

# **EDUCATORS' PREPAREDNESS FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

by

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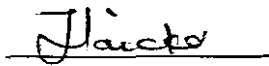
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April 2008

## **DECLARATION**

**I HEREBY DECLARE THAT "EDUCATORS' PREPAREDNESS FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION" IS MY OWN WORK AND THAT ALL SOURCES THAT I HAVE USED AND QUOTED HAVE BEEN INDICATED AND ACKNOWLEDGED BY COMPLETE REFERENCE.**

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'J. Naicker', is written over a horizontal line.

J.NAICKER

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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated

to my late dad,

**SAMINATHAN PILLAY** and my mum, **MARIAMA PILLAY**

as well as

my loving husband, **AMARAN**

and my precious sons

**KEMESHAN AND DHIVESHAN.**

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***TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN***

**EDITING OF MASTER'S DISSERTATION**

This is to certify that I have edited the dissertation:

*Educators' preparedness for inclusive education*

submitted by **Jeshni Naicker**, to the best of my ability and declare it free of language errors. The changes I have indicated concerning the dissertation have been made.



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## SUMMARY

The aim of this investigation was to establish educators' preparedness for inclusive education:

Educators seem to embrace the human rights philosophy underpinning the introduction of inclusive education. However the implementation of inclusive education is not easy as it signals a dramatic paradigm shift for mainstream educators. It involves a new way of thinking and behaving. Many experienced educators have found that they are no longer experts in their field and are concerned that they are novices regarding inclusive education. The success of inclusive education hinges on the effective preparedness of educators. The level of preparedness of educators will determine their degree of acceptance and their efficiency in the implementation of inclusive education.

The first phase of this study comprised a comprehensive overview of the literature on educators' preparedness for inclusive education. The second phase involved research by means of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered to a stratified random sample of 120 primary and secondary school educators in the Umdoni Ward of the Scottburgh circuit, KwaZulu Natal. The results of this questionnaire provided evidence that educators are not adequately prepared for inclusive education.

The literature review indicated that educators in mainstream schools are generally not prepared to include LSEN in the mainstream class for the following reasons:

- Large class sizes.
- Lack of support.
- Lack of knowledge.
- Lack of skills and competencies.

- Lack of resources
- High stress level.
- Time constraints.

For the purpose of the empirical investigation a self- structured questionnaire was utilized. The data from the questionnaires completed by educators from primary and secondary schools was processed and analysed by means of descriptive statistics. From the findings of the research, the following recommendations were made:

- The Department of Education must provide adequate support to educators concerning all aspects of inclusive education.
- In-service training regarding inclusive education must be available to mainstream educators.

## CHAPTER 1

### ORIENTATION

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Prior to 1994 special needs education was fragmented not only by apartheid laws that enforced separation along racial lines, but also by legislation and policy that separated 'ordinary' learners from learners categorised as having 'special' needs. Learners with disabilities and those experiencing learning difficulties had been relegated to a second system of education, separated and marginalized from mainstream educational provision (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999:10). In addition, they were relegated to the periphery of educational concern.

The nature of support services available reflected a strong focus on the medical model of diagnosis and treatment of 'learner deficits.' This approach has led to exclusionary practices in education towards learners with disabilities and those experiencing learning difficulties (DNE, 2001: 9). There has been a history of negative stereotyping and marginalization of these learners, and their exclusion from mainstream educational provision (Muthukrishna & Schoeman, 2000: 316).

The current South African government is promoting a society where human rights are supreme and diversity is celebrated and embraced. The change to an inclusive education system is part of the government's initiatives to eradicate all forms of injustice from all sectors of society. The education system is a reflection of society in general. The values of society shape education and education can be employed to shape the values within society (DNE, 2002: 211). The promotion of the ideals of inclusive education should be viewed as part of the wider human, political and ethical effort to secure a better life for all citizens. Education has an important role to play in the transformation, reconstruction and development of the South African society (Nicholls, 1998:44).

The Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education signed by several countries in 1994 pronounce inclusive education as



“...the most effective way to combat discriminatory attitudes, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all” (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999: 9). According to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa ((DNE, 2002: 211) education is a basic human right and the creation of inclusive schools is seen as pivotal to the creation of an inclusive society. The discussion of inclusive education thus takes place within the rights discourse and has its basis in South Africa's new democratic constitution. The principles and values contained in the new constitution of South Africa (1996) and in White Paper 6 (DNE, 2001:16) acknowledge that education should be accessible and all learners are to be given the opportunity to participate in a common education curriculum (Möwes, 2002:47).

In practice inclusive education means the integration of those learners who previously received their education in special classes or special schools into mainstream schools. “The focus is no longer on the individual learner who needs to fit in, but on the potential responsibility of the system to transform so that individual differences amongst learners can be accommodated” (Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booysen, 1996:7).

The guiding principle that informs the framework of inclusion is that all schools should accommodate all learners regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional or other conditions. Inclusive education promotes a single system of education dedicated to ensure that all learners are empowered to become caring and competent citizens in an inclusive, changing and diverse society (Hall & Engelbrecht, 1999:231).

## **1.2 ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM**

Although the principle of inclusion presupposes a warm and embracing attitude towards all learners, a great deal of responsibility lies with the educators who are the pivotal cornerstone of the process. According to Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker and Engelbrecht (1999:30) many of the reforms regarding the placement of learners with disabilities in regular classrooms have led to a reported decline in the morale of educators, together with a reduced willingness and capacity to cope with the associated demands.

The education system is not prepared for integrated education. The schools are not physically built to be accessible to disabled learners and the educators are not prepared for them (Hay, 2003:137). At present class sizes of 40 learners to one educator in an ordinary primary school and 35 to one in a secondary school, do not make it possible for a learner with disability to receive the kind of attention required for quality inclusive education. The realities of the situation in many schools and the legacy of the previous inequitable provision of educational facilities to certain population groups make it impossible to mainstream all learners with disabilities at this stage (Bothma, Gravett & Swart, 2000: 203).

According to Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker and Engelbrecht (1999: 57) when confronting the challenge of building an inclusive school, current conditions must be taken into account. As a result of South Africa's particular history of inequalities and discrimination and the context of recent rapid social changes, most schools do not even have basic resources and are experiencing a serious breakdown in the culture of teaching and learning. Whilst the state has given its commitment to addressing the critical issue of inclusive education by publishing the White Paper 6 in July 2001, there appears to be a lack of information at school level. Educational transformation may be on its way in terms of policy-making and legislation, but it has not brought about the expected metamorphosis in teaching practice or the schools (Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff & Pettipher, 2002:178).

Dyson (1999:36-50) says that despite the impression among advocates and non-advocates that full inclusion has swept the educational land, the rhetoric seems to have moved faster than the reality and only a few schools have joined the full inclusion bandwagon. The reality is that educators are struggling to come to grips with the associated additional demands against the backdrop of "change overload" from which South African educators are suffering at the moment. The changes seem to come from "the top" with little consideration for the educators' unique situations. The policies do not address and take into account the persistent problem of certain dysfunctional township schools – absenteeism among learners and staff, violence, sexual abuse and substance abuse (Hay, 2003:135; Bothma, Gravett & Swart, 2000:203).

Downing (2002:11) maintains that the knowledge, skills and competencies required for inclusive education are substantially different and require additional training and support for educators. The competencies required to teach in an inclusive setting also involve being able to adapt curricular content and teaching methods to assist learners with special needs, working in collaboration with colleagues, parents and the broader community and being instilled with an optimistic picture of what can be accomplished (Möwes, 2002:63). There seems to be a lack of preparedness of educators in this regard.

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

In essence the problem to be investigated in this study focuses on the following:

- Are educators adequately prepared for the implementation of inclusive education?
- What support do educators require to prepare them for the effective implementation of inclusive education?

### **1.4 ELUCIDATION OF CONCEPTS**

#### **1.4.1 Gender**

In this study all references to any gender include references to the other gender.

#### **1.4.2 Educator**

An educator is a mediator of learning, designer of learning programmes and material, leader and manager, learning area specialist or phase specialist (Parker 1998:3). According to De Witt and Booyesen (1995:39) the educator is an adult who assumes responsibility for guiding the child en route to adulthood. Since the educator plays such a large part in the process of a child becoming an adult, he can be called to account for the quality of the child becoming an adult. The educator is also jointly responsible for the creation of the educative climate, which is a condition for the encounter between the educator and the learner.

According to Griessel, Louw and Swart (1993:42) it is the task of responsible adults to aid those requiring maturity to assume gradual responsibilities for their own attainment of adulthood. All educators should be adults and fully capable of accepting the charge of beings in a not yet responsible mode of human existence. An educator is a scientifically schooled person practising education on a post-scientific level. An educator is someone who demonstrates authority, trust, expertise and understanding. An educator is concerned with the educand as a totality and not simply with the teaching of a specific subject (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1988:73).

### **1.4.3 Education**

Education is a practice – the educator’s concern in assisting the child on his way to adulthood. Education can therefore be defined as the conscious, purposive intervention by an adult in the life of a non-adult to bring him to independence (Van Rensburg, Landman & Bodenstein, 1994:366). Education as pedagogic assistance is the positive influencing of a non-adult by an adult, with the specific purpose of effecting changes of significant value. Du Toit and Kruger (1993:5) contend that education refers to the help and support which the child receives from an adult with a view of attaining responsible adulthood.

### **1.4.4 Inclusive education**

According to White Paper 6 (DNE, 2001:6) inclusive education is about acknowledging that all children and youth can learn and that all children and youth need support. Inclusive education is about acknowledging and respecting the differences in learners whether due to age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disability, HIV or other infectious diseases. Inclusive education describes the process by which a school attempts to respond to all learners as individuals, by reconsidering and restructuring its curricular organisation and by providing and allocating resources to enhance equality of opportunity (Hyam, 2004:36).

According to Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker and Engelbrecht (1999:19-20) inclusive education can be defined as a system of education that is responsive to the diverse needs of learners. A mere definition will not suffice in conveying the actual meaning of the concept for everyday teaching and learning. The term inclusive education means that children who were previously taught in special schools are now allowed to go to any regular school and attend classes with their “normal peers.” In other words, those children who were previously excluded from the schools in the mainstream are now included (Jenkins & Sileo, 1994:84).

Inclusive education is however more than just a placement. Very specific principles underlie this approach and are usually built into a bill of rights and governmental policies (DNE, 2002:11). All the documents stress the principle of education as a basic human right. The principle implies that all learners have the right to equal access to the widest possible educational opportunities. The state has an obligation to protect and advance these rights so that all citizens, irrespective of race, class, gender, creed, or age have the opportunity to develop their capacities and potential and make their full contribution to society. The principle of quality education for all learners suggests that schools have to meet the diverse needs of all learners (Barton, 1993:65).

#### **1.4.5 Learners with special educational needs (LSEN)**

White Paper 6 (DNE, 2001:7) acknowledges that the learners who are most vulnerable to barriers to learning and exclusion in South Africa are those who have historically been termed ‘learners with special education needs,’ that is, learners with disabilities and impairments. The ANC (1994:104) document defines the concept as follows: “Special educational needs include special academic and learning problems, physical health problems, emotional concerns and particular social needs.”

In the Consultative Paper No.1 on Special Education (DNE, 1999:6) the writers refer to the term “education for learners with special education needs” as the provision of education support services to learners in public specialised/special schools, and those who experience severe learning difficulties in ordinary public schools, who are

usually placed in specialised classes. The few specialised/ special schools continue to be administered and evaluated through separate structures and procedures.

Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (1997: 8) indicate that the concept LSEN is a comprehensive one that refers to a wide spectrum of learners ranging from those who suffer from severe and multiple physical disabilities who would normally be taught in a special school, to those with mild or hardly discernible problems, who can be found in mainstream education but who require additional educational assistance. According to Downing (2002: 27) it has become the current practice worldwide to keep LSEN within mainstream education as far as possible and to deal with their problems in the context of the classroom.

#### **1.4.6 Mainstream schools**

According to White Paper 6 (DNE, 2001:17) mainstreaming is about getting learners to 'fit into' a particular kind of system or integrating them into this existing system. According to Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booyen (1996:15) mainstream schools are regular schools as opposed to special schools. Mainstream schools traditionally cater for non-disabled "normal" learners who do not have special needs. However, the traditional make-up of regular/mainstream schools in South Africa has changed over the past decade. As inclusive education gains momentum, the term inclusive school will replace the term mainstream school. For the purpose of this study, the term mainstream school refers to the general education school where the classroom is the responsibility of the general classroom educator (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2000:8).

#### **1.4.7 Preparedness**

According to the Webster Comprehensive Dictionary (1992: 996) preparedness means to make ready, be fit or be qualified, or to provide with what is needed. In this context it can be translated to how well educators already have been readied or trained for inclusive education, i.e. has the educator been prepared with regard to skills, knowledge and attitudes to be able to be effective within the inclusive classroom?

Psychological preparedness is defined as a designed focus of intervention that is age and culturally appropriate (Idol, 1997:385). Preparedness also requires a good communication plan. Any change in society needs to be preceded by a preparation for the change or else change can be met with much resistance or pessimism. Educators need to be empowered with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values commensurate with the change (Hay, Smit & Paulsen, 2001:213).

## **1.5 AIMS OF THIS STUDY**

The aims of this study are:

- To pursue a study of relevant literature pertaining to educators' preparedness for inclusive education.
- To undertake an empirical investigation to establish educators' preparedness for inclusive education.
- To formulate certain recommendations in order to assist educators in their preparedness for the successful implementation of inclusive education.

## **1.6 METHOD OF RESEARCH**

Research with regard to this study will be conducted as follows:

- A study of available and relevant literature.
- An empirical survey comprising a self-structured questionnaire to be completed by educators.

## **1.7 FURTHER COURSE OF THIS STUDY**

In chapter two educators' preparedness for inclusive education will be discussed. Chapter three will explain the empirical research methodology to be utilized.

Chapter four will focus on the presentation and analysis of the research data.

Chapter five will offer a summary, findings and recommendations.

## **1.8 SUMMARY**

An explanation of the problem, statement of the problem and the aims of this study were presented in this chapter. The method of research was explained and certain relevant concepts were elucidated. In conclusion the further course of this study was provided.



## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The educator's task where learners with special educational needs (LSEN) are concerned has changed dramatically over the past few years. Whereas formerly educators were only expected to identify exceptional learners as soon as possible with a view to rating them on a scale for special education, they now have to accommodate LSEN in ordinary classes, in conformity with the principles of normalisation, inclusion and mainstreaming (Lefrancois, 1997: 251).

This change in policy has major implications for educators. Whereas they used to adhere to a standard curriculum, teach learners in a class as a whole, and place a high premium on the orderly progress of classroom routine, they are now expected to make provision for conspicuous individual differences, for example, in learning styles or achievements (Downing, 2002: 45). In addition to merely identifying LSEN, educators are now expected to render assistance at a certain level. Educators therefore have to set individual goals and adapt learning content, teaching methods and teaching media, and teach according to the pace of learners in the class. This could even mean that they have to pay attention to these learners on a one to one basis. One of the requirements for the effective implementation of inclusive education is that educators must be adequately prepared (Moore & Gilbreath, 1998: 56).

