Challenges facing the implementation of inclusive education in primary schools.

By

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CHALLENGES FACING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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STATEMENT OF DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation represents my own work both in conception and execution. All sources that I have consulted during the course of this study have been indicated and acknowledged by complete reference.

Qinisile Virginia Gwala

I hereby declare that this dissertation has been submitted for examination with \textit{without} my approval.

Prof. D. R. Nzima
(Supervisor)
ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to determine the challenges faced by educators in implementing inclusive education in primary schools in the EThekwini Region of Kwa Zulu Natal.

The research methodology was in the form of a qualitative inquiry. Individual interviews of educators were conducted, and a questionnaire was administered to collect data.

The results revealed that educators do not show an understanding of inclusive education and are uncertain of their roles. The educators' lack of knowledge, little or no experience, uncertainty about roles, inadequate training in teaching learners with barriers in learning and development result in a high percentage of educators holding negative attitudes towards inclusion of learners with barriers in learning into regular classrooms.

The researcher observed that a remarkable number of educators are therefore uncertain about inclusion of learners with barriers in regular classrooms. Based on the views of the educators the researcher concluded that educators attempts are influenced by the tradition of referring learners with barriers in learning and development to outside specialists who assessed, wrote evaluative reports, gave counselling to both learners and their parents, prepared and implemented educational programmes and provided preventative programmes.

The study revealed that teachers need quality comprehensive pre-service and in-service training.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

1. 1 Background to the study .............................. 1
1. 2 Motivation of the study .............................. 6
1. 3 Statement of the problem ............................ 13
1. 4 Aim of the study .................................. 16
1. 5 Operational definition of terms .................. 16
   1.5.1 Inclusive education .......................... 16
   1.5.2 Primary school ................................ 16
1. 6 Methodology ....................................... 17
   1.6.1 Sampling .................................... 18
1. 7 Method of data analysis ............................ 18
1. 8 Summary .......................................... 20

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2. 1 Introduction ....................................... 21
2. 2 Overview of the concept inclusive education .... 24
   2. 2.1 Inclusive education in the United Kingdom .. 27
   2. 2.2 Inclusive education in Germany ............... 27
CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Analysis of teachers’ responses emerging from the questionnaire

4.3 Analysis of interview transcripts

4.4 Concluding observations

4.4.1 The effects of teacher qualifications and experiences in the implementation of inclusive education
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5. 1 Introduction 98

5. 2 The benefits of inclusive education

5. 2. 1 The benefits which learners with barriers gain in an inclusive education 99

5. 2. 2 The benefits which peers of learners with barriers in learning gain in inclusive education 99

5. 2. 3 Benefits of inclusive education for teachers 101

5. 3 Findings

5. 3. 1 Challenges critical to the implementation of inclusive education 101

5. 3. 1. 1 Teacher qualifications 101

5. 3. 1. 2 Teacher competence 102

5. 3. 1. 3 Teachers’ attitudes 103

5. 3. 1. 4 Stress 104

5. 4 Recommendations

5. 4. 1 Recommendations to the school in general 105
5.4.2 Recommendations on inclusive education in general

5.5 Conclusion

LIST OF REFERENCES

APPENDICES

Letter of consent from the school principal 113
Letter to the District Manager 114
Questionnaire 115
CHAPTER 1

1.1 Background to the study

Access to education is a worldwide problem. In many developing countries only a minority non-disabled children attend any form of school and classes may have up to 100 children and may be taught by teachers who are unqualified, or underqualified. According to Mittler (1998:7), over 100 million children are without basic education and around half the worlds' children fail to complete four years of primary education. It has taken a long time for there to be any recognition that within the schooling system primary education is the foundation on which everything else rests or that it is a human right, which is fundamental.

The situation was worse for learners who evidenced learning or behavioural problems which impeded their ability to perform successfully. Such children qualified for one of the labels required for special educational service, for an example, learning disabled, emotional, or behavioural disorders.

In the past general and special education operated as two separate and distinct enterprises. Children were separated into “normal” and “not so normal”. Separating the normal from the not so normal was believed to be a way of protecting standards and safeguarding excellence (Hauritz, Sampford and Biencowe1998:108). Today the philosophical and pragmatic barriers that once divided the two disciplines are being dismantled. In more recent years the focus has broadened to incorporate consideration of special education potential and regular education for inclusive education.
The proposition is that more learners with barriers be served in general education classrooms. Inclusive education translates to full or part time placement in general education. Not only will the "pull out" decrease but suspension and expulsion will be used less.

The movement of learners with barriers in learning and development into regular classrooms require the general educator to teach a significantly diverse population and most but not all learners with barriers to learning are appropriate candidates for an inclusive education. According to Donald (1993: 140), two government reports estimate that there are 2.7 million black children with special needs. Learners with special needs are said to be those who, because of physical, sensory, cognitive, or other exceptionalities require some form of specialised intervention if they are to be effectively educated.

Central to the quality of the school is the quality of the teacher. The successful provision of inclusive education depends upon the quality of teaching available. Although in recent years there has been a marked improvement in the qualifications of teachers who are qualified, there has been a disturbing and marked increase in the number of professionally unqualified teachers (DuToit, 1997: 3).

Few school managers and teachers have the inclusive kind of training that enables them to deal with the complexities of inclusive education. Most managers in school
come up through ranks as teachers with no special educational needs training or experience outside general education. Teachers who lack knowledge, have a little experience and training in special needs education are likely to experience negative attitudes towards the inclusion of learners with barriers in learning in their classrooms. The experience and training are rough indicators of quality and of importance in the education system.

Serving learners with barriers in learning in a regular classroom requires a major shift in roles and responsibilities of educators, intervention and also special services (Forlin, 2001: 236). Possibly one of the most important requirements for ensuring the effective inclusion of learners with barriers in learning and development is the provision of support at schools, if schools are to serve a heterogeneous population of learners (Du Toit, 1997: 124). However, inclusive education should not be seen in terms of remediation for learners with disabilities, but rather in terms of a network of support based in school. It is envisaged in the White Paper that “school based support teams” be involved centrally in identifying learners with barriers in learning and development and addressing learning difficulties within the institutional context (D.N.E.2001:2.4.5.). Such support should not be available for learners with special needs only but it should be available for teachers and parents of learners with barriers in learning.
The redefinition of the teachers' roles is the most sweeping change taking place in schools. In addition to the traditional roles of regular classroom teaching the current roles involve participation in referrals, assessment, preparation and implementation of educational programmes which were previously planned and implemented by experts in the field of special educational needs in education (Lewis & Doorlag, 1995: 23).

Macleod in the monthly South African teachers' publication, 'The Teacher' (December 2000: 9) comments on the teachers' resistance to change and mentions the problem like reluctance to take additional roles, an unwillingness to adopt a more consultative approach in their teaching, feelings of being unsupported by authorities, and overwhelmed at the magnitude of the problem and the lack of skills.

The change from segregated school settings towards inclusion affect subsystems and whole systems in education. Change affects teachers, administrators, students, parents and the community at large. The focus on the processes such as inclusive education generated concern for school effectiveness and improvement.

In the wake of such rapid change educators find themselves struggling to keep up with what these changes mean and how to get the best out of them (Forlin, 2001: 236). Contrast this with the scale of need for all children. Given the rise in the population of children, the number of school places will need to rise. Against this background affecting all children how can there be hope to gain access to quality education for learners with barriers in learning and development.
The recent cutbacks and retrenchments have worsened the situation in South African education system. Overcrowded classrooms and inadequate resources exacerbate the pattern and further lead to negative attitudes within teachers who have a stressful and demanding role to fulfil. Today as many as 20 – 60% of the general education population, depending on the context comprise the group of learners with barriers in learning and development.

By contrast inclusive communities are designed to surround all participants (students, families, educators and others) with support and encouragement.

Currently the removal of learners from regular education should occur only when the nature of the problem is such that education in regular classes cannot be achieved (Lewis & Doorlag: 1995: 23). According to Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht (1999: 710), teachers who lack knowledge, have little experience and training are likely to experience negative attitudes towards the inclusion of learners with barriers in their classrooms. Most teachers are not motivated to teach learners with special educational needs because of a lack of knowledge of methods, techniques or skills for teaching the learners.

There are a number of barriers in South African black primary schools. The legacy of apartheid has generated gross disparities and distortions in education and there should be specific strategies to correct the historical imbalances. The limited number of high cost special schools serve a small minority of
learners with disabilities. There are approximately 44 special schools, for children with conspicuous disabilities in the province of Kwa-Zulu Natal as a whole and the majority are located in urban areas. Learners with disabilities in rural areas are the most denied equal access and appropriate education.

Education in South Africa is fast becoming a reality. The birth of a new democracy brought about the need for an inclusive diverse and transformative education. South Africa has to work hard, plan and organise well its education to reach its goal of inclusive education. The education department has to make intelligent adjustments needed in the implementation of inclusive education and manage its external environment.

1.2. Motivation of the study

The policy regarding the provision of education in South Africa has changed with emphasis on the accommodation of all learners in one inclusive education system (Engelbrecht, Swart & Ellof, 2001: 256; Harber, 1999: 571). The policy supports the proposition that more learners with barriers in learning should be served. The policies are democratic in terms of access and provision as emphasised by the policy of inclusion (Engelbrecht et al, 2001: 256).

Until 1994 inclusive education was not a major concern in South African education policy, able and disabled learners were basically unequal regarding educational standards but nowadays education for learners with barriers is a part
of debate on equality. In the past, learners who had significant needs (for an example, physical disabilities, low mental functioning, medical needs) attended special schools. The South African education is moving away from a policy of exclusion towards a policy of inclusion. The policy of inclusion implies that support for learners (who for some reasons do not manage to benefit from an ordinary school) by outside specialists is moving away to support by all persons in regular classroom irrespective of their potential or circumstances (Du Toit, 1997:123; Engelbrecht et al, 1999:28; Fisher, Roach & Frey, 2002: 63). For the most part learners with barriers in learning will be taught in general education classrooms with their peers. This means that all learners will have access to a single education system that is responsive to diversity.

Placement of learners with barriers into general education has increased the responsibility of the general educator. General education teachers are assuming more responsibility for the education of all learners, including the large numbers of those formerly excluded on the basis of an identified disability.

The proponents of inclusive education claim that learners, teachers, administrators and parents will benefit from merging special and general education where in more learners will participate in mainstream education.
Advocates further assert that mainstreaming will teach minimizing the negative stigma of labels, increasing opportunity for modelling desired social and academic behaviour, learning in situations more representative of the real world and increasing appreciation on individual differences.

While these consequences are positive some educators question mainstreaming benefit. The educators argue that many learners with barriers in learning will be lost in the shuffle, that general education teachers are ill prepared to serve learners with special needs, that there is no clear empirical basis for shifting to a full inclusion model and that research has failed to show that general classroom is the most appropriate placement for all learners with barriers in learning. Teachers feel that a more unified system of general education will undermine the much of the progress that has been made in special education in the past years.

These huge shifts in education pose problems and challenges for educators, parents, and education specialists. The role of educators differs from their traditional role. In the past it was customary for educators to identify learners who did not fit in the curriculum as early as possible with a view to referring them to someone else outside the school or to special classes or schools for special education (Du Toit, 1997: 136; Kapp, 1991:75). The new approach advocates devolution of assistance and proposes that assistance be provided by
class or subject teachers themselves (Du Toit 1997:136). The redefinition of roles and change is far reaching for educators.

In line with the policy of inclusion educators have to pool their expertise and experience to forge a new model of teaching and in presenting special teaching programmes. Educators have to adapt or modify the curriculum, the teaching methods, use special teaching aids and make adjustments with regard to classroom management and or organisation, refine their existing skills and develop new ones to meet the challenges, work collaboratively with team members and cooperate with parents, business or other agencies.

Primary teaching is a complex skilled activity calling for a highly developed ability to hold in balance its demands and tensions. Learning difficulties appear for the first time in the primary school. It is the stage where teachers take note of the extent to which children are succeeding in mastering the basic skills such as reading and understanding mathematics. Children in the primary phase experience emotional or behavioural problems in addition to academic problems. Teachers are apprehensive about inclusion of learners with disabilities in regular classrooms.

It is understandable that general educators are reluctant to accept learners classified as having barriers in learning and development in their classes. Very few teachers have received adequate specialized training at the present level. Their ability to work with learners with special needs has been seriously
put to test. A major challenge in South African education is that many educators are not qualified, or under qualified to teach in normal schools and may not cope to teach the diversity of learners. Their initial training did not include a component of special education needs and many educators do not know what inclusive education is and are unsure of the implications it has on classroom practice (Du Toit, 1997: 98).

According to Van der Horst & MacDonald (1997: 15) many South African teachers are irresponsible, lack dedication and commitment. There is a high level of absenteeism among teachers and learners, schools do not function in an organised manner and there is a lack of discipline. The teaching of learners with special educational needs (LSEN) require teachers who are dedicated, responsible and display a positive attitude to learners with barriers in learning (Du Toit, 1997:72).

It is reported that the most important element for successful inclusion is the attitude of teachers. Teachers should not hold opinions and values, which serve as motives for particular attitudes towards learners. Survey studies indicate that general classroom teachers who express negative views toward inclusion often feel ill prepared and unsupported in that effort, and not all administrators have been adequately prepared to support inclusive practices.

The teacher's negative attitude can prevent inclusive education from being
implemented with success (Dada & Alant, 2001: 99). Teachers label learners according to their group or class such as slow learners, mentally retarded, learning disabled learners and this is regarded as constituting a negative attitude towards learners (Du Toit, 1997: 53). Teachers also label learners according to their achievements and a particular kind of placement is made and base the placement on the labels without appropriate assessment of the educational needs of the learner. The negative attitudes can create barriers to learning. The teachers’ labels stigmatises, humiliates and labels learners (Du Toit, 1997: 53). The experiences and feelings in turn impact on learners self images with the result that they sometimes not actualise themselves and teachers may become stressed.

