledging that all children can learn and are in need of support;

- putting enabling education structures in place to meet the needs of all learners;
- acknowledging and respecting differences in learners;
- acknowledging that learning also occurs at home and in the community;
- adapting teaching methodologies and curricula to meet the needs of all learners;
- maximizing learner participation during teaching; and
- developing learners' strengths and minimizing their weaknesses.

Objective 2: gauging the understanding of primary school teachers in South Africa regarding the inclusive education policy

This objective was achieved by means of the empirical study.

The interview data revealed that the participants seemingly had a good understanding of what inclusive education policy in essence stipulate. The themes extracted from the data gauged their understanding as enabling education for all learners, accommodating different needs and abilities in mainstream education and accommodating different barriers to learning in mainstream classrooms (*cf.* 4.3.1). Their responses also indicated that inclusive education implies flexible instruction (*cf.* 4.3.7), applying different teaching methods (*cf.* 4.3.8), making use of alternative methods of assessment (*cf.* 4.3.9), promoting involvement by all learners during teaching and learning (*cf.* 4.3.12) and avoiding discrimination during teaching, learning and assessment (*cf.* 4.3.13).

Objective 3: exploring how the principles of the inclusive education policy are implemented in primary school classrooms in South Africa

This objective was achieved by means of the empirical study.

The participants have to address a variety of barriers to learning in their classrooms. The data revealed that although the teachers were applying

principles of differentiated teaching and assessment, they seem to lack comprehensive and deep knowledge on the different strategies to apply to apply the principles of differentiation, multi-level teaching, scaffolded learning and individualized instruction effectively (*cf.* 4.3.7). Noteworthy is the fact that the teachers apparently understood how to accommodate the visual, verbal and kinaesthetic learning styles during teaching (*cf.* 4.3.8). The data also revealed some evidence that the teachers are adapting their assessment tasks to allow for differentiation during assessment (*cf.* 4.3.9). However, as with the teaching and learning principles, comprehensive knowledge on ways to adapt assessment seems to be lacking among the teachers who took part in the study. The participants allow learners to become critically involved during teaching and learning, and provide some opportunities for learners to construct their own meaning during teaching and learning (*cf.* 4.3.12).

Objective 4: exploring the perceptions of primary school teachers in South Africa on which inclusive education policy ideal they find the most challenging to implement

This objective was achieved by means of the empirical study.

The interview data revealed that not all the teachers who took part in the study have been trained adequately to implement inclusive education (*cf.* 4.3.3). Furthermore, the following resources that contribute to the effective implementation of inclusive education seems to be lacking in most schools: special equipment, facilities, teaching and learning resources and classrooms to accommodate large learner numbers (*cf.* 4.3.6). Some of the schools require human resources in the form of therapists and social workers to support the implementation of inclusive education (*cf.* 4.3.6). It is disturbing that some of the participants pointed out that they do not have access to the White Paper 6 or any other support material, which they could consult to obtain information regarding inclusive education (*cf.* 4.3.4). A number of responses confirmed that there were schools that apparently had no policies in place for guiding the implementation of inclusive education (*cf.* 4.3.4).

Objective 5: exploring the perceptions of primary school teachers in South Africa on which inclusive education policy ideal they find the most rewarding to implement

The interviews showed that the most rewarding part of inclusive education was observing children who are happy, watching a child smile, helping a child, seeing a child suddenly grasp a concept and having children in class who feel that they are capable (*cf.* 4.3.15).

Objective 6: suggesting ways in which inclusive education policy principles can be implemented to minimize the gap between policy and implementation in primary school classrooms in South Africa

This objective was achieved by providing recommendations on how to improve the implementation of inclusive education based on the empirical research and literature study in section 5.6.

Because all of the abovementioned objectives were achieved, I conclude that I achieved the overall aim with the study. Based on the findings of my study, I argue that there are signs and evidence that the principles of the inclusive education policy are indeed implemented to some extent in the classrooms that took part in the research. However, it appears that deep implementation of the policy principles has not yet been achieved.

Linked to the findings of the research, and in line with the literature review, I make the following recommendations to improve the implementation of the inclusive education policy initiatives.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to minimize the gap between policy initiatives and the implementation of the initiatives in the schools that took part in the research, the following recommendations based on challenges that emanated from the data are made below.

Recommendation 1: Teacher training

The present study raises questions for transformation in schools and teacher professional development. The teachers who took part in the study highlighted the importance of proper training as one of the prerequisites for the effective implementation of inclusive education (*cf.* 4.3.2, 4.3.3). In line with the viewpoints of Swart *et al.* (2002:175-189), Bosma *et al.* (2007:440) and Ngcobo and Muthukrishna (2011:360) (*cf.* 2.8), I also suggest that teacher training curricula at pre-service level place greater emphasis on preparing teachers with knowledge and skills to teach and assess in inclusive classrooms successfully. Furthermore, workshops organised by the Department of Education in collaboration with Universities are necessary to address the gaps in the knowledge and skills of in-service teachers to enable them to enhance their teaching and assessment practices.

In line with the suggestions made by Ngcobo and Muthukrishna (2011:360), I argue that it seems necessary to revitalise the competence of teachers, to restore their confidence in their own abilities, rejuvenate the enthusiasm, proficiency and professional development of teachers, to re-inspire teachers and enhance their job satisfaction. In support of Johnstone (2005:45), it might be rewarding to teachers if their efforts to implement inclusive education effectively are rewarded by the Department of Education in some way.

Recommendation 2: Comprehensive knowledge regarding the application of teaching, learning and assessment principles applicable to inclusive education

The data revealed that the teachers had a good understanding of what teaching, learning and assessment in inclusive classrooms imply. However, the responses lacked depth and detail regarding a variety of ways to implement differentiation; multi-level teaching, scaffolded learning, active learning and individualized instruction (*cf.* 4.3.5, 4.3.7, 4.3.8, 4.3.9, 4.3.11, 4.3.12, 3.3.13). Based on the data obtained, it seems to be necessary to revitalize the competence of teachers.

In line with recommendation 1, the curricula of in-service teacher training should focus on including modules that emphasise the practical application of teaching, learning and assessment principles applicable to inclusive education. Teachers should be made aware of the variety of strategies that comprise differentiated teaching, learning and assessment, multi-level teaching, scaffolded learning and individualized instruction as cited by the Department of Education (2002:8-10), Department of Education (2005b:90), Dyson and Howes (2009:156), Frazer and Maguvhe (2008:3), Nel *et al.* (2012b:61) and Walton (2012:137) (*cf.* 2.6.1, 2.6.2, 2.6.3, 2.6.4, 2.7). In-service teacher workshops should also be conducted to enable the teachers to extend their current repertoire of teaching, learning and assessment strategies. In spite of the numerous barriers mentioned the teachers (*cf.* 4.3.6) they do not appear to be paralyzed by the diverse barriers (Mogare *et al.*, 2010:60), but demonstrated the ability to adjust their teaching practices to accommodate the diverse barriers. However, as suggested by Mogare *et al.* (2010:60) the competences of the teachers who took part in the study need to be strengthened.

Recommendation 3: Access to policy and supportive resource material

Many of the participants reported that they had no access to the inclusive education policy, White Paper 6. In addition to the aforementioned, it also appears as if there is a need for supportive resource material to assist teachers with the implementation of inclusive education (*cf.* 4.3.4). It is disturbing to experience that there are schools who apparently do not consult the inclusive education policy due to its unavailability. The Education Department should be made aware of this problem, and they need to conduct a survey to identify the schools that are in need of policy documents, and provide the schools with the necessary documents. Schools are encouraged to liaise with universities to acquire additional resource material for teachers to update and enrich their knowledge on inclusive education.

Recommendation: 4: Formulation of school policies to guide the implementation of inclusive education

A number of the research participants noted that their schools do not have any policies in place to guide the implementation of inclusive education (*cf.* 4.3.4). It is important that all schools set up a policy to guide the implementation in the particular school, as the contexts of schools differ with regard to the barriers to learning that learners can experience. Schools are again encouraged to liaise with the Education Law departments at universities to assist them in drawing up a policy that would guide the implementation of teaching, learning and assessment.

Recommendation 5: Human and physical resources and infrastructure

The interviews revealed that most schools do not have adequate resources to implement inclusive education optimally, and that special equipment, facilities, teaching and learning resources and classrooms to accommodate large learner numbers can hamper the successful implementation of inclusive education (*cf.* 4.3.6). Only a few of participants have access to various therapists on site but this is at an extra cost to the parents. Some of the participants have access to social workers and community helpers but they do not help with the implementation of inclusive education in the classroom (*cf.* 4.3.6).

In light of the lacking human and physical resources and infrastructure to implement inclusive education effectively, I support Lethoko *et al.* (2001:311) and Beyers and Hay (2007:396, 398) (*cf.* 2.8, 2.9) and suggest the following.

Provincial education departments need to review the support provided to schools, and consider the appointment of at least one support staff member per school who can assist teachers in planning and managing the implementation of inclusive education. In addition, the appointment of a classroom assistant for each teacher seems to be an attractive solution to the time constraints teachers experience in planning for the adaptations to the curriculum (Hemmingson & Borell (2002:57-63) (*cf.* 2.8).

Processes need to be facilitated at Departmental level to pool resources (human and physical) from special and regular education settings, to enable a more equal distribution of resources to support schools who lack resources (Department of Education, 1997:38; Moŵes, 2002:42; Uys, 2005:211-236; Du Plessis, 2007:35) (*cf.* 2.8). In this regard, the expertise of teachers at special schools could also be utilised (Wood & Williams in Olivier & Pienaar, 2009:205; Mogare *et al.*, 2010:60, Nel *et al.*, 2011:86), to assist teachers in dealing with the variety of learning barriers in their classrooms.

Funding should be considered to enable the availability of facilities, equipment and resources, and to extend the infrastructure of schools to accommodate large learner numbers in a classroom (Hemmingson & Borell, 2002:58) and to extend the capacity of district based support teams (*cf.* 2.8).