However, before inclusion can be practised, educators will need to experience a paradigm shift, one that will prepare them for the change from teaching in mainstream class to teaching in inclusive classrooms (Hyam, 2004: 34).

## **2.2 CHANGE TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

According to Corbett (2001:56), it is generally accepted that change is challenging and may be perceived as a threat. Educators are currently being expected to make major changes in the way they understand teaching and learning in an inclusive classroom. Research has shown that educators feel that most of the changes are forced upon them, that they have no say in the changes and that changes make no meaningful contribution to their professional development (Hay, Smit & Paulsen, 2001: 215). The government's initiatives since 1994 on the development, for example, of outcomes based education and the revised new curriculum 2005, have contributed to the disempowerment of educators.

Change is a process, not an event; educators will therefore have to be prepared to meet the challenges of this process. Educators must be prepared to act as agents of change and recognize that they do have the power to understand the challenge and indeed the responsibility to act as agents of change (Ainscow, 1997:5). According to Giroux (1990:207) the responsibility for the reshaping of education rests squarely on the shoulders of educators. He maintains that educators have the power to either challenge or reinforce a need for change in policy and practice in education.

Davies and Green (1998: 100) maintain that until schools develop an understanding of why change is necessary, most educators will still perceive LSEN as not their problem. According to White Paper 6 (DNE, 2001:24) the most significant conceptual change from current policy is that the development of education and training must be premised on the understanding that many learners experience barriers to learning or drop out primarily because of the inability of the system to recognise and accommodate the diverse range of learning needs typically through inaccessible physical plants, curricula, assessment, learning materials and instructional methodologies.

The role of educators in changing environments is required to also change if there is to be a smooth transition from mainstream education to inclusive education. Change will not be effective if those who implement it are resistant or uncommitted.

Educators must see the value of the change and be prepared to embrace this change. They may need to acquire new skills and discard some of their beliefs and practices. This implies taking risks and facing challenges. Educators are required to rethink their roles, construct new knowledge and learn new skills to equip themselves for the change (Hyam, 2004: 34).

Principals too have an important role to play. They are in a critical position to influence the change process and contribute towards educators' preparedness for inclusive education. As instructional leaders, principals articulate school missions, promote an instructional climate, manage curriculum and instruction, supervise teaching and monitor student progress (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997:134-135). They can support inclusion through (re)deploying the staff; scheduling the necessary time for educators to plan and learn new skills; involving the parents of all children in school; ensuring access to staff development, and taking time to be involved with the outcomes of all the learners in the school (Walter-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000: 30).

Inclusive programmes are most effective when shared leadership prevails. For meaningful improvements to occur, educators and principals must become change agents. The role of leadership and management is crucial in ensuring that the school goes the "route of inclusion," and is managed and "held together" in such a way that this is possible. Research based on a study of 32 schools in America that were implementing inclusive educational opportunities for learners, reported that among both general and special educators, the degree of administrative support emerged as the most powerful predictor of positive attitudes towards full inclusion (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997: 134-135; Walter-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000: 30).

Successful inclusion is largely dependant on the preparedness of the educator to embrace inclusivity. Lomofsky, Roberts and Mvambi (1999:71) state that clarity about their own strengths, vulnerabilities and needs is a necessary step in preparing educators for inclusive education.

To be effectively prepared for inclusive education, educators must be willing to change their:

- attitudes;
- beliefs;
- opinions;
- paradigms;
- perspectives;
- teaching methods; and
- relationships.

### **2.3 EDUCATOR – LEARNER RELATIONSHIP**

An important aspect of the educator's preparedness for inclusive education is his relationship with the LSEN. The educator must be prepared to have a positive relationship with the LSEN. Van Niekerk (1982:145) describes the type of educational situation where things go wrong as one where there is usually no positive relationship with the educator.

According to Du Toit and Kruger (1993:66) the educator and the learner are related in a special way. An effective education situation is characterised by a:

- relationship of trust;
- relationship of understanding; and
- a relationship of authority.

Educators must be prepared to treat every learner with sincerity, warmth and interest. They should not simply concentrate on those learners they find appealing. Only by adopting such an attitude will educators be able to accept each learner as "their learner" and build up a true educational relationship with each learner. The educator must refrain from being sentimental and indulgent as this kind of love will destroy rather than establish an educational relationship (Lefrancois, 1997: 145).

If the relationships of trust, understanding and authority are not realised, the educator will not be prepared to teach effectively.

### **2.3.1 Relationship of trust**

The relationship of trust is a precondition for inclusive education. There must be mutual trust between the educator and the LSEN (Bender, Vail & Scott, 1995: 90). A trusting environment in which the educator and the LSEN accept each other as persons who are bearers of human dignity, is necessary to constitute the education relationship. The educator must be prepared to trust in the LSEN'S ability to be educated. He must trust that the LSEN is capable of learning and achieving and being someone (Goodman, 1992:146).

The relationship of trust is characterised by respect, acceptance and faith. The key to the understanding of trust is faith. One can only trust a person if one has complete faith in him. The educator must be prepared to have faith in the LSEN'S worthiness and thereby instil confidence in him (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 1997:65). The LSEN sometimes has a low self-concept, which arises out of his difficulty with coping with the challenges he is confronted with in the educational situation and hence lacks faith in his worthiness. Educators will need to be prepared to boost LSEN'S feeling of self-worth in order for them to gain trust in themselves. This can be done by helping learners develop their internal self- worth through guidance that provides opportunities to see themselves as unique, lovable and important regardless of appearance or performance (Foreman, 1996: 62).

### **2.3.2 Relationship of understanding**

According to Allan (1999:56) the educator must be prepared to understand the special needs of LSEN. The educator must understand the nature of learners with special educational needs, their problems, their way of learning and what works for them. He must be prepared to convey a message of unconditional acceptance and understanding or else the LSEN will most likely feel stigmatised and consequently underachieve in an inclusive class.

Educators must be prepared to develop a critical understanding of common stereotypes and prejudices related to disability and reflect on how these have influenced their own attitudes. Inclusive education requires that these learners are not simply thought of with pity but viewed more positively, in terms of their abilities rather than their disabilities (Lomofsky, Roberts & Mvambu, 1999: 71).

In learning to understand the child, the educator must be prepared to acquaint himself well with the educand's capacity of being educable, his strengths and weaknesses and who the educand is (Hegarty, 1994: 56). The educator has to become involved with the child and assist him. The act of understanding implies action. According to Swart and Pettipher (2000: 80), to understand presupposes that one must have knowledge of that which one wishes to understand. Understanding implies thinking that leads to the solving of the problem. In the case of LSEN, the educator must be prepared to make time and take the trouble to collect the necessary information to plan for the learner and to assist him to the best of his ability. He should constantly strive to help the child reach his pedagogically attainable level of development (Kapp, 1994:77).

Flavell (2001: 23) maintains that most educators are committed to having or developing a broad repertoire of teaching strategies. How they implement them is shaped by their relationships with learners, their feelings about what will excite and engage their learners emotionally, and their feelings about what will excite and engage themselves as educators. The relationship of understanding is at the heart of the emotional labour of teaching. It is responsible for educators wanting to change and develop pedagogically (Foreman, 1996:59).

The educator must be prepared to increase his knowledge about LSEN in order to be an understanding educator in an inclusive class (Nell, 1996: 25). Educators become more accepting as they learn more about the abilities and problems of LSEN. This acceptance and understanding will then reflect a respect for the dignity of the learner as a unique individual. The learner will then feel a sense of confidence and security and be willing to accept the authority of the educator (Lefrancois, 1997:148).

### **2.3.3 Relationship of authority**

Educational authority cannot be imposed on learners but can be acquired or developed through interaction between the educator and the learner in a spirit of mutual trust, respect and understanding. The educator as a symbol of authority must be prepared to display certain qualities in his inter-personal relationships or contact with the child in order to get him to accept and respect his authority (Foreman, 1996:63).

According to Allan (1999: 74) the educator must be prepared to be reliable, consistent and trustworthy before he can expect LSEN to submit to his guidance and attach appropriate meanings to what is wrong and what is right. The educator will have to be unbiased when disciplining. He will have to assert authority and discipline equally, this means not ignoring LSEN if and when the need arises, for example: disruptiveness and inattentiveness. Learners are quick to sum up the educator's expectations of them. The educator should have high expectations for all learners, that means allowing every learner to reach his maximum potential (Page & Page, 1998: 39).

If the educator fails to discipline the learner when he (LSEN) knows that he should be disciplined, he will be forced to feel marginalized. The child then experiences a feeling of not being accepted. He will consequently not be wholehearted in his acceptance of authority and of norms represented by the adult (Baker & Gotlieb, 1980: 62).

Educators must be prepared to respond to troublesome behaviour in an equitable manner as this enables all learners, including LSEN, to learn from their mistakes (Foreman, 1996:65). Educators need to respond in an evenhanded manner to behavioural problems as some learners may feel that they are being treated unfairly. When learners violate classroom rules, educators should respond in a caring yet firm manner. Learners should also understand why they are chastised. It is essential for learners to perceive the process as fair and predictable (Lewis & Doorlag, 1991:139).

According to Smith (1991:177) educators tend to formulate one of four general feelings about each learner; attachment, concern, indifference and rejection. These feelings result in varied interaction patterns, for example: learners towards whom the educator is indifferent are usually passive, avoid contact with the educator and are in turn avoided by the educator.

When educating learners, the educator should always confront the child with authentic educational authority (Allan, 1999: 74). He should be consistent in his authoritative guidance in the sense of always being empathetic and understanding, and in particular, he should demonstrate practically that which is exemplary in his own life. Learners are usually very sensitive and may easily judge the educator and find him lacking. Sympathetic authoritative guidance is a reliable means of stabilising the learner emotionally; this affords the learner certainty and security (Page & Page, 1998: 148). Problems arise in the educational situation when authority is constantly wielded in an unsympathetic, inconsistent, loveless or dictatorial manner, but also when no authority is exercised at all (Smith, 1991:15).

## **2.4 THE CURRICULUM**

Educators must be prepared in terms of understanding the curriculum appropriate for inclusive education. Many educators still tend to think that it is correct to use the 'one-size-fits all' approach to teaching (Wade, 2000:87). In reality, educators are faced with a group of learners where each and every one has his unique character, interests, style and pace of learning and working. Curriculum differentiation should not be an exception but rather a central method of ensuring curriculum access (Gilbert & Hart, 1990:150).

According to White Paper 6 (DNE, 2001: 5) the curriculum and education system as a whole have failed to respond to the diverse needs of the learner population resulting in massive numbers of drop-outs, push-outs, failures and in learners being 'mainstreamed by default.'

The physical presence of learners in a classroom is no guarantee for their involvement in class and school activities. It is through the curriculum that inclusion



truly takes place (Levitz,1996: 65). A school's curriculum is all those activities designed or encouraged within its organizational framework to promote the intellectual, personal, social, and physical development of learners. These include the content of lessons, types of resources, lesson presentation, teaching style, time allocation and learner activities (Möwes, 2002: 59).

In South Africa, inclusive education takes place within the context of the outcomes based curriculum. The introduction of OBE is conducive to inclusive education as it promotes learning and assessing in individualized ways (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999: 29). However, the implementation of OBE has been problematic. Pithouse (2001: 54), in an article dealing with the retraining of in-service educators, points out that the skills and knowledge necessary to deal with OBE were dealt with on a very superficial level. She states that the notion that effective teacher development can be achieved through a brief retraining exercise left educators feeling insecure about their abilities to implement the new curriculum. Educators need to be equipped with relevant knowledge, skills and competencies. Many schools have not yet successfully implemented OBE and still make use of rigid testing and examination orientated systems which are counterproductive in terms of inclusive education (Kühnert, 2003:43-47).

Learners learn in different ways and at different rates. Research has stressed the importance of the flexibility of the curriculum (Richmond, 1993:50). There has to be a balance between the learner, the learning content and the instructional strategies adopted. According to Möwes (2002: 65), a flexible curriculum would allow for individualized instruction and would take into account the different rates of learning. Traditionally the curriculum resulted in learners being stratified into high and low achievers based on their ability to maintain the pace of learning and progress successfully. Educators must be prepared to change this notion. They must be prepared to understand that learners learn differently and learn at different rates. Realising that all learners will acquire different levels of skills and understanding of material/activities, may help prepare educators to welcome LSEN in the classroom (Downing, 2002: 150).

The educator must be prepared to adapt the instructional strategies to suit the individual needs and diverse learning styles of learners. Learners must be allowed to progress at their own rate. The educator must be prepared to analyse the skills and needs of the LSEN and then determine what adaptations are required (Vlachou, 1997: 53). They must be prepared to be creative and resourceful when teaching LSEN.

Eaton (1996:5) suggests the following instructional strategies:

- **Data – based or outcomes - based - instructional models:** such as mastery learning and computer assisted instruction, as well as curriculum – based assessment models. The goals and objectives set are based on individual needs and ability.
- **Cooperative group learning:** Heterogeneous groups whose members are interdependent upon one another in order to achieve the group-learning goal. This strategy allows educators to establish individual goals for learners or a variety of skills and abilities while the group works to achieve a common goal.
- **Whole language:** This approach accepts the diverse communicative skills and abilities of learners and allows each learner to work at his own level.
- **Activity–based learning:** There exists a variety of learner centred experiential learning techniques that readily lend themselves to the diverse abilities of learners in the mainstream classroom. Individual learning objectives are easily embedded into the general concept of the lessons.
- **Skills matrix:** Rather than a curricular subject, the routine of the classroom is an important tool that can be used in the programming of learners with disabilities. The benefit here is that natural cues rather than contrived cues exist and the learning occurs in the context in which the skills are to be practised. This strategy is often used for social and behavioural goals, but may also be used for academic learning.

- **Differentiated instruction:** also known as multi-level instruction. This strategy allows the inclusion of all learners in the learning activity while using the same lesson, materials and programme

## 2.5 EDUCATORS' BELIEFS

Beliefs are what guide thinking and actions (Carrington, 1999:258). All educators have beliefs about their work, their learners, how learning occurs, etc. Unlike knowledge, which tends to be impartial and impersonal, a belief has strong emotional components. Thus beliefs are reflected in attitudes, prejudices, judgements and opinions (Lefrancois, 1997: 251).

According to Carrington (1999: 263) beliefs regarding acceptance of inclusive practices may affect the degree to which educators are prepared to carry out their duty. The beliefs that educators have about teaching learners with different learning needs and beliefs about their roles and responsibilities in meeting these needs, may impair the progress of inclusive education. Educators who believe that learners with special educational needs may become useful members of society are more prepared to integrate them than educators who do not share this belief.

Downing (2002:11) maintains that educators will only be adequately prepared to embrace inclusive education if they believe that all children can learn. Educators must also believe that they can teach all children. Many educators believe that children with "special needs" belong to a "special class." These educators may not believe in the positive outcomes of inclusion but accept it because they are expected to. Such beliefs may hinder their preparedness to embrace inclusive education and prevent them from being effective educators in an inclusive class (Swart & Pettipher, 2000: 85).

