

***EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION***

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis *Educators' Perceptions of Inclusive Education* represents my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



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*This work is dedicated to my late parents Sumintra and
Basantlall Siebalak who instilled in me an unfading
inspiration during my formative years to pursue my studies*

CHAPTER 1

EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

ORIENTATION	PAGE
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM	3
1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	5
1.4 HYPOTHESIS	5
1.4.1 Formulation of hypothesis	6
1.4.2 Null hypothesis	6
1.5 ELUCIDATION OF CONCEPTS	7
1.5.1 Education	7
1.5.2 Educator	7
1.5.3 Inclusive education	8
1.5.4 Learners with special educational needs	10
1.5.5 Learning disability	11
1.5.6 Perception	12
1.5.7 Physical disability	13
1.6 AIMS OF THIS STUDY	15
1.7 METHODS OF RESEARCH	15
1.8 FURTHER COURSE OF STUDY	16
1.9 SUMMARY	16

CHAPTER 2

THE DEVELOPMENT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

CONTENT	PAGE
2.1 INTRODUCTION	17
2.2 PROVISION FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS PRIOR TO 1994	18
2.2.1 Early years	19
2.2.2 Colonial era	19
2.2.3 Apartheid era (1948-1994)	20
2.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW APPROACH BEGINNING IN 1994	22
2.3.1 Discourse	23
(1) Medical discourse	23
(2) Charity discourse	24
(3) Lay discourse	24
(4) Rights discourse	25
2.4 THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON SPECIAL NEEDS IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING (NCSNET) AND THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES (NCESS)	27
2.4.1 Terms of reference	28
2.4.2 Principles	29
2.4.3 Public participation	29
2.4.4 The research process	31
2.4.5 The recommendations	32

CHAPTER 2 <i>(continued)</i>	PAGE	
2.5	IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	33
2.5.1	Pre-conditions of the policy of inclusive education	33
2.5.2	Implementation of the theory of inclusive education in practice	34
(1)	The curriculum	35
(2)	Assessment	36
(3)	Human resources	36
(4)	Peers	37
(5)	Educational programme	37
(6)	Inclusion models	39
2.6	APPLICATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS	41
2.7	SUMMARY	44

CHAPTER 3

EDUCATORS AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

CONTENT	PAGE
3.1 INTRODUCTION	46
3.2 NEEDS OF EDUCATORS	47
3.2.1 Emotional needs	47
3.2.2 Need for knowledge	48
3.2.3 The need for support	50
3.3 EDUCATORS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	54
3.3.1 Change	57
3.3.2 Learners' abilities	59
3.3.3 Learners' disabilities	60
3.3.4 Inclusive education	62
3.3.5 Role of educators	65
3.4 STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	65
3.4.1 General strategies	66
3.4.2 Working as a team	68
3.4.3 Instructional strategies	69
3.4.4 Peer power	71
3.5 CREATING A CARING SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM COMMUNITY FOR ALL LEARNERS	73

CHAPTER 3 (<i>continued</i>)		PAGE
3.5.1	The classroom	74
3.5.2	Administrators' role	77
3.6	SUMMARY	79

CHAPTER 4

PLANNING THE RESEARCH

4.1	INTRODUCTION	81
4.2	PREPARATION FOR AND DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH	81
4.2.1	Permission	81
4.2.2	Selection of respondents	82
4.3	THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT	83
4.3.1	Qualitative research	84
4.3.2	Quantitative research	84
4.3.3	The questionnaire as a research instrument	86
(1)	The purpose of a questionnaire	86
(2)	Characteristics of a good questionnaire	87
(3)	Advantages of a questionnaire	89
(4)	Disadvantages of the questionnaire	90
(5)	The construction of the questionnaire	92
4.4	LITERATURE STUDY	94
4.5	OWN EXPERIENCE	95
4.6	PILOT STUDY	96
4.7	ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE	98
4.8	DATA PROCESSING	99
4.8.1	Editing and data	100

CHAPTER 5

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH DATA		PAGE
5.1	INTRODUCTION	104
5.2	DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS	104
5.2.1	Gender of respondents	105
5.2.2	Age of respondents	106
5.2.3	Qualifications of respondents	107
5.2.4	Years teaching experience	108
5.2.5	Post level of respondents	109
5.2.6	Type of post held by respondents	110
5.2.7	Respondents' employers	111
5.2.8	Successful implementation of inclusive education	112
5.2.9	Educators' perceptions of an inclusive classroom	128
5.3	INFERENTIAL STATISTICS	139
5.3.1	Introduction	139
5.3.2	Independent and dependent variables	140
5.3.3	The hypothesis	141
5.3.4	The Chi-Squared (X^2) statistical test of significance	142
5.3.5	The relation between the educators' genders, qualifications, experiences as educators and the successful implementation of inclusive education	143
5.3.6	The relation between educators' gender, qualifications, and years of experience as an educator and their perceptions of an inclusive classroom	147
5.4	TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS	151
5.5	SUMMARY	152

CHAPTER 6

	SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS	PAGE
6.1	SUMMARY	153
6.1.1	Statement of the problem	153
6.1.2	The development of inclusive education in South Africa	153
6.1.3	Educators and inclusive education	154
6.1.4	Planning of the research	156
6.1.5	Presentation and analysis of the research data	156
6.1.6	Aim of the study	157
6.2	RECOMMENDATIONS	157
6.2.1	The curriculum, institutional development and assessment	157
6.2.2	Utilization and development of human resources	160
6.2.3	Governments and funding	161
6.3	FURTHER RESEARCH	164
6.3.1	Recommendation	164
6.4	CRITICISM	164
6.5	FINAL REMARK	165

LIST OF TABLES	PAGE
Table 1	Frequency distribution according to the educators' genders 105
Table 2	Frequency distribution according to the age of the educators 106
Table 3	Frequency distribution according to the qualification level of the educators 107
Table 4	Frequency distribution according to the educators' total number of years' teaching experience 108
Table 5	Frequency distribution according to the post level of the educators 109
Table 6	Frequency distribution according to the type of post held by the educators 110
Table 7	Frequency distribution according to the employer of the educator 111
Table 8	Frequency distribution according to the availability of facilities or strategies for successful implementation of inclusive education 112
Table 9	Frequency distribution according to the educators' perceptions of an inclusive classroom 128

LIST OF TABLES <i>(continued)</i>	PAGE
Table 10 The Chi-squared and p-value of the dependent variables against the independent variables of the successful implementation of inclusive education	144
Table 10.1 The relation between the educators' gender (Question 1.1) and their perceptions of a school-based support team for assisting educators with LSEN (Question 2.1)	146
Table 10.2 The relation between the educators' qualifications (Question 1.3) and their perceptions of the strategies to eliminate discriminating attitudes towards LSEN (Question 2.12)	146
Table 11 The Chi-square and p-value of the dependent variables against the independent variables of the educators' perceptions of an inclusive classroom	148
Table 11.1 The relation between the educators' qualifications (Question 1.3) and their acknowledgement that they think they could better educate LSEN with the help of remedial educators (Question 3.3)	150
Table 11.2 The relation between the educators' gender (Question 1.1) and their perceptions that they require more knowledge to educate LSEN learners (Question 3.7)	151

ANNEXURES		PAGE
Annexure A	Questionnaire	189
Annexure B	Permission letters	197

SUMMARY

The aim of this study was to pursue an investigation if mainstream educators are adequately equipped to deal with learners with special educational needs in ordinary classrooms. From the literature study it became evident that inclusive education is not simply a reform of special education but it accommodates all learners within mainstream classrooms. Changing over to inclusive education will have to be done with great responsibility, otherwise inclusive education in South Africa will be doomed from the beginning.

The actual implementation of inclusive education could be highlighted as being *inter alia* the following:

- ▶ Legislation pertaining to inclusive education.
- ▶ The community as a whole.
- ▶ No learners should be excluded from mainstream schools.
- ▶ In-service training and professional development.
- ▶ Children should be grouped according to chronological ages.
- ▶ Class size.
- ▶ Curriculum must be readapted.
- ▶ Assessment and evaluation should be changed.
- ▶ Programmes and facilities must be constantly monitored and assessed.

- ▶ Financial issues need to be addressed.
- ▶ Facilities will have to be suitably adapted.

Successful implementation of inclusive education will depend upon an effective and responsive educators to cater for the needs of all learners.

The following needs of the educator influence his perceptions of inclusive education.

- ▶ Emotional needs.
- ▶ The need for knowledge and skills.
- ▶ The need for support.

Inclusive education would require educators to:

- ▶ Have a positive attitude.
- ▶ Be flexible in their thinking.
- ▶ Be critical, creative and innovative in their approach to teaching and learning.

To measure the educators' perceptions of inclusive education it was necessary to design a set of values, attitudes, beliefs and responsibilities against which the perceptions of the educators could be measured. The values, attitudes, beliefs and responsibilities were grouped into the following key performance areas.

- ▶ Successful implementation of inclusive education.
- ▶ Educators' perceptions of an inclusive classroom.

The questionnaires were completed by the school principals, deputy principals, heads of department and educators. It was analyzed and the data processed.

The study confirmed that the successful implementation of inclusive education will depend on the availability of the following:

- ▶ A school and district based support team.
- ▶ In-service training and ongoing retraining.
- ▶ Adequate funds.
- ▶ Collaboration and consultation between special and mainstream educators.
- ▶ Guidance and counselling facilities for parents.
- ▶ Parental involvement.
- ▶ Accessible transport.
- ▶ Physical barriers to the built-in environment.
- ▶ New teaching strategies.
- ▶ Curriculum adaptation.

In conclusion a summary was presented and based on the findings of this study.

The following are some of the recommendations that were made:

- ▶ The implementation of inclusive education in South African classrooms need changes to be made to the curriculum, institution and methods of assessment.
- ▶ Successful implementation of inclusive education depends upon South Africa's utilization and development of its human resources.
- ▶ Successful implementation of inclusive education relies largely on governance and funding.

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ORIENTATION	PAGE
1.1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.2 ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM	3
1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	5
1.4 HYPOTHESIS	5
1.4.1 Formulation of hypothesis	6
1.4.2 Null hypothesis	6
1.5 ELUCIDATION OF CONCEPTS	7
1.5.1 Education	7
1.5.2 Educator	7
1.5.3 Inclusive education	8
1.5.4 Learners with special educational needs	10
1.5.5 Learning disability	11
1.5.6 Perception	12
1.5.7 Physical disability	13
1.6 AIMS OF THIS STUDY	15
1.7 METHODS OF RESEARCH	15
1.8 FURTHER COURSE OF STUDY	16
1.9 SUMMARY	16

CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Inclusion is a new way of thinking about specialised education. The shift from special education to inclusive education signals a dramatic philosophical change. Inclusion is a belief in the inherent right of all persons to participate meaningfully in society. Inclusive education implies acceptance of differences and making room for persons who would otherwise be excluded. This practice of educating children who have disabilities together with their non-disabled peers means creating learning communities that appreciate and respond to the diverse need of its members (Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booysen, 1996:7).

Inclusion involves recognising that we are one even though we are not the same. Inclusion may be defined as fighting against exclusion and all of the social diseases which exclusion gives rise to, for example racism, sexism, handicapism, etc. Inclusion also involves ensuring that all support systems are available to those who need such support (Jenkins & Sileo, 1994:84).

Since 1994, the South African Government has been committed to transforming the educational policy to address the imbalances and neglect of the past and to bring the country in line with international standards of recognition of human rights, which led to the movement towards inclusive education. Inclusive education promotes a single system of education dedicated to ensure that all learners are empowered to become caring and competent citizens in an inclusive, changing and diverse society (Hall & Engelbrecht, 1999:230).

Special education, with the emphasis on and mainly the continued existence of special schools, as well as remedial programmes in ordinary schools, educational support services, education and training policies, legislation and governance and outcomes-based education (OBE), are the focal points of transformation to a system of inclusive education in South Africa.

The period pending the promulgation of a new law regarding the education of learners who are experiencing barriers to learning, is distinguished by the low morale of educators in both special and mainstream schools mainly because of cutbacks on the education budget, redeployment of excess educators and a large number of learners with diverse needs in mainstream as well as special classes (Hall & Engelbrecht, 1999:231).

On the one hand, mainstream educators are rarely equipped, skilled or qualified to deal with the diversity of learners who are experiencing barriers to learning in large classes (Bradley, King, Sears & Tessier-Switlick, 1997:15; Schoeman, 1997:3). On the other hand, special school educators are equipped to deal with learners who have learning difficulties or problems within a special school setting. Special and remedial school educators and educational support services should be seen as expert centres in preparing individualised learning and life-skill programmes, learning strategies and early intervention. This could play a significant role in the inclusive education system in South Africa (Engelbrecht, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1997:5; Saleh, 1996:9).

The actual implementation of inclusive education will not be easy for educators in mainstream schools, as it would require hard work and dedication to move from a system of a segregated setting for learners with special needs to the provision of education for all learners in an inclusive and supportive learning environment (DNE, 1997d:53).

This study explores the extent to which educators and personnel can contribute to creating an environment that supports the learning and development of all members of the learning community.

1.2 ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

Inclusive education at present seems to be unacceptable for many educators because of a lack of knowledge of the benefits of inclusion. At this stage the most acceptable option for placement of learners who are experiencing barriers to learning, seems to be a progressive move towards inclusion as this will enable the education ministry to prepare mainstream educators for the successful implementation of inclusive education in South African classrooms (Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booysen, 1996:15).

Educators' perceptions and attitudes in mainstream schools, together with their training and skill have practical implications for learners who are experiencing learning difficulties (Schechtman & Or, 1996:146). Factors such as the number of learners in class and the academic pressure and standards of the school, influence the amount of time and attention an educator can afford a learner who is experiencing learning difficulties in the mainstream school. Learners experiencing learning difficulties place high demands on educators. The educator also has high expectations of the way he deals with these learner demands. This leads to more pressure and stress for the educator.

It appears that the degree of acceptance of inclusive education goes hand-in-hand with the way in which the policy of inclusion has been presented to educators (DNE 1997d:54-60). Educators who experience the policy as being forced onto them appear to reject it totally. Educators who participated in the process of transformation seem to be more accepting. Information on the movement towards

inclusive education will improve acceptance. From an educator's point of view, it appears that inclusive education shows a vacuum in the training of mainstream school educators which will have to be filled with compulsory training in special education (Hall & Engelbrecht, 1999:230).

According to Ainscow (1995:1) the theory of inclusive education emphasises the importance of sufficient support for the educator and learner in mainstream schools. *Knowledge and skills should equip educators to deal with learners who are experiencing learning difficulties.*

The education paradigm is apparently still based on the traditional methods of teaching, where the learner has to perform and progress according to predetermined standards, rather than an outcomes-based education and continuous assessment, as recommended in the report entitled: *Quality Education for All* (DNE, 1997b:15-25). Educators find it difficult to accommodate a paradigm shift within their traditional frame of reference.

Donald (1995:51) says the successful implementation of inclusive education seems to be the availability of financial resources and this creates a negative feeling towards inclusive education.

Collaboration between parents and educators improves parents' understanding of the movement towards inclusion and can influence views more positively. Parents who respect diversity and are willing to become involved can sway a community. A positive approach in a community towards people with a disability can improve job opportunities and participation for all (Ainscow, 1992:2).

Teacher training plays a significant role in terms of classroom research, support for educators and learners, as well as providing in-service training (COTEP, 1994:5). The collaboration between special and mainstream school educators is necessary for information and skill-sharing. Early intervention, support and

sharing of knowledge can only be done successfully when collaborative structures are in place (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997:101; Giangreco, Dennis, Cloninger, Edelman & Schattman, 1993:367).

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In essence the questions to be investigated in this study focus on *inter alia*, the following:

- ▶ What are the main challenges facing educators in the implementation of inclusive education in South African classrooms?
- ▶ Are educators sufficiently equipped for inclusive education?
- ▶ Do educators require assistance concerning inclusive education and if so, what is the nature of the assistance required?

1.4 HYPOTHESIS

A hypothesis is a tentative proposition, a prediction suggested as a solution to a problem or as an explanation of some phenomenon. It represents the researcher's expectations concerning a relationship between variables within the problem (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990:112). A hypothesis is merely a suggestion, which through the findings from the research which follows may be accepted or rejected.

The characteristics of a hypothesis are as follows (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997:358):

- ▶ A hypothesis should not contradict existing knowledge.
- ▶ It predicts the relationships between two variables and can be tested empirically.
- ▶ It shows that the researcher has mastered the problem and can single out and check the most important variables contained therein.
- ▶ It directs the investigation by indicating the procedure to be followed and the data to be gathered.
- ▶ It establishes a reference for the interpretation of results and the drawing of conclusions.
- ▶ The researcher does not attempt to prove his hypothesis but only to accept or reject it.

1.4.1 Formulation of hypothesis

The experimental or research hypothesis for this study, which will state the relationship expected to be found by the researcher, is formulated as follows:

- ▶ A relation exists between educators' perceptions of inclusive education and the successful implementation of inclusion in South African classrooms.

1.4.2 Null hypothesis

The null hypothesis (H_0) states that there is no relation between variables and that any observed relationship is only a function of chance. For the purpose of this investigation the null hypothesis will read as follows:

- ▶ There is no relation between educators' perceptions of inclusive education and the successful implementation of inclusion in South African classrooms.

1.5 ELUCIDATION OF CONCEPTS

This study on the educators' perceptions of inclusive education in South Africa will cover a wide spectrum of concepts. To ensure a clear understanding of the problem to be investigated it is deemed necessary to explain the following concepts.

1.5.1 Education

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

1.5.2 Educator

Educators play a major role in the holistic development of their learners. Both learners and parents regard educators as the most important factor in the learners' becoming towards adulthood.

According to De Witt and Booysen (1995:39) the educator is an adult who assumes responsibility for guiding the child en route to adulthood. Since the educator plays such a large part in the process of a child becoming an adult, he can be called to

account for the quality of the child's becoming an adult. The educator is therefore also jointly responsible for the creation of the educative climate which is a condition for the encounter between the educator and the learner.

Du Toit and Kruger (1993:4) state that the child's parents (primary educators) and his teachers (secondary educators) play the greatest part in the child's education and the quality of his becoming adult. Initially it is the parents or their substitutes who are responsible for his education. When the child attends pre-primary or primary school, the parents' help, support and accompaniment in education are supplemented by the teacher.

1.5.3 Inclusive education

Inclusive education describes the process by which a school attempts to respond to all pupils as individuals by reconsidering and restructuring its curricular organization and by providing and allocating resources to enhance equality of opportunity. Through this process the school builds its capacity to accept all learners from the local community who wish to attend and in so doing reduces the need to exclude learners (Sebba & Ainscow, 1996).

According to Engelbrecht (1999:19-20) inclusive education can be defined as a system of education that is responsive to the diverse needs of learners. A mere definition will not suffice in conveying the actual meaning of the concept for everyday teaching and learning.

The National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) and the DNE report on the National Commission on Education Support Services (NCESS) (DNE, 1997a:55) provide sufficient clarity in this regard. The separate system of education which presently exists as 'special' and 'ordinary' needs to be

integrated to provide one system which is able to recognise and respond to the diverse needs of the learner population. Within this integrated system a range of options for education provision and support services should be provided. Learners should have the ability to move from one learning context to another, for example from early childhood education (ECE) to general education and training (GET), from a specialised centre of learning to an ordinary centre of learning, or from a formal to a non-formal programme. The system of education should be structured in such a way that irrespective of the learning content, opportunities to facilitating integration and inclusion of the learner in all aspects of life should be provided.

The term 'inclusive education' means that children who were previously taught in special schools are now allowed to go to any regular school and attend classes with their 'normal' peers. In other words, those children who were previously excluded from the schools in the mainstream are now included (Jenkins & Sileo, 1994:84). Inclusive education is, however, more than just a matter of placement. Very specific principles underlie this approach and are usually built into a bill of rights and governmental policies. The key documents are the White Paper on Education and Training (Department of Education, March 1995), the Organization, Governance and Funding of Schools White Paper 2 (Department of Education, November 1996), the White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy (Office of the Deputy President, 1996), and the S.A. Schools Act of November 1996. All the documents stress the principle of education as a basic human right. The principle implies that all learners have the right to equal access to the widest possible educational opportunities. The state has an obligation to protect and advance these rights so that all citizens, irrespective of race, class, gender, creed or age have the opportunity to develop their capacities and potential and make their full contribution to society. The principle of quality education for all learners suggests that schools have to meet the diverse needs of all learners.

1.5.4 Learners with special educational needs

Various terms are used to describe learners who are experiencing learning problems in schools. Presently the common term is "learners with special educational needs" (LSEN). This term is used in recent educational documents such as the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI, 1992:130), the "Policy Framework for Education and Training" of the African National Congress (ANC, 1994:104), the draft White Paper on Education and Training (DNE, 1994:16), the Consultative Paper on Special Education (DoE, 1995:6) and the "Report of the International Commission on open learning and distance education in South Africa" of the South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE, 1994:64). The ANC (1994:104) document defines the concept as follows: "Special educational needs include special academic and learning problems, physical health problems, emotional concerns and particular social needs.

In the Consultative Paper No. 1 on Special Education (DNE, 1999:6) the writers refer to the term "education for learners with special education needs" as the provision of educational support services to learners in public specialised/special schools and those who experience severe learning difficulties in ordinary public schools who are usually placed in specialised classes. The few specialised / special schools continue to be administered and evaluated through separate structures and procedures.

Donald (1992:8) indicates that the concept LSEN is a comprehensive one that refers to a wide spectrum of learners ranging from those who suffer from severe and multiple physical disabilities who would normally be taught in a special school, to those with mild or hardly discernible problems who can be found in mainstream education but who require additional educational assistance.

According to Goodman (1992:27) it has become the current practice worldwide to keep LSEN within mainstream education as far as possible and to deal with their problems in the context of the classroom. Gable, McLaughlin, Sindlar and Kilgore (1993:9) are convinced that LSEN around the world will increasingly have to be accommodated in regular classes. Moreover, South African educators will have to take account of the differences between pupils in language, culture, environment and experience (United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF, 1993:19).

1.5.5 Learning disability

According to Naude and Bodie (1990:48) learning disability means that the learner has a problem in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or to do mathematical calculations. The term learning disability includes handicaps of perception, brain injury, dyslexia and developmental aphasia. It excludes learning difficulties that are due primarily to visual, auditory or motor handicaps, mental retardation, emotional disturbances or environmental disadvantages.

Lerner (1993:9-4) points out that 'learning disability' refers to those children who have a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which disorder may manifest itself in imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or to do mathematical calculations. Such disorders include such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia. Such terms do not include children who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor handicaps, mental retardation or emotional disturbance, or environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage.

According to the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (NJCLD) it is a general term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or mathematical abilities. These disorders are intrinsic to the individual, presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction and may occur across the life-span. Problems in self-regulatory behaviours, social perception and social interaction may exist with learning disabilities and may occur concomitantly with other handicapping conditions, for example sensory impairment, mental retardation, serious emotional disturbance, or with extrinsic influences such as cultural difference, insufficient or inappropriate instruction that are not the result of those conditions or influences.

The Association of Children with Learning Disability define learning disability as a chronic condition of presumed neurological origin which selectively interferes with the development, integration and/or demonstration of verbal and/or non-verbal abilities. Specific learning disabilities exist as a distinct handicapping condition and varies in its manifestations and in degree of severity. Throughout life, the conditions can affect self-esteem, education, vocation, socialization and/or daily living activities.

Different definitions serve different purposes, including identification, assessment, institution and research. Different definitions are required by various professionals. We must therefore acknowledge that the various attributes of learning disabilities cannot be forced into a single encompassing definition.

1.5.6 Perception

Sekuler and Blake (1990:8) define perception as each individual's personal theory of reality, a kind of knowledge-gathering process that defines our view of the

world. Mader and Mader (1990:36) view perception as the process by which we select, organize and interpret external and internal stimuli. The external stimuli are the sensations that bombard us almost constantly, that come to us through sight, smell, touch, hearing and taste (Sekuler & Blake, 1990:19). The internal stimuli can either be physiological (nervous system) or psychological (motivation, interest and desire). Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990:167) describe perception as the act of receiving information through the senses (sight, sound, touch and smell). It is an activity which involves the organising and interpreting of information received through the senses.

Vrey (1990:19) defines perception as a unitary process in which sensation and therefore sensing and finding meaning, occur simultaneously. Crain (1992:59, 79) emphasises that perceptions do not end in awareness, but extend further to interpretation and giving meaning to sense impressions of a particular object or event.

