

**DEVELOPMENT OF AN INSTRUMENT THAT SUPPORTS  
AND MONITORS INCLUSIVE CULTURES, POLICIES AND  
PRACTICES IN A WESTERN CAPE SCHOOL**

by

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

UNIVERSITY *of the*  
WESTERN CAPE

**MASTER OF EDUCATION (M.Ed.) – Full Thesis**

University of the Western Cape

**SUPERVISOR: DOCTOR S STOFIE**

SEPTEMBER 2014

# DECLARATION

I, Nickfred Johane Sayser, hereby declare that this dissertation: **Development of an instrument that supports and monitors inclusive cultures, policies and practices in a Western Cape mainstream school**, is my own work and has not been submitted to any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

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## ABSTRACT

The democratisation of the South African government created a policy environment that enabled transformation in every sphere of our society. Transformation of the education sector was marked by the adoption of inclusive education as a constitutional imperative in this country. This resulted in attempts to make ordinary mainstream schools more accessible to learners with disabilities. The transformation of schools into inclusive institutions is a tedious process that is being further complicated by the contentious nature of the notion of inclusion. The challenge to schools and institutions is that there is no measuring instrument against which schools can measure their own development, and which can inform the process they embark on.

Against this backdrop this study aimed at developing an instrument that could guide schools through the process of becoming more inclusive. The question that this study seeks to answer is: What are the indicators that can be used to evaluate the development of inclusive practices in mainstream schools in the Western Cape context? Methodologically the study is set in a qualitative research paradigm that employed a participatory action research method (PAR), that matches the spirit of democracy that permeates the society in which participants in study found themselves in. In-depth interviews were used to pursue the aim of the study.

Inclusive education is described in literature as an elusive and contentious concept. This description resonated well with the findings of this study as participants conceptualised inclusive education in a variety of ways. The study explored the three interconnected dimensions of inclusive education to direct the development of inclusive education in a school. This exploration yielded a variety of indicators for each dimension that were categorised in general indicators and more specific indicators. These general and specific indicators, as were foregrounded by the participants, were then collated in an instrument that the stakeholders of the school could use to support and monitor the implementation of inclusive cultures, policies and practices in their school.

## DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the memory of my late mother, Rev. Miriam Jane Sayser, who inculcated Godly values and principles in me.



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and express my gratitude to the following people for their individual guidance, support and sacrifices.

### **Dr. Sindiswa Stofile**

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for being my mentor, guide and life-coach throughout this journey. Our conversations about inclusive education long after our formal sessions helped me tremendously to understand this elusive concept.

### **Prof. M. Moletsane and Prof. Bojuwoye**

You were soundboards and voices of reason that kept this study on course. I am deeply indebted to you for your human touch when I experienced family challenges. Thank you for your contributions towards teaching me to embrace and celebrate diversity.

### **The Western Cape Education Department**

Thank you to WCED and my colleagues at Metropole South Education District for your commitment to combat exclusion on a daily basis.

### **A.Z. Primary School**

I thank the principal, staff, parents and learners for allowing me to become one of the staff members while I conducted this study at the school. You went the extra mile in accommodating me when I needed space and time for the different focus groups.

### **Cindy, Nathaniel and Timiney**

I thank you my children for your sacrifice throughout the duration of my research. You showed such maturity in understanding my absence when I needed to be. I love you eternally.

Nickfred Johane Sayser

September 2014

## ACRONYMS / ABBREVIATIONS

DANIDA	Danish International Development Assistance
DBST:	District Based Support Team
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ILST	Institutional level Support Team
IQM	Inclusion Quality Mark
NCSNET	National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training
NCESS	National Committee on Education Support Services
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PQI	Programme Quality Indicators
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
SADC	Southern African Development Community
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights

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# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS

*Home is where one starts from.*  
T.S. Elliot (1922)

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The landscape of South African education changed dramatically after the country adopted a democratic government in 1994. Prior to this change of governance, the education system reflected the ideology of the apartheid government that was in force. Naicker (2000) posited that apartheid education failed to promote common citizenship and nationhood, but instead promoted race, class and gender division and separateness. Critical to the development of this argument are the findings and recommendations in the Report of the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET), as reported in (Department of Education, 1997) as well as the National Committee on Education Support Services (NCESS), reported in (Department of Education, 1997).

The central findings of these investigations were that Specialised Education and Support Services have in the past been provided for a small percentage of learners with disabilities within special schools and classes. During apartheid, specialised education and support were provided on a racial basis, with the best human, physical and material resources reserved for whites. Most learners with disabilities (besides whites) have either fallen outside of the system or been mainstreamed by default. The curriculum and education system as a whole have generally failed to respond to the diverse needs of the learner population, resulting in massive numbers of drop-outs, push-outs 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.

The findings of the NCSNET and NCESS (Department of Education, 1997) clearly reflected the apartheid ideological paradigm of separatism that promoted race, class and gender divisions that were indicative of South African society at the time. What emerged from this report is a segregated and 'disable-list' thinking that permeated not just education, but every sphere of society (Naicker, 2000). I wish to highlight two initiatives that served as agents for transformation in education in South Africa, namely the Salamanca Statement and the South African Constitution. The Salamanca 'Framework for Action' (UNESCO, 1994) states that inclusive schools must recognise and respond to the needs of learners, regardless of any

difficulties or difference they may have. Similarly, the South African Constitution requires education to be "transformed and democratised in accordance with the values of human dignity, equity, human rights and freedom, non-racism and non-sexism" (Department of Education, 2004:15).

## **1.2 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

After the release of the Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (2001), several attempts were made to make public ordinary mainstream schools more accessible to learners with disabilities or special needs. These attempts included: conversion of public ordinary schools into full-service schools; the conversion of Special Schools into resource centres; and the establishment of Institution Level Support Teams (ILST) and District Based Support Teams (DBST).

The success of the implementation of this new policy on inclusion depends on schools' commitment and political will. As the key drivers of inclusion, schools are expected to embrace this new philosophy and, in the process, they must be transformed in three key areas, namely: policies, practices and cultures. This transformation of schools into inclusive institutions is often a tedious process that is being complicated by the contentious nature of the notion of inclusion. The challenges to schools and institutions are many. Two major challenges that I would like to highlight are. Firstly, there is no measuring instrument in South Africa against which schools can measure their own development, and which can inform the process the schools need to embark on. Secondly, schools cannot be seen as managing diversity, or as being inclusive, by simply consigning large numbers of disabled learners to special educational programmes within these inclusive schools. This was confirmed by several international studies (Haug, 1998; Persson, 2000; Pijl, 1994).

My key role as an official of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) is to ensure that learners with disabilities or learners experiencing barriers to learning are placed at full service schools or inclusive schools in the Metropole South Education District, Western Cape. During my interaction with these schools I became aware that schools deemed themselves as being inclusive schools by virtue of having learners with disabilities, or learners with barriers to learning, in their schools.

This triggered my interest in becoming involved in preparing these schools for their new role and I endeavoured to undertake research that would develop an instrument that would guide and support schools in their inclusive development, through a collaborative process of review, planning and implementation. I became particularly interested in the process that schools should follow in becoming more inclusive and seeing what relevant elements these schools should focus on. This is emphasised by Charlton and David (1993:3), when they state that the increasing challenge to schools that want to make a difference and want to become more inclusive is to examine what they are offering their learners, how it is offered and whether it meets the needs of the learners and the public. Booth and Ainscow (2002) identified three key areas that must be developed by schools that want to become more inclusive, namely: cultures, policies and practices.

This research therefore focused on the development process that schools need to undergo in their pursuit of becoming more inclusive. This was done through a conceptual exploration of cultures, policies and practices so that an instrument that could guide schools towards greater inclusivity could be developed. Mcleskey and Waldron (2002:8) posit that:

An in-depth research into the environment and context of schools in the education system constitutes the necessary first steps towards a solution to obtain a comprehensive idea of the knowledge and attitudes of teachers and also to develop an understanding of the aspects that need to be addressed in the process of inclusion.

Transformation of schools into inclusive institutions should be based on the development of those aspects that would guide the school through the process of inclusive school development. Rustemier and Booth (2005) suggest the use of the inclusive index as a set of materials to support the inclusive development of schools, through a collaborative process of review, planning and implementation. Any instrument that is intended to be used in South African schools should take into consideration the unique circumstances of this country. I therefore endeavoured to develop guidelines within a particular school, which could be used as benchmarks for its own development towards greater inclusivity.

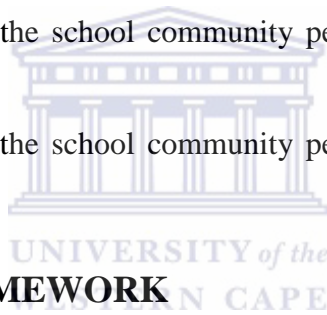
### **1.3 RESEARCH AIMS**

The aim of the study is to develop an instrument that will be used by a mainstream school to monitor and evaluate the development of inclusive practices, cultures and policies in their

school. The objectives of this study are: to explore the stakeholders' understandings of inclusive education and inclusive schools; and to explore the stakeholders' perceptions of cultures, policies and practices that need to be in place to develop inclusivity in schools. The main research question is: What are the indicators that can be used to support and monitor the development of inclusive practices, cultures and policies in a mainstream school in the Western Cape context?

More specific questions that will be answered are:

- What does inclusive education mean to the stakeholders of the school community?
- How do stakeholders of the school community define an inclusive school?
- What do stakeholders of the school community perceive as indicators for inclusive cultures?
- What do stakeholders of the school community perceive as indicators for inclusive policies?
- What do stakeholders of the school community perceive as indicators for inclusive practices?



## **1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The theoretical framework of a research project provides an orientation to the study. It also positions the research in the particular discipline (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smith, 2004). The theoretical framework chosen for this study is the eco-systemic approach. This theory sees “different levels of the social context as systems where the functioning of the whole is dependent on the interaction between all parts” (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2001:47). Inclusive education is generally seen as advocating for access and participation of all stakeholders of a school community and how role-players interact in their particular social contexts.

Inclusive education, as a form of educational reform strategy, provides practitioners with the means to deal with various barriers to learning and development. There has been a shift in understanding the location of barriers to learning and development. It is now widely accepted that these barriers to learning and development can occur anywhere in the complex system in which learners operate. Johnson and Green (2007) found that many learners who struggle to

learn have often been negatively influenced by various microsystems. This poses certain challenges to the educational system whose function is to provide quality education for each learner. Sands, Kozleski and French (2000:5) provide a possible solution when they argue that:

These challenges are met when we embody the concepts of inclusion, community, collaboration, democracy and diversity, and when all children and members of the community have a future of fulfilled human and community potential, security, belonging and valued interdependence leading to meaningful contributions.

The eco-systemic model is explanatory of systemic influences on child development; however, its basic premise in the explanation of development itself is very useful. Bronfenbrenner (1999) argues that various immediate and distant forces affect an individual's development. These can be distinguished as five systems: intimate, interfacing, community, cultural and time (which Bronfenbrenner termed: microsystems, mesosystems, exosystems, macro-systems and chronosystems). Development involves a reciprocal and dynamic relationship between all these five systems, in which each developing person is significantly affected by interactions between these overlapping systems. Bronfenbrenner's (1999) framework thus allows for an exploration of inclusive education as being about the development of systems including individuals and organisations. One of the aims of this study is to gauge the perceptions of learners, parents and educators with regard to the inclusion of learners with barriers to learning in schools. The ecosystems approach would provide an appropriate framework to achieve this goal.

## **1.5 CLARIFICATION OF TERMS**

This section clarifies the terms that will be used in the study.

### **1.5.1 Inclusive education**

A very simplistic definition of inclusive education is that it is the placement of learners with special educational needs in mainstream schools alongside individuals who are not disabled. A more comprehensive definition of inclusive education that would enhance the thinking around this particular research is:

Inclusive education focuses on the transformation of the school cultures to increase access of all students (not only marginalised or vulnerable groups), to enhance the school personnel's

and students' acceptance of all students, to maximise student participation in various domains of activity, and to increase achievement of all students (Booth, Ainscow, Black-Hawkins, Vaughan & Shaw, 2000; Kalambouka, Farrell, Dyson & Kaplan, 2005).

This definition of inclusion is adopted in the study as it contains the very aspects that literature suggests that schools need to develop in order to become more inclusive. More explanations of the concept of inclusive education are provided in chapter 2.

### **1.5.2 Inclusive schools**

A review of education reform in Sweden reveals that changes in inclusive education in Sweden consisted of reforming the special education system so that its services and programmes could be extended to mainstream schools. In Sweden and the other Scandinavian countries there is therefore 'a move away from special schools'. According to Flem and Keller (2000:198), Scandinavian countries use terminology such as 'comprehensive schools', 'common schools for all', 'inclusive schools' and 'schools that suit every child'. The South African perspective, as outlined earlier, is not much different from the Scandinavian experience.

One of the pertinent statements of the Salamanca Statement is that ordinary schools with an inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all. After 1994, the South African Government adopted a number of policies that set a process in motion to transform the entire education system, in order to tackle barriers to learning and development.

The Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Training System (Department of Education, 2001) proposes the conversion of public ordinary schools into full service schools.

Full-service schools are defined as "schools and colleges that will be equipped and supported to provide for the full range of learning needs among all learners" (Department of Education, 2001:22). Emphasis was placed on inclusive principles which included flexibility in teaching and learning and the provision of educational support to learners and educators, when capacity was built into these schools.

### **1.5.3 Access**

The notion of inclusion is characterised mainly by access and participation. Access not only relates to physical proximity to other mainstream learners, but also access to mainstream curricula and other opportunities for development. The notion of access relates closely to this research, as depicted in The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996), where the right to equal access to education for all learners without discriminating in any way is asserted. Learners may therefore not be denied access to any school on any ground, including disability, language or learning difficulty.

### **1.5.4 Participation in inclusion**

Participation in inclusive education refers to opportunities learners and other stakeholders of a school have to interact with the programmes and curricula that are made accessible through inclusive practices. Mitchell (2005) sites physical proximity and social contact between disabled learners and their mainstream peers as an example of participation in inclusion. Involvement of disabled learners in the educational programmes of mainstream schools poses the question of whether these educational programmes, or curricula, will address their needs. The implementation of inclusive education is deemed cosmetic if participation of learners with special educational needs does not promote social and curricular access.

In this study, participation is deemed to refer to the interaction of all learners in the curricula and co-curricular programmes of a school. It also involves all other stakeholders of the school, i.e. learners, teachers (including principals) and parents.

### **1.5.5 What is the index for inclusion?**

The index for inclusion is an instrument that was developed in England. It consists of a set of materials to guide schools through the process of inclusive school development. The purpose of the index is to build *supportive communities* and foster *high achievements* for all staff and students. Schools could use the index, as developed by Booth and Ainscow (2008:30), in the following ways:

- Adopt a self-review approach to analyse their cultures, policies and practices, and identify the barriers to learning and participation that may occur within each of these areas.
- Decide their own priorities for change and evaluate their progress.

- Use it as an integral part of existing development policies, encouraging a wide and deep scrutiny of everything that makes up a school's activity.

## **1.6 CHAPTER OUTLINE**

Chapter one provides a background to the study.

Chapter two reviews literature on inclusive education.

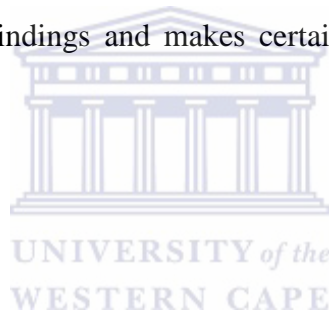
Chapter three discusses the indicators for inclusive education is discussed.