Hay, Smit and Paulsen (2001: 215) state that the recognition that all learners learn differently and at different rates and are motivated to learn different things, assists the process of inclusive education. Not all learners in a classroom obtain the same level of knowledge or understanding in the course of a school year. What is critical, however, is that all learners have access to the information, regardless of whether

similar goals are reached. When confronted with new learning tasks, not all learners will master the material; some will attain only a partial level of understanding

Educators' beliefs about teaching and learning changes are a complex issue. Changes to their belief system could lead to high stress levels. To deal with LSEN educators have to abandon their old teaching strategies, which have withstood the test of time, and experiment with new ones, an experience that is recognized as anxiety evoking (Carrington, 1999: 260).

During the process of changing to inclusive education, educators' beliefs seldom change through a mere discussions of beliefs, but involve a deep personality-related challenge (Hyam,2004:45). Educators will need guidance to explore their concepts and feelings, ambiguities, anxieties and confusions in an open and accepting climate. It is simply not enough to think that unwelcome beliefs will go away. Educators will need safe, professional environments where their attitudes and beliefs can be explored, shared, challenged and restructured (Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff & Pettipher, 2002: 185).

Inclusive education works when all educators are prepared to believe in the idea that they will not sacrifice the many for the few (Pithouse, 2001: 55). In other words, they will not provide for the special needs of some learners without looking at how it affects all learners in the classroom. The interaction between positive beliefs, knowledge about LSEN and use of appropriate classroom strategies in the classroom is complex. For example, some educators may have positive beliefs about inclusive education but may not have the knowledge and skills that allow them to do what they would like to in the classroom. These educators may need to see other successful educators working in inclusive settings, adapting curricula for all learners and organizing classes to meet the needs of diverse learners (Dyson & Forlin, 1999:47).

Inclusive education can only be successful when confident, forceful and persistent educators who are prepared to convince themselves and others to adopt new beliefs and practices that support inclusion, resolve ambiguities in practice and policy (Carrington, 1999: 260). There has been little or no research to date in South Africa,

which has explored the mainstream educator's beliefs with regard to LSEN. However, in a study involving specialised schools in the KwaZulu–Natal area, Rocher (1996: 25) found that despite the many problems there was incredible dedication and optimism among the principals and educators.

## **2.6 ATTITUDES**

Educators' attitudes towards LSEN determine their preparedness to embrace inclusive education. Siegel (1992:19) points out that it is generally assumed that educators who hold negative attitudes will not be prepared to accept LSEN if mainstreaming were to take place. This would impede the inclusion process and defeat its purpose.

Opponents of inclusive education argue that general education classes are not appropriate learning environments for learners who have problems such as distractibility, poor memory, visual and auditory processing problems and poor self-control. They argue that these learners are likely to fail in larger classrooms because they may not receive the more intensive and individualized instruction which is especially important in elementary grades. They also argue that LSEN might be penalized by means of inappropriate instruction, insensitive peers, limited attention, and unrealistic expectations from mainstream educators (Walter-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:14-15).

Educators with negative attitudes towards inclusive education must be prepared to change and develop positive attitudes (Mowes, 2002:65). Facing negative attitudes from the beginning is exhausting to all concerned and can interfere with effective learning. Learners without disabilities who follow the lead of their educators are not going to be welcoming or helpful in the classrooms in which it is clear that the educator would rather not have a certain learner in class. The educator must be prepared to be a role model in his attitude towards LSEN. Educators must realize that their words and actions provide a model for the learners; they should attempt to convey a positive attitude that encourages acceptance of the "special learner" (Lewis & Doorlag, 1991:139).

According to Hay, Smit and Paulsen (2001: 215) educators should refrain from labelling LSEN. This will be an indication of their preparedness to accept them in the mainstream class since one factor that influences educators' attitudes is labelling. When learners are identified by a negatively perceived label (for example, learning disabled, mentally retarded, and dumb) educators are less able to objectively observe, rate and plan appropriate interventions (Lewis & Doorlag, 1991:139).

Educators expect less from learners who are handicapped (Smith, 1991: 65). Expectations lead people to form self-fulfilling prophecies. Self-fulfilling prophecies are expectations about future behaviour and performances that emanate from labels and self-image. A learner labelled "mentally retarded" is likely to live up to such an expectation or prophecy. Labels and low expectations can have a detrimental and negative effect on the acceptance of LSEN in an inclusive class (Page & Page, 1998: 28).

Wade (2000: 48) maintains that attitudes are affected by information. Educators who are well informed about LSEN will be more prepared and empowered to implement inclusive education. When educators and 'normal' learners increase their knowledge about "special learners," their attitudes improve. According to Davies and Green (1998:18), in research exploring educators' attitudes towards actual mainstreamed learners with difficulties, a prominent variable can be identified which has a positive influence. In a study conducted by Siegel (1992 : 65) it was found that positive attitudes were significantly correlated with educators' success with handicapped learners.

According to Hegarty (1994: 52) attitudes towards inclusion may be closely tied to educators' feelings of competency and effectiveness in educating those learners with disabilities. Lack of knowledge and experience of exceptional learners and mainstreaming also affect classroom educators' attitudes and recommendations about placements.

Educators need to be prepared to welcome learners with disabilities into their classrooms. A body of research has shown positive effects for learners with

disabilities in inclusive settings (Wade, 2000:50). An improvement in communication and social skills, increase in peer interactions and post-school adjustments are reported by research. Not only does it show benefits for disabled learners, but also for non-disabled learners. Fully inclusive settings facilitated learners' development of self-esteem and a sense of pride. It also increased tolerance of other people, appreciation of human diversity and responsiveness to the needs of others (Walter-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:16-18).

Some educators are more naturally inclined than others to regard inclusion in a positive light (Lipsky & Gartner, 1996: 787). These educators make good use of the diversity of learners to teach valuable lessons. They can ease the transition into general education classes by convincing their colleagues of the benefits of having learners with disabilities in their classes (Downing, 2002:147).

The following strategies serve to promote a positive attitude and thereby ensure preparedness for inclusive education (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2000:43):

- The educator serves as a model of how to interact with the learner who has a disability.
- Treat the learner with the dignity and respect that all learners are entitled to.
- Speak to the learner directly, never around the learner in his or her presence.
- When speaking about learners with disabilities, make reference to the learner first, and then the disability, only if it is necessary to mention the disability at all.
- Use words with dignity.
- Draw attention to the learner's achievements and strengths.
- Avoid a congregation of LSEN in the class or in school.

- Teach about differences as part of the regular curriculum.
- When teaching about disabilities, speak about it matter-of-factly. Use proper terminology. If possible, invite experts into the classroom to speak, like parents of learners with disabilities who are also experts.
- Ensure as far as possible that expectations and routines are the same for all learners.
- Where individualization is necessary, attempt to have it occur when other learners are receiving individual instruction.
- Structure social interaction in the classroom through planned activities.
- Promote social interaction outside the classroom.
- Integrate everyone: the special education educator and any support staff who may be in the classroom should work with all learners, not just the learners with the disability.
- Ensure frequent communication between the school and the home.
- Do things with, rather than for, the learner when he or she needs assistances.
- Foster and encourage independence.
- Encourage peers rather than an adult to assist the learner.
- Where necessary, have an affirmative behaviour plan in place.
- Be committed to integration and inclusive practices.



## **2.7 NEEDS OF EDUCATORS**

According to Hay (2003: 137) educators' needs have to be taken into consideration as fulfilling these needs has a direct impact on their preparedness to implement inclusive education effectively. Education White Paper 6 (DNE, 2001:18) maintains that educators will be the primary resource for achieving the goal of an inclusive education and training system. Staff development at the school and district level will be critical to putting in place successful integrated educational practices. Ongoing assessment of educators' needs will make a critical contribution to inclusion. It is imperative that the educators' needs are taken into consideration. Hall and Engelbrecht (1999:230) identify the needs of educators as follows:

- Need for knowledge.
- Need for skills and competencies.
- Emotional needs.
- Need for support.

### **2.7.1 The need for knowledge**

Knowledge dispels misconceptions and clarifies misunderstandings; prejudice and fear then decrease (Goddard, 1995:261). Educators and regular class peers become more accepting as they learn more about the abilities and problems of "special learners" (Lewis & Doorlag, 1991:141).

Knowledge that a learner is handicapped raises the anxiety level of educators, for example, knowledge that a learner is visually handicapped causes tension and anxiety in the educator (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997:89). In actual fact, what is pertinent is information that, although the learner reads braille reading material, he is able to participate in class discussions, benefit from instructions, and interact with classmates. Learners with "special needs" should be included in as many activities as feasible and treated like any other learner, that is, as an individual. Special learners are children with identified needs; despite these needs, they remain individuals (Downing, 2002:65).

Elliot (1996: 223) points out that mainstream classroom educators must buy into the philosophy that if material is presented appropriately, all learners can learn; it may have to be at their own rate, but they still can learn. Educators must also be risk takers. They must be willing to risk the way they have always done things. They must be willing to look at the same situation in a different way and even risk failure in order to grow, and to look at obstacles as opportunities (Nell, 1996: 76).

According to Kapp (1994: 76) the educator should be aware of:

- The importance of early identification of and aid to learners with problems and the educator's task in this regard.
- The most important causes and manifestations of learning and behaviour problems in learners.
- The identification procedures that may be employed, such as screening and criterion-referenced tests.
- Informal methods of gathering information.
- The basic principles and possible forms of assistance.

Nell (1996: 39-40) states that knowledge includes *inter alia*, the following:

- Educators being adequately prepared to assess special needs, to adapt curriculum content to the needs of the learners in the classrooms, to utilize special orthodidactic devices and instructional aids as well as medical and para-medical assistive devices required by some of the LSEN.
- The use of appropriate teaching strategies based on the learners' total level of functioning. According to Levitz (1996:9), the aims of teacher education courses are to teach effectively in order to facilitate learning. Universities and training colleges need to present courses for diplomas in special education.

- The need to upgrade inadequately trained educators. This in-service training should preferably be done by distance education. The National Council on Teacher Education (NCTE) has drawn up a system of accreditation and transferability of credits, but institutions of learning throughout the country should become actively involved in this program.

Lewis and Doorlag (1991:143) maintain that limited knowledge and experience can lead to the development of prejudice and non-accepting attitudes and to a natural discrimination against learners who are different. Knowledge about LSEN does not necessarily have to be obtained from formal training. Knowledge can be gained in many ways. Educators can read, or view films, video tapes and television programmes about learners with “special needs.” Also, simulations of handicapping conditions can be used to increase understanding. As more is learned about learners with special needs, they appear less different, more familiar and more acceptable.

### **2.7.2 The need for skills and competencies**

According to Van Schalkwyk (1994:40) skills and competencies refer to the abilities, knowledge, expertise or techniques a person has. Educators need to be trained with the necessary skills in order to make inclusive education successful. According to Downing (2002:11), the skills required for inclusive education are different. They involve being able to identify and assess LSEN, being able to adapt curricular content, teaching methods and assessment methods to assist LSEN and working in collaboration with colleagues, parents and the broader community .

According to Goddard (1995:260) the educator should be able to:

- Identify and assess the learner with learning and behavioural problems in his class by using informal diagnostic procedures.
- Implement screening tests such as reading and mathematical tests himself or in cooperation with the remedial educator or school psychologist.

- Adapt curricular content and teaching methods to assess LSEN.
- Collect relevant information in connection with the learner's problems by means of informal media such as observation, home visiting, etc.
- Record and then discuss the information concerning the learner objectively and scientifically with others (school principal, remedial educator, didactic assistance team or parents).
- Formulate the objectives of the aid, based on the findings, either on his own or in co-operation with others.
- Apply basic aid techniques on his own and evaluate the progress thereof.
- Work in collaboration with colleagues, parents and the broader community.

Hyam (2004:36) refers to the Government Gazette that outlines further roles and competencies of the educator to ensure preparedness for inclusive education:

**Learning mediator:** the educator will mediate learning that is sensitive to the diverse interests of all learners, including those with barriers to learning. This implies the planning of learning activities that are: relevant and meaningful to the learners, appropriate to their development levels and contexts, and based on sound knowledge of subject content.

**Interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials:** the educator will understand and interpret learning programmes; design original learning programmes; identify and select relevant and meaningful resource material; adapt material to the needs of the learners; value the many skills the learners bring to the classroom.

**Leader, administrator and manager:** the educator will manage learning and make decisions and expectations according to the level of learners; carry out classroom

administration efficiently; participate in decision making; support learners and colleagues and respond to changing circumstances and needs; be responsible for teaching every learner in the class; see every learner as providing an opportunity to become a better educator.

**Scholar, researcher and lifelong learner:** the educator will keep informed of changes in the educational and other relevant fields through reflective study and research; have the ability to problem solve.

**Community, citizenship and pastoral role:** the educator will develop a sense of responsibility towards others; uphold the constitution and promote the values and practice of democracy; empower learners through providing a supportive environment; respond to the educational needs of the learners; respond to the other needs of the learners and colleagues.

**Assessor:** the educator will understand that assessment is integral to the teaching and learning process; understand the purposes, methods and effects of assessments and give meaningful feedback to learners; be able to formally assess the skills a learner needs; develop alternate assessments when necessary.

**Learning area/subject/discipline/phase specialists:** the educator will have a working knowledge of the skills, values, principles, methods, and procedures of area/subject/phase of expertise; know about different teaching methods and use them according to the needs of the learners in the class, have an understanding and knowledge of his/her area of expertise.

It can be seen that the role of the educator in an inclusive classroom is multidimensional. It is challenging and complex because it encompasses all aspects of teaching and learning. The educator is the social and emotional centre of the classroom.

### **2.7.3 Emotional needs**

According to Hargreaves, Lieberman, Fullan and Hopkins (1998:560) the educator needs to be emotionally prepared for inclusive education. Too often educators' beliefs, attitudes and perceptions are ignored by policy-makers, who tend to focus on knowledge, skills and practical support without giving much recognition to the emotional needs of educators. When policy – makers ignore educators' emotions, the consequences can be disastrous, because emotions enter into all aspects of life. Festering resentment will undermine and overwhelm rationally made decisions, teamwork will be poisoned by members with unresolved grudges and grievances, and curriculum planning will become stilted when educators have to plan things they do not care about (Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff & Pettipher, 2002: 178).

According to Hall and Engelbrecht (1999:232) most of the barriers in implementing inclusive education are embedded in the emotional predisposition of educators. These include *inter alia*, the following:

- Opportunities for educators both in mainstream and special schools to deal with feelings of anxiety, ignorance, confusion, scepticism, concern for personal loss of autonomy, security and job satisfaction, as well as feeling of discomfort and fear of failure.
- Acknowledging different skills and expertise of each educator.
- Participation in the process of transformation through a shared vision and mission.

### **2.7.4 The need for support**

According to White Paper 6 (DNE, 2001:17) inclusion is about supporting all learners, educators and the system as a whole so that the full range of learning needs can be met. Educators need support to be prepared to cope with the challenges associated with inclusive education. Resistance to including LSEN may

emanate from a fear of not being adequately prepared to teach LSEN (Goddard,1995:261). The degree of support the educator receives is the most powerful predictor of positive attitudes towards inclusive education. Sharing information and working as a collaborative team can serve to alleviate concerns and resistance (Downing, 2002:189).