1.5.7 Physical disability

Physical disability may be defined as a physical health problem that requires intensive medical attention or hospitalization. This term includes many different kinds of physical disabilities and illnesses, for example children who are born with multiple physical defects, children who lose their limbs because of accidents, children with visual and auditory disabilities, children with chronic illness such as leukaemia, AIDS, etc. (Ainscow, 1992:11). These learners have medical problems of a physical nature. They require medical services such as hospitalization and possibly surgery. Many physically disabled learners are normally within the average ability range, some are very able while others have quite severe learning difficulties.

According to Saleh (1996:17) physical disabilities may be described by terms such as physical handicaps, orthopaedic disabilities and handicaps, neurological impairments, chronic illness, disabling illness and chronic physical disorders. These disabilities cannot be easily and completely cured, are long-standing and therefore place severe demands on the child's abilities to lead a normal life.

Bender (1993:34) states that there are many forms of physical disability which are classified as handicaps. Children with a loss of limbs causing them to be bed-bound, or who suffer from profound deafness, blindness, spasticism, spina bifida, polio, cerebral palsy and other disabling malfunctions generally need to attend special schools which can cater medically as well as provide educational services. However there are also those children with physical disability who are able to attend ordinary school, but these cases are rare.

In *planning educational programmes for physically disabled learners*, the development of motor skills is an area to which much attention must be paid. Optimum growth must be promoted through an organized series of activities based on normal development. Consultation with an occupational or physical therapist is necessary.

If educators think of the learner in terms of a label or disability we deny that the child possesses individuality and abilities. Physical disability would not be a handicap if buildings were designed with access for learners in a wheelchair. The crippled learner may not be handicapped if architectural barriers are removed. Microprocessor technology is helping to break down barriers imposed by physical limitations, many of which involve the operation of the computer keyboard which will make inclusion in ordinary schools possible.

1.6 AIMS OF THIS STUDY

The aims of this investigation stem from the statement of the problem and can be formulated as follows:

- ▶ To study and report on relevant existing literature pertaining to educators' perceptions of inclusive education.
- ▶ To undertake an empirical investigation into educators' perceptions of inclusive education by means of a self-structured questionnaire.
- ▶ In the light of the findings obtained from the literature and empirical study, to formulate certain recommendations which could serve as guidelines for the successful implementation of inclusive education.

1.7 METHOD OF RESEARCH

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

- ▶ An overview of available, relevant literature in order to base this study on an accountable theoretical base.
- ▶ An empirical survey comprising a self-structured questionnaire to be completed by mainstream and special school educators.
- ▶ An analysis of the responses from educators will be in the form of a response to one of three possible response categories (Agree, Disagree, Uncertain).

- ▶ Unstructured interviews with role players and experts on inclusive education in South Africa.

1.8 FURTHER COURSE OF STUDY

Chapter 2 will deal with the development of inclusive education in South Africa.

The focus in Chapter 3 will be on educators and inclusive education.

The planning of the research will be outlined in Chapter 4.

The analyzed research data will be presented in Chapter 5.

Chapter 6 will comprise a summary and certain recommendations.

1.9 SUMMARY

An exposition of the problem, statement of the problem and the aim of this study were given in this chapter. The method of research was explained and concepts were elucidated. Lastly the further course of this study has been set out.

CHAPTER 2

THE DEVELOPMENT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

CONTENT	PAGE
2.1 INTRODUCTION	17
2.2 PROVISION FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS PRIOR TO 1994	18
2.2.1 Early years	19
2.2.2 Colonial era	19
2.2.3 Apartheid era (1948-1994)	20
2.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW APPROACH BEGINNING IN 1994	22
2.3.1 Discourse	23
(1) Medical discourse	23
(2) Charity discourse	24
(3) Lay discourse	24
(4) Rights discourse	25
2.4 THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON SPECIAL NEEDS IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING (NCSNET) AND THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES (NCESS)	27
2.4.1 Terms of reference	28
2.4.2 Principles	29
2.4.3 Public participation	29
2.4.4 The research process	31
2.4.5 The recommendations	32

CHAPTER 2 (<i>continued</i>)	PAGE	
2.5	IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	33
2.5.1	Pre-conditions of the policy of inclusive education	33
2.5.2	Implementation of the theory of inclusive education in practice	34
(1)	The curriculum	35
(2)	Assessment	36
(3)	Human resources	36
(4)	Peers	37
(5)	Educational programme	37
(6)	Inclusion models	39
2.6	APPLICATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS	41
2.7	SUMMARY	44

CHAPTER 2

THE DEVELOPMENT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The development of Inclusive Education in South Africa is a new concept which educators and policy-makers will have to come to grips with. An inclusive policy stipulates that all learners irrespective of race, gender, class, religion, disability, culture or sexual preference have a right to access a learning environment in a single system of education that values, respects and accommodates diversity (DNE, 1996:1).

The Constitution of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) together with new legislation and policy, for example the White Paper on Education and Training No. 1 of 1995) and the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996) provide a framework for the first steps towards inclusive education in South Africa (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwane, 1997:20; Lazarus, Daniels & Engelbrecht, 1999:46).

According to the Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, the ultimate challenge is to "create the conditions of learning and teaching in all our learning institutions so that all learners can be fully accommodated, can flourish and contribute effectively to the regeneration of our society, our economy and our country" (DNE, 1999:11).

In educational context inclusive education implies that learners with special educational needs who were previously taught in separate schools for specialised education are now allowed to go to regular schools and attend classes with their normal peers. This means that those who were previously excluded from regular schools are now included (Jenkins & Sileo, 1994:84).

The historical context of change in special education, the development of inclusive education and its implementation in practice will be outlined in this chapter.

2.2 PROVISION FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS PRIOR TO 1994

The history of education for learners with 'special needs' and education support services in South Africa, like much of the history of our country, reflects massive deprivation and lack of provision for the majority of the people. The inequities evident in the area of concern addressed by NSNET / NCESS can be directly attributed to these social, economic and political factors which characterised the history of South African society during the years of apartheid (Muthukrishna & Schoeman, 2000:316).

These factors have resulted not only in limited educational opportunities for many learners, but have created inequalities between provision for white and black learners, has developed a highly inefficient and fragmented educational bureaucracy which has separated and marginalised those learners from the mainstream, as well as the provision of highly specialised services to a limited number of learners. This system has been supported by legislation and policy which entrenched these inequalities by institutionalising racial segregation, labelling learners with special needs and separating them from their peers.

The history of educational provision for learners with special needs and support services was also characterised by the involvement of non-governmental structures including churches. The absence of provision and the nature of much of the limited provision that existed led to the development of advocacy groups, alternative practice methods and innovative responses to the limitations of the system (DNE, 1998a:21).

2.2.1 Early years

Prior to the second half of the nineteenth century no provision existed for any type of 'special needs' among learners in South Africa. Disabilities were viewed with superstition especially by the indigenous peoples. According to traditional tribal custom, children who were unusual or different were killed at birth. The reason was that they were regarded as a bad omen or as an indication of the wrath of the ancestors (Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booyens, 1996:8).

2.2.2 Colonial era

The first schools for learners with disabilities in South Africa were church schools set up for deaf and blind learners. In 1865 six Dominican sisters founded the Grimley Institute for the deaf and dumb in Cape Town. The institute was funded entirely by the church. There was no state funding. The institute was divided along racial lines. The Dominican Grimley school for the deaf in Cape Town serviced white learners and the Dominican School for the deaf at Witteborne, non-white learners. Two more churches sponsoring schools for learners with disabilities were opened before the turn of the century. The racial division which characterised this early provision of facilities for learners with disabilities reflect a trend in educational provision for learners with 'special needs' which continued until recently (Ramarumo, 1994:30). From 1900 onwards, the Education Department became involved in specialised education when the Cape Education Department recognised the existence of white church-run schools. Later, legislation which enabled the state to set up 'vocational' and 'special' schools for white learners was passed by central government. The state's racial policy with respect to the provision of education for learners with special needs contributed to growing depreciation among black learners. In the context of this growing inequality the churches and missionaries became more involved in special needs provision for a small number of black learners (Nkabinde & Ngwenya, 1996:34).

While churches and private institutions continued to provide support for black learners, the state became increasingly involved in the provision for white learners. This support included the allocation of funding for setting up special schools, for the building of hostels in those schools and the training of those who would teach them (DNE, 1997b:22).

2.2.3 The apartheid era (1948-1994)

In 1948 the National Party with its "apartheid policy" came to power. The inequities in the provision of education for learners with special needs and education support services became more significant. The apartheid policy has affected every facet of South African life and it had a major impact on the area of special needs and support in education. The setting up of the homelands system and the promulgation of the Bantu Education Act of 1953; the Indian Education Act of 1965, and the Coloured Persons Education Act of 1963 all entrenched racial disparities and contributed to the massive inequalities in educational provision which was highlighted in the National Education Policy Investigation Report (NEPI Report of 1992).

According to Levitz (1996:7) white children who were deaf, hard of hearing, blind, partially sighted, epileptic, cerebral palsied and physically disabled were given free and compulsory education in special government schools and had the benefit of the best the school could provide. Blacks (in terms of Indian, coloured and black) children were not entitled to the same free and progressive education. Until the 1960s, what education was available to them was provided by the Roman Catholic and Dutch Reformed churches.

In the sixties the separate education departments especially created for the different race groups came into being and special education, still based on a medical

disability such as blindness, deafness or mental retardation was administered by the Bantu Special Education Act of 1964, the Coloured Persons Education Act of 1963 and the Indian Education Act of 1965. The focus on *medical* disability led to exclusionary practices in education towards learners with disabilities and those experiencing learning difficulties.

Ramarumo (1994:31) states that the discrepancies and inequalities in the education sector were heightened during this period. It was clear that the education system was fragmented and was based on separation and discrimination, duplication and disproportionate allocation and utilization of professionals and services, difference in *per capita* expenditure and a conspicuous lack of coordination between health, welfare and education.

The development of support in South Africa reflects similar inequities. The precursors of those services was the introduction in the mid-sixties of psychological services of white schools by the apartheid government. The service provided to white children were fairly extensive and included specialised interventions and assistance on a number of levels. Although some support services were set up by the other racially segregated departments those were generally inadequate in meeting the needs which existed and often relied on insufficient resources and provisioning (Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booyens, 1996:9-13).

According to Muthukrishna & Schoeman (2000:316) the inadequacy in provision for African learners, in particular those in rural areas, is extreme. The voices of three rural mothers of children with disabilities from the Qwaqwa district in the Free State Province highlighted this: "In my community there is no such help available ... there is nowhere one can go for help for a child with a disability".

2.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW APPROACH BEGINNING IN 1994

Since 1994 the new South African government has been committed to transforming education policy to address the imbalances and neglect of the past and bring the country in line with international standards of recognition of human rights. A strong voice in these processes has been that of disabled people's organization such as the South African Federal Council on Disability (SAFCD) and parent organization such as the Down's Syndrome South Africa (DSSA) and the Disabled Children's Action Group (DCAC). A strong human rights emphasis evident in educational policy and legislation with respect to disability reflected a move away from a welfare to a rights and developmental approach (Muthukrishna & Schoeman, 2000:317).

The recent adoption of a new constitution for South Africa together with the introduction of new education legislation and policy, forms the basis for providing a framework for recognising diversity and providing quality education for all learners, including those learners excluded by the previous system of (DNE, 1999:2-5).

The new government was committed to restoring the human rights of all marginalized groups (Levitz, 1996:8). The key documents are the White Paper on Education and Training (DNE, 1995c:2), the Organization, Governance and Funding of Schools White Paper - 2 (DNE, 1996:17), the White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy (office of the Deputy President, 1996) and the South African Schools Act of November 1996. All these policy documents stress the principle of education as a basic human right. The principle implies that all learners have the right of equal access to the widest educational opportunities. The White Paper on Education and Training (March 1995:21) states that education

and training are basic human rights. The state has an obligation to protect and advance these rights so that all citizens irrespective of race, class, gender, creed or age have the opportunity to develop their capacities and potential and make their full contribution to society. The emphasis of quality education for all learners suggest that schools have to meet the diverse needs of all learners.

Naicker (1999:12) states that a clear commitment to the principles of redressing past inequalities and creating equal opportunities for all learners has been made through the new legislation and policy on education. These principles have been developed into particular strategies aimed at specifically alleviating poverty, creating access to basic services and achieving a more equitable distribution of existing and future resources. New initiatives with regard to learners with special educational needs have influenced the movement towards inclusive education in South Africa.

2.3.1 Discourse

According to Naicker (1999:13-14), there are four main types of discourse which have constituted the field of specialised education in South Africa:

- ▶ Medical discourse .
- ▶ Charity discourse.
- ▶ Lay discourse.
- ▶ Rights discourse.

(1) Medical discourse

Medical discourse implies improvement that is linked with disability. Such a learner is excluded from mainstream's social and economic life because of a

disability that is thought to be a natural and irremediable characteristic of the person.

The blind, deaf or those labelled by some other disability are excluded from ordinary schools and such exclusion immediately results in the perception of such people as inadequate human beings who are unfit to be included in the mainstream, economic and social life.

(2) Charity discourse

Much of special education in this country has had to do with benevolent humanitarianism. Recipients of special education are viewed as in need of assistance as objects of pity and externally dependent on others. As a result they are seen as underachievers and people who are in need of institutional love. Little is mentioned about social workers, therapists, physiotherapists, nurses, teachers and others who benefit from this type of labelling. Whilst the work of these people are appreciated and respected, the question remains who really benefits from this type of isolation. What charity discourse promotes is that people in authority are always the decision-makers. The voice of the disabled persons are all but erased from the production of knowledge central to disability.

(3) Lay discourse

Lay discourse relates to prejudice, hate, ignorance, fear and even paternalistic tendencies. Much of this has to do with the isolation of people who deviate from normal physical presence.

(4) Rights discourse

Rights discourse has been articulated strongly at both *international and national* level. Internationally several forums were convened to promote the rights discourse. At the end of 1990, the World Conference on Education was held in Jamtien, Thailand, where much emphasis was placed on inclusive education. The driving force for inclusive education was realised in the resolution that became known as the Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education. This statement was endorsed by 92 countries and 25 international organizations. The message was clearly articulated and took the following form (UNESCO, 1994a:9): "We the delegates of the World Conference on Special Needs Education representing ninety-two governments and twenty-five international organizations hereby affirm our commitment to education for all, recognising the necessity and urgency of providing education for children, youth and adults with special education needs within the regular education system, and further hereby endorse the framework of action on Special Needs Education that governments and organization may be guided by the spirit of its provisions and recommendations."

Furthermore, the resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 4 March 1994 with regard to standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities, reads as follows (UNESCO, 1994b:15): "Education in mainstream school presupposes the provision of interpreter and other appropriate support services. Adequate accessibility and support services designed to meet the needs of persons with different disabilities should be provided."

At national level, major changes are taking place as a result of the new democracy in South Africa. The South African Federal Council on Disability (SAFCD) called for the development of a single inclusive education system for South Africa. The central theme of the statement was clear (SAFCD, 1995:1):

"Learners with special educational needs (LSEN) have a right to equal access to education at all levels in a single inclusive education system that is responsive to the diverse needs of all learners, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning as well as different language needs as in the case of deaf learners where their first language is sign language, and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, technical strategies, resource use and partnership with their communities" (Oliver, 1992:11).

At least 28 organization and institutions in South Africa were instrumental in the development of this statement. What emerges is a strong international and national call for inclusive education, a call which is in keeping with the key themes of the South African constitution, the White Paper on Education and Training, the Policy Framework of the majority party in the Government of National Unity and the African National Congress. The SAFCD was not alone in its call for a non-discriminatory type of education. With regard to education, the South African Constitution (RSA, 1996:16) is incisive.

Moreover, the government's draft White Paper on Education (DNE, 1995:15-16) declares the following: "It is essential to increase awareness of the importance of ESS as an education and training system which is committed to equal access, non-discrimination and redress and which needed to target those sections of the learning population which have been most neglected or are most vulnerable."

According to Government Notice No. 16874, NSNET and NCESS had to take into consideration the constitution, all relevant submissions contributed which towards the formulation of the White Paper on Education and submissions made by national and international specialists and organizations such as UNESCO, as well as inputs from the national and provincial government departments with line functions like Education, Welfare, Health and Labour (DNE, 1995:3). It is quite clear that the

suggested documentation that needs to be taken into consideration is very compatible with the rights discourse and the work of the NCSNET and NCESS had to be underpinned by this discourse.

2.4 THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON SPECIAL NEEDS IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING (NCSNET) AND THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES (NCESS)

According to the Green Paper Draft No. 2 (1998:2) the realisation of the need for massive changes in the provision of education for learners with special educational needs and the critical role of appropriate support services was recognised by the new democratic government in its first White Paper on Education and Training published in 1995. As part of the government's commitment to an integrated and holistic approach to all areas of education, the idea for a National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training was included in the document. It was further argued that such commission should run in conjunction with investigations into new imperatives for the ESS. The practical implementation of this commitment was realised when the National Commission for Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee for Education Support Services (NCESS) were appointed by the Minister in October 1996. A joint report on the findings of these two initiatives were presented to the Minister in November 1997 (DNE, 1997c:23).

This section provides information on the work of the NCSNET and NCESS relating to the terms of reference, principles, public participation and the research process.

2.4.1 Terms of Reference

Naicker (1999:16-17) states that according to Government Notice No. 16874 (DNE, 1995:2), the general terms of reference of the NCSNET and NCESS were to advise the Minister of Education on the following matters:

- ▶ The immediate and long-term national and provincial needs and strategies for the education of learners with special needs in education.
- ▶ The support structures required by the Minister of Education, the departments of education or any other relevant authority for the implementation of the strategies.
- ▶ The training of personnel for specialised education and education support services.
- ▶ The implications of the policy of mainstreaming for general education and strategies for marketing the policy to the communities.
- ▶ The organization, governance and funding of schools providing education for learners with special educational needs.
- ▶ An implementation plan to effect the above.
- ▶ Guidelines for the involvement of international agencies and their interaction on provincial and local level.
- ▶ A project plan and time-frame when it is made available.

2.4.2 Principles

The work of the NCSNET and NCESS was underpinned by the following principles (DNE, 1997:4):

- ▶ Amalgamation of the NCSNET and NCESS, to address historical fragmentation in these areas.
- ▶ A commitment to democratic processes in the NCSNET / NCESS in a participating and transparent manner involving all members in decision-making and in all areas of work.
- ▶ A participatory approach to public involvement, attempting to involve relevant stakeholders in the fullest manner possible.
- ▶ A "listening approach" forming the basis of both research and consultation work, the aim being to learn as much as possible from all relevant sources before putting forward recommendations — this listening does not however exclude a critical engagement with contributions made.
- ▶ Finding indigenous responses to South Africa's needs. While international opinion and trends are important to consider in the process of developing policy, the thrust has been on seeking radical problem-solving in an attempt to address local needs.

2.4.3 Public participation

The principle of involving key stakeholders in the investigation was considered important. This is in accordance with the democratic ethos of public policy

development that is emerging in South Africa. The following steps were taken to ensure maximum participation:

- ▶ The National Coordinating Committee (NaCoCo) for the Education of Learners with Special Educational Needs (ELSEN) and the Education Support Service (ESS) Reference Group were set up to assist the NCSNET and NCESS in its work. They played a key role in mediating information flow between the NCSNET / NCESS and key stakeholders.
- ▶ Members of the NCSNET / NCESS formed provincial teams which were responsible for conducting site visits, participating in stakeholders' meetings and facilitating provincial workshops and hearings in all nine provinces.
- ▶ During March the NCSNET / NCESS's first public discussion document outlining their initial proposals for a future vision, principles and strategies, was released to the public. The document was used as a basis for workshops held in all nine provinces during March and April 1997.

On the basis of written submissions, workshop debates and research conducted within the NCSNET / INCESS itself a further public discussion document outlining the NCSNET / NCESS's initial findings and recommendations was completed and released in August 1997 for public debate.

- ▶ The NCSNET / NCESS consultation process culminated in a national conference held from 25-27 September 1997 in Cape Town.
- ▶ Wherever possible the media was used to inform and invite members of the public to participate in the process. This was a limited process owing to

severe resource constraints but it did achieve and facilitate some public awareness and involvement.

- ▶ The final recommendation of this report was given to Minister Bengu on 11 November 1997. There were 219 written submissions (DNE, 1995c:20).

2.4.4 The research process

The research conducted for the NCSNET / NCESS has been structured through joint task groups, focusing on the main aspects of the terms of reference of the NCSNET and NCESS.

The task groups comprised core members (members of the NCSNET / NCESS), commissioned researchers and additional consultants. The primary function of the task groups was to conduct research in all areas relevant to the task groups' focus, utilising literature from within and outside South Africa, and where appropriate and possible, conducting primary research in South Africa. Each task group was then responsible for developing research reports and discussion documents. Submissions received from the public as well as reports on site visits, meetings and workshops were incorporated in the development of these documents. The documents were then used as a basis for developing both the public discussion document released in August and the final report.

Additional research was then conducted in areas insufficiently covered in the early work of the NCSNET / NCESS. Reports on these investigations as well as analyses of submissions received by the Secretariat before and after the development of the public discussion document, were also incorporated in this report.

2.4.5 The recommendations

Inclusive systems of education must be responsive to the diverse needs of the learners. Centres of learning should be developed to be able to respond to the diversity of learners that they contain and to draw in these learners within the communities who are currently excluded (DNE, 1997a:21).

Inclusion therefore speaks of a single system of education and the closure of the dual special ordinary education system. It articulates the need for support services which ensure a range of options for the provision of education. The support services will include educators with specialised competencies, parents, community, homes, community-based transportation NGOs, lay community resources, and dedicated posts of personnel in all sections of the education departments (Naicker, 1999:19). It is suggested that part of a strategic implementation plan of the NCSNET / NCESS, human resource development should take place to ensure that all personnel are retrained over a ten-year period.

All learners should be able to move from one learning phase to another as well as from one site of learning to another.

The complex and diversified conditions in the nine provinces in South Africa pose particular challenges to an inclusive system of education. Differences in terms of fiscal allocation, previously inherited disparate service provision, rural urban disparities and infrastructure present major problems to a uniform system of inclusive education. *Innovative and imaginative steps will have to be taken to ensure that an inclusive system materialises.*

2.5 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Before the policy of inclusion can be implemented, certain basic structures and conditions should be addressed.

2.5.1 Preconditions

- ▶ A bill of human rights protecting the rights of all individuals.
- ▶ Legislation that will allow all children with disabilities, no matter the grade of severity, to join the mainstream of education, should their parents prefer them to be included.
- ▶ The roles of different state departments, other structures and stakeholders in policy-making.
- ▶ A system of assessment / evaluation that allows children to make progress on their own merit. That is, they should be allowed to pass from one class to another by being assessed by individualised criteria and not by writing standardised examinations. This implies curriculum-based assessment.
- ▶ Curricula and subject content that are totally different and meet the needs of each individual child in a very specific manner. Care should be taken not to emphasise individual disabilities or special needs, but to look at the class as a whole in a total context (Ainscow, 1992:3, 18). This implies the teaching of community skills, and grouping children together for projects while taking into consideration the needs of individual children (Ainscow, 1993:8).

- ▶ The use of individualised educational programmes where the needs of each individual are highlighted as special and not only because of a disability.
- ▶ Professionals who have a wider perspective and are adequately trained and willing to be continually retrained. Ainscow (1992:12-13); 1993:10, 18) prefers terms such as "teacher development", "partnership approach" and "reflection and collaboration".
- ▶ People who are willing to become involved and commit themselves to the philosophy of inclusion. Rainforth (1994:252) believes that philosophy is a powerful influence; perhaps the main influence on how individual needs of children can be met most appropriately.
- ▶ A specific socio-economic approach which is not too "materialistic" and that cannot lead to malpractices should form the basis for economic support (Ainscow, 1992:11).

2.5.2 Implementation of the theory of inclusive education practice

When applying inclusion in practice there are no set rules. According to Lloyd (2000:133-151) as long as within the organization of schooling, the curriculum and assessment and testing procedures remain unchallenged, equal educational opportunity will remain a myth.

The aim of education is to prepare all children for future adult life. "Educational systems must redirect their energies and resources to ensure equitable treatment for all learners and to focus on developing skills and competencies that facilitate their successful functioning in society. In essence learners must be confronted with real life problems" (Jenkins & Sileo, 1994:84). The following highlights the

principles of inclusion that forms the cornerstone of different models of implementation:

- ▶ The curriculum.
- ▶ Assessment.
- ▶ Human resources.
- ▶ Peers.
- ▶ Educational programme.
- ▶ Inclusion models.