Recommendation 6: Parental and community involvement

The interview responses showed different levels of parental and community involvement in the schools that took part in the study. The involvement related to learner support with academic work, support with extra-curricular activities, limited parental involvement and limited community involvement (*cf.* 4.3.14). As the responses revealed that there was a lack of parental involvement at some schools, I suggest that schools consult the departmental documentation (Department of Education, 2005a,b,c) (*cf.* 2.9) in order to obtain guidelines according to which parental and community involvement in the implementation of inclusive education can be promoted.

The aforementioned recommendations emphasise that stronger partnerships with parents and communities should be established, to obtain their involvement in supporting teachers with the implementation of inclusive education initiatives. Schools could undertake surveys on their own to establish the availability of social workers, psychologists and therapists in their community who would be willing to render voluntary support to learners who experience severe barriers to learning.

Recommendation 7: Teaching methods and strategies to address a wide variety of learning style needs

According to the interview responses (*cf.* 4.8.3.2) teachers do not employ a wide variety of teaching methods and strategies to accommodate all learning style needs during teaching. It is suggested that a strong emphasis on the use of Interactive, Direct and Indirect Teaching Methods by means of group work, discussions, worksheet completion, problem-solving, case studies, role-plays and lecturer presentations are balanced during teaching, in order to accommodate learners who prefer learning by doing, sensory experiences, reflecting and thinking.

Although previous researchers have already made many of the aforementioned recommendations, it appears that they remain documentation on paper and that the need to implement the recommendations should be strongly emphasised to the Department of Education.

As with any research, I identified a number of limitations, which I report in the following section.

5.7 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

Bearing the under mentioned limitations in mind, the researcher acknowledges that only tentative conclusions regarding the implementation of inclusive education policy principles in the primary school classrooms that took part in the research, could be made. The following limitations are identified.

- The sample was limited to only three primary schools in one District of the Gauteng Department of Education. Different results might be achieved if the research involves other Districts and secondary schools.
- Only female teachers were interviewed. If male participants are involved in the study, different views regarding the implementation of inclusive education might have been obtained.
- I used convenient and purposive sampling and acknowledge that bias might have been influenced the selection of the research participants. The findings of my study can therefore not be generalised.

- As a novice researcher, I acknowledge that I could have made better use of follow-up questions during the interview to obtain richer data. For example, I could have probed as to why schools do not have any policies to guide the implementation of inclusive education, and requested the participants to explain exactly what they meant with differentiation by asking for practical examples. In addition, I would have been valuable to enquire from teachers how they determine the amount of extra time given to learners to complete tasks. The additional information might have altered my interpretation of the interview data and contributed to strengthening the argument that a gap exists between policy intentions and its implementations.
- I did not address the timeframe for the implementation in order to establish long term aims that had to be addressed.
- Including an additional data collection instrument, such as observations, would have enabled me to obtain first-hand information regarding the actual implementation of the inclusive education policy initiatives in practice.

5.8 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In order to extend the current research, I make the following suggestions for further research.

- The current research could be duplicated by including randomly selected male and female participants from all the provinces in South Africa at primary and secondary schools to obtain a more comprehensive database on which conclusions regarding the implementation of the inclusive education policy can be based. Such a comprehensive study will enable a researcher to conclude whether there is really a gap between the inclusive education policy and its implementation. By including more schools from different provinces would enable a researcher to generalize findings.
- More research should be done and compared to similar research in foreign countries that have implemented inclusive education. A comparison could

provide insight into similarities and differences regarding the gap between education policy and its implementation in different countries

- As learners and parents occupy an important role in the inclusive education policy, research could be conducted with them to explore their opinions regarding the implementation of inclusive education. The data obtained would indicate to what extent the policy principles and initiatives related to learners and parents are achieved successfully.
- Research could be conducted to scrutinize the teacher training programmes at various Higher Education Institutions with the aim to determine if the programmes prepare teachers to effectively deal with the implementation of inclusive education.
- Research regarding the type of infrastructure most effective for meeting diverse learner needs compared to the types of resources, learning and teaching material and assistive devices presently lacking in schools that hamper the implementation of inclusive education, could be conducted.

5.9 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

The present study is not new, but its findings link to and extend current research on inclusive education, which focused on:

- understanding the perceptions of teachers regarding inclusive education (Kim, 2006; Geduld, 2009; Mphunngoa, 2009; Gous, 2010; Korkmaz, 2011; Urdang, 2011) (*cf.* 1.1);
- obtain information regarding the implementation practices of inclusive education at school level (Ghesquiere *et al.*, 2002; Engelbrecht, 2006, Kujwana, 2007; Molope, 2008; Zulu, 2008; Boloka, 2010; Zulu, 2010) (*cf.* 1.1);
- exploring challenges affecting the implementation of inclusive education (Hlongwane 2007; Rakholile, 2007; Matela, 2008; Ladbrook, 2009; Stofile, 2009; Haihambo, 2010) (*cf.* 1.1); and

- the attitudes of teachers and principals regarding the implementation of inclusive education (Machi, 2007; Mthethwa, 2008, Sims, 2008; Nkone, 2009; Tau, 2009) (*cf.* 1.1).

The main contribution of the present research lies in answering the question as to whether there is a gap between inclusive education policy and its implementation, and if there is a gap, whether the gap could be contributed to a rejection of policy or a superficial implementation of the policy (Engelbrecht, 2006; Dreyer, 2011) (*cf.* 1.1). This research revealed that the gap between policy and implementation could be contributed to a superficial implementation of policy and not a rejection of policy. Teachers are positive about inclusive education, but numerous challenges (*cf.* 4.3.14, 4.3.15) seem to obstruct a deep implementation of the policy initiatives.

5.10 CONCLUSION

South Africa has a long way to go to ensure that inclusive education is successfully implemented in South Africa. The Department of Education seriously needs to look at training teachers, modernising, and equipping all schools with the necessary resources and facilities and providing support to teachers. The budget for education will have to be increased significantly in order for inclusive education to be implemented properly. If the challenges cited by this study and previous studies are not met, the noble ideas of inclusive education might remain principles which are superficially implemented.

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APPENDIX A

CONSENT DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Date:	03 April 2012
Name of Researcher:	Harmith Nichola
Address of Researcher:	68 Kaalplaats Lochvaal
	Vanderbijlpark
	1900
Telephone Number:	0766431759
Fax Number:	N/A
Research Topic:	Inclusive Education: Principles Versus Realities
Number and type of schools:	3 Primary Schools
District/s/HO	Johannesburg North and Ekurhuleni West

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

Permission has been granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met, and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted:

The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.

A letter / document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.

The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.

1.1.1 Office of the Chief Director: Information and Knowledge Management

Room 501, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2000 P.o.Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000

Tel: (011) 355-0809

Fax: (011) 355-0734



education

Department: Education

GAUTENG PROVINCE

Enquiries: Nomvula Ubisi (011)3550488

Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.

It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.

The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.

The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.

On completion of the study the researcher must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and one Ring bound copy of the final, approved research report. The researcher would also provide the said manager with an electronic copy of the research abstract/summary and/or annotation.

The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.

Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

Nomvula Ubisi

DEPUTY CHIEF EDUCATION SPECIALIST: RESEARCH

The contents of this letter has been read and understood by the researcher.

Signature of Researcher:

N. Harmuth

Date:

03/04/2012

APPENDIX B

CONSENT PARTICIPANTS

PRINCIPAL

Dear Principal

I am busy with a research study for my Masters degree (MED). I need your assistance to provide me with information to complete the study. This document will provide you with information regarding the project and what your involvement will entail. If you feel comfortable with the contents of the explanation I will appreciate it if you could sign the section indicating your consent to take part in the study, participation is voluntary and can be terminated at any time you wish.

My research wants to determine the ideals versus realities of inclusive education in the classroom. I would like to interview six teachers at your school for this purpose. Teachers will be required to answer several questions about inclusive education. All of the information that is collected will be kept confidential and will not be discussed with anybody else other than my supervisor. No names of schools or participants will be linked to the interpretation of data. Each participant will be identified by a code.

This research is being conducted by Prof. M.M Grosser from the school of educational sciences, North-West University (Vaal Triangle Campus). If you have any questions you can call Prof. Grosser at (016) 910 3063.

Consent:

I _____ (Full name) have read and understand the nature of participation in the project and agree to participate.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

TEACHER

Dear Teacher

I am busy with a research study for my Masters degree (MED). I need your assistance to provide me with information to complete the study. This document will provide you with information regarding the project and what your involvement will entail. If you feel comfortable with the contents of the explanation I will appreciate it if you could sign the section indicating your consent to take part in the study, participation is voluntary and can be terminated at any time you wish.

My research is about the ideals versus realities of inclusive education in the classroom. I would like to interview you. Teachers will be required to answer several questions about inclusive education. All of the information that is collected will be kept confidential and will not be discussed with anybody else other than my supervisor. No names of schools or participants will be linked to the interpretation of data. Each participant will be identified by a code.

This research is being conducted by Prof. M.M Grosser from the school of educational sciences, North-West University (Vaal Triangle Campus). If you have any questions you can call Prof. Grosser at (016) 910 3063.

Consent:

I Chauke Molai (Full name) have read and understand the nature of participation in the project and agree to participate.

Signature: Molai Date: 07/06/2010

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview questions

A. Biographic information:

- Age
- Gender
- Years teaching experience
- Type of school they are teaching at
- Qualification level of participants

B. Interview questions

1. What is your understanding of inclusive education?
2. Do you think that it can work in South African classrooms? Motivate your answer.
3. What training did you receive to assist you with acquiring knowledge and skills regarding the implementation of inclusive education? Explain the nature of the training? Was the training adequate?
4. Do you make use of policy documents to gain knowledge on what is expected of you regarding teaching in inclusive classrooms? Which policy documents do you consult?
5. What type of barriers to learning do you have to deal with in your classroom? Explain these barriers. (Policy ideal 2)
6. To what extent does your school have adequate resources and facilities necessary for inclusive education? Provide practical examples. (Policy ideal 6)
7. How do you adapt the curriculum for learners who experience barriers to learning in your class? Provide practical examples. (Policy principles, 6, 7).