Educators must be prepared to work as a team and support each other. The educator should not be expected to integrate a learner with a disability into the mainstream classroom on his own (DNE, 2002:117). Without adequate support educators feel unsure and demotivated, and may become negative and pessimistic. Instead of viewing the situation from the perspective of 'my learner' and 'your learner,' all educators must be prepared to share the responsibility for the learning of all learners (Corbett, 2001:10).

Working as a team is a key to success. For some educators, especially those who feel that they lack the necessary training to teach learners with disabilities or who may be experiencing integration for the first time, the concept is frightening and intimidating (Flavell, 2001:75). Educators should be prepared to discuss the problems they experience with LSEN with each other. They should be prepared to accept alternate suggestions and to admit that they do not have all the answers. A stubborn and over sensitive educator will not be of benefit to the LSEN. Educators must be prepared to learn from each other (Hyam, 2004:34).

According to Fullan (1993:50) educators can be effectively prepared for inclusive education if they are prepared to be committed to the inclusion process. Hay (2003:136) points out that it seems obvious that inclusive education will function at its best if all parties from the mainstream and special schools (for example: principals governing bodies, etc.) are strongly involved in the process. A willingness to work together is a vital prerequisite. Intensive participation of educators, principals and school boards from mainstream and special schools heightens the expertise and leads to mutual adaptations of goals at different levels. Educators who work together will have more opportunities to investigate and explore their beliefs and attitudes and instructional alternatives (Pugach & Johnston,1995: 65). Educators could then be encouraged to develop a shared commitment and vision for

future development towards inclusive education and will be more committed to achieving that goal (Downing, 2002:25).

**(1) School-based support team**

A school-based support team is an 'internal' support team, which is co-ordinated by a member of staff, preferably someone who has received training in either life skills education, counselling or learning support (remedial) (Eaton, 1996:87). According to White Paper 6 (DNE, 2001:29) the primary function of the school-based support team would be to support the learning and teaching process by identifying and addressing learner, educator and institutional needs. The team is made up of learners, their parents, educators and representatives from the community, organizations, NGO'S, neighbouring schools, education institutions, and other indigenous support systems (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999: 53).

According to Foreman (1996: 77) it is imperative that school-based support teams become an integral part of the education system. The teams focus should be prevention, rehabilitation, social integration and equalization of opportunities. The school-based support team is not there to remove the 'problem' learner from the classroom but acts as a support system to empower and prepare the educator to succeed within the bounds of the classroom. The purpose of this team is to support educators who are experiencing problems and are not adequately prepared to cope with LSEN in the mainstream class.

Key functions that relate to this include (DNE, 2002:117):

**Various forms of classroom-based support, such as:**

- Identifying LSEN and coordinating the curriculum.
- Collectively identifying educators' needs and in particular, barriers to learning at learner, educator, curriculum and institutional-levels.



- Collectively developing strategies to address these needs and barriers to learning. This should include a major focus on educator development and preparedness to deal with LSEN.
- Drawing in resources needed from within and outside the school to address these challenges.
- Direct learning support to LSEN; Keep confidential notes about cases to enable follow-up work to be carried out in an efficient way.
- Training and ongoing support to educators to respond to LSEN.

Once the team is established the team members themselves need ongoing support and professional development to enable them to support the educators in their schools. Educators involved in meetings need to have some time release from other responsibilities. The principles and practical aspects of the school-based support team need the full support of the staff and principal (Campher, 2003: 74).

## **(2) Support from district level**

Support from district level can enhance educators' preparedness for inclusive education. According to White Paper 6 (DNE, 2001:29) district support teams will provide the full range of education support services, such as professional development in curriculum and assessment to school-based support teams.

When there is a need for more specialist advice and intervention, the district support team (support professionals), who consist of a core of education support personnel, will be capable of offering support and advice (Engelbrecht & Green, 2001: 25). These teams can consist of school psychologists, special educators, guidance counsellors, speech and language specialists, occupational therapists and even doctors and nurses (Walter-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000: 181).

In the past the role of the district support teams/support professionals was curative, fragmented and problem orientated (Campher 2003: 61). It has changed to being preventative, health promotive and developmental. There are several consultation approaches (Walter-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000: 181):

- Behavioural consultation as an efficient means of implementing behavioural intervention.
- Clinical consultation for identifying and assessing learner problems and describing specific strategies for resolution.
- Organizational consultation and facilitating within a whole school approach, assessing the entire system and assisting educators to resolve identified concerns.
- Mental health approach, which ensures the development of 'health promoting schools'. It includes accountability, legal and ethical practices and collaborative and consultative skills.

The main focus of the district-support team would be to ensure preparedness of educators, with a particular focus on curriculum and institutional development, and to ensure that the teaching and learning framework and environment is responsive to the full range of learning needs (DNE, 2001:29).

Forms of support can include the following (DNE, 2002: 89):

- Training and ongoing support of educators to respond to LSEN.
- Curriculum development to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are responsive to different needs.
- Provision of teaching and learning materials and equipment to facilitate learning for all learners.

- Organisational support, such as:
  - Staff development for educators.
  - Organisational development support for schools, for example, policy formulation and implementation.

### **(3) Support from special school educators**

According to White Paper 6 (DNE, 2001:29) special schools and settings will be converted to resource centres and integrated into district support teams so that they can provide specialised professional support in curriculum, assessment and instruction to neighbouring schools.

According to Bothma, Gravett and Swart (2000: 203) services of existing structures through collaboration and teamwork must be addressed. Support and collaboration between ordinary school and special school educators can play a significant role in providing quality inclusive education in South Africa. Special school educators are encouraged to share knowledge with ordinary school educators who may otherwise not have access to this knowledge. Despite existing individual skills and knowledge of both ordinary and special educators and personnel, they do not have the necessary collaborative skill to share their expertise effectively. The historic division between ordinary and special schools hamper effective collaboration.

Consultation and collaboration functions fall into the domain of communication and collaboration planning and include exchanging learners' progress information, sharing diagnostic information and sharing responsibility for grading, participating in collaborative long and short-term educational planning and meeting with parents (Dettmer, Thurston & Dyck, 1993: 21). A common base of learner-related information for educators, who are jointly responsible for learners experiencing barriers to learning, provides a platform for other collaboration roles, such as problem-solving (Pugach & Johnston, 1995: 123).

Through the process of problem-solving, ordinary and special school educators use their collective expertise in an equal status relationship (Idol & West, 1987: 485). This partnership allows for the proposal of alternative teaching strategies or supplementary instructional material by special school educators in consultation with the ordinary school educator. Collaborative problem-solving may also entail the periodic observation of learners who are experiencing barriers to learning in ordinary classes, in order to identify areas of difficulty or monitor the success of intervention strategies (Bradley, King-Sears & Tessier-Switlick, 1997:85).

The collaborative teamwork approach will also include aspects of training and support in consultation with various role-players (Idol, 1997: 387). Special schools should be available for training and support of educators, psychologists and other support personnel. Training should include visits to special schools, a rotation of personnel or an exchange scheme, possible internship and practical experiences, lectures, notes and information, participation in multi-disciplinary teams and research opportunities. Information could be made available on the internet or by having a telephone "helpline" available for questions (Friend & Cook, 1996: 239).

The collaborative roles of special and ordinary school educators include actively planning for skills transfer across settings, team teaching, directing small group instruction in ordinary schools, special education settings and training peer tutors (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997: 138; Phillips & McCullough, 1990: 301). A network between schools could assist in accumulating valuable knowledge and expertise as well as providing support.

As more learners who are experiencing barriers to learning are accommodated in mainstream classrooms, educators have to find ways of providing efficient learning and support. Special school educators can support mainstream educators by providing a continuum of services (Hall, Campher, Smit, Oswald & Engelbrecht, 1999: 165):

- Early identification of barriers to learning and development as well as learning support programmes.

- Study methods, life-skills, social skills and behaviour modification programmes are other valuable skills and strategies that need to be shared to improve learners' self-esteem.
- Assessment of academic progress of both learners at risk and ordinary school learners.
- Planning and coordination for specialised education where applicable.
- *Support for ordinary school educators in the development of the curriculum to ensure that the diverse needs of the learners in the ordinary schools are addressed.*
- In-service training for professionals, para-professionals, etc.
- Guidance and counselling for parents and care-givers.
- Assessment of barriers to learning.
- Specialised support, i.e. therapists and psychologists.

## **2.8 SUMMARY**

Inclusive education constitutes a challenge to the education system, particularly to educators in mainstream schools. Educators may feel overwhelmed with the prospect of having to face learners with such diverse needs in a single class especially because they may not feel adequately prepared to cope with the diversity. *They thus need to undergo a paradigm shift.*

They must be prepared to change their beliefs, practices and expectations and be prepared to align themselves to deal with inclusive education positively. They must be prepared to have a positive attitude, be flexible and open to new ideas and be creative and innovative in their approaches to teaching and learning. They must be prepared to engage in a positive relationship of trust, understanding and authority

with the LSEN. They must be empowered with the necessary knowledge, skills, competencies and support structures in order to implement inclusive education effectively. The educator cannot educate LSEN in isolation. He must be prepared to engage in teamwork. Educators can be empowered through the assistance of school support teams, district support teams and special educators. These support structures ultimately contribute towards their preparedness for inclusive education.

The next chapter will deal with the research design and research methodology.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapters dealt with a literature study of educators' preparedness for inclusive education. It is the intention of the researcher to establish further in quantifiable terms the level of preparedness of educators for inclusive education. In this chapter the empirical research methodology used in the investigation of educators' preparedness for inclusive education will be described.

#### 3.2 PREPARATION FOR THE RESEARCH

##### 3.2.1 Permission

With the aim of administering the questionnaire to educators of selected schools in the Umdoni ward (Scottburgh Circuit, Port Shepstone District), it was required to request permission from the Ward Manager, Dr J. Naidoo. The questionnaire (Appendix A), and the letter requesting permission (Appendix B) were personally delivered to the Ward Manager. Permission was granted immediately as indicated by a stamp of approval on the same letter requesting permission (Appendix B). A letter to the educators requesting their cooperation was attached to each questionnaire (Appendix A). Questionnaires were hand delivered to the selected schools in the Umdoni Ward.

##### 3.2.2 Selection of respondents

The empirical investigation was conducted in the Umdoni Ward. For the purpose of this study educators in primary, secondary and combined schools in the Umdoni Ward were randomly selected as the research group. The target population was defined by the following considerations:

- Type of school: Primary, secondary and combined schools

- Geographical area: Umdoni Ward, Scottburgh Circuit,  
Port Shepstone District, KwaZulu Natal
- Population: All educators
- Age: 20 years +
- Gender: Male and female
- Years of teaching: 1 year and more

Eight schools were identified in accordance with the defined type of school and population. From each of the eight schools, educators were randomly selected in the sample in order to produce statistical dependable results. This provided the researcher with a sample of 120 educators as respondents, which may be considered an adequate sample for reliable data analysis. Borg and Gall (1989:542) maintain that a successful study depends on the skills in selecting groups that are homogenous with respect to certain critical variables.

### **3.3 THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

#### **3.3.1 The questionnaire as research instrument**

According to Van Rensburg, Landman and Bodenstein (1994: 504) a questionnaire is a set of questions dealing with some topic or related group of topics, given to a selected group of individuals for the purpose of gathering data on a problem under consideration. Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988: 190) define the questionnaire as "a prepared question form submitted to certain persons (respondents) with a view to obtaining information." Churchill and Peter (Schnetler, 1993: 77) have shown that the questionnaire as a measuring instrument has the greatest influence on the reliability of research data. The characteristics of measurement are best controlled by the careful construction of the instrument.



There is, however, insufficient appreciation for the fact that a questionnaire should be constructed according to certain principles (Kidder & Judd, 1986: 128-131).

A well-designed questionnaire is the culmination of a long process of planning the research objective, formulating the problem, generating the hypothesis, etc. A questionnaire is not simply thrown together (Behr, 1988: 155-156). A poorly designed questionnaire can invalidate any research results, notwithstanding the merits of the sample, the field workers and the statistical techniques (Huysamen, 1989: 2). In their criticism of questionnaires Berchie and Anderson (Schnetler, 1993:61) object to poor design rather than to questionnaires as such. A well-designed questionnaire can boost the reliability and validity of the data to acceptable tolerance (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993: 42).

It therefore stands to reason that questionnaire design does not take place in a vacuum. According to Dane (1990: 315-319) the length of individual questions, the number of response options, as well as the format and wording of questions are determined by the following:

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

Against this background the researcher can now look at the principles that determine whether a questionnaire is well designed. It is thus necessary to draw a distinction between questionnaire content, question format, question order, type of questions, formulation of questions and validity and reliability of questions.

### **3.3.2 Construction of the questionnaire**

Questionnaire design is an activity that should not take place in isolation. The researcher consulted and sought advice from specialists and colleagues at all times during the construction of the questionnaire (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1988:198). Questions to be taken up in the questionnaire should be pre-tested on people to eliminate possible errors. A question may appear correct to the researcher when written down but can be interpreted differently when asked to another person. There should be no hesitation in changing questions several times before the final formulation keeping the original purpose in mind.

The most important point to be taken into account in questionnaire design is that it takes time and effort and that the questionnaire will be re-drafted a number of times before being finalised (Cohen & Manion, 1994: 111-112). A researcher must therefore ensure that adequate time is budgeted for the construction and preliminary testing of the questionnaire. An important aim in the construction of the questionnaire for this investigation was to present the questions as simple and straight-forward as possible (Kidder & Judd, 1986: 243-245). All of the above was taken into consideration by the researcher during the designing of the questionnaire for this investigation.

The aim of the questionnaire was to obtain information regarding educators' preparedness for inclusive education. The researcher's objective was to avoid bias, ambiguity, prejudice and technical language in the questions.

### **3.3.3 Characteristics of a good questionnaire**

During the construction of the questionnaire, the researcher was guided by the characteristics of a good questionnaire as identified by Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988: 190) and Mahlangu (1987: 190):

- It has to deal with a significant topic; one which the respondent will recognise as important enough to warrant spending his or her time on. The significance

should be clearly and carefully stated on the questionnaire and the accompanying letter.

- It should seek only that information which cannot be obtained from other sources.
- Questionnaires should be attractive in appearance, neatly arranged and clearly duplicated or printed.
- It must be as short as possible, but long enough to get the essential data.
- Directions should be clear and complete and important terms clearly defined.
- Each question must deal with a single concept and should be worded simply.
- Objectively formulated questions with no leading suggestions should render the desired responses.
- Different categories provide an opportunity for easy, unambiguous and accurate responses.
- Questions should be presented in a proper psychological order proceeding from general to more specific and sensitive responses. An orderly grouping helps respondents organize their thinking so that their answers are logical and objective. It is preferable to create a favourable attitude before proceeding to those that are more intimate or delicate in nature.
- Data obtained from questionnaires are easy to tabulate and interpret. It is advisable to pre-construct a tabulation sheet anticipating the likely tabulation and ways of interpreting the data, before the final form of questionnaire is decided upon. This working backward from a visualisation of the field analysis of data is an important technique for avoiding ambiguity in a questionnaire. If computer tabulation is planned it is important to designate

code numbers for all possible responses to permit easy transference to computer programming format.