According to Olivier and Venter (2000:136), teacher stress is becoming endemic and could have serious implications for the physical and mental health of the teacher. Occupational stress is regarded as significant for teachers since it may not only affect them, but may have a negative impact on their learners as well.

Teacher stress is therefore a problem for the individual teacher, learner, the school, the teaching profession and the education system. It is asserted that teacher stress has become a major issue which will not disappoint but is likely to have escalating negative effects on the quality of education, the mental of teacher and the life chances of children.
Currently teachers increasingly report experience of stressful conditions and an escalation in their experience of stress (Ackhurst, 1998: 6). In England, it is maintained that stress is the main factor that contributes to job dissatisfaction, job related illness and early retirement.

Special needs education is more intensive than ordinary education in regular classroom. The assistance lasts longer, should be presented more systematically and is more specialised, as a result educators have to share the responsibility with other people available from inside and outside the school (Du Toit, 1997: 88). Although support for learners should be organised within the school and structured around school based support team, experts and other people from the community need to participate (Engelbrecht et al, 1999: 128; Du Toit, 1997: 123). Teachers’ renewal efforts that consists only of introducing teaching strategies to deal with diversity in the classroom are not enough. Teachers have to augment their interpersonal and communication skills to engage in the group problem solving process. All educators must recognise that learners with or without special needs constitute a community of learners for whom all school personnel share a responsibility. An increasing number of communities also have to define even closer relationships among professionals in education, health and human service agencies by actively linking a full range of community services to the schools.
Often people whom educators consult are not readily available to offer assistance. There is an inadequate supply of consultants and they have to serve large areas thus are unable to visit schools regularly. Teachers are usually unwilling to involve parents. There are barriers between the education system and the support service which are often difficult to overcome (Eybers, Dyer & Versfeld, 1997: 65).

In the face of a strong evidence of supporting the need for inclusive education and a rich variety of suggestions for providing its practices, inclusive education will be successfully implemented provided the ills of the past are removed completely.

1.3 Statement of the problem

One of the controversies of the present time in South African education is that of learners with barriers in learning and development securing equal educational opportunities as able learners in regular education (Burden, 1995:44). Advocates of inclusive education believe that all learners need to attend their own neighbourhood schools, have opportunities to belong to classrooms and neighbourhood groups and be recognised as capable people.

The South African government has accepted inclusive education as a system of education provision and believe that it is possible to bridge the gap between
general and special education and to merge the knowledge and expertise of the two to better serve all learners. Learners who were excluded from regular classes or schools, who were bussed to designated sites where special education was provided are to study a curriculum according to their age, ability, aptitude and need in a regular classroom in an ordinary school. Education for learners with barriers is no longer the responsibility of the remedial or special teacher or expert outside the school (Du Toit, 1997:122,123). While clustering learners with barriers in learning may have helped remedial or specialist's schedules, it wreaked havoc on the learners' social lives, they were segregated and isolated from families, peers and classmates.

Teachers and class members should take time to genuinely welcome learners with barriers to learning and development and celebrate their arrival. It is especially important for learners with barriers in learning and development whose adjustment to new environments may be more difficult.

Teachers who are new to inclusion have many questions about classroom roles and responsibilities. Questions that are also raised are whether educators are prepared and ready for inclusive education and how they can best fulfil the legacy of differences in learning.

Unfortunately no one has all the answers and every setting has its own unique
challenges and effective solution may only be found when skills and expertise are pooled. With this in mind the main thrust of this study is to ascertain the relative impact of implementation strategies. Inclusive education has unique characteristics, which differ from ordinary education with regard to aims, time, content and method(s). Expecting educators who are not trained and not motivated to teach learners with unusual atypical needs is a problem and poses challenges to them.

There is much that is laudable with the concept of inclusivity, for an example:

- Changes in roles and responsibilities among educators.
- Change from segregated school settings towards inclusion
- Teachers acceptance that it is right to be different, accept their learners and recognise that they all have strengths in some areas and weaknesses in others.

Admittedly chronic problems afflict the South African education. The problems encountered are, for an example, school enrolments, teacher-pupil ratio, lack of instructional material, inadequacy of teacher training, inadequacy of finances and inefficiencies in administrative and management practices. To facilitate the inclusion of learners with barriers in learning in the regular classroom is not easy.

However this study tries to answer the following questions:

- To what extent do changes in education create problems and challenges for the successful implementation of inclusive education?
- Do educators in primary schools have knowledge about inclusive education?
To what extent do educators' personal variables such as qualifications, attitudes, age and grades taught influence how best they fulfil their roles and responsibilities and become more inclusive in their approach?

1.4 Aim of the study

The study aims:

1.4.1 To establish the extent to which changes in education create problems and challenges.

1.4.2 To determine the educators' knowledge about inclusive education.

1.4.3 To establish whether a relationship exists between the problems and challenges facing the implementation of inclusive education and the characteristics of educators such as qualifications, attitudes, age and the grades taught at school.

1.5 Operational definition of terms

1.5.2 Inclusive education

- Inclusive education refers to a system of education in which all children learn together in a regular school or class with their peers irrespective of whether others have difficulties in learning or development.

1.5.2 Primary school

- Primary school refers to a school which caters for all children from grade R to Grade 7. The common age groupings in schools are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>5 to 6 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 3</td>
<td>6 to 9 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 to 7</td>
<td>9 to 12 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The way ages are grouped varies from school to school. The arrangement described above may not be followed in some school systems. Primary school is elementary in nature.
Currently there has been a change in the classification of primary school. There are foundation phase, intermediate and senior phases. Initially the primary school was classified into lower primary and higher primary. Currently they are called junior primary (foundation phase) and senior primary (senior phase). The foundation phase refers to the first four years of schooling, grades R-3 and the senior phase refers to grades 4-7. This categorisation does not, however, apply in all schools. Some junior primary schools do not have grade R and have grade 4, whilst some senior primary schools do not have grade 4 whilst others may have grade 8. The National Qualifications Framework is responsible for the current classification.

1. Methodology

The study was approached by:

Reviewing literature with a view to deriving the conceptual framework with which the study could be undertaken.

The research is conducted using triangulation, semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and informal discussions to gain information from educators who are in some way implementing the inclusive approach. A preliminary questionnaire was sent to principals of pilot schools to ascertain to what extent (if any) the schools deliberately follow an inclusive policy. The result of the questionnaire determined the sample interviewed.

There were elements of unstructured interviews as the questions were not confined to a
predetermined interview schedule with no variations but rather some questions emerged during the discussion. The interview focused on the subjective experiences of the respondents.

1.6.1 Sampling
Purposive sampling was used. The researcher picked only those respondents whom she thought would best meet the purpose of the study. The sample was chosen because it would support the argument and in a way help to develop, test and make meaningful comparisons in relation to the research question. The respondents were approached because they were accessible, knowledgeable, experienced and informative with regard to research under investigation (Neuman, 2000:198; MacMillan & Schumacher, 1997:378)

1.7 Method of data analysis
The researcher first processed data collected during the pilot study to ensure that the desired and expected results are obtained, or to make necessary modifications in the main investigation.

The data was analysed by the process of qualitative analysis. There is no one right way of analysing qualitative data. Analysing qualitative data is an eclectic activity. Because there is no fixed formula or strict rules that can be followed, the researcher was wary not to be limitlessly inventive.

The data was described, classified and interpreted to enable the researcher to
organise it into file folders and convert files into appropriate text units.

Describing, classifying and interpreting data enabled the researcher to organise it in an easy retrievable and manipulatable format.

The researcher read all of the data to gain sense of the whole to facilitate the interpretation of the smaller units of data. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1997: 505) it is difficult to process large amount of content all at once. The researcher concentrated on sets of smaller and similar material at a time.

The interviews recorded by means of audiotape were recorded, meticulously transcribed and a simple coding system was used to identify topics or recurring themes. The interviews were transcribed for use in writing up the findings of the research. The exact words of the respondents, pauses and repetitions were recorded.

The analysis of personal documents of each of the respondents would identify certain recurrent themes in the documents. The ensuing responses were analysed using qualitative strategies such as categorisation, interpretation, noting patterns or themes and clustering of beliefs and values.

From the analysis the researcher envisaged to:

- Establish the respondents’ level of comprehension in the fields dealt with by the questionnaire.
- Identify which questions were inadequately understood by the respondents involved in the pilot study and would need to be adapted for future use.
1.8 Summary

The focus of the study is based in EThekwini Region primary schools, which are piloting the implementation of inclusive education. The project is structured to explore and investigate the challenges facing inclusive education.

Major changes are taking place in the South African education, the general and special education are no longer separate and distinct enterprises. The barriers that once divided the two disciplines are being dismantled. Learners with barriers in learning and development have access to regular classrooms. This means that support for learners with barriers is moving away from outside specialists to support by educators in regular schools. According to Burden (1995: 47) change and transformation is achieved by changing the system and by the removal of barriers and not by changing the individual. These huge shifts in education pose challenges for educators and specialists (Hay, 2003: 135).

In the next chapter the researcher will report on the relevant literature, give an overview of inclusive education in the United Kingdom, Germany, United States of America, Australia and South Africa focusing on the historical background in an attempt to identify the extent to which they promote inclusive education.

The researcher believes the literature review makes a contribution to attaining ones research objectives and it is an indispensable and meaningful part of research.
CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores literature reviewed on inclusive education as an approach to providing educational experiences for all learners experiencing barriers in learning and development.

Many authors have presented definitions of "integration", "inclusion", "heterogeneous school", and "inclusive education". Burden (1995: 45) and Jenkins and Sileo (1994: 16) contend that Inclusive Education or Education for All mean that a society consists of a diversity of people who are part of a diversity of cultures, languages, races, gender, abilities and temperaments.

Variations among these definitions exists, however, most advocates agree that inclusive learning environments are those in which every one belongs, is accepted, supports and is supported by his or her peers and other members of the school community in the course of having his or her education needs met. According to the United Nations Educational Science and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO: 1993) all people are regarded as being equal to one another in society. No one is superior to another person. Because of the fact that a society consists of people every person has the right to be part of the society which also entitles them to be accommodated with tolerance, to be respected and to be treated with dignity. Learners with special educational needs also form part of a "normal" society and have the same rights as other people in society.
According to Mittler (2000:10) inclusive education is seen internationally as being based on a value system that recognizes and celebrates diversity arising from gender, nationality, race, language of origin, social background and level of education, achievement or disability. In many ways the concept is not new or revolutionary. Special education advocates have long heed inherent commitment to inclusion. There is a large body of literature available on inclusive education and published literature in the area of special educational needs. It is asserted that in USA there are many publications on “inclusive education” or “education of exceptional children” that it is difficult to determine which works to select or exclude (Du Toit, 1997: 24). For many years researchers, program developers have written passionate and powerful arguments supporting inclusion in education and independent living opportunities for persons with disabilities.

The literature shows an increased acceptance of the idea of allowing all learners access to regular schools and disallowing discriminative practices against any learner on the grounds of race, gender, social descent, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, faith, culture, or language (Engelbrecht et al, 1999; NCSNET/NCESS Document, 1997; vi). The NCSNET/NCESS Document (1997:vi), Disability Rights Charter of South Africa (1992) as well as the documents that were released by the Centre for the Study of Inclusive Education (CSIE : 2000) stipulates that inclusive education:

- Is free of discrimination, segregation and harassment
- Facilitates an atmosphere of mutual acceptance and respect.
- Enables learners to participate in the life and work of mainstream institutions to the best of their abilities, whatever their needs may be.
* Promotes the full personal academic and professional development of all learners irrespective of race, gender, status, disability, religion, culture, sexual preference, learning style and language

* Creates an environment which respects and values each other as unique individuals and as partners in the teaching and learning process.

* Corresponds to the individual learners requirements or needs and the provision that is made for them.

* Respects the rights of all learners and enables them to participate fully in a democratic society

Some researchers argue that all learners should be educated in one classroom and acquire experiences alongside their peers (Lewis & Doorlag, 1995: 11). Studies conducted in the past report that providing special service to special needs and implementing special education is not easy (Engelbrecht et al, 1999: 22). It is problematic and challenging as there are policies which are interpreted by a range of stakeholders who may conflict with one another and influence how effectively the policy is implemented (Mda & Mothata, 2000; 125). Irrespective of the above constrains inclusive education is a need that has to be recognized as integral to overall education transformation.

The chapter concludes by looking at the development of inclusive education overseas and locally. It also examines the emerging legislation and policy developments, reports that are recent policy initiatives specifically for learners with learning difficulties, the recommendations that impact on inclusive education, insight on the current situation in South Africa with respect to the implementation of inclusive education in primary schools. Finally it looks at specific problems and challenges that have arisen as primary schools have become responsive to inclusive education.
2.2 Overview of the concept inclusive education

For several decades inclusive education has been a topic of discussion at conferences and declarations of intent worldwide. International agencies, such as the United Nations Educational Science and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), United Nations International Children’s Funds (UNICEF) all have a strong commitment to encouraging governments to meet the needs of disabled learners and adults and to increase their activities in this field (Mittler, 1998: 9). The International Year of Disabled Persons increased public awareness in many countries and also led to significant developments in provision for disabled people. By the mid 1980’s many organizations and advocates became dissatisfied with the type of education which was offered to students with disabilities and called for including children with disabilities in regular classrooms. During the 1990’s the special needs education reformers focused the attention to making students with disabilities truly a part of the regular classroom experience.

According to Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin and Williams (2000: 7) specialized classrooms or day programmes away from student’s neighbourhoods offer limited occasion for them to learn how to belong because they do not spend time with siblings, peers, parents and others. They attend remote, specialized classes, have few interactions with typical students, spend every weekday with adults and others with disabilities. Some special programmes were housed in hallways away from general education classroom or in separate buildings where students were physically and psychologically removed from other students. By contrast inclusive communities are designed to surround all participants (students, families, educators, and others) with support and encouragement. The removal of learners from regular education
should occur only when the nature of the problem is such that education in regular classes cannot be achieved.