(1) The curriculum

Subject choice and level of difficulty must be structured in such a way as to make the aim a reality:

- ▶ The learners should be taught chronological age-appropriate skills.
- ▶ These skills must be life-space skills, the so-called survival skills. The policies presented are all concerned with either modifying or adopting current structures and nowhere is there any challenge to provision of lifelong education to meet market ideology rooted in competition and the survival of the fittest.
- ▶ The needs of the child in a specific context, as determined for example by compiling an ecological inventory, should be listed and then prioritised. This forms the basic curriculum.
- ▶ These skills must be functional as well, that is they must be meaningful and not only activities to keep the children busy. The children should be doing exactly what the rest of the class is doing.

- ▶ While these skills form the basic curriculum for older children, pre-school children can also be taught developmental skills (motor, language, social and pre-academic skills).

(2) Assessment

Criterion-based checklists are used for evaluating younger children and curriculum-based checklists for older children and adults. Norm-based assessment is not found to be of much value in helping learners with special educational needs effectively. Realistic targets that are relevant to those learners, should be set.

(3) Human resources

All people involved (professionals, parents, peers, family and community members etc.), should be empowered to help learners who are experiencing barriers to learning and development. This entails the following:

- ▶ Parents should be empowered to be the main agents of change.
- ▶ The community should be fully involved and commit themselves to the cause.
- ▶ Professionals should be able to transcend the boundaries of their own discipline and help in other areas as well. This is called role release. All should be committed to a culture of learning and to develop their own practices. Everybody should learn from each other. Ainscow (1993:10) calls this "a partnership approach to professional development".

Elliot (1996:223) states that teachers have the power either to change or reinforce policy and practice in education. Teachers also need to challenge discrimination and inequality of schooling in South Africa by redressing

social disadvantages. Educators need to reshape educational practice so that schools are moving towards equity and excellence. Teachers should be accountable for learners' success or failure.

(4) Peers

Peers should be part of each group assisting learners who experience barriers to learning and development. Groups therefore allow individuals to reach beyond themselves, to be part of something that some others would have attained on their own and to discover ways of thinking with others to mutual benefit (Ainscow, 1993:8). This functional involvement can be made possible by adhering to a culture of group-work and collaboration. According to Lloyd (2000:144) collaboration is clearly an essential ingredient for the development of genuine participation and for the promotion of critically reflective problem-solving in education. According to Reich (1999:20) individual skills are integrated in the group over time as group members work through various problems - they learn about each others' abilities. They learn how they can help one another perform better, what each can contribute to a particular project and how they can best take advantage of one another's experience.

(5) Educational programme

In order to transform education it is necessary to search for new solutions rather than reproducing and reframing current approaches. To keep each learner in a class occupied in a meaningful way an individualised education programme could be compiled which could meet the needs of each learner. In this way the curriculum content will provide the foundation for the development of quality education for all learners.

Skrtic (1991:233) states that educational equity is the precondition for excellence, growth, knowledge and progress. The move is towards an optimal learning environment which is a barrier-free, flexible, responsive, and inclusive where everyone is entitled to participate fully so as to develop his/her full potential. Care should be taken:

- ▶ not to emphasise disabilities or differences, but to stress the abilities and the needs of all learners; and
- ▶ not to follow a behaviouristic or developmentalistic approach when compiling an individualised education programme, that is not to decide on the instruction of pre-set goals, but on aspects of the curriculum (content) that are relevant for a specific child (Goddard, 1995:266).

Teaching principles and approaches must also be adopted, as the emphasis always is on facilitating learning and not the treatment of a disability. Slavin *et al.* (1989:154-155, 163, 214) report on some successful instructional practices for mainstream situations in American schools, and stress that care should be taken in using these strategies, not to fall into the trap of pre-set goals and the top-down transfer of knowledge, but to use the strategies to expose children to their context and to facilitate the process of learning. These strategies are inclined to represent aspects of the old "empirical analytical or medical-clinical" approach. The basic elements that are mentioned are the importance of, for example, the nature and function of the curriculum, the manner in which the needs of each individual should be accommodated, the role of the teacher and the importance of real life experiences (role of context, an open-ended independence-oriented approach, and the importance of the nature and function for support systems). Inclusive education requires complete restructuring of the provision and resourcing of education to account for and address barriers in learning and development.

According to Gerber (1996:166) equality must accept not only that children may consume different resources to reach different goals but also that they may consume different resources to reach different equally valid goals.

(6) Inclusion models

There are various models or systems that are used to implement inclusion, such as:

- ▶ Self-contained classes: children are in a regular school but in separate classes for certain activities.
- ▶ The pull-out system: children are in the regular class, but extra help is supplied in the form of resource teachers, parents, volunteers etc.
- ▶ Children are in a regular class, with circumstances complying with the guidelines suggested above; the children with disabilities are taught in a regular classroom-setting in groups with the "normal" children (peer tutoring) who are of their own chronological age (peers). The proportion of children with disabilities, including those with severe disabilities to those without disabilities, are the same in the class as in the community. The ratio of children to people assisting them should, however, always be as low as possible to allow for more personal interactional learning from each other.
- ▶ Children could also be taught effectively in an inclusive manner at home or within the local community set-up.

- ▶ Giroux (1990:208) points out that schools need to be viewed as democratic public spheres where students learn the skills and knowledge to live in and fight for a democratic society. As such they will have to be characterised by a pedagogy that demonstrates its commitment to engaging the views and problems that deeply concern students in their everyday lives. Equally important is the need for schools to cultivate a spirit of critique and a respect for human dignity that is capable of linking personal and social issues around the pedagogical project of helping students to become critical active citizens. The above model recognises the role of education as a transforming agent in society with potential to change it rather than as a vehicle transmitting current educational practices. Education should be seen as supporting people to become more fully human so that they have the ability to transform the circumstances in which they live.

- ▶ Farrell (1997:153) indicates that there was a whole variety of ways in which learners could experience inclusion, for example occasional visits of special school learners to a mainstream school, to full-time placement in a mainstream class in the local neighbourhood school. It is quite possible for pupils to be placed in a class in a mainstream school (i.e. integrated) but to spend the whole day completely isolated from their peers. Such children are in fact quite segregated. For learners who are experiencing barriers to learning and development to be fully included they should take a full and active part in the life of the mainstream school, and they should be a valued member of the school community. Special units attached to mainstream school could hardly be described as inclusive.

From the above it seems that inclusion in South Africa at present will be difficult to implement.

2.6 APPLICATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS

If legislation pertaining to inclusive education in South African schools are to be gazetted by the government the following will have to be borne in mind:

- ▶ The community as a whole should come to grips with the true meaning of inclusion, and they must be taught the necessary skills and commit themselves to adhering to it. As Ainscow (1992:2) puts it, "a reconceptualization of the special need task" will be necessary.
- ▶ All people should be allowed to use the facilities which they choose to perform their daily duties in the way they find the most convenient. For this reason an array of choices (different options and models) should be available.
- ▶ No person should be excluded because he/she could not perform in a way that "normal" people can.
- ▶ All learners with special educational needs should, whenever possible, receive their education in an ordinary school and should join fully with their peers in the curriculum and life of the school. However, separate provisions may be necessary on occasions for specific purposes. If these principles are strictly adhered to, the following should be the practical situation at our schools:
 - Special schools will be phased-out and used as resource or for in-service training (teacher development), community learning centres or regular schools (including "normal" children and inclusive approaches).

- Suitably trained teachers or other professionals at our own special schools will be used as resource personnel responsible for supervision and as facilitators in a few neighbourhood schools. A transdisciplinary approach will be used and the principle of role release will be applied. In-service training and ongoing re-training of all teachers will be of paramount importance. These professionals should have a reflective and research approach, "exploring innovative ways of responding to day-to-day concerns in the workplaces (Ainscow, 1993:7). Strategies should be put in place to develop mainstream educators for inclusion. One has to consider what training they have received and how they work with the support staff at school and at district level. The management, role and training of the support team is necessary for effective implementation of inclusion.
- All learners of a specific neighbourhood will go to the same school. Nobody will be excluded, no matter the severity of the disability.
- The children will be grouped in classes according to chronological ages.
- The future of special schools should be considered - what are the attitudes of the staff in special school towards inclusion, and how will special school change and adapt as education systems become more inclusive?
- With regard to factors affecting parental attitudes towards inclusion, why do some parents prefer inclusion and others prefer segregation?

- Views of learners with special needs: what do learners think of their provision? Did they have a choice? Are they aware of alternatives? What do they understand by the notions of inclusion and exclusion?

- The ratio of children to a teacher will be such as to enable teachers to give proper attention to the needs of each child. Assistants could be used but according to Ainscow (1992:10) this may have positive or negative results: "... the presence of additional adults in a mainstream classroom to provide support for individual pupils can also limit opportunities. Too often the support teacher or classroom assistant becomes a barrier to integration, standing between a particular child and the rest of the class, rather than acting as a facilitator of learning opportunities. If, however, additional adults are seen as a means of increasing the flexibility of the teaching that is provided for all pupils, it is likely that educational difficulties will be reduced". For this reason peer tutoring could be a viable option.

- The community as a whole will have to be involved and committed to the cause because success will depend on a total mind-switch.

- Individual needs of all children will have to be addressed in a very specific manner.

- The curriculum will have to be totally readapted, reflecting contextual aspects as well as the input from different disciplines and sectors of life (Lazarus & Donald, 1995:51).

- Assessment and evaluation approaches will have to be changed.
- Facilities will have to be suitably adapted to be accessible to all and teaching aids will have to be functional and available for all.
- Programmes and facilities will have to be constantly monitored and assessed according to certain criteria, for example the PQI (Program Quality Indicators) suggested by Meyer *et al.* (1994:21-22).
- Financial issues will have to be addressed carefully so as to be cost-effective (Donald, 1995:51) and not to fall prey to all sorts of malpractices (Ainscow, 1992:11).

The development of inclusive education remain one of the most demanding challenges facing those involved in striving to improve the quality of education for all learners, including those learners with special needs.

2.7 SUMMARY

Inclusion has developed out of the reconstruction of notions of disability, educational policy, legislation and principles of social justice and human rights. Inclusive education is not simply a reform of special education but it accommodates the disabled as full partners in normal life and in so doing, helps to overcome the effects of exclusion. It empowers them to become worthy and valued members of society and thus afford them the right to be treated as such.

The actual implementation of inclusive education will not be easy but the secret of success lies with parents, professionals and the community, who have to apply the principles of inclusive education.

Changing over to an inclusive education system has to be done with great responsibility, otherwise inclusive education in South Africa will be doomed from the beginning.

Successful inclusive education requires adequate resources and properly trained educators. Classroom models should be developed and implemented at school level. A continuum of services should be maintained. The service model should be evaluated continuously and ongoing professional development should be provided at school and at district level.

Inclusive education is not a miracle solution but any approach pertaining to the care and education of learners who are experiencing barriers to learning and development will work if people believe in it and have the vision and courage to apply it.

It is therefore the responsibility of all South Africans to create the necessary conditions for providing quality education for all. If this is not done there is a real danger that education in the twenty-first century will simply continue to reproduce and extend the current inadequacies and problems of the twentieth century and will fail to provide quality education for all.

The next chapter will focus on educators and inclusive education.

CHAPTER 3

EDUCATORS AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

CONTENT	PAGE
3.1 INTRODUCTION	46
3.2 NEEDS OF EDUCATORS	47
3.2.1 Emotional needs	47
3.2.2 Need for knowledge	48
3.2.3 The need for support	50
3.3 EDUCATORS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	54
3.3.1 Change	57
3.3.2 Learners' abilities	59
3.3.3 Learners' disabilities	60
3.3.4 Inclusive education	62
3.3.5 Role of educators	65
3.4 STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	65
3.4.1 General strategies	66
3.4.2 Working as a team	68
3.4.3 Instructional strategies	69
3.4.4 Peer power	71
3.5 CREATING A CARING SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM COMMUNITY FOR ALL LEARNERS	73

CHAPTER 3 (<i>continued</i>)		PAGE
3.5.1	The classroom	74
3.5.2	Administrators' role	77
3.6	SUMMARY	79

CHAPTER 3

EDUCATORS AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The new policy in specialised education implies that learners with disabilities now have a right to normal school and normal home circumstances where possible, and respect, not pity from others and the right to lead a normal life. There has been a shift from isolating these learners in special schools or classes to the policy of inclusive education in ordinary schools where the classroom environment is recognised to meet the needs of all learners. In this way ordinary schools will not only mirror society but will create conditions in the classroom that recognise the diverse needs of all its members. This is in keeping with the policy of the new government to include people with disabilities in the governance and in the normal functioning of the country, not tucked away in towns and institutions (Pretorius & Lemmer, 1998:48).

Educators will have to acquire a new set of values along with new methods of teaching. Where it is impossible at this stage to allow a learner to attend a regular school, appropriate education and training will be provided in special facilities, but those will equal in value and quality the education received in ordinary schools.

According to Clarke (1999:8-9) the education system is not yet prepared for integrated education. The schools are not physically built to be accessible to disabled learners and the educators are not prepared for them. At present class sizes of 40 learners to one teacher in an ordinary primary school and 35:1 for a secondary school, do not make it possible for a learner with disability to receive the kind of attention required for quality inclusive education.

Pretorius and Lemmer (1998:41) state that the realities of the present situation in many schools and the legacy of the previous inequitable provision of educational facilities to certain population groups, make it impossible to mainstream all learners with disabilities at this stage. Therefore, in South Africa at least, inclusive education is still a dream that we must strive for. This chapter outlines the attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, needs and strategies of educators for the implementation of inclusion as well as creating a caring school and classroom environment.

3.2 NEEDS OF EDUCATORS

Hall and Engelbrecht (1999:230) identify the needs of educators as follows: emotional needs, the need for knowledge, and skills and the need for support. The emotional needs of the educator are the most important and have to be addressed before knowledge and skills are addressed on a cognitive level (Schechtman & Orr, 1996:46). Sufficient emotional and cognitive support of educators and learners in the mainstream school will determine the effectiveness of inclusion.

3.2.1 Emotional needs

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

- ▶ Opportunities for educators both in mainstream and special schools to deal with feelings of anxiety, ignorance, confusion, scepticism, concern for personal loss of autonomy, security and job satisfaction, as well as feeling of discomfort and fear of failure.

- ▶ Acknowledging different skills and expertise of each educator.
- ▶ Participation in the process of transformation through a shared vision and mission.

3.2.2 Need for knowledge, skills and competencies

According to Nell (1996:39-40) appropriate knowledge skills and competencies are vitally important if inclusive education is to be successfully implemented. This knowledge includes *inter alia*, the following:

- ▶ In-depth knowledge of the philosophy of inclusion and the need for educators to develop the commitment of caring required to accommodate LSEN, as much as possible in regular classes, should be developed during pre-service and in-service training. Teachers in mainstream schools will have to develop an inclusion mentality which implies that they will have to accept that they have a duty to accommodate all learners in their classes and not to want to exclude those with disabilities.
- ▶ Educators will have to be adequately prepared to assess special needs, to adapt curriculum content to the needs of the learners in the classrooms, to utilize special orthodidactic devices and instructional aids as well as medical and para-medical assistive devices required by some of the LSEN.
- ▶ Teaching strategies based on the individual's total level of functioning. According to Levitz (1996:9), the aims of teacher education is to teach effectively in order to facilitate learning. Universities and training colleges need to present courses for diplomas in special education. They need to upgrade the inadequately trained educators. This in-service training should

preferably be done by distance education. The National Council on Teacher Education (NCTE) has recently drawn up a system of accreditation and transferability of credits, but institutions of learning throughout the country should become actively involved in this program.

- ▶ Training on collaboration and teamwork. Working as a team is a key to success. For some educators, especially those who feel that they lack the necessary training to teach learners with disabilities or who may be experiencing integration for the first time, the concept is frightening and intimidating. Accepting the responsibility to educate a learner who may present challenges is less intimidating when the educator has the guarantee that he or she will be able to tap the expertise and interest of other members of the team, will be able to call upon others to make decisions and to problem-solve, and will have the support necessary in difficult times. With proper support from the team members, and the classroom educator, the learner with disability as well as other learners in the classroom will benefit (Eaton, 1996:3).

- ▶ Information and support to bring about a new education paradigm.

- ▶ Information pertaining to practical considerations in distributing certain resources.

- ▶ Insight into the financial support to schools.

There must be a vision, mission and plan of action for the implementation of inclusive education. Collaborative management structures should be established through multidisciplinary and multi-sectoral councils and committees. Parents, educators, learners, relevant non-government organizations, labour organization

and the private sector will participate and benefit from these resources. In this way education of all people with special needs will become an integral part of the RDP, because it will eradicate the legacy of apartheid and allow disabled people their rightful place in society (Levitz, 1996:10).

3.2.3 The need for support

The educator's need for support is related to the need to share information, experiences and problems with others in similar circumstances.

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

Consultation and collaborative functions fall into the domain of communication and collaborative planning and include exchanging learners' progress information, sharing diagnostic information, sharing responsibility for grading, participating in collaborative long and short-term educational planning and meeting with parents (Dettmer, Dyck & Thurston, 1996:21; Idol & West, 1987:485). A common base of learner-related information for educators who are jointly responsible for learners experiencing barriers to learning, provides a platform for other collaborative roles, such as problem-solving (Pugach & Johnston, 1995:123).

Through the process of problem-solving ordinary and special school educators use their collective expertise in an equal status relationship (Rainforth, York & McDonald, 1992 in Bradley *et al.*, 1997:87). This partnership allows for the proposal of alternative teaching strategies or supplementary instructional material by special school educators in consultation with the ordinary school educator. Collaborative problem-solving may also entail the periodic observation of learners who are experiencing barriers to learning in ordinary classes, in order to identify areas of difficulty or monitor the success of intervention strategies (Bradley *et al.*, 1997:85).

The collaborative teamwork approach will also include aspects of training and support in consultation with various role-players. Special schools should be available for training and support of educators, psychologists and other support personnel. Training should include visits to special schools, a rotation of personnel or an exchange scheme, possible internship and practical experience, lectures, notes and information, participation in multi-disciplinary teams and research opportunities. Information could be made available on the Internet or by having a telephonic 'helpline' available for questions.

The collaborative roles of special and ordinary school educators include actively planning for skills transfer across settings, team teaching, directing small group instruction in ordinary schools, special education settings and training peer tutors (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997:138; Friend & Cook, 1996:239; Phillips & McCullough, 1990:301). A network between schools could assist in accumulating valuable knowledge and expertise as well as providing support.

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

- ▶ Early identification of barriers to learning and development as well as learning support programs.
- ▶ Study methods, life-skills, social skills and behaviour modification programs are other valuable skills and strategies that need to be shared to improve learners' self-esteem.
- ▶ Assessment of academic progress of both learners at risk and ordinary school learners.
- ▶ Language programs for literacy and for second language users.
- ▶ Sign language and interpreters.
- ▶ Preparation and support of learners for return to ordinary school and classes.
- ▶ Follow-up work after placement in ordinary schools.
- ▶ Special school staff need to link-up with various members of the community in order to provide information and support. Teacher support teams at ordinary schools, consisting of medical doctors, social workers, paramedics, special teachers and ordinary school educators are structures that can accommodate effective collaboration with special school personnel (DNE, 1997c:14-17).
- ▶ Valuable information on adaptation of existing buildings, buses and infrastructure for learners with special educational needs can also be obtained through collaboration and consultation.

- ▶ It is important for educators and learners to be supported sufficiently during the transformation of education for learners who are experiencing barriers to learning. Support programs have to be implemented to address the emotional and cognitive needs of all involved in education.

- ▶ Schools for specialised education should not be seen as a separate entity but should act as resource units. It would therefore be necessary for each region or district to have such school or unit to provide *inter alia*:
 - Planning and coordination for specialised education where applicable.

 - Support for ordinary school educators in the development of the curriculum to ensure that the diverse needs of the learners in the ordinary schools are addressed.

 - In-service training for professionals, para-professionals, etc.

 - Guidance and counselling for parents and care-givers.

 - Assessment of barriers to learning.

 - Specialised support, i.e. therapists and psychologists.

 - Local public awareness and education.

 - Professional development as part of the normal work of all educators and support personnel on their new roles and expectations, would be appropriate support, advice and training, which should also be provided for administrators, parents and other stakeholders.

- Create participation of tertiary institutions in education practice through involvement in classroom research, support to education and learners as well as personnel development.
- Community involvement to improve attitudes towards diversity and preconceived ideas about people with disabilities.
- Improved job opportunities and participation in society for all, irrespective of barriers to learning, will make inclusive education a reality in South Africa.

3.3 EDUCATORS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

International research on educators' attitudes towards learners with special educational needs suggests that educators in mainstream classrooms generally express negative attitudes to mainstreaming efforts (Stephens & Brown, 1980; Gans, 1987; Coats, 1989; Rodden-Nord, Shinn & Good III, 1992; Mintler, 1995; Davies & Green, 1998:18.2).

It is generally assumed that educators who hold negative attitudes would reject learners with special educational needs if mainstreaming were to take place (Siegel, 1992:19). This would impede the inclusion process and defeat its purpose. Baker and Gottlieb (1980:6) clearly state that "... teacher attitudes are expected to influence the extent to which handicapped learners become not only physically included but integral members of regular classes, benefitting academically, socially and emotionally from the experience.

According to Davies and Green (1998:18(2)), in research exploring educators' attitudes towards actual mainstreamed learners with difficulties, a prominent

variable can be identified which has a positive influence. In the studies conducted by Thomas (1988), Siegel (1992) and Stole (1992) it was found that positive attitudes were significantly correlated with educators' success with handicapped learners. Attitudes towards inclusion may be closely tied to educators' feelings of competency and effectiveness in educating those learners with disabilities. Lack of knowledge and experience of exceptional learners and mainstreaming also affect classroom educators' attitudes and recommendations about placements (Hoover, 1984; Hutchinson & Hemingway, 1984).

According to Farrell (1997:158) educators are generally positive about the idea of inclusion, particularly for learners with physical and sensory difficulties and rather less for learners with emotional and behavioural problems. However, when faced with the prospect of having a learner with disabilities in their class, attitudes become less positive. Classroom educators feel negative of experiencing high level of stress when a learner with special needs is in their class. Provided that the inclusion process is carefully managed, ordinary school educators will gradually change their attitudes from being sceptical and detached to that of wishing to collaborate or work as part of a team.

According to Bank (1997:35), Gottlieb *et al.* (1994) reported that 65 percent of the educators who referred learners out of the classroom to special education said they did not know what resources would enable them to teach these learners within their classrooms, while 16 percent believed they could be trained with the skills to enable them to teach such learners. Only 10 percent of the ordinary school educators could even describe a curricular adaptation they might make to accommodate these learners. According to Bank (1989:252) educators who have taken courses in special education were more willing to include handicapped learners into their classroom than educators who had not taken such courses. Educators who believed that learners with special educational needs can become

useful members of society were more willing to integrate them than were educators who did not share this belief.

Bank (1989:266) states that classroom educators are in a difficult position regarding learners who are handicapped. Educators are being asked to individualise instruction to teach basic skills and to model attitudes of acceptance. Parents, administrators and learners should be aware that most teachers are trying to meet the needs of all of their learners including those with handicaps. There are many caring, capable teachers who are meeting the needs of learners with special educational needs. One positive outcome of inclusive education has been the opportunity for educators and other professionals to work together. Through understanding the unique problems of each teaching situation, classroom educators and specialists have gained empathy and respect for each other.

Bender (1993:61) states that learners with special educational needs were perceived by educators as less cooperative, less attentive, less able to organize themselves, less able to cope with new situations, less socially acceptable to others, less accepting of responsibility and less tactful than their normally achieving peers.

Educators perceive these learners as showing more problem behaviours, engaging in appropriate social skill less often, showing less task initiative and being more distractible and more introverted than non-disabled learners. Educators perceive learners with learning disabilities as less desirable to have in the classroom.

Educators rate learners with learning disabilities as less task oriented and more reactive than their non-disabled peers. Learners with learning disabilities tend to be held in low esteem by teachers. This can lead to feelings of rejection and social alienation. Such feeling may ultimately cause the learner to drop-out of school.

A supportive and caring attitude towards inclusion of learners with special educational needs by ordinary teachers will play a major role in meeting the challenges of inclusive education in South Africa. Beklen and Zollers (1986:582) point out that '... good teachers, even though restricted by too few resources and too many demands, find ways to provide more instruction and to provide it in more adaptive ways.

3.3.1 Change

According to Lomofsky, Roberts and Mvambi (1999:70) educators in South African schools are currently being expected to make major changes in the way they understand teaching and learning. The restructuring of education in South Africa presents an ideal opportunity to introduce a new approach to the education of children with special educational needs. The emphasis on rights in the Constitution of the RSA, 1993 (Act No. 200 of 1993) makes it imperative that the rights of these learners be recognised. Several documents exist recommending policies which stress integration such as the "progressive mainstreaming" model of Archer, Viljoen, Hanekom and Engelbrecht (1994), the Western Cape Education Department Strategic Movement Task Team's Specialist Support Services Report (1994), and the discussion document, 'A model for a Psycho'. The Educational Auxiliary Service and Specialised Education for the Free State Province (1994) and the Southern African Association for Learning and Educational Difficulties (SAALED), who published papers on learners with special educational needs (PACSEN), as well as Down's Syndrome Association, have all made their voices heard through organization such as the South African National Council on Disability and by submissions to the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET). Most recently the public discussion document on the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee for Education Support Services (DNE,

1997:41), expresses the vision of the "Development of all centres of learning as 'special' and 'inclusive' with only a small percentage of learners being in specialised contexts (Davies & Green, 1998:18.2).