Chapter four explains the research methodology employed in the study.

Chapter five presents the research findings.

Chapter six discusses the findings of the study.

Chapter seven summarises the findings and makes certain recommendations based on the findings.





## CHAPTER TWO: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

*I had come to the conclusion a long time ago that there was no escape from the labyrinth of contradictions in which we live except by an entirely new road, unlike anything hitherto known or used by us. P.D. Ouspensky (1949)*

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter one provides a background to the study, while this chapter explores literature relevant to the study. The main aim of the literature review is to gain a deeper understanding of the notion of inclusive education, which in turn enables the researcher to adequately address the questions and sub-questions as stated in chapter one. In order for the study to achieve these aims, it was deemed important to extensively explore theory underpinning inclusive education, because “research does not happen in a theoretical vacuum” (Henning, van Rensburg & Smith, 2004:12). It is also imperative to note that social researchers achieve their position by virtue of their knowledge of what the field has to offer in terms of its theory. Henning et al. (2004:26) identify three purposes of literature reviews:

- The literature review is used first and foremost in the contextualisation of one’s study, to argue a case and to identify a niche to be occupied by one’s research.
- Secondly the literature review is also used to synthesise the literature on the selected topic and to engage critically with it.
- The third instance where literature reviews are useful is where you explain the data and show the relevance of your findings in relation to the existing body of literature.

### 2.2 THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Several international scholars describe inclusive education as a widely used and yet contentious notion in contemporary education reform, because of conceptual, historical and pragmatic reasons (Artiles, Kozleski, Dorn & Christensen, 2009:65). It was thus deemed necessary to investigate some conceptualisations with both the similarities and differences found amongst scholars, in order to enrich this study.

The next section explores the various ways in which inclusive education have been described, with a view to deepening the understanding of this elusive concept.

### **2.2.1 What is inclusive education?**

The literature research reveals the various ways in which different people think about inclusive education. The similarities or common elements between the different definitions can, however, not be ignored. Green (2001:4) cited some of the common elements as: “a commitment to building a more just society, and a commitment to building a more equitable education system”. The four principles that are common to all definitions of inclusive education, as outlined by UNESCO (2005:15), are:

- Inclusion as a process has been seen as a never-ending search to find better ways of responding to diversity.
- Inclusion is concerned with the identification and removal of barriers.
- Inclusion is about presence, participation and achievement of all students.
- Inclusion involves a particular emphasis on those groups of learners who may be at risk of marginalisation, exclusion or underachievement.

In order to understand inclusive education, it became necessary for this study to investigate the epistemic features of special education and some conceptions of inclusive education. A whole range of conceptual perspectives on inclusive education are found in literature. These range from placement of disabled and non-disabled learners on the one hand, to a more comprehensive whole-school approach or transformation of whole education systems on the other. Policies on inclusive education in most countries are incrementally challenging schools to change their thinking and practices to include in the mainstream those learners with a wide range of barriers to learning (Karsten, Peetsma, Roeleveldt & Vergeer, 2001:196). This calls on teachers to work flexibly in a variety of settings with learners with diverse needs (Capper, Frattura & Keyes, 2000: 38). In the light of the above, Rose (2001:147) states that inclusive education is largely dependent on a reconceptualisation of teaching roles and responsibilities. In making provision for learners who are experiencing barriers to learning, it is essential that issues relating to how schools operate are addressed, through the development of a whole school policy for inclusive education (McLesky & Waldron, 2000:9; Stakes & Hornby, 2000:117). A whole-school approach which addresses the educational needs of all learners is seen by Mukhopadhyay (2002:142) as the most powerful approach to generate and internalise innovation for the improvement of a school. A historical contention within inclusive education is the fact that inclusive education is more visible in special education literature

than in mainstream literature. This sounds a warning to practitioners to be cautious of the tendency to see inclusive education as an extension of special education. It also relates to, and has direct consequences for, pragmatic considerations such as: “governance structures, professional development models, curriculum approaches and collaborative approaches that support positive learning outcomes for all learners” Artiles et al. (2009:66). The contrast between inclusive education and special education is highlighted by Lipsky and Gartner (1999:15). In their description of inclusive education, they claim that inclusive education is not a special education reform, but the convergence of the need to restructure the public education system to meet the needs of a changing society and the adaptation of the separate special education system, which has been shown to be unsuccessful for the greater number of students who are served by it. These aspects have direct bearing on how practitioners establish and sustain inclusive practices.

Another contentious issue I wish to highlight is found in the ambiguities that emerge from different conceptions of inclusive education. Some observers, such as Pijl, Meijer & Hegarty (1997), are of the opinion that inclusive education has become central to the education policies of many countries and, as such, it has been propelled to a global agenda in education. Despite the sudden rise to prominence, several authors have extensively documented that inclusive education still means different things in different contexts (Dyson, 2001; Florian, 1998; Forlin, 2004; Green, 2001; Mitchell, 2006; Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff & Pettipher, 2002; Swart & Pettipher, 2005). Dyson (1999) believes that the ambiguities within inclusion arose from different discourses, through which different theoretical notions of inclusion are constructed. The four discourses within inclusive education are:

- The rights and ethics discourse: The Salamanca Statement emphasises that inclusion can be justified by reference to the rights of children to an education and, moreover, to an education that is made available alongside the majority of their peers (Dyson, 1999:39).
- The efficacy discourse: This holds that inclusive schools are seen as bringing greater social benefits, being more effective educationally, and being more cost effective than segregated special education (Dyson 1999:40).
- The political discourse: The implementation of inclusive education has to be concerned with not only determining the particular forms that will realise the general

principle of inclusion, but also with the transition from a segregated to an inclusive system (Dyson 1999:41).

- The pragmatic discourse: This discourse is concerned with what inclusive education looks like in practice and with how, in practical terms, it can be brought about (Dyson 1999:42). An important feature within this discourse is concerned with the nature of inclusive schools as organisations, the determinate features, systems, practices and structures. This discourse is also concerned with delineating an inclusive pedagogy which enables proponents to set out a series of practical steps for educators, managers and policy-makers, to realise inclusion.

Inclusion has been defined by UNESCO (2005:12) as a dynamic approach of responding to pupil diversity and seeing individual differences not as problems, but as opportunities for enriching learning. In line with this, UNESCO (in EENET 2000:1) defined inclusive education as:

... being concerned with removing all barriers to learning, and with the participation of all learners vulnerable to exclusion and marginalisation. It is further regarded as a strategic approach designed to facilitate learning success for all children. It addresses common goals of decreasing and overcoming all exclusions from human rights to education, at least at the elementary level, and enhancing access, participation and learning success in quality basic education for all.

Another definition of inclusive education concentrates on the contrasting efforts of an education system to normalise certain groups of learners on the one hand, versus the transformation of a society on the other hand. To this end, Barton (2003) explains what inclusive education is not. This author claims that inclusive education is not integration and is not concerned with the assimilation or accommodation of discriminated groups or individuals within existing socio-economic conditions and relations. It is not about making people as 'normal' as possible. Barton (2003) asserts that inclusive education ultimately is about "transformation of a society and its institutional arrangements such as education".

Booth, Ainscow and Kingston (2006:3) advocate the view that inclusive education is a principled approach to action in education and society, while developing inclusion involves reducing all forms of exclusion. They argue that it is not just the mere placement of learners with special educational needs in mainstream schools alongside individuals who are not

disabled. Skrtic, Sailor and Gee (1996:229) focus on the transformation of the school policies, cultures and practices. According to Booth, Ainscow, Black-Hawkins, Vaughn and Shaw, (2000); Kalambouka, Farrel, Dyson and Kaplan, (2005), inclusive education is about incrementally providing access to all students, not only marginalised or vulnerable groups, while enhancing the school personnel's and students' acceptance of all students. It also seeks to maximise student participation in various domains of activity, and increase achievement of all students.

This definition of inclusive education is appropriate for this study, as it contains the very aspects that literature suggests schools need to develop in order to become more inclusive. Literature also suggests that the aspects schools need to change are: cultures, policies and practices. *Inclusive cultures* refer to the way things are done within the school and the ethos of the school community. This in turn is reflected in increased acceptance of learners, increased participation of learners by engaging them in their own learning, allowing all learners access to schools and its programmes, and allowing all learners to achieve. More detail about inclusive cultures will be provided in chapter three.

Inclusive education is defined in the policy document of South-Africa, Education White Paper N0.6: Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (Department of Education, 2001) as follows:

It acknowledges that all children and youth can learn and that all children and youth need support. It seeks to enable education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners. It acknowledges and respects differences in learners, whether due to age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disability or HIV status. There is an acknowledgement of the fact that learning occurs in the home, the community, and within formal and informal contexts. Inclusive education requires changing attitudes, behaviours, teaching methods, curricula and environments to meet the needs of all learners. Finally it endeavours to maximise the participation of all learners in the culture of educational institutions and the curriculum.

### **2.3 THEORIES UNDERPINNING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

Three main theories that underpin inclusive education, namely: the social model, human rights model and the ecological systems theory were selected for discussion in this study.

Hick, Kershner and Farrel (2009:1) contend that teachers and educationalists traditionally view psychology as a source of ideas and evidence of how best to support children's learning, especially for those who experience difficulties in learning at my school. This tradition of psychology had its academic roots in the 'within person' model, where explanations about behaviour and learning can be made by focusing on the individual (Farrel & Venables, 2009). Practitioners seeking to follow a more inclusive approach have to contend with two issues as pointed out by Thomas and Loxley (2001). The first issue these writers point out is the role of psychology which provides an IQ-based rationale for separating children into special schools. The second issue is about ascribing difficulties in learning to individual child deficit.

Critical to advancement and improvement in any field of endeavour is a paradigm shift, as pointed out by Smith (2003:360). What then is a paradigm and what are the identifiable paradigms in this field of study? A paradigm is an interconnecting set of assumptions, values and methodologies that are taken as axiomatic, and which cannot be further examined within the paradigm itself (Lewis, 1998:92). The paradigms on viewing learners who experience barriers to learning are presented in two major models. These models are the social and human rights models. These three models then become relevant to this research.

### **2.3.1 SOCIAL MODEL**

The primary aim of the social model is to challenge the idea that disability is caused by bodily impairment. Within this model, it is the environment that disables people, because it restricts their movement and their ability to communicate and function effectively (Bain, Lancaster, Zundans & Parks, 2007). According to Hughes and Patterson (1999), the central tenet of this model is that society actually causes disability by placing barriers to accessibility in the way of people with impairments. The social model is guided by the following principles:

It is the attitudes, values and beliefs operating within a society that causes disability, not the medical impairment. Institutions such as schools are human inventions designed to fulfil specific social and cultural needs of groups of people (Berger & Luckman, 1966). It is within these institutions that disability is constructed.

Quantz and O'Connor (1998) conclude that, because human beings and their cultures are constituted in social interactions, the presentation of human identities outside the context of social relations misrepresents life. It is therefore society that needs to be treated and cured,

not individual people with impairments. Power over the lives of people with impairments should be held by those individuals, not professionals. Society, through its political apparatus, legislation and government, denies people their civil rights. Solutions to these issues cannot be effectively imposed from above or from outside, but can only be resolved by disabled people and non-disabled people working together (Johnstone, 2001; Oliver, 2006).

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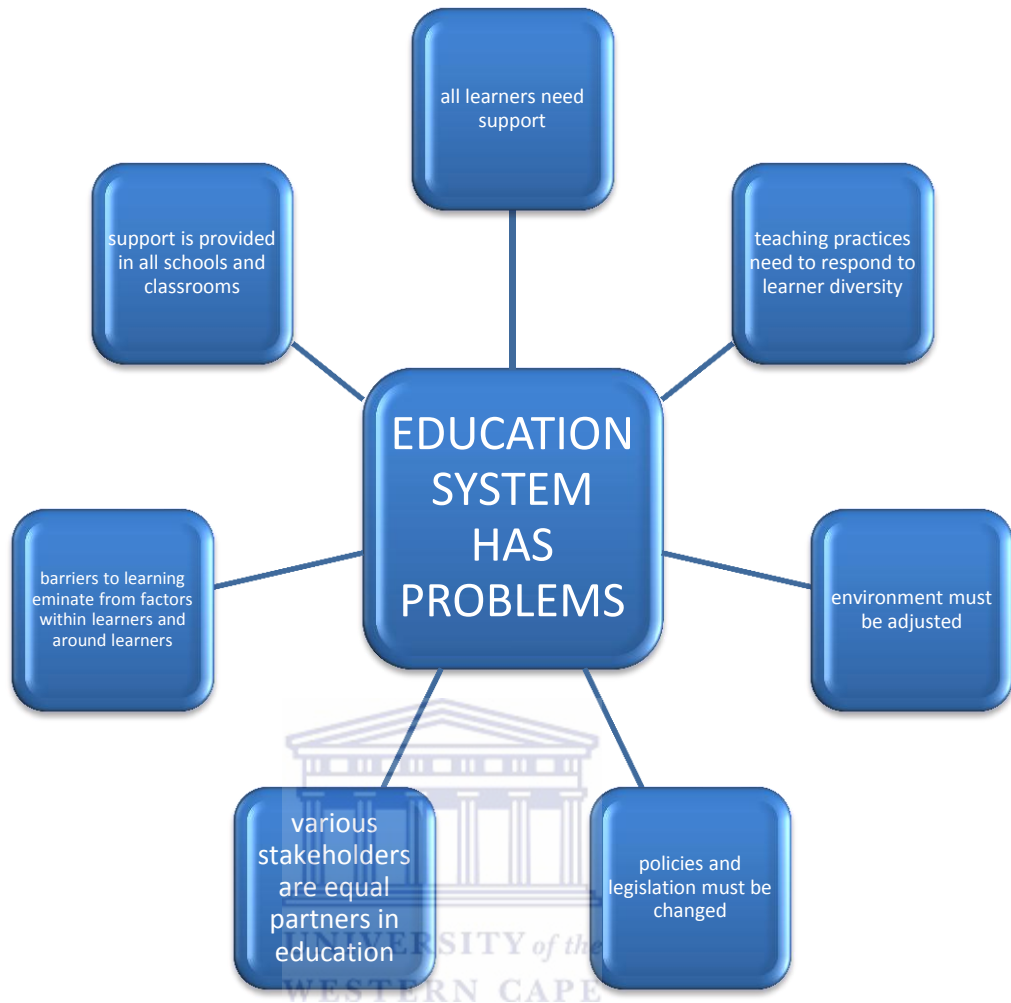


Figure 2.1: Social model

Source: Adapted from Harris and Enfield (2003:172)

The social model for understanding disability advocates the view that disability is socially constructed and not merely the result of medical conditions. Varenne and McDermott (1999:124) conclude that many challenges people have in schools stem only incidentally from what they can or cannot do, and much more radically from the way they are treated by others. They are supported in this view by Ladson-Billings (1994) who asserts that, when students are treated as competent, they are likely to demonstrate competence.