Currently the focus of advocates for students with disabilities is an authentic or system wide inclusion which recognizes the essential and interrelated role played by the curriculum, instrument and placement (Fisher, Roach & Frey; 2002; 65). Since 1990 a new development has emphasized the right of all learners to be included in education. As a result the majority of countries have developed attitudes and responses to non-discriminatory practices to learners with disabilities.

The field of inclusion has been influenced to a great extent by international trends concerning human right and principle of normalization, integration and inclusion (Du Toit, 1997: 24; Engelbrecht et al, 1999: 12). The international trends are informed by publications on learners with special educational needs through international congresses such as those held at Jontiem in 1990, Salamanca, (Spain) in 1994, Birmingham in 1995 and by international organisations such as the United Nations Educational Science and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). The Salamanca Statement for Action on Special Needs Education (1994), adopted by the representatives of 92 governments and 25 international organizations, connect the championing of inclusive schools with broader societal goals:

*Regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all*
The trend in social policy during the past two decades has been to promote integration and participation and to combat exclusion. Inclusion and participation are essential to human dignity and the exercise of human rights.

The results of the documents led world leaders to gather at Jomtiem, World Conference on Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs. The theme for the conference was Education For All and was adopted as the goal for the year 2000 (Burden, 1999: 18 & Du Toit, 1997: 17). Following the Jomtiem Conference the issue of inclusion and the accommodation of diversity has become central to education of large numbers of countries in both developed and developing worlds (Burden, 1999: 18; Chenowelt & Stehlik, 2004: 159; Dyson, 1997: 36; Engelbrecht et al, 1999: 8 & Vlachou, 2004: 3).

During the World Congress on Special Needs in Education: Access and Quality, which was held in Salamanca, Spain, the vision that was adopted at Jomtiem was expanded and the policy of inclusion was adopted as the official international policy for the education of learners with special educational needs (LSEN). The message from the conference held in Salamanca… “spells out the principles that schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions”. The Salamanca statement has stimulated educational change and is even supported by the United Kingdom Government. The result was the creation of the most fully integrated environment for special students (Dyson, 1997: 37).
2.2 1. Inclusive education in the United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom (UK) the subject has become known as “special educational needs” or “education of exceptional children” and it was first used in the Warnock Report in 1988 (Du Toit, 1997: 24). The report shaped the attitudes and practices of the Government. A discussion paper “Excellence for All Children: Meeting Special Educational Needs and the Programme for Action” referred to the rights of all pupils to be educated in mainstream school wherever possible. The most recently revised Code of Practice on Special Needs and the Special Needs and Disability Act provide for the idea of a more inclusive system. The Disability Rights Task Force Report contains the recommendations to extend the Disability Discrimination Act to education. The government’s response to the Task Force Report has been to announce a new special educational need and the Disability Rights in Education Bill. In Great Britain some educators are reported to have felt that the National Curriculum is not designed to meet the special needs students because it discourages differentiation (Du Toit 1997: 25).

2.2.2 Inclusive education in Germany

According to Kaufman and Chick (1996:172), inclusive settings are becoming common in most European communities with a movement towards improving human rights. The works of the Germans, Deinhardt and Georgens are the earliest references which describe special needs education. Deinhardt and Georgens termed this field of science Heilpadagogik (curative pedagogics) and described it as an intermediate field between pedagogics (education) and medical science (Du Toit 1997:22)
A critical school of thought developed during the sixties at Frankfurter Schule in Germany and gave rise to critical pedagogies. The adherents of the school of thought identified themselves with this school of critical thought. These adherents put forward ideas that the problem should not be sought in the child but in the existing political and societal structures which make it difficult for the child to become emancipated or to reach adulthood.

Special educational needs received support from influential European authors. The approach gave rise to the ecological and systems theoretical perspective. Literature surveyed indicated that Germany initially resisted inclusive practices and held tightly to special school but currently there are pilot initiatives on the idea of inclusion (Du Toit, 1997:24)

2.2.3 Inclusive education in the United States of America

During the 1950's efforts to establish special education programs at the local level were often fragmentary and haphazard. After World War II, local schools for children with all types of handicaps were provided with financial support. In 1963 the Public Law 88-164 provided funds for training professional personnel, for research and demonstration. Legislation stemmed to ensure that all children with handicaps have access to an appropriate education. Federal initiatives included:

- special grants to states to encourage new programmes for children with handicaps.
- support of research and demonstration projects to find better ways to educate children with handicaps.
- establishment of regional resource centers to help teachers develop special educational programs and strategies.
• extension of programmes for training leadership personnel to head training programmes and administer programmes for children.

• establishment of a nation wide set of centres for deaf-blind children to aid children with multiple handicap.

• a requirement that some funds be available for innovative programmes in general education be reserved for special projects for children with handicaps.

• establishment of a Bureau of Education for the Handicapped within the Office of Education to administer these and other provision for children with handicaps.

The provision which the Federal government provided served notice that it had accepted responsibility for providing support, resources for children with handicaps and for encouraging the states to carry out their basic responsibilities. Programmes were not consistent from state to state and to deal with the inconsistency, the state handled the costs of court mandated programmes. Congress passed the Public Law 94-142 (P.L.94-142) the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. The P.L.94-142 requires that “students” with disabilities be educated with regular class peers to the maximum extent appropriate. The major provisions of the P.L. 94-142 are that students with disabilities are guaranteed a free, appropriate public education (Kirk & Gallagher, 1989:50).

According to P.L. 94-142 “students” with disabilities are to be educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE). The concept “least restrictive environment” originated together with “mainstreaming.” The philosophy of least restrictive environment advocates special instruction for children that enables them to master necessary content and skills in a setting that is as close to normal as possible. This means that children who can be served effectively in a resource room should not be assigned to a special class (Biehler & Snowman 1990: 197)
The inception of the 1976 legislative policy saw the growth of special education and the subject is known as “special education” or “education of exceptional children”. The measure took effect in 1977, assured that all handicapped children have available to them special education and related services.

The Federal laws that were passed in the 1970’s have had a dramatic impact on the lives of individuals with disabilities in the USA. An intense programme of Federal support has fostered the education system. Thirty states have been allocated funds to restructure educational services for students with disabilities. In Michigan 3700 students from segregated classrooms and buildings were moved to home school, regular education and full time educational programmes. Training and mentoring programmes were established for teachers who expressed concern about lack of skills for the implementation of inclusive education. Two newer laws were passed in the 1990’s and extend rights guaranteed to persons with the disabilities.

2.2.4 Inclusive education in Australia

In Australia there has been a slow but consistent movement across all states and territories towards inclusion of children with mild to severe disabilities in regular classrooms. Placement facilities range from separated special schools to full inclusion in regular classes in all states and territories. In some regions there is a higher number of children with special needs included in their local schools due to geographical isolation (Du Toit: 1997).
2.2.5 Inclusive education in South Africa

South Africa was saddled with decades of politically inspired neglect in the field of education and the most people affected were the disabled children. Primary education, especially for blacks was neglected in relation to other levels of education, starved of resources and generally accepted as a route march from which most would drop out. Children did not stay long enough in school even to achieve the basic primary literacy and numeracy. There is a history of neglect, inferiority and discrimination. Much of what was spent directly on primary education was unproductive because the school failed to hold children long enough to benefit them.

The major changes that took place before the African National Congress (ANC).led government has been the introduction of the ten year schooling system. Black education, unlike other education systems in South Africa, was based on a thirteen year schooling system, eight year primary education structure (sub A to Std.6) and a five year secondary structure (Forms 1 to 5).

In South Africa inclusive education is a new concept and a new approach. The issue of special educational needs has been relegated to the periphery of educational concern. The recent political changes saw a need to transform education in South Africa. As of 1994 the education system has undergone major changes and restrictions. In line with international thinking South Africa is moving away from a policy of separatism towards a policy of inclusion. The South African government has made efforts to improve schools, made them accessible to all and responsive to the learning needs of all. According to the South African Constitution there must be no
discrimination on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, religious conscience, belief, culture, language, and birth.

In October 1996 the Minister of Education appointed the National Commission on Special Needs Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee for Education Support Services (NCESS) to investigate and make recommendations on all aspects of the special needs and support services in education and training in South Africa.

In November 1997 the NCSNET and the NCESS published a report and recommended that learners with barriers in learning and development should have access to regular schools, learning centres and the core curriculum (Engelbrecht et al. 1999: 16). The NCSNET / NCESS document (1997: 80) also recommended that certain practices of teaching and learning should be followed in order to accommodate a diversity of learners in the classroom situation. As a result there was a policy drafted on inclusion which is applied and implemented (Burden, 1995: 44).

The situation in South Africa has been influenced by developments in other countries especially England which serves as its role model and it is suggested that publications from England should be regarded as important in South Africa (Du Toit, 1997: 24). It is asserted that there are similarities in the political approach of the A.N.C. and the Labour Government as they impact on the educational policy.

Since 1994 the government led by the A.N.C. has been committed to transforming
the educational policy in order to bring South Africa in line with international standards of recognition of human rights (Harber, 1999:571).

In South Africa provision for learners with special needs took the form of introduction in the second half of the 19th century (Mda & Mothata, 2000:110) and was undertaken by the clergy (Du Toit 1997:103). The history of South African education has followed the same cause as in other countries. However, the development differs from that in the rest of the world because it is influenced by political and philosophical thinking (Du Toit 1997: 104).


The South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 Section 5 (7) reads:

- "A public school must admit learners and serve their educational requirements without unfairly discriminating in any way."

- The member of the executive council must take reasonable measures to ensure that the physical facilities at public schools are accessible to disabled persons (Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5).

- The rights and wishes of the parents of learners with special needs should be taken into account (Section 5, 6 NCSNET Document 1997:44)

The premise of the policy on learners who experience barriers to learning and development is incorporated in the South African Constitution within the section on Human Rights by accentuating equality (Point 8). This implies that every person has equal rights in the eyes of the law and that no discriminative practices against any person are allowed. The Human Rights pave the way for all learners to enjoy freedom from discrimination because of a specific barrier that they might experience. The importance of inclusive education and the rights of children appears in the articles and quotes:

**Article 1. Non-discrimination**

*There shall be no discrimination against disabled people and they shall enjoy equal opportunities in all spheres of life and they shall be protected against exploitation and all treatment of an abusive or degrading nature.*

**Article 4. Education**

*Disabled people shall have the right to mainstream education with personal assistance where necessary, appropriate assistive technology and specialized teaching.*
Article 11. Disabled children

a) Disabled children shall have the right to be treated with respect and dignity and shall be provided with equal opportunities to enable them to reach their full potential in life.

b) The state shall ensure that all disabled children are properly cared for with adequate support.

c) All forms of abuse of disabled children shall be prohibited and severe penalties imposed for such abuse (Disability Rights Charter of South Africa)

Initially education was characterized by differentiation based on race and colour. When the Union of South Africa took over from the Independent Boer Republic state schools provided free and compulsory education for white learners (Du Toit: 1997). The churches educated other race groups but there was no provision made for the disabled.

The schools that were established by the second half of the 19th century were private schools that received no financial support from the government. Learners were categorized into “normal” and learners with special educational needs. The practice of differentiating learners resulted in a dominant mainstream for “normal” learners and secondary system of specialized education for learners with special needs (Mda & Mothata, 2000: 112). The education departments became involved in special education for the first time after 1900 (Du Toit, 1997:105,106; Mda & Mothata, 2000: 110).
The key provision of the Constitution is the one dealing with equality of Rights, Section 9 of the Constitution, relates specifically to the issue of equality of rights. The section commits the government to ensuring that individuals including those with disabilities have the rights to:

- Equal benefit and protection of the law
- Protection from discrimination and guarantees the right to have measures designed to achieve the adequate protection and advancement of person previously disadvantaged by unfair discrimination.

The policies and the laws provide the basic framework and are the first steps to the development of a new system provision of education in South Africa.

The main outcomes of the document are learning and academic excellence within a diverse classroom situation (Bothma et al, 2000:200). The NCSNET /NCESS has introduced policies which are democratic in terms of access and provision, and which signal a different approach to the process of schooling. The education policy and legislation reflect a move away from a policy of exclusion towards a policy of inclusion (Bothma et al, 2000:200; Mda & Mothata, 2000: 11)

In recent years the issue of inclusion has become more of a feature discussion. The developments have been informed by ongoing debates in the field of special education that have focused on questions about what forms of provision should be made for children with disabilities and others who experience disabilities (UNESCO:1994)
Despite the developments, inclusion remains a complex and criticised issue which tends to generate debates.

The principle of equality of education for all learners that is stressed in many documents, such as The Children’s Charter South Africa: Article 8, is not adequate in itself to ensure equality. According to Engelbrecht et al (1999: 710); Male & May, (1997:135) change towards inclusion is complex and warn against a simplistic notion that inclusion can be implemented as long as the building is accessible and the teachers are willing to work with special needs students.

If the South African government wants to be relevant it needs a new paradigm. The new paradigm will however, change everything about education and retain nothing of what education formally was perceived to be (Land & Jarman 1992: 68). Policy makers have to investigate, assist and support education for LSEN to utilize their potential within inclusive environments despite the problems and challenge, which exist.

2.3 Theoretical framework on inclusive education

A number of theories and remedial approaches have been developed and each approach has its own concepts, terminology, definitions, and models to describe the phenomenon concerned. Furthermore theories have their own philosophy on which they are based and which give them a specific character. The division of theories according to discrete philosophical categories reduces the number of tools available for teachers.
Theories are associated with the view that underlying psychosocial provision (vision and auditory perception, memory, receptive and expressive language etc) determine learning, problems in learning and are also associated with dysfunction in some process. This view is frequently associated with the education of children with learning disabilities.