Curriculum 2005 with its outcomes-based approach makes new demands on educators and the experience is stressful. Educators need time and the psychological space to re-examine their general understanding of teaching and learning. They may need support in order to be able to focus on the positive rather than the negative aspects of change.

Davies and Green (1998:18.2) point out that until schools develop an understanding of why change is necessary, most educators will still perceive learners with special needs as not their problem. It appears, however, that educators are more accepting of special needs children if they are in contact with a special class educator who favours integration (Thomas, 1998), if they actively participate in decision making and if the mainstream is modified (Myles & Simpson, 1992). The most frequently suggested modifications were support services availability, special education consultations and decreased class sizes.

If inclusive education, or even the milder approach of mainstreaming, is to be successful in South Africa, the committed support of the education system as a whole is an essential component.

As Fullan (1993:23) observes: "If there is one cardinal rule of change in the human condition, it is that you cannot make people change...". South African teachers' current responses to the notions of both mainstreaming and inclusive education have to be taken into account. Janney, Snell, Beers and Raynes (1995:438) remark resistance is natural and that the resistance felt by those who will implement a proposed change is exacerbated when the central role they must play in the change is not acknowledged.

3.3.2 Learners' abilities

Every learner has the potential for learning. The teaching and learning environment should provide the opportunity for learning to take place through several modalities and develop a curriculum that caters for a diversity of intelligences.

Gardiner (Coleman, 1996:37) says cultivating a variety of natural abilities will help learners "to identify their natural competencies and gifts ...". Both special and general educators face major challenges in providing relevant, individualised education to learners with disabilities from culturally diverse backgrounds. Many learners with disabilities experience discrimination or experience inadequate educational programs because their racial, ethnic, social class or gender is different from the majority. Learners from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are often under- or over-represented in educational programs for exceptional children (Bank, 1997:324).

Good teachers must be responsive to the changes in individual learners' performances. The effective educator needs as many different ways of teaching as there are learners in the classroom and if this is coupled with a respectable attitude towards learners' abilities, it will increase the motivation and achievements of most learners.

As with all learners the educator of culturally diverse learners must be flexible in teaching style, establish a positive climate for learning and use a variety of approaches to meet individual needs.

Bank (1997:350) points out that individual learning differences demand preparation of a new generation of educators with a repertoire of values and strategies that match the demands of inclusion.

Today most of the South African educators are probably not confident in their abilities to manage and accommodate the diverse range of learners' characteristics in their classroom. According to Levitz (1996:9), the more pressing concern at the moment is the upgrading of inadequately trained educators.

Wade and Moore (1992:12) state that where teaching is merely perceived as transmission of knowledge and there is no understanding of the kinds of classroom interaction that facilitate collaboration and participation in learning, there will be problems for all learners and not just those with special educational needs. The movement towards inclusive education has implications for all educators to help all learners best obtain what they need.

3.3.3 Learner disabilities

Lomofsky, Roberts and Mvambi (1999:71) point out that educators are human beings with individual attitudes to differences and disability, formed in a context of prevailing social attitudes. Many may critically resist the notion of inclusive education. International studies suggest that educators with little experience of people with disabilities are likely to have negative attitudes to inclusive education and this would impede the integration process (Coats, 1989; Mittler, 1995). It has been found, however, that experience tends to change their attitudes (Hoover, 1984; Hutchinson & Hemingway, 1984). In this respect, the fact that many educators in South Africa work with learners who have been "mainstreamed by default" (Donald, 1998). Provision for special educational needs in South Africa has been unequal across racial groups. Where there was provision it was separated from the ordinary school. In this respect mainstreaming happened "by default" (Donald, 1998).

Davies and Green (1998:100) found that a number of South African educators in mainstream classrooms were positively disposed towards inclusive education. Educators in mainstream classrooms will be, and in many cases already are,

accommodating learners with a diverse range of needs. They work with learners of different ages and stages of development, cultural and linguistic diversity and special needs.

Oliver (1992:11) identifies the need to propose a new view of education for children identified as having special educational needs which recognise disability as an equal opportunity. He sees the need for disabled people to free themselves from the chains of oppression. According to Young (1990:140) groups of different circumstances or forms of life should be able to participate together in public institutions without shedding their distinct identities or suffering disadvantages because of them. The goal is not to give special compensation to the disabled until they achieve equality, but rather to denormalize the way institutions formulate their rules by revealing the plural circumstances and needs that exist or ought to exist within them.

Bank (1989:252) states that an attitude of openness helps educators to recognise that learners who are handicapped are useful members of society. The attitude of acceptance that pervades multicultural education is the same attitude that views all people as worthy citizens. Most learners who are included into regular classrooms have mild handicaps. They are more like other learners than they are different from them.

According to Clarke (1999:8) the debate about schooling for the disabled learners, should take into account the experience of educators such as Mr David Smythe, the vice-principal of the Brown's School for the disabled, in Durban. Mr Smythe says that the social cost of educating disabled children separately from non-disabled children are high both to the children concerned and to society at large, and that the South African education system is not yet prepared for inclusive education.

3.3.4 Inclusive education

Inclusive education may be defined as the common schooling and education of handicapped and non-handicapped learners in ordinary classes of the public school system, with adequate support for the learners with special educational needs (cf. 1.5.3). Real inclusion is characterised by common instruction of all learners. Inclusive education, however, is not realised by a loose cooperation between ordinary and special schools. Cooperation between ordinary and special schools is not an essential step towards real inclusion in the true sense of the word, because it is not real reform of the school system. It only grants a kind of hospitality to the handicapped learners without really changing the ordinary school system towards an inclusive model. According to Gerard Bless (e-mail: Gerard.Bless@unifr.ch), inclusive education depends on two conditions:

- ▶ Inclusion must not cause any further expense. Financial resources set a limit to inclusion.

- ▶ Inclusion must not disturb the regular schooling in the classroom. As long as the classroom institution can be realised in its ordinary way inclusion is fine. As soon as educators have to individualise their lessons beyond a certain degree, inclusion does not have a chance. For example, hardly any learners with hearing impairments and additional more severe learning difficulties can be found in ordinary classes because including these learners would be asking for a high degree of differentiation and individualization.

To support inclusive education educators have to be sensitive not only to the particular needs of individual learners but also to their own attitudes and feelings. Educators may need training to identify and address special educational needs.

Educators need to develop a critical understanding of common stereotypes and prejudices related to disability and reflect on how these have influenced their own attitudes. Lomofsky, Roberts and Mvambi (1997:71) state that clarity about their own strengths, vulnerabilities and needs is a necessary step in preparing educators for inclusive education. Only when this has been achieved are they in a position to work as change agents who can influence the attitudes of the school community (staff, parents and other learners) towards learners with disabilities. Inclusive education requires that these learners are not simply thought of with pity but viewed more positively, in terms of their abilities rather than their disabilities. Inclusion works when teachers believe that all children can learn.

Both special education and regular classroom educators must buy into the philosophy that if material is presented appropriately, all learners can learn - it may have to be at their own rate, but they can still learn. Educators must also be risk-takers. They must be willing to risk the way they have always done things. They must be willing to look at the same situation in a different way and even risk failure in order to grow, and to look at obstacles as opportunities. They must be willing to look at different methods of delivery, different management systems, different room arrangements. Inclusive education works when teachers become learners.

Good inclusion teachers are open to suggestions but are even more open to criticism. They do not take criticism of the program personally. They learn instead to use negative comments as opportunities to explain what they are doing and why. They use criticism to probe the minds of the critics and to find ways they can change and deliver services in a more efficient manner.

Inclusive education works when all educators believe and practise the idea that they will not sacrifice the many for the few. In other words, they will not provide

for the special needs of some learners without looking at how that affects all learners in the classroom.

The educators work together to make the learning time effective for all learners even when that means that the special education educator provides services to learners who are not identified as part of the program, because the need exists. Educators' sense of ownership of new initiatives is crucial for inclusive education.

Inclusive education does not imply a certain number of special needs learners in a classroom with a certain number of regular learners. It does not mean equal amounts of time split between two classes, without regard to the specific needs of each learner. It means looking at the whole picture, looking at the need of individual learners and then assigning learners to the classroom based on the needs of the class, looking at the teacher and learning styles to make the best matches, and looking at time in relation to need. Inclusive education works when educators are able to take the 'me' out of the formula and look at the needs of the learners first (inclusion@rushservice.com.2000).

If inclusive education is to be successful in South Africa, the committed support of the education system as a whole is an essential component. Davies and Green (1998:98) point out that political decisions to adopt certain educational values and a climate in the teaching profession which supports them, are important elements of inclusive education. There has been little or no research to date in South Africa which has explored the mainstream educators' perspectives with regard to learners with special educational needs. However, in a study involving specialised schools in the KwaZulu-Natal area, Rocher (1993) found that despite the many problems, there was incredible dedication and optimism among the principals and teachers (Davies & Green, 1998:82).

3.3.5 Role of educators

Educators have a powerful effect on all learners in school. It is important therefore that the educator's interaction with learners who are experiencing barriers to learning and development should be one of acceptance, respect and value. This implies an acceptance of learners' difficulties, to respect them for what they are able to achieve and to value them as individuals working alongside other individuals. If the role model is positive then learners in the class will take on the attitude of the educator. If the inclusive education is to be successful in South Africa, educators will need active encouragement and commitment to make the difference. Special education educators need to give their expertise, support and encouragement to educators in ordinary schools.

Wade and Moore (1992:53) state that once a child starts to integrate into ordinary school there needs to be collaboration between members of staff in special classes or school, and those in ordinary schools, to ensure that successful interaction takes place. Educators must be able to empathise with learners with disabilities.

According to Elliot (1996:223) teachers need to understand the challenge of inclusion and recognise that they have the responsibility to act as agents of change in education and in society. The educator is ultimately responsible for the education of all its learners.

3.4 STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Each child has a right to belong and to share normal experiences with a family, neighbours and peers. Each child has a right to a quality education in his or her neighbourhood school.

All children can learn and develop. Working side-by-side with peers with diverse skills and abilities help all children to learn and develop the skills necessary to live and work in the real world. Each child has a vital contribution to make to society.

Schools should strive to be communities that value diversity. In order to achieve this especially with learners who may experience some barriers to learning, the following strategies are essential (Eaton, 1996:2-7):

- ▶ General strategies.
- ▶ Working as a team.
- ▶ Instructional strategies.
- ▶ Peer power.

3.4.1 General strategies

- ▶ The teacher serves as a model of how to interact with the learner who has a disability:
 - Treat the learner with the dignity and respect that all learners are entitled to.
 - Speak to the learner directly, never around the learner in his or her presence.
 - When speaking about persons with disabilities, make reference to the person first, and then the disability if it is necessary to mention the disability at all.
 - Use words with dignity.

- ▶ Draw attention to the learner's achievements and strengths.
- ▶ Avoid a congregation of learners with disabilities in the class or in the school.
- ▶ Teach about differences as part of the regular curriculum.
- ▶ When teaching about disabilities, speak about it matter-of-factly. Use proper terminology. If possible invite experts into the classroom to speak, like parents of learners with disabilities who are also experts.
- ▶ Ensure as far as possible, that expectations and routines are the same for all learners.
- ▶ Where individualization is necessary, attempt to have it occur when other learners are receiving individual instruction.
- ▶ Structure social interaction in the classroom through planned activities.
- ▶ Promote social interaction outside the classroom.
- ▶ Integrate everyone: the special education educator and any support staff who may be in the classroom should work with all learners, not just the learner with the disability.
- ▶ Ensure frequent communication between the school and the home.
- ▶ Do things with, rather than for, the learner when he or she needs assistance.

- ▶ Foster and encourage independence.
- ▶ Encourage peers rather than an adult to assist the learner.
- ▶ Where necessary, have an affirmative behaviour plan in place.
- ▶ Be committed to integration and inclusive practices.

3.4.2 Working as a team

The educator should not be expected to integrate a learner with a disability into the regular classroom on his own. Working as a team is a key to success. For some educators, especially those who feel that they lack the necessary training to teach learners with disabilities or who may be experiencing integration for the first time, the concept is *frightening and intimidating*.

Accepting the responsibility to educate a learner who may present challenges is less intimidating when the educator has the guarantee that he or she will be able to tap the expertise and interests of the other members of the team; will be able to call upon others to make decisions and to problem-solve, and will have the necessary support in difficult times. With the proper support from the team members, the classroom educator, the learner with the disability as well as the other learners in the classroom will benefit.

The functioning of the team will be specific. However, some members of the team may be more active in the day-to-day activities than others. The core team member will definitely be the classroom educator, while other members may be called in when necessary. The role of the team is to support each member, to develop the individual education program for the learner and to implement and solve problems which may arise.

Porter (1996:5) refers to these teams as teacher support teams. This team meets to help classroom educators with a specific academic or behavioural problem. The special education educator and the classroom educator decide on three or four colleagues to invite to the meeting. The team members are then given a printed note describing the learner, the situation and interventions already attempted. The meeting is then set, and will last not longer than 30 minutes. This time limit must be adhered to, as teachers are busy and may not want to be part of the team if the meeting drags on.

3.4.3 Instructional strategies

It is important to note that just because a learner may be labelled as disabled, it does not mean that he or she cannot participate in the planned classroom activities as the other learners are expected to. The needs and the skills of the learner must be analyzed and from there it is determined if adaptations are required. The learner may participate in the same activity in the same way as his or her peers, with some adaptation, or in an alternative activity. Recent research (Eaton, (1996:5) has suggested that, although not essential to successful integration, a shift away from teacher directed organization and delivery of lessons to education facilitated, child-centred approaches are more desirable. Instructional strategies include:

- ▶ Data-based or outcomes-based instructional models: such as mastery learning and computer assisted instruction, as well as curriculum-based assessment models. The goals and objectives set are based on individual needs and ability.

- ▶ Cooperative group learning: Heterogeneous groups whose members are interdependent upon one another in order to achieve the group learning

goal. This strategy allows educators to establish individual goals for learners or a variety of skills and abilities while the group works to achieve a common goal.

- ▶ Whole language: This approach accepts the diverse communicative skills and abilities of learners and allows each learner to work at his or her own level.
- ▶ Activity-based learning: There exists a variety of child-centred experiential learning techniques that readily lend themselves to the diverse abilities of learners in the regular classroom. Individualized learning objectives are easily embedded into the general concept of the lessons.
- ▶ Skill matrix: Rather than a curricular subject, the routine of the classroom is an important tool that can be used in the programming of learners with disabilities. The benefit here is that natural cues rather than contrived cues exist and the learning occurs in the context in which the skill is to be practised. This strategy is often used for social and behavioural goals, but may also be used for academic learning.
- ▶ Differentiated instruction: also known as multi-level instruction. This strategy allows the inclusion of all learners in the learning activity while using the same lesson, materials and program.
- ▶ Peer tutoring, partner learning or peer support: The teacher utilizes "peer power" to increase the individualization of the program. These systems may be formal or informal in the use of peers to assist each other with their learning.

3.4.4 Peer power

The role of peers in the successful implementation of inclusion should not be underestimated. Peers are a readily available, but frequently untapped, resource in the classroom. It is important to include peers every step of the way: preplanning, planning and implementation. The involvement of peers needs to be an ongoing, open process of communication, the valuing of diversity, fostering of respect, fostering of proximity and modelling and establishing of behavioural expectations, all of which contribute to positive peer interactions.

▶ Pre-planning

- Peers should be told in advance that there will be a new member to their class.
- Educating peers about the specific nature of their new classmate's disability is important.
- Teach peers how to interact, to respect, to communicate and to behave towards a classmate with a disability.
- Educate peers with regard to disabilities in general.
- Introduce the new classmate to a circle of friends.

▶ Planning

- Include peers on the integration team.
- Include peers in a MAPS session.

▶ Implementation

- Informally challenge peers to make adaptations where necessary.
- Include peers on the problem-solving team.

▶ Establish a peer support system

A peer support system may consist of:

- Out of class buddies.
 - Circles of friends.
 - Peers in instructional aspects. This collaborative learning approach may either be through formal or informal means.
- ▶ Peer modelling - use peers to help teach specific social skills, etc.
- ▶ Peer tutors - formal program where peers teach each other.
- ▶ Paired learning - learners work in pairs. Each may be working on the same assignment or on different assignments.
- ▶ Peer support - learners are there to assist each other with questions, assignments, moral support, etc.

▶ Peer tutors

Benefits have been found to be:

- improved communication skills for both tutee and tutor.
- improved organizational skills for the tutor.
- improved learning for both.
- for the tutee there is more individual attention, and the language used is generally regarded as "cool".
- for the tutor the understanding of the concept is raised to higher levels, rather than superficial levels.
- improved self-esteem for both.
- providing a positive role model for the tutee.
- creating opportunities for enrichment.
- creating the opportunity to wean learners from the educational assistant.

3.5 CREATING A CARING SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM COMMUNITY FOR ALL LEARNERS

Schools in South Africa are presently faced with enormous challenges with regard to their development. Crowded schools and large classes have been a feature for

the majority of South African schools. Pretorius and Lemmer (1998:41) state that in practice this means that South African teachers will continue to face the physical and emotional constraints that large classes have for both educators and learners. Given the current budgetary constraints in South African education it is not possible for the majority of schools to reduce the class size by hiring additional teachers.

However, schools that consistently fulfil the needs of all their learners constitute caring communities in which all learners can be contributing valued members.

3.5.1 The classroom

McNamara and Moreton (1995:29) indicate that the classroom organization consist of many different rules, few of which are expressed overtly. It affects the noise level, the peer group interaction and the level of teacher stress.

According to Slavin, Karweit and Madden (1989:154) the structural conditions in schools and classrooms make them caring, supportive and productive environments for educators, administrators and learners. The classroom contains three major elements that work together to foster prosocial development: cooperative learning, developmental discipline and a literature-based and values oriented approach to reading instruction.

► Cooperative learning

Educators must prepare learners for a cooperative learning environment. They should be prepared for collaborative learning by acquiring new social and learning skills (Weimer, 1987:225). It is through cooperative learning that learners learn the importance of attending to others supporting them

and negotiating compromises. Through discussions, debates, explanations and the resolution of disagreements among each other, learners can often achieve a deeper understanding of a topic than when working on it individually.

According to Reich (1990:20) individual skills are integrated in the group over time. As group members work through various problems they learn about each other's abilities. They learn how they can help one another to perform better, what each can contribute to a particular project and how they can best take advantage of one another's experience.

Lipsky and Gartner (1997:138) further state that because peer interaction is seldom optimally collaborative, benevolent and productive, educators carefully monitor the groups as they work, watching for opportunities to help the learners to reach higher levels of collaboration and interpersonal understanding or academic learning than they might have been able to reach unaided. Sometimes a brief question or suggestion is sufficient to guide a group towards a fairer way to divide a task, or a more caring way to treat its members.

According to Sapon-Shevin (1990:3) the educator should encourage sharing all kinds of structure situations in which every child has a chance to speak and be heard. Learner involvement and active participation enable the shy and unsure learner to feel more comfortable and confident in a small group than in the whole class setting.

Cooperative learning has been found to be effective for diverse groups of learners because it provides opportunities for equal status collaboration and interactions among learners, for mutual explanation and helping and for

learning develops a sense of community in the classroom because learners are concerned about each other's welfare and performance.

► Developmental discipline

The educator works to create a classroom setting in which members are concerned about the welfare of each other. They share common assumptions and expectations about the importance of maintaining a supportive environment in the classroom, and the responsibility of each member to make meaningful contributions to the life and welfare of the group (Cooper, 1993:167).

The value of this approach is that it encourages learners to take active roles in classroom governance, which include participating in the development of classroom rules. Educators can foster learners' interpersonal knowledge, respect and concern by using many classroom activities that help them to learn about each other while also building academic knowledge and skills, and by avoiding learning activities that force the learners to compete with one another. This, incidentally, is the basic premise for quality inclusive schooling.

Educators should treat learners with respect as capable people who can use and respond to reason. This enables learners to understand the importance of common values rather than exercising their authority or power. Educators work to enhance the learners' intrinsic motivation by emphasising the inherent interest and importance of the academic activities. According to Bank (1997:324) good educators must be responsive to the changes in the individual learner's performance. The effective educator needs as many different ways of teaching as there are learners in the

classroom. When problems or unacceptable behaviour occurs the educator and the learners will think of alternative solutions. This approach will enhance the educators' warmth and supportiveness with the promotion of an active learner involvement.

► Using literature to promote reading, thinking and caring

According to Sopon-Shevin (1990:5) children's books can provide an excellent way to teach cooperative skills. Educators can select and read books that have cooperation or conflict resolution as a theme, also select stories that will help to develop learners' understanding of values such as fairness and kindness that are expressed in daily lives. This would help learners to empathise with people who are both like them or not like them and to see the commonalities that underlie diversity.

Bender (1993:61) state that educators must select literature that is inherently interesting and helps learners to focus on the underlying meaning of each work through discussions with partners and with the entire class, as well as through related drama, art writing and other activities. In addition to stories that learners read themselves the educators should read stories regularly so that all learners, even the weakest reader, can come to appreciate good literature and can participate in the discussion, explanation and the use of reason to develop oral language skills as well as thinking skills.

3.5.2 The administrator's role

Bank (1997:344) states that the culture of the school must support diversity, mutual regard and caring as well as the need to adopt instructions that do not

stigmatize or separate learners. The role of the administrator is extremely important especially in the following: support for educators, relationship with learners, role in discipline and helping the school to become a supportive community.

▶ Support for educators

According to Wade and Moore (1992:52) educators face extreme challenges to adapt to new teaching approaches, they need to be allowed to be temporarily 'ineffective', to make mistakes and learn from them. It is important that educators be allowed to be learners. Administrators need to provide room for educators to take on challenges, make mistakes and eventually work through these mistakes to master the new approaches and the related skills.

▶ Role in discipline

If the school is taking a problem-solving approach to discipline it is essential for administrators to be knowledgeable about specifics of the problems and the learners involved.

▶ Helping the school to be a supportive community

According to Lazarus, Daniels and Engelbrecht (1999:50) the challenge to schools are to develop barrier-free teaching and learning environment which can accommodate the diverse needs of the learning population and enable all learners to move around freely. School buildings and classrooms may need redesigning, to widen doorways and replace stairs with ramps. The administrator therefore plays a vital role in creating a caring school

environment. She sets the tone by being concerned for the welfare of its members by encouraging active participation. The administrator encourages and supports its members to establish sound values, norms, practices and activities that make the school a caring and supportive place.

Resources are essential in creating a learning environment which enables all learners to maximise their potential. Pretorius and Lemmer (1998:42) state that staff development programs enable staff to obtain appropriate skills needed to manage a more complex classroom situation. This may be done by allocating funds and resources to staff training, allowing staff to attend to relevant in-service courses and by creating a flexible and supportive atmosphere in which staff will be free to experiment with new ideas. The administrator should also inform the school governing bodies about educators' needs for staff development so that it can be included in whole school planning and budgeting. She can introduce the use of educator assistant and parent volunteers who will be trained to help educators with routine classroom management. This kind of assistance allows the educator more time to devote to teaching and to give individual help to learners.

In addition to educators and principals the other school adults who are in a position of authority can also establish close personal relationships with the learners in order to create an atmosphere of trust in the school.

3.6 SUMMARY

Inclusive education constitutes a challenge to the education system in South Africa, in particular to educators in ordinary schools. Inclusive education requires educators to have a positive attitude, be flexible in their thinking and to be critical,

creative and innovative in their approach to teaching and learning. Educators are expected to have the necessary knowledge, skills, competencies and support to accommodate a wide range of diversity among learners. This means that they must be able to select appropriate teaching strategies to achieve specific outcomes. It is unrealistic for educators to manage these challenges and changes on their own. An efficient support system and appropriate resources are required both in and outside the classroom.

