

**AN EXPLORATIVE STUDY OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
AT MAINSTREAM SECONDARY SCHOOLS FOR
LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

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Abstract

During apartheid, black learners with disabilities experienced difficulties accessing education. At this time very few special schools existed and admissions were limited, as they were restricted according to certain segregation criteria. In 2001, the Education White Paper 6 was published, demarcating that South African education should shift into the international trend of inclusion. Inclusion, relating to mainstream schools, encourages the schools to review their structures, approaches to teaching, student grouping and promote schools to meet the diverse needs of all students. Research indicated that inclusive education has been promoted in primary schools. However, there is limited research regarding inclusive education in secondary schools in South Africa. The purpose of this study was to explore the implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools for learners with special needs. The research study used an exploratory qualitative methodology with an interpretivist approach. Participants included the principal, teachers and learners from a secondary school which has an inclusive approach. Purposive sampling was used to identify participants. There were 12 participants who partook in the study and data was collected through a focus group discussion and individual interviews. The focus group consisted of 6 non-disabled learners who participated in the study. Data were analysed through the use of thematic analysis. The results suggest that learners with special needs should be taught in this mainstream secondary school. Teachers and non-disabled learners accept learners with special needs in their classroom and at their school. However, there are a number of barriers such as access, awareness, lack of training, that hinder the full participation of teachers when assisting learners with special needs.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis: *An explorative study of Inclusive Education at a mainstream secondary school for learners with special needs* is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

Edwina Konghot,

Signed



November 2012

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank the Lord God Almighty for giving me the strength, wisdom, knowledge and understanding to complete this thesis. In particular I would like to thank my supervisor Dr Nicolette Roman for the love, help and support she so freely offered. I would also like to thank my family; Natasha, Hannah-Simone, Patty and my mom Sarah.



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ACRONYMS USED

CRC: Convention on the Rights of a Child

CRPD: Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

DOE: Department of Education

NCESS: National Committee on Education Support Services

NCSNET: National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training

SAFCD: South African Federation Council on Disability

SAG: South African Government

UN: United Nations

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



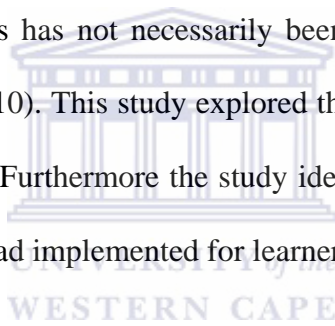
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In my community, my neighbour's son was involved in a car accident. He was 14 years old at the time of the accident and had just completed his primary school education. The doctors informed her that her son was paraplegic. A few months before the accident, the learner was accepted at one of the secondary schools in our community. The following year before school started, the mother informed the principal of her son's condition and that he was now a wheelchair user. The principal informed her that her son was in need of special accommodations and that the school's physical structure was not suitable to accommodate the learner's needs. Apart from the physical barriers at the school, the principal said that the teachers and learners were not qualified to deal with disabled learners. After exploring all possible enrolment avenues at five different secondary schools in our community, the mother was advised of a possible mainstream school which was 35 km away from her community. After one month of frustration and disagreement, the learner was accepted at the school. This however became expensive, as it included an increase in school fees and travelling costs. The human right of the learner was violated, given that in 1994, South Africa closed the doors on apartheid and embraced democracy for all. In 1996 South Africa adopted a new Constitution and a Bill of Rights (Engelbrecht & Green, 2007:52). The Constitution of South Africa, Act 1996 includes a Bill of Rights that asserts that all children have the right to basic education and access to educational institutions. The right to education is also outlined in the Children's

Act No 38 of 2005. Furthermore, the Bill of Rights Section 7(1) states that human rights are the rights of all people in our country and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom. The White Paper 6: (2001) emphasizes the right to inclusive education for children with disabilities. Inclusion embraces the democratic values of equality and human rights and the recognition of diversity (Engelbrecht, 2006). Inclusion is about encouraging a sense of community, belonging and involvement. Thus in accordance with legislation, schools should include all learners regardless of their abilities. Although inclusion has been promoted in primary schools (Clark, 2007; Department of Education, 2002; Elloker, 2004; Engelbrecht, Oswald & Forlin, 2006; Jacobs 2010; Mayaba, 2008; Molope, 2007; Prinsloo, 2001; Stofile, 2008), this has not necessarily been the case in secondary schools (Loebenstein, 2005; Mbengwa, 2010). This study explored the understanding and approaches to inclusion in secondary schools. Furthermore the study identified and explored the support structures that secondary schools had implemented for learners with special needs.



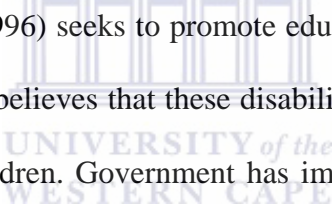
1.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study primarily used a human rights framework to explore the implementation of inclusive education in a mainstream secondary school. The Constitution of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, includes a Bill of Rights that asserts that all children regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, culture, religion or disability have the right to basic education and access to educational institutions. Section 29 (1) states that everyone has the right to basic education. The fundamental right of basic education is further developed in the Constitution in Section (2), which commits the state to the achievement of equality, and Section 9 (3), (4) and (5)

which commits the state to non-discrimination. These sections are particularly important for protecting learners with or without disabilities.

The obligation of the South African Government(SAG) is to provide basic education for all learners, guided by the central principles of the South African Constitution, Act 108 of 1996, the Child Care Act 38 of 2005, the National Educational Policy Act 12 of 1998, the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 and its commitments to identify and recognize a new unified education and training system based on equality, redressing past imbalances, and on a progressive raising of the quality of education and training.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT



The South African Constitution (1996) seeks to promote educational equality for all children regardless of any disabilities, as it believes that these disabilities should not restrict or hinder the educational progression of children. Government has implemented the Education White Paper 6: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (Department of Education, 2001), to ensure the successful implementation of inclusive education and training systems in primary and secondary schools. Since the implementation of the White Paper 6 (2001), eleven years ago, research indicated that inclusive education has been promoted and implemented in primary schools (Clark, 2007; DOE 2002; Elloker, 2004; Engelbrecht et al., 2006; Jacobs 2010; Mayaba, 2008; Molohe, 2007; Prinsloo, 2001; Stofile, 2008). There is limited research that focuses on the implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools in South Africa (Loebenstein, 2005; Mbengwa, 2010). However, research was mainly conducted internationally (Cook, Semmel & Gerber 1999; Nel, Miller, Hugo, Helldin, Backmann, Dwyer & Skarlind 2011; Salend, 1999; Sulaiman 2010). Achieving inclusive education will

require the support and collaboration of all role players such as the parent(s), teachers, principals, learners and the community (Engelbrecht et al., 2006). When learners with disabilities attend mainstream secondary schools, they have more social contacts and richer friendship networks (Fryxell & Kennedy 1995, cited in Salend, 1999). Furthermore, learners with disabilities have greater success in making a transition to adulthood (Salend, 1999). This study explored and described the implementation of inclusive education in a secondary school for learners with special needs; focusing on the support structures that have been outlined by the Department of Education with the implementation of the White Paper 6.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION

- How was inclusive education implemented in secondary schools for learners with special needs?
- How did secondary school educators and learners respond to learners with special needs?
- What support structures were in place when the schools were confronted with learners' special needs?



1.5 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to explore inclusive education in secondary schools for learners with special needs.

1.6 OBJECTIVES

The objective of the study was to:

- Explore the approach of inclusivity of inclusive education in secondary schools for learners with special needs.
- Describe how educators and learners respond to learners with special needs in secondary schools.
- Identify and describe the support structures that were in place when schools were confronted with learners' special needs.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to assess the different elements necessary for this study an empirical investigation was conducted. This study used a qualitative exploratory design that explores the implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools for learners with special needs. Data was collected by means of literature reviews, individual interviews and focus group interviews with the participants, as well as by means of field notes and observation. The research paradigm for this study was the human rights framework that explores, and is utilised throughout the study. The study has taken place at secondary school in Cape Town, South Africa.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The information collected from this study has revealed the problems and challenges experienced by the learners, teachers and the principal at the mainstream secondary school, with regards to inclusive education for adolescents. The focus group discussion helped the participants to recognize the problems they experienced and identified solutions to the barriers they encountered. Though this study only focused on one school in the Cape Town

District area, the objective was to identify how educators respond to adolescents with special needs and the support structures that were in place when the schools were confronted with these learners. Additionally the findings of this study highlighted the gaps that needed to be addressed and it is hoped that this research will promote further activities in this field. The outcome of this study could benefit the participants by increasing their insight regarding the implementation of inclusion in mainstream secondary schools. However the results of this study will be made available to the Department of Education, and the data can be used to inform change to service provisions and could particularly be an advantaged to (a) raise awareness around the monitoring and evaluation progress of inclusive education in secondary schools and (b) give direction regarding the educational support systems that are needed.

1.9 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Adolescence is defined as the period of transition between childhood and adulthood, and can therefore be seen as a bridge between being a child and becoming an adult (Louw & Louw 2007:278).

Disability is defined in respect of an applicant's moderate to severe limitation to his or her ability to function, as a result of a physical, sensory, communication, intellectual or mental disability (Social Assistance Act No. 13 of 2004).

Human rights are the rights of all people in our country and they affirm the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom (Bill of Rights, section 7(1))

Inclusive education is the term used to describe educational policies and practices that uphold the right of learners with disabilities to belong and learn in mainstream education (Engelbrecht et al., 2007:4).

Mainstreaming is giving the learner extra support to be integrated in a “normal” classroom routine or curriculum (Department of Education 2001:17).

1.10 OUTLINE OF STUDY

This study consists of the following chapters:

Chapter 1 includes the problem statement, aim and objective of the study and the significance of the study. The chapter also includes a brief overview of the theoretical framework and the methodology used.

Chapter 2 reviews inclusive education from the theoretical framework of human rights and the implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools. This chapter presents the disability models as a precursor to the human rights framework as a conceptual underpinning for the study. Furthermore, this chapter provides information regarding inclusive education for learners with special needs in secondary schools in South Africa.

Chapter 3 focuses on the methodology used in the study. The data collection process and the data analysis process are discussed and a review of the truthfulness of the data and ethical consideration is specified.

Chapter 4 The purpose of this study was to explore and describe inclusive education in mainstream secondary schools for learners with special needs. This chapter discusses the results of the study as well as the findings in the context of the literature available in the field.

Chapter 5 provides a summary of findings, methodological limitations and further research possibilities. In this chapter conclusions and recommendations are also made concerning the research findings.



CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The chapter reviews inclusive education from the theoretical framework of human rights and the implementation of inclusive education in secondary schools. It presents the disability models as a precursor to the human rights framework as a conceptual underpinning for the study. Furthermore, this chapter provides information regarding inclusive education for learners with special needs in secondary schools in South Africa.

2.2 Models of disability

The Constitution of South Africa shifted the previous discourses on disability and welcomed a rights discourse (Pillay & Terlizzi, 2009). There are four kinds of discourses: (1) the medical discourse, (2) charity discourse, (3) lay discourse and (4) the rights discourse which has constructed the field of specialized education in South Africa (Fulcher 1989, cited in Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999:13). This meant a change from the medical discourse, which considered the learner from a deficit perspective, to the rights discourse in which the learner's right to education is of paramount importance.

Prior to 1994 South Africa adhered largely to the medical model and deficit theory approach to disability, whereby people with disabilities were seen as helpless individuals with deficits, in need of care and help, who could never occupy a fully integrated, equal position in society. The medical model emanates from the disease model used in medicine, which allowed

practitioners to think of the condition which needs appropriate treatment. For example, a child is excluded for the mainstream social and economic life because of a disability that is considered to be a natural and permanent characteristic of the child.

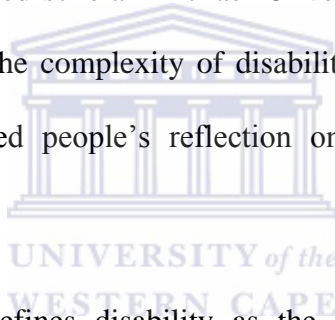
According to the medical discourse, the “blind”, “deaf” or those labelled by other disabilities are excluded from regular educational schools and such an exclusion immediately results in the perception of such people as inadequate human beings, who are unfit to be included in mainstream economic and social life (Engelbrecht, et al., 1999:13). The main approach of understanding disability arises from the medical model (Johnston 1994, cited in Llewellyn & Hogen 2001) and the social model (Hughes & Paterson 1997; Oliver, 1990; Terzi, 2004). The medical model views all disabilities as a result of physiological impairment, due to injuries or a disease process (Llewellyn et al., 2001).