According to Du Toit (1997:30), some theories are concerned with development and learning whereas others focus on behaviour. Most children with behaviour disorders have a variety of non-adaptive behaviour that cause them trouble with their peers and teachers, and suffer from scarcity of positive social skills. Teachers have to enhance the use and practice of socially acceptable behaviour by drawing from learning-teaching theories. Learning theories seek fundamental understanding of the nature and cause of learning in children and theories relating to their correction.

The social learning theory presented by Bandura and Walters accounts for learning in terms of a continuous reciprocal interplay among behavioural, cognitive and environmental influences. According to Le Francois (1994 :305), behaviour is influenced by the environment but people also play an active role in creating the social milieu and other circumstances that arise in daily action.

2.3.1 Educational implication of the social learning theory

Bandura places primary emphasis on the role of observational learning and that most human behaviour is learned through observation, or by example. The author asserts that people learn not only through their experience but also by observing
behaviour of others. At school learners constantly observe the behaviour of their peers and teachers. The behaviour often serve as an example that learners tend to follow. Learners include a pattern of a persons behaviour in their collection, if it is worth including by encoding, processing and storing the information presented by the behaviour. Encoding may encompass the observed behaviour or it may also include an explanation why, how and where something is done (Biehler and Snowman, 1990: 347). The benefit to encode behavioural rules is the ability to generalize responses. The observer may engage in overt or covert rehearsal once the behaviour has been modeled.

The social learning theorists propose that behaviour is learned and inappropriate behaviour may be decreased in frequency of occurrence and more appropriate behaviour may be learned through the use of the modeling technique. The behaviour the individual need to engage in to reach a desired goal can be more easily learned by watching someone else engage in those behaviours and achieve the goal. Including learners with barriers in learning in regular classroom may enable them to learn many skills and other forms of classroom behaviour by observing and imitating their able peers and teachers in an inclusive setting.

Children with barriers in learning often behave illogically, immaturely (for their age), anxiously, in a reserved or depressed manner, or in a hostile and unpredictable way (Du Toit, 1997:34). Teachers and able peers can provide direction and opportunity for learners with problems to copy and influence them. Children, at school learn academic skills through modeling. According to Bandura models are
effective if they are seen as having respect, competence, high status or power.

Teachers are highly influential models and are more likely to get learners attention.

Teachers can teach routine information, skills, problem solving strategies, moral
codes, general rules, principles, performance standards and creativity by modeling.

They can teach children to formulate goals that are achievable and reaching a
personal goal is reinforcing.

Bandura emphasizes the importance of self-generated influence as a causal factor in
all aspects of human functioning, motivation, emotion and action. This is evident in
his concept of self-efficacy or the belief that one can exercise control over events
that affects ones life. This means that an individual can execute behaviour relative to
a task.

Teachers believe the nature of the human mind influences effective teaching
practices. Teachers accepting the Aristotle and Locke’s position would specify
educational objectives in behavioural terms and define kinds of experiences that
would bring about desired behaviour. Teachers holding a behavioural point or
accepting a Gestalt point of view would use such strategies. The best teaching
technique is the one that allows teachers to meet their course of objectives
effectively and efficiently. Teachers must evaluate any method of teaching in
terms of course objectives, that is, instruction must be able to determine whether
or not and to what extent the objective of the course has been met.
2.4 Challenges facing the implementation of inclusive education

The focus in this section is on challenges in implementing inclusive education. Research evidence seems to suggest that there are many problems which inhibit the successful implementation of inclusive education. Contrary to the popular belief, inclusive education is much more than placing learners with barriers to learning and development in single inclusive system that is responsive to the diverse needs of all learners.

In South Africa the issue of special needs has been relegated to the periphery of educational concern. It has been argued that the establishment of proper institutions is sufficient to maintain successful inclusion. This means that whatever the current state of a school is, there can always be development towards greater inclusivity (Sebba & Ainscow 1996: 7).

The government is struggling to provide a minimum subsistence to the entire population and providing special services for the people with disabilities is a burden. In Kwa-Zulu Natal a major problem is that it has a large number of children of school going age as compared with other provinces. Many of these learners are in school but still a large number of children of school going age are not at school. Providing equal opportunity for people with disabilities is extremely problematic. Some schools do not even have basic resources such as toilets, water, electricity and sufficient classrooms. According to a survey report there is
a shortage of about 12 000 classrooms in the Eastern Cape, 9 000 in Limpopo and 10 000 in KwaZulu Natal (KZN). This is a problem and a challenge to inclusion. The drastic shortage of specialist rooms, classrooms, sports facilities as well as furniture and equipment means it would be sometime before equity is reached in KZN, not mentioning preparation for inclusive education. If these shortages are not addressed they will act as major barriers to learning and development thus exclude many learners as a result a serious breakdown in the culture of learning will be experienced (Engelbrecht et al, 1999:57).

Scholarly reports indicate that challenges relating to basic resources can be overwhelming. Specific priorities relating to particular needs should be identified such as building more schools, offering adequate education and training for teachers. When building a school there are strategies that are required such as an organizational strategy for managing change.

Scholarly research also indicates that another important determinant of attitude towards inclusion is training. The majority of learners with barriers who are currently in mainstream are in the care of teachers who have little or no special education training. The challenge facing many South African teachers is not being trained professionally and/or in special needs education (Engelbrecht et al 1999:155). According to a survey held in 2002-2003, 24% of teachers in KwaZulu Natal are under qualified.
In South Africa as a whole there are 22% of under qualified teachers. Due to lack of training on the part of teachers it is asserted that learners in special education receive less direct instruction, more work and fewer minutes of reading than other students because they move to and from special education resource rooms (Kaufman & Chick, 1996:172).

Authors such as Bothma et al (2000:20) argue that teachers who have had training in special education have a more positive attitude towards learners who differ from or have needs that are more special than those of average learners. Successful inclusion depends on a belief that all students deserve to be accommodated in regular classroom setting. Teachers should take note that children do not progress at the same time. An inclusive culture in schools acknowledges that all children can learn and need support. International studies indicate that inclusion and special needs carry negative connotations which include feelings that there is insufficient support, resources, the policies are confused and that inclusion has been imposed from top (Engelbrecht et al, 2001:256).

It is more challenging to determine the most inclusive, appropriate and heterogeneous placement. Learners do not all learn the same concepts or skills. Inclusive teachers fail to individualize learners learning objectives to ensure that unique learning needs are met within shared content curriculum. The overall demands on a teacher are greatly affected by the range of needs presented by the
entire group of learners. It makes it easier for the teacher to differentiate instruction if there are other learners in the class who are functioning near the same level as the learner with a disability.

Another most cited barrier to effective inclusion is negative attitude expressed by educators and parents. Principals have an important role to play in creating an attitude of acceptance as a result influence the attitude of all in the school community towards inclusion (Bender, Vail & Scott, 1995: 91).

Teachers do not have a clear understanding of the demands of the changes. They hold negative attitudes because they feel that they are not obliged to implement the policies of inclusion. Teachers with a negative attitude toward inclusive education may lack confidence in their ability to teach learners with barriers to learning, fear failure and become more concerned about the needs of regular learners in their classes (Bothma et al, 2000: 201). The availability and provision of sufficient resources determine the teachers' attitude. Where the resources are inadequate or has shrunk the teachers' attitudes have become more negative.

Like many authors Prinsloo (2001: 345), agree that inclusion can only be successful if teachers receive additional training and such training should be ongoing, identify shortcomings in teacher participation, be planned and organized by teachers themselves to ensure that it meets the needs of the school community.
Backup teams should further empower teachers. A high level of collaboration should exist and be the norm in a general education setting. Collegial relationships are valuable in the training and support of teachers who are involved in inclusive settings. Teachers need the opportunity to share concerns. Time need to be set aside for planning and collaboration (Sebba and Ainscow, 1996:11).

The fundamental role of teachers should change to accumulate knowledge and insight in inclusive education. According to Engelbrecht et al, (2001:256) and Forlin (2001:236), the need to cope with change is listed as a major cause of stress. The effect of task demands that teachers face in their performance of their roles causes occupational stress. Inclusive education makes additional demands on teachers and that teachers’ sense of efficacy in including learners with disabilities in mainstream classes plays a defining role in the successful implementation of an inclusive educational policy.

Engelbrecht et al, (2001), maintains that stress levels of teachers are depended upon their perceived ability to cope with inclusion of learners with barriers to learning in regular classrooms. The teachers’ perception of potential stressors in the work environment and the role of coping skills have to be addressed and appraised to ensure the successful implementation of inclusive education in schools and classrooms.
2.5 Summary

This chapter focuses on the development of inclusive education system in U.K, USA, Germany, Australia and South Africa, a theoretical framework on inclusive education and challenges facing the implementation of inclusive education.

In the introduction it was highlighted that there is an increased acceptance of the inclusion of learners with barriers in learning and development internationally. This has been established by the reports emerging from congresses, conferences and reports.

In the next chapter the writer will give a detailed description of the design and the methods used and their advantages and disadvantages in this research study, description of research sites, sampling procedures and limitations.
CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology and Design

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to investigate the challenges faced by educators in implementing inclusive education in primary schools in EThekwini Region. There are 110 primary schools in Kwa Mashu circuit. Three are piloting the implementation of inclusive education (two senior primary schools and one school previously a special school for the severely mentally handicapped which has been converted to an inclusive school). All three schools were selected for the study. The study sought to find out what contributes to the emergence of the problems and challenges in including learners with barriers in learning and development in regular classrooms or schools.

The chapter outlines the research methodology, the design and methods of data collection which were applied in the study.

3.2 The research methodology

Two approaches of data collection were used in the study, that is a combination of the qualitative and quantitative methods. The researcher’s disposition, audience, time, limitations, the research problem and the purpose of the intended research were the determinants when selecting qualitative and quantitative methods for constructing knowledge. The use of a combination of
qualitative and quantitative data collection methods contributes to the trustworthiness of the data. This was not to negate the utility of a study based solely on one method but to indicate that the more sources tapped for understanding, the more believable the findings. The researcher contends that educational research activities can be based on empirical grounds or evidence (quantitative research) complemented by researchers’ reflection, rationality and social interaction (qualitative research).

According to De Vos, Strydom, Fouche’& Delport (2000: 143) there is no absolute dichotomy of qualitative versus quantitative research but rather a continuum between the two approaches. Nevertheless, it is important for the researcher to understand the underlying differences between the qualitative and the quantitative researches. The complementary relationship between the quantitative and qualitative research aims to describe, explain and change (improve) human action.

The research methods selected for the study had to be consistent with the aims of qualitative research. The researcher felt that questionnaires and semi-structured interviews would be the most effective strategy for the data collection. There were written responses and verbal responses to some questions. There were follow up interviews to some of the written responses.

3.2.1 Qualitative method

The qualitative approach was the dominant method used and the study was consistent with its aims. Mouton (2001: 57) asserts that qualitative
methods provide rich and holistic description which reveal dynamic complexities of the social settings of the investigated phenomena. The qualitative approach was important in this study because the researcher sought to understand the problems and challenges that were investigated. The researcher was investigating the totality and complexity, that is the unifying nature of the settings. The aim was to understand the experiences as respondents feel it or live it as far as possible. The researcher did not, however, attempt to change or manipulate the research setting in any way, nor did she attempt to establish any kind of predetermined course.

Glesne and Peshkin (1992) contend that the openness of the qualitative inquiry allows the researcher to approach the inherent complexity and to respect it in its own right. Qualitative research approaches were particularly valuable for the earlier phases of the research when focus was on identifying, describing and exploring key phenomena or concepts. A qualitative approach was applied to explore issues by verbal means such as interviews and discussions. The qualitative approach was particularly useful because the intervention was new and tested on a new population group. The use of qualitative approach added to the researcher’s understanding of the circumstances under which the intervention was received and therefore was effective with the targeted population.

The researcher was afforded the opportunity to encounter multiple socially constructed realities about the phenomena. It meant that the experiences of
inclusion of learners with barriers in learning and development could be viewed from different perspectives. Interacting with various individuals in the study enabled the researcher to have an opportunity to explore various realities.

Although the qualitative method has been recommended for this study, the researcher was aware of mistakes of employing qualitative research method and its weaknesses were not overlooked for the purpose of the research validity. To help overcome possible shortfalls of the qualitative approach precautions were employed.

3.2.2 Quantitative method

The quantitative approach was used to give numbers and statistics describing the educators, that is, addressing the research questions.

- How do educators understand the purpose, focus and objectives of inclusive education?
- What teaching and learning strategies / resources do educators use in the implementation of inclusive education?
- What challenges do educators face in their effort to implement inclusive education and what strategies have been developed to address them?

The researcher also used a quantitative method because she wanted to keep herself from influencing the collection of data. She wanted to be objective and independent of her personal bias, values and idiosyncratic notions (Borg & Gall, 1989:23). The results of the exploration laid the foundation for the theoretically based quantitative research that focussed on testing the effectiveness of the selected intervention mathematically or statistically.
When a quantitative research is chosen the emphasis is on representativeness of the findings which implies a higher number of responses and greater reliability.

Reliance on one method of data collection may yield a lop-sided conclusion, but the employment of more than one method yielding the same results gave confidence to the researcher that the data collected is valid and reliable. The study is intended to make a contribution to the limited knowledge and understanding of inclusive education and learners with barriers in learning and development.

3.2.3 Triangulation

Authors like Kvale (1996: 67), warn of the danger of bias creeping into an interview. They state that there is danger that the interview may become a reflection of what one poorly perceives as required rather than an honest exchange of ideas. Bias or systematic distortion of responses often occur out of the desire to see that the study succeeds. To minimize bias in this study triangulation was used because biases can lead to false conclusions of effectiveness on the part of the researcher.

Triangulation helped reveal the richness and diversity of information which is collected as this increases the sophistication and rigor of data collection and analysis.

Because the study used quantitative and qualitative methods, triangulation
was useful to examine shared realities and meanings and to propose interpretations (McFee, 1992: 176). Triangulation was used to verify data. The verification of data is dependent upon whether a quantitative or qualitative approach was adopted by the researcher.