8. What teaching methods do you use to accommodate different learning styles in an inclusive classroom? Provide practical examples. (Policy principles, 3, 6).
9. How do you adapt your assessment strategies to meet the needs of all learners in your class? Provide practical examples. (Policy ideal 3).
10. What is your view on the following statement in the policy on inclusive education (White Paper 6): “all children and youth can learn and all children and youth need support” (Policy ideal 1).
11. How do you determine the strengths and weaknesses of learners? What do you do to advance their strengths or address their weaknesses? Provide practical examples. (Policy ideal 8).
12. How do you enable learners to get critically involved in the learning process? (to give own opinions, own viewpoints). Provide practical examples. (Policy ideal 8).
13. What do you do to accommodate different cultural, language and gender groups in your class? Provide practical examples. (Policy ideal 4).
14. In what ways are the homes and communities of learners involved in the teaching and learning of learners? Provide practical examples. (Policy ideal 5).
15. What do you find the most challenging and the most rewarding about teaching in inclusive classrooms?

APPENDIX D

VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTS AND CODING

SCHOOL 1

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
2	Researcher: 1.What is your understanding of inclusive education?		
3	Educator 1: Inclusive education is enabling all learners regardless of race, language, disability to be taught in the same school or class.	enabling all learners regardless of race, language, disability to be taught in the same school	enabling all learners regardless of race, language, disability to be taught in the same school
4	Educator 2: It is including different types of children in a mainstream class; they can have special needs and be in a mainstream class.	including different types of children in a mainstream class	including different types of children in a mainstream class
5	Educator 3: It is when a school accepts learners that have special needs into their mainstream classes.	school accepts learners that have special needs into their mainstream classes	learners that have special needs into their mainstream classes
6	Educator 4: Inclusive education is including all kinds of learners in a school, it does not matter if they have special needs or are physically handicapped.	including all kinds of learners in a school	including all kinds of learners in a school
7	Educator 5: Inclusive education is about accepting different learners into a mainstream setting, they could have physical or mental disabilities.	accepting different learners into a mainstream setting	

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
8	Educator 6: It is including children that have barriers to learning in a normal class.	including children that have barriers to learning in a normal class	
9	Researcher: 2. Do you think that it can work in South African classrooms? Motivate your answer.		
10	Educator 1: Yes and no. If the disability is to severe not all schools will have the necessary training or equipment. E.g. A brail machine for a blind child.	If the disability is to severe not all schools will have the necessary training or equipment	If the disability is to severe not all schools will have the necessary training or equipment
11	Educator 2: Yes and no. It can't always be done; it depends on the disability of the child and whether they and the teacher will cope.	depends on the disability of the child and whether they and the teacher will cope.	depends on the disability of the child
12	Educator 3: Yes and no. There has to be a line drawn as to when a child should go to a "special school". It is not always fair on the child to be put in a mainstream school. Nor is it fair to the teacher or the other children. Our classes are big enough as it is.	a line drawn has to when a child should go to a "special school". It is not always fair on the child to be put in a mainstream school. Nor is it fair to the teacher or the other children. Our classes are big enough	It is not always fair on the child to be put in a mainstream school. Nor is it fair to the teacher or the other children

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
13	Educator 4: Yes and no. I believe there is still a place for special needs schools but we can also include learners that we did not in the past. I have taught a few Aspergers children but they were not very severe.	<p>still a place for special needs schools</p> <p>can also include learners that we did not in the past</p>	<p>still a place for special needs schools</p>
14	Educator 5: Yes and no. Like everyone here, it depends on the severity of the disability. We could not have someone with cerebral palsy in our class but we could help a child with a sight problem for example.	<p>depends on the severity of the disability</p> <p>could help a child with a sight problem</p>	
15	Educator 6: Yes and no. It depends on what barrier the child has and whether he would be happy in a normal school setting and if he would cope with being in a big class.	<p>depends on what barrier the child has</p> <p>would be happy</p> <p>and if he would cope in a big class.</p>	<p>would be happy</p> <p>and if he would cope</p>
16	Researcher: 3. What training did you receive to assist you with acquiring knowledge and skills regarding the implementation of inclusive education? Explain the nature of the training? Was the training adequate?		

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
17	Educator 1: I have been on a course from the I.E.B and I have attended conferences such as the SAALED conference on inclusive education. Our school has also done talks on it as we a partially inclusive.	course from the I.E.B SAALED conference talks	course from the I.E.B SAALED conference talks
18	Educator 2: I received training at university , have been to talks and the SAALED course .	University SAALED course	University
19	Educator 3: I have been trained at university . I am new here so I have not been to any courses. I will attend the next one.	university	
20	Educator 4: The school has had talks on it and we have attended courses on it . We know all about it!	Talks courses on it	courses on it
21	Educator 5: I have been to a course and several talks have been done at school.	Course several talks	
22	Educator 6: We have been trained in inclusive education , I attended the SAALED course .	trained in inclusive education SAALED course	trained in inclusive education

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
23	Researcher: 4. Do you make use of policy documents to gain knowledge on what is expected of you regarding teaching in inclusive classrooms? Which policy documents do you consult?		
24	Educator 1: Our school has a policy towards it and we follow that.	school has policy	school has policy
25	Educator 2: I follow the schools policy.	schools policy	
26	Educator 3: I teach a third language so I try to accommodate all learners as per the school policy but it is difficult in such limited time! I have fifteen minute sessions three times a week.	school policy limited time	
27	Educator 4: I follow the schools policy.	schools policy	
28	Educator 5: We have to follow the schools policy.	schools policy	
29	Educator 6: The school policy is followed.	school policy	
30	Researcher: 5. What type of barriers to learning do you have to deal with in your classroom? Explain these barriers.		

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
31	Educator 1: I have ADD, ADHD, a bursary learner from a poor background who has a language barrier; some learners are weak and are in three therapies.	ADD, ADHD, a bursary learner from a poor background language barrier learners are weak and are in three therapies.	ADD, ADHD, a bursary learner from a poor background language barrier learners are weak and are in three therapies
32	Educator 2: I have two language barriers as English is not their home language, concentration problems and some children that would normally be in a remedial school as they are on three therapies and remedial support.	language barriers concentration problems children that would normally be in a remedial school as they are on three therapies	concentration problems
33	Educator 3: I have a few children with concentration problems and a child who wears hearing aids.	concentration problems	
34	Educator 4: Most of my class is fine, I just have two girls that need a lot of remedial support and the one will probably get a facilitator soon.	remedial support facilitator	remedial support facilitator
35	Educator 5: Language is a barrier to some learners. Concentration problems with two girls. One girl has a speech problem.	Language Concentration problems speech problem	speech problem

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
36	Educator 6: I have a child with sensory problems ; she does not like it when people are in her space. There are two girls that have to go to more than one therapy . Language is a problem for two girls who don't come from an English home. Parents are also too busy to help children with homework	sensory problems more than one therapy Language Parents too busy	sensory problems Parents too busy
37	Researcher: 6.To what extent does your school have adequate resources and facilities necessary for inclusive education? Provide practical examples		
38	Educator 1: We have various therapists and remedial teachers on sight. Our school is not yet wheel chair friendly throughout. We develop Individual education plans for certain learners. Some classes have facilitators .	various therapists and remedial teachers Individual education plans facilitators	various therapists and remedial teachers Individual education plans facilitators
39	Educator 2: On sight therapists and remedial teachers . We also have books and an educational psychologist at school who can give us advice.	therapists and remedial teachers educational psychologist	educational psychologist

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
40	Educator 3: We have all therapists and some learners have facilitators but the parents have to pay extra for the therapies and the facilitator. It costs them a fortune as our school fees are very high.	Therapists Facilitators parents have to pay extra	
41	Educator 4: I agree with the others, we don't have special equipment for blind or deaf children though.	don't have special equipment	don't have special equipment
42	Educator 5: The children can go to therapists during school time but then they miss out on class time . It is also very expensive for parents if their child needs a facilitator and is in more than one therapy.	Therapists miss out on class time facilitator	miss out on class time
43	Educator 6: We have a lot of resources and therapists at hand but not all learners can be accommodated .	lot of resources and therapists not all learners can be accommodated	lot of resources not all learners can be accommodated
44	Researcher: 7. How do you adapt the curriculum for learners who experience barriers to learning in your class? Provide practical examples.		

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
45	Educator 1: Our school has a policy that we make an Individual education plan (IEP) for the child that is carefully monitored and adjusted throughout the year.	Individual education plan (IEP) Child monitored and adjusted throughout the year	Individual education plan (IEP) Child monitored and adjusted throughout the year
46	Educator 2: We use IEP's and we have differentiated work cards in class.	IEP's differentiated work cards	differentiated work cards
47	Educator 3: I assess the learner on the same outcomes but by using easier questions.	assess the learner on same outcomes using easier questions.	assess the learner on same outcomes using easier questions.
48	Educator 4: I use IEP and I adapt the assessment standards and learning outcomes for the learner. At the end of the day the child must achieve the same outcomes but she may take longer and be given easier tasks.	IEP adapt the assessment standards and learning outcomes Child may take longer and be given easier tasks.	adapt the assessment standards and learning outcomes Child may take longer and be given easier tasks.
49	Educator 5: I use IEP and I have differentiated work cards, so that the weak and the advanced learners can be stimulated.	IEP differentiated work cards	
50	Educator 6: I use IEP's and I will assess the learner on the same outcomes but by using easier questions.	IEP's Assess on same outcomes using easier questions.	