### 2.3.2 HUMAN RIGHTS MODEL

Kenilworthy and Whitaker (2000) contend that the rights-based model has at its very core the



principle that all children should attend a mainstream school that is based within their local community. This model seeks to challenge the societal belief regarding the legitimacy of segregated education and the premise that it is simply impossible to include all children in mainstream education, (Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education, 2008). The human-rights model, according to Johnstone (2001), is guided by the following principles:

- Recognition of the existence of structural discrimination against disabled people in society
- Acknowledgement of the collective strength of disabled people
- Determination of an agenda set by disabled people and their allies
- Recognition of legislation as a basis for establishing the visibility of the democratically enforceable rights of disabled people
- Bringing legal sanction to bear upon any act of disability discrimination.

Daniels and Garner (1999) describe inclusive education as an issue of human rights as well as an issue that lends itself to international human rights declarations. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, (1948) serves as an example, as it is seen as being at the core of inclusive education, as is evident in its statement:

Everyone has the right to education and education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace, (Article, 26: Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948).

Other important human rights declarations since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are: The United Nations Convention on the rights of the child (UNCROC, 1989) which states that all children have the right to receive education without discrimination on any grounds. Article 23 of UNCROC, 1989 states that: “disabled children should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child’s active participation in the community”.

The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action and Special Needs Education emphasises that inclusion can be justified by reference to the rights of children to an

education and, moreover, to an education that is made available alongside the majority of their peers (Dyson, 1999:39).

This study adopted the concept of inclusive education as presented in the Conceptual and Operational Guidelines document of the Department of Education, (2005). In this document, inclusive education is defined as: “a process of increasing the participation of learners in, and reducing their exclusion from, cultures, curricula and communities of local centres of learning”, amongst others.

### **2.3.3 ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS MODEL**

The eco-systemic perspective is not the only perspective from which inclusive education can be viewed. Behavioural, psycho-educational and biophysical theories are among other perspectives available (Shea & Bauer, 1994:7). The eco-systemic perspective was selected as a framework, because it allows the researcher to study all facets of the learner who experiences barriers to learning and development as an inseparable part of the environment. This perspective is an example of a multidimensional model of human development and is useful in understanding classrooms, schools and families as systems themselves (Swart & Pettipher, 2005).

The literature research revealed that inclusive education, as described by the Department of Education (1997:2001), locates barriers to learning not only within the learner, but, more importantly, within the school, within the education system or within the broader social, economic and political context. The Education White Paper No.6 (Department of Education, 2001) policy document on inclusive education in South Africa advocates for a philosophical shift away from the deficit model, that assumes that causes of learning difficulties lie largely within the child (Mittler, 2006; Muthukrishna, 2001; Stofile, 2008). This paper locates barriers to learning within the schooling system (Department of Education, 2001). This is consistent with Bronfenbrenner’s 1979 bio-ecological theory.

The bio-ecological framework explains the systemic influences on child development. This view is supported by Stofile, Raymond and Moletsane (2013), who state that learning and development of children and youth are influenced by a wide range of factors, including the learner’s biological and physiological systems, as well as a number of overlapping contexts that the individual experiences. Bronfenbrenner (1999) argues that various immediate and distant forces affect an individual's development. The challenge in inclusive education is to

understand the interactions, influences and interrelationships between the learner with disabilities and other systems from an ecological systems perspective.

Bronfenbrenner's (1977; 1979; 1999) model suggests that there are five interacting systems: intimate, interfacing, community, cultural and time (which he termed: microsystems, meso-systems, exo-systems, macro-systems and chrono-systems). Development involves a reciprocal and dynamic relationship between all these five systems, in which each developing person is significantly affected by interactions between a number of overlapping systems. This point is emphasised by Garbarino (1992), who states that the involvement of children in ever-increasing complex settings offers children rich possibilities for having caring and nurturing relations. Pipher (1996) stated that the same principle holds true for parents and other family members, who also grow from these opportunities. Bronfenbrenner's (1999) framework thus allows an exploration of inclusive education as being about the development of systems, for example, the mainstream education system, and the development of individuals, for example, attitudes of teachers within these systems.

Identifying the different factors operating within and between these systems would facilitate a better understanding of inclusive education. This allows us to explore the development of inclusive education as constructed and constrained by factors operating at different levels, and how practices are shaped by the interactive influence of individuals and their social environment. It is universally recognised that the main objective of any educational system in a democratic society is to provide quality education for all learners, so that they will all be able to reach their full potential and will all be able to meaningfully contribute to, and participate in, that society throughout their lives.

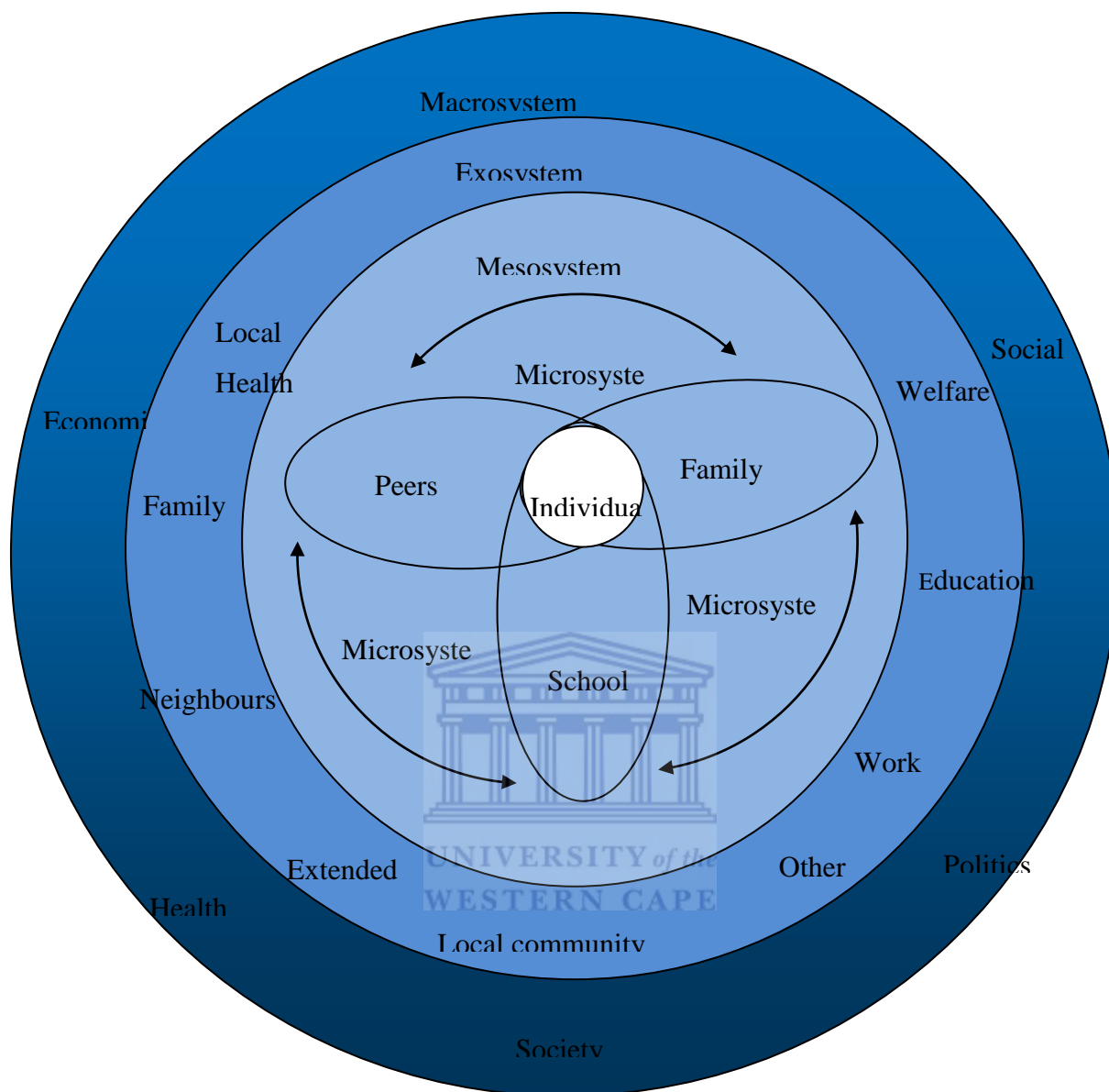
The microsystem (e.g. classroom, home day care, peer group) is the learner's most immediate environment, physically, socially and psychologically, and therefore it stands as the learner's venue for learning about the world. It offers the learner a reference point of the world as his most intimate learning setting (Swick & Williams, 2006). The effect this system has on the development of the learner is varied. According to Rogoff (2003), it may provide the nurturing centre piece for the child or become a haunting set of memories of one's earliest encounters with negative experiences. The real power in this initial set of interrelations with the family for the learner is what they experience in terms of developing trust and mutuality

with their significant people (Pipher, 1996). These interactions have a direct impact on the learner.

The mesosystems comprise the reciprocal interactions between and amongst those in the individual's immediate environment, for example, family, school, peer group, church and camp (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The mesosystem includes formal and informal social structures with which the learner may not interact directly but which may influence elements of his microsystems (for example, neighbourhood, parents' work, mass media, government agencies, service delivery, communication, transport facilities and other informal social networks) (Stofile, Raymond & Moletsane, 2012). Galinsky (1999) states that in the same vein as parents being involved with children's schools or care centres, children also 'go to work' with parents psychologically when they wonder about and seek experience with the place of work of the parents, without physically experiencing it. Swick and Williams (2006) posits that exosystems are the contexts we experience vicariously and yet they have a direct impact on us. The fact that we might be absent from a system makes it no less powerful in our lives (Garbarino, 1992).

The macrosystems refer to the broad institutions of the culture or subculture, such as economic, political, educational, social and legal systems, that implicitly or explicitly influence particular roles, activities, social networks and their interrelations (Bronfenbrenner, 1999). Sterling and Davidoff (2002:49) see the macrosystems as the national context in which the school is located. As such, this could refer to the South African education system, on a national level, that is responsible for policy development and implementation. The Education White Paper No. 6 (2001) could be seen as an example of such a policy. The macrosystems help us to hold together the many threads of our lives.

The chronosystems refer to the fact that developmental processes are likely to vary according to specific historical events that occur as the individuals are at one age or another (Tudge, Mokrova, Hatfield & Karnik, 2009:201). This means that, as children grow older, they may respond differently to environmental changes. Stofile et al. (2013) say that different groups of children in South Africa may define and experience the effects of racism differently because they have experienced these events at different intervals in their lifetime. It also means that their parents' school experiences during apartheid are likely to differ from the experiences of their children, creating stresses around parent participation.



**Figure 2.2: Ecosystemic model layout**  
**Source: Swart and Pettipher (2005:11)**

A complex and dynamic relationship exists between the learner, the centre of learning, the broader education system, and the social, political and economic context, of which they are all part. When a problem exists in one of these areas, it impacts on the learning process, causing learning breakdown or exclusion. Those factors which lead to the inability of the system to accommodate diversity, which lead to learning breakdown or which prevent learners from accessing educational provision, have been conceptualised as barriers to learning and development (Department of Education, 1997). Barriers can be located within

the learner, within the centre of learning, within the education system and within the broader social, economic and political context (Department of Education, 1997; Hick, Kershner & Farrell, 2009).

## **2.4 THE DEVELOPMENT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

The disparate educational support provisioning during the apartheid era is discussed in chapter one of this research. The inequality in the provision of support services for the different racial groups within the Department of Education, during this era that resulted in highly specialised and costly provision of special needs education and support services for a limited number of learners is highlighted by Muthukrishna & Schoeman (2000).

The democratisation of the South African Government in 1994 heralded a dramatic change in society and consequently in education. Hay, Smith and Paulsen (2001:213) as well as, (Beyers & Hay, 2007) state that this includes the social, political, economic and educational transformation aimed at developing a more inclusive society. This era was marked by the adoption of key policies that shaped the way education transformation would be achieved, but also gave impetus to how South African society would be transformed as a whole. Policies, both national and international, shaped or influenced the motion towards inclusive education. According to Beyers and Hay (2007:388) the term inclusive education focused on the “normalisation and mainstreaming paradigm where learners with special needs needed to be included in the everyday classroom”. There are several policies and reports that shaped the inclusive movement in South Africa.

A noticeable shift is reported to have happened as reported by (Hay, 2003; Beyers & Hay, 2007), when the move from the medical model changed to an ecological and systems theory. The medical model was characterised by a patient-diagnosis-treatment sequence by using, as the point of departure, the philosophy that the child and his impairment is the problem (Hall, 1997:74). Various reasons for the move away from this model were given with the most pronounced reason being: “. . . the realization that unique human beings cannot be classified into simple medical-disability diagnosis and that learners may have different medical disabilities, but similar needs” (Hay, 2003:135). The South African government, in line with the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action, drafted a policy that sought to ensure the implementation of inclusive education, Makoelle, (2012).

The first of an array of policies and reports that shaped inclusive education in this country is The White Paper on Education and Training in a Democratic South-Africa (Department of Education, 1995). The main focus of this policy was to promote the fact that education and training is a basic human right. Inclusive education in South Africa is grounded within a human rights discourse as is evident in Education White Paper No. 6: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (Ngcobo and Muthukrishna, 2011:358). According to these authors “this policy foregrounds key values of equity, social justice, human rights and a respect for diversity”. Ngcobo and Muthukrishna emphasise the fact that the state has an obligation to protect and advance these rights, so that all citizens, irrespective of race, class, gender, creed or age, have the opportunity to develop their capacities and potential, and make their full contribution to society.

In support of this view, Makoelle (2012: 96) locates inclusive education in the South African constitution, “which sought to transform the society from that which is uninclusive to a more inclusive one.” The key initiatives of this policy were to restore respect for diversity and the culture of teaching and learning – The Culture of Teaching, Learning and Services (COLTS). Secondly, it was to give recognition to prior knowledge and the concept of life-long learning through The National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Another aspect of this initiative was to develop a curriculum that responded to the diverse learners’ needs, to respect individuality, and is based on the belief that all learners can achieve success. This curriculum is ‘inclusive’ by nature and focuses on the processes whereby learners achieve the desired outcomes – Outcomes Based Curriculum (OBE). In what was widely regarded as a revolutionary move, OBE gave recognition to the twelve official languages in the country, which included South African Sign-Language (The New Language Policy). Lastly, an important aim of this policy was to develop a holistic and integrated approach regarding education support services. The South African Schools Act (Department of Education, 1996) is the second legal framework that promotes inclusivity. The main aim of this act is to promote inclusive education. Section 5 (1) of SASA for instance states that: “A public school must admit learners and serve their educational requirement without unfairly discriminating in any way” (Makoelle, 2012: 96) This forms the basis of the SA Schools Act is quality education for all learners. Two policy initiatives that were released simultaneously were: i) The White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy (1997), Ministry in the Office of the Deputy President, (1997),

and ii) The National Commission on Special Needs and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee on Education Support Service (NCESS) (Department of Education, 1997). The key findings of the NCSNET/NCESS reports were the following: It was clear from these reports that specialised education was provided predominantly for a small percentage of learners with disabilities within special schools and classes. The provision of specialised education was stratified along racial lines, with the best human, physical and material resources reserved for whites. An important finding was that most learners with disabilities fell outside of the system or were mainstreamed by default. The curriculum generally failed to respond to the diverse needs of the learner population, which resulted in massive drop-outs, push-outs and failures. Some attention was given to the schooling phase with regard to special needs and support, while other levels or bands of education seriously neglected this aspect. These reports also found that learning needs arose because of socio-economic reasons, negative attitudes, stereotyping, an inflexible curriculum, inappropriate language or the language of learning and teaching. Further identified aspects that caused learning needs related to an inaccessible and unsafe building environment, inappropriate support services, inadequate policies and legislation, lack of parental recognition and involvement, inadequate policies and legislation, lack of human resource development and disabilities.