The charity discourse promotes that people in authority referring to non-disabled persons are always decision makers and the voices of the disabled were erased. In South Africa special education was always associated with generosity. Beneficiaries of special education are seen as objects of pity and forever in need of assistance. These beneficiaries were always seen as underachievers and in need of institutional care. Social workers, therapists, physiotherapists, nurses, teachers and others who benefit from these types of labelling are hardly mentioned. Even as the work of these professionals is appreciated and respected, the question remains; who benefits from this type of isolation or categorization (Engelbrecht, et al., 1999:13-14).

However, the lay discourse was linked to prejudice, hate, ignorance, fear and even paternalistic tendencies. This has to do with the isolation of people who deviate from the normal physical appearance. Disability is more than impairment and within the connotations

associated with the medical model, there is the assumption that all children with impairment are automatically disabled or disable their families (Hutchison, 1995). Thus children with disabilities would need to be in specialized care or schools. The challenge to disablism, oppression and exclusion has produced the new politics of disablement which includes, as its intellectual expression, the social model of disability (Oliver, 1990).

When focusing on the ways in which disability is socially produced, the social model has succeeded in shifting debates about disability from medically dominated agendas to discourses about politics and citizenship (Hughes, et al., 1997). The social model of disability theorized principally by the disabled scholar Michael Oliver, is a fundamental contribution not only to the discussion about the complexity of disability, but to our understandings of disability as informed by disabled people's reflection on their own experience (Terzi, 2004:141).



Furthermore, the social model defines disability as the product of specific social and economic structures and aims at addressing issues of oppression and discrimination of disabled people, caused by institutional forms of exclusion and by cultural attitudes embedded in social practices. However, debate about the body and impairment is beginning to re-emerge within the disability movement (Shakespeare, 1992; Vassey, 1992; French, 1993; Shakespeare & Watson, 1995a, b; Oliver, 1995, unpublished paper, cited in Hughes, et al., 1997).

The social model of disability has influenced the political positions of disability movements, both in the UK and, to a lesser extent, in the US. This model has also significantly influenced the field of disability studies as well as educational perspectives on inclusion. However, the

rights discourse is committed to extending full citizenship to all people both nationally and internationally. It stresses equal opportunity, self-reliance, independent wants rather than needs (Engelbrecht, et al., 2007:13). Furthermore, the rights discourse has been expressed strongly at both national and international levels. Several forums internationally were convened to promote the rights discourse.

2.3 Human rights framework

According to the United Nations (1997) human rights are described as “those rights which are built into our nature and which we cannot live without as human beings”. It further states that:

Human rights and fundamental freedoms allow us to fully develop and use our human equalities, our intelligence, our talents and our conscience and to satisfy our spiritual needs. They are based on mankind’s increasing demands for a life in which the inherent dignity and worth of each human being will receive respect and protection (United Nations 1997).

Furthermore, the historical development of human rights in all spheres of education is a reflection of human rights in South Africa. There have been five South African Constitutions since the 19th century. In 1910 the Union of South Africa adopted the first constitution that deprived the majority of South Africans their fundamental rights, giving those rights only to the white minority. During 1948, ‘apartheid’ was introduced by the Nationalist government to South Africa, supposedly a system of separate development for the different ‘races’ but in reality a system for entrenching massive inequality. The people of South Africa were divided into four main race categories: ‘Whites’ who made up about 10% of the population, ‘Blacks’ 75%, ‘Coloureds’ 10%, and ‘Indians/Asians’ approximately 3%.

The second constitution was adopted when South Africa was declared a Republic in 1961. Since the oppression and exploitation of “non-whites” continued unchanged, there were very few significant changes as human rights remained a foreign concept to many South Africans. However, the oppressive system led to the arms struggle, after peaceful efforts to address it had failed. The 1976 Soweto student uprising was the historical mark of human rights abuse in the South African educational system. The uprising as recalled started as a peaceful protest against inferior education established by discriminatory apartheid policies and acts. The armed struggle resulted in civil unrest and public violence, which resulted in the deaths of many school children at the hands of the security forces (Mubangizi, 2004).

The Black Education Department under the supervision of the Department of Native Affairs implemented the Bantu Education Act 47 of 1953 which stipulated the compilation of a curriculum that matched the nature and the requirements of black people. The act prevented black school children from receiving an education that would guide them to seek positions they wouldn't be allowed to hold in society. The draftsman of apartheid, Hendrick Verwoerd did not believe that Blacks should receive anything more than basic education, as they were intended to be, in his infamous words, nothing more than *'hewers of wood and drawers of water'* (Daniels, 2010:632). Instead they were to receive an education designed to provide them with the necessary skills to serve their own people in their homeland or work as labourers under the whites. Furthermore the Extension of University Act 45 of 1959 banned black students from attending white universities (mainly the University of Cape Town and Witwatersrand). This resulted in separate tertiary institutions for Whites, Coloureds, Blacks and Indians/Asians.

In 1983 the third South African Constitution was adopted, still denying basic human rights to non-white South Africans. Human rights for non-whites were non-existent during that period. This resulted in the creation of separate parliaments for Whites, Indians/Asians and Coloured groups. Black people continued to be excluded and involuntarily made citizens in their homeland. Nevertheless, it was difficult for anyone to speak about human rights in an educational system that was so oppressive, discriminatory and extremely dehumanizing (Mubangizi, 2004). Black South Africans lost their citizenship as a result to the homeland system, which started with the Bantu Authority Act 68 of 1951 and the Bantu Homelands Act of 1970.

The 1980's witnessed an increasing demand for a democratic government, and it became increasingly clear that any system imposed by an apartheid government would fail and that a radical transformation was necessary (Du Toit, 1996 cited in Engelbrecht et al., 2007). Towards the end of 1990 there were various processes of negotiations which led to the adoption of the interim Constitution and later birth of the 1996 Constitution by which the country is now administered. Since the adoption of the Constitution in 1996, the educational systems in South Africa have changed noticeably over the last 18 years of democracy (Pillay et al., 2009). The Constitution of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, includes a Bill of Rights that asserts that all children regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, culture, religion or disability have the right to basic education and access to educational institutions. The South African Constitution has been recognized as one of the best in the world with regards to human rights. The significance of the Constitution for disabled people is enormous since it guarantees their rights along with those of every other citizen.

2.3.1 Human rights for children with disabilities

The responsibility of SAG is to provide basic education for all learners, guided by the central principles of the Constitution. It is the commitment of SAG to identify and recognize a new unified education and training system, based on equality and redressing past imbalances. Likewise, the support of inclusion is evident in many articles of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the 2010 Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

Section 1 (a) of the South African Constitution (1996), founded the democratic state of common citizenship on the values of human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedom. The values call upon all South Africans to take up the responsibility and challenges of building a humane and caring society to ensure that all learners, with and without disabilities, pursue their learning potential to the fullest. Basic education is a fundamental right of all South Africans. Section 29 (1) states that everyone has the right to basic education. The fundamental right of basic education is further developed in the Constitution in Section (2), which commits the state to the achievement of equality. The right to equality is probably the most applicable when introducing education at a primary and secondary level. Prior to 1994, inequality and discrimination were essential characteristics of the South African society.

Section 9 (3), (4) and (5) of the South African Constitution (1996), commit the state to non-discrimination. These sections are particularly important for protecting learners with or without disabilities.

Article 2 of the CRC prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. Article 5 of the CRPD states the following;

Article 5: States Parties recognize that all persons are equal before and under the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law.

1. States Parties shall prohibit all discrimination on the basis of disability and guarantee to persons with disabilities equal and effective legal protection against discrimination on all grounds.
2. In order to promote equality and eliminate discrimination, States Parties shall take all appropriate steps to ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided.
3. Specific measures which are necessary to accelerate or achieve de facto equality of persons with disabilities shall not be considered discrimination under the terms of the present Convention

As noted in the literature, discrimination was the heartbeat of segregation in South Africa prior to 1996. Article 2 of the CRC, Article 5 of the CRPD and Section 9 (3), (4) and (5) of the South African Constitution (1996), identify the rights of “all” (disabled or non-disabled persons) as equal before and under the law.

Article 3 of the CRC, Article 7 (2) of the CRPD and the Child Care Act 38 of (2005), states that the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children. However Article 7 of the CRPD particularly focuses on children with disabilities.

Article 7:

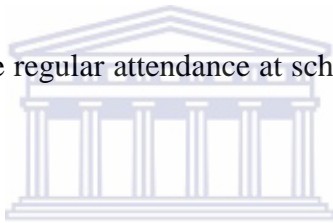
1. States Parties shall take all necessary measures to ensure the full enjoyment by children with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children.
2. In all actions concerning children with disabilities, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.
3. States Parties shall ensure that children with disabilities have the right to express their views freely on all matters affecting them, their views being given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity, on an equal basis with other children, and to be provided with disability and age-appropriate assistance to realize that right.

In the past persons with disabilities were seen as objects of pity. However, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2010), changed disability from an object to a subject. Articles 28 and 29, of the CRC clearly stipulate the support for inclusion in education.

Article 28 states the following:

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to education and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:
 - (a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;

- (b) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;
- (c) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;
- (d) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;
- (e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.



2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.
3. States Parties shall promote and encourage international cooperation in matters relating to education, in particular with a view to contributing to the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy throughout the world and facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

Article 29 states the following:

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:

(a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;

(b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;

(c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;

(d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;

(e) The development of respect for the natural environment.

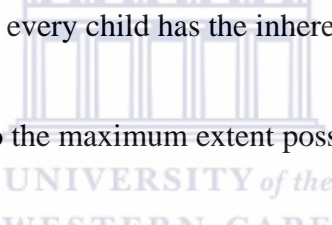
2. No part of the present article or article 28 shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, subject always to the observance of the principle set forth in paragraph 1 of the present article and to the requirements that the education

given in such institutions shall conform to such minimum standards as may be laid down by the State.

The above articles emphasize that the State makes education compulsory, available and free to all, and that different forms of secondary education be 'accessible to every child', and set as the purpose of education 'the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential'.

Article 6 of the CRC requires a guaranteed development of the child to the maximum.

Article 6 states the following:

- 
1. States Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life.
 2. States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.

However, Article 19 (b) & (c) of the CRPD indicates that persons with disabilities should be included within their communities.

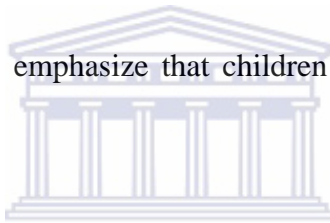
- (b) Persons with disabilities have access to a range of in-home, residential and other community support services, including personal assistance necessary to support living and inclusion in the community, and to prevent isolation or segregation from the community;
- (c) Community services and facilities for the general population are available on an equal basis to persons with disabilities and are responsive to their needs.

Similarly; Article 30 of the CRC recognizes the right of the child to participate fully in the culture of the community.

Article 30

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.

Articles 9, 10 and 18 of the CRC emphasize that children should not be separated from their parents,



The above-mentioned Articles stipulate that children must be seen as individuals with rights, views and feelings of their own. Every child has a right to respect, dignity and consideration of his or her views and best interests. Taking into account the provisions concerning the family, the community, the right to social integration and personal development, these Articles constitute and justify a right to inclusive education.

2.4 A basic right to education

The education system in South Africa has undergone extensive policy changes since 1994, reflective of the Government's desire to restructure and transform a divided, fragmented, discriminatory and authoritarian education system into a more democratic, open, flexible and inclusive system (Sayed, 1998; Welton, 2001; Pillay et al, 2009). Under the apartheid

education system, education for learners who experienced learning difficulties and learners with disabilities was called special education (DOE, 2002:6).

Special needs education in South Africa is a sector where the negative effects of apartheid remain most evident. The segregation of learners on the basis of race was extended to incorporate segregation on the basis of disability (DOE, 2001). The Social Assistance Act No 13 of 2004 defines disability in respect of an applicant's moderate to severe limitation, to his or her ability to function as a result of a physical, sensory, communication, intellectual or mental disability.

In the past special education and support services were mainly provided to a small number of learners with special educational needs in special classes in mainstream schools or in special needs schools (DOE, 2002). Prior to 1994, black learners with disabilities experienced great difficulty regarding access to education. Very few special schools existed and they were limited to admitting learners according to firmly applied categories. Learners who experienced learning difficulties because of severe poverty did not qualify for educational support. The categorization system allowed only those learners with natural, medical disabilities access to support programmes. (DOE, 2001:9).