CHAPTER 4

PLANNING THE RESEARCH

4.1	INTRODUCTION	81
4.2	PREPARATION FOR AND DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH	81
4.2.1	Permission	81
4.2.2	Selection of respondents	82
4.3	THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT	83
4.3.1	Qualitative research	84
4.3.2	Quantitative research	84
4.3.3	The Questionnaire as a research instrument	86
(1)	The purpose of a questionnaire	86
(2)	Characteristics of a good questionnaire	87
(3)	Advantages of a questionnaire	89
(4)	Disadvantages of the questionnaire	90
(5)	The construction of the questionnaire	92
4.4	LITERATURE STUDY	94
4.5	OWN EXPERIENCE	95
4.6	PILOT STUDY	96
4.7	ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE	98
4.8	DATA PROCESSING	99
4.8.1	Editing and data	100

CHAPTER 4 (<i>continued</i>)		PAGE
4.8.2	Statistical analysis	100
4.8.3	Application of data	101
4.9	LIMITATIONS TO THE INVESTIGATION	101
4.10	SUMMARY	102

CHAPTER 4

PLANNING THE RESEARCH

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapters a literature study of inclusive education provides a brief insight into policy development with respect to special needs education in South Africa since the new democratic government came to power in 1994. Secondly, it explored how the policy transformation process since 1994 has impacted on the implementation of inclusive education. The emphasis of quality education for all learners suggests that educators have to meet the diverse needs of all learners. From the literature study it is clear that the educator will have far more responsibilities than in the present situation if he/she is to ensure that inclusive education is successfully implemented in South Africa.

The successful implementation of inclusive education will require that the educators will have to move from a comfort zone to one that is complex, flexible and unfamiliar. In this chapter the research methodology used in the empirical investigation of the educators' perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and responsibilities will be described.

4.2 PREPARATION FOR AND DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH

4.2.1 Permission

In preparation for the research, a detailed literature study was made as outlined in chapters two and three of the policy development and implementation of inclusive education in South Africa with particular focus on educators' perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and responsibilities.

By reading documentation and in discussions with principals, heads of departments, deputy principals and educators in the GET band internationally and locally, the theoretical information was obtained, scrutinised and analyzed.

In obtaining data to verify the information as discussed, it was necessary to submit a letter of introduction to the identified / selected respondents, outlining the purpose of the study, the aim of the study as well as background information gathered from the literature study. A covering letter from the University and the promoter was attached to the covering letter (cf. Annexure B).

The administration of the research instruments included the delivering of the instrument to the respondents, as well as the mailing of the instrument with a self-addressed envelope to the respondents indicating the date of return and the fact that the information was to be kept confidential. E-mail facilities, where possible, were also used to reach the respondents and to obtain the information back from them. The respondents were assured of a copy of the results of the research.

4.2.2 Selection of respondents

As the research was done on the educators' perceptions of inclusive education in the GET Band, it was decided that only principals, heads of departments, deputy principals and educators from both ordinary and special schools would be selected to assist with the verification of information. The 40 schools chosen were from the greater Durban area. The address list of the 40 schools in the greater Durban area which is available from the district office was utilised to identify the list of respondents. A total of 200 respondents comprising principals, heads of departments, deputy principals and educators were identified, to whom questionnaires were sent in order to obtain reliable information.

It was further decided that ten educators in the Chatsworth district would be asked to act as a pilot sample before submitting the research instruments to other educators.

The selection was based on those who have been teaching for more than 10 years in ordinary public school and others that have been teaching for less than ten years in special schools. This will give a pilot group of ten educators who will then not form part of the two hundred identified respondents. A draft of the questionnaire was discussed with these ten educators, modified and finalised.

4.3 THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Prior to deciding on which research instrument is the best to obtain information, the question as to what research is, should first be answered.

In evaluating various literature written over decades by academic researchers such as Tuckman (1978), De Wet, Monteith, Steyn and Venter (1981), Cohen and Manion (1987) and Lamb, Hair, McDaniel, Boshoff and Terblanché (2000), it is clear that research is a formal, systematic method, or attempt to obtain answers to questions and identified problems, to critically evaluate any observation made from literature studies and to analyze the validity of information before any recommendations can be made.

Research is the collection of data. It is important, prior to deciding on what type of instrument to use, to decide on what kind of research data would be most suitable to assist in improving and substantiating the topic being researched. The distinction between 'quantitative' and 'qualitative' methods of collecting data must be clarified first.

4.3.1 Qualitative research

According to Lamb *et al.* (2000:116-123) qualitative research is not a numerical (statistical) collection of data. Data is obtained in a descriptive format, when the researcher wishes to obtain in-depth insight, understanding, explanations and detailed information from the people who are being interviewed. The analysis of the data is subjective and impressionistic.

In obtaining information, the researcher or interviewer must be skilled to be able to motivate the respondent to freely express himself and give a feeling or opinion about an issue. The use of open-ended questions is more suitable for this method of data collection, than using a structured questionnaire. This kind of research is usually done with a few respondents only as it could become very costly to the researcher (Crouch, 1986:76-77).

The advantage of using a qualitative format of research is that the research could be completed in a short period of time and is less expensive than the quantitative method. The information gathered could be verified at the time of the interview, and uncertainties can be clarified by asking more exploratory questions.

The disadvantage of this method is that the interviewer could influence the respondent through the use of probing and leading questions. The respondent is usually known and confidentiality is not always guaranteed.

The main methods used are interviews (personal or panel) and group discussions.

4.3.2 Quantitative research

Lamb *et al.* (2000:116-123) state that quantitative research methods collect data to be translated into statistical format. The replies of the respondents such as their perceptions and attitudes, are recorded in coded format and analyzed into graph

or pie-chart formats. According to Crouch (1986:241) the interpretation of data is where a systematic method of approach and a great deal of common sense are the two most useful attributes.

The advantage of using quantitative data collection is that the researcher has to carefully plan the questions that will be asked of the respondents. This will result in answers given without the researcher asking any leading and/or probing questions. Confidentiality is maintained and the respondent remains anonymous.

The disadvantage of using this kind of method is that the researcher cannot verify information given by the respondents and that questions normally are of a closed-ended format requiring only one possible answer, and no explanation given as to why the respondent is responding in a particular manner. The true opinions of the respondent cannot always be established and if interviewers (other than the researcher) are used in the process, the wrong coding of responses from the respondents could be possible, which will result in distorted statistics.

The most common format of quantitative data collection method used is through questionnaire which are either sent to respondents or the respondents are questioned according to the questionnaire by an interviewer either individually or as a panel.

When having to decide between using either the quantitative or qualitative method of research or a combination of the two methods, the following should be considered: simplistically it can be stated that, where information is required about a new aspect, topic or category, then qualitative data collection methods will be best suited, but should the aim of data collection be to determine the attitude or opinion of existing situations then a quantitative method will be best suited.

For the purpose of collecting verifying data to determine the correctness of the statement of educators' perceptions of inclusive education in the General Education and Training Band in South Africa, it was decided by the researcher to use the questionnaire (as a quantitative method), to obtain scientifically founded information.

4.3.3 The questionnaire as a research instrument

In this section a briefing on the questionnaire as a research instrument will be given by exploring the purpose of a questionnaire, the construction of a questionnaire, the types of questions to be formulated, the advantages and disadvantages and the reliability of questionnaires.

1 The purpose of a questionnaire

In any research project, a questionnaire forms the basis for any researcher to obtain information, regardless of the technique applied. Questionnaires therefore cannot be seen in isolation.

Hague (1994:11-12) identifies four basic purposes that questionnaires fulfil, namely:

- ▶ The primary role is to draw accurate information from the respondent. The researcher is trying to obtain information as close as possible to the reality and therefore needs to ask the right questions of the right persons.
- ▶ The questionnaire provides a standard format on which facts, comments and attitudes can be recorded. Responses are recorded correctly and will ensure that no distortion of information can take place.

- ▶ The questionnaire facilitates data processing. The various answers are recorded in a place where the data processing team knows where to find them. With the purpose of a questionnaire in mind, it is necessary to ensure that the questionnaire which is to be constructed will meet the aim of the research objective, namely to establish the educators' perceptions, attitudes and responsibilities of inclusive education in South Africa.

2 Characteristics of a good questionnaire

In evaluating the literature studies on questionnaire design in the educational and marketing fields by authors such as Cohen and Manion (1987), Tuckman (1978), De Wet *et al.* (1981), Nel, Radel and Loubser (1988) and Chetty (1997), the characteristics of a good questionnaire could be summarised as follows:

- ▶ The topic should be relevant to ensure the respondent realises the importance thereof and will be prepared to spend time on completing the questionnaire. This could be assured by ensuring that the introductory and accompanying documentation is clear, precise and indicates the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcome and indicating the benefits the respondent could obtain through participation (such as improve his/her own career as an educator).
- ▶ It seeks information that is not readily obtainable from other sources.
- ▶ The formulation of questions and the entire questionnaire must be of such a nature that the time involved in completing the questionnaire is as short as possible thereby avoiding the non-return of the questionnaire.

- ▶ Questionnaires should give the impression of professionalism, by being attractively composed, arranged and duplicated.
- ▶ Directions on completing the questionnaire should be clear and precise with important terminologies clearly defined.
- ▶ Each question should deal with a single concept and be worded as simply as possible.
- ▶ Different categories should provide an opportunity for easy, accurate and unambiguous responses.
- ▶ Questions should be formulated in such a manner that no leading suggestions are stated to encourage a specific or desired response. Leading questions could result in skewed information which is not a true reflection, thereby nullifying the statistical value of the research.
- ▶ Questions should be ranked from general to more specific and sensitive responses (the funnel approach should be applied). The willingness of the respondent to participate should be obtained first with the more generalistic type of questions before the more probing and sensitive questions are stated. Personal, annoying, offensive, ambiguous or embarrassing questions should be avoided at all times.
- ▶ Data obtained from the questionnaire must be readily and easily tabulated and interpreted. If a computer programme is to be used, it is advisable that the responses should be pre-coded to ensure that responses are transferred correctly.

- ▶ It is advisable to pre-design a tabulation form to assist with the anticipated interpretation of data before planning the final questionnaire format. This method will ensure that ambiguity is avoided in the questionnaire.

3 Advantages of a questionnaire

The following advantages of using a questionnaire as a technique to obtain information can be identified:

- ▶ The primary advantage is that a written questionnaire is the least expensive method of obtaining data. By using electronic technology, the cost factor could be reduced even further.
- ▶ Possible interviewer bias can be precluded. By using the written questionnaire the possibility of respondents being influenced by factors such as the interviewer's appearance, and interaction with the respondent by asking leading or probing questions, are eliminated completely, resulting in honest responses from the respondents.
- ▶ A questionnaire ensures the anonymity of the respondent, especially if the questionnaire is arranged in such a manner that the responses given are representative of the beliefs, feelings, opinions or perceptions of the respondent without being identified. It will also increase the return rate of the questionnaires.
- ▶ The respondent has time to reflect on the questions before giving answers without being pressurised to give answers. Own personal time, in a more relaxed atmosphere, is used to complete the questionnaire.

- ▶ With the written questionnaire, a large sample population can be reached.
- ▶ Standard questions and instructions are given. The more instructions are repeated to assist the respondent, the more accurate the responses from all the respondents will be as they are exposed to the same environment such as *same questions, instructions, and no interference of the interviewer.*
- ▶ Through written questionnaires any possibility of interviewer errors (which could lead to incorrect interpretation of data, undermining the reliability of data) are avoided.
- ▶ Questions of a more personal nature or on embarrassing situations could be and will be answered more readily by the respondent in a private environment rather than in the presence of an interviewer.
- ▶ Questions that require more time for consideration and possibly consulting with resource materials, would be answered more readily on a written questionnaire than when the respondent is confronted by an interviewer.
- ▶ Questionnaires can obtain information which is not always possible through other sources.
- ▶ The administering, coding, analysis and interpretation of data can be done without much training or experience if the basic guidelines are followed.

4 Disadvantages of the questionnaire

Using a written questionnaire also has certain disadvantages which are outweighed by the advantages. The disadvantages can be identified, *inter alia*, from the various literature, as the following:

- ▶ Flexibility is not possible. In a personal interview, certain concepts can be clarified by the interviewer which is not the situation with a written questionnaire. The validity of responses can be questioned, should the phrasing of the questions be open to different interpretations.
- ▶ Verbal expression of views, opinions and interpretations are easier with a personal interview than with a written questionnaire.
- ▶ Complex questions cannot be responded to in the questionnaire without giving sufficient instructions or definitions to the respondent to be able to interpret the questions.
- ▶ The opinion of a single person only is obtained and the opinion of a group cannot be captured.
- ▶ Answers given are final with a questionnaire, as it is impossible for the researcher to go back to the respondent to verify answers which could have been misleading or interpreted incorrectly. This, however, could be done in a personal interview situation.
- ▶ Human nature has it that with a questionnaire the respondent would read the entire questionnaire before responding, resulting in the fact that the response could be taken as a general view and not as independent to each question.
- ▶ The possibility of the questionnaire being completed by other parties other than the addressee cannot be ruled out. This will result in the fact that the answers given are not necessarily the response that the researcher would have hoped to have obtained if the correct person had completed the questionnaire.

- ▶ The return rate of the questionnaire response is very low. If not administered professionally, which includes follow-up requests, the reliability and validity of the data collected could be questionable.

5 The construction of the questionnaire

In the composition of the questionnaire, the researcher has to take cognisance of the basic guidelines as indicated in the abovementioned sections. When constructing a questionnaire, it should be taken into account that each research technique will require a different format of questionnaire. It is therefore possible to state that three types of questionnaire can be identified.

- ▶ **Structured:** for a structured interview the questionnaire sets out precisely the wording of the questions and the order in which they will be asked. The question asked will lead to predefined answers. Structured questionnaires form the basis for large quantitative surveys.
- ▶ **Semi-structured:** this type of interview uses questionnaires with a mixture of questions with defined answers as well as those where the respondent is free to say whatever he/she prefers. The format of this questionnaire is far more flexible than the structured format.
- ▶ **Unstructured:** for an informal, in-depth interview the unstructured questionnaire is of more value to the researcher as the questionnaire is only a guide / checklist and the answers provided by the respondents are recorded by the researcher (Hague, 1994:21-23).

For the purpose of this research, it was decided to use the structured format of questionnaire to be sent out to the respondents. The motivation for this decision

is that one of the aims of using a questionnaire is to obtain reliable data to verify and quantify the literature study and to put forward recommendations. It is important then that the respondents will be able to understand the questions, be able to provide the information required and be willing to provide the information.

As stated by Hague (1994:41-48) the following fundamental principles for constructing a questionnaire should be taken into account:

- think about the objective of the survey;
- think about how the interview will be carried out;
- think about the knowledge and interests of the respondent;
- think about the introduction;
- think about the order of the questions;
- think about the possible answers at the same time as thinking about the questions; and
- think about how the data will be processed.

For the purpose of this research it was decided to construct the questionnaire in four sections as follows:

(a) Section one: Biographical information

This section is to establish the background of each of the respondents. Issues such as gender, race-group, age, qualifications, years of total educational service and years as principal / deputy principal, HOD and educator are established. As some of the principals and deputy principals are only in office for a few months or less than five years, they might have a different opinion to those principals / deputy principals who have been in office for more than five years.

(b) Section two: Principles of inclusive education

For this section the researcher has opted to use the main principle criteria as indicated in chapter two and performance criteria as indicated in chapter three, and in a combination with a series of sub-questions to establish the view of the respondents on each of the matters.

(c) Section three: Educators' perceptions, attitudes and beliefs on inclusive education

For this section the researcher has opted to describe the requirements for successful implementation of inclusive education in South Africa. Questions were formulated into a statement format, which would require from the respondents to indicate their responses as to whether they agree, disagree or are unsure about the statement.

4.4 LITERATURE STUDY

According to Landman (1980:33) and Duvenhage (1991:10) a literature study is the basis and fundamental part of any research. Knowledge and insight obtained through literature studies lead to a thoroughly designed research project and meaningful result and recommendations. As inclusive education is new in the South African education system the only literature available is the documentation released by the Department of Education based on the NCESS / NCSNET recommendation. Other relevant documentation is published articles in South African journals by educationalists and other stakeholders in the development of Inclusive Education in South Africa.

Documentation was obtained from international journals on inclusive education which covered countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Britain, United Kingdom, Spain, Malaysia and Jomtien, Thailand. As many of the leading countries such as Australia, New Zealand and United Kingdom have placed emphasis on inclusive education, many of the perceptions and attitudes gained by educators in these countries were used as a basis to form possible suggestions for the South African context and in the questionnaire design.

4.5 OWN EXPERIENCE

Own experience by a researcher is permissible only if the researcher meets certain criteria. Landman (1989:308-310) states the following three criteria which must be met by a researcher:

- (i) The researcher must pay attention to the issues in which he is involved.
- (ii) The researcher must determine at all times, whether it is his own actual experience that is recorded.
- (iii) The researcher must indicate where in the research project his own experience would be applied.

According to Duvenhage (1991:11-13), Van Tonder (1991:8-12; 23) and De Wet *et al.* (1981:19), it is important to note that own experience, as gained from personal contact with other stakeholders, could result in a more positive and critical involvement and assurance that the research could lead to quality results and conclusions which would be of value to all stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of inclusive education in South Africa.

4.6 PILOT STUDY

Piloting the questionnaire is an important and critical stage in the entire process of data collection. It is at this stage in the research process where any problems can be identified and redefined. If a questionnaire is sent out without conducting this stage and errors are found, it is not only going to be a financially costly exercise, but the entire data collection process is in danger of giving a false impression. The researcher should also at this stage expose the questionnaire to the 'spoken' word whereby the effectiveness could be measured and the weaknesses be eliminated before sending the draft questionnaire to the selected grouping.

At this stage a draft of the questionnaire is handed to a few selected respondents to complete. Aspects that will have to be addressed include:

- ▶ Wording of questions: are the words that have been used understood by the selected respondents? Are there any words that need to be rephrased to be more meaningful and would the required response to test the literature statements be validated by the question?
- ▶ Pre-codes in closed questions: are they the right ones and will it be possible to generate statistical information from the codes as indicated to prove and substantiate the literature study and recommendations?
- ▶ The respondents will have to indicate which of the questions they had trouble with interpreting. If not changed, this will result in more respondents encountering problems to complete the questionnaire.
- ▶ The number of respondents selected to pilot the questionnaire will be determined by the sample size that is to be selected for interviewing and completing the questionnaire. If the sample size is less than two hundred

then a maximum of ten pilot respondents will be sufficient to test the questionnaire. In this research it was decided to pilot the questionnaire to *twenty-four educators in the immediate region* to save cost and to ensure that the desired outcome could be attained.

Piloting the questionnaire has certain advantages. For this research the advantages included the following:

- ▶ The testing of the hypotheses enabled the researcher to adjust the original hypotheses where necessary.
- ▶ New concepts came forward from the pilot group which were not anticipated by the researcher prior to drafting the questionnaire.
- ▶ Unforeseen problems, such as the interpretation of the statements revealed in the pilot, resulted in correction of the error, thus reducing the error factor in the final questionnaire and resulting in more accurate data collection.
- ▶ The coding of answers could be verified ensuring that the statistical data produced by means of computerisation was more accurate.
- ▶ The time to complete the questionnaire could be established. Being too long a questionnaire, too much time was spent on completing the questionnaire. Adjustments made to the length and layout of the questionnaire prior to sending out the final questionnaire, which could be completed within thirty minutes, would increase the return rate of questionnaires.

- ▶ Improvements to the questionnaire was made as suggested by the pilot group and the promoters. This included rewording / reformulating of questions that were or could have been misinterpreted by the respondents.

Piloting the research instruments leads to revising, modifying and improving the research instruments until such time as the researcher is satisfied that the most suitable instruments are used to obtain the most accurate data, in order to avoid any distortions of data and to ensure that the data gathered will meet the requirements of the study.

4.7 ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The success of any data collection is the manner in which the administration of the research instrument is being conducted. To ensure that the return rate of the questionnaire was as high as possible, the following administration matters were put in place:

- ▶ A covering letter was drafted explaining the purpose of the study as well as giving a brief outline of the research data collected that had to be verified.
- ▶ The address list of all the schools in the greater Durban area was taken and 40 schools selected at random, were chosen.
- ▶ Each school was coded to facilitate any follow-up procedures. Although the schools were coded it was ensured that each school remained anonymous.

- ▶ All questionnaires were pre-coded according to the codes used for the school, to be able to establish which questionnaires were returned and which were not returned for follow-up reasons.
- ▶ All questionnaires were delivered to the respondents and completed questionnaires were collected by the researcher.
- ▶ Utilizing modern technology, the questionnaire was also e-mailed to some schools who had e-mail addresses available. The return of the questionnaire by e-mail was checked against the address list.
- ▶ As an interesting exercise the questionnaire was also e-mailed to the other provinces. Their responses were kept separately from the KwaZulu-Natal responses and were not included in the data that was captured from the KwaZulu-Natal respondents. These responses will be utilized in the *recommendations to be made*.

4.8 DATA PROCESSING

The main aim and purpose of collecting data is to be able to analyze and interpret the data that has been collected by means of the questionnaire. The written questionnaire sent out to the principals / deputy principals, HODs and educators was pre-coded to facilitate the processing of the data by means of a computer spreadsheet. The data was given with instructions as to the outcomes needed from the data to the computer department at the University of Durban-Westville who then programmed the MS Excel spreadsheet program to suit the requirements of analysis and interpretation by means of descriptive statistics.

4.8.1 Editing of data

Before the data obtained from the questionnaires could be computerised, it was necessary to first edit each questionnaire for the following reasons:

- ▶ **Completeness:** Each questionnaire was checked to ensure that all the questions were responded to where possible, and if omissions were identified as missing information.
- ▶ **Accuracy:** Within reason, each questionnaire was checked to ensure that the information given was accurate as incorrect information could lead to a distortion of data and reduce the validity of the data.
- ▶ **Uniformity:** It was essential to ensure that uniformity in the recording and coding of responses was applied at all times.

Once this task was completed, all the data was captured and the statistical analysis was done.

4.8.2 Statistical analysis

According to Crouch (1986:229-242) and Hague (1994:46-47), statistical information could be used in three possible ways: to describe data in order to measure its significance and to indicate relationships between sets of data.

The purpose of using descriptive statistics is to give the researcher an impression of the location of the data and the spread thereof. The information can be given in the form of frequency, percentage and average.

Frequency tables indicate how many times a particular response appears on the completed questionnaires. Histograms are used to indicate the frequency.

Percentages reflect the number of responses to a certain question in relation to the total number of responses. The arithmetic mean is the most commonly used method to represent the average of data. The average is calculated by adding the frequencies, multiplied by the particular score and divided by the total respondents.

4.8.3 Application of data

The questionnaire (Appendix 11) was designed to determine the educators' perceptions of inclusive education in South Africa, to establish the performance criteria with which to measure the effectiveness of educators in implementing inclusive education successfully, as well as to determine any possible areas of development in its implementation. In order to obtain the information needed for the purpose of this study, the questionnaire was divided into four sections:

- ▶ Section one dealt with the biographical information of the respondents.
- ▶ Section two focused on the successful implementation of inclusive education.
- ▶ Section three focused on the educators' perceptions of an inclusive classroom.

4.9 LIMITATIONS TO THE INVESTIGATION

Any investigation or research is subject to possible limitations and problems which could have a negative effect on the validity and reliability of the data collected.

In this research the following possible constraints could have an effect on the reliability and validity of the questionnaire.

- ▶ Although the research is done to determine the educators' perceptions of inclusive education in South Africa, some of the principals, deputy principals, HODs and educators at the public ordinary and special schools could have regarded the research as a repetition of new policies by policy-makers with a few additional factors to be considered, and therefore could have given responses which might not have been well thought-out before responding. Principals / HODs and educators may lack the knowledge and training on the benefits of inclusion and therefore did not respond to the questionnaire as they should have.
- ▶ Although principals / deputy principals, HODs and educators have been asked to complete the questionnaire confidentially it is possible that one member of the staff could have discussed the questionnaire with others and arrived at a common response.
- ▶ Some of the questions might not have been answered truthfully and frankly as the respondents could have felt threatened by possible identification although anonymity was assured.

4.10 SUMMARY

This chapter was devoted to the research design to enable the researcher to decide on the best possible manner in which to conduct an empirical investigation into the educators' perceptions of attitudes, beliefs and responsibilities of inclusive education in South Africa, and also to establish the norms and standards to measure the preparedness of educators to implement inclusion successfully in order

to ensure that quality education is accessible to all learners. The written questionnaire as a research instrument was described to obtain and verify the theoretical information discussed in chapters two and three.

In chapter five the results of the research will be outlined, analyzed and interpreted to be able to provide recommendations in chapter six, to ensure that the *General Education and Training Band* meets the educational demands in Inclusive Education in South Africa.

CHAPTER 5

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH DATA

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, data which was collected from one-hundred and ninety-one completed questionnaires will be analyzed. This data comprised biographical information, number of LSEN in respondents' classes, facilities and strategies for successful inclusive education available at schools and educators' perceptions of an inclusive classroom. Findings will be interpreted and some comments offered.