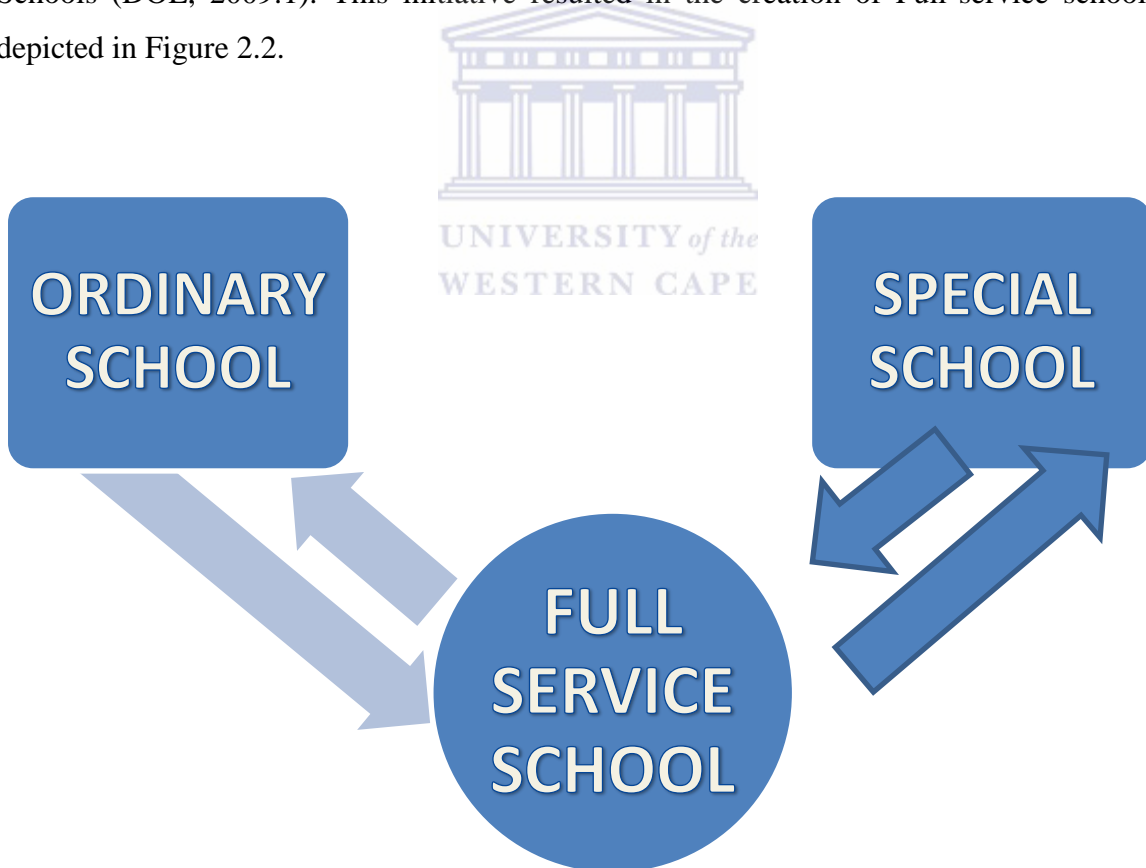
The main objectives of the investigation were: The findings and recommendations of these reports were geared towards ensuring that people with disabilities were able to access the same fundamental rights and responsibilities as any other citizen. It gave recognition to the need to restructure society, including the physical environment, to enable everyone to participate fully in society. An important initiative from these reports was the provision of life skills training for independent living. It also focused on the provision of assistive devices and specialised equipment where needed as is evident in the policy document on inclusive education, Education White Paper N0.6: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System, (Department of Education, 2001). The South African Government's commitment to inclusive education is aligned to the international inclusion movement by the adoption of the Salamanca Statement and the implementation of other significant policies. The Salamanca Statement is a call on governments to: "adopt the principles of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise. This implies the progressive extension of capacity of mainstream schools to provide for children



with a wide range of needs” (UNESCO, 1994:44). Walton (2011:241) highlights an important fact about the scope of inclusive education in South Africa when she posits that even though the Education White Paper 6 focusses on access and support for learners with disabilities, “it is clear that inclusion in South Africa is conceived more broadly than this”.

## 2.5 FULL-SERVICE SCHOOLS

One of the pertinent statements of the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) is that ordinary schools with an inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all. The South African Government then adopted a number of policies, as discussed earlier in this chapter, that set a process in motion to transform the entire education system, in order to tackle barriers to learning and development that any learner might encounter in a life-long learning career (Guidelines for Full-service/Inclusive Schools (DOE, 2009:1). This initiative resulted in the creation of Full-service schools as depicted in Figure 2.2.



**FIGURE 2.2: Network of support**

**Source: Swart and Pettipher (2005:11)**

Full-service schools are defined as 'schools and colleges that will be equipped and supported to provide for the full range of learning needs among all learners' (Department of Education, 2001:22; Makoelle, 2012). Emphasis was placed on inclusive principles which include flexibility in teaching and learning and the provision of educational support to learners and educators, once the capacity for this had been built into these schools. The key features of Full-service schools are defined as schools that:

- Welcome all learners and celebrate diversity
- Are flagship schools that demonstrate best practice in inclusive education
- Ensure that the curriculum is accessible to all learners through the way in which they teach and allow learners to learn
- Promote teamwork amongst teachers and between teachers and parents
- Have a flourishing relationship with other schools and with all members of the community and send a message of tolerance, respect and acceptance towards all
- Are advocates for all learners who are at risk of becoming marginalised, including learners with disabilities, chronic illnesses, learning difficulties and social, emotional and behaviour problems
- Demonstrate how all children of school-going age can attend their local school and achieve their full potential (Department: Basic Education, 2010).

While there are guidelines for the establishment of such schools, Makoelle (2012) is of the opinion that they do not offer the solution to the pedagogic practice in the classroom.

## **2.6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

The purpose of the literature review is to be a 'conceptual funnel through which the interest of the research becomes increasingly focused (Marshall & Rossman, 1995:18) In this chapter an attempt was made to develop a conceptual framework of inclusive education and what it means to different people. The development of inclusion in South Africa was then explored and the constitutional and policy developments that supported inclusion as an education transformation strategy were highlighted. The theoretical framework that was chosen for this study was discussed. Chapter three will concentrate on a documentary analysis of the inclusive index to explore what is being done in South Africa and other countries to develop inclusion in mainstream schools.

## CHAPTER THREE: INDEX FOR INCLUSION

*Given sufficient support humans can defy the odds and become agents of history.*  
Dr. Mamphela Ramphele (2002:123)

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter two the conception and development of inclusive education were discussed and a theoretical framework was explored that would inform this research. In this chapter an exploration of national and international indices for inclusion and its related concepts is done. These indices are explored with the aim of using it as a lens through which this study is done and to utilise it as a framework to analyse collected data.

### 3.2 INDEX FOR INCLUSION

The index for inclusion is generally understood as an instrument to facilitate the development of *inclusive education* in schools and it is explored to broaden understanding of all aspects involved in the kind of research this study is undertaking. The index for inclusion contains three dimensions that will be discussed comprehensively in this chapter.

#### 3.2.1 What is the index for inclusion?

Vislie (2003) posits that the index for inclusion has gained international attention as an instrument to move practice towards more inclusive schools, while Booth and Ainscow (2002) describe it as a comprehensive document that offers schools a supportive and collaborative process of self-review, planning and implementation to further inclusive school development, drawing on the views and resources of the school management team, teachers, students and parents or caregivers, as well as members of the school community. The index for inclusion does not offer a blueprint, but claims to be both flexible and context-friendly and involves a process of systemic self-review within three interconnected and overlapping dimensions of school life: school culture, policy and practice, as depicted in Figure 3.1.



**Figure 3.1: The planning framework**

**Source: Index for Inclusion, (Booth, Ainscow & Kingston, 2006)**

The planning framework seeks to instigate a process of planning and collaboration in schools, in order for them to take over their own development to ensure that it is in accordance with their own values and context and is sustained over time (Rustemier & Booth, 2005). It aims to facilitate a process of deep and challenging exploration of the school's present position, with a view to embark on a journey towards becoming an inclusive school. Fundamental to the index for inclusion is the creation of a school culture that encourages a preoccupation with the development of ways of working that attempt to reduce barriers to the learning and participation of all students. The index for inclusion is concerned with minimising all barriers to learning and participation for whoever experiences them and wherever they are located within the cultures, policies and practices of a school (Booth & Ainscow, 2002; Rustemier & Booth, 2005).

The index for inclusion encourages staff to share and build on existing knowledge about what impedes learning and participation of their students. It assists them in a detailed examination of the possibilities for increasing learning and participation in all aspects of their school for all their students. This is not an additional initiative for schools, but rather a systematic way of engaging in school development planning, setting priorities for change, implementing developments and reviewing progress. There is an emphasis on mobilising under-used resources within staff, students, school management teams, parents and other members of the school communities. The index for inclusion is concerned with school improvement to allow

for school attainments for all students and can be employed by primary and high schools alike (Vaughan, 2002).

### **3.2.2 What is the aim of the index for inclusion?**

Booth et al. (2006) postulated that the most important aim of the index is to bring a deeper understanding to the school of what aspects they should be concentrating on when they want to embark on a process of inclusive school development. Firstly, schools are orientated in the *elements of the index* that supports thinking and discussions about inclusive school development. This is done to enable the schools to conduct a detailed review of all aspects of the schools and help to identify and implement priorities for change. It is important that the schools own the process and decide on their priorities. Secondly, the schools are orientated in what inclusive features already exist in the schools. This is done to highlight the indicators for inclusive practices, whilst at the same time bringing awareness about factors and indicators of their exclusionary practices. Thereafter they are orientated in the three dimensions of inclusive education development (see Figure 3.1: Creating inclusive cultures, producing inclusive policies and evolving inclusive practices).

A further aim of the index is to bring awareness to schools that care should be taken to ensure that the process of review, planning and implementation are themselves inclusive. According to Booth, Ainscow and Kingston (2006), the index process itself contributes to the development of inclusion. It involves a detailed self-review, which includes everyone connected to the school or institution and draws on their knowledge and experience.

Building supportive communities and fostering high achievements for all staff and students is another expressed aim of the index for inclusion. The index suggests a process of collaborative learning in schools, the intended outcome being the continuous transformation of the school and classroom cultures, policies and practices, in order to increase the participation of all students in caring and inclusive learning communities, to ensure quality learning for all. In this way supportive communities are built that will facilitate and foster high achievement for all staff and students.

Schools could use the index to adopt a self-review approach to analyse their cultures, policies and practices and to identify the barriers to learning and participation that may occur within each of these areas. The three dimensions of the index each consist of a set of indicators that the schools could use to review their own setting against (the index for inclusion), and to

decide their own priorities for change and to evaluate their progress. The aim was to determine from all the stakeholders' contributions what aspects they perceive as indicative of cultures, policies and practices within the school, in order to increase learning and participation, (Booth, Ainscow, Black-Hawkins, Vaughan & Shaw, 2000).

The index for inclusion could also be used as an integral part of existing development policies, encouraging a wide and deep scrutiny of everything that makes up a school's activity. These aspects of the index are used to direct the research in its pursuit to answer the research questions.

This discussion on the ways of working with the index for inclusion draws on the work done by Ainscow, Booth and colleagues in the field of school development for inclusion (Ainscow, 1998; 1999; 2003; 2007; Ainscow, Booth & Dyson, 2001, 2004; Ainscow, Howes, Farrell & Frankham, 2003; Ainscow & Kaplan, 2004; Rustemier & Booth, 2005; West, Ainscow & Stanford, 2005). The development of the index for inclusion is the result of a collaborative action research project. The aim is to explore how schools develop in ways that support the learning of all students by addressing barriers to learning and participation that exist within their existing cultures, policies and practices, in order to identify priorities for change (Booth & Ainscow, 2002).

### **3.2.3 Development of the index for inclusion internationally**

Ramphele (2002:123) stated: "Given sufficient support, humans can defy the odds and become agents of history". This quotation, although not directly linked to the development of inclusive education, captures an important element of inclusive education implementation, namely support. The implementation process of inclusive education faces tremendous challenges, both conceptually and practically. It captures the essence of what Artiles and Dyson (2005) suggest the index for inclusion should be used for when they contend that it should be a catalyst for change. The inclusive index also provides schools and the communities they serve with the necessary '*support to defy the odds*' in the form of a set of material resources to help them with their own review, planning and implementation.

The development of the index for inclusion has pursued different pathways internationally, with both similar as well as disparate features amongst the different countries. Several international scholars such as Ainscow, Booth and Dyson, (2004), and Vislie (2003) assert that the development of the inclusive index was informed by research evidence indicating

more successful strategies to facilitate the participation of students who were at risk of exclusion and marginalisation.

The following section of the study will be dedicated to a discussion of the development of indices for the different countries with the aim of foregrounding commonalities as well as highlighting the distinctly different features.

Ainscow, (1998) states that the Programme Quality Indicators (PQI) were developed in America, as a checklist to be employed by schools as needs assessment that can help to establish how closely their practices resemble what is known about quality inclusive schooling. The (PQI) specifically emphasised the inclusion of students with disabilities.

The developers of the British index for inclusion proceeded along a different route when they deliberated about which values to incorporate into the index for inclusion in their country. They assembled a group of teachers, parents, school governors and representatives of disability groups with extensive experience in developing more inclusive ways of working. Researchers from three universities, Cambridge, Manchester and The Open University, were enlisted in the team. The group collaborated to produce a pilot version of the index in 1997, which was trialed in several primary and secondary schools in Britain. This phase of development was followed by a detailed process of research conducted in four school districts during the school year 1998-1999, according to Ainscow (1998; 1999). The Department for Education and Employment in the United Kingdom supported the piloting of the project and assisted in distributing the index for inclusion to 26 000 primary, secondary and special schools and all local education authorities in the country (Vislie, 2003). The 2000 index represents the product of three years of pilot work and development in 25 schools across England (Rustemier & Booth, 2005).

The index for inclusion in England differs from its Australian and American counterparts on three important points. The focus is not only on students 'with special needs', but on all students in a school community. The British index focuses on participation and development in schools and not only on measurement such as the American PQI. All the strategies for carrying out the review and development are determined within the school (Ainscow, 1998; 1999). The index for inclusion was first published in 2000 and revised in 2002. Work undertaken with the index for inclusion in this study employed the 2002 revised version of the framework. The aim of the English index for inclusion, according to Booth and Ainscow

(2008), was to guide schools through a process of inclusive school development by utilising a set of materials.

In Australia the development of the index project was built on developmental work done in two main research projects, namely, the initiative of Centre, Ward and Ferguson (1991) and the North American initiative by Eichinger, Meyer and D'Aquanni (1996). These research projects encouraged moving from an emphasis of the medical model looking for 'problems' in individual students, towards a deeper exploration of the processes by which schools include and exclude students (Ainscow, 1999:148). Ainscow further claims that the work undertaken in developing the index for inclusion is close to its American forerunner, the Programme Quality Indicators (PQI), (Ainscow, 1998; 1999).

The implementation of inclusive education involves complexity and uncertainty; simple solutions are elusive (Pearson, 2007). To meet the needs of an increasingly diverse learner population successfully, schools will have to accept change and innovation as part of the process to create and sustain inclusive schools and classrooms. Howell (2007) contends that change affects the total school system and all school members. Structural changes require strategies, structures and procedures that are able to reconstruct education in such a way that the structures and practices that maintain the status quo are transformed (Slee, 1997).