At this time very few special schools existed to accommodate the needs of learners with various disabilities and admission was limited, as it was restricted according to certain segregation criteria which included race and disability. Most learners with disabilities were either not in special schools, or had never been to a school because mainstream schools could not adequately meet their needs. (DOE, 2002:7). Schools, that accommodated white children with disabilities, were extremely well resourced, while schools that accommodated black

disabled learners were rare and systematically under-resourced (Education White Paper, 2001: 9). Children who were identified as having special educational needs were labelled and excluded from mainstream education and society (Du Toit 1996 cited in Engelbrecht et al., 2007:3).

Children were placed in special settings and actually believed that this was done in the best interest of the child. Increasingly the concern for segregated special education appeared and it was recommended that it was not in the best interest of those children with disabilities to be separated from mainstream education or society as a whole. According to Chambers (2001:12), when we remove children with disabilities from their peer groups, we deny non-disabled children the opportunity to learn about the experience and become aware of disability. Thus, inclusive education is a human right and research suggests that children perform better academically and socially in an integrated environment (Chambers, 2001:13).

At the 1990 World Conference on Education for All, great emphasis was placed on inclusive education. The Salamanca Statement on principles, policies and practice in special needs education was the resolution that became the driving force of inclusive education. The statement was adopted by 92 countries and 25 international conferences whereby the message was clearly articulated (Engelbrecht, et al., 1999:14-15).

We the delegates of the World Conference on Special Needs Education representing ninety-two countries and twenty-five international organizations, hereby affirm our commitment to Education for All, recognizing the necessity and urgency of promoting education for children, youth and adults with special education needs within regular systems, and further hereby endorse the Framework of Action on Special Needs Education, that governments and organizations may be guided by the spirit of its provisions and recommendations (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1994a:9).

The Salamanca Statement argued that regular schools with an inclusive orientation are “the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all” (Ainscow, 2000:16). These are however an aspect of the Salamanca Statement that South Africa’s White Paper has disregarded. The Salamanca Statement encourages governments to plan and educate all persons throughout both public and private sectors (UNESCO, 1994a:13). South Africa has a well-established and growing private education sector that serves 2.9% of South African learners (DOE, 2008:5). Nevertheless, the White Paper does not mention the role that ordinary independent schools play in an inclusive education and training system. This omission is noteworthy since there is evidence that independent ordinary schools in South Africa are pursuing inclusion in education (Cohen, 2000:11; Gardener, 2003:22 cited in Walton et al., 2009).

Furthermore, on the 4th of March 1997 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the resolution on the equalization of opportunities for people with disabilities.

Education in mainstream schools presupposes the provision of interpreter and other appropriate support services. Adequate accessibility and support services designed to meet the need of persons with different disabilities should be provided (UN, 1994:15).

Major changes were taking place at a national level, because of the new democracy in South Africa. The South African Federation Council on Disability (SAFCD) called for the development of single inclusive educational systems for South Africa and the statement was very clear and to the point.

Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSEN) have the right to equal access to education at all levels in a single inclusive educational 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 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 used and partnerships with their communities (The South African Federation Council on Disability (SAFCD) 1995:1).

As a result, 28 South African organizations and institutions were actively involved with the development of this statement. A strong sense of international and national call for inclusive education materialized, a call which fitted together with the South African Interim Constitution, the White Paper on Education and the Education and Training policy of the majority party in the Government of National Unity, the African National Congress.

In 1996, the National Commission on Special Needs Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee for Education Support Services (NCESS) were appointed. The NCSNET and NCESS were charged with conducting research and consulting widely, including all relevant stakeholders in the process. The NCSNET and NCESS have been structured through joint task groups focusing on the main aspects of the terms of reference of the NCSNET and NCESS. They were commissioned by the Minister of National Education to investigate the state of special education and support in South Africa and were given 12 months to complete their investigations and to make recommendations for a new national policy (Daniels, 2010:633; Naicker, 2000:2) .

Given the widespread differences in special schools and specialized support provisioning amongst racial categories, but also amongst provinces and between rural and urban communities, it was critically important that the Commission itself be as inclusive as possible, representing the diversity in the country and providing opportunities to surface the views of all stakeholders, particularly the previously marginalized (Daniels, 2010:633;

Engelbrecht, et al., 1999:18-19). The primary function of the Commission was to conduct research, utilizing literature from within and without South Africa.

Historically the areas of special needs education, or specialized education, and education support services provision have reflected the general inequalities of South African society, with disadvantaged learners (the majority of learners) receiving inadequate or no provision. Specialized education and support has predominantly been provided for a small percentage of learners with disabilities within “special” schools and classes. Most learners with disability have either fallen outside of the system or been “mainstreamed” by default. The curriculum and education system as a whole has generally failed to respond to the diverse needs of the learner population, resulting in massive numbers of dropouts, putouts, and failures. While some attention has been given to the schooling phase with regard to “special needs and support”, the other levels or bands of education have been seriously neglected.

As was to be expected, the Commission found vast inequalities in provision across race categories, and rural and urban settings. Approximately 288,000 school age children with disabilities were out of school. About 50% of learners in the country in 1997 could be considered to have ‘special needs’. Thus the Commission proposed the term ‘barriers to learning and development’ be used rather than ‘special needs’. So many learners had the need for specialized provision or support that this term seemed more appropriate. So often the barrier was not intrinsic to the learner but rather a barrier in the system (Department of Education, 1997). Similarly, the suggested documents and statements need to be taken into consideration since they are compatible with the rights discourse (UNESCO, 1994a:9; UN, 1994:15; SAFCD, 1995:1).

2.5 Inclusive education

A child is “included” when he or she is viewed as an equal partner in the school community. The more facilitating and accommodating the environment is to the needs of children, the

fewer barriers there will be to children's development and learning (Salend, 1999:205). Inclusion, relating to mainstream schools, encourages schools to review their structures, approaches to teaching, student grouping, and promote the schools to meet the diverse needs of all students (Farrell, 2003).

When the inclusive education project was introduced into the pilot project schools, some teachers felt nervous because they did not understand what inclusive education was all about. Some were confused because they did not understand what they were supposed to do. Others were worried because they had not been trained to teach children who were not able to participate in learning activities like the other children in their classes. Many teachers thought that children with disabilities or learning difficulties had to be taught by teachers with special qualifications. Others did not understand that the learning problems of many children were caused by the way teachers taught them, or the school system or even problems at home or their community (DOE 2002:13).

Teachers' perceptions of inclusive education are significant because they can influence the degree to which learners with special needs are accepted and accommodated within mainstream schools (Koay, Lim, Sim & Elkins, 2006).

Classroom teachers are the primary resource for achieving the goals of inclusive education and training systems. Therefore, teachers will need to improve their skills and knowledge and develop their own. Teachers should be trained to think and work in a new frame of reference or mind-set, since a disturbing number of teachers in South Africa is confused and insecure because of a series of radical changes that have transformed their working environment (Prinsloo, 2001:345).

Transformation and change must therefore focus on the full range of education and training services: the organizations - national and provincial departments of education, further and higher education institutions, schools (both special and ordinary); education support services; curriculum and assessment; education managers and educators; and parents and communities (DOE, 2001:125).

The most successful training is likely to occur in schools that have some experience of working with learners with special educational needs. Classroom support activities involved action research.

Action research is when a researcher works with a teacher in their classrooms to see how they are teaching. In a way, where the researcher helps the teachers to think about (or reflect on) how they can improve the way they are teaching and doing things. The researcher also helps the teachers to develop the skills to reflect on their own teaching so they become independent reflective teachers. (DOE 2002:16)

The success of inclusive education depends heavily on the perceptions and attitudes of teachers within mainstream schools toward learners with special needs and learners who experience barriers to learning. The positive perceptions and feelings of teachers tend to encourage successful inclusion; this has been found to be influenced by various factors. Research indicated that teachers' acceptance or resistance to the inclusion of learners with barriers to learning into mainstream classrooms is related to the knowledge base and experiences of educators (Stoler 1992; Taylor, Richards, Goldstein & Schilit, 1997). However, further research indicated the lack of necessary skills to teach learners with barriers to learning are the most common source of educator resistance (Kauffman, Gerber & Semmel, 1988).

Therefore, teachers with specialist training in special needs education work collaboratively with general classroom teachers in providing support to learners within the classrooms (Walton, Nel, Hugo & Muller: 2009). Specialist support personnel seem to have a vital role to play in the inclusive practice of schools in developed countries. Inclusive classrooms

represent diverse learning needs and appropriate support needs to be provided to meet the needs of all learners.

The South African Schools Act No 84 of 1996 provides a basic structure of an inclusive education and training system through its announcement of the right of equal access to basic and quality education for all learners on a non-discriminatory basis. No learner may, therefore, be denied access to any school on any grounds, including disability, language or learning difficulty.

Inclusive education is the term used to describe educational policies and practices that uphold the rights of learners with disabilities to belong and learn in mainstream education (Engelbrecht & Green 2007:4). Similarly, inclusive education is the education of all students classified as disabled together with non-disabled in general classrooms with appropriate professional services (Bowe, 2005). The goal of inclusive education is to combat discriminatory attitudes, create welcoming communities, build an inclusive society and achieve equal educational opportunities for all. It strives for a more equitable, quality education system and appeal to ordinary schools to accommodate the diverse needs of all learners in mainstream education.

The Education White Paper 6 (2001) was published, outlining a route for South African education to move into the international trend of inclusion. Inclusion is defined by Engelbrecht et al., (1999:6) as: “A shared value which promotes a single system of education dedicated to ensuring that all learners are empowered to become caring, competent and contributing citizens in an inclusive, changing and diverse society”. However, Magare, Kitching & Roos (2010), define inclusive education as the inclusion of learners who

experience barriers, for example learning difficulties in reading, writing, mathematics, speech, language and impairments, barriers to communication and so on, to learning in a regular educational environment, regardless of their diverse personal or interpersonal needs, the contextual challenges and the adversities they have to deal with.

Below is the definition of inclusive education extracted from UNESCO (1994b:61) in their section for special needs education:

The fundamental principle of the inclusive school is that all children should learn together, wherever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they have. Inclusive schools must recognize and respond to the diverse needs of their students, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities. There should be a continuum of support and services to match the continuum of special needs encountered in every school.

Inclusion emphasizes that learners who experience barriers to learning should attend their neighbourhood schools and be taught alongside their peers in regular classrooms (CSIE, 2000:12; Giangreco, 1997:194; Morgan & Demchak 1998:26 cited in Walton et al, 2009).

Barriers to learning and development is a term that was identified by the NCSNET and the NCESS to extend the scope of needs for disabled persons and to other learners whose special needs often arise as a result of impediments to learning and development (DOE,1997) . Similarly A barrier also refers to developmental delays, physical, neurological and sensory impairments (Muthukrishna & Sader, 2004).

Barriers to learning and the participation in schools in South Africa commonly arise from a range of factors, including socio-economic deprivation; negative attitudes to and stereotyping of difference; an inflexible curriculum; inappropriate languages or language of learning and teaching; inappropriate communication; inaccessible and unsafe built environments; inappropriate and

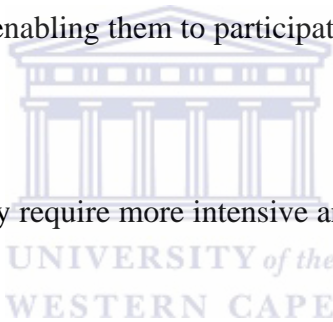
inadequate support services; inadequate policies and legislation; the non-recognition and non-involvement of parents; and inadequately and inappropriately trained leaders and teachers in education (Department of National Education, 2001).

The important barriers identified in the education system include: attitudes of teachers and non-disabled learners in mainstream schools, socio-economic conditions, inflexible curriculum, language skills and communication, inaccessible and unsafe building environments, inappropriate and inadequate provision of support services, lack of enabling and protective legislation and policy, lack of parental recognition and involvement, disability and the lack of human resource development strategies (DOE, 1997).

In July 2001, the South African Ministry of Education released *Building an Inclusive Education and Training System* (Education White Paper 6: special needs education- Department of National Education, 2001). The Educational White Paper 6 (2001:16) describes inclusive education and training systems as the following:

1. Acknowledging that all children and youth can learn and that all children and youth need support.
2. Accepting and respecting the fact that all learners are different in some way and have different learning needs which are equally valued and an ordinary part of our human experience.
3. Enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners.
4. Acknowledge and respect differences in learners, whether due to age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disability or HIV status.