5.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

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

5.2.1 Gender of respondents

Table 1 Frequency distribution according to the educators' genders

Gender	Frequency	%
Male	56	29,3%
Female	135	70,7%
TOTAL	191	100%

Table 1 shows that most respondents (70,7%) are females. Zaiman (1993:16:34) states that the majority of the teaching corps in South Africa consist of female educators. Table 1 confirms this statement in showing that most of the educators (70,7%) in this study are also females. Possible reasons for this finding are the following:

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

5.2.2 Age of the respondents

Table 2 Frequency distribution according to the age of the educators

Age group	Frequency	%
Under 20	3	1,6%
20-25 years	6	3,1%
26-30 years	6	3,1%
31-35 years	22	11,5%
36-40 years	74	38,7%
41-45 years	43	22,5%
46-50 years	18	9,4%
51-55 years	14	7,3%
56 and older	5	2,6%
TOTAL	191	100%

According to Table 2 most of the educators (61,2%) are in the age group 36-45 years. This may be attributed to the fact that the rationalization and redeployment policy has affected younger educators and older educators that opted for early retirement. Garson (1999:4) states that rationalization and redeployment is slicing a path of destruction through schools, ridding them of their most valuable staff members, demotivating others, affecting academic achievements and causing depression, anxiety and poor performance among educators.

With the sword of rationalization and redeployment hanging over them most educators feel insecure about their job and their future in the teaching profession. Younger educators are therefore seeking better paying jobs elsewhere, for example the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand (Sylvester, 1999:2).

Only 49% of educators were in the age group 51 and older. Low educator morale, anxiety and lack of motivation are possible reasons for more experienced educators to leaving the profession. This phenomenon may also be attributed to the fact that the voluntary severance package had attracted the more experienced educators to take the package and move out of the teaching profession and enter the business community.

Another possible reason for the loss of younger educators is the spread of HIV/AIDS which has resulted in the deaths of many educators (Govender, 2001).

5.2.3 Qualifications of the respondents

Table 3 Frequency distribution according to the qualification level of the educators

Educational level	Frequency	%
Teaching certificate(s) only	1	0,5%
Teaching diploma(s) only	90	47,2%
Bachelor's degree and diploma	94	49,2%
Honours degree and diploma	6	3,1%
TOTAL	191	100%

From Table 3 it emerges that slightly more than half of the educators (52,3%) possess academic and professional qualifications which enable them to be efficient educational leaders at school, both academically and professionally.

The finding that nearly fifty percent of the educators (47,7%) have only teaching diplomas or certificates may be because they are in primary schools. The contents

and curricula of teaching diplomas and certificates are more practical than theoretically orientated courses and are therefore more appropriate for teaching younger primary school children (Griessel, Louw & Swart, 1993:71).

Inadequate qualifications may result in the insufficient execution of responsibilities by educators, which may have a negative impact on the implementation of inclusive education. The perception is that poorly or under-qualified educators may experience a greater degree of difficulty to meet the demands made on them as educators (Van der Westhuizen, 1995:95). The opposite can be said of adequately qualified and experienced educators.

5.2.4 Years of teaching experience

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

Total number of years' teaching experience	Frequency	%
0-1 year	4	2,1%
1-5 years	7	3,7%
6-10 years	12	6,3%
11-15 years	43	22,5%
16-20 years	64	33,5%
21-25 years	31	16,2%
26-30 years	21	11,0%
31-35 years	9	4,7%
TOTAL	191	100%

Although educators may have many years of teaching experience in mainstream schools the possible lack of experience of LSEN may have a negative impact on inclusive education (Befring, 1997:18).

Table 4 shows that the larger number (65,4%) of educators have more than 16 years of teaching experience. It thus appears that most educators in this investigation are adequately experienced and possess sufficient skills for the task of implementing educational change. However, experience together with adequate training is needed for the responsibilities and the demands imposed on educators in including learners who experience barriers to learning and development into mainstream classrooms (Ainscow, 1992:12). The more experience and training educators have, the more confidence, motivational skills and expertise they will acquire over the years to become competent educators, who would be able to adapt to curriculum changes easily (Bergh, 1996:120). Continuous professional development and experience are prerequisites for educators to keep up with the rapid pace of change in education (Marsh, 1992:88).

5.2.5 Post level of respondents

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

Post level	Frequency	%
Principal	16	8,4%
Deputy principal	4	2,1%
HOD	29	15,2%
Educator (post level one)	142	74,3%
TOTAL	191	100%

Table 5 reflects that more than seventy percent (74,3%) of the respondents are post level one educators. This finding was expected because the aim at the study was to establish the perception of educators in mainstream classrooms towards learners with low to medium levels of special educational needs. In international literature it is reported that the attitudes of educators play a primary role in the successful implementation of an inclusive educational policy (Bothma, Gravett & Swart, 2001:200). Taking the importance of educators' attitudes for the successful implementation of inclusive education into account, the purpose of the research was to explore the educators' perceptions towards the South African policy of inclusive education. Opportunities for promotion will motivate educators to give their best in teaching and their willingness to teach LSEN (Schaeffer, 1997:35).

5.2.6 Type of post held by respondents

Table 6 Frequency distribution according to the post held by respondents

Type of post	Frequency	%
Permanent	175	91,6%
Temporary	16	8,4%
TOTAL	191	100%

The finding in Table 6 that the majority (91,6%) of the respondents are in permanent posts is possibly because of the area selected for the research. Most of the selected schools are situated in the urban areas. The possible reasons for being in a permanent post are (Mona, 1997:3):

- ▶ The educators in urban schools are better qualified to provide a higher quality of education.

- ▶ Schools in urban areas have more resources and facilities.
- ▶ Permanent educators may be on the excess list in urban areas (HRM 61 of 2001).

Being in a permanent post gives security to an educator and might improve commitment to LSEN. The perception therefore exists that educators in rural areas are not as competent or qualified as their counterparts in the cities (Magubane, 1995:12). Research has found that 42% of the educators at rural schools have no professional teaching qualification while the rest were also under-qualified for the post they occupied (Jansen, 1999:8). Being employed by the education department leaves educators no choice but to implement inclusive education as laid down by policy and may have a negative influence on them.

5.2.7 Respondents' employers

Table 7 Frequency distribution according to the employer of the educator

Employer	Frequency	%
Department of Education	175	91,6%
Governing body	16	8,4%
total	191	100%

Table 7 shows that more than ninety percent (91,6%) of the educators are employed by the department of education. This finding corresponds with the finding in Table 6 in that most schools in urban areas have permanently appointed educators. Only 8,4% of the respondents are employed by the governing bodies to reduce class size and the workload of permanent educators. Godden and Maurice (1999:3) state that low socio-economic areas are too poor to supplement the financial resources of the school in order to create governing body posts for educators.

5.2.8 Successful implementation of inclusive education

Table 8 Frequency distribution according to the availability of facilities or strategies for successful implementation of inclusive education

Question number	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	Total
2.1	61 31,9	121 63,4	9 4,7	191 100%
2.2	53 28,2%	125 65,4%	12 6,3%	191 100%
2.3	75 39,3%	102 53,4%	14 7,3%	191 100%
2.4	58 30,4%	128 67,0%	5 2,6%	191 100%
2.5	55 28,8%	118 61,8%	8 9,4%	191 100%
2.6	61 31,9%	112 58,6%	18 9,4%	191 100%
2.7	64 33,5%	115 60,2%	12 6,3%	191 100%
2.8	71 39,1%	83 43,5%	37 19,4%	191 100%
2.9	79 41,3%	85 44,5%	27 14,1%	191 100%
2.10	70 36,6%	109 57,1%	12 6,3%	191 100%
2.11	69 36,1%	114 59,7%	8 4,2%	191 100%
2.12	74 38,7%	97 50,8%	20 10,5%	191 100%
2.13	87 44,0%	87 45,5%	20 10,5%	191 100%
2.14	57 29,8%	124 64,9%	10 5,2%	191 100%
2.15	55 29,3%	119 62,3%	16 8,4%	191 100%
2.16	62 32,4%	106 55,5%	23 12,0%	191 100%
2.17	65 34,0%	118 61,8%	8 4,2%	191 100%
2.18	62 32,5%	119 62,3%	10 5,2%	191 100%

An analysis of the responses in Table 8 reflects educators' perceptions of the implementation of inclusive education at the schools where they teach. All schools in this investigation include LSEN in mainstream (cf. 4.2.1) education.

2.1 A school-based support team

Twice the number of respondents (63,4%) disagreed than agreed (31,9%) with the statement that a school-based support team for assisting educators with LSEN are available in their schools. Muthukrishna and Schoeman (2000:319) point out that the reports of the NCSNET / NCESS (National Commission on Special Education Needs and Training and the National Committee for Education Support Services) state that an inclusive education policy will place some of the responsibility for addressing barriers to learning and development on the shoulders of the school support teams that will be developed in the schools in the next few years. The school support team has been conceptualised as comprising mainly of educators in the school itself. It has been proposed that the school support team be coordinated by a member of staff, preferably someone who has received extra training in one of the specialised competency areas emerging from the NCSNET/NCESS report, for example life-skills education, counselling or learning support (Lazarus, Daniels & Engelbrecht, 1999:54). A school-based support team will develop the mainstream educators' competency in dealing with LSEN.

2.2 In-service training

Most educators (65,4%) indicated that in-service training opportunities are not available for mainstream educators to cope with LSEN. Levitz (1996:9) states that UNISA and other universities and training colleges present courses for Diplomas in Special Education. However, of more pressing concern at the moment is the upgrading of educators to be better equipped to educate LSEN. According to Nell

(1996:39) successful inclusive education has major implications for the pre-service and in-service training of educators. Appropriate preparation of all educational personnel is vitally important. In-depth knowledge of the philosophy of inclusion and the need for educators to develop the commitment and caring required to accommodate LSEN as much as possible in mainstream classes should be developed during pre-service and in-service training.

Educators in mainstream schools will have to develop an inclusion mentality which implies that they will have to accept that they have a duty to accommodate all children in their classes and not to want to exclude those with disabilities.

Educators will have to be adequately prepared to assess special needs to adapt curriculum content to the needs of the learners in the classroom, and to utilize special orthodidactic devices and instructional aids required by some of the LSEN.

Bothma, Gravett and Swart (2000:201) state that the challenge facing many South African educators is that they have not been trained to cope with the diversity of learners now entering schools.

2.3 Administrative support

More than half of the respondents (53,4%) acknowledged that the administrative team at their school did not support them to pursue inclusive goals. From their responses it is evident that the majority of the educators perceive the school management team as not being effective in helping educators to develop an inclusive education system in their schools. Hilton and Smith (1994:253) state that the psychosocial environment of an inclusive school is strongly affected by the style and manner of leadership and management practices. The challenge in an inclusive school is to develop a style of democratic leadership and management

which reflects the principles of inclusive education (Lazarus, Daniels & Engelbrecht, 1999:49).

According to Riehl (2000:55) a genuine commitment to inclusive education would require administrators to attend to the fundamental inequities in schooling. School administrators must therefore help to create specific conditions and practices within the school that address the needs of all learners. Successful inclusive education requires support, advice and training to be provided by administrators (Hall & Engelbrecht, 1999:231).

2.4 Adequate funds

The majority of educators (67%) indicated that their schools lacked the necessary funds for resources to implement successful inclusive education. Only (30,4%) of the respondents indicated that their schools have adequate funds. From this finding it can be inferred that adequate funding is required for the successful implementation of inclusive education.

According to Nell (1996:39) in many parts of the country we have large classes, inadequate or no support facilities, a lack of orthodidactic materials as well as a lack of expertise of educators to deal with LSEN. This makes it impossible to fully implement placement of LSEN in mainstream classes. To provide for effective inclusive education the financial issues will have to be addressed carefully so as to be cost-effective (Donald, 1992:51).

According to Dyson and Forlin (1999:33) inclusive education requires a certain degree of capital investment (in buildings and equipment) and an even greater degree of investment in human resources (educators, managers and administrators). In June 1994 an international conference was held in Salamanca, Spain with the

purpose of developing an international policy document on special needs education. The Salamanca statement reaffirmed that inclusive education is not only cost-efficient but also cost-effective. The most immediate challenge facing a new funding framework is to redress the legacy of apartheid of backlogs and inequities. However, this should be achieved within the policy of inclusive education and a commitment to the accommodation of the full diversity of learning needs and the addressing of learning difficulties (DNE, 1999:90).

2.5 Collaboration between special and mainstream educators

Most educators disagreed with the statement relating to a model of collaboration between special and mainstream educators at their schools. Special school educators and special schools, as expert centres in individualised learning programmes, learning strategies and early intervention could play a pivotal role in an inclusive education system in South Africa (Engelbrecht, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1997:5; Saleh, 1996:9).

For the successful implementation of inclusive education there is a need for special and mainstream school educators to collaborate and share information. All educators should have the necessary skills to work collaboratively and cooperatively. Early intervention, support and sharing of knowledge can only be done successfully when collaborative structures are in place (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997:10; Giangreco, Dennis, Cloninger, Edelman & Schattman, 1993:367).

It is vital that special and mainstream school educators use their collective expertise in an equal status relationship. This partnership will allow for the proposal of alternative teaching strategies or supplementary instructional material by special school educators in consultation with the mainstream school educator. Collaborative problem-solving may also entail the periodic observation of learners,

who are experiencing barriers to learning in mainstream school classes in order to identify areas of difficulty or monitor the success of intervention strategies (Thousand, Villa & Nervin, 1994 in Bradley *et al.*, 1997:85).

An effective model for collaboration between special and mainstream educators will possibly ensure the successful implementation of inclusive education in South African schools.

2.6 Consultation between special and mainstream educators

More respondents disagreed (58,6%) than agreed (31,9%) with the statement that provision for consultation between special and mainstream educators are available at their school. Consultation falls into the domain of communication and include exchanging learner progress information, sharing diagnostic information, sharing responsibility for grading, participating in long and short-term educational planning and meeting with parents (Dettmer, Dyck & Thurston, 1996:21; Idol & West, 1987:485). A common base of learner related information for educators who are jointly responsible for learners who are experiencing barriers to learning, provides a platform for other collaborative roles, such as problem-solving (Pugach & Johnston, 1995:123).

Special and mainstream educators should actively plan for skills transfer, team teaching, directing small group instruction in mainstream schools, special education settings and training peer tutors (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997:138); Friend & Cook, 1996:239; Phillips & McCulloch, 1990:301). A network between schools could assist in sharing valuable knowledge and expertise as well as providing support.

2.7 Guidance and counselling facilities for parents

Nearly two-thirds (60,2%) of the educators stated that guidance and counselling facilities for parents are not available at their schools. Only (33,5%) were in agreement. Guidance and counselling facilities provide a support group for parents of LSEN at their school. According to Belknap, Roberts and Nyewe (1999:171) guidance and counselling facilities provide many parents with the opportunity to meet with other parents of similar circumstances and this provides an enriching and useful experience where parents share the difficulties and successes of their children. Any difficulties that parents of learners with special educational needs are experiencing with regard to services rendered by the school could be identified and corrected by the educator support team.

Many parents find themselves at a loss in dealing with their children with special educational needs. Parenting a LSEN is an art in itself and parents usually require support. Kapp and Levitz (1995:59) state that the purpose of parent guidance and counselling is to correct the parenting skills of parents with children who may manifest educative problems and/or to teach them new ways of dealing with their children. When a parent has a problem they often benefit from support given by others (Cunningham & Davis, 1985:90).

According to Weiss and Jacobs (1988:203) support entails the ability to inform parents about the problems they are likely to encounter, assist them to assess and evaluate different types of problems and to help them develop general strategies for coping with problems as they arise.

2.8 School governing body

Most of the educators (43,5%) indicated that the school governing body does not support inclusive education. For the successful implementation of inclusive education parents should become more involved in the education of their children.

This involvement could include insight into progress, participation in decisions, and information on educational issues. An efficient school governing body could involve parents' understanding of the movement towards inclusive education and can influence views more positively. According to Hall and Engelbrecht (1999:33) parents who respect diversity and are willing to become involved, can sway a community.

Belknap, Roberts and Nyewe (1999:177) point out that the school governing body is the key element in empowering parents in the school communities and facilitating their greater involvement in the formal education of their children.

2.9 Effective management

The difference between the respondents that disagreed (44,5%) and agreed (41,3%) that the management in their schools have the competencies to know how to accommodate diversity and address barriers to learning and development, is only 3,2%. Lazarus, Daniels and Engelbrecht (1990:60) state that the style and manner of leadership and management practice of educational managers (in particular that of the school principal) is a critical factor in ensuring that inclusive education is successfully implemented. For effective management of inclusive education to occur, the above difference should have been much larger.

Literature acknowledges the key role played by educational managers in providing a supportive framework for inclusive education (De Long (1989:23); Du Four & Berkey, 1995:2; Sparks, 1997:22; Bunting 1997:30). This is based on the assertion that the most effective development programmes take place within the school itself.

2.10 Additional support

More than fifty percent (57,1 %) of the educators indicated that additional support for LSEN is not available at their schools. This means that in more than half of the schools involved in the survey, support provision for LSEN is lacking. Possible reasons for this finding is that historically provision for special educational needs in South Africa has been unequal across the different racial groups. There was a total absence of provision in mostly disadvantaged communities. In a developing country such as South Africa it is impossible to continue with the highly specialised, high cost model of support currently available to a small minority of learners. This would mean drawing on local resources such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), parents, community workers, organizations for individuals with disabilities and tertiary institutions. The establishment of a centre-based learning support team would ensure that support is accessible to educators, learners, parents and communities (Muthukrishna & Schoeman, 2000:325).

For inclusive education to be successful mainstream schools need to find ways of providing efficient learning support consisting of medical doctors, social workers, paramedics and special school personnel. Support, advice and training should also be provided for administrators, parents and other stakeholders (DNE, 1997a:53).

2.11 Life-skills programmes

Nearly sixty percentage of the educators (59,7%) in the survey indicated that life-skill programmes for integration of LSEN is lacking in their schools. This may possibly contribute to the lack of knowledge of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE).

The aim of OBE is for all learners to succeed and the school experiences are

The aim of OBE is for all learners to succeed and the school experiences are redefined as preparation for life rather than preparation for more schooling (Spady, 1992:2). Placing LSEN in a mainstream classroom will promote their integration in society and possibly facilitate skills development.

According to Davies and Green (1998:97) children with special educational needs should be educated in the most normalized learning environment consistent with their needs.

Learning difficulties originate not only from within the learner but also from within the system. Hegarty (1994:126) implies that barriers to learning may be caused by a system that is unable to meet or adapt to the needs of the specific learner. With OBE the focus has moved from the learner having to adjust to the demands of the system, to the system that needs to be flexible enough to accommodate the diverse needs of all learners as inclusively as possible (DNE, 1999:3).

The aim of education is to prepare all children for future adult life. Jenkin and Sileo (1994:84) state that educational systems must redirect their energies and resources to ensure equitable treatment for all learners and to focus on developing skills and competencies that facilitate their successful functioning in society. In essence learners must be confronted with real life problems

2.12 Discriminating attitudes

Half the educators (50,8%) indicated that their schools do not have strategies in place to combat discriminatory attitudes towards LSEN. According to UNESCO (1994:ix) mainstream schools with inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities,

building an inclusive society and achieving education for all. Moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of learners and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system.

According to the Gauteng Department of Education (1996:1) the ultimate purpose of inclusive education is to contribute towards building an inclusive society in which all its members are valued, respected and able to fulfil their full potential.

2.13 Negative attitude

Responses indicate that (44%) of the educators agreed that mechanisms to address negative attitudes are available at their schools whilst (45,5%) said no such mechanisms exist at their schools. Lomofsky, Roberts and Mvumbi (1999:71) state that inclusive education requires that LSEN are not simply thought of with pity but viewed more positively in terms of their abilities rather than their disabilities.

Educators who hold negative attitudes would possibly reject learners with special educational needs if inclusive education was fully implemented in South African classrooms. Negative attitudes would impede the integration process and defeat the purpose of inclusive education. Attitudes towards inclusive education may be closely tied to educators' feelings of competency and effectiveness in educating these children.

Davies and Green (1998:97) found that a number of South African educators in mainstream classrooms were positively disposed towards inclusive education. Educators in some mainstream classrooms are already accommodating learners with a diverse range of needs. They work with learners of different ages and stages of development, cultural and linguistic diversity and a wide range of ability/disability and special educational needs.

To support the inclusion of learners with special educational needs, educators have to be sensitive not only to the particular needs of the individual learners, but also to their own attitudes and feelings.

2.14 Funding

More than sixty percent (64,9%) of the educators said that sufficient funding is not available at their school to implement inclusive education. Successful implementation of inclusive education will depend on the availability of *inter alia* financial resources. Cutbacks in the education budget, redeployment, low salaries, lack of resources, disciplinary problems, theft, vandalism and low educator morale, contribute to the negative feeling towards inclusive education among educators (Vlachou, 1997:53). Financial issues will have to be addressed carefully so as to be cost-effective (Donald, 1995:51).

An inclusion model must be cost-effective, implementable, sustainable and affordable (Muthukrishna & Schoeman, 2000:327).

2.15 Accessible transport

The White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy highlights the lack of accessible transport as a serious barrier to the full integration into society of people with disabilities and sets the objective to develop an accessible, affordable multi model public transport system that will meet the needs of the largest numbers of people at the lowest cost, while at the same time planning for those higher cost features which are essential to disabled people with greater mobility needs (Office of the Deputy President, 1997:32). The Department of Education is committed to finding ways to address the needs of learners with disabilities who are excluded from the education and training system because of the lack of transport or hostel facilities (Pretorius, 2001:25).

About two-thirds of the educators (62,3%) in the survey indicated that accessible public transport for learners with physical disabilities is not available.

The Brown School for disabled children in Durban has a bus service which fetches learners from near their homes and drops them off in the afternoon. For pupils who live far away from Browns there is a boarding establishment as part of the school. Fees (excluding boarding) are R2 000 per year. However, schools such as these cannot cope with the demand for their service. Most disabled children in South Africa do not have the kind of care that the children at school like the Browns School receive (Clarke, 1999:9).

Valuable information on adaptation of existing buildings, transport and infrastructures for learners with special educational needs can be obtained through collaboration and consultation.

The issue that was raised by most parents was the problem with transportation of their children. Some indicated that they could not use public transport because it was not easily accessible for their children, especially those who use wheel chairs (Pardesi:2001).

2.16 Harassment of LSEN

More than half of the educators (55,5%) said that their schools did not have procedures in place to address possible harassment of LSEN. The South African School Act states that "a public school must admit learners and serve their educational requirements without unfairly discriminating in any way" (RSA, 1996:6). This implies that depending on the wishes and based on the rights of all learners and their parents, including LSEN, no learners may be turned away from any public school if it is at all possible to accommodate the learner. This means

that schools may be legally obliged to provide appropriate educational support services and make structural adjustments to accommodate LSEN, should they want to attend a regular public school. Educators' attitudes to LSEN is important. Educators who are negative towards inclusive education very often do not have a clear understanding of the demands of changes they must implement and often lack adequate time to prepare for the implementation (Ainscow, 1992:3). They lack confidence in their own abilities to teach LSEN and they fear failure. Educators' negative attitudes are influenced by past experience of LSEN, availability and provision of sufficient support and resources, the burden of additional responsibility and the amount of time required of the educator to meet the needs of LSEN. According to Waldman (1993:88) learners with special educational needs face beatings from educators, teasing from fellow-learners and anger from parents. The community labels these children as retarded or naughty when they may be dyslexic or hyperactive, or have an attention deficit. The mildly mentally handicapped who either fail repeatedly or are passed without merit are what one educator called "just passengers in class". A policy to address harassment of LSEN should be part of the school's mission statement.

2.17 Access facilities to school buildings

Most of the respondents (61,8%) indicated that access facilities to school buildings for learners with physical disabilities are lacking at their schools. Only one-third (34%) agreed with the statement. According to Clarke (1999:41) the education system in South Africa is not yet prepared for inclusive education, the schools are not physically built to be accessible to disabled children, and the educators are not prepared to meet the special educational needs of inclusivity.

For the successful implementation of inclusive education facilities at schools will have to be suitably adapted to be accessible to all learners and teaching aids will have to be functional and available for all (Burden, 1995:52).

The NCSNET / NCESS report (DNE, 1997:71-72) discusses the provision of a "barrier-free access" to the built environment and states that the way in which the environment is developed and organized either contributes towards the independence and equality of people with disabilities, or acts as a barrier to achieving this. The Integrated National Disability Strategy (Office of the Deputy President, 1997:32) identifies a number of barriers which currently prevent people with disabilities from enjoying equal opportunities. This includes structural barriers in the built environment, such as flights of stairs, inaccessible toilets, inaccessible service points e.g. telephones, inaccessible entrances and problematic interior design e.g. fixed seats or inadequate floor space.