- In deciding on the appeal and utility of the questionnaire in this study, cognizance had to be taken of the fact that the questionnaire was to be self-administered. The design of the questionnaire therefore had to be appealing and brief in order to elicit answers.

### **3.3.4 Advantages and disadvantages of the questionnaire**

Data can be gathered by means of a structured questionnaire in *inter alia*, the following ways: a written questionnaire that is mailed, delivered or handed out personally; personal interviews, and telephone interviews (Kidder & Judd, 1986:221). Each mode has specific advantages and disadvantages which the researcher needs to evaluate for their suitability to the research question and the specific target population being studied, as well as relative cost. The researcher used the written questionnaire as research instrument taking into consideration certain advantages (Cohen & Manion, 1994: 111-112).

#### **(1) Advantages of the written questionnaire**

Bless & Higson–Smit (1995: 112-113), Mahlangu (1987: 96) and Cohen and Manion (1994: 111-112) list the advantages of the written questionnaire as follows:

- **Affordability.** It is the least expensive means of data gathering.
- It precludes possible interview bias.
- It permits anonymity. If it is arranged such that responses are given anonymously, the researcher's chances of receiving responses which genuinely represent a person's beliefs, opinions or perceptions, will increase. It provides uniformity across measurement situations. Each person responds

to exactly the same questions because standard instructions are given to respondents.

- A respondent has sufficient time to consider answers before responding.
- Data provided by written questionnaires can be more easily analysed and interpreted than data obtained from verbal responses.
- Written questionnaires can be given to many people simultaneously; hence a large sample of a target population can be reached.
- The use of written, mailed questionnaires solves the problem of non-contact if the respondent is not at home when the interviewer calls. When the target population to be covered is widely and thinly spread, the mailed questionnaire is the only possible method of approach.
- The problems related to interviews can be avoided. Interview "errors" may seriously undermine the reliability and validity of survey results.
- A respondent can answer questions of a personal or embarrassing nature more willingly and frankly than in a face to face situation with an interviewer who may be a complete stranger.
- In the case of the mailed questionnaire, questions requiring considered answers rather than immediate answers can be completed by consulting relevant documents.
- Respondents can complete the questionnaires in their own time and in a more relaxed atmosphere.
- The administering of the questionnaires, and the coding, analysis and interpretation of data can be done without special training.

- Data obtained from written questionnaires can be compared and inferences made.
- Written questionnaires can elicit information, which cannot be obtained from other sources. This renders empirical research possible in different educational disciplines.

Self-administered questionnaires provide an opportunity to establish rapport with respondents and to explain the purpose of the study.

## (2) Disadvantages of the questionnaire

The researcher is also aware of the fact that the written questionnaire has important disadvantages. According to Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988: 190) and Kidder and Judd (1986: 223-224) the disadvantages of the questionnaire are *inter alia* the following:

- Questionnaires do not provide the flexibility of interviews. In an interview an idea or comment can be explored. This makes it possible to gauge how people are interpreting the question. If questions asked are interpreted differently by the respondent the validity of the information obtained is jeopardised.
- People are generally better able to express their views verbally than in writing.
- Questions can be answered only when they are sufficiently easy and straightforward to be understood with the given instructions and definitions.
- The mail questionnaire does not make provision for obtaining the views of more than one than one person at a time. It requires uninfluenced views of one person only.

- *Answers to mail questionnaires must be seen as final. Re-checking of responses cannot be done. There is no chance of investigating beyond the given answer for a clarification of ambiguous answers. If respondents are unwilling to answer certain questions nothing can be done to it because the mail questionnaire is essentially flexible.*
- *In a mail questionnaire the respondent examines all the questions at the same time before answering them and answers to the different questions can therefore not be treated as “independent.”*
- *The researcher is unable to control the context of question answering and specifically, the presence of other people. Respondents may ask friends or family members to examine the questionnaire or comment on their answers, causing bias if the respondent’s own private opinions are desired.*
- *Written questionnaires do not allow the researcher to correct misunderstandings or answer questions that the respondents may have. Respondents might answer questions incorrectly or not at all due to confusion or misinterpretation.*

### **3.3.5 Validity and reliability of the questionnaire**

There are two concepts that are of critical importance in understanding issues of measurement in social science research, namely validity and reliability (Huysamen, 1989:1-3). All too rarely do questionnaire designers deal consciously with the degree of validity and reliability of their instrument. This is one reason why so many questionnaires are lacking in these two qualities. Questionnaires have a very short life, and administered to a limited population. There are ways to improve both the validity and reliability of questionnaires. Basic to the validity of a questionnaire is asking the right questions phrased in the least ambiguous way. In other words, do the items sample a significant aspect of the purpose of the investigation? Terms must be clearly defined so that they have the same meaning to all respondents (Cohen & Manion, 1994:111-112).

Kidder and Judd (1986:53-54) mention the fact that although reliability and validity are two different characteristics of measurement, they “shade into each other.” They are two ends of a continuum but at points in the middle it is difficult to distinguish between them. Validity and reliability are especially important in educational research because most of the measurements attempted in this area are obtained directly. Researchers can never guarantee that an educational or psychological measuring instrument measures precisely and dependably what it is intended to measure (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1988:198). It is essential, therefore, to assess the validity and reliability of these instruments. Researchers must therefore have a general knowledge as to what validity and reliability are and how one goes about validating a research instrument and establishing its reliability (Huysamen, 1989:1-3).

#### **(1) Validity of the questionnaire**

According to De Vos (2001:166) validity refers broadly to the degree to which an instrument is doing what it is intended to do. Validity refers to the degree to which an instrument succeeds in measuring what it has set out to measure. Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988:237) and Dane (1990:257-258) distinguish between four types of validity:

- Content validity which is determined by asking: Is the instrument really measuring the concept one assumes it is? Does the instrument provide an adequate sample of items that represent that concept?
- Face validity, which is often used interchangeably with content validity, however some researchers argue that it is technically not the same. It refers to what an instrument “appears” to measure. It is a desirable characteristic of a measuring instrument and without it, one may encounter resistance on the part of the respondents.
- Criterion (or criterion- related) validity, which involves multiple measurement and is established by comparing scores on an instrument with an external



criterion, known to, or believed to measure the concept, trait or behaviour being studied. The criterion should be relevant, reliable and free from bias and contamination.

- Construct validity, which is perhaps the most difficult because it involves determining the extent to which an instrument successfully measures a theoretical construct, e.g. intelligence, cohesion, achievement, responsibility, motivation etc. Construct validity is concerned with underlying theory.

According to De Vos (2001:168) one really poses three questions when one asks how valid an instrument is:

- How well does this instrument measure what one wants it to measure? (Content validity)
- How well does this instrument compare with one or more external criteria purporting to measure the same thing? (Criterion validity)
- What does this instrument mean, what is it in fact measuring, and how and why does it operate the way it does? (Construct validity)

The validity of the questionnaire as a research instrument reflects the sureness with which conclusions can be drawn. It refers to the extent to which interpretations of the instrument's results, other than the ones the researcher wishes to make, can be ruled out. Establishing validity requires that the researcher anticipates the potential arguments that sceptics might use to dismiss the research results (Cooper, 1989:120; Dane, 1990:148-149).

The researcher employed the questionnaire as a method to establish educators' preparedness for inclusive education. Due to the complexity of the respondents' varying contexts and conditions, one is never sure that the questionnaire devised will actually measure what it purports to measure. Items in the questionnaire cannot be measured like height, mass, length or size. From the interpretation of the results

obtained and the sureness with which conclusions can be drawn, the researcher is, however, convinced that the questionnaire to a great extent did measure that which it was designed for.

## **(2) Reliability of the questionnaire**

According to Mulder (1989: 209) and Van Rensburg, Landman and Bodenstein (1994: 512) reliability is a statistical concept and relates to consistency and dependability of obtaining the same relative answer when measuring phenomena that have not changed. A reliable measuring instrument is one that, if repeated under similar conditions, would present the same result or a near approximation of the initial result. Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988:194) and Kidder and Judd (1986:46-47) distinguish between the following types of reliability:

- Test-retest reliability (coefficient of stability) - consistency estimated by comparing two or more repeated administrations of the measuring instrument. This gives an indication of the dependability of the results on one occasion which may then be compared with the results obtained on another occasion.
- Internal consistency reliability. This indicates how well the test items measure the same thing.
- Split-half reliability. By correlating the results obtained from two halves of the same measuring instrument, one can calculate the split-half reliability.

In essence, reliability refers to consistency, but consistency does not guarantee truthfulness. The reliability of the question is no proof that the answers given reflect the respondents' true feelings (Dane, 1990:256). A demonstration of reliability is necessary but not conclusive evidence that an instrument is valid. Reliability refers to the extent to which measurement results are free of unpredictable kinds of error. Sources of error that affect reliability are *inter alia*, the following (Mulder, 1989:209; Kidder & Judd, 1986:45):

- Fluctuations in the mood or alertness of respondents because of illness, fatigue, recent good or bad experiences, or temporary differences amongst members of the group being measured.
- Variations in the conditions of administration between groups. These range from various distractions, such as unusual outside noise to inconsistencies in the administration of the measuring instruments such as omissions in verbal instructions.
- Differences in scoring or interpretation of results, chance differences in what the observer notices and errors in computing scores.
- Random effects by respondents who guess or check off attitude alternatives without trying to understand them.

When the questionnaire is used as an empirical research instrument there is no specific method, for example the "test-retest" method, to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. Therefore, it will be difficult to establish to what extent the answers of the respondents were reliable. The researcher, however, believes that the questionnaires in this investigation were completed with the necessary honesty and sincerity required to render the maximum possible reliability.

### **3.4 PILOT STUDY**

A pilot study is an abbreviated version of a research project in which the researcher practises or tests the procedures to be used in the subsequent full-scale project (Dane, 1990: 42). The pilot study is a preliminary or "trial run" investigation using similar subjects as in the final survey. Kidder and Judd (1986: 211-212) maintain that the basic purpose of a pilot study is to determine how the design of the subsequent project can be improved and to identify flaws in the measuring instrument. A pilot study gives the researcher an idea of what the method will actually look like in operation and what effects (intended or not intended) it is likely to have. In other words, by generating many of the practical problems by changing procedures, instructions and questions.

The number of participants in the pilot study or group is normally smaller than the number scheduled to take part in the final survey (Dane, 1990:42). Participants in the pilot study and the sample for the final study must be selected from the same target population. For the purpose of this study the researcher conducted a pilot run on ten educators. The pilot study was conducted to determine whether questionnaires would be understood by the populations to be surveyed. No quantitative analysis of the data was carried out.

The respondents were encouraged to make comments and suggestions about specific items in the questionnaire. The feedback from the respondents as well as the observations made by the researcher, were taken into consideration when drawing up the final questionnaire.

Plug, Meyer, Louw and Gouws (1991: 49-66) list some of the purposes of the pilot study. These were also the aims of the researcher in this study:

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

### **3.5 ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

If properly administered the questionnaire is the best available instrument for obtaining information from widespread sources or large groups simultaneously (Mulder, 1989:39). The researcher personally delivered questionnaires to selected respondents (educators) and collected them after completion. This method of administration facilitated the process and the response rate.

### **3.6 PROCESSING OF THE DATA**

After having collected data, it then had to be captured in a format which would permit analysis and interpretation. This involved the careful coding of 120 questionnaires completed by educators in mainstream schools in the Umdoni Ward. The coded data was subsequently transferred onto a computer spreadsheet using Microsoft Excel.

#### **3.6.1 Descriptive statistics**

Descriptive statistics serve to describe and summarise observations (Van Rensburg, Landman & Bodenstein, 1994: 355). Frequency tables, histograms and polygons are useful in forming impressions about the distribution of data. Some descriptive statistics summarize the distribution of attributes on a single variable, others, called measures of associations, summarise the associations between variables.

According to Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988:65-76) frequency distribution is a method to organise data obtained from questionnaires to simplify statistical analysis. A frequency table provides the following information:

- It indicates how many times a particular response appears on the completed questionnaire.
- It provides percentages that reflect the number of responses to a certain question in relation to the total number of responses.

- The arithmetic mean (average) can be calculated by adding all the scores and dividing it by the number of scores.

### **3.6.2 Analysis of data**

The questionnaire was designed to determine educators' preparedness for inclusive education.

Section 1 required biographical information about the educator and included items 1.1-1.10.

Section 2 gathered information regarding the educator–LSEN relationship and was covered by items 2.1-2.10.

Section 3 gathered information regarding support for the implementation of inclusive education and included items 3.1-3.10.

Section 4 gathered information on educators' perspectives in terms of what being prepared for inclusive education entails. This information was covered by items 4.1-4.10.

## **3.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

This investigation was constrained by a number of factors that may have influenced the reliability and validity of the questionnaire:

- There is a possibility that some of the questions might not have been answered truthfully and frankly as the respondents could have felt threatened by possible identification, even though anonymity was assured.
- Although principals/deputy principals, HOD'S and educators were asked to complete the questionnaire confidentially, it is possible that one member of the staff could have discussed the questionnaire with others and arrived at a common response.

### **3.8 SUMMARY**

The research design, which was applied in the empirical investigation, was discussed in this chapter. The questionnaire as a research instrument was also comprehensively described. In the following chapter the data obtained from the completed questionnaires will be presented and analysed.

## **CHAPTER 4**

# **PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH DATA**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, the data that was collected from the completed questionnaires will be analysed, findings will be interpreted and some comments will be presented. The data comprised biographical information and the educators' responses regarding the educator–LSEN relationship, support for the implementation of inclusive education and educators' preparedness for inclusive education. Educators completed one hundred and twenty (120) questionnaires.

### **4.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS**

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:42) state that the purpose of research is to gain insight into a situation, phenomenon, community or person. Descriptive research is one of the methods of research used to study a person or persons scientifically in the educational situation. It attempts to describe the situation as it is, thus there is no intervention on the part of the researcher and therefore no control. Van Rensburg, Landman and Bodenstein (1994:355) maintain that descriptive studies do not set out with the idea of testing hypotheses about relationships, but want to find the distribution of variables. In this study homothetic descriptive research was employed with the aim of establishing educators' preparedness for inclusive education.



#### 4.2.1 Gender of the respondents

Table 1: Frequency distribution according to the gender of the respondents.

Gender	Frequency	%
Male	48	40%
Female	72	60%
TOTAL	120	100%

Chetty (2004: 110) maintains that the majority of the teaching corps in South Africa consist of female educators. Table 1 confirms this statement in showing that most of the respondents (60%) in this study are also females. Possible reasons for this finding are the following:

- The research sample involved mostly educators from primary schools (cf. 4.2.8).
- Most primary schools have female educators (Reay & Dennison, 1990:42).
- A female educator represents a motherly figure and is more acceptable to younger children in primary schools as in *loco parentis*.
- Research found that female educators show more empathy with LSEN (Brodin, 1997:139).

#### 4.2.2 Age of the respondents

Table 2: Frequency distribution according to the age of the respondents.