5. Acknowledging that inclusive education is broader than formal schooling and learning also occurs in the home and community, and within formal and informal modes and structures.
6. Inclusive education and training are about changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methodologies, curricula and the environment to meet the needs of all learners.
7. Inclusive education and training are about maximizing the participation of all learners in the culture and the curricula of educational institutions and uncovering and minimizing barriers to learning.
8. Inclusive education and training are about empowering learners by developing their individual strengths and enabling them to participate critically in the process of learning.



It is obvious that some learners may require more intensive and specialized support to be able to develop to their fullest potential.

Furthermore, there is often a confusion regarding mainstream schools and special educational schools. Mainstream schools are schools, situated in various communities, who cater for the “ordinary” child. Special needs schools are established to cater for the needs of children with various disabilities, which include children with specific disabilities such as physical disabilities, visual and hearing impairment, blindness and learning disabilities (Chambers, 2001:11). However, inclusion inter-related with mainstreaming offers the learner extra support to be integrated in a “normal” classroom routine (DOE, 2001:17).

There is also a distinction between mainstream and inclusion as described.

Mainstreaming or integration	Inclusion
Getting learners to fit into a particular kind of system or integrating them into an existing system.	Inclusion is about recognizing and respecting the differences amongst all learners and building on the similarities.
Giving some learners the extra support so that they can 'fit in' or be integrated educators and the system as a whole so into the 'normal' classroom routine. Learners are that the full range of learning needs	Inclusion is about supporting all learners, educators and the system as a whole so that the full range of learning needs can be met. The focus is on teaching and learning actors, with the emphasis on the development of good teaching strategies that will be of benefit to all learners
Mainstreaming and integration focus on changes so that they can 'fit in'. Here the focus is on the learner.	Inclusion focuses on overcoming barriers in the system that prevent it from meeting the full range of learning needs. The focus is on the adaptation of and support systems available in the classroom.

The Children's Act No. 38 of 2005 is a prime example of the legislative framework ratified in South Africa with the intention of providing means of promoting sound physical, psychological, intellectual, emotional and social development of all children. The Act contains all the founding provisions to ensure that children's basic needs are met wherein the preamble and clauses require all spheres of government to implement the Act in a coordinated manner to the maximum extent of available resources (Jamieson & Proudlock, 2007: 2).

One of the core objectives stated in the Children's Act 38 of 2005 is to give effect to the constitutional rights of children, namely family care, parental or appropriate alternative care when a child is removed from the family environment, social services, protection from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation wherein the best interests of a child are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child.

The Act declares that the child has responsibilities suitable to their age, developmental level including responsibilities toward their family, community and the State. Upon reaching the age of 18 years, the child becomes an adult in which the Act stipulates, "Every child that is of such an age, maturity and stage of development has the right to participate in an appropriate way, and views expressed by the child must be given due consideration".

As a result the impact of this policy was that only 20% of learners with disabilities were accommodated in special schools. The World Health Organization (WHO) has calculated that between 2.2% and 2.6% of learners in any school could be identified as disabled or impaired. An application of these percentages to the South African school population would project an upper limit of about 400,000 disabled or impaired learners. Current statistics indicate that only 64,200 learners with disabilities or impairments are accommodated in about 380 special schools. This indicates that, potentially 280,000 learners with disabilities or impairments are unaccounted for. It is apparent the result of decades of segregation and systematic under resourcing is the imbalance between special schools that created exclusivity.

2.5.1 Inclusive education in primary schools

Research indicates that inclusive education has been promoted in primary schools in South Africa (Clark, 2007; DOE 2002; Elloker, 2004; Engelbrecht et al., 2006; Jacobs 2010; Mayaba, 2008; Molope, 2007; Prinsloo, 2001; Stofile, 2008),). Learners and teachers in primary school settings were faced with the reality of including learners with disabilities in their class rooms. Due to inclusion in primary schools, some of these schools were made accessible to accommodate learners with physical disabilities (DOE, 2002:45). However the attitude of teachers in secondary schools plays a critical role in ensuring the success of inclusive education since the success of inclusion is sustained through positive attitudes (Nel, et al., 2011:77).

2.5.2 Inclusive education in secondary schools

Research conducted in this area of studies in South Africa has mainly focused on inclusive education in primary schools (Clark, 2007; DOE 2002; Elloker, 2004; Engelbrecht et al., 2006; Jacobs 2010; Mayaba, 2008; Molope, 2007; Prinsloo, 2001; Stofile, 2008). However, inclusion in secondary schools was almost non- existent in the Cape Town District area (Loebenstein, 2005; Mbengwe, 2010). Research indicates that the majority of studies have been conducted outside of South Africa (Cook, Semmel & Gerber, 1999; Nel, et al., 2011; Salend, 1999; Sulaiman, 2010 cited in Walton et al., 2009: 108). According to the Education Management District Centre only two inclusive secondary schools were identified in the Cape Town area. While there is evidence of integration of the disabled into mainstream primary schools it has not been fully examined in mainstream secondary schools.

2.6 Adolescence

The choice of understanding inclusive education in secondary schools is that this is a challenging phase of development for learners in secondary schools which is referred to as adolescence. According to Louw & Louw (2007:279) adolescence is a period of transition between childhood and adulthood; however the stages of adolescence vary from 11 to 13 years and end between the ages of 17 and 21 years. During this transition, secondary learners have to deal with rapid changes in their physical appearance, emotional instability, hormonal fluctuations, sexual maturity, peer pressure and increased expectations of parents, family members, teachers and the community. During this stage adolescents become more aware of themselves as an independent unique person with a specific place in society.

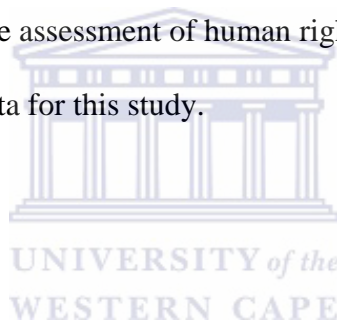
According to Erickson (1963) adolescents need to define who they are, what is important to them and what directions they want to take in life. Erikson (1963) refers to the identity development as an identity crisis, which is a temporary period of confusion, during which the adolescent explores, questions existing values and experiments with alternative roles in order to develop their own set of values and goals. Furthermore, adolescence could also be described as a time of evaluation, decision-making, commitment and a time of carving out a place in the world, with the environment that plays a major role in the development of the adolescent (Santrock, 2003, cited in Sulaiman 2010).

During adolescence, adolescents search for new intimate relationships either in a form of friendship or a group where they can feel a sense of belonging. These relationships also play a role in exploring their identities (Louw, et al, 2007:338). Studies suggest that students with disabilities, educated in an inclusive secondary school, had more social contacts and richer

friendship networks that included peers without disabilities (Fryxell & Kennedy 1995, cited in Salend, 1999). Placement in inclusion programs has resulted in improved educational outcomes for students with disabilities, with greater success in making transition to adulthood (Salend, 1999).

2.7 Conclusion

Since 1910, South Africa was governed by a segregated system of apartheid and became a democratic country in 1994. As a result, there has been major transformation in the South African education systems. This chapter attempts to highlight the successful implementation of inclusive education alongside the assessment of human rights. The next chapter reports the methodology used to collect the data for this study.



CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methodology used in the study. The data collection process and the data analysis process are discussed and a review of the truthfulness of the data and ethical consideration is specified.

3.2 A qualitative approach

This study used a qualitative exploratory approach to describe and understand the experiences of teachers, learners and the principal regarding inclusive education for learners in mainstream secondary schools. According to Creswell (1994:2) "A qualitative study is defined as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting". Similarly Babbie and Mouton (2009:270), state that the primary goal of qualitative research is to describe and understand, rather than explaining human behaviour.

A qualitative research design is relevant to this study as it allows the researcher to assess the experiences of the individuals and groups, seeking how people construct the world around them, by what they are doing, what is happening to them and what is meaningful (Gibbs, 2007). Furthermore, with a qualitative research approach the researcher was more flexible to explore other underlying matters in relation to the topic. Therefore the theoretical approach

for the purpose of this study was an interpretivist research approach. The interpretivist approach recognized the self-reflective nature of qualitative research and emphasized the role of the researcher as an interpreter of the data and the individuals who represented the information (Creswell 2007:248). It is believed that people continuously interpret, create and give meaning to, define, justify and rationalize their actions (Babbie, et al., 2009:28). Furthermore, people are continuously constructing, developing, and changing the everyday interpretations of their world. Similarly, qualitative interpretivist approach identified how the principal, teachers and learners responded to learners with special needs in mainstream secondary schools. The interpretivist approach assisted the researcher to observe the reason that the participants gave for their actions and behaviour and examined the relations between beliefs and behaviours (Donatella & Keating, 2008).

Whilst there is a clear need for both quantitative and qualitative research in the field of inclusion (Engelbrecht, 2006) it is only through qualitative research that the meaning and diversity of perspectives of inclusion can be identified.

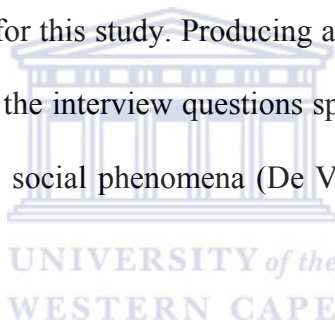
3.3 Participants

The participants were the principal, deputy principal, teachers and non- disabled learners at a mainstream secondary school, since they had direct interaction with learners who experience various challenges regarding inclusion. The participants were purposefully selected for the interviews. According to Creswell (2007), criterion sampling works well to select the participants for the study. Contact was made with the Educational Management District Centre who assisted with the identification of two inclusive schools. However interviews were only conducted at one school.

Criteria for participation in the study included the principal, teachers and learners at one of the identified inclusive secondary schools in the Cape Town District area. Interviews were conducted with the principal, deputy principal and the 4 teachers. Focus group interviews were conducted with 6 non-disabled learners. Parents were requested to provide written consent for the learners who participated in the study. There were 12 participants included in this study.

3.4 Data collection tools

An interview schedule for the principal, teachers and learners was used to engage with the participants to collect information for this study. Producing an interview schedule beforehand allowed the researcher to structure the interview questions specifically in order to gain an in-depth and thorough account of the social phenomena (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport 2011:352).



Open-ended questions were asked where the participants provided their own answers to the questions (Babbie et al., 2001: 233). Open ended questions also led to a textual and structural description of the experience, and finally provide an understanding of the common experiences of the participants (Creswell 2007). The questions used to guide the discussions were as follows:

Interview schedule for the principal and deputy principal

1. A basic framework of questions is outlined below. The individual interview with the principal will centre on this topic of discussion.
2. What is your attitude towards the whole notion of Inclusive Education?

3. What was your attitude initially towards learners with special needs?
4. Do you have any learners with special needs at your school?
5. Are you aware of the disability or the level of disability of learners with special needs in your classroom?
6. How did it come about that your school was chosen by the Department of Education to become an inclusive school?
7. As the principal of the school, how do you feel about learners with special needs at your school?
8. Why do you think learners with disabilities should be accepted in mainstream schools?
9. Compared to other schools in your area, what accommodations are in place at your school regarding inclusive education?
10. How has the school building and the physical appearance of the school been modified to accommodate learners with physical disabilities?
11. Have you made adaptations to your planning and teaching programs to include the need of learners with special needs?
12. How do learners in your class respond to learners with special needs?
13. As a principal do you support the implementation of inclusive education in mainstream schools?
14. Who do you think is the key person(s) responsible for inclusive education at your secondary school?
15. What role does the external community (parents, businesses, organizations, universities) in the inclusion of learners?

16. What support structures are put in place when your school is confronted with learners' special needs?
17. What can you recommend in order to improve the progress of inclusion for learners with special needs?

Interview schedule for the teachers

1. Do you have any learners with special needs in your classroom or school?
2. Are you aware of the disability or the level of disability of learners with special needs in your classroom?
3. As an educator, how do you feel about learners with special needs in your classroom?
4. How are the learners with special needs supported at your school?
5. As an educator, why do you think learners with disabilities should be accepted in mainstream schools?
6. How are the individual needs of learners with disabilities (blind, deaf, mobility impairment) met in your classroom?
7. What do you understand by the concept of inclusive education?
8. Do you see yourself as an inclusive educator, if yes please explain?
9. What do you see as positive factors with regards to your role as a inclusive educator?
10. What do you see as obstacles to you fulfilling your role as an inclusive educator?
11. Compared to other schools in your area, what accommodations are in place at your school regarding inclusive education?
12. Have you made adaptations to your planning and teaching programs to include the needs of learners with special needs?