The challenge to school is to develop a barrier-free teaching and learning environment which accommodates the diverse needs of the learning population and enable all learners to move around freely (Lazarus, Daniels & Engelbrecht, 1999:50).

2.18 Parental Involvement

Programmes to promote parental involvement was available only at 32,5% of the schools in the survey, while 62,3% of the educators indicated that no programme for parental involvement pertaining to LSEN was available.

Since 1994 the new South African government has provided parents with a sound platform for pursuing the struggle for equal access for their children with special educational needs (Belknap, Roberts & Nyewe, 1999:172). Parental involvement may be regarded as the most essential factor to enable learners to respond adequately towards inclusive education (Shea & Bauer, 1985:3).

According to Burden (1995:50) parents should be empowered to be the main agents of change towards inclusive education. Parents should be allowed sufficient participation in decision-making regarding their children's education, in particular parents of children with disabilities (Premdev, 2000:5).

A culture of non-involvement and abdication of responsibility has consequently been created in some parents while others have been burdened with responsibility without support (Thurman & Widerstrom, 1985:19). Parents therefore need to be carefully counselled about children's rights issues, what inclusive education means, how it might work in different contexts, and what commitment they would need to make in partnership with the school (Belknap, Roberts & Nyewe, 1999:74).

5.2.9 Educators' perceptions of an inclusive classroom

Table 9 Frequency distribution according to the educators' perceptions of an inclusive classroom

Question number	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	Total
3.1	19 9,9%	152 79,6%	20 10,5 5	191 100%
3.2	124 64,9%	46 24,1%	21 11,0%	191 100%
3.3	168 88,0%	12 6,3%	11 5,8%	191 100%
3.4	172 90,1%	13 6,8%	6 3,1%	191 100%
3.5	47 25,6%	114 59,7%	30 15,7%	191 100%
3.6	182 95,3%	8 4,2%	1 0,5%	191 100%
3.7	176 92,1%	11 5,8%	4 2,1%	191 100%
3.8	186 97,4%	4 2,1%	1 0,5%	191 100%
3.9	160 83,7%	19 9,9%	12 6,3%	191 100%
3.10	185 96,6%	1 0,5%	5 2,6%	191 100%
3.11	182 95,3%	4 2,1%	5 2,6%	191 100%
3.12	173 90,6%	12 6,3%	6 3,1%	191 100%
3.13	124 64,4%	48 25,1%	19 9,9%	191 100%
3.14	171 89,5%	12 6,3%	8 4,2%	191 100%
3.15	184 96,3%	5 2,6%	2 1,0%	191 100%
3.16	112 58,6%	54 28,3%	25 13,1%	191 100%
3.17	183 95,8%	3 1,6%	5 2,6%	191 100%
3.18	185 96,6%	5 2,6%	1 0,5%	191 100%

The responses in Table 9 reflect the perceptions and attitudes of primary school educators towards inclusive education — a policy that stipulates that all learners irrespective of race, gender, class, religion, disability, culture or sexual preference have a right to access in a learning environment, in a single system of education that values, respects and accommodates diversity. In the following discussion the findings relating to educators' perceptions of an inclusive classroom will be individually analyzed, interpreted and commented upon.

3.1 Changes in teaching procedures

The majority of the educators (79,6%) hold the perception that to educate LSEN there must be fundamental changes to mainstream classes and teaching. From responses it appears that this contributes to the negative perception of educators towards inclusive education. According to Moore and Gilbreath (1989:9) educators feel threatened by having to change their tried and tested teaching methods and having to cope with too much diversity in their classroom.

Inclusive education implies that LSEN must be confronted with a differentiated curriculum and evaluation system which will enable them to progress at their own rate and at their own levels while placed in mainstream classes. Educators will have to be adequately prepared to utilize orthodidactic devices as well as medical and paramedical assistive devices required by some of the LSEN (Nell, 1996:35). Inclusive education is assisting all children by facilitating problem-solving and learning to develop their abilities by exposing them to the abilities of normal people, and *vice-versa* (Ainscow, 1993:8). This involves drastic fundamental changes for school curricula, the role of educators in the classroom and educator training or development.

3.2 Learner diversity

Most of the educators (64,9%) indicated that they experience difficulty in meeting the needs of learner diversity. This possibly reflects a negative attitude of the respondents towards inclusive classrooms. The Green Paper on special needs and education support services points out that ordinary educators are now challenged with the task to accommodate diversity and to prevent and address barriers to learning and development (DNE, 1998:36). Educators perhaps felt inadequately prepared and therefore unable to cope with LSEN in the classroom (DNE, 1999:10).

In their research Lomofsky, Roberts and Mvambu (1999:71) found that a number of South African educators are already accommodating learners with a diverse range of needs. They work with learners of different ages and stages of development, cultural and linguistic diversity and a wide range of ability/disability and special educational needs. According to their findings a low percentage of educators (24,1%) were able to meet the needs of learner diversity. To support inclusive education educators have to be sensitive not only to the particular needs of individual learners, but also to their own attitudes and feelings (Pott, 2000:302).

3.3 Remedial educators

In most mainstream schools there are a significant percentage of learners with learning problems (Barnard, Le Roux & Van Zyl, 1993:1). These learners require specialised help to ensure that their learning potential is realised and for this purpose intensive teaching, known as remedial teaching is necessary (Steenkamp & Steenkamp, 1992:6). The majority of respondents (88%) were in agreement that they could educate LSEN better with the help of a remedial educator. In spite of normal, intellectual, physical and sensory abilities the disabled child is affected in such a way that their learning problems cannot be rectified in the normal class

situation. Remedial teaching is mainly given on an individual basis due to the uniqueness of each child and his specific learning disability Derbyshire, (1991:377). Du Toit (1991:5) holds the opinion that remedial teaching has improved the performance of LSEN. Rationalization of educational remedial services has already led to massive cutbacks, both in terms of finances and manpower. For this reason the question arises whether the influence of remedial teaching on learners with special educational needs would make a difference to mainstream educators' perceptions towards inclusive education (Barnard, Le Roux & Van Zyl, 1993:13).

3.4 LSEN requires more time

A high percentage of the respondents (90,1%) admitted that educators have to spend more time attending to the needs of learners with special educational needs. According to Czapo (1992:253) educators are very concerned about the "normal" learner in their classroom. The general sentiment appeared to be that the "normal" learners in the system would be neglected due to the educators' time and effort being consumed by the LSEN in their class.

Booyse (1995:51) points out that the standards would possibly drop due to the neglect of the "regular" learners in order to accommodate the learner with special educational needs. Educators feel that it was not fair to expect the regular learners to support and carry the LSEN when their focus should be on their own education (Pillay, 2001).

3.5 Negative feeling towards LSEN

Most of the educators (59,7%) said they do not experience negative feelings towards LSEN because of inclusion. Positive feelings towards inclusive education

is closely tied to educators' feelings of competency and effectiveness in educating learners with disabilities (Moore & Gilbreath, 1998:10).

Davies and Green (1998:97) suggest that often educators need other professionals to solve learner problems rather than have the professionals help the educators to effect changes themselves. Sleeter (1995:156) makes the point that until schools develop an understanding of why change is necessary, most educators will perceive learners with special needs as not their problem. He also stated that inclusive education might have a negative effect on both LSEN and their peers in regular classrooms. Only 24,6% of the respondents agreed that they experienced negative feelings towards LSEN because of inclusion.

3.6 Knowledge and training

The majority of the respondents (95,3%) agreed that educators need more training to educate LSEN. The respondents felt that they had neither the training or the ability to work with LSEN. According to Schechtman and Or (1996:137) educators need to receive in-service education and training to gain the necessary knowledge, skills and values to cope with learners of varying abilities and diverse needs. Policy makers must therefore focus on knowledge, skills and practical assistance rather than attending to educators' perceptions, needs and emotional inhibitions. According to Booyse (1995:59) the objective is not to train subject educators as specialised remedial educators but to provide information about problems that may be encountered and how these may be solved. The successful implementation of inclusive education will depend on in-service training and ongoing retraining (educator development of all educators). This training should have a reflective and research approach, "exploring" innovatory ways of responding to day-to-day concerns in the workplace (Ainscow, 1993:7).

3.8 Class size

According to Clarke (1999:9) in the current class sizes of 38 learners to one educator, LSEN would not receive anywhere near the kind of attention they need. Therefore, in South Africa, inclusive education is still a dream that we must strive for. The majority of the respondents (97,4%) supported the statement that educators feel they would not have the time to give adequate individual attention to LSEN, because of the large number of learners in their classes. An issue that seems to bear importance for most of the respondents was the large class size and the perception that schools were understaffed.

Educators generally felt that having to cope with the normal day-to-day problems in these large classes, was nearly more than they were able to do. The concern aired was that an impaired learner demanded so much more attention, yet no allowance was made for this by the education department in the prescribed class sizes (Pretorius, 2000:6). Some of the respondents felt that inclusion could work if the class sizes were smaller. This coincides with the research of York, Van der Cook, MacDonald, Heiso-Nett & Caughey (1992:246) and More and Gilbreath (1998:9) which indicates that a good predictor of more positive attitudes towards inclusion is smaller class size.

3.9 Curriculum

More than eighty percent (83,7%) of the respondents were in agreement that LSEN should follow an adapted curriculum. According to Nell (1996:35) inclusive education does not imply the dumping of LSEN into mainstream classes. It implies that a learner is placed in mainstream classes but with the necessary support to be able to cope in the classroom. It also implies that LSEN must be confronted with a differentiated curriculum and education system which will enable

them to progress at their own rate and at their own levels while placed in mainstream classes. Outcomes-Based Education is designed to have the capacity to respond to diversity in learning needs, based on a belief that all learners can learn successfully. All learners are understood to possess unique individual characteristics. Instruction therefore requires inherently differentiated teaching based on the learning characteristics of the learners (Naicker, 1999:21).

The curriculum will have to be adapted to suit the learners rather than learners fit into the curriculum (*Curriculum 2005: Lifelong learning for the 21st century*; 1997:4). An OBE curriculum is more flexible and makes allowances for variations in learning rates, pace and style. The OBE curriculum thus provides an ideal opportunity to implement inclusive education successfully, (Lomofsky, Roberts & Mvambu, 1999:76). Fullan (1993:23) argues that support for educators in the development of the curriculum is necessary to ensure that the diverse needs of the learners in mainstream classrooms are addressed. The curriculum will have to be totally readapted, reflecting contextual aspects as well as the input from different disciplines and sectors of life (Lazarus & Donald, 1995:51).

3.10 Collaboration with educators

The collaborative role of educators include actively planning for skills transfer to educators in similar circumstances, team teaching, directing small-group instruction in mainstream schools, special education settings and training, and peer tutors (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997:138; Friend & Cook, 1996:239; Phillips & McCulloch, 1990:301). A network between schools could assist in sharing valuable knowledge and expertise as well as providing support. A high percentage of respondents (96,6%) indicated that there is a need to share information with other educators who are jointly responsible for learners who are experiencing barriers to learning.

3.11 Attitude towards LSEN

More than ninety percent (95,3%) of the educators said that educators should not discriminate against LSEN. According to Davies and Green (1998:97) educators who have negative perceptions of inclusive education would reject learners with special educational needs, which would hinder the successful implementation of inclusive education. Baker and Gottlieb (1980:6) state that educators' attitudes are expected to influence the extent to which LSEN become not only physically integrated, but integral members of regular classes, benefiting academically, socially and emotionally from the experience.

Vlachou (1997:53) maintains that educators can directly introduce anti-bias material in the classroom and generate discussion from either factual information or fiction involving people with disabilities. They may also make use of role-play and experiential activities in the classroom or arrange for the class to meet with people with disabilities.

3.12 Acceptance of LSEN

Successful inclusive education expects mainstream educators to accept LSEN like any other "normal" child (Barton, 1993:20). The majority of the respondents (90,6%) supported this statement. Meyer, Nagel & Synder (1993:19) say "inclusion is unconditional and program must fit the child rather than children fitting the program". The inclusive classroom should foster acceptance, tolerance and caring in all learners. The educator has the responsibility of creating and maintaining a classroom atmosphere which nurtures the personal, cognitive and social development of all learners.

3.13 Treatment of LSEN

Nearly two-thirds of the respondents (64,4%) indicated that educators should avoid treating learners with special educational needs more sympathetically in class. Lomofsky, Roberts and Mvambu (1997:71) say that inclusion requires that LSEN are not simply thought of with pity but viewed more positively in terms of their abilities rather than their disabilities. Care should be taken not to emphasise individual disabilities or special needs but to look at the class as a whole in a total context (Ainscow, 1992:18).

3.14 Unacceptable behaviour

Most of the respondents (89,5%) were in agreement that educators should not overlook unacceptable behaviour of learners with special educational needs. Wolfensberger (1994:20) points out that in an inclusive classroom all learners are important, but that those who experience barriers to learning and development make special demands on educators. Educators should deal with the problem of unacceptable behaviour in an objective and educationally effective way, otherwise greater harm may very well be caused to LSEN. Booyse (1995:58) states that unacceptable behaviour from LSEN should not be overlooked. Educators should be trained to develop skills to assist these learners in an appropriate way within the regular classroom and effectively cooperate with parents, other educators, educator consultation teams and others in order to alleviate or solve the children's problems.

3.15 Tolerance

A high percentage of respondents (96,3%) confirmed that the education of LSEN requires more tolerance from educators. The success of inclusive education is dependent on the educators' perceptions of special needs and tolerance of LSEN

and the extent of their willingness to make adaptations to accommodate these learners (Alizan & Jelas, 2000:52). Educators may have negative perceptions of inclusive education because they lack confidence in their own abilities to teach LSEN; they fear failure and felt that these learners require more patience. To provide "excellence for all learners", educators felt that LSEN would be best served in separate educational facilities for example remedial or special schools, or special classes attached to mainstream schools (Lloyd, 2000:4(2)).

According to Forlin and Engelbrecht (1997:202) it is possible that the normal learners in class would be disadvantaged and neglected as a result of all the time and attention needed by LSEN.

3.16 Discipline

The majority of the respondents (87,6%) indicated that all learners must be disciplined in the same manner. Lomofsky, Roberts and Mvambu (1999:72) maintain that educators have the responsibility of creating and maintaining a classroom atmosphere which nurtures the personal, cognitive and social development of all learners. Discipline in the classroom will be influenced by the ethos of the school. Most schools follow a democratic system of discipline which encourages the participation of parents, teachers, learners and the community. Ainscow (1992:18) states that care must be taken not to emphasise the individuals with disabilities or special educational needs but to look at the class as a whole when disciplining learners. Csapo (1992:244) maintains that all learners must be disciplined in an appropriate manner within the regular classroom. Educators and school management should effectively cooperate with parents, other teachers, teacher consultation teams and others to alleviate or solve the learner's problem.

3.17 Understanding of LSEN

More than ninety percent (95,8%) of the respondents were in agreement that learners with special educational needs, demand better understanding. Elliot (1996:223) states that educators need to understand the challenge of successful inclusive education and to recognise that they do have the power and the responsibility to act as agents of change in education and in society.

The majority of the educators felt that they have not been trained to cope with the diversity of learners now entering school. Dr Gordon Porter (Unesco, 26 July 1997) maintains that all educators have the skill to teach all learners — if they want to.

Positive attitudes by educators will influence their perceptions of inclusive education. Hall and Engelbrecht (1999:232) state that most of the barriers in implementing inclusive education are embedded in the emotional predisposition of educators.

Davies and Green (1998:100) found that a number of South African educators in mainstream classrooms were positively disposed towards inclusion. Educators were already accommodating learners with a diverse range of needs. They work with learners of different ages and stages of development, cultural and linguistic diversity, a wide range of abilities/disabilities and special needs.

To support the inclusion of learners with special educational needs, educators have to understand not only the particular needs of the individual learners but also their own attitudes and feelings concerning LSEN.

3.18 Consultation between special and mainstream educators

More than ninety-five percent (96,6%) of the respondents were in agreement that regular consultation with special school educators should be made available to mainstream educators. Consultation should include sharing knowledge and learner-related information for educators who are responsible for learners who are experiencing barriers to learning, and to provide a platform for other collaborative roles such as problem-solving (Pugach & Johnston, 1995:123).

Through the process of problem-solving, mainstream and special school educators use their collective expertise in a collegial, equal status relationship (Rainforth *et al.*, 1992). This partnership allows special school educators to prepare alternative teaching strategies or supplementary instructional materials by special school educators in consultation with the mainstream school educator.

Collaborative problem-solving may also entail the periodic observation of learners who are experiencing barriers to learning in mainstream classes, in order to identify areas of difficulty or monitor the success of intervention strategies (Hall, Campher, Smit, Oswald & Engelbrecht, 1999:163).

5.3 **INFERENCEAL STATISTICS**

5.3.1 Introduction

Inferential statistics are used to make inferences or predictions about the similarity of a sample to the population from which the sample is drawn. McMillan and Schumacher (1997:204) state that since many research questions require the estimation of population characteristics from an available sample or subjects or behaviour, inferential statistics are commonly used in reporting results. Inferential

statistics depend on descriptive statistics. Without a complete understanding of descriptive statistics, therefore, inferential statistics make very little sense.

5.3.2 Independent and dependent variables

Variables differ from study to study and are determined by the hypotheses under investigation. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1997:239) variables are classified on the basis of their use. In this study independent and dependent variables will be used.

(1) Independent variables

In experimental research the variable that is manipulated, the variable that is hypothesized (thought to be), the cause of the effect, is the independent variable (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1990:239). An independent variable is a variable that is thought to influence or predict another variable, but no outside or previous influence on itself is being investigated. The independent variable is under direct control of the researcher who may vary it in any way he desires.

For the purpose of this study the following independent variables were selected:

- ▶ Gender of respondents.
- ▶ Qualifications of respondents.
- ▶ Years' experience as an educator.

(2) Dependent variables

A dependent variable is a variable which is dependent upon an antecedent variable. It is the variable that should be assessed. In this study the dependent variables

were represented by the questions within the questionnaire (Appendix C). The questions reflected the educators' perceptions of inclusive education concerning the following:

- ▶ Facilities and/or strategies for successful inclusive education available at respondents' schools.
- ▶ Respondents' perceptions of an inclusive classroom.

5.3.3 The hypothesis

For the purpose of this investigation the research hypothesis is formulated as a null hypothesis and reads as follows:

There is no relation between educators' perception of inclusive education and the effectiveness thereof.

For the aim of this study the null hypotheses is elaborated as follows:

Hypothesis 1:

The availability of facilities and/or strategies for the successful implementation of inclusive education has no relation to:

- ▶ the gender of the respondents;
- ▶ the qualifications of the respondents; and
- ▶ the years of experience as an educator.

Hypothesis 2

The educators' perceptions of inclusive education has no relation to:

- ▶ the gender of the respondents;
- ▶ the qualifications of the respondents; and
- ▶ the years of experience as an educator.

5.3.4 The Chi-Squared (X^2) statistical test of significance

Chi-Square is a statistical procedure that is used as an inferential statistic with nominal data, such as frequency counts, and ordinal data, such as percentages and proportions (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:38). Chi-Square is a test of significance which compares observed frequencies with expected frequencies. It is a measure of discrepancy between observed and expected frequencies. Observed frequencies are obtained empirically while expected frequencies are generated on the basis of some hypotheses or theoretical speculation.

In this study the X^2 statistic is used to test for significant differences between proportions. Critical values for X^2 are taken at the 5% and 1% level. Symbols are as follows:

- ▶ $p < 0,05$ to denote significance at the 5% level;
- ▶ $p < 0,01$ to denote significance at the 1% level; and
- ▶ $p > 0,05$ to denote no significance.

5.3.5 The relation between the educators' gender, qualifications, experiences as educators and the successful implementation of inclusive education

Hypothesis 1

The availability of facilities and/or strategies for the successful implementation of inclusive education has no relation with:

- ▶ the gender of the respondents;
- ▶ the qualifications of the respondents; and
- ▶ the years of experience as an educator.

Each item in Table 10 has been formulated as a null hypothesis and reflects the availability and/or strategies for the successful implementation of inclusive education at the respondents' schools.

Table 10 The Chi-squared and p-value of the dependent variables against the independent variables of the successful implementation of inclusive education.

Question number	Gender of educators N = (2) p-value df = (2)	Qualifications of educators N = (2) p-value df = (6)	Experience as educator N = (2) p-value df = (4)
2.1	0,255 0,880	3,872 0,706	22,220 0,074
2.2	2,724 0,436	5,866 0,753	20,354 0,449
2.3	1,870 0,393	5,769 0,450	5,024 0,985
2.4	1,257 0,553	0,765 0,096	14,179 0,436
2.5	3,348 0,341	9,243 0,415	10,786 0,967
2.6	3,149 0,369	6,392 0,700	11,136 0,960
2.7	1,136 0,567	13,044 0,042*	13,056 0,522
2.8	6,060 0,109	5,953 0,745	10,780 0,967
2.9	3,022 0,388	7,578 0,577	8,076 0,995
2.10	1,018 0,797	6,471 0,692	19,785 0,535
2.11	4,813 0,186	13,038 0,161	10,054 0,582
2.12	2,862 0,413	17,962 0,036*	14,134 0,864
2.13	1,250 0,535	10,047 0,123	8,784 0,845
2.14	3,022 0,388	10,490 0,312	18,944 0,589
2.15	0,476 0,92	5,498 0,789	27,340 0,160
2.16	2,744 2,433	11,005 0,275	20,973 0,461
2.17	1,219 0,748	3,339 0,946	22,842 0,352
2.18	6,575	6,575	16,699

* Significant at the 5% level ($p < 0,05$) N = Number of groups

** Significant at the 1% level ($p < 0,01$) df = degree of freedom

According to Table 10 a significant relation ($p < 0,05$) exists between the following:

- ▶ The qualifications of the educators and their perception of the guidance and counselling facilities for parents of LSEN.

- ▶ The qualifications of educators and their perceptions of the available strategies to eliminate discriminating attitudes towards LSEN.

The null hypotheses of the above two items are rejected. In relation to hypothesis 1 the Chi-square test was found not statistically significant for the majority of null hypotheses as represented by the items in Table 10 and will thus be accepted because there is no statistically significant relation ($p > 0,05$), between the independent and dependent variables (cf. 5.3.2). Educators' gender, qualifications and experience as educators show no statistically significant relation to their perception of the successful implementation of inclusive education.

To explain how the X^2 values in Table 10 were calculated, a more detailed analysis of the relation between some of the independent variables and dependent variables will be given by means of cross tabulation in Table 10.1.

Table 10.1 The relation between the educators' gender (Question 1.1) and their perceptions of a school-based support team for assisting educators with LSEN (Question 2.1)

Gender	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	Total
Male	19 9,9%	34 17,8%	3 1,6%	56 29,3%
Female	42 22,0%	87 45,5%	6 3,1%	135 70,7%
TOTAL	61 31,9%	121 63,4%	9 4,7%	191 100%

$$X^2 = 0,255 \text{ df} = 2 = 0,880 \text{ (cf. column 1, row 1 in Table 10)}$$

The value of $p > 0,05$ indicate that there is no statistically significant relation between the educators' gender and their perceptions of a school-based support team for assisting educators with LSEN.

Table 10.2 The relation between the educators' qualifications (Question 1.3) and their perceptions of the strategies to eliminate discriminating attitudes towards LSEN (Question 2.12)

Qualifications	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	Total
Certificates only	1 0,5%	0 0,0%	0 0,0%	1 0,5%
Diplomas only	42 22,0%	42 22,0%	6 3,1%	90 47,1%
Degree + Diploma	30 15,7%	53 27,7%	11 5,8%	94 49,2%
Degree only	1 0,5%	2 1,0%	3 1,6%	6 3,1%
TOTAL	74 38,7%	97 50,8%	20 10,5%	191 100%

The value of $p < 0,05$ and there is a significant statistical relation between the educators' qualifications and their perceptions of the strategies to eliminate discriminating attitudes towards LSEN.

5.3.6 The relation between the educators' gender, qualifications, experience as educators and their perceptions of an inclusive classroom

Hypothesis 2

The educators' perceptions of an inclusive classroom has no relation with:

- ▶ the gender of the respondents;
- ▶ the qualifications of the respondents; and
- ▶ the years of experience as an educator.

Each item in Table 11 has been formulated as a null hypothesis and reflects the educators' perceptions of an inclusive classroom.

Table 11 The Chi-square and p-value of the dependent variables against the independent variables of the educators' perceptions of an inclusive classroom.