Age Group	Frequency	%
20 - 25 years	6	5%
26 - 30 years	12	10%
31 - 35 years	24	20%
36 - 40 years	18	15%
41 - 45 years	32	27%
46 - 50 years	16	13%
51 - 55 years	7	6%
56 - 60 years	2	2%
61 - 65 years	3	2%
TOTAL	120	100%

According to Table 2 the majority (62%) of the educators are in the age group 31- 45 years. This may be attributed to the fact that the rationalisation and redeployment policy has affected younger educators. Another explanation could be that not many school leavers are pursuing a career in teaching due to a breakdown in the culture of teaching and learning. Garson (1999:4) states that the rationalisation and redeployment is slicing a path of destruction through schools, ridding them of their most valuable staff members, demotivating others, affecting academic achievements and causing depression, anxiety and poor performance amongst educators. Younger educators are therefore seeking better paying jobs elsewhere (Sylvester, 1999:2).

### 4.2.3 Qualifications of the respondents

Table 3: Frequency distribution according to the qualification level of the respondents.

Qualifications	Frequency	%
Academic Qualifications	50	42%
Professional Qualifications(diplomas and certificates)	70	58%
TOTAL	120	100%

From Table 3 it is clear that more than half of the educators (58%) possess professional qualifications (diplomas or certificates). This may be because they are in primary schools. The contents and curricula of teaching diplomas and certificates are more practical than theoretically orientated courses and are therefore more appropriate for teaching younger primary school children (Griessel, Louw & Swart, 1993: 71).

#### 4.2.4 Years of teaching experience

Table 4: Frequency distribution according to the educators' total number of years teaching experience.

Total number of years' teaching experience	Frequency	%
0 - 5 years	10	8%
6 - 10 years	10	8%
11 - 15 years	32	27%
16 - 20 years	31	26%
21 - 25 years	17	14%
26 - 30 years	14	12%
30 years +	6	5%
TOTAL	120	100%

Table 4 shows that a larger number of educators (84%) has 11 years or more teaching experience. It thus appears that most educators in this investigation have adequate teaching experience for the task of implementing educational change. Over and above experience, educators need the necessary training to empower them to meet the demands and responsibilities imposed on them in an inclusive classroom. The more experience and training educators have the more confidence, motivational skills and expertise they will have accrued over the years to become competent educators, for example, being able to adapt to curriculum changes easily (Bergh, 1996:120). Continuous professional development and experience are prerequisites for educators to keep up with the rapid pace of change in education (Marsh, 1992:88).

#### 4.2.5 Post level of respondents

Table 5: Frequency distribution according to the post level of educators.

Post level	Frequency	%
Principal	4	3%
Deputy Principal	2	2%
HOD	17	14%
Educator Level 1	97	81%
TOTAL	120	100%

Table 5 reflects that (81%) of the respondents are post level one educators. This is consistent with the composition of educators in most schools (DNE, 2002: 2-8).

#### 4.2.6 Type of post held by respondents

Table 6: Frequency distribution according to the post held by respondents

Type of Post	Frequency	%
Permanent	98	81%
Temporary	20	17%
Part Time	2	2%
TOTAL	120	100%

Table 6 reflects that the majority (81%) of the respondents are in permanent posts. Most of the selected schools are in urban areas. Being in a permanent post gives security to an educator and might improve commitment to LSEN.

Chetty (2004: 114) maintains that to be on the permanent staff has the following advantages:

- Permanent staff are entitled to a housing subsidy, which enables them to buy a house or flat.
- They can provide for their retirement, as they are contributors to a pension fund.
- They can join a medical aid benefit scheme to which the employer contributes a percentage of the monthly premium.

#### 4.2.7 Respondents' employers

Table 7: Frequency distribution according to the employer of the educator.

Employer	Frequency	%
Department of Education	109	91%
Governing Body	11	9%
TOTAL	120	100%

Table 7 shows that 91% of the educators are employed by the department of education. This finding corresponds with the finding in Table 6 in that most schools in urban areas have permanently appointed educators. Only 9% of the respondents are employed by governing bodies to reduce class size and the workload of permanent educators.

#### 4.2.8 Classification of schools

Table 8: Frequency distribution according to the classification of schools

Type of School	Frequency	%
Primary	67	56%
Secondary	36	30%
Combined	17	14%
TOTAL	120	100%

Table 8 reflects that the researcher has randomly included primary, secondary and combined schools in this research. More than half of the respondents (56%) are from primary schools, 30% are from secondary schools and 14% are from combined schools. Inclusive education has to be implemented in primary schools and secondary schools. Both primary and secondary schools were therefore included in the sample to make it more representative of the educator population.

#### 4.2.9 Number of learners in respondents' classes

Table 9: Frequency distribution according to the number of learners in respondents' classes.

Number of Learners	Frequency	%
Under 20	1	1%
20 - 25	2	2%
26 - 30	6	5%
31 - 35	24	20%
36 - 40	58	48%
41 - 45	23	19%
46 - 50	4	3%
51 - 55	2	2%
TOTAL	120	100%

From Table 9 it is clear that most educators (72%) have 36 and more learners in their classes. According to Clarke (1999:9) in class sizes of 38 learners to one educator, LSEN would not receive the kind of attention they require. Teaching large classes is stressful to educators. Modise (1999:18) maintains that with the presence of large class numbers in schools, educators find it difficult to create an atmosphere conducive to effective teaching and learning. Nicholls (1998:16) states that classes in many schools in South Africa are too large, which means that there is insufficient time to adequately complete the required tasks – hence, learners suffer. Overcrowding in a class makes it virtually impossible to provide individual educational support for LSEN.



#### 4.2.10 Training in special educational needs

Table 10: Frequency distribution according to training in special educational needs.

<b>Training for teaching LSEN</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Educators with training	18	15%
Educators with no training	102	85%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100%</b>

From Table 10 it is evident that the majority (85%) of the educators have no training to teach LSEN. According to Schechtman and Or (1996: 137) educators need to receive in-service education and training to gain the necessary knowledge, skills and values to cope with learners of varying abilities and diverse needs. According to DNE (1997:87) "the lack of training to equip educators to deal with diversity has not only disadvantaged many learners but has often left educators feeling inadequate." Research has found that educators, who were fully trained special educators, have more realistic views towards placement decisions (Mowes, 2002: 75-86; Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff & Pettipher, 2002: 177-179,185). Professionals agree that educators would be more willing to accept LSEN if they had received training in special education.

#### 4.2.11 The educator-LSEN relationship

Table 11: Frequency distribution according to the relationship between the educator and the LSEN.

Question number	Agree (1)	Disagree (2)	Uncertain (3)	TOTAL
2.1	112	3	5	120
	93%	3%	4%	100%
2.2	105	9	6	120
	87%	8%	5%	100%
2.3	118	0	2	120
	98%	0%	2%	100%
2.4	113	3	4	120
	94%	3%	3%	100%
2.5	112	2	6	120
	93%	2%	5%	100%
2.6	83	30	7	120
	69%	25%	6%	100%
2.7	68	38	14	120
	56%	32%	12%	100%
2.8	114	0	6	120
	95%	0%	5%	100%
2.9	115	2	3	120
	96%	2%	2%	100%
2.10	117	2	1	120
	97%	2%	1%	100%

**Trust in the educability of the LSEN (2.1)**

There must be mutual trust between the educator and the LSEN (cf.2.3.1). Most of the respondents (93%) agreed that the educator must have trust in the educability of the LSEN. Inclusive education can only be effective when educators have trust in the educability of the LSEN. The educator must be prepared to trust the LSEN'S ability to achieve by providing opportunities for LSEN to do things on their own and allow them to take responsibilities for their own efforts (Hay, Smit & Paulsen, 2001: 215).

**Acceptance of the LSEN (2.2)**

The majority of the respondents (87%) indicated that there should be unconditional acceptance of the LSEN. Successful inclusive education expects mainstream educators to accept LSEN like any other "normal" child (Barton, 1993:20). According to Meyer, Nagel and Snyder (1993:19), "inclusion is unconditional and the program must fit the child rather than the children fitting the program." The educator must be prepared to create and maintain a classroom atmosphere which nurtures the personal, cognitive and social development of all learners including LSEN. Good educators are caring and supportive and as such realize the need for unconditional acceptance of LSEN. In this sense, educators have a responsibility in creating a more tolerant society, which accepts diversity.

**Respect towards the LSEN (2.3)**

An important facet of the relationship between the educator and the LSEN is respect. There is no fear and subjection, only appreciation of the uniqueness and self-being of the other. True respect has no need of humiliation or ridicule or assault on the integrity of the other. Respect means the acceptance of one by the other for what he is in an active positive sense (Lefrancois, 1997:146). A high percentage of the respondents (98%) agreed that educators must have respect for LSEN. Every individual deserves respect and the LSEN like every individual is worthy of respect.

**Faith in the LSEN (2.4)**

In order to have faith one has to believe. Most of the respondents (94%) agreed that the educator must have faith in the LSEN'S learning ability. Educators can only be

prepared for effective inclusive education if they believe that all children are capable of learning. According to Carrington (1996:54) inclusion works when teachers have faith in all children, including LSEN.

### **Understanding the LSEN (emotional problems) (2.5)**

The educator must be prepared to understand the nature of LSEN, their problems, their way of learning and what works for them (cf.2.3.2).The majority of the respondents (93%) agreed that the educator must understand the emotional problems of the LSEN. The educator must understand that the LSEN sometimes has a negative self concept which arises out of his difficulty with coping with the challenges he is confronted with in the educational situation. As such the educator must assist in boosting the self confidence of the LSEN. The majority of educators regard understanding and caring for learners as an integral part of their work.

### **Treatment of the LSEN (2.6)**

More than two thirds of the respondents (69%) acknowledged that educators should treat all learners in the same way, in other words, avoid treating LSEN more sympathetically in class. A quarter of the respondents felt that LSEN should be treated with more sympathy and 6% were uncertain. Lomofsky, Roberts and Mvambu (1999:71) maintain that inclusion requires that LSEN are not simply thought of with pity but viewed more positively in terms of their abilities rather than their disabilities.

### **Discipline (2.7)**

All learners must be disciplined in an appropriate manner in the classroom. Educators should not show more sympathy towards LSEN when disciplining them but should deal with discipline problems in an objective and educationally effective way, otherwise greater harm may very well be caused to LSEN (Siebalak, 2002:136). More than half of the respondents (56%) agreed that all learners must be punished in the same manner. Wolfensberger (1994:20) maintains that in an inclusive classroom all learners are important, but those who experience barriers to learning and development make special demands on educators. Booyse (1995:58) states that educators should not overlook unacceptable behaviour of LSEN but should ensure that the appropriate punishment is meted out. Care must be taken

not to emphasize the individuals with disabilities or special educational needs, but to look at the class as a whole when disciplining learners. Educators should be trained to develop skills to assist LSEN in a regular classroom and effectively cooperate with parents, other educators, educator consultation teams and others in order to alleviate or solve the children's problems (cf. 2.7.2).

### **Understanding the special educational needs of the LSEN (2.8)**

According to an ANC document (1994:104) special educational needs include special academic and learning problems, physical health problems, emotional concerns and particular social needs (cf.1.4.5). The majority of the respondents (95%) indicated that the educator must understand the special educational needs of LSEN. The educator can only be prepared for effective inclusive education if he has an understanding of the special needs of the LSEN. He has to understand the challenges that the LSEN face and the demands associated with educating LSEN in the mainstream classroom.

### **Understanding the LSEN's experience (2.9)**

Most of the respondents (96%) agreed that the educator must understand the LSEN's experience of being different. Smith (1991:65) explains that a child's impairment is not in itself a developmental learning problem. It is his experience of his impairment that can impede his progress. Special aid is necessary to help the child become an adult and to cope in life despite his impairment. Current literature calls his experience of his impairment a "barrier to learning." If educators understand this they are more likely to empathize with the LSEN and thereby be more accommodating of LSEN in the mainstream classroom (cf.2.3.2).

### **Supporting LSEN (2.10)**

The educator must be willing to convey a message of unconditional acceptance and understanding, or else the LSEN will most likely feel stigmatised and consequently underachieve in an inclusive class (cf.2.3.2). The educator must be prepared to adapt his teaching methods and pace to accommodate LSEN. The majority of the respondents (97%) indicated that the educator must support the LSEN to the best of his ability. This indicates that educators have embraced the idea of educating LSEN

in the mainstream class. This, however, is not an indication that they are appropriately equipped to support LSEN.

#### 4.2.12 Support for the implementation of inclusive education

Table 12: Frequency distribution according to support for educators

Question number	Agree (1)	Disagree (2)	Uncertain (3)	TOTAL
3.1	50	58	12	120
	42%	48%	10%	100%
3.2	63	46	11	120
	53%	38.%	9%	100%
3.3	48	60	12	120
	40%	50%	10%	100%
3.4	48	61	11	120
	40%	51%	9%	100%
3.5	36	73	11	120
	30%	61%	9%	100%
3.6	46	61	13	120
	38%	51%	11%	100%
3.7	51	47	22	120
	43%	39%	18%	100%
3.8	61	40	19	120
	51%	33%	16%	100%
3.9	42	44	34	120
	35%	37%	28%	100%
3.10	47	43	30	120
	39%	36%	25%	100%

### **An assessment team (3.1)**

Almost half of the respondents (48%) said that an assessment team to evaluate LSEN is not available at their schools. It is necessary to have an assessment team as the function of the team is to ensure that LSEN is identified and thereby appropriately catered for. Inclusive education implies that LSEN must be confronted with an evaluation system which will enable them to progress at their own rates and at their own levels in mainstream classes (Hall, 2002:34). The team needs to ensure that educators adapt assessment strategies to suit the levels and abilities of the learners (cf.2.7.4(1)). If assessment strategies are not adapted, learners with special needs are likely to feel demotivated.

### **Record of LSEN (3.2)**

Slightly more than half of the respondents (53%) agreed that there is a record of LSEN at their school while a significant percentage disagreed. It is important for educators to keep a record of LSEN. The record should reflect the LSEN's personal particulars such as his name, age, parents' telephone numbers and medical history. There should be a record of all observations made and all assessments done. Such records will assist in keeping track of the LSEN's progress. It will assist the educator in the formulation of relevant learning and assessment programmes. The record should be passed on to the following educator as the LSEN progresses to the next grade. This will ensure that the LSEN is always effectively catered for.

### **A school – based support team (3.3)**

Half of the respondents (50%) said that a school-based support team for assisting educators with LSEN is not available at their schools. Muthukrishna and Schoeman (2000: 319) point out that the reports of the NCSNET/NCESS (National Commission on Special Needs Education and Training and the National Committee for Education Support Services) state that an inclusive education policy will place some of the responsibility for addressing barriers to learning and development on the shoulders of the school support teams that will be developed in the schools in the next few years.

The presence of a school-based support team provides an ongoing "training" opportunity for educators, enabling and empowering them to become more

independent in addressing difficulties. If not needed for guidance, it is there for emotional support and peer discussions to enhance professional development (Campher, 2003: 75). The school-based support team has been conceptualised as comprising mainly of educators in the school itself. It has been proposed that the school-based support team can be coordinated by a member of staff, preferably someone who has received extra training in one of the specialized competency areas emerging from the NCSNET/NCESS report, for example, life-skills education, counselling or learning support (Lazarus, Daniels & Engelbrecht, 1999: 54). A school-based support team will develop the mainstream educators' competency (cf.2.7.4(1)).