13. How do learners in your class respond to learners with special needs?
14. As an educator do you support the implementation of inclusive education in mainstream schools?
15. Who do you think is the key person(s) responsible for inclusive education at your secondary school?
16. What role does the external community (parents, businesses, organizations, universities) in the inclusion of learners?
17. What support structures are put in place when your school is confronted with learners' special needs?
18. What can you recommend in order to improve the progress of inclusion for learners with special needs?

Interview schedule for the learners

1. Do you have any learners with special needs in your classroom or school?
2. Are you aware of the disability or the level of disability of learners with special needs in your classroom?
3. As a learner, how do you feel about learners with special needs in your classroom?
4. How are the learners with special needs supported by the teachers and principal at your school?
5. As a learner, why do you think learners with disabilities should be accepted in mainstream schools?
6. How are the individual needs of learners with disabilities (blind, deaf, and mobility impairment) met in your classroom?

7. What do you understand by the concept of inclusive education?
8. What do you see as obstacles to you fulfilling your role as a learner who supports inclusivity?
9. Compared to other schools in your area, what accommodations are in place at your school regarding inclusive education?
10. How did the curriculum change to include learners with special needs?
11. How do learners in your class respond to learners with special needs?
12. As a learner do you support the implementation of inclusive education in mainstream schools?
13. Who do you think is the key person(s) responsible for inclusive education at your secondary school?
14. What support structures are put in place when your school is confronted with learners' special needs?
15. What can you recommend in order to improve the progress of inclusion for learners with special needs?

The use of open ended questions was appropriate for this study, since the style of questioning allowed the participants to fully supply the answers without any prompts or options. According to Babbie & Mouton (2009: 81) explorative studies must use an open and flexible research strategy in order to meet the objectives.

3.5 Data collection process

Permission was sought from the Senate Higher Degrees committees, the Western Cape Education Department and the principal, teachers and learners of the secondary school in

order to conduct the study. Parents were asked for consent to allow their children to participate in the study. The principal, deputy principal, teachers and learners were invited to voluntarily participate in the study. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with the principal, deputy principal and teachers and data were collected with the non-disabled learners in the focus group interviews.

A focus group is defined as a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment (Kingry, Tiedjie, & Friedman 1990: 24).

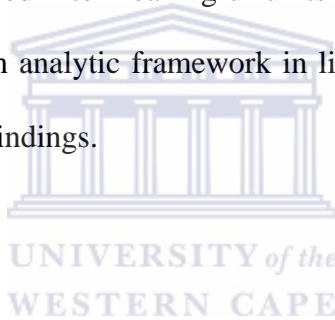
Creswell (2007), states that qualitative researchers tend to collect data in the field where participants experience the issue or problem. According to Marshall and Rossman (2011), the strengths of focus group interviews are that this method is socially orientated where the researcher studies the participants in an atmosphere more natural and more relaxed.

The focus group consisted of 6 participants, which included learners from grade 8 to grade 11. The purpose of focus groups was to collect opinions from various constituents regarding the inclusiveness and non-inclusiveness of the secondary school.

When conducting interviews the quantity of data was yielded quickly, mainly when more than one person participated. When conducting focus group interviews a greater variety of information and the immediate follow-up and clarification are possible (Marshall et al., 2011:145). With permission from the participants, the interviews were recorded.

3.6 Data analysis

Thematic analysis was used to analyze data. Creswell, (2007:156) identified five steps to analyse data. The *first* step was analyzing the data by managing the data. Data management refers to the checking and organizing of files to store the data. The *second* step was to read and re-read the text. During this process the researcher immerses him or herself with the details of the interview. The *third* step was to make margin notes to code the data. Line by line coding was used to analyse the data, in order to develop themes and to give a detailed description of what the interviewer sees. The *fourth* step was the grouping of the themes identified. The themes were grouped into meaningful units (Creswell, 2007:156-157). The meaningful units were linked to an analytic framework in literature. The *fifth* and final step was to write up a report about the findings.



3.7 Trustworthiness

The standard principle of a good qualitative study includes neutrality of the findings or decisions, found in the concept of trustworthiness (Babbie et al, 2001:276-277). In this study the researcher ensured that the findings of the study were credible, transferable, dependable and conformable (De Vos et al, 2005:346).

Credibility defines how true the research is; this includes the prolonged engagement with the study until the data is inundated. Credibility also includes the constant interpretation of what data is valid and what is not, and only the data collected from the various participants were used in the study. In order to check the credibility of the data, the researcher clarified and summarized the findings of the focus group and the interviews.

Transferability refers to the fact that the data that were collected in this study can be possibly applied to qualitative findings of other populations. To ensure transferability, the researcher used purposive sampling when selecting the participants to guarantee the thorough collection of data.

Dependability refers to the consistency in the study and how the researcher attempts to account for the changing conditions of the phenomena. The interviews and focus group discussions were held until saturation. This however indicated that the data is dependable.

Conformability indicates whether the findings of the study could be confirmed with the participants. The participants were able to determine whether the results are reliable and a true reflection of the information shared with the researcher.

3.8 Self-reflexivity

Finlay and Gough (2003:16) refer to reflexivity as confessional account or methodology for examining our own personal, possibly unconscious, reactions. The information discussed at the interviews and focus group discussions was challenging for me because the participants experienced various barriers that hindered the implementation of inclusion. Since I'm employed as a Barrier-Free Access coordinator at the University of Cape Town, this study brought about feelings of annoyance and frustration. I enjoy writing and I kept a reflective journal when engaging with this study until the study was completed. I also consulted with my supervisor and sought counselling when necessary.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Ethics is considered as crucial to a research study, as the interviewer negotiates entry to the field of research, convinces the participants to participate in the study, gathers personal and emotional data that disclose the details of the participants' lives and appeals that the participants give of their time to participate in the study (Babbie and Mouton, 2008:528). The purpose of this study was to explore and describe inclusive education in a secondary school for learners with special needs. The participants were the principal, teachers and learners from mainstream secondary schools. Interviews were conducted with the principal and the teachers and focus group interviews were conducted with the learners.

Ethical considerations for this study were centred on issues of confidentiality, anonymity and voluntary consent. Participation was confidential and anonymous. Pseudonyms were used to protect participants' identities when results are published. Participation was free and voluntary. The participants received an explanation sheet and were informed about the process prior to the interviews and focus group discussion. Participants were informed of the nature and purpose of the study and that there was no harmful procedure involved. The participants in the focus group discussion were advised that confidentiality by their fellow participants cannot be guaranteed and the participants were encouraged only to discuss general issues.

All participants were required to sign an informed consent form to participate in the study (see Appendix A1 to A3). Parents were required to provide written consent for the learners who would participate in the study (see Appendix A4). Participants could decide not to participate or leave a focus group discussion at any time. The focus group provided

participants with a shared, safe and informal environment in which to discuss the issue of inclusivity. The primary ethical issue that arose during focus group interviews centred on the issue of dynamic of power and influence that played out in any group.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the methodology of the study and the process of the data collection and analysis. The chapter has also reviewed the trustworthiness of the data and the ethical considerations that were applied to this study. The results of the study are discussed in chapter 4.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe inclusive education in mainstream secondary schools for learners with special needs. This chapter discusses the results of the study as well as the findings in the context of the literature available in the field.

The participants are coded according to the following:

Principal = P1P

Deputy Principal =P1DP

Teachers = P1T, P2T, P3T & P4T

Non-disabled learners = focus group

4.2 Participants

The participants were the principal, the deputy principal, teachers and non-disabled learners at a mainstream secondary school. Individual interviews were conducted with the principal, deputy principal and teachers. One focus group was conducted with the non-disabled learners from grade 8 to 11. There were six participants (4 males and 2 females) who attended the focus group discussion. The focus group discussion was held at the identified school in Cape Town. The focus group discussion took place on a Thursday during the last period. The

participants were sourced voluntarily with the assistance of the deputy principal. The interviews took place during the free periods of those teachers who voluntarily participated in the study. The interview with the principal and deputy principal were scheduled with the school secretary.

4.3 Overview of the topic discussed and themes identified

A summary of the topics discussed is shown below:

1. Understanding the concept of inclusive education in mainstream secondary schools in Cape Town
2. Responses to learners with special needs.
 - a. Teachers' attitudes towards learners with special needs.
 - b. Learners' attitudes towards learners with special needs.
3. Inclusion and mainstream secondary schools.
4. Barriers to Learning

The main themes identified were:

1. Acceptance
2. Awareness
3. Access
4. Training (Lack of appropriate training)
5. Support

4.4 Understanding the concept of inclusive education in a mainstream school

The participants participating in the individual interviews as well as those participating in the focus group discussion were asked to define inclusive education.

Inclusion is defined by Engelbrecht et al., (1999:6) as: “A shared value which promotes a single system of education dedicated to ensuring that all learners are empowered to become caring, competent and contributing citizens in an inclusive, changing and diverse society”. However, Magare et al., (2010), define inclusive education as the inclusion of learners who experience barriers, for example learning difficulties in reading, writing, mathematics, speech, language and impairments, barriers to communication and so on, to learning in a regular educational environment, regardless of their diverse personal or interpersonal needs, the contextual challenges and the adversities they have to deal with.

The definitions provided by the participants were much simpler than the ones cited in the literature. For examples participants said that inclusion is:

- *Every child's right to education and to be included, whether from a racial background or special needs (P1T).*
- *we have learners who have disabilities and what can we do to include them in the mainstream school(P2T)*
- *to allow learners in various forms of neglect or disability or learned behaviour or physiological or social inability, those learners are accommodated in education in a mainstream type of education (P1P)*

Examples of the definition of inclusive education given by the participants were:

- *There is a place for everyone (P1DP)*
- *acknowledging every child in your classroom for who he or she is (P4T)*
- *Help and support those with disabilities, treat them equal (focus group).*

The response from (P1DP) indicated that there is a place for everyone, whether the learner is non-disabled or disabled in any way. The response indicated a sense of inclusion by making provision regardless of the learner's disability but focusing on the learner's ability. The response from (P4T) recognized that everyone at the school has an obligation toward learners with special needs. The response from the focus group indicated that learners with special needs in mainstream schools require the support and assistance of everyone at the school. It is clear that non-disabled learners understand the concept of inclusion. If the school nurture and develop the increase of learner support to learners with special needs it can go a long way in developing the ethos of inclusive education at this school and other mainstream schools. Inclusion, relating to mainstream schools, encourages schools to review their structures, approaches to teaching, student grouping, and promote the schools to meet the diverse needs of all students (Farrell, 2003).

The response from (P1T) indicated a greater sense of inclusion, saying for example *“That every child has a right, no matter what his or her barriers. Whether it's barriers in learning or physical barriers, it's every child's right to education and to be included, whether from a racial background or special needs, that every child is included”*. In contrast, when consulting the history of education prior to 1994, literature indicated separate education systems which included discrimination, segregation, inequality etc.

The data collected on the understanding of the concept of inclusive education in secondary schools in Cape Town suggest that all participants are in agreement that learners with special needs should be taught at this mainstream secondary school.

4.5 Responses to learners with special needs

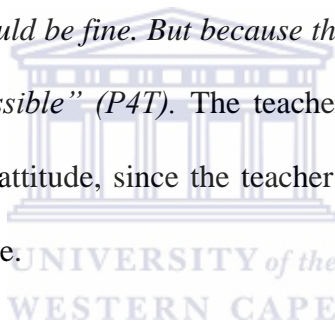
4.5.1 Teachers' attitudes towards learners with special needs

The attitude of teachers in secondary schools plays a critical role in ensuring the success of inclusive education since the success of inclusion is sustained through positive attitudes (Nel, et al., 2011:77). While the majority of participants and the data analysed in this study indicated the enthusiasm and positive attitudes towards inclusion of learners with disabilities, the principal of the school was of the opinion that *“we are doing learners a disservice when they have special needs and we do not identify it”*. Again if we nurture the development of positive attitudes of teachers together with all learners it will build the ethos of the school and address the challenges the principal identified.

The Educational White Paper 6 (2001:16) describes inclusive education and training systems as changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methodologies, curricula and the environment to meet the needs of all learners and acknowledging that all children and youth can learn and that all children and youth need support. Teachers in mainstream schools thought that children with disabilities or learning disabilities had to be taught by teachers with special qualifications (DOE, 2002:13).