An outstanding feature of the English school culture becomes a central concern, which positions the re-culturing of schools as an integral part of the implementation of inclusive education. Inclusive education development, then, is an invitation to schools to transform themselves into inclusive learning communities. In such schools, learning becomes a core business while individual and collective learning are both seen as necessary for change (Swart & Pettipher, 2007). Teacher learning for inclusive education cannot be understood as a merely technical process, but asks for personal change, relating to the ratification of inclusive values in practice (Howes, Booth, Dyson & Frankham, 2005). Learning for inclusive education has to be approached as an on-going collaborative process where there is a shared purpose, a collective focus on student learning, trust and respect, and reflective dialogue (Geijsel & Meijers, 2005). Teachers are central to the transformation of schools and, for them to successfully become part of the change initiative in their schools, they need to be offered expanded and enriched opportunities for learning.



The Department of Education in South Africa, in its attempt to establish inclusive education, sought financial assistance from the Danish government. This resulted in the DANIDA project, Danish International Development Assistance (DANIDA, 1999) that was implemented in three provinces: Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and North-West, from October 2000 until October 2003 (Stofile, 2008). The aim of the project was to develop an inclusive education system that would benefit all learners experiencing barriers to learning. The project was entitled: 'Resource and Training Programme for Educator Development: Towards Building an Inclusive Education and Training System'. This project endeavoured to reach the following objectives, as stated in the End-Term National Quality Evaluation: Final Report, (Department of Education, 2002):

- Drawing on the strengths and weaknesses of the pilot projects, with a view towards informing the on-going implementation of White Paper N0.6;
- Drawing out 'best practices' from the pilot projects that can be used to guide on-going implementation of White Paper N0.6;
- Using the insights gained through the pilot projects to provide indicators for inclusive education, which could act as benchmarks for on-going policy and practice development in the country;
- Supporting and informing the action research process in the pilot projects to support on-going monitoring and internal valuation of each of the project components;
- Providing insight into and critically analysing specific strategies used and developed during the project, particularly with regard to capacity building of specific target groups and mechanisms towards sustainability of inclusive education in the pilot districts;
- Informing the National Department of Education of the appropriateness of the training programmes and materials developed through the project, for on-going use in the training of teachers towards the implementation of White Paper No. 6 and the on-going development of an inclusive education and training system;
- Sharing with Southern African Development Community (SADAC) countries the lessons learnt from the project with a view to contributing to the development of inclusive education and training systems in their own countries;

- Providing DANIDA, the Department of Education, the Project Steering Committee and the National Stakeholder-Forum with a final report on the National Quality Evaluation of the project.

The project consisted of five components that ranged from capacity building, educator development, pilot projects that linked the philosophy of inclusive education to practices in districts, and action research, to collaboration with SADC countries. The project components were geared towards raising awareness about inclusive education within the Department of Education on national, provincial and district levels. An attempt was also made to filter down an understanding of the practical implications of the philosophy by linking the inclusive philosophy to practices within three districts. The focus with the educator component was on capacity building through in-service training and the testing of the training materials. The project also focused on a whole school development approach to make the whole school responsive to diversity, on the development of effective management of inclusive schools and on a total systems change in schools and the Education Department.

The End Term National Quality Evaluation (Department of Education, 2002) established the following categories for the inclusive education indicators:

- Addressing contextual factors was found as being imperative to the successful implementation of inclusive school development. These factors relate to social, political and economic factors such as poverty, HIV/AIDS, infrastructure, substance abuse, various forms of violence in the community and factors relating to the families of learners.
- According to the report, the successful implementation of inclusive education is dependent on the extent to which these community and broader issues are recognised as impacting on effective teaching and learning, and are addressed. A major aim of inclusive education is to facilitate respect for diversity, different learning styles and building on the strengths of these differences in the teaching and learning process. Addressing contextual barriers to learning should focus on the physical and psychosocial environment, e.g. the ethos or culture of the institution. A key indicator related to addressing barriers in this category relates to issues around the effective functioning of the institution or school. At school level it relates to policies and

practices that inform how it functions as an institution, including how people relate to each other and how they make decisions.

- Indicators in the physical environment include the provision of adequate resources and appropriate infrastructure for learning and teaching to take place. Another indicator relates to the provision of support that is needed by institutions to facilitate the full participation and inclusion of all learners in the learning process. Important indicators in this domain include the establishing of support structures and making sure that teachers know about the support that is available in the community, from education officials and other community-based sources.
- Indicators related to curriculum factors that need to be considered are: accessibility and relevance of the content of the learning areas, responsiveness of teaching strategies used, the language and medium of teaching and learning, availability and accessibility of teaching and learning materials and equipment, appropriateness of assessment procedures, and general flexibility of curriculum and classroom management.
- An important indicator relating to management and sustainability issues are structures, procedures and processes that need to be developed to support education institutions to develop and implement inclusive education. This includes the establishment and successful operation of Institution-level Support Teams (ILST), District Based Support Teams (DBST) and leadership and management capabilities of education officials at provincial and national levels. An integrated approach to strategic planning and collaborative working relationships is key to leading and managing on-going support to institutions and schools.

#### **3.2.4 Dimensions of the index for inclusion**

The index for inclusion, according to Oswald (2010), has in mind an unending process of collaborative learning in schools, with an intended outcome of continuous transformation of the school and classroom cultures, policies and practices, in order to increase the participation of all students in caring and inclusive learning communities, to ensure quality learning for all. The dimensions have been chosen to direct thinking about school change and represent relatively distinct areas of school activity. The index materials contain a branching tree structure, allowing progressively more detailed examination of all aspects of the school. The

three dimensions are expressed in terms of 45 indicators; the meaning of each of these is clarified by about 500 questions (Rustemier & Booth, 2005).

### ***Inclusive cultures***

School culture is often defined as a cohesive system of shared motives, values, beliefs, identities and interpretations of meanings of significant events and rules and prescribed roles, resulting from the common experiences of individuals in the school community over time (Artiles & Dyson, 2005; Moloï & Henning, 2007). As depicted in Figure 3.3, the dimension of inclusive cultures is about creating a secure, accepting, collaborating, stimulating community, in which everyone is valued and where inclusive values are developed and conveyed to all new practitioners, learners, management committee/governing bodies and parents/carers. The principles and values in inclusive cultures guide decisions about policies and moment-to-moment practice, so that development becomes a continuous process.

Researchers, such as Ainscow (1995); Alton-Lee (2003); and Carrington (1999) have linked school culture to effective inclusive schools, while in turn other researchers have defined effective school culture as:

The underground stream of norms, values, beliefs, traditions, and rituals that has built up over time as people work together, solve problems and confront challenges. This set of informal expectations and values shapes how people think, feel and act in schools (Peterson & Deal, 1998:28).

An investigation into the indicators for inclusive cultures reveals that culture within a school context exists at different levels. Some can be observed, such as language, rituals, symbols and customs; others are not visible and are deeply embedded within organisations such as values, norms and beliefs and taken-for-granted assumptions.

According to Dyson (2002), inclusive cultures are defined around values of respect for difference and a commitment to offering all learners access to learning opportunities. Dyson (2002; 2004) also found that in such schools there are more likely to be high levels of staff collaboration and joint problem solving that might extend into the student body, and into parent and other community stakeholders in the school. Inclusive cultures, in turn, lead to greater learner participation. An example of greater participation in inclusive schools can be

found in specialist provisions within ordinary classrooms, rather than in withdrawal of learners (Ainscow, Booth & Dyson, 2006).

### ***Inclusive policies***

Inclusive schools should constantly work towards establishing inclusive cultures but, at the same time, they should ensure that the external policy environment should be compatible with inclusive developments, if it is to support rather than undermine the schools' efforts. Booth, Ainscow, Black-Hawkins, Vaughn and Shaw (2000) found that the government in England made no discernible attempt to revitalise the idea of a school for all, or to permeate its policies with inclusive values. These policies were characterised by a concern with 'excellence', 'standards' and 'accountability'. This highlights the fact that, in any given country, tension can be found between the attempts to put values and principles into action and the complexities of schools and educational systems. However, inclusive schools should actively engage in the realities of schools and find ways in which they might become more inclusive. Inclusive policies should encourage the participation of learners and teachers from the moment they join the school and are concerned with reaching out to all children in the school to minimise exclusionary pressures. So, for example, policies around curriculum and assessment should be formulated to ensure that learner diversity is catered for and that enough flexibility around teaching and assessment methodologies is allowed, in order to include all learners. A key policy strategy, as identified by Responding to Diversity through Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements, CAPS, (Department of Education, 2011), is to differentiate the curriculum.

Curriculum differentiation is a key strategy for responding to the needs of diverse learning styles and needs. It involves processes of modifying, changing, adapting, extending and varying teaching methodologies, teaching strategies, assessment strategies and the content of the curriculum. Differentiation of the content of the curriculum is done to provide access to learning and to facilitate successful experiences for all learners. It is also employed to motivate learners, to build their self-esteem and to promote effective learning for all learners.

Bullying has proved to lead to exclusion of certain individuals (Mc Arthur & Gaffney, 2000). For this reason it is imperative that schools develop a policy around bullying that deals effectively with both the victim and the perpetrator. Particular care should be taken that the code of conduct that usually deals with consequences for perpetrators is not geared towards

exclusion, but should be geared towards support for them. Booth, Ainscow, Black-Hawkins, Vaughn and Shaw (2000) are of the opinion that policies should focus on decreasing the pressure of exclusion. An important indicator of access and participation of learners in the school is the induction of new learners. Schools should ensure that they have clear policies around putting this indicator in place, to ensure that all learners new to the school are helped to feel settled in Ainscow et al, ( 2001).

An induction programme should be in place to facilitate the orientation of new learners. This induction programme for new learners and their families should have as an aim the sharing of information about the school as well as the national and the provincial education system. This programme should take into account the diversity of students and the variety of home languages of all new learners. Schools would be well advised to have steps in place to find out after a few days to what extent learners feel at home in their new school and if they know who to approach if they experience difficulties. Regular discussions about the effectiveness of the induction programme should take place with the aim of making it more effective. These programmes should also be extended to new parents and new staff members.

Policies should be formulated by the school and sometimes it should involve the parent community as part of the school. Ashman (2009) reported that parents could avoid contact with the school if they see themselves as visitors who are unwelcome, and if they are not offered opportunities to learn about the school. Parents are of the opinion that communication becomes difficult when schools pay lip-service to policies around parents and teacher communication, as if they were impaired (Fraser, 2005).

All policies should involve clear strategies for inclusive change and to ensure that there is greater access and participation within the school.

### ***Inclusive practices***

Inclusive practices refer to activities that reflect inclusive cultures and policies. South Africa has a wide range of learners from different backgrounds which educators should learn to value, embrace and make positive use of. Policies should ensure that teachers have options to make activities more applicable to the diversity of children and young people in the school and in the surrounding community.

Learning activities could be made responsive to the diverse needs of children by adapting the curriculum. The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) document (Department of Education, 2011) offers educators the following ways in which the curriculum may be adapted:

- Teachers should recognise any biases or stereotypes they might have absorbed over time. They might find it easier to take corrective measures if they could reflect on their own practices and their conceptualisation of diversity. They should treat each learner as an individual and respect each learner for whom he or she is. The use of language that is biased and that could undermine certain groups of learners, as well as remarks that make assumptions about the experiences of learners, should be avoided at all cost.
- Teachers should consider the unique needs of learners when designing learning programmes, as well as employing different approaches, methodologies and strategies when teaching a diverse group of learners.
- Teachers create opportunities for all learners to participate in activities and to constantly re-evaluate their methods of teaching and assessment.

In addition to the above mentioned strategies, teachers should identify material resources and resources within each other, management committee/governing bodies, children and young people, parent/carers, and local communities, who can be mobilised to support play, learning and participation. The outcomes of students' learning must be used to offer a way of addressing certain shortcomings with regard to pedagogy, teaching approaches and formulating educational goals for classroom practice in the index for inclusion, as identified by Rose (2002); and Dyson (2001).

The role of the curriculum in creating inclusive schools is well documented, as UNESCO (2005:25) reports that accessible and flexible curricula can serve as the key to creating inclusive schools. Unfortunately not many teachers make use of curriculum adaptations as a key practice to reduce exclusions often experienced by learners. Udvar-Solner (1996) found that if teachers did not adopt a model of curriculum adaptation, learners were more likely to be excluded from participation in regular classroom activities.

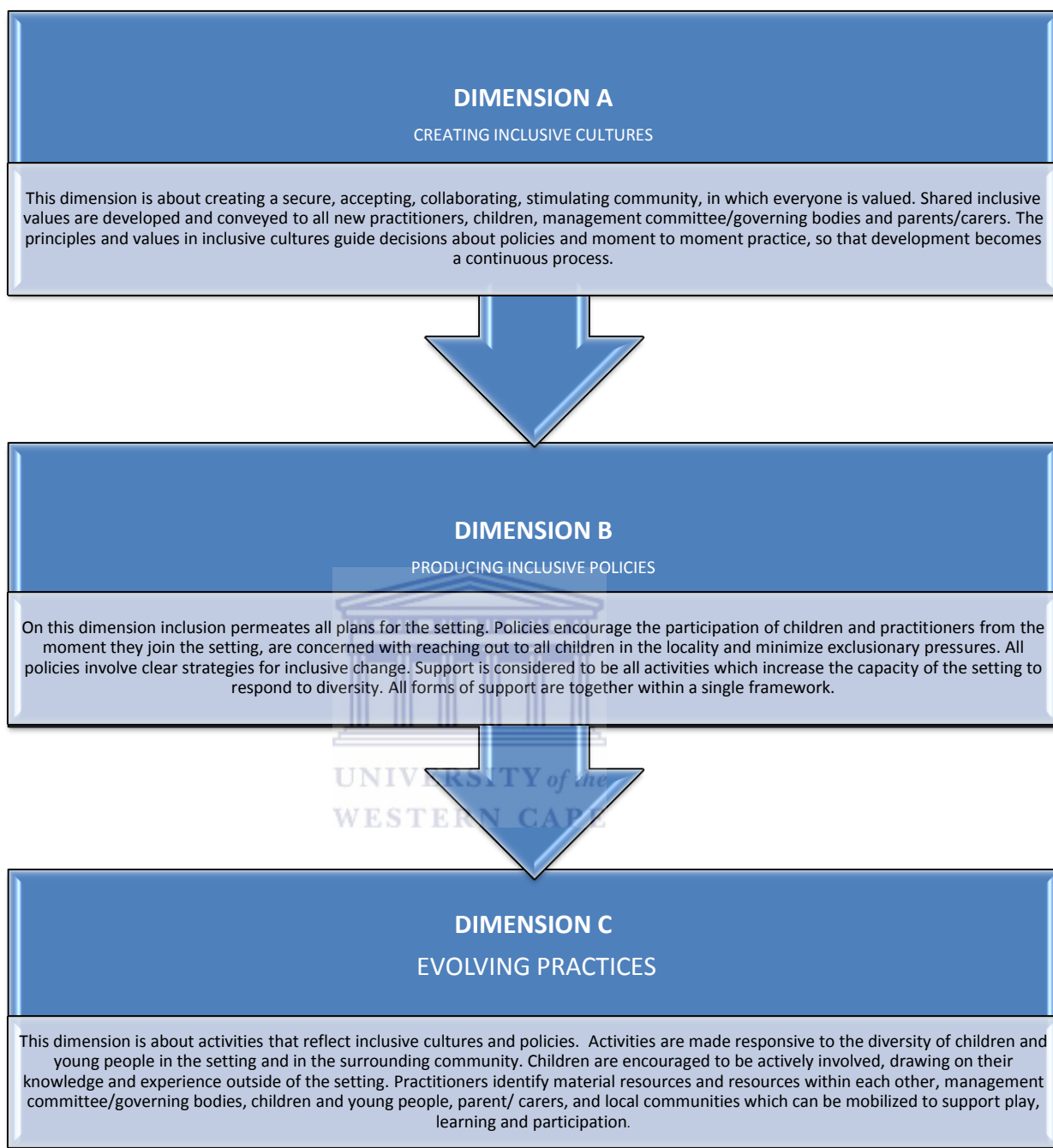
Similarly, Davids and Watson (2001) reported a need for teachers to focus on modifying and adapting the curriculum, rather than to expect learners experiencing barriers to learning

needing to modify and adapt in order to access the curriculum. In addition to this, UNESCO (2005:25) suggested further strategies that could be used by teachers to ensure curriculum access. They assert that teachers should provide flexible time frames for learners when they participate in certain subject areas, and not enforce prescriptive teaching methodologies, as greater freedom should be allowed to teachers in choosing their methods of instruction. These writers advocate for teachers to be allowed the opportunity of giving special support in practical subjects over and above the periods allotted for more traditional subjects, while also allotting time for additional assistance for classroom-based work.