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
51	Researcher: 8. What teaching methods do you use to accommodate different learning styles in an inclusive classroom? Provide practical examples – let them explain which methods suit which learning styles.		
52	Educator 1: Visual - some learners are visual so I use pictures, the projector, physical examples	Visual use pictures, the projector, physical examples	Visual
53	Auditory - some learners are verbal learners so we read stories, I explain verbally, we listen to tapes.	Auditory read stories explain verbally listen to tapes	Auditory
54	Kinaesthetic and tactile - Some learners need to move so they sit on sensory pillows or on a gym ball, some learners need to physically do something to learn so they make examples and build things	Kinaesthetic and tactile sit on sensory pillows or gym ball build things	Kinaesthetic and tactile
55	Educator 2: I use a mixture of the different teaching methods that suit the learning styles. You can't only teach verbal or visual methods, you must also do hand on practical lessons.	mixture of methods verbal or visual methods practical lessons	mixture of methods

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
56	Educator 3: I try to have a balance when teaching. I don't do too much written or verbal work. For each them we must teach for the verbal, auditory, kinaesthetic and tactile lessons so that all learners have a fair chance.	have a balance verbal, auditory, kinaesthetic and tactile lessons	have a balance
57	Educator 4: I teach using the different methods . Most of the lessons are both visual and verbal. The kinaesthetic and tactile learners cannot be accommodated in every lesson but we do move around a lot and we often make practical examples .	different methods kinaesthetic and tactile learners practical examples.	
58	Educator 5: I have a trampoline and special cushions in my class for the kinaesthetic learners . I also allow them to move more freely . I use a lot of visual and verbal aids and we do a lot of hands on practical work .	trampoline and special cushions kinaesthetic learners move freely visual and verbal aids practical work	
59	Educator 6: I incorporate the four styles and I ensure that my lessons are rich in content and are varied. I teach a new concept using all of the different styles .	incorporate the four styles lessons rich in content teach using different styles	teach using different styles

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
60	Researcher: 9.How do you adapt your assessment strategies to meet the needs of all learners in your class? Provide practical examples.		
61	Educator 1: They have to complete the same assessments but extra time is given and they may use concrete apparatus to help them.	same assessments extra time may use concrete apparatus	same assessments extra time may use concrete apparatus
62	Educator 2: The same assessments are completed but they have been given a lot of extra support to meet those assessment standards. They are also given extra time and can use their number blocks or other apparatus.	same assessments have been given extra support to meet those assessment standards given extra time number blocks apparatus	have been given extra support to meet those assessment standards
63	Educator 3: They are given extra time and I often explain the assessment individually to them.	extra time explain assessment individually	explain assessment individually
64	Educator 4: They can use their concrete apparatus and they are given extra time. They also ask questions when they get confused.	concrete apparatus extra time ask questions	ask questions

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
65	Educator 5: Extra time, I explain more and they can use concrete apparatus.	Extra time explain more can use concrete apparatus.	explain more
66	Educator 6: The same as above. They have received extra support to meet the assessment standards but in the end they need to achieve the same outcomes in order to progress to the following year.	extra support achieve the same outcomes	achieve the same outcomes
67	Researcher: 10. What is your view on the following statement in the policy on inclusive education (White Paper 6): "all children and youth can learn and all children and youth need support"		
68	Educator 1: Yes, definitely, some children just need more support though.	Yes some children just need more support	some children just need more support
69	Educator 2: I agree but some children need more support than others.	I agree some children need more support	I agree
70	Educator 3: Yes, but not all children learn the same, some need more help.	Yes some need more help	some need more help

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
71	Educator 4: I agree but everyone needs different levels of support.	I agree everyone needs different levels of support	everyone needs different levels of support
72	Educator 5: I agree but some learners need more support than others.	I agree some learners need more support	
73	Educator 6: Yes, I agree but some learners need additional support.	I agree some learners need additional support	
74	Researcher: 11.How do you determine the strengths and weaknesses of learners? What do you do to advance their strengths or address their weaknesses? Provide practical examples.		
75	Educator 1: A baseline assessment is done to determine the child's level. We then assess what extra support a child needs. We re-teach certain things and we give extension work to the bright children.	baseline assessment re-teach extension work	baseline assessment re-teach extension work
76	Educator 2: By using a baseline assessment and the by continuous assessment. You have to re-teach certain concepts and you have to differentiate work cards.	baseline assessment continuous assessment re-teach differentiate work cards	continuous assessment differentiate work cards

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
77	Educator 3: I assess them verbally as they do not write the third language at this stage. I do a lot of repetition and I try and make learning a positive experience.	Assess verbally Repetition make learning a positive experience	Assess verbally Repetition
78	Educator 4: I use a baseline assessment and from then they are continuously assessed to follow their progress. Some children need additional support and other children need to be challenged more. I take small groups to the carpet to do extra work.	baseline assessment continuously assessed additional support take small groups to the carpet	additional support take small groups to the carpet
79	Educator 5: I also use a baseline assessment at first to determine a child's level. I then work out what support each child needs. If the whole class is struggling with something that means the work must be re-taught in a different way.	baseline assessment work must be re-taught in a different way.	work must be re-taught in a different way
80	Educator 6: I use a baseline assessment. The learners who are strong are given extension work and the most difficult work cards. I do a lot of revision for the weak learners.	baseline assessment extension work revision	revision

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
81	Researcher: 12.How do you enable learners to get critically involved in the learning process? (To give own opinions, own viewpoints). Provide practical examples.		
82	Educator 1: Every lesson enables learners to get involved. They must work out the problem or find the solution. My learners don't just sit and listen. We solve things practically.	Every lesson learners get involved work out the problem don't just sit and listen solve things practically.	work out the problem solve things practically.
83	Educator 2: The learners must be actively involved at all times. Everyone gets a chance to answer questions or to demonstrate something.	learners actively involved Everyone answer questions or demonstrate something	Everyone answer questions or demonstrate something
84	Educator 3: I always ensure that all learners participate in lessons, some try to avoid it but you have to get them involved. I try to make them feel safe and they don't get moaned at if they make a mistake.	all learners participate make them feel safe don't get moaned at if they make a mistake.	don't get moaned at if they make a mistake

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
85	Educator 4: The learners must be actively involved otherwise they will not learn. They must answer questions and pose problems . They have to show me that they understand.	actively involved must answer questions and pose problems	must answer questions and pose problems
86	Educator 5: The learners can't just sit and listen they must contribute to a lesson .	learners must contribute to a lesson	must contribute to a lesson
87	Educator 6: My lessons involve the children a lot. We do a lot of role-plays, speeches, group work, practical examples and so on.	lessons involve the children role-plays, speeches, group work, practical examples	role-plays, speeches, group work, practical examples
88	Researcher: 13. What do you do to accommodate different cultural, language and gender groups in your class? Provide practical examples.		
89	Educator 1: I am very tolerant and I try to use media and visual aids that represent a diverse country .	Tolerant use media and visual aids that represent diverse country	Tolerant use media and visual aids that represent diverse country
90	Educator 2: The language barrier is challenging at times but you have to explain in a different way sometimes or show the child an example .	language barrier is challenging explain in a different way show example	show example

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
91	Educator 3: I don't only use pictures or names of one race in my work, we also learn a lot about different cultures.	use pictures or names about different cultures	use pictures or names about different cultures
92	Educator 4: We celebrate our differences and cultures. We learn about each other and learn to respect each other.	celebrate our differences and cultures learn about each other respect each other	celebrate our differences and cultures learn about each other respect each other
93	Educator 5: I treat everyone equally and I don't group learners into categories. Our work also reflects the diversity in our country. We learn about different cultures.	treat everyone equally don't group learners into categories work reflects diversity learn about different cultures	treat everyone equally don't group learners into categories
94	Educator 6: I am tolerant of all the different learners in my class and I choose learning material that reflects our diverse society.	Tolerant learning material reflects our diverse society.	
95	Researcher: 14. In what ways are the homes and communities of learners involved in the teaching and learning of learners? Provide practical examples.		

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
96	Educator 1: We have a lot of help from parents , they run our puzzle library, cover books, we have class moms , and they run charities. Our community helps by listening to reading.	help from parents class moms community helps	help from parents class moms community helps
97	Educator 2: The parents at our school help a lot . Of course you get those that never do anything but in general our moms and dads are fantastic. They help with our outreach programmes .	Parents help a lot help with our outreach programmes	Parents help a lot help with our outreach programmes
98	Educator 3: They help a lot. We are never short of volunteers and a lot of parents help at our Outreach projects .	never short of volunteers parents help at Outreach projects	never short of volunteers
99	Educator 4: We have great support from the parents and our community . We have reading grannies who listen to children read, class mums , fundraisers, etc.	great support from parents and community reading grannies class mums	reading grannies class mums
100	Educator 5: The parents are very involved . We have mums that make costumes for plays, Dads help set up sound and build props.	parents are involved	parents are involved

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
101	Educator 6: The parents help with outings and they come in and do talks.	parents help with outings and do talks.	parents help with outings and do talks.
102	Researcher: 15. What do you find the most challenging and the most rewarding about teaching in inclusive classrooms?		
103	Educator 1: The most challenging is lack of time! The most rewarding is seeing the child succeed at something.	lack of time child succeed	lack of time child succeed
104	Educator 2: It is difficult to have such mixed abilities in one class; it is not always easy to accommodate everyone's needs. I love it when a child feels that he is capable.	difficult to have such mixed abilities in one class not easy to accommodate everyone's needs child feels that he is capable.	difficult to have such mixed abilities in one class not easy to accommodate everyone's needs child feels that he is capable.
105	Educator 3: The most challenging thing is having such extremes in one class. Some learners are so bright and then the other learner needs a facilitator. It is difficult to set up tasks. It is rewarding when you see children help one another.	extremes in one class children help one another.	children help one another.

1	School 1	Open code	Axial code
106	Educator 4: Language is a big challenge. It affects all the areas of the child's work and it is not easy to help them if you can't speak their first language. I love it when the children come to school with a smile.	Language children come to school with a smile.	Language children come to school with a smile.
107	Educator 5: Our classes are too small and we have a lot of children! 18 would be a nice amount!! I love it when you see a child's progress.	classes are too small lot of children when you see a child's progress	classes are too small
108	Educator 6: The most challenging thing is to make sure that everyone is included and that you are catering for everyone's needs. It is great when a child suddenly grasps a concept.	Challenging to make sure that everyone is included great when a child suddenly grasps a concept.	great when a child suddenly grasps a concept.