Therefore, the success of inclusive education depends heavily on the perceptions and attitudes of teachers within mainstream schools toward learners with special needs and learners who

experience barriers to learning (Koay et al., 2006). However, inclusive education imposes certain demands on teachers, including addressing different needs in common learning environments and through a common curriculum. This task is complex and is likely to create tensions that could lead to feelings of helplessness in some individuals. Research indicates the lack of necessary skills to teach learners with barriers to learning as the most common source of educator resistance (Kauffman et al., 1988). For example, *“learners with the learning disability, I feel that they need special attention and special time. Because I have grade 8 English class with 50 learners in it. So to focus on the ten or twelve that struggle with the work is really difficult. In the whole spectrum of things, but if I had a class where I just work with them, I would enjoy it that would be fine. But because the class is so big and giving them individual attention is a bit impossible” (P4T)*. The teacher/learner ratio has the ability to cause frustration and a change in attitude, since the teachers are required to teach and give individual attention at the same time.



Teachers with specialist training in special needs education work collaboratively with general classroom teachers in providing support to learners within the classrooms (Walton et al., 2009). Specialist support personnel seem to have a vital role to play in the inclusive practice of schools in developed countries. Inclusive classrooms represent diverse learning needs and appropriate support needs to be provided to meet the needs of all learners.

4.5.2 Learners’ attitudes towards learners with special needs

The response of the focus group indicated a sense of acceptance, for example *“I feel that learners with disabilities should be treated equal and there should not be any discrimination because of their circumstances*. A child is “included” when he or she is viewed as an equal

partner in the school community. The more facilitating and accommodating the environment is to the needs of children, the fewer barriers there will be to children's development and learning (Salend, 1999: 205). However, at the same time the focus group responded with the following": *we don't treat them different but they keep them away from us, they are ashamed of themselves and they think we will discriminate against them*". Children who were identified as having special educational needs were labelled and excluded from mainstream education and society (Du Toit 1996 cited in Engelbrecht et al., 2007:3). Literature indicates that disabled children were placed in special settings and it was actually believed that this was done in the best interest of the child. According to Chambers (2001:12), when we remove children with disabilities from their peer groups, we deny non-disabled children the opportunity to learn about the experience and become aware of disability. Non-disabled learners should be taught to see that a difference does not mean separation or exclusion. However learners who experienced barriers to learning may need to learn various functional, personal and social skills in their inclusive classroom.

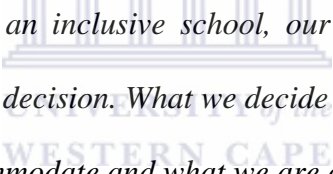
4.6 Inclusion and mainstream secondary schools

The education system in South Africa has undergone extensive policy changes during 1994, reflective of the Government's desire to restructure and transform a divided, fragmented, discriminatory and authoritarian education system into a more democratic, open, flexible and inclusive system (Sayed, 1998; Welton, 2001; Pillay et al, 2009).

Research indicates that inclusive education has been promoted in primary schools in South Africa (Clark, 2007; DOE 2002; Elloker, 2004; Engelbrecht et al., 2006; Jacobs 2010; Mayaba, 2008; Molope, 2007; Prinsloo, 2001; Stofile, 2008). However, inclusions in

secondary schools were almost non-existent in the Cape Town District area (Loebenstein, 2005; Mbengwa, 2010). According to the Education Management District Centre only two inclusive secondary schools were identified in the Cape Town area. These schools were not referred to as inclusive schools, but they were listed as full-service schools. Full-service schools are schools that will be equipped and supported to provide for the full range of learning needs among all our learners (DOE, 2006:22). Gaining entry was challenging. Contact was made and permission was sought from the principals. Nevertheless, the application was approved by the one school and declined by the other school.

The participants were asked to explain how it came about that the school was chosen by the Department of Education to become an inclusive school.

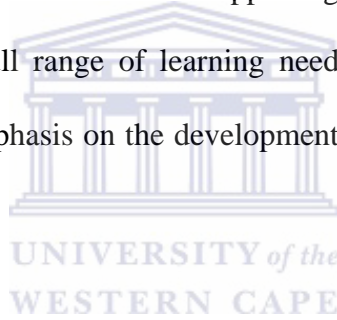
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- *The school is not as such an inclusive school, our attitude is inclusive. What the Department decides is their decision. What we decide we are is what matters, what we as teachers choose to accommodate and what we are concerned about (PIP).*
 - *As far as inclusivity is concerned, the school took the decision. OK. (PIDP)*

It is the responsibility of SAG to provide basic education for all learners, guided by the central principles of the Constitution. It is the commitment of SAG to identify and recognize a new unified education and training system, based on equality, redressing past imbalances and on a progressive developing of quality education and training.

The participants also discussed their reasons why learners with disabilities should be accepted in mainstream schools.

- *Assuming that a learner with a disability is left out of the school, we are saying “they are not ok and we are”. A disability does not suggest that you should not be included in a mainstream programme. Your disability might be limited, it might be specific and something that one can overcome (PIDP)*
- *There’s absolutely nothing wrong with them. There’s absolutely nothing wrong with a learner in a wheelchair. the only thing that is different is that he/she can’t walk and that is why he/she sits in a wheelchair(PIDP)*

The implementation of the White Paper 6: (2001) highlights the right to inclusive education for children with disabilities. Inclusion is about supporting all learners, educators and the system as a whole so that the full range of learning needs can be met. The focus is on teaching and learning with the emphasis on the development of good teaching strategies that will be of benefit to all learners.



4.7 Barriers to Learning

It is essential to acknowledge that learners with disabilities and impairments are most vulnerable to barriers to learning and excluded in the South African mainstream education system because they have historically been regarded as learners with special educational needs. Their increased vulnerability has arisen principally because of apartheid policies. They were not only excluded on the basis of race but disability. This had a dual effect and created barriers to learning for many non-white disabled learners.

Barriers to learning and the participation in schools in South Africa commonly arise from a range of factors, including socio-economic deprivation; negative attitudes to and stereotyping of difference; an inflexible curriculum; inappropriate languages or language of learning and teaching; inappropriate communication;

inaccessible and unsafe built environments; inappropriate and inadequate support services; inadequate policies and legislation; the non-recognition and non-involvement of parents; and inadequately and inappropriately trained leaders and teachers in education (DOE, 2001).

Participants clearly stated their reasons for what they regarded as obstacles to fulfilling their roles as an inclusive educator.

- *“A lack of knowledge. A lack of knowledge of the special needs of a particular child can also be a barrier. Sometimes we are not sensitive to the needs of a special needs child” (P1T)*
- *Giving learners with a learning disability individual time, all the time they need individual time and you sit by their desk and help them. I think that is a bit of an obstacle for me, because while am working with one, the others are breaking down the class, they also want attention.(P2T)*

In order to address barriers to learning and exclusion, it is important to be consistent with a learner-centred approach to learning and teaching. It recognizes that developing learners' strengths and empowering and enabling them to participate actively and critically in the learning process involve identifying and overcoming the causes of learning difficulties. The approach is also consistent with a systemic and developmental approach to understanding problems and planning action. It is consistent with new international approaches that focus on providing quality education for all learners (DOE, 2001:19).

Similarly, the concept of “addressing barriers to learning and development” which has emerged from the NCSNET/NCESS report is directly linked to a systems approach to understanding problems and development. The emphasis is not on “what is wrong with the

learner but what barriers are being experienced by the learner (Engelbrecht et al., 1999:53). Most of these barriers are located in the system. Testing and assessments were one of the recommendations that were put forward by the participants in order to identify learners with special needs at the school.

“Testing” and “assessing” and “verification” of learning needs or learning barriers or disabilities in that regard. We must have that because once we have that teachers can adjust and teach and accommodate various levels of understanding in the class. I believe the learners will be more accommodated they will be related to it, they will respect, they will understand themselves much better. I think it will improve education tremendously; it will improve the performance of learners significantly. I think we need to assess we need to be clear on what the difficulties” (PIP).

In the past many learners who experienced barriers to learning dropped out of school primarily because of the inability of the system to recognise and accommodate their diverse range of learning needs. Most learners with disabilities were either not in special schools, or had never been to a school because mainstream schools could not adequately meet their needs. (DOE, 2002:7). Learners in mainstream education who experience barriers to learning need to be identified early and appropriate support needs to be provided.

4.8 Summary of the themes identified

4.8.1 Acceptance

Acceptance was frequently discussed by the participants. The participants were of the opinion that learners with disabilities need to be treated equally and not any different. The data

collected from the participants indicated that disability is no longer isolated and disabled learners have the right to belong. Participants believed that sympathy will not compensate for past imbalances but acceptance will create welcoming attitudes and an atmosphere where non-disabled learners can be educated around disability. In the past persons with disabilities were seen as objects of pity; however the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2010), changed disability from an object to a subject.

All children have the right to learn together. There are no legitimate reasons to separate learners for their education. Learners belong together, with advantages and benefits for everyone. Schools are obliged to accept learners with disabilities.

It is the responsibility of the South African Government (SAG) to provide basic education for all learners, guided by the central principles of the Constitution. It is the commitment of SAG to identify and recognize a new unified education and training system, based on equality and redressing past imbalances.

Section 1 (a) of the South African Constitution (1996), founded the democratic state of common citizenship on the values of human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedom. The values call upon all South Africans to take up the responsibility and challenges of building a humane and caring society to ensure that all learners, with and without disabilities, pursue their learning potential to the fullest.

Basic education is a fundamental right of all South Africans. Section 29 (1) states that everyone has the right to basic education. The fundamental right of basic education is further developed in the Constitution in Section (2), which commits the state to the achievement of

equality. The right to equality is probably the most applicable when introducing education at a primary and secondary level. Prior to 1994 inequality and discrimination were essential characteristics of the South African society.

A child is “included” when he or she is viewed as an equal partner in the school community. The more facilitating and accommodating the environment is to the needs of children, the fewer barriers there will be to children's development and learning (Saleh, 1999:205). Inclusion, relating to mainstream schools, encourages schools to review their structures, approaches to teaching, student grouping and promote the schools to meet the diverse needs of all students (Farrell, 2003).

Inclusion not only views disabled learners as equal partners in the school community but also allows non-disabled learners and teachers to embrace disability by accepting disabled learners for their abilities rather than for their disabilities. Participants indicated that acceptance brings about awareness which creates a need to be educated around various disabilities.

4.8.2 Awareness

Awareness was frequently discussed by the participants. Many participants said that they were able to identify and assist learners with physical disabilities. However, learners who experience learning difficulties were not fully understood because teachers are not aware of their disability, or it is not regarded as a disability. The majority of people living with disabilities in South Africa have been historically excluded from education.

Prior to 1994 South Africa adhered largely to the medical model and deficit theory approach to disability, whereby people with disabilities were seen as helpless individuals with deficits,

in need of care and help, who could never occupy a fully integrated, equal position in society. The medical model emanates from the disease model used in medicine, which allowed practitioners to think of the condition which needs appropriate treatment. For example, a child is excluded from the mainstream social and economic life because of a disability that is considered to be a natural and permanent characteristic of the child.

According to the medical discourse, the “blind”, “deaf” or those labelled by other disabilities are excluded from regular educational schools and such an exclusion immediately results in the perception of such people as inadequate human beings, who are unfit to be included in mainstream economic and social life (Engelbrecht, et al., 1999:13). The main approach of understanding disability arises from the medical model (Johnston 1994, cited in Llewellyn et al., 2001) and the social model (Hughes et al., 1997; Oliver, 1990; Terzi, 2004). The medical model views all disabilities as a result of physiological impairment, due to injuries or a disease process (Llewellyn et al., 2001).

Harmful and negative attitudes towards learners with disabilities make these learners more vulnerable and more likely to be excluded, or they experience learning breakdowns. Educators and non-disabled learners should be educated around disability.

Prior to 1994 non-disabled persons were always decision makers and the voices of the disabled were erased and special education was always associated with generosity. Beneficiaries of special education are seen as objects of pity and forever in need of assistance. These beneficiaries were always seen as underachievers and in need of institutional care. Social workers, therapists, physiotherapists, nurses, teachers and others who benefit from these types of labelling are hardly mentioned. Even as the work of these professionals is

appreciated and respected, the question remains; who benefits from this types of isolation or categorization? (Engelbrecht, et al., 1999:13-14).

In order for the school to raise disability awareness non- disabled learners and teachers need to recognize that they have needs in this area. This could perhaps be the most challenging aspect of their new responsibilities. However disability awareness does exist in schools but it is distorted and based on a view of disability that focuses primarily on vision, hearing or mobility.

Disability is more than impairment and within the connotations associated with the medical model, there is the assumption that all children with impairment are automatically disabled or disable their families (Hutchison, 1995). Thus children with disabilities would need to be in specialized care or schools. The challenge to disablism, oppression and exclusion has produced the new politics of disablement which includes, as its intellectual expression, the social model of disability (Oliver, 1990).