Triangulation between the two methods is used to seek mutual validation and employ two or more approaches to a single problem with the aim to select the appropriate method that in combination will result in complementary data and thereby reduce the possibility of unsubstantial findings. Triangulation compares the two research solutions to a single problem in an effort to validate the outcomes of one approach in terms of the outcome of another and serve as the means of monitoring research findings.

The data for this research was triangulated through the employment of interviews, questionnaires and content analysis. Triangulation was conducted to assess the sufficiency of data, collect information from different respondents.

A covering letter which began with the identification of the sponsoring school and the researcher was given to each principal. The letter requested permission from the school to do research and stated the intention of the study and gave an assurance to the respondent that the data will not be misused and promising that confidentiality will be maintained.
3. 2.4 Questionnaire

Considering factors of time, expense and administration the researcher regarded the questionnaire as the most suitable method of data collection. The questionnaire that was employed was drawn by the researcher after reviewing literature. In preparing the questions the researcher applied the following criteria:

To what extent might a question

- influence the respondent to answer it?
- be unduly helpful by attempting to anticipate what the researcher wants to hear or find out?
- be asking information about respondents that they are not certain and perhaps likely to know about themselves?

A total of 15 questionnaire were distributed to teachers in schools piloting the inclusion of learners with barriers in learning and development into regular classrooms. The researcher administered the research questionnaire to 15 respondents from the three schools. The respondents were assured that participation in the study was voluntary, they can opt out at any stage without any negative consequences (Mouton, 2001: 244).

The researcher communicated the aims of investigation to the respondents, that is, what will happen to the findings and assured them confidentiality, anonymity and privacy. The respondents were requested not to write their names and names of their schools so as to remain anonymous. The information that they gave ensures
privacy. The researcher assured the respondents of anonymity in the covering letters and by verbal communication. The researcher saw no need for informed consent because the respondents were not subjected to any harm or discomfort they remained anonymous and personal matters that they revealed were of a less serious nature (De Vos et al 2000:67).

The questionnaires were handed to the principal of each school and were collected three days later allowing teachers to complete them at their own leisure time.

The researcher felt it was advantageous to use a questionnaire method to obtain information about inclusive education rather than observing the participants behave or by sampling a portion of their behaviour. The researcher used questionnaires because the use of questionnaire enabled to obtain voluminous information from respondents in a non-threatening way. According to De Vos et al (2000:180), questioning is a widely used technique for obtaining information because questions:

- can be used even with scattered, widely spread sample
- allow respondents to collect information from many sources
- allow to answer questions which are personal in nature

The researcher depended upon questions to collect information about the research problem. The researcher used a questionnaire although it takes time. Asking question was useful because the topic under investigation was unknown to the researcher and she gained a wealth of information on the
Questions, interviews and content analysis were used to teachers in schools which are piloting inclusive education. A questionnaire was used to collect data related to the nature and quality of human and physical resources available in the schools and their usefulness for the implementation of inclusive education. Asking questions, interviewing and analysing content was used to explore the problem and ensure that the range of relevant outcome measurement for this study was assessed. A questionnaire was used because it provides information and data of a factual nature. The format of the questions that were used in the study was unstructured (open-ended) and structured (closed) questions.

A few closed questions were used in this study because substantial information was expected about the subject and the response options were unknown. Closed questions provided the respondent with response choices. Respondents understood the questions better and questions could be answered within the same framework. Important information can be missed if only closed questions are used. Closed questions do not completely provide for a variety of response options that may exist on a particular subject (De Vos et. al., 2002:180).

The topic that was investigated could not be explored with a simple yes or no answers only. The questions consisted of open (80%) and closed dichotomous questions (20%). Open ended questions are not followed by any choice,
respondents answer the question in full. The amount of space or lines that were provided for the answer partly determined the length of the response to be given. The virtue of the open-ended question is that it does not force the respondent to adapt to the preconceived answer. Open-ended questions were chosen because they encourage the respondents to formulate and express their responses freely. The focus in the questions was mostly on teachers' perceptions and attitudes to inclusion, exclusion of learners with barriers in learning and development in regular classrooms. Respondents were given the opportunity of writing their answers in the spaces provided. The questions stimulated the respondents to think the questions over and the answers were written as fully as possible. The questionnaire was not long because having many questions lengthens time of completion and time necessary for processing data. If the questionnaire is too long respondents may be tempted to leave incomplete notes which may decrease the value of data obtained from the questionnaire. The questions did not contain any fixed responses and were appropriate because a wide range of opinions were anticipated in the study. The pilot study contained more open questions and some were used as closed questions in the main investigation. The content of the questions arose from the research problem and the proposal questions were used to collect information. The response to the questionnaire was satisfactory because a total of twelve (12) questionnaires were completed and returned although the remaining three (3) teachers chose not to answer the questionnaire and did not forward any explanation. The questionnaire guaranteed total anonymity so that the respondents could be
honest in their responses because some of the questions requested data of a personal nature. The anonymity of the questionnaire posed problems, because three (3) of the respondents did not return the questionnaire and they could not be identified. Questionnaires were labelled using letters of the alphabet (a-p) in order to help with the recording of data.

3.2.5 Interview

The researcher used the interview because it allows for the exploration of issues that may be too complex to investigate by quantitative means. The study was predominantly a qualitative study and the researcher had to go to the field and have direct personal contact with the respondents in their own environment. Teachers who answered the questionnaire were assigned letters of the alphabet (a-h). Eight teachers were selected from the sample by simply writing letters of the alphabet (a-h) on small pieces of paper and putting them in a container. The respondents closed their eyes and each picked a piece of paper. Teachers who picked papers with a letter on it were selected for the interview. The interviews were semi-structured but the questionnaire formed the basis for the discussion. Out of the eight (8) teachers who were selected only five (5) teachers presented themselves for the interview.

The respondents were interviewed individually at places where they felt at ease and ensured confidentiality. To obtain co-operation from the respondents the researcher established a warm relationship between her and the respondent.
Kvale (1996: 71) is of the opinion that if the researcher wants to know how people understand their world and their life he/she has to talk to them. In an interview people tell about their lived world, express their views and opinions, learn about their views on their work situation. It is also asserted that there is a move away from obtaining knowledge primarily through external observation and experimental manipulation of human subjects, toward an understanding by means of conversation with human beings to be understood. The researcher felt that the semi-structured interview would be the most effective method for the collection of data. The interview allow greater depth and give a truer picture and feelings of the respondents than do other research procedures. Interviews also allowed the researcher to tailor make questions to the responses of the interviewees and perspectives she did not even contemplate.

The interviews were conducted a week after the respondents had completed and returned the questionnaire. The questions focussed on the problem of the study. The study required the views of the respondents with regards to the implementation of inclusive education. In-depth interviews of the respondents using mostly open ended questions to encourage lengthy and full explanations was used so as to facilitate the diversity of responses (see Appendix C).

An interview schedule was used and the interview was guided by it rather than dictated by it. The interview schedule provided a set of predetermined questions that were used to engage the interviewees. Although the researcher planned a set of questions the interviews were not like a survey of which the
same questions are asked for each respondent. Some questions which were in response to respondents' answers varied from respondent to respondent. The respondents were encouraged to talk freely. The researcher made full use of the responses of the interviews. The interview provided immediate feedback, permitted follow up leads and thus more data was obtained and greater clarity.

The interview succeeded to probe deeply enough and provide a true picture of opinions and feelings. The researcher had to take care that various questions including probes are open-ended to ensure that the respondents are not led to a particular perspective or formulation. Through careful motivation of respondents and maintenance of rapport the researcher obtained information that the respondents would probably not reveal under any circumstances. The probe allowed the researcher to clarify anything she was uncertain about, press for additional information when a response seemed incomplete or not entirely relevant. The educators gave additional information and explained their feelings more explicitly and accurately. The interview allowed for flexibility and freedom to express the interviewees spontaneous remarks.

According to De Vos et. al (2000: 305), interviews are a useful way of getting large amounts of data quickly and are an effective way of obtaining depth in data. The disadvantage of the interview is that the adaptability gained through the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee may lead to subjectivity and possible bias.
The interviewer was aware of the following problems and issues:

* Interviews should not be Socratic teaching.
* Interviewers must be thoroughly familiar with the material to be covered.
* The personality factors are important.
* The interviewers must listen to the respondents they are interviewing.
* Interviewer must be patient.
* The interview atmosphere should be calm and relaxed.
* "I don’t know “ and “ I forgot” answers seldom mean just that.
* Statements revealing feelings are significant.
* The respondents own language should be used to re-phrase questions or probe further.
* The interviewers’ logic should not be forced upon the respondents.
* Interviews should end in a positive note.
* The interview is time consuming, expensive thus a small sample was used.

The study had only the researcher as the interviewer.

3.2.6 Pilot study

The first phase of gathering data was a pilot study. Borg and Gall (1989:101), maintain that the pilot study should be conducted:

* to present a thorough check of the planned, statistical and analytical procedures, thus allowing an appraisal of their adequacy in treating data,
* provides the researcher with problems with the research instruments not foreseen prior to pilot study

The problems are then corrected before the main administration of the
questionnaire. Accordingly a pilot study was designed to provide a trial run of the data collection approach, establish the feasibility of the research instrument, to see if it is in need of correction or revision before conducting the actual data collection, identify any problems that were likely to be encountered during the research proper, to test the length of the questionnaire and the clarity of the questions. The pilot study helped the researcher to throw out some of the problems and convert the research design into reality.

The researcher undertook the pilot study before the interviews were conducted with the selected sample. The pilot study included respondents who are representative of the targeted population the researcher expected to complete the questionnaire and interview. The pilot study was executed in the same way as the main investigation was planned.

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) the wording of the questionnaire is of paramount importance and pre-testing it is crucial for its success. The researcher acquainted herself with most available literature before designing the pilot study (De Vos et al., 2000). The result was that of the 15 (fifteen) respondents who were given the questionnaires 12 (twelve) completed and returned it. The pilot study helped the researcher to decide whether the study was feasible and whether or not it is worthwhile to continue. The pilot study also assisted in estimating the time and cost that may arise.

Appointments were made telephonically and meetings were set up with the
principals of each school and the researcher left five (5) questionnaires in each school. Follow up meetings with respondents who completed the questionnaires were arranged to collect the questionnaires. During the meetings informal interviews were conducted to elicit the opinions of the respondents, identify problems encountered when the questionnaire was administered, probe and set in-depth information.

The pre-testing of the questionnaire was undertaken three weeks before the date for their distribution for the main investigation. The respondents possessed the same characteristics as those of the main investigation and the nature of the questions that were tested in the pilot study bore similar characteristics, to enable the researcher to make modifications with a view to obtaining quality information during the investigation. The exercise assisted in refining the questionnaire.

Based on the information that was obtained during the pilot study very slight changes were made to the questionnaire.

3.2.7 Negotiating access

To gain access to the research sites the researcher first obtained permission from the District Manager. This was done by means of a letter of request from the researcher (Appendix A). The District Manager proved helpful, he informed the Superintendent of Education Management (SEM) who is a Co-ordinator of Inclusive Education about the study and we discussed the feasibility of involving teachers and was granted permission
to contact the schools. After consultation, a final permission from the principals was sought to interview the teachers after they have completed the questionnaires.

Once approval had been granted after four months the researcher contacted the principals of the selected schools telephonically to set appointments and where she could, approached them personally for permission to conduct the research at their schools. The fieldwork was considered the central activity because the study was a qualitative study. Going to the field meant having direct, personal contact with the subjects in their own environment. Qualitative research stresses the importance of getting close to the people and situations being studied in order to understand the realities of their everyday lives.

3.2.8 The sampling design

The study was undertaken with respect to teachers involved in the implementation of inclusive education in EThekwini Region. The focus was limited to teachers in the three schools piloting inclusive education with an intention of keeping the study manageable. Teachers, comprising the total number of the three schools were considered as the research population.

In total there are 57 teachers in the three schools targeted for the study.

Only four schools are piloting the implementation of inclusive education in the whole province. The fourth school is not within the researcher's convenient distance thus the school was not included in the study because it would entail a great deal of travelling which is costly and time consuming.
The sample was defined as follows: all permanent teachers (except their aids) from a special school for the severely mentally handicapped learners, which has been converted to inclusive education, 5 teachers from school B (2 males and 3 females) and from school C 3 males and 2 females.

Approximately 66% of the teachers were females from the three schools. All teachers are classroom teachers and are qualified teachers. For all teachers, it is their first experience with a learner with barriers to learning in an inclusive classroom. Only 40% of the teachers have formal training in dealing with learners with special needs in their classrooms. Some hold a Diploma in Special Education (DSE) and others have Certificates in Special Educational Needs. The majority of teachers are currently studying toward a degree, diploma or certificate in Learner with Special Educational Needs. The experience of teachers range from 5 to 30 years and the grades taught covered grade 1 to grade 7. Nearly 60% of teachers are working in schools, which were previously general education. 34% of teachers work at a school which was previously a special school. The majority of teachers’ age range from 31 to 45 years with 20% being younger than 45 years.

The sample can be described as non-random, purposive and small (De Vos et al., 2000). Purposive sampling was used. For the purpose of the study three (3) schools were selected of which fifteen (15) educators were selected as units of analysis (five participants in each school were selected). One pre-condition existed that the researcher endeavoured, was to confine the study to the
school piloting inclusive education The researcher had no choice but to handpick the subjects to be included in the sample from schools which are piloting inclusive education. The researcher picked respondents that she judged to be typical of the population, the driving force behind the implementation of inclusive education in their schools and their experience was deemed valuable to provide information, answer the questions properly.