SCHOOL 2

1	School 2	Open code	Axial code
2	Researcher: 1.What is your understanding of inclusive education?		
3	Educator 1: Having learners with any barriers to learning in a mainstream school. This is to benefit such learners by improving their skills and overcoming challenges.	learners with any barriers to learning in a mainstream school	learners with any barriers to learning in a mainstream school
4	Educator 2: It is when everyone is included such as blind and deaf children.	when everyone is included	when everyone is included
5	Educator 3: That all learners, with or without disability, can go to the same school. Blind, deaf and disabled children.	all learners, with or without disability, can go to the same school	
6	Educator 4: All learners, even those with special needs, must be taught in the same class or school.	All learners, even those with special needs taught in the same school	
7	Educator 5: Including different learning abilities in your class.	Including different learning abilities	
8	Educator 6: Inclusive education is when you allow children with disabilities to be part of a normal classroom.	allow children with disabilities to be part of normal classroom.	
9	Researcher: 2. Do you think that it can work in South African classrooms? Motivate your answer.		

1	School 2	Open code	Axial code
10	Educator 1: No because we don't have the necessary facilities to optimally implement inclusive education.	don't have the necessary facilities	don't have the necessary facilities
11	Educator 2: Sometimes, a deaf child could do some work.	Sometimes	
12	Educator 3: No, the children will not get the attention that they need. They will be lost.	children will not get the attention that they need.	
13	Educator 4: No, learners with special needs do not get the required attention. This leads to discipline problems.	learners with special needs do not get the required attention leads to discipline problems.	learners with special needs do not get the required attention
14	Educator 5: No, we don't have the resources.	don't have the resources.	
15	Educator 6: Yes for certain disabilities but no for most as there is too much focus and disturbance on one when you have thirty in a class.	Yes for certain disabilities but no for most	Yes for certain disabilities but no for most
16	Researcher: 3. What training did you receive to assist you with acquiring knowledge and skills regarding the implementation of inclusive education? Explain the nature of the training? Was the training adequate?		

1	School 2	Open code	Axial code
17	Educator 1: At varsity I needed to complete a special needs course as part of my training. I also worked at Eduplex – a hearing impaired inclusive school.	special needs course worked at Eduplex	special needs course
	Educator 2: None	None	None
18	Educator 3: I did psychology at university but no training for inclusive education.	did psychology at university no training	
19	Educator 4: We received a book with examples on how to accommodate learners with special needs. We had to learn it and write a test on it.	Book on how to accommodate learners with special needs	
20	Educator 5: I only received training at university but it was limited.	received training at university	received training at university
21	Educator 6: Training material and school support helps me to deal with disabilities.	Training material school support	
22	Researcher: 4. Do you make use of policy documents to gain knowledge on what is expected of you regarding teaching in inclusive classrooms? Which policy documents do you consult?		
23	Educator 1: No	No	No
24	Educator 2: None	None	
25	Educator 3: No	No	
26	Educator 4: No	No	
27	Educator 5: No, I don't.	No	
28	Educator 6: No	No	

1	School 2	Open code	Axial code
29	Researcher: 5. What type of barriers to learning do you have to deal with in your classroom? Explain these barriers.		
30	Educator 1: Bad concentration, ADD and ADHD. Some children are very disruptive and cannot sit still.	Bad concentration, ADD and ADHD	Bad concentration, ADD and ADHD
31	Educator 2: ADD and ADHD are the only barriers. The children are difficult to settle and can't concentrate.	ADD and ADHD	
32	Educator 3: Bad concentration.	Bad concentration	
33	Educator 4: I just have a few concentration problems in my class. I have to be patient and get them to refocus.	concentration problems	
34	Educator 5: Language barriers: Learners move from their previous school to our school and they often cannot communicate well.	Language barriers	Language barriers
35	Educator 6: Lack of discipline. Some learners disrupt the class.	discipline	discipline
36	Researcher: 6.To what extent does your school have adequate resources and facilities necessary for inclusive education? Provide practical examples		

1	School 2	Open code	Axial code
37	Educator 1: An occupational therapist on the premises to whom learners can be referred and a remedial teacher.	occupational therapist remedial teacher.	occupational therapist remedial teacher.
38	Educator 2: Our school does not have facilities. We do not have ramps or equipment for blind children.	school does not have facilities	school does not have facilities
39	Educator 3: Our school has none.	none	
40	Educator 4: We do not have any special resources. There are therapists but parents have to pay for that.	do not have any special resources therapists but parents have to pay for that.	
41	Educator 5: We do not have adequate resources.	do not have adequate resources.	do not have adequate resources.
42	Educator 6: We have a remedial class in the morning and we give extra time to learners that need it.	remedial class in the morning	
43	Researcher: 7. How do you adapt the curriculum for learners who experience barriers to learning in your class? Provide practical examples.		
44	Educator 1: Differentiation of work sheets and one on one re-teaching of concepts.	Differentiation of work sheets one on one re-teaching	Differentiation of work sheets one on one re-teaching
45	Educator 2: One on one work and extra classes.	One on one work extra classes	extra classes
46	Educator 3: I use differentiation in my lesson plans.	differentiation	

1	School 2	Open code	Axial code
47	Educator 4: I teach the work in an easier manner that they understand. I take groups of learners to the carpet while other learners do work at their desks. This allows me to teach new concepts in small groups.	teach the work in an easier manner teach new concepts in small groups.	teach new concepts in small groups
48	Educator 5: I give learners easier readers, worksheets and spelling words.	give learners easier readers, worksheets and spelling words.	
49	Educator 6: I make the lesson easier for the child so that he can have a sense of achievement.	make the lesson easier so that he can have a sense of achievement.	make the lesson easier so that he can have a sense of achievement
50	Researcher: 8. What teaching methods do you use to accommodate different learning styles in an inclusive classroom? Provide practical examples – let them explain which methods suit which learning styles.		
51	Educator 1: Differentiation of work sheets to learners on different levels.	Differentiation of work sheets	Differentiation of work sheets
52	Educator 2: I see the learners in the afternoon for extra lessons.	extra lessons	
53	Educator 3: I use differentiation in my lesson plan.	use differentiation	
54	Educator 4: Visual- I use pictures, Verbal- stories and speeches, Written- learners write in their books	Visual- use pictures, Verbal- stories and speeches, Written- write	

1	School 2	Open code	Axial code
55	Educator 5: I use visual and auditory methods. I use pictures and I read stories.	use visual and auditory methods	use visual and auditory methods
56	Educator 6: I have a boy with sight problems so I let him sit in front of the class. If a child is weak I let them sit closer to me so I can help them.	boy with sight problems so I let him sit in front of the class let them sit closer to me so I can help them	
57	Researcher: 9. How do you adapt your assessment strategies to meet the needs of all learners in your class? Provide practical examples.		
58	Educator 1: I use differentiation so that all learners can achieve.	use differentiation	use differentiation
59	Educator 2: I go back to the basics.	go back to basics.	
60	Educator 3: I use differentiation	use differentiation	
61	Educator 4: I allow some children to answer something verbally if they can't write it down.	allow some children to answer verbally	allow some children to answer verbally
62	Educator 5: Often learners cannot read in front of the whole class so I allow them to read to me.	learners cannot read in front of the class read to me	
63	Educator 6: I look at what each child is capable of and make sure that I give them some marks so that they have a sense of achievement. I give them easier questions.	give them some marks so that they have a sense of achievement. easier questions.	easier questions

1	School 2	Open code	Axial code
64	Researcher: 10. What is your view on the following statement in the policy on inclusive education (White Paper 6): “all children and youth can learn and all children and youth need support”		
65	Educator 1: Some learners would certainly gain more by learning in more specialised and focused environments. All learners need support, most especially from parents and community.	Some learners gain more by learning in more specialised and focused environments All learners need support	Some learners gain more by learning in more specialised and focused environments All learners need support
66	Educator 2: I believe that all learners can achieve.	all learners can achieve.	
67	Educator 3: All learners can learn but they can't be in the same kind of school always.	All learners can learn can't be in the same kind of school always.	
68	Educator 4: I agree but some children need more support.	some children need more support	some children need more support
69	Educator 5: Very true	true	
70	Educator 6: Absolutely, even children without a disability need support.	even children without a disability need support.	
71	Researcher: 11. How do you determine the strengths and weaknesses of learners? What do you do to advance their strengths or address their weaknesses? Provide practical examples.		

1	School 2	Open code	Axial code
72	Educator 1: Baseline assessment in the beginning of each year. Additional work sheets are given to learners to reinforce knowledge. Enrichment work sheets are given to above average learners. Differentiation is implemented.	Baseline assessment Additional work sheets To reinforce knowledge Enrichment work sheets	Baseline assessment
73	Educator 2: I determine this with tests.	tests	
74	Educator 3: I use tests, written work and one on one work.	Tests written work one on one work	Tests written work one on one work
75	Educator 4: You can see in tests and written work. I help learners at their desks and explain again to certain learners. I praise learners on their strengths. I take learners in groups to the mat. I use differentiation.	tests and written work help learners at their desks and explain again praise learners use differentiation	
76	Educator 5: By additional work and looking at their reading skills.	additional work looking at reading skills	
77	Educator 6: You motivate the children and work with them step by step. You work with them individually to ensure that the focus is on the work.	motivate the children work with them step by step ensure focus is on work.	

1	School 2	Open code	Axial code
78	Researcher: 12. How do you enable learners to get critically involved in the learning process? (To give own opinions, own viewpoints). Provide practical examples.		
79	Educator 1: Real life problems are the method used to introduce new concepts. Learners need to discuss and solve these problems in order to gain and understand new knowledge.	Learners need to discuss and solve problems	Learners need to discuss and solve problems
80	Educator 2: We have open debates.	open debates	open debates
81	Educator 3: I try to make the work fun and exciting.	Make work fun	
82	Educator 4: They have to do speeches, projects and work out problems in groups.	do speeches, projects work out problems	do speeches, projects
83	Educator 5: I use creative writing; they must write poems on their opinions.	creative writing	creative writing
84	Educator 6: You have to reassure them that they are doing well and they must not give up. Keep reassuring them.	reassure them	
85	Researcher: 13. What do you do to accommodate different cultural, language and gender groups in your class? Provide practical examples.		