The dimensions as depicted in Figure 3.2, together with the indicators and questions contained in the index for inclusion, provide a progressively more detailed map to guide the exploration of the current position of a school and it allows schools to plot future possibilities (Booth & Ainscow, 2000).







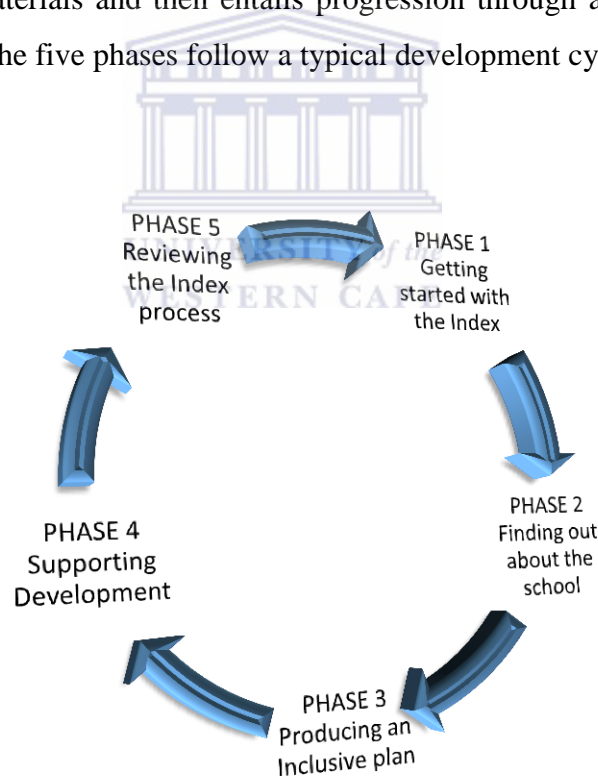
**Figure 3.2: Dimensions of the Inclusive Index**

**Source: Index for Inclusion, (Booth, Ainscow & Kingston, 2006)**

### 3.2.5 DEVELOPMENT PROCESS OF THE INDEX OF INCLUSION

By virtue of my duties as a departmental official, I am aware that most schools already have a clear idea of how to produce school development plans, but schools found it challenging to balance formal planning and implementation of changes that may occur as a result of them putting their shared inclusive values into action. It was, therefore, deemed necessary to explore the development process of inclusive index or feasibility to be used in its current form or an adapted form in this research.

Working with the index for inclusion involves a cycle of activities as depicted in Figure 3.3; Booth, Ainscow and Kingston (2006) propose that schools use this cyclical process to review and develop existing policies and practices. They further suggest that each school may elect to go through the cycle as often as they deem necessary. The school research activities can then be guided by the indicators of the index for inclusion. The process starts from the first engagement with the materials and then entails progression through a series of five school developmental phases. The five phases follow a typical development cycle.



**Figure 3.3: The index process**

**Source: Index for Inclusion, (Booth, Ainscow & Kingston, 2006)**

During the *first phase* a representative coordinating group is set up in the school. Incorporated in the first phase of the index for inclusion process is also an exploration of the school's particular approach to school development and connecting the index for inclusion process with current working arrangements in the school.

In the *second phase* the current knowledge of the different groups making up the school community is explored. The coordinating team of a particular school is responsible for choosing the best way to investigate present knowledge in the school. All data collected in this phase should be used as opportunities for discussion, debate and further investigation. After members of the school community have engaged with the indicators and questions, they will be able to identify specific areas for change.

In the *third phase* the school development plan is revised in the light of new priorities.

During the *fourth phase* the coordinating team group supports the implementation of agreed changes and the staff development activities necessary to support them. The development should be sustained and the process recorded.

Finally, in the *fifth phase* the whole process is reviewed with the aim of formulating further improvement efforts and perhaps repeating the index for inclusion cycle.

Schools should focus on challenging the thinking behind existing ways of working during the implementation of the index process. It is important for schools to question how their perceptions of socio-economic status, race, language, gender and disability influence classroom interactions, since deeply entrenched deficit views of difference which define certain types of students as lacking can be the cause of barriers in the classroom.

### **3.4 SUMMARY**

In this chapter the index for inclusion has been presented. Detailed explanations of the three dimensions and the characteristics of each were provided. The study also explored the intended aims of the index of inclusion. It was found that the materials of the index brought a deeper understanding of all aspects of inclusive development in schools. The logical next step was to research the development of the index in Australia, America, England and South Africa.

Due consideration was then given to the different dimensions and related indicators. Lastly the chapter looked at the index process, as advocated by Booth and Ainscow (2008), to explore the possibility of adopting some of the phases for this research. In the next chapter the research plan for this study will be presented.



# CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

*Field research is the study of people acting in the natural courses of their daily lives.*  
Robert Emerson: Contemporary Field Research (1983:1)

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter focused on the index for inclusion. The aim of this chapter is to present a detailed account of the research paradigm, research design and research methodology that was used to guide the investigation in this study. The research question that this study is attempting to answer is: What are the indicators that can be used to monitor and evaluate the development of inclusive *cultures, policies* and *practices* in a specific mainstream school in the Western Cape context?

The chapter first describes the research methodology in terms of its approach, design, context, participants and methods that were used to collect analyse and verify the data that were envisaged to assist the researcher in answering these questions. Finally the chapter concludes with the ethical considerations that the researcher endeavours to uphold while conducting this study.

## 4.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 4.2.1 Research approach

Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, or how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world (Merriman, 2009). This approach to research, according to Parkinson and Drislane (2011), uses methods such as participant observation or case studies, which result in a narrative, descriptive account of a setting or practice. The aim of this study was to explore the perspectives of the stakeholders as it pertains to inclusive education development in their school and therefore a qualitative approach was selected.

A further use of a qualitative approach is found in the explanation of Denzin and Lincoln (2005), who contend that the qualitative researcher utilises the aesthetic and material tools of his craft, deploying whatever strategies, methods and empirical materials at hand. This study drew from this description of qualitative research by employing different methods and strategies to contribute to a deeper understanding of the topic and to gain a better understanding of the lived experiences of the participants. Denzin and Lincoln (2005:5)

expand on their explanation of this approach by stating that the approach that employs “multi methodological practices, empirical materials, perspectives, and observers in a single study is best understood as a strategy that adds rigor, breadth, complexity, richness and depth to any enquiry”. The complex nature of inclusive education and the variety of ways in which it could be defined, as was extensively explored in the literature review section of this study, necessitated a research strategy of this nature that could add depth to the inquiry, in order to yield rich and descriptive data that could be used to answer the research questions.

Participants in this study decided to embark on their own journey to discover or generate knowledge about inclusive indicators in their own context, not merely import indicators from documentary analyses or even from other inclusive schools in similar situations. To achieve this aim, they decided to harness my collaborative support with the aim of combining their lived experience as insiders of the school, with my research expertise. This participatory action method of conducting research, adopted by this study, is a well-documented research method within qualitative studies, and its usefulness to this study will be explained next.

#### ***Description of participatory action research (PAR)***

Participatory action research approach differs from other approaches to research because it is based on reflection, data collection, and action that aim to improve social, health or educational conditions and inequities, through involving the participants who, in turn, take actions to improve their own circumstances (Epidemiol Community Health, 2006). This description of participation action research (PAR) is supported by other researchers such as Baum, 1995; and Chevalier and Buckles (2008; 2013) who contend that a participatory action research approach seeks to understand and improve the world by trying to change it collaboratively and reflectively. The different formulations of this approach, as explained by Brock and Pettit (2007; and Chevalier and Buckles (2000; 2013), have a common idea that research and action must be done ‘with’ participants and not ‘for’ participants. This study borrowed liberally from the well-documented tradition of PAR that is based on collective self-experimentation, backed up by evidential reasoning, fact-finding and learning. Research based on the principles of PAR makes sense of the world through collective efforts of participants and researchers to transform it, as opposed to simply observing and studying human behaviour and people’s views about reality, in the hope that meaningful change will eventually emerge. This resonated with me as I could draw on these principles to direct the inquiry on inclusive education when interacting with the school and its community.

A feature of PAR that was found to be consistent with the notions of equity and social justice in inclusive education, and as such was most suitable for this study, was its insistence that participants be embraced as equal partners with me. This understanding guided me while conducting research to afford participants the liberty to reflect on their own understanding of the phenomenon in question, without me imposing my ideas on them. In this way, participants were able to use their own experiences to create knowledge that could be used to address questions and issues that were significant to them, as advocated by Reason and Brady (2008). Participatory action research is grounded in the experiences and history of participants, according to Hall (2005), and has drawn considerable inspiration from the work of Paulo Freire (1970), adult education, and the Civil Rights Movement. Borda (1995) advocated for the 'community action' component to be incorporated in the research plans of traditionally trained researchers, which was well received by researchers committed to the struggle for justice and greater democracy in all spheres.

Minkler and Wallerstein (2003) emphasised the empowerment agenda of participatory action research when they posited that the processes of PAR should be empowering and should lead to people (participants) having increased control over their own lives. PAR is further depicted in Figure 4.1 by Chevalier and Buckles (2013), as an attempt by researchers to integrate the three basic aspects of the research i.e., participation (life in society and democracy), action (engagement with experience and history), and research (soundness in thought and growth of knowledge). This method ensures a pluralistic orientation to knowledge making and social change in the study, by combining the lived experience of participants with the expert research knowledge of the researcher and collaborative action of participants and the researcher. Chambers, (2008) describes this method as being born out of a deep commitment of researchers to empower the participants as co-researchers, and to bring about knowledge-making and ultimately social change. The insistence on a participatory action research understanding of the meanings and self-descriptions of the individual requires a methodology which emphasises the following: unstructured observation, open interviewing, ideographic descriptions, qualitative data analysis and objectivity understood as the inter-subjective attitude of the insider Babbie and Mouton, (2010).



**Figure 4.1: Participatory Action Research**

**Source: Chevalier and Buckles. (2013: 10)**

In this study, participatory action research processes were followed to ensure that participants were able to generate solutions to address a concern they had about implementing inclusive developments in their school.

#### **4.2.2 Research design**

A research design is generally described as a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the implementation of the research (Durrheim, 2006:34). In other words it is a logical plan that ensures that evidence obtained enables the researcher to answer the research questions. It could also be described as a plan or blueprint that the researcher follows to conduct his research. Durrheim (2006) identified the four dimensions for research designs as: the purpose of the study, the theoretical paradigm that informs the study, the context in which the study is conducted and the research techniques used to collect and analyse data.



According to Durrheim (2006:35), a research design involves multiple decisions about the way the data will be collected and analysed, to ensure that the final report answers the initial research questions. This study used a single qualitative case study. Case studies are common ways to do qualitative enquiry. It is not a methodological choice, but a choice of what is to be studied, according to Stake (cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:443). Qualitative researchers utilise case studies to investigate and understand the case in depth and in its natural setting, recognising its complexity and context, as explained by Punch (1998). This method gives a unitary character to the data being studied, by interrelating a variety of facts to a single case. It also provides an opportunity for the intensive analysis of many specific details that are often overlooked with other methods (Punch, 1998:153).

A pilot study was included in the research design prior to data collection, to determine the feasibility of the interview schedules in terms of the relevance of the questions and applicability of the content. This utilisation of pilot studies is in line with Huysamen (cited in Strydom, 2000), who posits that the aim of pilot studies is to investigate the suitability and feasibility of the research instruments.

This research was done in one mainstream school to gain an in-depth understanding of the perceptions of parents and educators about inclusive education. This was done to determine what these stakeholders believed to be the indicators for inclusive education in their school.

The study explored the development of an instrument that would measure inclusive practices within a specific mainstream primary school in Mitchell's Plain (Presidential Nodal Area), Western Cape. This aim was achieved by determining what the stakeholders of the school perceived to be the *indicators* that could be used to develop such an instrument. These indicators, in turn, were collated from the stakeholders' perceptions of inclusive cultures, inclusive policies and inclusive practices.

This research was conducted in the following six phases:

### **Phase 1: Literature review/Documentary analysis**

In this phase, inclusive education literature was reviewed, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the global meanings of inclusive education and to explore the development of the index for inclusion in other countries. This phase informed the development of the interview schedule and the selection of data collection methods for the study.

## **Phase 2: Negotiations**

At this stage I presented myself to the school to negotiate with the stakeholders about several aspects of the research, including the research problem, the aims of the research, the research questions, the data collection and data analysis methodology this study adopted.

## **Phase 3: Unstructured interviews**

In this phase, unstructured interviews were conducted with the school governing body, educators, school management, ILST members and parents, to explore their understanding of inclusive education, inclusive schools as well as their perceptions of the indicators of inclusive cultures, policies and practices. The transcriptions of the interviews were done, accuracy of the data was verified with the participants, and the data was analysed.

## **Phase 4: Data analysis of the unstructured interviews**

In this phase the data collected during the previous phase were analysed and confirmed with the stakeholders for accuracy. The next phase of action was discussed.

## **Phase 5: Development and administration of the interview schedule**

In this phase, findings of the unstructured interviews were used to develop semi-structured interview schedules which, in turn, were duly administered during semi-structured interviews.

## **Phase 6: Data analysis**

During this phase, the data collected was analysed and interpreted.

## **Phase 7: Feedback**

During this phase, feedback was given to the participants about their perceived indicators of inclusive cultures, policies and practices. Participants were then given the opportunity to add or remove items.

## Phase 8: Development of the measuring instrument

This phase was marked by bringing all collected and verified data together to start the development of the instrument. Great care was taken to ensure that a purely inductive process was followed, whereby stakeholders identified the priorities for their own school development. They owned the process by identifying the indicators that were used to develop inclusion in their school, themselves. Figure 4.2 presents a summary of the research phases in the study.