Question number	Gender of educators N = (2) p-value df = (2)	Qualifications of educators N = (2) p-value df = (6)	Experience as educator N = (2) p-value df = (6)
3.1	0,696 0,706	10,064 0,122	11,362 0,657
3.2	67,313 0,097	20,174 0,017*	34,165 0,031*
3.3	0,373 0,830	18,257 0,006**	16,990 0,257
3.4	2,571 0,276	6,821 0,338	12,965 0,529
3.5	3,442 0,328	4,803 0,851	13,295 0,898
3.6	4,924 0,177	92,311 0,000**	13,240 0,900
3.7	2,757 0,431	49,525 0,000	18,374 0,625
3.8	0,6155 0,7351	35,173 0,000**	19,762 0,138
3.9	4,226 0,238	5,419 00,796	14,425 0,927
3.10	0,639 0,726	1,414 0,965	16,038 0,311
3.11	0,256 0,880	6,789 0,341	8,073 0,885
3.12	2,571 0,463	3,441 0,944	15,672 0,788
3.13	2,573 0,462	2,953 0,966	20,546 0,487
3.14	1,206 0,547	4,056 0,669	6,965 0,936
3.15	5,280 0,152	41,483 0,000**	24,403 0,274
3.16	1,383 0,501	2,097 0,911	7,094 0,931
3.17	4,419 0,211	4,632 0,865	19,666 0,543
3.18	0,639 0,726	3,076 0,700	8,583 0,857

- * Significant at the 5% level ($p < 0,05$) N = number of groups
- ** Significant at the 1% level ($p < 0,01$) df = degree of freedom

Table 11 shows statistically significant relations ($p < 0,05$) between:

- ▶ the qualifications of education and their perceptions that they could better educate LSEN with the help of remedial educators.
- ▶ the qualifications of educators and their need for more training to educate LSEN.
- ▶ the qualifications of educators and their acknowledgement that they require more knowledge to educate LSEN.
- ▶ the qualifications of educators and the feeling that the number of learners in a class make individual attention difficult.
- ▶ the qualifications of educators and the feeling that the education of LSEN require more time.
- ▶ the qualifications of educators and their experiencing difficulties in meeting the needs of the diversity of learners (LSEN and others).
- ▶ the teaching experience of educators and their experience of difficulties in meeting the needs of the diversity of learners (LSEN and others).

Except for the abovementioned, all the null-hypotheses formulated in Table 11 will be accepted as there is no statistically significant relation ($p > 0,05$) between the independent variables (cf. 5.3.2) and the dependent variables (questions in Table 11). The gender qualifications and years of experience of the educators have no relation to their perceptions of an inclusive classroom.

To explain how the X^2 values in Table 11 were calculated, a more detailed analysis of the relation between some of the independent variables and dependent variables will be given by means of cross tabulation.

Table 11.1 The relation between the educators' qualifications (Question 1.3) and their acknowledgement that they think they could better educate LSEN with the help of remedial educators (Question 3.3)

Qualifications	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	Total
Certificates only	0 0,0%	0 0,0%	1 0,5%	1 0,5%
Diplomas only	81 31,9%	11 11,5%	7 3,7%	90 47,1%
Degree + Diploma	60 31,4%	24 12,6%	10 5,2%	94 49,2%
Degree only	3 1,6%	0 0,0%	3 1,8%	5 3,1%
TOTAL	124 64,9%	48 24,1%	21 11,0%	191 100%

$X^2 = 18,257$ $df = 6$ $p = 0,006$ (cf. column 2, row 3 in Table 11)

The value of $p < 0,01$ and there is a statistically significant relation between the educators' qualifications and their acknowledgement that they think they could better educate LSEN with the help of remedial educators.

Table 11.2 The relation between the educators' gender (Question 1.1) and their perceptions that they require more knowledge to educate LSEN learners (Question 3.7)

Gender	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	Total
Male	51 26,7%	4 2,1%	1 0,5%	56 29,3%
Female	125 65,4%	7 3,7%	3 1,6%	135 70,7%
TOTAL	176 92,1%	11 5,8%	4 2,1%	191 100%

$X^2 = 2,757$ $df = 2$ $p = 0,431$ (cf. column 1, row 7 in Table 11)

The value of $p > 0,05$ and there is no statistically significant relation between the educators' gender and their perception that they require more knowledge to educate LSEN.

5.4 TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS

As a result of the findings from the inferential statistics (cf. 5.3.4, 5.3.5) the null hypothesis as formulated in 5.3.3 has to be accepted because there is no statistically significant relation ($p > 0,05$) between the majority of independent and dependent variables as represented in Tables 10 and 11.

The educators' gender, qualifications and experiences as educators have no relation to their perceptions of:

- ▶ the successful implementation of inclusive education.
- ▶ educators' perceptions of an inclusive classroom.

The null hypothesis as formulated in 1.4 has to be accepted.

Table 11.2 The relation between the educators' gender (Question 1.1) and their perceptions that they require more knowledge to educate LSEN learners (Question 3.7)

Gender	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	Total
Male	51 26,7%	4 2,1%	1 0,5%	56 29,3%
Female	125 65,4%	7 3,7%	3 1,6%	135 70,7%
TOTAL	176 92,1%	11 5,8%	4 2,1%	191 100%

$X^2 = 2,757$ $df = 2$ $p = 0,431$ (cf. column 1, row 7 in Table 11)

The value of $p > 0,05$ and there is no statistically significant relation between the educators' gender and their perception that they require more knowledge to educate LSEN.

5.4 TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS

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The educators' gender, qualifications and experiences as educators have no relation to their perceptions of:

- ▶ the successful implementation of inclusive education.
- ▶ educators' perceptions of an inclusive classroom.

The null hypothesis as formulated in 1.4 has to be accepted.

5.5 SUMMARY

In this chapter information derived from the questionnaire provided to the school principals, deputy principals, Heads of departments and educators was presented in table format and analyzed. Section one dealt with an analysis of the biographical information of the respondents. In section two, descriptive statistics were used to analyze the successful implementation of inclusive education in South Africa. In section three the educators' perceptions of an inclusive classroom was analyzed to establish whether educators had positive or negative perceptions of inclusive education. Inferential statistics were also used to make inferences where statistically significant differences between the observed and expected frequencies were found.

In chapter six the research will be summarised and certain recommendations will be made in view of the findings of this research.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 SUMMARY

6.1.1 Statement of the problem

In this study an inquiry was made into educators' perceptions of inclusive education. In the literature study and through empirical investigation it was found that educators are faced with many challenges concerning the successful implementation of inclusive education. Educators feel they have to change their tried and tested teaching methods in order to cope with more diversity in their classrooms. Furthermore, most educators feel inadequately prepared and equipped for inclusion and therefore unable to cope with the LSEN in their classrooms. The assistance educators need concerning the successful implementation of inclusive education are decreased class sizes, adequate human and material resources and relevant training.

6.1.2 The development of inclusive education in South Africa

The shift from special education to inclusive education signals a dramatic philosophical change; it has to be noted that inclusive education consists of both special and ordinary school educators and vast differences exist between the management of an ordinary school and a special school.

For inclusive education to be successfully implemented legislation should ensure that all learners with special educational needs join mainstream schools and changes should be made to:

- ▶ A system of assessment and evaluation.
- ▶ Curriculum and subject content.
- ▶ Individualised educational programmes.
- ▶ Professionals who are adequately trained and willing to be retrained.
- ▶ All stakeholders including professionals, parents and community must commit to the policy of inclusion.
- ▶ Financial issues.
- ▶ Support at school and district level.
- ▶ Public transportation.
- ▶ Educators and parental attitudes towards inclusion.
- ▶ Class size should be such as to enable educators to give adequate attention.
- ▶ Facilities must be adopted to be accessible to all learners.

6.1.3 **Educators and inclusive education**

With the research it was necessary to establish a set of values, attitudes, beliefs, needs and teaching strategies which one could measure the educator's perceptions of inclusive education. This was necessitated by the fact that the new policy in specialised education implies that learners with special educational needs have a

right to ordinary schools where the classroom environment is recognised to meet the needs of all learners.

The success of inclusive education is a challenge to educate in ordinary schools. The needs of educators was categorised into three main areas, namely:

- ▶ emotional needs;
- ▶ the need for knowledge and skills; and
- ▶ the need for support.

One of the key areas which the educator has to take into account is how to accommodate and provide specific service to learners who are experiencing barriers to learning and development.

Research has indicated that educators in ordinary schools generally express negative attitude towards inclusive education for the following reasons:

- ▶ Lack of knowledge.
- ▶ Large class size.
- ▶ High stress level.
- ▶ Physical barriers to the built-in environment.
- ▶ Lack of support.

The attitudes of educators towards inclusive education is influenced by their level of competency and effectiveness.

The success of inclusive education in South Africa depends on how school principals manage change, motivate their staff and learners, other stakeholders in education and establish a relationship with the community it serves.

One of the key elements to be taken into account is the fact that educators have to manage change effectively and complement new teaching strategies for the successful implementation of inclusive education. This is due to the fact that education in South Africa is in a process of transformation and all stakeholders have to be empowered to be able to accept the changing environment in which all learners can learn and develop.

6.1.4 Planning the research

The questionnaire was aimed at principals, heads of departments, deputy principals and educators from both ordinary and special schools. The information sought for this investigation was not available from any other source and had to be acquired directly from the respondents. The aim of the questionnaire was to determine the educators' perceptions of inclusive education in South African classrooms, and to establish performance criteria with which to measure the effectiveness of educators in implementing inclusive education successfully, as well as to determine any possible areas of development in its implementation.

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

6.1.5 Presentation and analysis of the research data

The purpose of this chapter was to statistically analyze and discuss data collected from the questionnaire completed by 191 educators, which included school principals, deputy principals, heads of departments and educators. Comments were offered and interpretations were made of the findings. At the outset an explanation and description was provided as to the methods employed in the

categorisation of the responses and the analysis of the data. This was followed by the presentation and discussions of the responses to the questions in the questionnaire.

6.1.6 Aim of the study

The researcher formulated specific aims (cf. 1.6) to determine the course of the study. Some of these aims were realised through the literature study which was made from various sources available nationally and internationally. Documents were also obtained from Australia, New Zealand, The United Kingdom, United States, Britain and Scotland. An empirical survey consisting of a structured questionnaire as basis was used together with the literature study, to determine the educators' perceptions of inclusive education and determine performance criteria with which to measure the effectiveness of educators in implementing inclusive education. On the basis of the findings of this study certain recommendations are offered.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.2.1 The curriculum, institutional development and assessment

(1) Rationale

In a developing country like South Africa where thousands of LSEN learners with barriers to learning and development must be assisted in the most economical yet effective way, inclusion is not only a viable solution but the best way of transforming educational policy to address the imbalances and neglect of the past and to bring the country in line with international standards of recognition of human rights. Inclusion is also the best way of expressing that educators really

care for everyone including those who were previously excluded. Before the implementation of inclusive education in South African classrooms changes needs to be made to the curriculum, institutions and methods of assessment.

(2) Recommendations

The recommendation is that in order for inclusive education to be implemented successfully in South Africa the Department of Education must:

- ▶ Ensure that the Outcomes-Based approach to education and training address the problems of special educational needs.
- ▶ A barrier free access to the built environment be essential for inclusive education.
- ▶ There must be ongoing campaigns to raise public awareness and address discriminatory attitudes within and outside the education system.
- ▶ Develop on integrated system of education where the separate system of education 'special' and 'ordinary' be integrated into one system responsive to the diverse needs of the learner population.
- ▶ All centres of learning should reflect an inclusive ethos and engage in whole school and centre development to address the diverse needs of all learners.
- ▶ There should be a move away from supporting individual learners to supporting the system to be responsive to diversity.

- ▶ A holistic approach to institutional development to facilitate a positive culture of learning and teaching, all aspects of a centre of learning have to be developed that would include strategic planning and evaluation, organizational leadership and management, staff development and other mechanisms.
- ▶ Centres of learning would have to be put in place with ongoing anti-discrimination and human rights programmes.
- ▶ The education system must provide a flexible curriculum which is responsive to differences in the learner population and one that ensures that all learners can participate effectively in the process.
- ▶ The development of health promoting centres of learning is essential for the implementation of inclusive education.
- ▶ Teaching materials and learning materials should accommodate the diverse needs of the learner population.
- ▶ A centre based learning support team would ensure that support is accessible to educators, learners, parents and communities.
- ▶ A centre should be established for continuous assessment for early identification of learners at risk, assessment and intervention, ongoing assessment of the system, parent and learner involvement in the curriculum.

6.2.2 Utilization and development of human resources

(1) Rationale

Successful implementation of inclusive education will depend upon South Africa's utilization and development of its human resources. In South Africa there has been a history of inadequate ongoing teacher development. This has led to insecurity, low self-esteem, and a lack of innovative practices in the classroom to meet the needs of a diverse learner population.

The policy of inclusion however, makes it necessary for teacher training institutions to reassess the basic training given to prospective educators. Subjects such as orthopedagogics must be a compulsory subject in the basic training programmes for all educators. This will enable educators of the future to be ready for the demands that the South African school population will make on them.

(2) Recommendations

The recommendations are:

- ▶ Training in special educational needs should be given in a structural manner to ensure that all educators receive equal training.
- ▶ Develop a flexible and integrated support system.
- ▶ Remedial educators and educators with diplomas in specialised education who have already undergone training can also provide valuable service in mainstream schools where trained experts fulfil a supportive role.

- ▶ Exports from educational practice, representing the various population groups should be involved in the training of educators. Such experts could act as guest lecturers, offering lectures at various training institutions and could include subject educators from schools for special education or educators from a specific cultural group. In this way educators would receive first-hand knowledge from educational practice.
- ▶ Ongoing in-service and pre-service training courses on LSEN should be offered at all training institutions, thus enabling educators to deal with the problem in the classroom.
- ▶ The training of the centre based learning support team (CBLT) coordinators, intersectoral partnership, rationalization of current educational support personnel for new roles, education management development, NGO involvement, parent empowerment and development, should be encouraged.
- ▶ All human resources in our institutions and communities should be used optimally and in a structured manner.

6.2.3 **Governance and funding**

(1) **Rationale**

In a developing country such as South Africa it is impossible to continue with the highly specialised high cost model of support currently available to a small minority of learners; mainly white and Indian learners. The inadequacy in provision for African learners in particular those in rural areas, is extreme. Despite the introduction of compulsory education in South Africa many learners continue to remain outside the formal education system, many being those with disabilities who have been prevented from entering ordinary schools.

Research carried out by the National commission on Special Needs in Education and the National Committee on Education Support Services showed a very low enrolment of learners with special needs in ordinary schools and the existence of only a few community projects offering limited provision. Street children make up a large sector of the learner population, estimated to be about 10 000 children which is currently not catered for in the formal sector.

Inclusion seems to promise that it will enhance not only the attainments of learners with disabilities but, by drawing the attention of schools to individual differences, the attainment of all learners will be enhanced, thereby developing the country's economy by providing a work force with appropriate skills.

(2) Recommendation

Governance and funding recommendations are related to:

- ▶ The active participation and commitment of all stakeholders in governance structures, the infused capacity of all sections in provincial and national education departments to meet the diverse range of learners and system needs.
- ▶ A new model for funding to address barriers to learning and development.
- ▶ A funding partnership between state and external funding sources, conditional funding, earmarked funding and funding accountability.
- ▶ An inclusive system will require a funding strategy that is directed towards the provision of support services for all. This will be operationalised through a funding model that is directed towards the development and maintenance of an effective support system at all levels of the learning system.

- ▶ Funding framework for general, further and higher education and training will have to cater for expansion of provision to disabled learners and other target groups who experience severe learning difficulties and who have been excluded from learning.
- ▶ Funding policies which would also have to cater for new modes of learning, barrier-free access, learner support, curriculum and assessment development, as well as capacity development among all sites of learning, educators, education support personnel and education managers in special schools and settings and ordinary schools.
- ▶ Funding policies should provide for the creation of partnership with parents that enable them to participate in the planning and implementation of institution-based inclusion activities.
- ▶ Funding policies should provide for research and development into the applicability and roles of the proposed teaching assistants.
- ▶ Funding policies should also provide for research and development on the creation of a list of essential learning-related assistive devices for learning sites.
- ▶ Accessible transport is necessary for the full inclusion into society of people with disabilities. There is a need to develop an accessible, affordable, multi-model public transport system that will meet the needs of the largest numbers of people at the lowest cost while at the same time planning for those high cost features which are essential to disabled people with greater mobility needs.

6.3 FURTHER RESEARCH

As South Africa begins to implement inclusive education in mainstream classrooms educators' perceptions as well as collaboration among educators, parents and learners has been recognised as a critical feature in effective implementation. The power of collaborative teams lies in their capacity to merge the unique skills of special school educators with the unique skill of mainstream educators, parents and learners.

6.3.1 Recommendation

The recommendation is that further research of a quantitative and qualitative nature must be undertaken with the aim of developing well-planned strategies to be implemented to provide mainstream educators with the necessary skills to effectively manage inclusive schools including effective staff development strategies.

6.4 CRITICISM

Criticism that emanates from this study includes the following:

- ▶ It can be presumed that many of the school educators who completed the questionnaires drew their perceptions regarding inclusive education from the media and relevant policy documents. The probability therefore exists that the majority of educators indicated what is theoretical to their perceptions of inclusive education and not what is practical.
- ▶ The research sample comprised only of educators from the former Indian and white schools. Dissimilar responses might have been elicited from educators of black and coloured schools.

6.5 FINAL REMARK

The aim of this study was to reach a better understanding of inclusive education and how it will be implemented in South African classrooms. It is hoped that this study will prove useful to all interested stakeholders in education but more especially to educators and school governance.

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Annexure A

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

QUESTIONNAIRE

EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Ms S Siebalak
June 2001

Dear Educator

QUESTIONNAIRE: EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

At present I am engaged in a research project towards my D.Ed (Doctor in Education) degree at the University of Zululand under the guidance of Proff. G. Urbani and M S Vos. The research is concerned with *Educators' perceptions of inclusive education*.

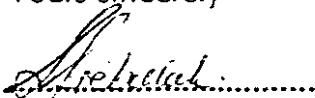
I have taken the liberty of writing to you, as one of the selected respondents, in order to seek your assistance in acquiring information about your experiences relating to the research.

CONFIDENTIALITY

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

We appreciate your co-operation.

Yours sincerely



Ms S Siebalak

.....4.02.2000.....

Date

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE RESPONDENT

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

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

TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Inclusive education: The placing of learners with special educational needs in ordinary schools and classrooms

LSEN: Learners with special educational needs may include, *inter alia*, the following

- . Hearing impaired
- . Visually impaired
- . Physically impaired
- . Intellectually challenged
- . Behaviour problems
- . Emotionally troubled

Dear Educator

QUESTIONNAIRE: EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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I have taken the liberty of writing to you, as one of the selected respondents, in order to seek your assistance in acquiring information about your experiences relating to the research.

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We appreciate your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

.....
Ms S Siebalak

.....
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INSTRUCTIONS TO THE RESPONDENT

1. Please read through each statement carefully **before** giving your opinion.
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- . Intellectually challenged
- . Behaviour problems
- . Emotionally troubled

SECTION ONE: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF THE RESPONDENT**1.1 Gender**

Male Female

1.2 Age in completed years as at 2001-01-01**1.3 Qualifications**

Academic qualification(s) (e.g. BA, MEd, etc.)

Professional qualification(s) (e.g. HDE, FDE, PTC, etc.)

Other (please specify)

**1.4 Total number of completed years in the teaching profession
as at 2001-01-01****1.5 Post**

Principal HOD
Deputy principal Educator

1.6 Type of post

Permanent
Temporary

1.7 Employer

Department of Education
Governing body

Other (please specify)

1.8 Total number of LSEN in class

1.9 Number of learners with the following special educational needs:

- Hearing impaired
- Visually impaired
- Physically impaired
- Intellectually challenged
- Behaviour problems
- Emotionally troubled

Others (please specify learning barrier and number)

.....

.....

.....

.....

SECTION TWO: SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

		<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Uncertain</i>
	The following facilities and/or strategies for successful inclusive education are available at my school:			
2.1	A school-based support team for assisting educators with LSEN			
2.2	In-service training opportunities for mainstream educators to cope with LSEN			
2.3	Effective administrative support to pursue inclusive goals			
2.4	Adequate funds for resources to facilitate effective teaching of LSEN			
2.5	A model for collaboration between special and mainstream educators			
2.6	Provision for consultation between special and mainstream educators			
2.7	Guidance and counselling facilities for parents			
2.8	An efficient school governing body that supports inclusive education			
2.9	An effective management team to implement inclusive education			
2.10	Additional support required by some LSEN (e.g specialised therapists)			
2.11	Special life-skills programmes for the integration of LSEN			
2.12	Strategies to eliminate discriminating attitudes towards LSEN			
2.13	Strategies to address negative attitudes relating to diversity of learners			
2.14	Sufficient funding for restructuring of mainstream schools for LSEN			

		<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Uncertain</i>
2.15	Accessible public transport for LSEN with physical disabilities			
2.16	Procedures to address harassment of LSEN			
2.17	Easy access facilities to school buildings for learners with physical disabilities			
2.18	Programmes to promote parental involvement pertaining to LSEN			

SECTION THREE: EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

	In the mainstream class including LSEN (learners with special educational needs) I:	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Uncertain</i>
3.1	feel I could educate LSEN without any fundamental change(s) in my procedures			
3.2	experience difficulties in meeting the needs of the diversity of learners (LSEN and other)			
3.3	think I could better educate LSEN with the help of a remedial educator(s)			
3.4	have to spend more time attending to the needs of LSEN			
3.5	experience negative feelings towards LSEN because of inclusion			
3.6	need more training to educate LSEN			
3.7	require more knowledge to educate LSEN			
3.8	feel that the number of learners in a class make individual attention difficult			

		<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Uncertain</i>
3.9	think LSEN should follow an adapted curriculum			
3.10	need to share information with educators in similar circumstances			
3.11	must safeguard against a discriminating attitude towards LSEN			
3.12	have to instill acceptance of LSEN in the classroom			
3.13	should avoid treating LSEN more sympathetic in class			
3.14	must not overlook unacceptable behaviour of LSEN			
3.15	feel that the education of LSEN require more tolerance (patience)			
3.16	must discipline all learners in the same manner			
3.17	believe LSEN demands better understanding			
3.18	feel regular consultation with a special education consultant(s) must be available to me			

Annexure B



Dear Educator

QUESTIONNAIRE: EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

At present I am engaged in a research project towards my D.Ed (Doctor in Education) degree at the University of Zululand under the guidance of Proff. G. Urbani and M S Vos. The research is concerned with *Educators' perceptions of inclusive education*.

I have taken the liberty of writing to you, as one of the selected respondents, in order to seek your assistance in acquiring information about your experiences relating to the research.

CONFIDENTIALITY

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

We appreciate your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

.....
Ms S Siebalak

.....
Prof G Urbani

.....
Date

.....
Prof M S Vos

Alencon Primary School
P.O. Box 45314
CHATSGLEN
4012

21 May 2001

The Principal

DURBAN
4001

Dear Sir/Madam

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DETERMINING EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

I am conducting a research study entitled: **EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**. Educators from your school has been selected to participate int his research programme. I have received written permission from your Regional Director of the Kwa Zulu-Natal Education Department to enlist the help of your educators to complete a questionnaire.

I hereby seek your assistance in administering this questionnaire to any five educators on your staff. I am fully aware that in asking for your co-operation I am adding to your already considerable responsibilities and workload. However, I hope that this study will provide an awareness to educators that inclusive education is a stepping stone to developments that are more effective in providing quality education for all.

The date on which the questionnaires will be collected from you will be arranged with you soon. The questionnaire has been designed to take not more that twenty (20) minutes to complete.

I thank you for your co-operation and assistance.

Yours sincerely

.....
S. SIEBALAK (MISS)



Address : Malgate Building
Ikheli: 72 Stanger Street
Adres: Durban
4001

Private Bag :
Isikhwama Seposi : Durban
Privaatsak : 4000

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Enquiries :
Imibuzo : **D.M. Moodley**
Navrae : **3270278**

Reference :
Inkomba :
Verwysing :

Date :
Usuku : **2001-05-2**
Datum :

Miss S. Siebalak
75 Erica Avenue
Kharwastan
4092

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Your letter dated 21 May 2001 in respect of the above matter has reference..

Kindly be informed that permission is granted for you to conduct the research subject to the following:

1. The schools which participate in the project would do so on a voluntary basis.
2. Access to the schools you wish to utilise is negotiated with the principal concerned by yourself.
3. The normal teaching and learning programme is not to be disrupted.
4. The confidentiality of the participants is respected.
5. A copy of the thesis/research is lodged with the Regional Chief Director through my office on completion of your studies.

I wish you all the success in the research you are undertaking.

Kind regards.

D.M. MOODLEY
CHIEF EDUCATION SPECIALIST