1	School 2	Open code	Axial code
86	Educator 1: Differentiation of work sheets and some individual attention and learning opportunity granted.	Differentiation of work sheets individual attention	
87	Educator 2: I use different worksheets and differentiation.	different worksheets and differentiation.	
88	Educator 3: I am sensitive towards everyone and I understand their beliefs.	sensitive towards everyone understand their beliefs.	sensitive towards everyone understand their beliefs.
89	Educator 4: I understand the different beliefs and I am sensitive towards them.	understand different beliefs sensitive towards them.	
90	Educator 5: We learn about different cultures and we talk about their views.	learn about different cultures talk about their views	learn about different cultures talk about their views
91	Educator 6: I am very tolerant of different cultures and beliefs.	tolerant of different cultures and beliefs.	tolerant
92	Researcher: 14. In what ways are the homes and communities of learners involved in the teaching and learning of learners? Provide practical examples.		
93	Educator 1: It is my opinion that there is minimal support from homes and learners are left on their own to manage the work load	minimal support learners are left on their own	
94	Educator 2: There is not a lot of help from the parents or the community.	not a lot of help from parents or community	not a lot of help from parents or community

1	School 2	Open code	Axial code
95	Educator 3: They do homework, help with research for themes and help with speeches.	They do homework, help with research and speeches.	They do homework, help with research and speeches
96	Educator 4: The parents help with homework and tasks.	parents help with homework and tasks.	
97	Educator 5: Parents help the children with homework but there is not a lot of community help.	Parents help with homework not a lot of community help.	
98	Educator 6: Some children come from poor homes and have to walk far to school. Not all parents help at home.	Not all parents help	
99	Researcher: 15. What do you find the most challenging and the most rewarding about teaching in inclusive classrooms?		
100	Educator 1: The challenges are the practical implementation and time management to make this a success. The reward is to witness the success of my work and see the difference it makes in the child.	practical implementation and time management to witness the success see the difference it makes in the child.	see the difference it makes in the child.
101	Educator 2: The most rewarding thing is when a child suddenly understands and when they can work together.	when a child suddenly understands and when they can work together	when a child suddenly understands

1	School 2	Open code	Axial code
102	Educator 3: The most challenging is that some learners need a lot of attention. The most rewarding is when learners succeed at something.	some learners need a lot of attention learners succeed at something	some learners need a lot of attention
103	Educator 4: The most challenging is that learners with special needs do not get the attention they need. The most rewarding is when I praise learners on their strengths and help them solve problems.	do not get the attention they need praise learners on their strengths and help solve problems.	do not get the attention they need
104	Educator 5: Everyday is very rewarding for me. I enjoy helping a child in every way possible.	Everyday is rewarding enjoy helping a child	enjoy helping a child
105	Educator 6: It is challenging to have to re-teach over and over but it is rewarding when learners understand the work	challenging to re-teach over and over rewarding when learners understand the work	

SCHOOL 3

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
1	Researcher: 1.What is your understanding of inclusive education?		
2	Educator 1: It is when all learners have different abilities intellectual or physical challenge learn in the same school without been discriminated against.	different abilities intellectual or physical challenge without been discriminated	different abilities intellectual or physical challenge without been discriminated
3	Educator 2: An education which accommodates all learners able or disabled on a normal school with the physical environment which will accommodate all of them.	accommodates all learners able or disabled	accommodates all learners able or disabled
4			
4	Educator 3: Inclusive education is a barrier to learning.		
6	Educator 4: It is a place where every learner belongs, is accepted and his educational needs are met. It is including learners with barriers in mainstream schools. All types of learners are included irrespective of race, age, gender, and disabilities.	every learner belongs, is accepted and his educational needs are met including learners with barriers in mainstream irrespective of race, age, gender, and disabilities.	

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
7	Educator 5: To have learners with different barriers. Some are slow to catch up what you teach them and others are fast.	learners with different barriers.	
8	Educator 6: It is when we include everyone in our education despite of his status, abilities, and disabilities. Everyone is covered and involved in everything. There are also programs which are developed in cater for these learners such as wheelchair friendly facilities and special reading and writing programs.	include everyone despite of his status, abilities, and disabilities.	
9	Researcher: 2. Do you think that it can work in South African classrooms? Motivate your answer.		
10	Educator 1: Yes and no. Yes, because children were excluded from mainstream by merely looking at their physical problems.	excluded from mainstream by physical problems	
11	No, because it is challenging to educators. Most educators were not trained to teach in that kind of environment.	Educators not trained	Educators not trained
12	Educator 2: Yes, with proper planning, instruction and an implementation process.	proper planning, instruction and an implementation process.	

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
13	Educator 3: No, it needs special attention in the classroom, due to our classroom environment, it is overcrowded and it is difficult to teach or to include inclusive education.	classroom environment overcrowded, difficult to include inclusive education.	classroom environment overcrowded
14	Educator 4: If the department of education provide us with enough and relevant resources, e.g. professionals (remedial teachers, educational psychologist, therapists, etc.)	department of education provide relevant resources	relevant resources
15	Educator 5: Not at all, more especially when we are still having such big numbers in classes.	big numbers in classes.	
16	Educator 6: Definitely, yes. There is no way that it can't because everyone is different and we do things differently. We like different things and excel in different activities. There are people who are physically not normal but are able to do things a normal person can.	everyone is different and we do things differently.	

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
17	Researcher: 3. What training did you receive to assist you with acquiring knowledge and skills regarding the implementation of inclusive education? Explain the nature of the training? Was the training adequate?		
18	Educator 1: Yes, I did a course on it.	course	
19	Educator 2: I have not done any training. I only know a little from when I studied and from some articles at school.	not done any training know a little from when I studied articles at school	
20	Educator 3: No, I have not been trained. I hear about this from my colleagues and we have received some documents from the Department of Education.	not been trained, hear about this from my colleagues, documents from Department of Education	not been trained,
21	Educator 4: The government has not trained us in this. At college we learnt what it is but that is all.	government has not trained us	
22	Educator 5: The only training that I received was in university but it was very limited. I have read about it but have not been on a special course.	only training received was in university but it was limited read about it not been on a course.	only training received was in university but it was limited

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
23	Educator 6: I have not received any courses for inclusive education. I have just read about it in the news. They sent the white paper 6 and some articles to our school to read.	not received any courses read about it white paper 6 and some articles	read about it
24			
25	Researcher: 4. Do you make use of policy documents to gain knowledge on what is expected of you regarding teaching in inclusive classrooms? Which policy documents do you consult?		
26	Educator 1: Yes, I trained in inclusive education.	trained in inclusive education.	
27	Educator 2: I know about the documents from university like white paper 6 but that is all I have used. It is only the ideal though. How can one actually do all that with such big classes.	white paper 6 only the ideal such big classes.	white paper 6
28	Educator 3: No, I don't look at any documents.		
29	Educator 4: No, but our school has books on different barriers but I do my best to help the learners in class.	school has books on different barriers do best to help the learners	
30	Educator 5: No, I don't consult any documents.	don't consult any documents	don't consult any documents

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
31	Educator 6: No, the policies are difficult to get, we don't have them all and we don't have time to read every policy. They always change.	Policies difficult to get don't have time always change	
32	Researcher: 5. What type of barriers to learning do you have to deal with in your classroom? Explain these barriers.		
33	Educator 1: I deal with health, environment and poverty barriers. The children are often sick and most of them are poor. The soup kitchen is not enough. They don't have enough nutrition and health at home.	health, environment and poverty barriers	health, environment and poverty barriers
34	Educator 2: The physical environment and no resources is a big barrier. The biggest barrier though is that I have not been trained for inclusive education.	physical environment and no resources not been trained	not been trained
35	Educator 3: The barriers are language, institution, overcrowded classrooms, lack of resources, drug abuse, and unstable place of residence. We can't help the learners like we want to. We don't have the time or resources, there are too many children.	language, institution, overcrowded classrooms, lack of resources, drug abuse, unstable place of residence time or resources	overcrowded classrooms, lack of resources,

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
36	Educator 4: Extrinsic barriers come from a systematic perspective for e.g. Poverty, violence, crime, HIV and AIDs, disability, etc.	Poverty, violence, crime, HIV and AIDs, disability,	Poverty, violence, crime, HIV and AIDs, disability
37	The intrinsic barriers are the disabilities from the mind, they are severe for example, fear, stress, anger, phobias, aggression, etc.	disabilities from the mind, they are severe for example, fear, stress, anger, phobias, aggression,	
38	Educator 5: The classes are too packed with learners, you can't do your best in a 40 minute lesson. There is no time and too many children.	no time too many children.	no time
39	Educator 6: Language problem- we have so many children from different languages. I can't speak them all. Hearing- the children can't hear what I am saying. Behaviour problem- some children don't behave. Reading and writing – some children can't read and write.	Language problem Hearing Behaviour problem Reading and writing	Behaviour problem
40			
41	Researcher: 6.To what extent does your school have adequate resources and facilities necessary for inclusive education? Provide practical examples		

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
42	Educator 1: Our school has books that show us how to cater for learners needs.	books	books
43	Educator 2: Some classes do have but many classes cannot accommodate everyone at this stage. Children in wheel chairs can go to some classes. Some classes are bigger.	classes cannot accommodate everyone	classes cannot accommodate everyone
44	Educator 3: No . As a teacher you are bound to create the contusive environment and activities for the learners.	No contusive environment	
45	Educator 4: Yes, we have social workers, nurses, police officer, priest and a psychologist to assist our learners with barriers to learning.	social workers, nurses, police officer, priest and a psychologist	social workers psychologist
46	Educator 5: No, we do not have any special equipment or the space in our classes.	do not have special equipment or space	do not have special equipment or space
47	Educator 6: No, but we only have an aid teacher who is using a non inviting class as her remedial class .	aid teacher non inviting remedial class.	aid teacher remedial class
48			
49	Researcher: 7. How do you adapt the curriculum for learners who experience barriers to learning in your class? Provide practical examples.		