When focusing on the ways in which disability is socially produced, the social model has succeeded in shifting debates about disability from medically dominated agendas to discourses about politics and citizenship (Hughes, et al., 1997). The social model of disability theorized principally by the disabled scholar Michael Oliver, is a fundamental contribution not only to the discussion about the complexity of disability, but to our understandings of disability as informed by disabled people's reflection on their own experience (Terzi, 2004:141).

4.8.3 Access

Disabled people in South Africa continue to face barriers that prevent them from enjoying the full civil, political, economic, social, cultural and developmental rights. In 1996, the South African Schools Act was passed to provide a basic structure of an inclusive education and training system through its announcement of the right of equal access to basic and quality education for all learners on a non-discriminatory basis. The South African Schools Act states that principals should allow parents the right to decide where they wish to enrol their learning disabled child. No learner may, therefore, be denied access to any school on any grounds, including disability, language or learning difficulty.

There are three important aspects relating to access particularly when focusing on the development of inclusion in mainstream schools; physical access in terms of buildings, educationally in terms of curricular and support systems and emotionally in terms of philosophy of acceptance and the celebration of diversity (Engelbrecht, et al., 1999:10).

The participants mentioned that the school has the necessary accommodations in place for learners with mobility impairments. Physical access at the school includes the ramps that were installed when the school was confronted with their first wheelchair learner. However, the current wheelchair user (learner) makes use of the toilet facilities in the sick room since there is no accessible toilet at the school. Participants mentioned that learners with mobility impairments are not excluded from any form of activity at the school. Wheelchair learners are accommodated on the ground level in order to gain access to classrooms, library and computer labs.

Since 1994 concrete steps have been taken to address the ways in which people with disabilities are excluded from mainstream society. Government policies and legislation now reflect the need to promote the rights of persons with disabilities.

Article 2 of the CRC prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. Article 5 (2) of the CRPD states the following;

2. In order to promote equality and eliminate discrimination, States Parties shall take all appropriate steps to ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided.

The majority of people with disabilities can live independent and productive lives, particularly if they have access to opportunities, resources, environments and assistive technology that allow them independence, dignity, self-sufficiency and responsibility.

The participants mentioned that the school has limited resources to enhance the curriculum that is supposed to facilitate successful learning and teaching programmes. The installation of smart boards at the school made a tremendous difference to learners with learning disabilities being able to learn and grasp concepts and have intelligent thought happening while teaching is taking place. The principal mentioned that he wished all the classrooms were fitted with interactive smart boards to simplify the task of teachers.

The most important way of addressing barriers arising from the curriculum is to make sure that the process of learning and teaching is flexible enough to accommodate different learning needs and styles. The curriculum must therefore be made more flexible across all bands of education so that it is accessible to all learners, irrespective of their learning needs. One of the tasks of the district support team will be to assist educators in institutions in creating greater flexibility in their teaching methods and in the assessment of learning. They will also provide illustrative learning programmes, learning support materials and assessment instruments (DOE, 2001:20).

While the principal identified assistive technology that can enhance the learning of students, the lack of available or insufficient resources still hampers the learning of students with learning disabilities.

4.8.4 Training

The study identified the importance of training in terms of improving inclusion at the school. However, training seems to be limited to cases where teachers are able to fulfil their daily task due to lack of knowledge and proper understanding of the learner's disability. Some participants were of the opinion that learners with learning difficulties were regarded as slow learners.

Teachers in this study were concerned that they were not trained well enough to assist learners with learning difficulties. Others mentioned that they did not have the time to give these learners individual attention because of the size of the class and the time slots allocated for teaching.

When the inclusive education project was introduced into the pilot project schools, some teachers felt nervous because they did not understand what inclusive education was all about. Some were confused because they did not understand what they were supposed to do. Others were worried because they had not been trained to teach children who were not able to participate in learning activities like the other children in their classes. Many teachers thought that children with disabilities or learning difficulties had to be taught by teachers with special qualifications. Others did not understand that the learning problems of many children were caused by the way teachers taught them, or the school system or even problems at home or their community (DOE 2002:13).

Inclusive education was adopted at the Salamanca World Conference on Special Needs Education in Spain in 1994 as a global strategy for addressing the learning needs of all

disadvantage, marginalized and excluded learner groups as the fundamental way of realising the vision of education for all (Engelbrecht, et al., 2007:140).

The Salamanca Statement argued that regular schools with an inclusive orientation are “the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all” (Ainscow, 2008:16). However, the central objective of the DOE, (2001) is to extend the policy foundation, framework and programmes of existing policy for all bands of education and training so that the education and training systems will recognize and accommodate the diverse range of learning needs.

Effective teaching and learning can become a reality in mainstream schools if teachers embrace a system that promotes commitment to change, planning for change and providing support that promotes and maintains change. Teachers are the key to the transformation of schools and teacher education programmes should be informed by current research on the variables that are keys to implement successful inclusion of learners with diverse needs in mainstream schools (McLeskey et al., 2002).

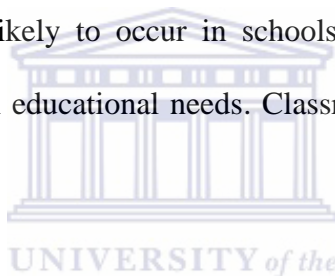
Transformation and change must therefore focus on the full range of education and training services: the organizations - national and provincial departments of education, further and higher education institutions, schools (both special and ordinary); education support services; curriculum and assessment; education managers and educators; and parents and communities (White Paper 6, 2001:125).

Teachers should be trained to think and work in a new frame of reference or mind-set, since a disturbing number of teachers in South Africa is confused and insecure because of a series of radical changes that have transformed their working environment (Prinsloo, 2001:345).

Research indicates that teachers' acceptance or resistance to the inclusion of learners with barriers to learning into mainstream classrooms is related to the knowledge base and experiences of educators (Stoler 1992; Taylor et al., 1997). However, further research indicated the lack of necessary skills to teach learners with barriers to learning as the most common source of educator resistance (Kauffman et al., 1988).

Classroom teachers are the primary resource for achieving the goals of inclusive education and training systems. Therefore, teachers will need to improve their skills and knowledge and develop their own.

The most successful training is likely to occur in schools that have some experience of working with learners with special educational needs. Classroom support activities involved action research.



Action research is when a researcher works with a teacher in their classrooms to see how they are teaching. In a way, where the researcher helps the teachers to think about (or reflect on) how they can improve the way they are teaching and doing things. The researcher also helps the teachers to develop the skills to reflect on their own teaching so they become independent reflective teachers (DOE 2002:16).

4.8.5 Support Structures

This study identifies the importance of support structures that are in place when the school is confronted with learners with special needs. Teachers in inclusive classrooms cannot accommodate all learners effectively without support. The term “support” describes both the learning support provided by teachers to individual learners in the classrooms, and structures and arrangements that are put in place by the school when assisting learners with special needs (Engelbrecht 1999:128). Participants explained that there are certain structures in place

when parents enrol learners with special needs at the school. The principal together with the teachers are in agreement that the Educator Support Team assists with the enrolment of learners with disabilities at the school. This includes the screening of learners in relation to the accommodations they require when included in mainstream education. The support provided by non-disabled learners was established through peer support, which was formed in classrooms and on the playgrounds. The buddy system has been used in the school whereby specific learners volunteered to assist disabled learners (wheelchair users) by helping them to get to the classrooms, calling staff when needed etc.

This type of support is normally built into the education system. Therefore the Ministry of Education believes that the key to reducing barriers to learning within all education and training lies in a strengthened education support service (DOE, 200:28). On the 4th of March 1997 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the resolution on the equalization of opportunities for people with disabilities.

Education in mainstream schools presupposes the provision of interpreter and other appropriate support services. Adequate accessibility and support services designed to meet the need of persons with different disabilities should be provided (UN, 1994:15).

Although there are structures in place at the school, when they enrol learners with special needs they still require the support from parents and the external community. The principal indicated that parents are keen to enrol learners with disabilities in mainstream schools, but the support provided by parents is very poor. There is hardly any support provided by the external community. The deputy principal mentioned that the school occasionally receives equipment from the community, but it's not enough.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the data obtained from the individual interviews and focus group discussions conducted with the key participants. The next chapter makes conclusions and recommendations.

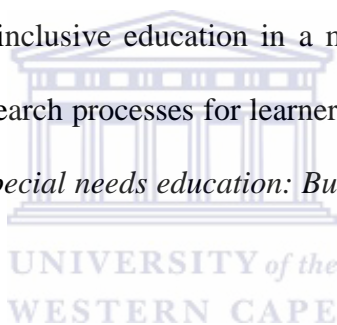


CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, conclusions and recommendations are made concerning the research findings after a careful review and consideration of the responses provided by participants and the literature study. The study focused on the implementation of inclusive education in a mainstream secondary school in Cape Town. This study was conducted to establish how successful the implementation of inclusive education in a mainstream secondary school is. The overarching thought in the research processes for learners with special needs is set out in the *Education White Paper 6 on Special needs education: Building an inclusive education and training system* (DOE, 2001).



5.2 Summary of the findings

The data shows that teachers' and learners' responses reveal that learners with special needs should be taught in this mainstream secondary school. Teachers at this mainstream school are ready to teach learners with special needs, and non-disabled learners accepted learners with special needs in their classrooms and at their school. However, on the contrary, the participants experience a number of barriers that hinder the full participation of teachers when assisting learners with special needs in their classrooms. The challenges go beyond commonly-reported problems such as the day-to-day expenses incurred by the school, but include challenges such as the identification and testing of learners with special needs,

insufficient training of teachers and not enough support from the DOE, community and parents.

The Educational White Paper 6 (2001:16) lists eight main goals describing what inclusive education and training are. The findings from this study have been reviewed in light of the extent to which this mainstream secondary school is meeting some of these objectives.

(1) Acknowledging that all learners can learn together with appropriate support: The Educational White Paper 6 (2001:10) outlined how South African policy will “systematically move away from using segregation according to categories of disabilities as an organizing principle for institutions. It will be based on the provision of education for learners with disabilities on the intensity of support needed to overcome the debilitating impact of those disabilities.” This study highlighted that teachers and non-disabled learners understand the concept of inclusion. Both teachers and learners acknowledge learners with special needs in their classroom and at the school. They are of the opinion that there is a place for everyone and disabled learners should be treated equally. Although the focus group discussion consisted of only six non-disabled learners, these learners are ready and eager to develop and embrace inclusion at this school. If this behavior is nurtured it has the ability to build up the ethos of inclusivity in this school.

The responsibility of the South African Government is to provide basic education for all learners, guided by the central principle of the Constitution. The South African Constitution (1996) recognizes a new unified education and training based on equality, redressing past imbalances and progressively developing the quality of education and training for all. However, this study identified the lack of inclusive mainstream secondary schools in the

Cape Town District, since this study was conducted by one of the two schools identified by the Western Cape Education Department. The Educational White Paper 6 (2001:22), identified and recognised the need for inclusive schools (full-service) and their intention of establishing them. However, after a decade of implementation of the White Paper (2001), only two inclusive mainstream secondary schools exist in Cape Town District.

Integrating inclusion into mainstream schools is not unique to South Africa. Research indicated that inclusion has been implemented in a number of primary schools in South Africa (DOE 2002; Engelbrecht et al., 2006; Jacobs 2010; Mayaba, 2008; Molope, 2007; Prinsloo 2001; Stofile 2008; Sulochini, 2011). Likewise, the designation and conversion of approximately five hundred out of twenty thousand primary schools were earmarked to become inclusive (full-service) schools, beginning with thirty districts that formed part of the National District Development Programme (White Paper 6, 2001:22). Whilst DOE supported the implementation of inclusion in mainstream primary schools, participants suggested that inclusion should be implemented in various secondary schools in the Cape Town District area. Participants indicated that segregation was abolished in 1994 and disabled learners have the right to decide where they want to complete their formal schooling.

(2) *Acknowledging, respecting and accepting learners with disabilities.* The main areas discussed in the focus group and interviews centred not only on disability and inclusion. Participants discussed some associated issues. For example the participants pointed out that separation from disabled learners can create feelings of isolation and unwelcoming attitudes. Non-disabled learners criticized the behaviour of disabled students in the past. The participants were of the opinion that learners with disabilities should be treated equally and

not any different. Participants believed that sympathy will not compensate for past imbalances created by segregation, but acceptance will create welcoming attitudes and a positive atmosphere. The majority of participants were enthusiastic about the inclusion of disabled learners at their school. Participants expressed a sense of empathy and helpfulness towards learners with disabilities. The positive attitude of teachers ensured the success of inclusion at this school, regardless of the barriers they encounter on a daily basis.