### **In-service training (3.4)**

The larger number (51%) indicated that in-service training opportunities are not available for mainstream educators to cope with LSEN. Bothma, Gravett and Swart (2000:201) state that the challenge facing many South Africans is that they have not been trained to cope with the diversity of learners now entering schools. According to Nell (1996:39) successful inclusive education has major implications for the pre-service and in-service training of educators. Appropriate preparation of all educational personnel is vitally important. In-depth knowledge of the philosophy of inclusion and the need for educators to develop the commitment and caring required to accommodate LSEN as much as possible in the mainstream classes should be developed during pre-service and in-service training.

### **Adequate funds (3.5)**

The majority of educators (61%) said that their schools did not have adequate funds for resources to implement successful inclusive education. Adequate funding is required to purchase resources required to accommodate LSEN. According to Nell (1996:39) many parts of the country have to cope with large classes, inadequate or no support facilities, a lack of orthodidactic materials as well as a lack of expertise of educators to deal with LSEN. Schools need to purchase books, adapted material, overhead projectors, aids such as hearing aids and computers. Schools have to be better resourced and equipped before inclusive education can be implemented.



**Networking (3.6)**

Just over half of the respondents (51%) indicated that there are no opportunities for networking between special school educators and mainstream educators. This is an area that needs attention. For the successful implementation of inclusive education there is a need for special and mainstream school educators to collaborate and share information. All educators should have the necessary skills to work cooperatively.

Special school and mainstream educators should actively plan for skills transfer, team teaching, directing small group instruction in mainstream schools, special education settings and training peer tutors (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997: 138; Philips & McCulloch, 1990: 301). A network between schools could assist in sharing valuable knowledge and expertises as well as providing support. Through the process of problem-solving, mainstream and special school educators can use their collective expertise in a collegial, equal status relationship.

**Effective management (3.7)**

The difference between the respondents that agreed (43%) and disagreed (39%) that the management in their schools have the competencies to know how to accommodate diversity and address barriers to learning and development, is 4%. Lazarus, Daniels and Engelbrecht (1999: 60) state that the style and manner of leadership and management practice of educational managers is a critical factor in ensuring that inclusive education is successfully implemented.

**School policy to eliminate discriminatory attitudes (3.8)**

A school policy to eliminate discrimination will ensure that LSEN are treated in a fair manner. Slightly more than half the educators (51%) indicated that their schools have a policy to combat discriminatory attitudes towards LSEN. Almost half the respondents (49%) either disagreed (33%) or were uncertain (16%) that their schools have a policy to combat discriminatory attitudes. All schools should have a basic policy to ensure that all learners including LSEN are protected.

**A district support team (3.9)**

More educators disagreed with the statement (37%) than agreed (35%) with the statement that there is a district support team available. The table shows that a significant percentage (28%) of the educators are unsure. Educators are to a great extent dependent on support structures as they are still grappling with educational changes imposed upon them. According to the White Paper 6 on Building an Inclusive Education and Training System, the main focus of the district support team should be support to educators, with a particular focus on curriculum and institutional development, to ensure that the teaching and learning framework and environment is responsive to the full range of teaching needs (DNE, 2001: 29).

**Harassment of LSEN (3.10)**

A smaller percentage of the respondents (39%) agreed that there are procedures to deal with possible harassment of learners at their schools. According to Walman (1993:88) learners with special educational needs often face beatings from educators, teasing from fellow learners or anger from parents. The community at times label these children as retarded or naughty when they may be dyslexic or hyperactive, or have an attention deficit disorder. It is thus the responsibility of the educators to ensure that LSEN are protected. The South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996 states that "...a public school must admit learners and serve their educational requirements without discriminating in any way" (RSA, 1996: 6). A policy to address harassment of LSEN should be part of the school's mission statement.

#### 4.2.13 Educators' preparedness for inclusive education

Table 13: Frequency distribution according to the educators' preparedness for the effective implementation of inclusive education.

Question number	Agree (1)	Disagree (2)	Uncertain (3)	TOTAL
4.1	114	2	4	120
	95%	2%	3%	100%
4.2	114	1	5	120
	95%	1%	4%	100%
4.3	111	3	6	120
	92%	3%	5%	100%
4.4	118	0	2	120
	98%	0.00%	2%	100%
4.5	117	2	1	120
	97%	2%	1%	100%
4.6	117	1	2	120
	97%	1%	2%	100%
4.7	114	3	3	120
	94%	3%	3%	100%
4.8	109	5	6	120
	91%	4%	5%	100%
4.9	112	6	2	120
	93%	5%	2%	100%
4.10	117	0	3	120
	97%	0%	3%	100%

#### **Setting an example in accepting LSEN (4.1)**

Educators must be prepared to be role models in their acceptance of LSEN in the mainstream class. The majority of the respondents (95%) supported this statement. Successful inclusive education expects mainstream educators to accept LSEN like any other 'normal' child (Barton, 1993:20). 'Normal learners' who follow the lead of

their educators are not going to be welcoming or helpful in the classrooms in which it is clear that the educator would rather not have a certain learner in class. Educators must realize that their words and actions provide a model for the learners. They should attempt to convey a positive attitude that encourages acceptance of the LSEN. Many educators support the human rights principles underpinning inclusive education and are thus willing to accept LSEN in the mainstream class (Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff & Pettipher, 2002: 179).

#### **Changes in teaching methods (4.2)**

The majority of the educators (95%) indicated that there is a need to change their teaching methods in order to accommodate LSEN. These learners have a right to equal access to education at all levels in a single inclusive education system that is responsive to the diverse needs of all learners, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning as well as different language needs, as in the case of deaf learners where their first language is sign language (cf.1.4.4). This will ensure quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, technical strategies and resource use (Downing, 2002:11). Educators will have to be adequately prepared to utilize orthodidactic devices as well as medical and para medical assistive devices required by some of the LSEN (Nell, 1996:35). Inclusive education involves assisting all children by facilitating problem-solving and learning to develop their abilities by exposing them to the abilities of 'normal' people, and *vice versa* (Sebba & Ainscow, 1996:15).

#### **The curriculum (4.3)**

More than ninety percent (92%) agreed that LSEN should follow an adapted curriculum. According to Nell (1996:35) inclusive education does not imply the dumping of LSEN into mainstream classes. It implies that a learner is placed in mainstream classes but with the necessary support to be able to cope in the classroom. It also implies that LSEN must be confronted with a differentiated curriculum and education system which will enable them to progress at their own rate and at their own levels while placed in mainstream classes (cf. 2.4). Outcomes based education is designed to have the capacity to respond to diversity in learning needs, based on a belief that all learners can learn successfully. All learners are understood to possess unique individual characteristics. Instruction therefore

requires inherently differentiated teaching based on the learning characteristics of the learners (DNE:2002: 21).

The curriculum will have to be adapted to suit the learners rather than learners fit into the curriculum. An OBE curriculum is more flexible and makes allowances for variations in learning rates, pace and style. The OBE curriculum thus provides an ideal opportunity to implement inclusive education successfully (Lomofsky, Roberts & Mvambu, 1999: 76).

#### **Learner diversity (4.4)**

The majority of the respondents (98%) said that educators need to be able to meet the needs of the diversity of the learners in an inclusive classroom. This is a major challenge. According to Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker and Engelbrecht (1999:128) educators are now challenged with the task to accommodate diversity and to prevent and address barriers to learning and development. Over the past few years, educators have had to adapt to multicultural education (Nicholls, 1998:34).

Squelch and Lemmer (1994: 4) mention that the majority of educators in South Africa experience the teaching of multicultural classes as stressful because they

- are not able to understand the diversity of cultures. The different cultures cause misunderstandings and clashes of ideas.
- experience difficulty in empathising with the problems of multicultural learners.

Adding to the stress of multicultural education, the stress of including multi-abled/multi-impaired learners, might just result in educators becoming discouraged and demotivated.

#### **Training (4.5)**

According to Schechtman and Or (1996: 137) educators need to receive in-service training to gain the necessary knowledge, skills and values to cope with learners of varying abilities and diverse needs. A high percentage of the respondents (97%) said that educators need more training to educate LSEN. This training should have a reflective and research approach, "exploring" innovatory ways of responding to

day-to-day concerns (Ainscow, 1997:7). The successful implementation of inclusive education is largely dependent on high quality professional preparation of educators.

#### **Teamwork (4.6)**

The majority of the respondents (97%) indicated that there is a need for teamwork. It is very difficult for educators to accommodate LSEN in the mainstream class, especially when they have no prior training and experience (Friend & Bursack, 1999:53). There is thus a need to share information with other educators who are jointly responsible for educating learners who are experiencing barriers to learning. The collaborative role of educators include actively planning for skills transfer to educators in similar circumstances, team teaching, directing small special education settings and training, and peer tutors (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997:138; Friend & Cook, 1996:239; Phillips & McCulloch, 1990:301).

#### **Knowledge of LSEN (4.7)**

Most of the respondents (95%) confirmed that educators need more knowledge of LSEN. Many educators have limited knowledge of inclusive education and have obtained their information from newspapers, pamphlets, educational programmes and informal discussions. They have not been trained (pre-service or in-service) and they possess little knowledge of official policy documents. Unfortunately lack of knowledge leads to negative attitudes and labelling (Hay, Smit & Paulsen, 2001:214; Swart & Pettipher 2000:85; Möwes, 2002:75-86; Idol, 1997:387-389). Knowledge dispels misconceptions and clarifies misunderstandings; prejudice and fear thus decrease. Educators are prepared to be more accommodating as they learn more about the abilities and problems of "special learners" (Lewis & Doorlag, 1991:141).

#### **Remedial educators (4.8)**

The majority of the respondents (91%) said that they would be more prepared for inclusive education if they receive assistance from remedial educators. Remedial teaching is mainly given on an individual basis due to the uniqueness of each child and his specific learning disability (Derbyshire, 1991:377). Remedial educators have the knowledge and the expertise to deal with learners with diverse needs. Therefore, any assistance from remedial educators will serve to enhance the efforts of the mainstream educator in dealing with LSEN. As more learners with disabilities

are accommodated in mainstream classes, teaching is likely to become more demanding. The challenge is to share expertise between remedial and mainstream teaching so that educators gradually acquire skills and confidence to work with LSEN (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999:65; Hayes & Gunn, 1988:31).

#### **Negative feelings towards LSEN (4.9)**

More than 90% of the educators (93%) agreed that they must avoid any negative feelings towards LSEN. This is consistent with the findings of Davies and Green (1998: 97) who found that a number of South African educators in mainstream classrooms are positively disposed towards inclusive education. Negative attitudes would impede the integration process and defeat the purpose of inclusive education (cf.2.6). The educators' attitudes towards LSEN determine their preparedness to embrace inclusive education (Hay, 2003: 137).

#### **Time for LSEN (4.10)**

A high percentage of respondents (97%) indicated that they need to make time to meet the needs of LSEN. Many educators will probably agree that time is their most valuable resource and that they are under stress to plan their work adequately. They have to attend to classroom commitments, extra-curricular duties, lesson preparation, assessment and the marking of learners' work, and provide personal and academic assistance to learners (Chetty, 2004:119). They often also have large classes, which add to their workload. Some educators express concern that the inclusion of LSEN in large classes will have a negative effect on other learners in the class. They argue that too much time and energy will be devoted to LSEN and that other learners will be neglected in the process.

### **43 SUMMARY**

In this chapter, an attempt has been made by the researcher to give some order to the range of information provided by the educators in their answers to the questionnaire. Data collected regarding educators' preparedness for inclusive education were organised in frequency distribution tables. The responses to the questionnaire were interpreted and the findings discussed. The last chapter of this study consists of a summary, findings and recommendations.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study was to investigate educators' preparedness for inclusive education. In this chapter, the following will be provided: a summary and findings of the previous chapters, recommendations, criticisms emanating from the study and a final remark.

#### 5.2 SUMMARY

##### 5.2.1 Statement of the problem

This study investigated the preparedness of educators for inclusive education.

This includes preparing educators with adequate knowledge and skills, sufficient training and adequate support. Educators need to examine their values, beliefs and attitudes and determine whether they are congruent with inclusive education. Educators' preparedness for inclusive education is also largely determined by the ability of educators to deal effectively with LSEN. From the literature study it is evident that mainstream educators are not equipped with adequate training, knowledge, skills and support networks to cope with diversity in mainstream classrooms.

##### 5.2.2 Literature review

The literature study shows that the successful implementation of inclusive education is largely dependent on educators' preparedness for inclusive education. The lack of preparedness of educators to deal with diversity has not only disadvantaged many learners but has often also left educators feeling inadequate. Educators who are prepared have more positive views towards inclusive education and are in a position to embrace inclusive education. The literature study shows that an important aspect



of the educators' preparedness for inclusive education is their relationship with the LSEN. For inclusive education to be successful, the educator must be prepared to have a positive relationship with the LSEN.

The educator and the learner are related in a special way. They become involved in education relationships, which are:

- A relationship of trust.
- A relationship of understanding.
- A relationship of authority.

Educators who are not prepared to actualize the above relationships will contribute towards an undesirable educational situation and a resistance towards the implementation of inclusive education.

The literature review shows that educators are the agents for change. Before they can play such a role, however, they themselves need to develop an understanding of why change is necessary. They need to understand the paradigm shift that is associated with a change from teaching in mainstream class to teaching in an inclusive class. Educators must see the value of such a change.

They are required to rethink their roles, construct new knowledge, and acquire new skills and competencies. Educators have to be prepared to change the following:

- attitudes;
- opinions;
- paradigms;
- perspectives; and
- teaching methods (cf. 2.2).

The literature indicated that educators in mainstream schools generally express negative attitudes towards inclusion for the following reasons:

- Large class sizes.
- Lack of support.

- Lack of knowledge.
- Lack of skills and competencies.
- Lack of resources.
- High stress level.
- Time constraints.

Educators' needs have to be taken into consideration as it is closely associated with their preparedness to implement inclusive education effectively. The needs of educators were categorised into four main areas:

- Need for knowledge.
- Need for skills and competencies.
- Emotional needs.
- Need for support (cf.2.6).

### **5.2.3 Planning of the research**

This study utilized a questionnaire, constructed by the researcher, as a means to obtain a database. The information sought for this investigation was not available from any other source and had to be acquired directly from the respondents. The questionnaire was aimed at principals, deputy principals, heads of departments and educators from primary and secondary schools. With the aim of administering the questionnaire to the respondents, the researcher had to obtain permission from the Ward Manager of the Umdoni Ward in the Scottburgh Circuit, KwaZulu Natal.

The composition, administration and data analyses of the questionnaire were also dealt with. The principle of a pilot study was addressed, as well as the limitations of the research.

### **5.2.4 Presentation and analysis of research data**

The purpose of this chapter was to statistically analyse and discuss data collected from the questionnaires completed by 120 educators. Comments were offered and interpretations were made of the findings. At the outset an explanation and

responses and analysis of the data. This was followed by the presentation and discussion of the responses to the questions in the questionnaires.

### **5.2.5 Aims of the study**

The researcher formulated specific aims (cf.1.5) to determine the course of the study. These aims were realised through the literature study, which was made from various sources available nationally and internationally. An empirical survey consisting of a structured questionnaire as basis was used together with the literature study, to determine educators' preparedness for inclusive education. On the basis of the findings of this study certain recommendations are offered.