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
50	Educator 1: It is easy when you know the children you can group them . Then as an educator I will know which learner needs more assistance in the classroom.	group them	group them
51	Educator 2: I need to have been prepared for them, learn to treat them the same way as other learners .	treat them the same as other learners .	
52	Educator 3: I will identify learners according to their performance and provide activities according to their performance .	provide activities according to their performance .	
53	Educator 4: By giving them different work activities according to their abilities and teaching them with different learning styles .	work activities according to their abilities teaching with different learning styles .	work activities according to their abilities
54	Educator 5: Staying behind with them sometimes after school , or giving the others extra work to do while busy with those that need your attention.	Staying behind after school giving others extra work	
55	Educator 6: I will first look at how needy the children are then plan a program that will cater for them all .	plan a program that will cater for all .	plan a program that will cater for all
56			

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
57	Researcher: 8. What teaching methods do you use to accommodate different learning styles in an inclusive classroom? Provide practical examples – let them explain which methods suit which learning styles.		
58	Educator 1: I feel learners learn differently. There are those you will give instruction they will understand. But also those who need me as an educator to talk to them individually.	talk to them individually.	
59	Educator 2: One must be flexible and adaptable. A variety of methods will have to be applied. Like visual and auditory methods.	be flexible and adaptable. variety of methods visual and auditory methods.	variety of methods visual and auditory methods.
60	Educator 3: Looking at the different performance of learners in the class, I will adjust myself according to the learner's performance. It will take more time.	adjust myself according to the learner's performance	

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
61	<p>Educator 4: Visual style- the educator has to do practical demonstrations, use pictures, diagrams, highlighting, handouts and colours during the presentation of a lesson. Auditory style- the teacher should read aloud, explain, repeat, discuss, use tapes, use poems, tell stories, dialogue and drama. Kinaesthetic- do things practically, use tactile experience and three dimensional models, write. Tactile- learners have to feel things by touching.</p>	<p>Visual style- Auditory style Kinaesthetic Tactile</p>	<p>Visual style- Auditory style Kinaesthetic Tactile</p>
62	<p>Educator 5: Putting the learners in different groups and giving them different work that you monitor.</p>	<p>learners in different groups different work</p>	
63	<p>Educator 6: Design different activities based on the same theme. E.g. Achieved, Partially, not achieved. Their activities will be different and according to their achievement.</p>	<p>Different activities on same theme Activities according to achievement</p>	
64	<p>Researcher: 9. How do you adapt your assessment strategies to meet the needs of all learners in your class? Provide practical examples.</p>		

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
65	Educator 1: I assess some of the learners verbally and not on paper, Especially those who are not able to read properly.	assess verbally	assess verbally
66	Educator 2: I give some learners more time and I explain the work a little more to those that struggle.	give more time explain work more	give more time explain work more
67	Educator 3: Some learners have to do easier questions on the same topic, they can't all answer the same questions. In maths some can count a lot better than others so they get bigger numbers to work with.	Some learners do easier questions	Some learners do easier questions
68	Educator 4: I also give some learners more time and ask some learners easier sums .	more time easier questions	
69	Educator 5: I allow some learners to take longer to finish and I have to assist them more with their work .	some learners to take longer to finish assist more with their work	
70	Educator 6: I give some learners different questions that are easier. Language is a problem as not all the learners understand the work properly. I have to translate work into their home language sometimes.	give different questions translate work into home language	translate work into home language
71			

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
72	Researcher: 10. What is your view on the following statement in the policy on inclusive education (White Paper 6): “all children and youth can learn and all children and youth need support”		
73	Educator 1: I agree with it but it is not always easy.	agree with it	agree with it
74	Educator 2: Yes, defiantly but we need more resources and training.	Yes need more resources and training.	
75	Educator 3: Yes, but it is difficult to support everyone with such big numbers in our class.	Yes Difficult with big class	Difficult with big class
76	Educator 4: I agree but we need to be trained properly in inclusive education.	I agree need to be trained in inclusive education	
77	Educator 5: Yes, I think that all children can learn but some take a lot longer and need a lot more help than others.	all children can learn but some take a lot longer and need a lot more help	all children can learn but some take a lot longer and need a lot more help
78	Educator 6: I agree with the statement but it is not easy in our school. We don't have the facilities or training to help all the children.	I agree Not easy don't have facilities or training	

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
79	Researcher: 11.How do you determine the strengths and weaknesses of learners? What do you do to advance their strengths or address their weaknesses? Provide practical examples.		
80	Educator 1: With assessment you can see the strengths and weaknesses of learners. I put the learners in groups according to their abilities then it is easier to help them.	With assessment groups according to their abilities	groups according to their abilities With assessment
81	Educator 2: You get to know your learners by assessing their work. I also put learners in groups according to what they can do.	assessing their work learners in groups according to what they can do	
82	Educator 3: It is easier to see the weaknesses than the strengths. Some of the learners are weak in all areas and don't have many strengths. I have to help the weak learners more.	easier to see the weaknesses than the strengths help the weak learners more.	
83	Educator 4: You determine them when you test the children. You can also see it when you do class work. I put the children in groups according to their abilities.	test the children see it when you do class work	test the children

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
84	Educator 5: I determine the strengths and weaknesses by looking at the children's work and assessments. You also get to know your learners and which learners struggle. I group the learners with a learner who knows what to do so that the other children can follow their example.	children's work and assessments children's work and assessments get to know learners group learners with a learner who knows what to do	children's work
85	Educator 6: I t is easy when you know the children. Then you can group them as some groups need more assistance from the teacher.	know the children group them some groups need more assistance	know the children
86			
87	Researcher: 12.How do you enable learners to get critically involved in the learning process? (To give own opinions, own viewpoints). Provide practical examples.		
88	Educator 1: I allow learners to answer questions and to show me examples.	Learners answer questions show examples	Learners answer questions
89	Educator 2: The learners must all answer questions or come and write on the board but it is difficult with such big classes.	answer questions write on the board	
90	Educator 3: The learner's, have to read aloud, answer questions, complete group work activities.	read aloud, answer questions, complete group work activities.	group work activities

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
91	Educator 4: I allow the learners to answer questions and to give their opinion or ask a question.	answer questions give their opinion ask a question.	give their opinion
92	Educator 5: Learners must all complete a written or verbal form of a task. Sometimes we do group work or drama. We also sing songs.	written or verbal task do group work drama	drama
93	Educator 6: The learners must ask and answer questions. They have to complete worksheets.	Learners ask and answer questions complete worksheets	
94	Researcher: 13. What do you do to accommodate different cultural, language and gender groups in your class? Provide practical examples.		
95	Educator 1: I have to teach in three different languages sometimes. There are seven different languages in my class. It is very difficult.	teach in three different languages	teach in three different languages
96	Educator 2: I am very tolerant of different cultures, we have some foreigners in our class. I have to speak in more than one language when I teach as the children are young and know their mother language best.	tolerant of different cultures speak in more than one language	tolerant of different cultures

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
97	Educator 3: I treat all the children equally and I try to speak different languages when possible as there are lots of different cultures in the class.	treat all children equally speak different languages	treat all children equally
98	Educator 4: I welcome all the children in my class, I am not bias in any way. I often have to teach in more than one language which is not very easy as I don't have a lot of time.	welcome all teach in more than one language	
99	Educator 5: All the children are equal in my class. I don't favour certain children.	All children are equal	
100	Educator 6: I tolerate all the children and I try to teach in more than one language when possible. I use pictures and visual aids when doing lessons to help.	tolerate all children teach in more than one language use pictures and visual aids	use pictures and visual aids
101	Researcher: 14. In what ways are the homes and communities of learners involved in the teaching and learning of learners? Provide practical examples.		

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
102	Educator 1: The homes are not very involved as both parents work. The children are looked after by a relative or friend because their parents passed way. We have a soup kitchen that is run by a church and we get help from St Peters every Tuesday in our classes.	not very involved as both parents work. children looked after by a relative or friend parents passed way. soup kitchen run by a church help from St Peters	not very involved as both parents work children looked after by a relative or friend parents passed way soup kitchen run by a church
103	Educator 2: There is very little parental involvement because they are working or they have passed away. We get help from the church and from St Peters.	little parental involvement working or they have passed away help from church and St Peters	
104	Educator 3: Our community helps, especially the church. We also get donations from St Peters and they do lessons in our classes on a Tuesday.	church. get donations from St Peters	
105	Educator 4: I don't often see parents as they normally both work. This is a poor community but we get help from the church as they have a soup kitchen at our school. St Peters also donates stationary and helps us teach on a Tuesday.	Parents work help from church soup kitchen St Peters also donates stationary and helps us teach	St Peters also donates stationary and helps us teach

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
106	Educator 5: The parents are too busy to come to school but the church helps us feed the poor children. We get donations from the wealthy schools like St Peters.	Parents too busy church helps feed the poor children donations from schools	
107	Educator 6: We have a good soup kitchen that is run by the church and we get help from St Peters on Tuesdays. The police also help if we need them for something.	soup kitchen run by the church help from St Peters police help	
108	Researcher: 15. What do you find the most challenging and the most rewarding about teaching in inclusive classrooms?		
109	Educator 1: The large number of children in our class is the biggest challenge. The most rewarding thing is watching children smile at school.	large number of children watching children smile	watching children smile
110	Educator 2: Big classes and language is the most challenging. The most rewarding thing is when a child is happy in class.	Big classes Language child is happy in class	Big classes child is happy in class
111	Educator 3: There are many challenges like, language, big numbers, lack of resources and lack of time. It is rewarding when a child learns something new.	language, big numbers, lack of resources and lack of time child learns something new.	lack of resources and lack of time child learns something new.