(3) Maximizing the participation of all learners in the curricula of educational institutions and uncovering and minimizing barriers to learning:

This study highlights the importance of positive attitudes by teachers and non-disabled learners towards learners with special needs. Again it is critical that teachers portray a positive attitude in the classroom towards all learners, since teachers are the key that will unlock a welcoming attitude in all aspects of teaching and learning. However, in order for teachers to remain positive, the principal and Western Cape Education Department should ensure that teachers receive the appropriate support in all aspects of teaching and learning. The size of classrooms at this school does not make it easy for teachers to work effectively and can create frustration, which will result in negative attitudes. The lack of resources should also be addressed to enhance teaching and learning. The principal mentioned that not all the classrooms are equipped with smart boards. If all classrooms are equipped with smart boards teachers will spend less time compiling learning materials and more time focusing on the learners' needs.

This study indicated that the school has the necessary accommodations in place to meet the need of learners with mobility impairments. Physical access at the school

includes the ramps that were installed when the school enrolled its first wheelchair user. However there are no accessible disabled toilets installed at the school. This creates a barrier, since the school is currently accommodating a wheelchair user. Learners and teachers indicated that the toilet facility in the sickbay was made available to assist the wheelchair user. Even though the learner makes use of the toilet facility, it defeats the principle of accessibility in terms of universal design. Therefore it will be recommended that the school install a fully accessible toilet to meet the needs of wheelchair users.

(4) Training and support structures to meet the needs of all learners.

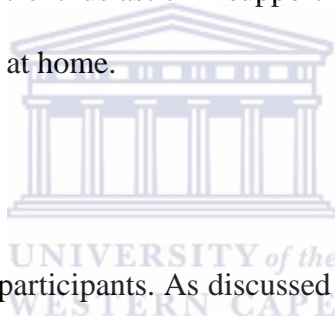
The study identified the importance of training in terms of improving inclusion at this mainstream secondary school. Some participants were of the opinion that learners with learning difficulties were regarded as slow learners. Some of the teachers in this study were concerned that they were not trained well enough to assist learners with learning disabilities or difficulties. Others mentioned that they are unable to give these learners the required attention because of the size of the class and the time slots allocated for teaching. The lack of necessary skills or on-going training to teach learners with learning barriers is the most common source of educator resistance.

The educator support team should provide teachers working at inclusive school the opportunity to raise awareness campaigns with teachers and all learners around the education and desensitization of disability. Training should also be provided to the administrators working in inclusive schools to assist teachers with their daily tasks. Capacity building

workshops should be on-going, since we are living in a changing world which brings about challenges for teachers that can so easily create barriers.

This study also explored the support structures that were in place when the school was confronted with special needs learners. Participants explained that there were certain structures in place when parents enrolled learners with disabilities. It was mentioned by the teachers that the school has an educator support team, who assist the principal with the screening of learners in relation to the accommodations required to include these learners in mainstream education. The findings of the study indicate parents are eager to rely on the school for support but they are not enthusiastic in supporting the school when the learners experience difficulties which occur at home.

5.3 Limitations



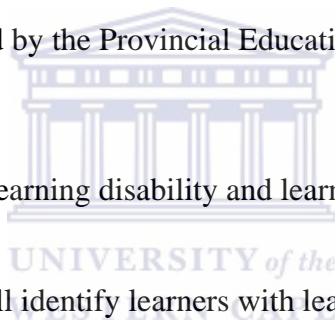
This study was conducted with 12 participants. As discussed above, there is a need to expand this study to allow a greater number of participants from all areas of the country to be accessed.

The study is also limited by the fact that it was conducted by one researcher. This means that the data analysis was conducted from the perspective of one person only. If this study was conducted at the two identified inclusive schools in the Cape Town area a greater number of people would likely be involved in the data collection and analysis, and this would improve the checking and validation of the codes and themes identified.

5.4 Recommendations

This study has identified a number of areas for further research. These are summarized below:

- Conduct research to explore the implementation of inclusion for learners in mainstream secondary schools in all provinces of South Africa.
- Assess the occurrence of discrimination and segregation of disabled learners in mainstream secondary schools.
- Assess the attitude of teachers and non-disabled learners towards learners with disabilities and learning difficulties.
- Assess the support provided by the Provincial Education Departments to mainstream secondary schools.
- Research linkage between learning disability and learning difficulties.



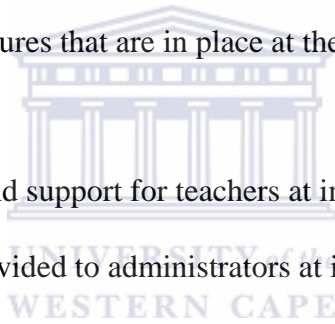
Research and develop tools that will identify learners with learning disability and difficulties.

5.5 Recommendations for improving inclusion in mainstream schools

The participants made a number of recommendations about how to improve inclusion in mainstream secondary schools. Recommendations made by the researcher have also been included in the list.

Based on the findings of the study it is recommended that the school, working in conjunction with the education support team, provides teachers working at inclusive schools the opportunity to:

- Raise awareness campaigns with teachers and all learners around the education and desensitization of disability.
- Network with NGO's and organizations and those involved in supporting inclusion of disabled learners in mainstream society.
- Network with business in the community to assist with fund raising and educating children within the community about disability
- Network with tertiary institutions in the Cape Town District to assist with the enrolment of learners with disabilities.
- Support disabled learners to further their education
- Re-assess the support structures that are in place at the school for learners with disabilities.
- Provide ongoing training and support for teachers at inclusive secondary schools.
- Training should also be provided to administrators at inclusive mainstream schools.



Recommendations for the Western Cape Education Department (WED)

- Create testing centres at schools to assist with early identification, assessment and verification of the learners with learning disabilities.
- Provide ongoing necessary support and training to teachers as well as the administrators of inclusive mainstream schools.
- The WED needs to ensure that relevant assistive technology is available to support learners with disabilities in mainstream schools.
- Provide adequate funding to ensure that the inclusive schools meet the access principles according to universal design.

- Conduct research to assess the progress of inclusion at schools.

5.6 Conclusion

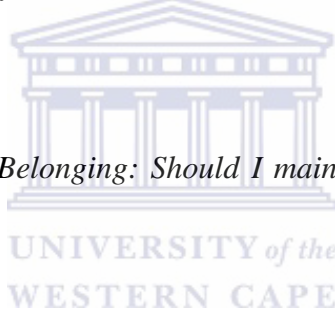
This chapter has discussed the findings of this study and has made recommendations to the school and Western Cape Education Department to improve on the inclusion of learners with special needs in mainstream secondary schools. Inclusion is about acceptance and belonging. The findings of this study indicate that teachers and non-disabled learners are eager and supportive to include learners with special needs in their classrooms and at their school. If their optimistic attitude and behaviors are nurtured and developed, it has the ability to build up the ethos of inclusivity in the school community and can be an example of best practice to many other mainstream secondary schools. Although the focus group consisted of only six non-disabled learners, these learners understand the concept of inclusion and rule out separation at their school. The study highlighted the importance of training and support. In order for these teachers to remain positive the principal and Western Cape Education Department should ensure that teachers receive the appropriate support and training in all aspects of teaching and learning. The teacher/learner ratio at this school does not make it easy for teachers to work effectively. This can create feelings of frustration, lack of support, lack of empathy to all learners, and change of attitude. Teachers are the heart of schools, but without proper tools its impossible to work. The lack of resources has to be addressed; physical access is a barrier if it's not addressed. The school is in need of an accessible toilet because they accommodate a wheelchair user. Disability is not just and impairment, however. It is unique and the accommodations differ from person to person. Although the school has structures in place when confronted with special needs learners, teachers and learners should

be educated around disability. The educator support team together with teachers and learners should raise awareness. Disability is not an easy topic, but the more we engage in discussions, the more we will learn and discover.



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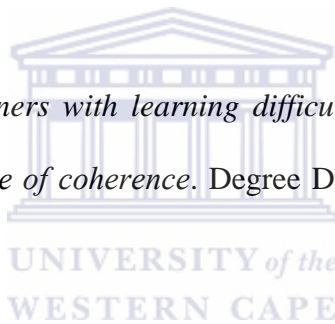
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REFERENCE: 20110818-0003

ENQUIRIES: Dr A T Wyngaard

Mrs Edwina Konghot
37 Oxford Street
Portland
Mitchell's Plain
7785

Dear Mrs Edwina Konghot

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: AN EXPLORATIVE STUDY OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AT MAINSTREAM SECONDARY SCHOOLS FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **22 August 2011 till 30 September 2011**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number.
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

**The Director: Research Services
Western Cape Education Department
Private Bag X9114
CAPE TOWN
8000**

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

Signed: Audrey T Wyngaard

for: **HEAD: EDUCATION**

DATE: 18 August 2011

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Appendix B (1)

Letter of Consent for the Principal

Title: Exploring inclusive education at mainstream secondary schools for adolescents with special needs.

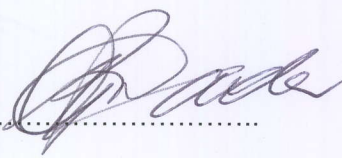
The letter serves to grant my consent to complete and participate in a individual interview with the interviewer. The interview is a discussion of my experience as principal, regarding inclusive education at mainstream secondary schools for adolescents with special needs. The objective of the study is to explore how secondary school educators respond too adolescents with special needs and what support structures are in place when the schools are confronted with learner's special needs. I am aware that I may withdraw from the study at any time should I not feel comfortable discussing the topic. I understand that the information is private and will be managed by the interviewer, confidentially and anonymously.

I understand that I give consent that the information gathered during the interviews will be type recorded and anonymously presented in research reports and publication articles.

I agree to participate in this study

I disagree to participate in this study

This letter was and signed on ...²⁹...day of ^{September}...month of the year ²⁰¹¹...

Signature of interviewee:.....



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SUPERVISOR

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

Appendix B (2)

Letter of Consent for the teachers

Title: Exploring inclusive education at mainstream secondary schools for adolescents with special needs.

The letter serves to grant my consent to complete and participate in a individual interview with the interviewer. The interview is a discussion of my experience as a teacher, regarding inclusive education at mainstream secondary schools for adolescents with special needs. The objective of the study is to explore how secondary school educators respond too adolescents with special needs and what support structures are in place when the schools are confronted with learner's special needs. I am aware that I may withdraw from the study at any time should I not feel comfortable discussing the topic. I understand that the information is private and will be managed by the interviewer, confidentially and anonymously.

I understand that I give consent that the information gathered during the interview will be type recorded and anonymously presented in research reports and publication articles.

I agree to participate in this study

I disagree to participate in this study

This letter was and signed on 29 day of SEPT month of the year 2011

Signature of interviewee:



UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

Private Bag X 17, Bellville 7535, South Africa

Tel: +27 21-9592277, Fax: 27 21-959

E-mail: nroman@uwc.ac.za

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

Appendix B (3)

Letter of Consent for the learners

Title: Exploring inclusive education at mainstream secondary schools for adolescents with special needs.

The letter serves to grant my consent to complete and participate in a focus group discussion with the interviewer. It is a group discussion of my experience as an learner, regarding inclusive education at mainstream secondary schools for adolescents with special needs. The objective of the study is to explore how secondary school educators respond too adolescents with special needs and what support structures are in place when the schools are confronted with learner's special needs. I am aware that I may withdraw from the study at any time should I not feel comfortable discussing the topic. I understand that the information is private and will be managed by the interviewer, confidentially and anonymously.

I understand that I give consent that the information gathered during the interviews will be type recorded and anonymously presented in research reports and publication articles.

I agree to participate in this study

I disagree to participate in this study

This letter was and signed on 15 day of September month of the year 2011

Signature of interviewee: [Signature]



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DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

Appendix B (4)

Letter of Consent for the parents

Title: Exploring inclusive education at mainstream secondary schools for adolescents with special needs.

The letter serves to grant my consent as the parent that my child may complete and participate in a focus group discussion with the interviewer. It is a group discussion of his or her experience as learner, regarding inclusive education at mainstream secondary schools for adolescents with special needs. The objective of the study is to explore how secondary school educators respond too adolescents with special needs and what support structures are in place when the schools are confronted with learners special needs. I am aware that I may withdraw from the study at any time should I not feel comfortable discussing the topic. I understand that the information is private and will be managed by the interviewer, confidentially and anonymously.

This letter was and signed on 16.....day of SEPTEMBER month of the year 2011

Signature of parent:.....Mashayi.....