The researcher used her knowledge of the population, its elements and the nature of the research aims based on the purpose of the study. The researcher listed the criteria for the sample which were among others:

- the educator must be currently teaching learners with barriers in learning and development in a regular classroom
- the educator must have experience of teaching able learners
- the educator must be teaching in a primary school which is involved in inclusive education
- the learners must have been identified, assessed and in a programme

The researcher judged that the respondents have special knowledge and information about the experience of inclusion of learners with barriers in learning in a regular class. The sample was restricted to teachers who have eventful teaching of learners with barriers in learning.

3.2.9 Teachers’ personal Variables

The researcher measured the effects of teachers’ personal variables, namely:

3.2.10 Teachers' Qualifications

The teachers' qualifications are as follows:

* 33.3% of teachers hold university postgraduate teaching degrees,
* 13.3% hold university teaching degrees,
* 20% hold college-teaching diplomas,
* 33.3% hold a diploma in special education
* 60% hold certificates for teaching learners with special educational needs.

This shows that a significant number of teachers are adequately qualified to teach learners who experience barriers in learning and development, however, they are not confident to teach in mainstream classes. They said they need training and skills to be more confident in their abilities to address diverse academic needs of learners with problems. Many teachers said they are furthering their studies.

3.2.11 Teachers' teaching experience

The ages of teachers are as follows:

* 13.3% have a teaching experience of less than 6 years,
* 6.6% have 6 to 10 years teaching experience,
* 46.6% have 11 to 15 years teaching experience,
* 13.3% have 16 to 20 years teaching experience,
* 20% have 21 to 30 years teaching experience

This indicates that teacher's experience is loaded between 11 to 15 years.

Teachers were asked about their dependence over the control of teaching activities in inclusive education and 70% of the teachers in the sample felt that they have complete
independence over their teaching activities as a result of their teaching experience. The 30% of teachers felt they have ‘partial independence’ because of limited training in special educational needs.

3.2.12 The research instrument

According to McMillan & Schumacher (1997) there are several ways of collecting data when conducting research and one or more of these methods such as observations, questionnaires, interviews, tests and unobtrusive measures are used depending on the disadvantages and advantages of each.

The researcher used a semi-structured interviewing schedule and a questionnaire as the main instruments of collecting data. The semi-structured interviews were opted for because they are more flexible, open and few restrictions are placed on the respondents answers.

The questions were mostly open-ended to allow respondents to formulate and express their responses freely.

Out of the fifteen teachers who completed the questionnaire five were also interviewed. Interviews were used because they are less formal and the technique allows for questions to be repeated as well as changed in order to suit the situation. The research instrument for the study consisted of 20 questions which attempted to assess the implementing of inclusive
education in primary schools in EThekwini Region. Items of the questionnaire and interview were derived from information obtained from the literature that was reviewed. The respondents were requested to answer in writing to give their views and opinions (see Appendix A).

A pilot study was done in order to establish the validity and reliability of the research instrument. In order to establish the reliability of the instrument triangulation was done.

3.2.13 Validity and reliability.

Measures were taken in the study to ensure that the aspects of validity and reliability are covered. The study’s integrity depended on the relevant instruments (questionnaires and interview). Validity was used to check out whether the meaning and interpretation of the event is sound or whether a particular measurer is an accurate reflection of what one has intended to find out. Triangulation of data was used in the study to ensure validity and trustworthiness of the data collected (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 1984).

The researcher employed reliable measuring procedures because she needed to be confident that comparable results would occur upon retest of the sample. To ensure reliability in the study the researcher used the same questions directed to all teachers who were selected for the study. The questions were first piloted to ensure clarity (and thus validity) on each item on the questionnaire and interview questions. According to De Vos (2000:138) questionnaires need to be piloted and refined so that the final version contain
a full range of possible responses as possible. This exercise assisted the researcher in refining the questionnaire.

3.2.14 Method of scoring and procedure for analysing data

 Completed questionnaires were collected from 12 teachers from the schools piloting inclusive education. The data that was collected was qualitative and descriptive, hence they were inductively analysed. The data analysis was divided into two stages. The data that was obtained from the questionnaires was transcribed and summarised while data collected from audio tapes were transcribed for the analysis process. The analysis of data involved using both narrative reconstruction of the respondents accounts and experiences and categorising of accounts.

 The subjects were requested to write their responses that best described their circumstances or situations. The researcher sorted the data obtained from questionnaires for the analysis process. A thorough reading of data was done and topics covered by the data. Answers from the self completion questionnaires were analysed through elementary content analysis and frequency counts and then converted to a percentage. The researcher labelled data according to percentages.

 The percentage scores from the questionnaires represents the teachers responses per question while the unreflected percentages were minor and remained divided
among opposite views and non responses. The data collected from interviews were aggregated and organised according to the research questions.

3.2.15 Limitations of the study

The size of the sample was small especially that of interviewees, however, researchers contend that a small sample is characteristic of qualitative research (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997:302).

Most qualitative studies use small samples for the following reason:

- Qualitative research seeks to identify behaviour and understand the meaning thereof in a far more complex manner and thus lends itself to the use of a small sample approach.

The researcher experienced difficulty meeting the District Manager as well as principals.

The collection of data through interviews was problematic, the most difficult part and consumed much of the time for the research. Teachers kept postponing their interviews. When the researcher got to see them there had been a major delay for the research. Teachers delayed the interviews so much and by the time the researcher arrived they were reported to be away, writing examinations and could not be interviewed. Other teachers could not be interviewed because they were busy with extra curricula activities and the researcher could not see them and appointments were constantly pushed back.

Eventually the researcher managed to interview 5 teachers. It was necessary to limit the scope of the research due to exigencies of time and restricted resources.
In connection with the scope of the study, while it was considered that a wider investigation would have given a more complete picture of the potentiality for the implementation of inclusion of learners with barriers in regular classrooms, it is deemed that certain conclusions can be drawn from the material presented and it can be confidently suggested that, although limitations in the scope, range and methodology of the research are acknowledged, the study can contribute to an in-depth investigation into the potentiality of inclusion of learners with barriers in learning and development in regular classrooms.

Notwithstanding the study's limitation outlined above, of the 15 respondents 12 cooperated fully with the researcher.

3.3 Summary

The context of the research methodology is sketched, paying attention to the research methods used, the population and sampling that was used in this study were described and it was indicated how many participated in the study.

The research instrument was fully explored focusing on the questionnaire and the types of questions used. Advantages and disadvantages of questions that were used in the study are mentioned.

In the next chapter the questionnaire and interviews are discussed and analysed.
CHAPTER 4

Data analysis and interpretation

4.1 Introduction

The chapter presents an analysis and discussion of data collected from 20 questionnaires and 5 interview transcripts as discussed in the previous chapter. The format of questions comprise of a series of open ended (86.6 %) and 13.3 % close items.

The form of data analysis has been both qualitative and quantitative following the use of self completion of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Items in the self completion questionnaire are analysed through straightforward frequency count, elementary content analysis and supplemented with direct quotations, as may be relevant.

The study sought to answer the following questions:

* To what extent do changes in education create problems and challenges for the successful implementation of inclusive education?

* Do educators have adequate knowledge about inclusive education?

* To what extent do educators' personal variables such as qualifications, attitudes, age and grades they teach affect the implementation of inclusive education?

The study gives insight into how teachers interpret their experience and make meanings of their day to day experiences as they deal with learner diversity in their
classrooms. The meanings in individual interpretations and experiences provide a framework for understanding how educators respond to diversity in the classroom.

4.2 Analysis of teachers' responses emerging from the questionnaire.

Item 1

Does your school have the policy on inclusive education?

Respondents were invited to indicate 'yes or no' in their answers. The 12 responses received from teachers can be classified as follows:

100% of teachers offered a positive response (yes)

Item 2

What do you think was the reason for your school to be selected to pilot inclusive education?

100% of the teachers did not know the reason(s) why their schools were selected. They said the schools received instruction that they must admit learners with disabilities. They did not know which criteria were used to choose schools, but they gave the following guesses:

Building 66.6%
Teaching 80%
Qualifications 13.3%
Location of the school 6.6%
Item 3

How would you describe a learner with barriers in learning?

20% of the teachers said learners with barriers are 'those children who can not perform as other children of their age, and show marked individual differences in developmental or academic areas.'

73.3% of teachers had considerable but diffuse knowledge about barriers in learning, they lacked differential knowledge of the manifestation of barriers. They did mention that learners with barriers have special needs that require differentiated instruction.

Although there is a belief that teachers have insight, skills and expertise to identify learners with barriers in learning, there is suspicion that they have problems regarding the differential identification of learners with special educational needs.

Item 4

What is the percentage of learners with barriers in your school?

33.3% of teachers said they have 65% of learners with intellectual impairment.

66.6% said they have ± 15% of learners with multiple disabilities.

Intellectual impairment, behavioural and emotional problems are forms of problems which have a high incidence in many schools. Intellectual problems and specific problems confuse many teachers and they are inadequately managed in schools.
Item 5

What are the most prevalent emotional problems manifested by learners with barriers in your school?

Teachers gave the following frequencies:

- 80% indicated anxiety
- 66.6% indicated nervousness
- 20% indicated withdrawn
- 13.3% indicated depression

Item 6

What are the most prevalent behaviour problems which learners with barriers in learning show?

Teachers gave the following frequencies:

- 73.3% indicated aggression
- 40% indicated oppositional behaviour
- 13.3% indicated dishonesty
- 13.3% indicated truancy

Item 7

What type of difficulty do you think your school can best cater for?

Teachers gave the following frequencies:

- Intellectual impairment 80%
- Physical challenges 13.3%
Item 8

Give a percentage of learners with the following barriers:

Intellectual impairment 80%
Physical challenges 13.3%
Multiple disabilities 5%

Item 9

Why do you think inclusion is the best option to serve learners with disabilities?

A total of 33.3% of teachers consider ‘full service schools’ as appropriate learning environments for learners with learning difficulties. They asserted that ‘inclusion in schools has been happening every day in schools for decades especially in black schools’. Teachers identified learners with problems but did not give them any support. One teacher commented and said: ‘Teachers shuffled these learners to the back and forgot about them thus they repeatedly failed and some dropped out of school’.

According to these teachers inclusive education can be regarded as a solution to providing for the needs of learners experiencing barriers. Now learners with learning difficulties stand a chance of being identified and teachers are obliged to attend to their needs and they will receive learning support. Special needs learners will remain with their peers, they will not be separated from the normal activities of the school. A paradigm shift in the minds of teachers and peers of learners in their attitude towards learners who experience barriers in learning will lead to the possibilities of practising inclusive
education. These will eliminate problems in including learners with barriers in learning and development in regular schools.

Other teachers (35%) said inclusive education is not good, the schools fail to meet the educational needs of learners who experience barriers in learning and further create other barriers in their learning and development. One respondent gave this comment: "Some teachers are increasingly required to cater for learners with barriers in their classrooms, but they continue to focus mainly on the typically achieving learners, rather than those with special needs. Inclusion creates a backlash that may result in more isolation for learners with problems. No matter, the inclusion policies that guarantee learners access to the regular curriculum, teachers still require that learners with barriers in learning demonstrate that they can benefit from the regular class before they can be given a place in such classes. Teachers who will serve learners with barriers in learning should volunteer, it should not be imposed upon them."

Another 20% of teachers said it is a bad idea, the Department of education should not have selected only a few schools to pilot inclusive education, all primary schools in the provinces should practise inclusion and serve a broad range of abilities and difficulties so that no school will be stigmatised.

**Item 10**

**Do you think identifying the problem in learners is ideal?**

33.3% of teachers said it is necessary to obtain information to know the nature of the
learners' disability because problems which do not receive attention become entrenched, escalate and may influence other areas of the learner. The identification of learners' problem help teachers to know which learning support media to use, to gain insight about the actual problem and determine the strengths and weakness so as to assist them to function more effectively, satisfy their emotional and intellectual needs more effectively.

13.3% of teachers said it is necessary to identify the problem so as to make available the resources necessary to teach them and implement an individualised education programme and meet each learner's needs.

A relative small number of teachers were able to give appropriate information as to why the learners' problems should be identified. Most said it increases the possibility of rectifying or improving the learners situation, help answer questions about the problems.

**Item 11**

**In what way do you think learners with barriers are different from able learners?**

Teachers gave the following responses:

- Learners with special needs require additional supervision, monitoring, prompting, correction and feedback.
- Learners with problems in learning acquire and demonstrate knowledge through unusual ways.
- The performance of learners with diverse needs fluctuates, perform slowly and tire quickly.
• Learners with disabilities need an adapted physical environment to accommodate their needs.
• Learners with diverse needs need validated teaching methods.
• Learners with special needs cannot manage elements such as, attention on task behaviour, self monitoring, social skills, peer and teacher interactions, time, goal setting.
• Learners with special needs have attitudes towards people and teachers

**Item 12**

**Do you think you are ready to teach learners with barriers in learning and development?**

Teachers (20%) said they are ready to teach learners with barriers in learning.

Teachers said they have acquired strategies (through training), techniques, skills and assistive technological devices to improve the functional capabilities of learners who struggle to learn effectively.

Teachers (73.3 %) said they are not ready to teach learners with barriers effectively.

They said they depend on information, knowledge and methods they learn from workshops which is in itself inadequate and sometimes not comprehensive enough to offer valuable and effective knowledge. One teacher commented and said "to date neither pre-service nor in service training guarantees the confidence to address barriers in learning."

Teachers (33.3 %) said they cannot readily and effectively implement inclusion because of large classes, multiple administrative duties and inadequate training in
special needs education.

One teacher commented and said 'We continue to provide watered down versions of required content, classes and it does not provide adequate support to learners with problems in learning.'

The problem of large classes emerged as a problem preventing the successful implementation of inclusive education. The respondent said:

'We are working with a small number of staff in a big school and the problem is overcrowded classes.'

Another teacher commented as follows on the issue of overcrowding: 'The department is selling us short by allowing such big classes and having expectations of supporting learners with barriers in learning.'