	School 3	Open code	Axial code
112	Educator 4: The most challenging is the lack of resources in our classes. The most rewarding is that the children are happy and feel safe at school.	lack of resources children are happy and feel safe at school	lack of resources
113	Educator 5: The most challenging is the number of learners in our class. It makes me happy when a child succeeds at something in class.	number of learners child succeeds	child succeeds
114	Educator 6: The different languages of the learners and the big numbers are very challenging. The most c thing is when you help a learner.	different languages big numbers big numbers when you help a learner.	different languages
115			

APPENDIX E

THEMES FROM THE INTERVIEWS

Grouping of axial codes into themes

Q 1: Understanding of inclusive education			
1	2	3	Themes
<p>Enabling learners</p> <p>Different learners in mainstream</p> <p>Special needs in mainstream</p> <p>All kinds of learners in one school</p> <p>Different abilities in mainstream</p> <p>Barriers to learning in a normal class</p>	<p>Different abilities in same school</p> <p>No discrimination</p> <p>Accommodating all learners</p> <p>A barrier to learning</p> <p>Every learner belongs</p> <p>Every learner is accepted</p> <p>Learners with barriers in mainstream</p> <p>Include everyone in education despite race, status, ability, gender, age, disability</p>	<p>Barriers in mainstream school</p> <p>Include everyone – deaf, blind</p> <p>All learners to same school</p> <p>Special needs in same class and school</p> <p>Different learning abilities in one class</p> <p>Disabilities in normal classroom</p>	<p>An enabling approach without discrimination</p> <p>Mainstreaming learners</p> <p>Accommodating barriers to learning</p>
Q2: Can inclusion work in SA classrooms			
1	2	3	
<p>Yes and no</p> <p>Depends on severity of disability</p> <p>Special needs school necessary for severe disabilities</p> <p>Depends on whether child would be happy and cope</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Physical problems not too severe to handle in normal classroom</p> <p>Can work:</p> <p>If proper planning, instruction and implementation</p> <p>If enough resources, and professionals to assist (remedial educators,</p>	<p>No:</p> <p>Lack of facilities and resources</p> <p>Not possible to pay enough attention to all learners</p> <p>Discipline problems arise if attention is paid to certain learners</p> <p>Yes:</p> <p>Certain disabilities can be handled in normal classrooms</p>	<p>Training of teachers</p> <p>Reducing learner numbers</p> <p>Appropriate facilities and resources</p> <p>Thorough planning</p> <p>Depends on severity of disability</p>

	therapists) No: Too many learners in a class		
Q3: Training received, nature and adequacy			
1	2	3	
IEB SAALED University training Talks at school	Courses attended Colleagues provide information DoE documents Articles White Paper 6 Not been trained at all College/University Limited knowledge	No training Special courses at university Books with examples on how to accommodate learners University training Training material at school and school support Limited knowledge	Inadequate training Supportive school environment University and college training Self-enrichment opportunities
Q:4 Use of policy documents? Which documents?			
1	2	3	
School policy	White Paper 6 Books on different barriers Difficult to get policies No time to read policy documents Do not consult any documents	No- do not consult any documents	Inadequate consultation Becoming acquainted with White Paper 6
Q5: Explain the types of barriers you deal with.			
1	2	3	
ADD ADHD Language barriers Concentration problems	Health problems Environmental problems Poverty Food/nutrition	Concentration problems ADD ADHD Disruptiveness	Medical barriers Pedagogical barriers Socio-economic barriers Systemic barriers

Hearing problems Remedial support Speech problems Sensory problems	Physical environment: no resources Language problems Overcrowded classes Drug abuse Unstable homes Violence Crime HIV/Aids Disabilities Fear Anger Stress Phobias Aggression No time to address all problems: too many learners Hearing problems Behavioural problems Reading and writing problems	Language problems Communication problems Discipline	
Q 6: Do you have adequate resources and facilities – provide examples			
1	2	3	
Resources: Therapists and remedial therapists on site School not wheel chair friendly throughout Individual education plans for learners	Books: advice on how to cater for learner needs Small classrooms: no place for wheel chairs Teachers responsible to create suitable environment and	Occupational therapist Remedial teacher No resources, no facilities, no ramps for wheel chairs, no equipment for the blind Therapists – parents pay	Adequate human resources Inadequate physical resources

Facilitators to assist in class Educational psychologist on site for advice Parents pay for therapy and facilitators: school fees high No special equipment for the blind and deaf	activities Social workers, nurses, priest, psychologist, police No special equipment or space in classes Aid teacher- remedial class		
Q7: How do you adapt the curriculum for barriers to learning? Provide examples			
1	2	3	
Individual education plans monitored and adjusted Differentiated work cards Assessment: easier questions More time given to complete All must achieve same outcomes	Group learners with same needs Provide activities according to needs Staying behind after school : extra work given Look at different needs and plan programme to cater for all	Differentiation in work sheets One-on-one re-teaching Extra classes Easier instruction Grouping learners with similar problems and working with them Easier readers, work sheets, spelling words	Flexible instruction Individualized instruction
Q8: Which teaching methods do you use to accommodate different learning styles? Provide examples			
1	2	3	
Visual: pictures, projector, practical examples Auditory: read stories, listen to tapes Tactile: movement: sensory	Instruction Individual talks to learners Visual and auditory Be flexible Adaptive	Differentiated work sheets Extra lessons Differentiation in lesson plan Visual: pictures Verbal: stories, speeches,	Balancing the application of different teaching methods In individualized approach An adaptive/flexible approach

pillows, gym balls Balance between visual, auditory and tactile	Adjust according to performance Visual: practical demonstrations, pictures, hand outs, colours Auditory: explanations, discussions, tapes, poems, stories, drama Kinaesthetic: do things, models Group work Activities according to learners' levels	writing activities Learners with sight problems moved to front of class	
Q9: How do you adapt assessment practices? Practical examples			
1	2	3	
Extra time Concrete applications Individual explanations Allow to ask questions if they have problems More explanations	Verbal instead of writing More time to complete More explanation to those who struggle Easier questions Translate information in home language for better understanding	Differentiation Verbal instead of writing Back to basics Easier questions Instead of whole class reading allow learners with problems to do individual reading	Alternative methods of assessment Making adaptations to assessment
Q10 Your view on: "all children can learn and all need support"			
1	2	3	
Yes, some need more and	Yes, but:	All can learn but not in the	Positive that some learners

additional support than others	Not easy More resources, training and facilities required Too many learners Some learners need more help than others	same kind of school Some need more support Children without disabilities also need support	can learn and succeed with support Conditions necessary to provide support to all learners
Q11 How do you determine the strengths and weaknesses of learners and how do you advance the strengths and address the weaknesses?			
1	2	3	
Baseline assessment Re-teaching Enrichment work for bright learners/more challenging work Continuous assessment Repetition of work Small groups for extra work	Assessment, tests, work, assignments Group learners according to abilities Easier to see weaknesses than strengths There are more weak learners in class – help them more Group learners with a learner who knows what to do	Baseline assessment Additional work to reinforce Enrichment work sheets to above average learners Tests and written work Praise strengths Individual work with weak learners Motivate learners Step by step work	Determine strengths and weaknesses through assessment, tests and observation Ability and mixed ability grouping Strategies to address weaknesses
Q12 How do you get learners critically involved? Provide examples			
1	2	3	
Work out problems Active involvement Everyone gets chance to answer question and to demonstrate something	Answer questions Provide own examples Read aloud Group work activities Give opinions	Solve real life problems Discussions Speeches Projects Solve problems	Activities to promote critical involvement Strategies to promote critical involvement

Don't scold learners if they make mistakes to make them feel free and safe to participate Answer questions Pose own problems Demonstrate understanding Role play Speeches Group work Provide practical examples	Drama Complete work sheets	Creative writing- poems Reassuring them that they are doing well	
Q13 How do you accommodate different cultures, languages, genders? Provide examples			
1	2	3	
Media, visual aids representative of diverse countries Explain in different ways Make use of many examples Celebrate different cultures in class: learn about each other Equal treatment of all learners: tolerance nurtured Learning material reflects diverse society	Teaching in 3 languages: 7 languages in class Equal treatment Not being biased Welcome all learners in class Having no favourites Use pictures and visual aids to help us with understanding	Differentiation Individual attention Sensitive to learners Understanding different beliefs Talk about different cultures in class Tolerance	Avoiding discrimination during teaching: tolerance, respect, no favouritism or bias, equality, teach in and speak more than one language.
Q14 Involvement of learners' homes and communities			
1	2	3	
Receive a lot of help: Run puzzle library	Not involved Both parents work	Minimal support from homes: learners left to manage on	Parental involvement related to learning support

<p>Cover books</p> <p>Class moms</p> <p>Parents run charities</p> <p>Community members: listen to reading</p> <p>Outreach projects</p> <p>Reading grannies</p> <p>Fundraisers</p> <p>Make costumes</p> <p>Dads: sound, props</p> <p>Outings</p> <p>talks</p>	<p>Relatives/friends look after children</p> <p>Help from church</p> <p>Donations from St Peters</p> <p>St Peters do lessons on Tuesdays</p> <p>St Peters: stationery donations</p> <p>Soup kitchen at school: poor community</p> <p>Police help if needs are there</p>	<p>their own</p> <p>No help</p> <p>Some help with homework, research, writing speeches</p>	<p>Limited involvement by parents</p> <p>Parental involvement related to extra-curricular activities</p> <p>Limited involvement by parents</p> <p>Limited community involvement</p>
<p>Q 15 What do you find the most challenging and rewarding about teaching in inclusive classrooms?</p>			
1	2	3	
<p>Challenging:</p> <p>Lack of time</p> <p>Different needs to be accommodated</p> <p>Extremes in one class</p> <p>Language problems</p> <p>Overcrowded classes</p> <p>Catering for all needs</p> <p>Rewarding:</p> <p>Children succeeding</p> <p>When a child feels he is capable</p>	<p>Challenging:</p> <p>Large numbers in class</p> <p>Language problems</p> <p>Lack of resources and time</p> <p>Rewarding:</p> <p>Children smiling at school</p> <p>Happy children</p> <p>When a child learns something new</p>	<p>Challenging:</p> <p>Practical implementation</p> <p>Time management</p> <p>Some learners need a lot of extra attention</p> <p>Re-teaching work</p> <p>Rewarding:</p> <p>Every day is rewarding</p> <p>Learners succeeding</p> <p>Make a difference in the life of</p>	<p>Challenging:</p> <p>Systemic barriers</p> <p>Pedagogical barriers</p> <p>Rewarding:</p> <p>Making a difference in the life of a child</p>

Children helping one another Children who come to school with a smile Children progressing When a child grasps concepts being taught	Happy children Children who feel safe Children who succeed To help a learner	a child Child understanding work Learners working together To praise learners on their strengths To help learners to solve problems To help a child	
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