## **5.3 FINDINGS**

### **5.3.1 Findings from the literature study**

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

- Educators must be prepared to engage in a positive relationship with the LSEN as the success of inclusive education is largely determined by the ability of the educators to deal effectively with LSEN. This deems it necessary for the educator to respect the LSEN, to trust in his educability, to understand the uniqueness of the LSEN in a positive sense and to ensure that discipline is meted out in a fair and even-handed manner (cf.2.3).
- Educators need to be positive in terms of their attitudes, beliefs, opinions, paradigms and perspectives towards LSEN and inclusive education (cf.2.2).
- Educators need in-service training to empower them with the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies required to teach in an inclusive class (cf. 2.7.1; cf.2.7.2).

- They need adequate support to respond to the challenges that present themselves in an inclusive class. Educators need support from their principals, colleagues, special educators, remedial educators, school-based support teams and district support teams (cf.2.7.4).
- Educators need to be emotionally prepared. Policy makers tend to focus on knowledge, skills and practical support without acknowledging the educators' emotional needs. They need emotional support to alleviate anxiety, fears and concerns associated with including LSEN in the mainstream class (cf.2.7.3).

### **5.3.2 Findings from the empirical study**

From the empirical study the following information was obtained:

- Most of the educators (72%) have 36 and more learners in their classes (cf.4.2.9).
- It is clear that educators agree that their relationship with the LSEN has a significant bearing on their preparedness to include them in the mainstream class. Over ninety percent (90%) of the respondents agreed that the educator must have faith and trust in the educability of LSEN, respect for LSEN, an understanding of LSEN and must be prepared to offer learning support for the LSEN (cf.4.2.11).
- The majority of the respondents (85%) indicated that they did not have any training to equip them with knowledge, skills and competencies to teach LSEN (cf. 4.2.10).
- Forty eight percent (48%) of the respondents disagreed that there is an assessment team available at their school (cf.3.1).
- A significant percentage of respondents (38%) stated that there is no record of LSEN at their schools (cf.3.2).

- Half of the respondents (50%) said that a school-based support team is not available at their schools (cf.3.3).
- Slightly more than half of the respondents (51%) indicated that there are no in-service training opportunities (cf.3.4).
- Most of the educators (61%) maintained that their schools did not have adequate funds for resources required for LSEN (cf.3.5).
- Slightly more than half of the respondents (51%) said that there are no networking opportunities (cf.3.6).
- Thirty nine percent (39%) of the respondents stated that they do not have effective management teams at their schools (cf.3.7).
- Thirty three percent (33%) of the respondents indicated that their schools do not have policies to protect LSEN (cf.3.8).
- A significant number of respondents (65%) either disagreed (37%) or were unsure(28%) of a district support team being available (cf.3.9).
- The majority of the respondents (95%) agreed that they need more knowledge of LSEN (cf.4.7).
- Most of the respondents (95%) agreed that they need to change their teaching methods (cf.4.2).
- A high percentage of respondents (92%) confirmed that educators need to follow an adapted curriculum (cf.4.3).
- Ninety seven percent (97%) of the respondents indicated that they need in-service training (cf.4.5).

- Most of the respondents (97%) agreed that there is a need for teamwork (cf.4.6).
- The majority of the respondents (91%) agreed that they need assistance from remedial educators (cf.4.8).
- Most of the respondents (93%) agreed that they have to avoid negative feelings towards LSEN (cf.4.9).
- Ninety seven percent (97%) of the respondents agreed that teaching LSEN requires dedicating time for individual attention (cf.4.10).

## 5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.4.1 Support for educators.

#### (1) Motivation

Based on the literature study as well as the empirical survey the researcher has reason to motivate for improved support for educators in terms of preparing them for the change from mainstream education to inclusive education. The degree of support the educator receives is the most powerful predictor of positive attitudes towards full inclusion of LSEN (cf. 2.6.4).

If educators are not adequately supported, they:

- become demotivated;
- become unsure; and
- become negative towards change.

Despite the impression among advocates and non-advocates that full inclusion has swept the educational land, the rhetoric seems to have moved faster than the reality and only few schools have joined the full inclusion bandwagon (cf.1.4). Without adequate support for educators inclusion will remain a theory and will be synonymous with dumping LSEN in mainstream classes.

## (2) Recommendations

The following recommendations are made with regard to support for educators:

- There should be smaller classes in schools. The educator–learner ratio in a school should ideally be 1:30. This can be achieved by increasing the post-provisioning norm in a school, thus increasing the number of educators in a school.
- School principals should organize and (re)deploy staff effectively, and schedule the time necessary for educators to plan and learn new skills.
- The school environment should be one of collaboration where individuals are committed to working together.
- The principal's leadership style should be such that he actively embodies the democratic values of inclusive education, and supports educators by taking cognizance of their beliefs, feelings and perceptions.
- The curriculum should be developed to ensure that that the diverse needs of the population are met (cf.2.4).
- A school–based support team should be formed, made up of learners, their parents, educators, and representatives from the community, NGO'S and neighbouring schools. This team could assist educators in the following ways
  - Meet on a weekly basis with educators who request support.
  - Promote collaboration actively.
  - Deal with one case per meeting.
  - Keep confidential notes about cases.

A District-support team should be available for more specialist advice and intervention. This team should consist of a core of education support personnel who could offer support and advice. They could consist of school psychologists, special educators, guidance counsellors, speech and language specialists, occupational therapists and even doctors and nurses. They could assist educators in the following ways:

- Do behavioural consultation.
- Do clinical consultation to identify and assess learner problems.
- Assess the entire school system and assist educators in resolving identified concerns.
- Ensure accountability, legal and ethical practices and encourage collaborative skills
- Governing bodies are supposed to stay informed as to the latest policies which support inclusive education, such as
  - Whole school evaluation.
  - Parent empowerment programmes
  - Health –promoting initiatives
  - Community – based approaches to education. :



## 5.4.2 In-service training of educators

### (1) Motivation

It is clear from the findings that the training of educators will need to change in order to make inclusive education a reality (cf. 4.2.10). Educators were of the opinion that they have limited knowledge of inclusive education. Their lack of knowledge and skills lead to negative attitudes and a misconception concerning inclusive education (cf.2.7.1). It is recommended that at pre-service level, special needs should be integrated into all educator education courses. More importantly, however, educators who are already in service, should be provided with in-service training.

An important requirement, which became apparent from the literature study, is that educators should participate in the decision-making process. The significance of asking educators' opinions and input on inclusion of LSEN before such change is implemented, needs to be stressed (Möwes, 2002: 312). The schools' management has to create a school environment that is conducive for inclusive education by creating opportunities for in-service training.

An in-service programme should aim at promoting successful collaboration and include in its design the active participation of various role players, time provision to accommodate collaboration, the consideration of emotional (attitudes), cognitive (knowledge and skills), interpersonal (support and help) and educational needs of educators in times of change, and the training of educators in communication, consulting, joint planning, team teaching, problem solving, conflict control and leadership skills(cf.2.7.4(3)).

To promote the school as a learning community, professional development should be an ongoing, coherent and rigorous process. It should enable educators to become lifelong learners, through high quality, needs driven, research-based, in-service support programmes. Staff development should not only affect knowledge, attitudes and practices of educators and administrators, but must also alter the cultures and structures of the organisation (Campher, 2003:105).

Research has shown that educators can also benefit from therapeutic techniques where, through a self-exploration process, they can challenge existing beliefs, enhance insight into their own perceptions and raise the will to change. Two counselling methods are suggested, namely: clarifying processes, and bibliotherapy. These affective courses can be included in the training of educators. Educators have shown that they actually value the affective courses more than the educator-instruction courses (Schechtman & Or, 1996:146).

## (2)Recommendation

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

They should be instilled with an understanding that they are responsible for all learners regardless of their abilities.

They should be able to identify and assess barriers to learning.

They should be aware of how to make classroom and curricular adaptations as well as changes in their teaching methods to assist LSEN.

They should be prepared and trained in co-operative approaches to meet the needs of learners. These could involve learner tutors, family members or others.

They should be familiar with community and government agencies which can provide assistance to families and individuals.

They should be aware of where and who to turn to in order to receive advice or assistance concerning the instruction of learners with special needs.

They should be instilled with positive attitudes towards these learners.

They should obtain an optimistic picture of what can be accomplished.

An in-service training programme should involve the following aspects:

- Coaching.
- Collaborative problem solving.
- In-service education.
- Demonstration of methods and materials.
- Case study discussion.
- Guest speakers.
- Conferences.
- Newsletters.
- Co-teaching which includes:
  - Parallel teaching, and
  - Alternate teaching

The training programme could also include an affective course which involves two counselling methods for challenging existing educator beliefs: clarifying process and bibliotherapy.

Thus participants receive training on two levels: they are provided with specific knowledge, methods, and strategies for use in the classroom and they experience these interventions themselves.

## **5.5 Further research**

The transition from mainstream education to inclusive education is a major process. It is not easy for educators to embrace inclusion when they are not adequately prepared for the new paradigm. It is clear from the research that many schools are still grappling with the changes imposed on them. The perspective adopted in this research can be fruitfully extended by further research.

The difference between the preparedness of educators in urban, sub-urban and rural schools should be explored and their level of preparedness needs to be researched and addressed accordingly.

## **5.6 CRITICISM**

Criticisms that emanate from this study include the following:

- It can be presumed that many of the educators who completed the questionnaires drew their responses regarding preparedness of educators for inclusive education from the media and relevant policy documents. It can be assumed that they provided responses which they felt would be correct rather than that which they personally believed in and experienced. The probability therefore exists that the majority of educators indicated what is theoretical rather than what is practical.
- Due to the heavy workload of educators, they may have completed the questionnaire in haste.
- The challenge facing the educator with regards to inclusive education cannot be accurately determined by a questionnaire alone. A structured interview, as a supplementary source of information, might have provided a more reliable perspective

## 5.7 FINAL REMARK

The central focus of this study was to establish whether educators are prepared for the challenges that are associated with the implementation of inclusive education. The study focused on whether they have the skills, knowledge, attitudes, training and access to support structures to ensure successful inclusion of LSEN in mainstream classes. It is hoped that this study will be of value to all stakeholders in education and that recommendations made concerning training and the improvement of educator support structures will enhance the successful implementation of inclusive education.

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# **APPENDIX A**

**STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**EDUCATORS' PREPAREDNESS FOR  
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

**J NAICKER (MRS)  
SEPTEMBER 2006**

Dear Educator

**QUESTIONNAIRE: EDUCATORS' PREPAREDNESS FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

At present I am engaged in a research project towards my M.Ed. degree at the University of Zululand under the guidance of Prof M.S.Vos. The research is concerned with Educators' Preparedness For Inclusive Education.

Your response to the attached questionnaire is vital in assisting me to determine educators' preparedness for inclusive education.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

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

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully

.....  
J NAICKER

.....  
DATE



### INSTRUCTIONS TO THE RESPONDENT

1. Please read through each statement carefully **before** giving your opinion.
2. Please make sure that you do not **omit** a question, or skip any page.
3. Please be totally **frank** when giving your opinion.
4. Please **do not** discuss statements with anyone.
5. Please **return** the questionnaire after completion.

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

## SECTION ONE: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1.1 My gender is:

	Code
Male	1
Female	2

1.2 My age in completed years as at 2006-12-31:

Age group	Code
20 - 25 years	1
26 - 30 years	2
31 - 35 years	3
36 - 40 years	4
41 - 45 years	5
46 - 50 years	6
51 - 55 years	7
56 - 60 years	8
61 - 65 years	9
Older than 65 years	10

1.3 My qualifications are:

Academic qualification(s) (e.g. BA, M.Ed, etc.)  
Professional qualification(s) (e.g. FDE, HDE, PTC, etc.)

	Code
	1
	2

1.4 Total number of completed years in the teaching profession as at 2006-12-31:

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

5 My post level is:

	Code
Principal	1
Deputy principal	2
HOD	3
Educator (level 1)	4

6 Type of post held by me:

	Code
Permanent	1
Temporary	2
Part time	3

7 My employer is:

	Code
Department of education	1
Governing body	2

8 My school is qualified as:

	Code
Primary school	1
Secondary school	2
Combined school	3

9 What is the average number of learners in your class?.....

10 Do you have any training in teaching learners with special educational needs?

	Code
Yes	1
No	2

11 If your answer to 1.10 is "yes" please specify the type of training you have received:

.....  
.....

## SECTION TWO: THE EDUCATOR - LSEN RELATIONSHIP

		Agree	Disagree	Uncertain
	<b>The educator in an inclusive classroom must:</b>			
2.1	have trust in the educability of the LSEN			
2.2	be prepared to accept the LSEN unconditionally			
2.3	show similar respect towards all learners (including LSEN)			
2.4	have faith in the LSEN's learning ability			
2.5	understand the emotional problems of the LSEN (e.g negative self-image)			
2.6	treat all learners in the same way (e.g not show more sympathy with the LSEN)			
2.7	punish all learners in the same manner (e.g not be lenient towards the LSEN)			
2.8	understand the special educational needs of the LSEN			
2.9	understand the LSEN's experience of being different (e.g dyslexia)			
2.10	support LSEN to the best of his/her ability			

**SECTION THREE: SUPPORT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF  
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

		Agree	Disagree	Uncertain
	<b>The following facilities/strategies to make educators more prepared for inclusion are available at my school:</b>			
3.1	An assessment team to evaluate LSEN for special teaching methods			
3.2	A record of LSEN to help educators with the identification of a specific impairment			
3.3	A school based support team to assist educators with LSEN			
3.4	In-service training opportunities for mainstream educators to better cope with LSEN			
3.5	Sufficient funds for resources to facilitate effective teaching of LSEN			
3.6	Opportunities for networking between special educators and mainstream educators			
3.7	A management team with sufficient knowledge to implement inclusive education			
3.8	A school policy to eliminate discriminatory attitudes towards LSEN			
3.9	A district support team to assist the school with inclusion problems			
3.10	Procedures to deal with harassment of LSEN			

## **APPENDIX B**

41 Ashley Avenue  
Scottburgh  
4180

19-Sep-06

The Circuit Manager  
Scottburgh Circuit  
Department of Education  
Private Bag X505  
Umzinto  
4200

ATTENTION :DR J NAIDOO

request for permission to conduct research.

I am currently conducting a Research Project aimed at examining Educators' preparedness for inclusive education. This research is towards a M.Ed degree, and is being carried out under the supervision of Professor M.S Vos at the University of Zululand.

I will need to administer a questionnaire to educators in the primary and secondary schools in the Umdoni ward selected by random sampling. A copy of the approved questionnaire is attached for your inspection. All information will be dealt with the strictest of confidence and anonymity is assured.

I request your kind permission to conduct the above mentioned research.

Information gathered in this research will offer invaluable assistance to all stakeholders with an interest in education in South Africa.

Yours faithfully

*M. Naicker*  
.....  
Naicker(MRS)

PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION & CULTURE UMNYANCO MATHEMBE MAMASIKO
2006 -09- 18
PRIVATE BAG X0515 UMZINTU 4200
UMDONI WARD

APPROVED  
*J. Naicker*  
C.M.