All teachers in the study hold qualifications in education and many have diplomas, and certificates, some with specialisation in special education. Some have registered for further education in special educational needs but still feel helpless, lack confidence to adapt instruction, task or materials to support learning of their learners.

The teachers' suggestions indicate that they are prepared to enhance and broaden their knowledge and that opportunities should be created for them to be developed.

Item 13

What would your school need to review in order to provide for learners with barriers in learning?

Teachers (60 %) said the teacher – learner ratio should be revised so as to give
teachers opportunities to deal with learners with barriers in learning and development as individuals. One teacher commented and said: “We are expected to provide for the diverse needs of a wide range of learners in overcrowded and under resourced classrooms which is an impossibility. Class size result in excessive amount of time necessary to prepare for individual learners’ needs.”

According to these teachers the schools should meet the provincial teacher-learner requirement of 40:1. The Department of education should create balanced learner rosters for classrooms, inclusive planning teams need to consider all learner abilities and needs when learner placements are made. Individualised attention to learner needs will only be possible if teacher / learner ratio is limited.

Teachers (26.6 %) said administrative workload, time management, a lack of general support, extra curricular demands interfere with their instructional time and a major problem in trying to prioritise the allocation of time to be spent with learners with special needs.

Teachers (40 %) said the Department of Education should plan intensive in-service teacher development programmes and implement a sustained teacher training. They said the Department of Education should open centres for in-service training or education for all primary school teachers because disabilities are first detected at primary school level.

When teachers were asked what suggestions would they give about training and how could support be improved. They stated that they needed to be given more time for
training, more practical workshop, more teaching and learning material. They needed
to attend in-service workshops regularly at least once or twice per term so as to
acquire thorough training. The teachers felt that training, encouragement and
motivation is needed because they are not exposed to principles and procedures of
inclusive education.

The responses of the teachers concurred with the recommendations made by Engelbrecht et al
recommend that teachers should be provided with training. Many teachers need more
information and training to understand and assist their learners with barriers in learning more
effectively. In-service training can also change their attitudes and relieve them of the stress
they are experiencing. Teachers left out what most authors emphasised in literature study
(teachers negative attitude towards learners with barriers).

Teachers also left out capacity building strategies and infrastructure for school reform.
Teachers (13.3 %) said the schools should also hold workshops for parents and
communities to promote and support parenting skills.

Item 14

What role do workshops play in inclusive education?

Teachers (80 %) said workshops should be ‘eye openers’ to enable them to interact
‘therapeutically’ with the learners, but they are not.
The respondents indicated that the quality of training is not satisfactory. Facilitators repeat one and the same information and its effectiveness would have been determined by the actual hands on experience of inclusive education. Learners with difficulties in learning are physically there in regular class but do not benefit.

Teachers (13.3 %) said workshops enabled them to develop self confidence in handling difficult learners and have learnt that they can play a significant role in the teaching of learners with problems after attending workshops.

**Item 15**

**What are duties of a School Support Team at your school?**

In their responses the teachers showed an inadequate understanding of what are the duties of the School Support Team.

Teachers said:

* (73%) they do not have a School Support Team (SST) in their schools.  
* (20 %) said the SST helps learners to have the necessary support.  
* (6.6 %) the SST is responsible for the professional development of teachers.

**Item 16**

**What are duties of Special Educational Needs Coordinator in your school?**

Teachers said:

* (80%) they do not have a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)
in their schools, but there is an S.E.M who is a Coordinator for Inclusive Education.

*26.6% of teachers said that SENCO organises workshops for teachers.

The teachers' responses showed an inadequate understanding of what are the duties of the SENCO.

**Item 17**

**What is necessary to enhance your teaching of learners with barriers in learning?**

Teachers gave the following explanations:

* (66.6%) they need to refine existing skills to meet the challenges, deal with behaviour which inhibits effective teaching and learning. They need to attend more workshops.

* (33.3%) they need to be certain about the relationship between the various categories of barriers and the specific learner characteristics that they must deal with in the classroom.

* (13.3%) they need support from the Educational Support Service. The workshops should be conducted by people who themselves have adequate knowledge of inclusion. This view was expressed by 40 % of the responses received from teachers who indicated that they need the Department of education to plan intensive in-service training.
Item 18

Give a description of parents of learners with barriers in learning

Teachers gave the following answers:

* 60% said parents of learners with barriers in learning are supportive of their children and teachers.
* 26.6% said parents of LSEN are overprotective of their children.
* 13.3% said most parents have negative attitudes towards their children.

Item 19

What is the extent of the teacher’s autonomy?

Teachers gave the following answers:

* 73.3% said their autonomy is at risk. They are dependent on other people to give them knowledge and understanding of LSEN.
* 5% said their autonomy is not affected because they are knowledgeable and involved in teaching of LSEN. Teaching is an individual task, a private job, however not a an independent and isolated activity.
* 20% said the success of inclusion rests on the proposition that given reasonable support, general education teachers can teach most learners with barriers in learning more effectively. Various programmes of collaboration and consultation are needed to provide assistance to teachers. Peer collaboration and consultation between general and special education teachers in keeping with administration and instructional options is a dire need.
Item 20

Does the behaviour of learners with barriers in learning cause you stress?

Motivate your answer.

* 60% of teachers offered a qualified positive response. (yes)
* 33.3% of teachers offered negative responses (no)
* 6.6% did not answer the question (no response)

Respondents who offered qualified positive responses (yes) reported that coping with learners with learning disabilities is stressful. The teachers reported that they are not always able to meet the learners' needs and find it difficult to manage their classrooms in general.

Teachers also mentioned the following categories as causing them stress:

- Learners behaviour
- Professional competence. Experienced and competent teachers who have made the mind shift towards learners with learning problems, no longer experience themselves as experts in teaching.
- Administration overload.
- Lack of support
- Classroom management. Teachers reported that they experience difficulty in monitoring other learners while attending to a learner who struggles to learn.
- Dealing with parents with negative attitude or who are overprotective

4.3 Analysis of interview transcripts

Information that was obtained via interviews is recorded through direct quotation, as may be relevant.
Question 1

Was sufficient time allocated to the school to prepare for the implementation of learners with barriers in learning and development? Motivate your answer.

Respondents had to answer 'yes' or 'no'.

80% of the respondents offered negative responses. (no)

Educator A

"We were not adequately prepared, and empowered to take a stand regarding our convictions and decisions and make a difference to our situations."

Educator B.

"We were not timeously told that the school is going to be converted to a 'full service school.'"

Educator C.

"We were not given enough time to prepare ourselves for the change and it affected our plans. I did not intend to register for a course in special educational needs but had to develop necessary skills and disposition to handle diversity."

Educator E

"No. The school is not designed for responding to different and diversity or responding to the needs of its individual learner. There are no facilities such as ramps, or furniture, toilets for wheelchair bound learners."
Educator D

'I am well trained and developed as a teacher and facilitator and my teaching has always been learner centred. There was no need to be prepared to admit learners with disabilities. For many years there has been increased acknowledgement of the importance of including learners with learning difficulties within the sphere of ordinary education and I prepared myself.'

Question 2

What is the purpose / objective of inclusive education?

The 5 respondents gave the following answers to the question.

Educator A

'It is the governments’ bid to ensure that education reaches all children in the country, even those who are disabled are now admitted in regular classrooms and are not going to be taught separately by remedial teachers.'

Educator B.

'The purpose is to enable all learners with difficulties in learning to receive education side by side with their peers. The government want to get rid of ‘special schools.’ Education that was offered exclusively in special school is now provided in any school and in any classroom.'
Educator C.

'I think it is to ensure that education becomes accessible to all children. Disabled children are now offered access to public schools so that they receive equal education as the normal children.'

Educator D.

'The purpose is to include all learners in a ‘normal’ school, that is, learners with barriers in learning are to be taught by ordinary teachers, they are not going to be referred to go and learn in special schools.'

Educator E.

'Learners with disabilities are to be fully accepted in regular classes and they are going to be given the same opportunities as non-disabled learners in a ‘full service school’

Question 3

Did you experience any problems in implementing inclusive education?

60% of the respondents answered positively (yes)

Educator B.

'We were not properly prepared for the implementation of inclusive education. We still have reservations about responding to the complex and diverse needs of learners. It is difficult for an ordinary teacher to provide special tuition to learners with special educational needs. Specially trained teachers taught ± 12 children who have the same
problem in their classes but we are expected to provide tuition to 40 children including those with special educational needs'.

**Educator C**

'I become uneasy about a particular learner when I come to the conclusion that the learner’s problem will not be simply resolved by making slight adaptations. The needs of learners with disabilities in learning manifest themselves in different forms and I am not used to cater for all these disabilities. There is not enough time to set aside for assisting individual learners with barriers to learning because of overcrowding in our classrooms.'

**Educator E.**

'Special educational needs is different from ordinary education. I am not experienced and lack expertise to adapt the normal curriculum followed by able learners in the classroom and prepare for individual learners with learning disabilities. I have problems in trying to mask the real inequalities which exists between learners with problems and those who are non disabled in terms of access to experience, opportunity and power.'

40% of the respondents who answered positively (yes) commented as follows:

**Educator A.**

'We involved all other parties and teachers are not solely responsible for helping the learners with barriers in learning and development. We do not feel alone because
teachers are capacitated and feel that special education is not different from general education.'

Education D.

'We learned how to cope more easily with difficult children and managed to develop skills, techniques and strategies to deal with learners with barriers in learning and development. We understand almost everything about inclusive education. We have accepted ownership of the education offered at school and committed to good quality education for all.'

Question 4.

How do you make for allowances for differences within your class?

Educator A.

'Learners do individualised work and/or activities so that everyone in class can learn successfully. On very limited occasions do I group learners and use peer assisted learning.'

Educator B

'I give learners different work or make learners with academic needs to complete only part of the work assigned to the rest of the class.'

Educator C

'I set work according to the learners capabilities and assess them in keeping with diversity. When I realise that learners have to write on a topic that is unfamiliar to some I plan an excursion or a role play to empower all learners.'
Educator D.

'I set different levels of work for learners. Learners who are able to work by themselves receive a different level of work from those needing assistance.'

Educator E

'Mostly I group learners so that learners who are knowledgeable can help those who struggle to learn.'

Question 5.

What type of disability would you wish to include in your classroom?

Educator A and D.

'Both of the respondents answered that they could include only physically challenged learners into their classrooms.'

When asked why, educator D gave this comment:

'Learners with physical challenges do not always have intellectual impairment'.

Educator B.

'I prefer to teach gifted underachievers because I think I can be certain about what the learners understand, needs and prefers'

Educator C.

I can teach all learners except children whose disabilities are as a result of brain damage. These learners need more specialised educational methods and teaching aids.'
**Educator E**

'To tell you the truth, I do not wish to teach learners with problems to learn. It's difficult to teach such learners especially in a class with 60 or more children.'

When asked what problems are encountered in teaching learners with problems the respondent gave this comment:“One has to make modifications to teaching programmes, employ different approaches, be sensitive to the various needs of learners, take note of different developmental levels of learners or their learning styles. The content knowledge of inclusive education plays an important role in instruction and learning of learners with barriers in learning.”

**Question 6**

**Who were involved in formulating the school policy?**

60% of the respondents mentioned the following people:

- School governing bodies
- Parents
- School management
- Teachers

40% of the respondent gave the following answer:

- School management
- Parents
- School governing body
4.4 Concluding observations

4.4.1 The effects of teacher qualifications and experience in the implementation of inclusive education.

Some of the teachers are qualified in special educational needs but the majority of them have not developed the necessary skills and disposition to handle learners with barriers in learning and development. They have no back up special educational support or access to the required special methods and materials.

4.4.2 Teacher competence in inclusive education

It was evident from the findings that professional competency relate to the appropriateness of a teachers' own training in special educational needs, the ability to meet the specific needs of the child, the reduced ability to teach other learners effectively as they would like.

Professional competence is related to the number of years teachers have been involved with learners with barriers in learning and whether they received professional training. A distinction is made between education and training. Training implies teaching techniques that can be applied to similar circumstances which do not vary greatly, training is more of a hands on experience.

Professional education emphasises analytical experience in an effort to have practitioners who can combine various bodies of knowledge into application that meet changing or unique circumstances and professional practitioner behaviour arising from his education is characterised by a drive to know why things are as they are.
Analysis of responses and informal discussions with respondents revealed that 60% of educators still lacked confidence and doubted their capability in the understanding and implementation of inclusive education. There is an indication that pre-service training regarding special educational needs was insufficient. Teachers were inadequately trained because:

* the teacher training institutions provided inadequate training (to allow for skills).
* there was an overemphasis on content methods of delivering content at the expense of wider issues.
* teacher training was more of an ideal.

These reasons confirm earlier indications that most teachers do not consider themselves as having necessary teaching skills to engage in meaningful teaching of learners with barriers in learning.

Training periods are needed but the time for training was too short, not enough and inefficient. The facilitators are not capacitated thus lack the expertise to give appropriate support and guidance to meet the educational and behavioural needs of learners with barriers in learning. Teachers do not consider themselves developed and sufficiently prepared to implement inclusive education.

The overall theme identified by the researcher of teachers participating in the research project related to the teachers' self competence. Teachers do not understand inclusive education, have limited knowledge, do not cope with the inclusion of learners with barriers in learning and development in their classrooms.
4.5 Summary

The researcher analysed the data emerging from the questionnaire and interviews. It was established that, according to the criteria set out in the aim of the study, inclusive education is not properly practised in the schools. The drastic changes which the education policy is presently undergoing causes stress among teachers. The new approach complicates the task of teachers. It is difficult for ordinary teachers to provide special tuition to learners with special educational needs.

Teachers who were engaged in the project are professionally qualified. The low status of teaching qualification is directly attributable to the humble origins of teacher education and the status of schooling. These teachers did not receive good quality, basic or pre-service training and their initial training did not include a substantial component on LSEN. They need training in inclusive education. Teachers find inclusion stressful and require more appropriate, more relevant in service training course to be developed for them. Teacher training and support play an important role and sustain inclusive education in the regular classroom. Teachers have to begin training to develop methods of disseminating the information gained. Developments in the field of special education needs depend on how well teachers are trained to perform their task.