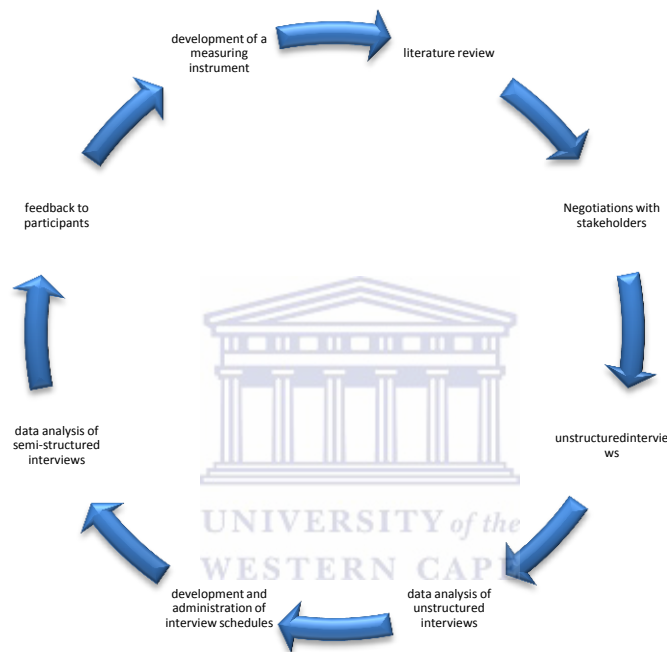


Fig: 4.2 A summary of research phases

Source: Adapted from Booth and Ainscow (2008)

### 4.2.3 Research context

The geographic location of the case study school is Mitchell's Plain, Cape Town. This area is inhabited by a previously disadvantaged population. It is further characterised by sub-economic conditions, as stated by the Department of Provincial and Local Government. In 2001, the then State President, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, announced an initiative to address underdevelopment in the most severely impoverished areas (Presidential Poverty Nodes) in South Africa. It is estimated that these nodes (rural and urban) are home to around 10 million people. Mitchell's Plain was selected as one of seven urban areas that were targeted for development.

This case was not selected because it is representative or because it illustrates a particular problem, but rather because it was identified as one of the schools in the *Presidential Nodal Area* to be developed into a full-service or inclusive school. The nodal areas are described in the following manner:

These areas are characterised by underdevelopment, contributing little to the GDP, absorbing the largest percentage of the country's population, incorporating the poorest of the rural and urban poor, structurally disconnected from both the First World and the global economy, and incapable of self-generated growth (Department of Provincial and Local Government Programme of Action, 2005).

As a result of the above situation, the intention was for government to intervene in the Presidential Poverty Nodes through a process of inter-governmental cooperation that would be fostered by an integrated approach to policy and planning (Department of Provincial and Local Government and Business Trust, 2007).

#### 4.2.4 Sampling

Huysamen (1994) defines sampling as the process of selecting a unit of analysis from amongst a population which is representative of the population or group.

The research was conducted in the Cape Metropolitan area, which consists of seven different education districts. I am an official in the Metropole South Education District and as such selected this district because it was more convenient to do so. The education district was thus selected by a *convenience sampling* method. I used *purposive sampling* to select a circuit that I do not service as part of my daily duties to avoid conflict of interest, while the school was selected by utilising *random sampling*. This type of sampling was deemed appropriate to select the school because there were only two full-service schools in Circuit 7 of the Metropole South Education District and any school could have been chosen for the case study.

The participants, i.e., teachers, parents and learners, were all invited to participate in the research, because the literature research of this study indicated that a study of this nature should include all stakeholders of a school. However, after the second phase of the study, which entailed the interviews and transcription of the interviews, it was felt that the learners did not show adequate knowledge of the subject matter. I presented this dilemma to the other

stakeholders for their input and valued opinions. After careful considerations by all the parties involved, a democratic decision was taken not to include the learners in this research.

#### 4.2.5 Research participants

At the start of the data collection phase of the research, I requested written permission to conduct the research from the Provincial Department of Education, the district and the school respectively. Permission from the principal and school governing body was obtained prior to the commencement of the study. Care was taken not to be prescriptive about who should participate in the study, nor was anybody excluded from the study. I ensured that all categories of stakeholders were invited to be included in the sample.

Although literature indicates that learners should participate in a study of this nature, the learners were excluded from the learner focus group interviews as they lacked understanding of the concept of inclusive education. As stated previously, this was done in consultation with all stakeholders of the school, who democratically made the decision. These categories were included: parents (including school governing body members), teachers, the principal and the senior management team as well as Institution level Support Team (ILST) members. The study was conducted using various sampling strategies for the different categories of participants. The ILST spearheads development and planning of schools and was included strategically in the process, and so was the participation of the Learning Support Educator of the school. The principal and some senior management team members, deemed to be invaluable to the process, were requested to participate in the research. Table 4.1 presents a summary of the participants involved in the study.

Table 4.1: A summary of participants

Participant description	Number of participants
Parents	45
Teachers	26
Learning Support Educator (included with teachers)	1
Principal and Senior Management Staff (included with teachers)	6
School Governing Body members	12

(included amongst parents)	
Total	71

#### **4.2.6 Data collection methods and procedures**

Data collection methods refer to the range of approaches used in a research study to gather data used as a basis for inference, interpretation and explanation. Qualitative researchers employ different methods of data collection, as indicated by social theorist Flick (2002) (cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Focus group interviews that can be conducted in a variety of ways, most notably as unstructured or semi-structured, have been popular data collection tools within a qualitative research approach, according to Kamberelis and Dimitriadis (2005). Focus groups have been defined by Richardson and Rabiee (2001) as a technique that involves the use of in-depth group interviews, in which participants are selected because they are focused on a given topic and, more importantly, because they have something to say on the topic. This study incorporated focus group interviews for their distinct feature of group dynamics that generate a type and range of data through social interaction of the group; these are deeper and richer than those obtained from one-to-one interviews, as explained by Thomas et al. (1995).

In conjunction with the selected research approach and research tools, a complimentary data collection method, (a participatory action research method that follows an interactive and reflective cycle of action and reflection that perpetuates the data collection phase), was chosen to conduct research in this study.

### *Prior to the research process*

Written permission was requested and obtained from the Western Cape Education Department to conduct research at this particular primary school before contact was made with the school. On receipt of the written permission, I presented it to the chairperson of the school governing body who discussed it with the principal and all other stakeholders of the school, with the aim of obtaining their consent to the research being undertaken in their school.

During my first engagement with the school I conducted informal discussions with the principal and all other stakeholders of the school about the school being declared an inclusive school by the Department of Education. As an official of the Department of Education I was aware of this mandate given to the principal and school community, which entailed the development of the school into an inclusive school. Parents, the school governing body, together with their chairperson attended this initial informal discussion. During this engagement I declared my interest in conducting research in the school around this very same aspect, and expressed my desire to include as many stakeholders of the school as possible in the study. Participation in the study would be on a voluntary basis. Discussions with all other stakeholders, which included the principal and senior management team members, the parents and school governing body, teachers and all the Grade Seven learners (the highest grade in the school), focused on what the new status of an inclusive school meant to them, and what they could do as a school community to make their school inclusive. At this meeting, the participants collectively identified the processes of the development of inclusive education implementation in their school as problematic, as none of them knew what these processes entailed, and were eager to find solutions to this problem.

The stakeholders of the school expressed the view that my proposed research could accomplish two aims, i.e. it could fulfil my expressed need to conduct an academic research in their school and, secondly, it could assist the school in the process of fulfilling its mandate of developing itself into an inclusive school. They subsequently took a decision to collaborate with me in the study which would be beneficial to both parties. This discussion was followed by more informal discussions which were initiated by me, to identify particular research questions that could assist the school in finding answers to the stated problem. A suitable research methodology as well as data collection and data analysis methods for the study were next adopted by all potential participants. The stakeholders were informed that participation

in the study was voluntary. Those who opted to participate were given consent letters to complete and were also informed of their rights to withdraw at any stage, should they no longer wish to be part of the study. The participants and I came to a mutual decision to conduct the research in focus groups of teachers, learners and parents.

On commencement of the study my assumptions were that people who experience a particular problem are in the best position to conduct research on the stated problem. This formed the basis of my motivation to conduct research in this particular school, with the stakeholders of the school as participants. The second of my assumptions was that all people can learn basic research skills. This motivated the adoption of the participatory action research method for the study, founded on the principles of empowerment of participants as co-researchers,. The third assumption of the study is that it attempts to address an educational problem that affected the whole school community. This prompted the decision to conduct the research in different focus groups for teachers, parents and learners.

After carefully considering all aspects about their new status as an inclusive school, the group came to the realisation that they knew very little about what an inclusive school entailed. They then identified the problem they faced as a school community as being encapsulated in the question; what can we do to make our school inclusive? After much probing and deliberation in an attempt to find an answer, the group decided that a possible solution was to: Develop an instrument that can be used to inform and monitor development of inclusive education in the school. Secondly, the group discussed the contents they would like to be covered by the instrument. They were in agreement that the instrument should contain: Indicators of inclusive cultures, inclusive policies and inclusive policies.

The participants and I explored several research methods that could be employed to answer this question adequately. After carefully considering the pros and cons of these options and by leaning on my expert knowledge of research processes and procedures, the group collectively agreed on the use of unstructured and semi-structured interviews as data collection tools. They felt that the participatory and empowering nature of the participatory action research method we had agreed to use in these sessions would ensure that they actively participated in the research process as equal partners. They also relished the prospect of becoming co-researchers, tasked with the responsibility of finding their own solutions. Participants felt that they knew their own circumstances better than anyone else and would be



more eager and motivated to implement possible solutions if they were instrumental in finding these for themselves.

Consent forms from participants were collated prior to commencement of the research and checked to make sure that participants had granted consent, but also to determine the number of participants who declared their interest to participate in the research. This session was also fruitfully utilised to plan my further engagement with the stakeholders of the school in ways that were unobtrusive and that did not interfere with teaching time or other responsibilities of the stakeholders.

An attempt was made to break down possible barriers that could have inhibited teachers who were familiar with me in my capacity as a departmental official. I clearly stated the purpose and nature of my visit in a way which assisted them in distinguishing my role as a researcher from my role as an official. The fact that my official role at the school was also supportive in nature, as opposed to a control function, might have assisted greatly in gaining the trust and cooperation of the teachers. I nonetheless gave them the opportunity to understand what the research was about, before I gave them the option to voluntarily participate or withdraw from the research. All participants were then prompted to arrange themselves into small focus groups for unstructured and semi-structured interviews.

### ***During data collection***

#### ***Unstructured interviews***

*Unstructured interviews* were conducted with different stakeholders (four focus groups of parents consisting of ten parents in each group and one group consisting of five parents, as well as three groups of teachers consisting of six teachers, and one other group of six teacher plus the principal and the ILST coordinator.), to negotiate participant understandings and perceptions of inclusive education, as well as inclusive cultures, policies and practices. The length of these sessions varied between forty-five minutes to an hour each. Unstructured interviews served the purpose of informally exploring participant knowledge of inclusive education, or the alternative need for facilitation of understanding of the concepts that would be explored in the semi-structured interviews. The informal nature of the discussions allowed me to get close to the participants and to view the world from the perspective of the insider. As such, it assisted me in understanding how the participants conceptualised inclusive education and its related dimensions.

During the unstructured interviews, I paid careful attention to power relations that emerged, but also reflected on myself. I was particularly aware of my dual authoritative roles as researcher and that of an official of the Education Department, and how these conflicting roles could potentially stifle the discussions. I decided to consciously share the perceived power I had over participants who could easily still have seen me in the authoritative role they had become accustomed to view me in as an official. Another challenge was to convince the participants that they were not just subjects in the study, but also co-researchers with equal powers, responsibilities and facilitators of the knowledge-making process. This I have done by consciously allowing opportunities for participants to direct the discussion and even taking the responsibility of recording the sessions.

Several challenges manifested themselves in a variety of ways. One particular challenge that emerged frequently was my tendency as departmental official to frequently curb discussions when I felt it had to be stopped or redirected. I felt that this kind of response would not bode well with my new role as co-researcher and could even be detrimental to the aims the group had set out to achieve. I had to realise that I effectively had no more or no less power than any of the other participants, and needed to make that adjustment to safeguard the integrity of the process. This decision rendered the process to be time-consuming and unpredictable at times, as participants lacked the skill to steer the process. When I was not directing discussions, I had to rely on the participants for direction and pace. This called for restraint on my behalf as the 'expert' in the group, to not impose my ways and knowledge on my co-researchers. Initially I found it challenging to make sense of the different ways in which participants shared their experiences. Sensitivity to all participants' knowledge, their meaning-making processes and their own ways of generating knowledge thus became my greatest challenge, but in some strange way it also became my most valued and treasured learning experiences. As I grew as a co-researcher and sometimes facilitator of the process, I learnt to trust the participants as equal research partners and learnt to value their input. At times I was humbled to discover an opinion of a parent that I had secretly doubted, to have resonance within literature.

### *Semi-structured interviews*

Prior to conducting semi-structured interviews, the audio recordings and all written observations of the unstructured focus group interviews were carefully studied. This was done with the aim of making sense of the mass of collected information, and to detect initial

categories that emerged and all other information that needed further exploration or clarification. This information was used to construct interview schedules for the semi-structured interviews. A pilot study was then performed to determine the feasibility of each question and to determine the applicability of the content. Participants also used this opportunity as co-researchers to review the preliminary information, with the view of bringing possible deficiencies in the interview schedules to the fore. Interview schedules for semi-structured interviews were then finalised and contained the following categories: Stakeholder's perceptions of inclusive cultures, inclusive policies and inclusive practices.

Planning for the focus group interviews was done timeously to allow participants to arrange their lives accordingly. Their commitment to the process was commendable as they negotiated several obstacles to attend these sessions. Due to travelling arrangements and other commitments, participants decided to retain the same groupings that had been formed for the unstructured interviews, to negotiate participant understandings and perceptions of inclusive education as well as inclusive cultures, policies and practices. The length of these sessions was forty-five minutes to an hour each.

Subsequent interactions with the participants of the school and its community became increasingly less cosmetic. I was accepted as one of the stakeholders of the school who shared a mutual interest with the other stakeholders. I found the participants to be more eager to engage with me around the research topic and other school matters relating to inclusive education. The acceptance I enjoyed within the school ensured my access into the school as an insider rather than a visitor. More importantly, it afforded me access to the personal spaces and informal conversations of other participants. I used these opportunities to listen to the conversations of participants about their challenges, achievements and fears as a school community. Many participants reported feeling confident about the participatory process, while others felt overwhelmed by the myriad of barriers to learning within the school and the surrounding community; however, the latter became empowered to identify barriers to inclusive education through their exposure to discussions about the topic.

The semi-structured interviews provided me with opportunities to gauge the personal growth of participants as pertaining to their perceptions of inclusive education, as well as their understanding of the research processes. I was delighted to observe how participants made connections between inclusive education at school, society and in the work-place. Although it

was not possible to assess the acquisition of technical research knowledge and skills in all participants, their empowerment in terms of inclusive education was evident and they gained confidence in their own abilities as co-researchers. The discussions that were directed by the interview schedules became opportunities for participants to share knowledge, gain insight into the many debates within inclusion and shape their own understanding about indicators for inclusive developments. Participants expressed the view that the knowledge and possible solutions they developed during the participatory process were valued more than ready-made formulae or methods transferred from other schools. This was perceived to have the potential to bring about real change, as opposed to cosmetic change implemented by coercion or forceful means of official instructions.