Some teachers have negative attitudes towards LSEN. They do not provide their learners with emotional support. A learner can not be able to give his or her best if a teacher gives the
impression that they are irritated or exasperated by a learner, or ignore the learner. Teachers should set an example for their learners, display a positive attitude.

The researcher could also see traces of stress in teachers. Difficulties in meeting the needs of an increasing diverse special education population are a source of stress. The specific stressors are administrative workloads, classroom based and personal, time management and a lack of general support. The most stressful administrative issue for teachers include those that interfere with a teacher's instruction time, increasing amount of paper work, extra-curricular demands and interpersonal conflicts. Coping with learners with barriers in learning in regular classroom was also indicated.

The researcher has included profiles of each educator and has described each respectively and individually.

In the following chapter the writer will draw conclusions and make recommendations from the findings.
CHAPTER 5

Conclusion and recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the discussion of findings, recommendations and conclusions on the challenges facing the implementation of inclusive education in the EThekwini Region in Kwa-Zulu Natal. Recommendations will be made about inclusive education and its implementation in schools.

The findings have important implications for teachers implementing inclusive education in primary schools. The results highlight the various variables that have an impact on the successful implementation of inclusive education. The rights of learners with barriers in learning and development continue to be violated. They have not all achieved equality of opportunity and equal access to regular education in inclusive education. The learners who are placed in regular schools or classrooms are physically there with no proper support offered to them.

The study is significant because it provides information that is critical to the conceptualisation of the framework priorities for learners with barriers in learning in a primary school context. Professionals and policy planners assume that their interventions are appropriate and they know what the priorities are for children.
5.2 The benefits of inclusive education

5.2.1 The benefits learners with barriers gain in an inclusive education.

The learners with barriers remain with their peers, they are not segregated from the normal activities of the school, they receive greater efficiency in the provision of services because they are already at school and can be easily reached.

Learners with barriers are likely to succeed in effective schools because teachers, school managers, specialists and typical classmates work together to ensure that every learner is valued, respected and accepted for who he or she is and provided with meaningful and appropriate learning experience (Choate, 2004: 2). The children are easily accessible thus this would mean the various support services could all be offered at school because if all agencies are represented at school it is easier to refer them.

Labelling is de-emphasised and the stigma attached to special school is decreased because many learners with many different types of barriers in learning are serviced. In addition research indicates that learners with disabilities achieve academic success in inclusive settings. According to Walther-Thomas et.al (2000) students with disabilities do better academically and socially in inclusive settings. Comparative studies reveal that learners in inclusive classrooms outperformed those in pull-out programmes across a number of important school performance indicators. It is asserted that learners with disabilities in inclusive settings earned higher grades, achieved higher scores on standardised tests, attended more school days, failed few classes and were involved in no more behavioural infraction than learners in more
restrictive placements. A growing body of evidence suggests that most learners do not benefit from out of class support. Reviews suggest that instructional programmes outside general education learning environment produce few, if any, positive and lasting effects on learner performance.

5.2.2 Benefits which peers of learners with barriers gain in inclusive education.

Studies show that typical high achieving learners are not harmed in the inclusion process, the presence of an identified learner in general education settings may enhance classroom learning experiences for peers who may be at-risk academically or socially as well as high achieving learners. This could be attributable to extra help to all class members when a learning specialist is present who can target specific problems as learners work and develop appropriate intervention, strategies immediately to address these concerns (Walther-Thomas, 1997: 122). Valuable life skills, often unexplored in more traditional settings, receive greater attention in inclusive environments.

Inclusive schools design academic work to use structures that facilitate social interactions among learners such as peer tutoring, cross-grade cooperate learning (Du Toit, 1997: 227-232). Through these interactions, all learners have opportunities to develop or enhance their communication, problem solving and relationship building skills.

When inclusion is implemented effectively, ongoing, daily involvement in others’ lives helps learners to become more empathetic and understanding as they develop a better appreciation for unique qualities that all people possess.
5.2.3 Benefits of inclusive education for teachers.

Teachers grow professionally and enhance personal support as a result of opportunities to collaborate with others in the development of inclusive services. Collaboration facilitates knowledge sharing and skills development in ongoing relationships (Du Toit 1997:123). The process enables teachers to become more skilled and more confident in their abilities to address the diverse needs of learners with barriers and others with unique learning needs. The various professions have separate cultures and different vocabularies and approaches to the needs of children.

5.3 Findings

5.3.1 Challenges critical to the implementation of inclusive education.

The findings revealed that there is a relationship between the teacher’s qualifications, attitudes, stress, gender, large classes and problems and challenges associated with the implementation of inclusive education.

5.3.1.1 Teacher qualifications

Teachers who participated in the study are qualified to teach but are inadequately trained to teach learners with barriers in learning. The quality of education is to a large degree determined by the quality of teachers it employs. Success for most schools depends on the teachers with skills to successfully perform tasks required to attain strategic goals. The teachers in the study raised the matter of training. It soon became obvious to the researcher that the word ‘training’ meant something else to the teachers.

Teachers lack appropriate professional training to implement inclusive education and
meet the needs of the diverse learner population. Traditionally pre-service programmes taught aspiring teachers how to work with able learners not learners with barriers in learning and development. Teachers created a strong sentiment for the need for additional training, instructional resources and technical assistance to ensure equality of education. With both pre-service and in-service training level teachers are unable to assess and teach academic and social skills to learners with barriers in learning and development. They reported that the training they received in workshops were of poor quality and ineffective, people who conduct workshops do not understand inclusive education, they are unable to answer questions that teachers direct to them. The training they received from the Department of Education was superficial and inadequate and the providers were ill at ease with process and details of the procedure of inclusive education. They showed a disturbing lack of skills for dealing with diversity among learners, for identifying the needs within learners and for evaluating support effectiveness.

5.3.1.2 Teacher competence

It was noted that teachers did not respond good enough in the questionnaires, interviews and that did not warrant a good understanding of inclusive education and a potential to implement inclusive education successfully.

The findings reveal that the teachers’ understanding of the extent of inclusive education is limited and also view inclusive education in a limited way as a means of ensuring equality of educational opportunities for learners with barriers in learning and development in the general education classes. They may not successfully
implement inclusive education on their own at the present moment. Professional
development was not provided for teachers who were to initiate or implement
inclusive education in their schools. Even competent and motivated teachers cannot
'just do it' when it comes to teaching learners with barriers in learning, they are
unaware of their strengths but are focussed on their weaknesses. Teachers need more
information and training in order to understand and assist learners who experience
barriers in learning more effectively.

5.3.1.3 Teachers attitude

Many teachers did not receive adequate specialised training at the preservice level
thus they do not possess the necessary knowledge and skills, their ability to work with
learners with special educational needs has been seriously tested. The majority of
teachers offered negative responses on the effectiveness of training and support on the
issue. Lack of knowledge, experience and training seemed to be the major factors that
lead to negative attitudes among teachers.

Many teachers are not motivated to teach learners with barriers in learning because of
a lack of knowledge of strategies for teaching these learners. They showed
apprehension about inclusion of learners with barriers in learning into general
education. The teachers’ reluctance to accept learners with barriers is a result of
inadequate specialised training they received.

Teachers with little or no experience of learners with barriers in learning experience
negative attitudes towards the inclusion of these learners in the regular classrooms.
Experience tend to change attitude.
Extrinsic factors like redeployment, retrenchment and low salaries lead to negative attitudes within teachers who have a stressful and demanding role to fulfil, as expected within a policy of inclusive education. Negative attitudes among teachers were sensed as a result of demands that they face in performance of their professional roles and responsibility.

5.3.1.4 Stress

Levels of stress ameliorated the longer teachers have been involved with inclusion and by undertaking formal training in teaching learners with barriers in learning.

Specific issues that teachers find stressful during inclusion were identified as requirements to enable more appropriate pre service training and more relevant in-service training to be developed for teachers.

Another stressful category relates to the behaviour of learners with barriers in learning. The disruptive behaviour of learners within the classroom is the most stressful classroom issue. Teachers experience increased stress when the learners with barriers disturb other learners.

A lack of collaboration across areas of expertise reflected in the coping strategies teachers reported was identified as another most stressful issue.

Increasing paper work, extra curricular demands, issues interfering with a teacher’s instructional time, overcrowded classes are most stressful on their own to be burdened with learners with barriers.
Female teachers experience significant stress than their male counterparts when coping with classroom issues and with threats to their perceived professional competence.

5.4 Recommendations

The areas of concern in this study were found to be in relation to the quality of training and support for the implementation of inclusive education and that the process is too complex.

5.4.1 Recommendations to the school in general

- It is recommended that the school should provide quality comprehensive in-service courses. If training is sensitively introduced and properly managed it will promote effective teaching and come to be perceived as a genuine vehicle of professional growth.

- In-service education and training (INSET) should train the teachers implementing inclusive education. INSET in education should be ongoing and answer life long professional development of teachers in education. The researcher believes that teachers will benefit profoundly from comprehensive in-service training. INSET to include facilitation skills, team building, development of individual learning programmes, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and strategic planning.

- Rectify long term training by including compulsory units of work on learners with special educational needs in pre-service courses. Because the flow-through will take some time schools should focus on providing relevant in-service training for
teachers in the area of teaching learners with barriers.

5. 4. 2 Recommendations on inclusive education (general )

* Individuals who hold workshops should have a thorough knowledge about inclusive education and learners with barriers in learning.

* Specific preparation should be made to develop consultation competencies.

The education of learners with barriers especially those with behaviour problems require working together with other experts. Collaboration benefits the individual teacher, learners and the school as a whole because it leads ultimately to the improvements in the delivery of appropriate education ( Du Toit 1997 ). Diverse and specialised professional development options must be produced that allow for teachers to gain experience that can meet their needs appropriately. Collaboration has the potential to promote greater confidence, greater competence, improved morale and enable better career planning, better professional relations and communication as well enhance the planning and delivery of education.

* Urgent consideration should be given to addressing the apparent poor social skills of learners with barriers who are included in regular classes.

* Focussed attention need to be given to learners behaviour, comprehensive training for parents of learners with barriers in learning, reduction of teacher- learner ratio and administrative workloads to enable teachers to cope without increasing their stress levels.
• Shortage of classrooms, furniture, teacher corps also need immediate attention.

• The amount of paperwork should be reduced.

• Inclusive education should be reviewed regularly to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the learners with special educational needs and all who are in it.

• The researchers who are willing to replicate this study may focus on class observation and increase the size of the sample.

5.5 Conclusion

The overall theme identified in the research programme related closely to teachers perceived self competence.

Lack of effective in-service and pre-service or training regarding the implementation of inclusion and special needs reinforces the high levels of stress associated with adapting the curriculum to the needs of and sustaining an effective learning environment for all learners in their classroom.

The experience of the researcher is that inclusion has occurred without the understanding of the implications for teachers who have much of the responsibility for implementing it.

Teachers have a diffuse knowledge about inclusive education.

In service education training is intended to directly enhance the educational provision
offered to learners, and affords individual teacher the opportunity to critically look at
their practices. Adequate education and training creates avenues for greater job satisfaction,
recognition and determination of career needs. In service training is closely related to ongoing
development and strategic planning.
REFERENCES


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APPENDIX A

LETTER OF CONSENT FROM THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

School: 
Address: 
Postal code: 
Telephone number: 
Date: 

(Title) ___________________________________ Initials ___________________________ Surname ___________________________________

grant permission for ____________________________ (student number) ______________________________ to do her practical work for the M.ed. (Educational psychology, University of Zululand) at this school. I hereby also acknowledge that she has fully informed me of the practical work which is required of students for this module.

In terms of our agreement, she will be gathering information during _______2005 ________.

Ms.________________________________ has also assured me that all information collected will be viewed and treated as confidential.

_____________________________________________________
Signature

School stamp
APPENDIX B

RESEARCH PRACTICE FOR MED. STUDENTS

To the District Manager.

Name

Student No.

is enrolled at the University of Zululand for Master’s degree in Educational Psychology. She is required to undertake research at a school or other institution during the course of the year. We rely on the willingness of Managers ‘to grant our students’ access to schools so that they may obtain practical experience in small scale research projects.

The results of these small projects are reported anonymously. Neither the school, teacher(s) nor the learner(s) is / are identified.

In addition the results will be kept confidential.

Would you grant her access to the school/class in order to be able to complete her work.

Thanking you in anticipation for your willingness to assist us in our training endeavours.

Department of Educational Psychology.

University of Zululand.
Dear Ms.

I am doing a Master's dissertation and researching on the inclusion of learners with barriers in learning in primary schools and would like your help by completing at your earliest convenience the following questionnaire.

N.B. Please answer in full except where otherwise stated.

1. Does your school have the policy on inclusive education?

2. What do you think was the reason for your school to be selected to pilot inclusive education?

3. How would you describe a learner with barriers in learning?

4. What is the percentage of learners with barriers? ______

5. What are the most prevalent emotional problems which learners with barriers in learning manifest?

---
6 What are the most prevalent behavioural problems which learners with barriers in learning show?

7 What type of difficulty do you think your school can best cater for?

8 Give a percentage of learners with the following barriers:

   Intellectual impairment

   Physical challenges

   Multiple disabilities

9 Why do you think inclusion is the best option to serve learners with disabilities?

10 Do you think identifying the problem in learners is ideal?

11 In what way do you think learners with barriers are different from able learners
12. Do you think you are ready to teach learners with barriers in learning and development?

13. What would your school need to review in order to provide for learners with barriers in learning?

14. What role do workshops play in inclusive education?

15. What are the duties of the School Support Team at your school?

16. What are the duties of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator in your school?
17. What is necessary to enhance your teaching of learners with barriers in learning?