Another personal challenge I faced during my engagement with the participants was to overcome my own official dominance of surveillance and knowledge control, by relinquishing my 'power' as an official and by learning to collaborate with the participants as partners and co-owners of the process. This brought about opportunities for personal growth and a deeper understanding of my own biases, while allowing growth opportunities for others.

The discussions on indicators for inclusive cultures, policies and practices presented an unforeseen obstacle when competing agendas surfaced. These manifested in the tendencies of school management to dominate discussions, perceived as a lack of trust in the abilities of ordinary teachers to generate their own ideas or foreground their own lived experiences. On the other hand, there were some attempts by teachers to use the process to settle disputes with management, by pointing out the exclusionary practices of the senior school management. The affected groups reflected on these perceptions and used them as opportunities to address elements in the ethos of the school that were not consistent with their efforts to establish an inclusive culture.

These open and honest discussions prompted me to do some self-reflection. I became aware that some of my methods of imposing departmental directives on the school were in direct contrast to the processes employed by the PAR methods and were as non-desirable as the initial contest between teachers and management. Although it might have been easier and far less time-consuming to use a top-down approach of instruction and imposition often employed by Department of Education officials, I question whether it would have been

valued as much by the participants, or if it would have brought about new learning through engagement with knowledge producing processes, or even if it would have brought about a real and lasting change in the school. A second reason why this process would not work as a departmental directive is because school contexts differ and each school requires collective, participatory and reflective processes of its own to generate knowledge to empower the role-players of each school and bring about improvement and meaningful change. Thirdly, during the literature research of this study, inclusive education has been described as an elusive concept. Considerable discussions about this aspect of inclusive education have concluded that it means different things in different contexts and therefore its contextual nature makes transferability of inclusive indicators non-practical.

These focus group interviews assisted me in better understanding how the stakeholders felt or what perceptions they had about inclusive education in the context of the study, as explained by De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2005).

#### ***After data collection***

After all data from semi-structured focus groups had been collected, it was transcribed and categorised as extensively as possible. These transcriptions were then presented to the participants who carefully reviewed it. Attention was paid to my attempts to make sense of participant responses and to refine the emerging categories. The participants and I collectively made decisions about which data to include, what the categories should be and also checked the transcriptions for factual correctness. This process of verification of data proved to be a time-consuming and rigorous process that called on collective participation and commitment from participants and me alike. A collective decision was taken to finalise the data analysis after all concerns were addressed and adjustments were effected.

#### **4.2.7 DATA ANALYSIS**

Data analysis is described as a systematic process of selecting, categorising, comparing and interpreting data by sorting or organising collected data in order to verify the data, make sense of it, and ultimately to be able to draw conclusions from it (Patton, 2002). Qualitative data analysis thus transforms data into findings.

In this study I employed a thematic data analysis, to accomplish this aim. Thematic analysis has been described by Guest, Macqueen and Namey (2012) as a rigorous yet inductive set of

procedures designed to identify and examine themes from textual data in a way that is transparent and credible. The primary concern of this method is with presenting the stories and experiences voiced by study participants as accurately and comprehensively as possible. Qualitative data analysis techniques, such as thematic analysis, are used to organise the data into themes and to identify relationships amongst the different themes.

During the data collection process, I transcribed the interviews. The transcripts were returned to the participants for confirmation and corrections. Some of the inaccuracies were corrected. The process of analysis started with the reading and rereading of the transcripts from the audiotape recordings of the interviews to familiarise myself with the data in order to determine the participants' understandings of inclusive education, inclusive cultures, inclusive policies and inclusive practices. The participants and I, as co-researchers, clustered and partitioned codes, which led to the emergence of categories that were also iteratively refined, revised and related to each other. The established categories of data were classified into themes. Comparisons of codes were made and codes were confirmed and clarified. De Vos (1998), as well as Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2005) contend that, in qualitative research, the researcher studies the selected issues in depth and in detail in an attempt to understand the themes that emerge from the data. The establishment of the significance or importance of themes and findings was crucial. I was cautious about drawing unwarranted inferences because of the small sample size, particularly since the case was not typical of others in the same set. Care was taken to provide sufficient evidence for claims or interpretations, to make them clear, credible and convincing to others. Consistent with participatory action research, I decided to consult participants for their interpretation of data or findings, to ensure that the collected data was consistent with the stakeholders' perceptions and not just my interpretation of the researcher. Bringing together (*triangulating*) multiple perspectives, methods and sources of information from different forms of interviews and the researcher's field notes adds texture, depth, and multiple insights to an analysis and can enhance the validity or credibility of the results. Data collection and data analysis progressed simultaneously; this allowed me to develop codes, refine them and revise them in an iterative process, as advocated by social researchers (Creswell, 1998; Silverman, 2000).

Unstructured and semi-structured interviews were recorded, transcribed and interpreted for emerging themes. These themes were coded and checked against my field notes as well as the findings of the documentary analysis. This multiple focus approach was used to ensure that internal validity of the study was achieved, as advocated by Denzin and Lincoln (2005:5), who contend that the use of multiple methods or *triangulation* reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question. They further advocate for an approach that employs multiple methods, to add richness and depth to the study.

### **4.3 ETHICS STATEMENT**

Mouton (2001); and Rix, Simmons, Nind and Sheehy (2005) state that the ethics of science concerns what is wrong and right in the conduct of research. Because scientific research is a form of human conduct, it follows logically that such conduct has to conform with generally accepted norms and values.

Qualitative researchers are described by Stake (1994) as guests in the personal spaces of others, therefore they should take care that participants are treated with courtesy and respect. The nature of the study, inclusive education and the research method employed (participatory action research), dictated that democratic principles of equity and fairness should be adhered to, while acknowledging and respecting participants as fellow researchers.

I used the following ways, which are consistent with participatory action research, to ensure and uphold ethical concerns in the study:

- Approval to conduct research in a primary school in the Western Cape was sought and obtained from the Western Cape Education Department prior to commencement of the study. A copy of this letter is included in Annexure A.
- I engaged the school principal and school governing-body chairperson with the express aim of obtaining their consent and approval, even though the WCED had already approved the request to conduct the study in the school.
- All participants were made aware of the voluntary nature of the study and of their right to withdraw at any stage.
- I undertook to have a follow-up meeting with participants prior to finalising the study, in order to ascertain the correctness of my interpretation of their responses, and to make the necessary changes if misinterpretations had occurred.

- Written informed consent was obtained from each participant in the study. Participants were also briefed about the purpose of the study. A copy of this letter is provided in Annexure B.
- All participants gave consent to be audio recorded during interviews, while some of them requested not to be videotaped. Assurance was given to this effect.
- The instrument that was developed as a collaborative effort between the participants and myself was presented to the participants for review.

#### **4.4 SUMMARY**

This chapter described the main aim of the research, and the research questions that were formulated to ensure certain outcomes. I worked from the premise, which was informed by the literature research in chapter three, that the perceptions of teachers, parents and learners would inform their practices with regard to inclusion.

The research paradigm, design and methodology that were used to determine the indicators that were utilised to develop a tool to support and monitor inclusive cultures, policies and practices at a mainstream school in the Western Cape have been discussed in detail. A qualitative research design that employed participatory action research methods was selected for this study, because of its inclination to value participants as more than mere subjects but as fellow researchers and producers of knowledge. Another reason for utilising a participatory action research design is because this type of research design is generally employed to empower participants. There was a commitment from me not to impose my interpretations, but rather to empower participants to develop their own unique instrument to support and monitor inclusive education development. The chapter also described which qualitative research tools used to collect data and gave a brief description of how this collected data would be analysed. Finally, the ethical considerations observed that were consistent with participatory action research were discussed. In the next chapter the findings of the research will be presented.



## CHAPTER FIVE: EXPOSITION OF RESULTS

*I have striven not to laugh at human actions, not to weep at them, nor to hate them, but to understand them.* Benedict Spinoza (1632 – 1677)

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter four discussed the research approach, research design, data collection techniques as well as data analysis methods used in the study. The chapter finally concluded with ethical considerations for this research. As indicated in chapter one and again in chapter four, this study aimed at exploring stakeholders' perceptions of indicators for inclusive education in their schools. These included inclusive cultures, inclusive policies and inclusive practices.

In this chapter an exposition of the research findings are presented under the following headings:

- Stakeholders' conceptions of inclusive education
- Stakeholders' conceptions of indicators of inclusive cultures
- Stakeholders' conception of indicators of inclusive policies
- Stakeholders' conceptions of indicators of inclusive practices

### 5.2 EXPOSITION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

#### 5.2.1 Demographics of participants

The data for this research was collected through unstructured and semi-structured interviews. The data was then synthesised in order to develop coherence in the presentation of findings. The findings were then analysed, using a thematic analysis. This section presents the demographics of the participants, which covers gender of all participants, teaching experiences of teachers and training workshops attended by teachers.

#### *Demographics of stakeholders*

The respondents in this research were the parents and teachers of a particular primary school in the Western Cape. A description of participants in the study is presented in Table 5.1.

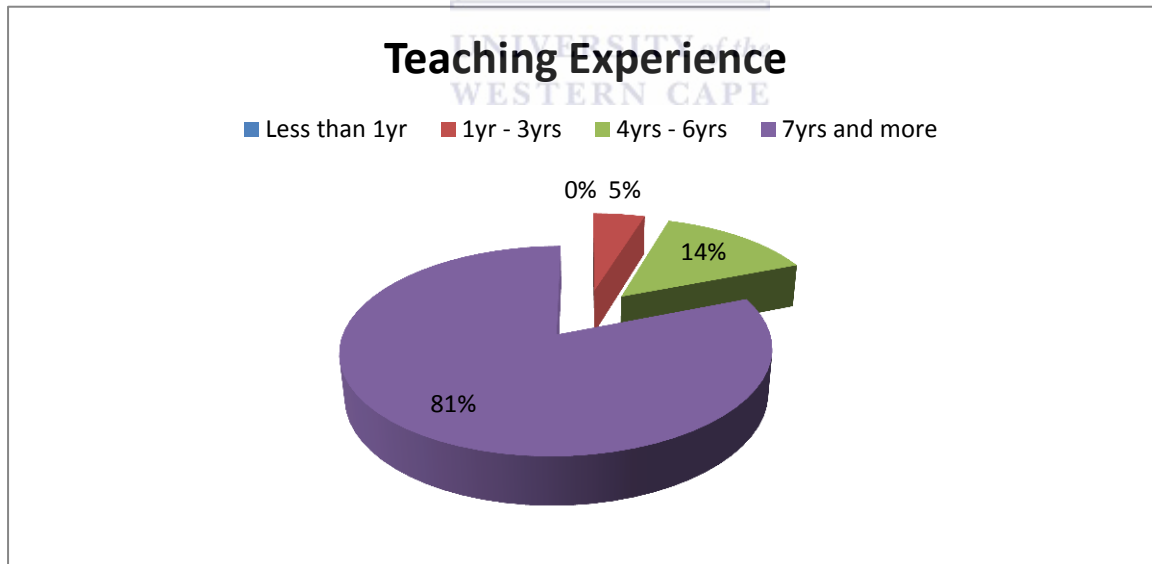
Table 5.1 Gender of respondents

Groups	Males	Females	Totals
Educators	4	22	26
Parents	17	28	45
Totals	21	50	71

**Teaching experience**

With regards to the teaching experience, Table 5.2 shows that the staff consists of a large number of teachers (81%) who have six years or more experience in teaching. 5% of the educators have between 1 year and 6 years of teaching experience, there are 0% of educators with less than one year and 14% of the educators have between two years and six years experience.

Table 5.2 Teaching experiences



### ***Training workshops in inclusive education***

Table 5.3 captures the types of training workshops that educators at the mainstream school attended. The majority of educators (15) were trained in barriers to learning and development. The second most attended workshop was an orientation in inclusive education (4), while a significant number of educators (5) did not receive any training or orientation in inclusive education. No formal workshops for parents were ever conducted by either the school or the education department.

**Table 5.3 Training workshops attended by educators**

Training workshops	Number of educators
Orientation to inclusive education	4
Screening identification assessment and support	0
Barriers to learning	15
Inclusive learning programmes	1
No training	5

### **5.2.2 Stakeholders conceptions of inclusive education**

The participants who responded to this question consisted of teachers and parents. The total number of parents who responded was 45, while 26 educators responded. This question was asked to gauge the participants' understanding of inclusive education. I was mindful of the fact that participants' understanding of inclusive education could affect their response or attitude towards it and this in turn could have a bearing on the type of indicators they chose for the school.

### ***Teachers' perceptions of inclusive education***

During the interviews, different categories emerged. Ninety per cent of the educators described inclusive education as a strategy that foregrounds the need for change in the school. Inclusive education was also seen by 43% of teachers as a way of accommodating learners. Another category that was supported by 89% of educators perceived inclusive education as an approach to teaching. Most educators in the focused group perceived inclusive education as being concerned with disabled students and others categorised as having special educational needs. Two other themes that also emerged were: inclusive education as

concerned with social values; and inclusive education as a strategy for developing the school for all. The following categories that emerged from the teacher responses are summarised in Table 5.4. below.

Table 5.4 Teachers' perception of inclusive education

Categories	Participant responses
Inclusive education as change	Inclusive education is about physical change Inclusive education is about holistic change
Inclusive education as an approach to teaching	Multi-level teaching It is about adapting resources Strives to meet the needs of learners It is about adapting the curriculum
Inclusion as concerned with disabled students	Physical and mental disabilities Learning disabled
Inclusion as concerned with social justice	Consider barriers to learning where ever the barriers might occur Whatever plans you have should be for both learners with barriers and those without barriers
Inclusion as a strategy for developing the school for all	It is basically including all categories of learners
Inclusive education as concerned with all groups seen as being vulnerable to exclusion	Making allowances for everyone vulnerable to exclusion It caters for physical and mental disabilities It accommodates learning disabled learners

### ***Inclusive education as change***

All educators claimed that the implementation of inclusive education is synonymous with change within schools. They seemed to suggest that the way schools are designed does not allow for the implementation of inclusive education without the modification of the existing infrastructure, adaptations to their programmes and redirection and change of the focus and ethos of schools. There also seems to be an agreement that the nature of the change is

complex and should happen at different levels and involve a number of fundamental aspects such as the physical building, curriculum, approach to learners, the community they come from and should also ensure that all practices the school engages in are geared towards retention of learners.

The first aspect that was cited for change was physical change. One educator voiced his opinion:

For me inclusive education is not just looking at the child, you look at holistic change. Change the physical structure of the school. Accommodating all learners, as well as educators, because you don't just find the learners having barriers, but also the educators. (Teacher #1).

The change of the physical structure of the school was viewed as necessary to facilitate greater *access* to the school for learners who are physically challenged. There seemed a realisation amongst the staff that infrastructural changes are paramount to the successful inclusion of learners, teachers and parents with physical barriers. Accessibility to classrooms, toilet facilities, playgrounds, library, school hall and staffroom received the attention of staff, management, the school governing board and learners of the school. The physical change refers to the ramps in the school. On further probing I discovered that, although the school does not have a single learner in a wheel-chair, it does have an educator who uses a wheelchair. It then became obvious that the educators viewed the change brought about by the implementation of inclusive education as being for all stakeholders of the school and not just for learners. The same educator also refers to a different kind of change. She refers to change in your school and holistic change. This seems to refer to change on a deeper level than just physical change or cosmetic change. This view is supported by another educator who said the following:

Then also in terms of your learners . . . accommodating their educational needs as well as physical needs with their moving around and so on. You could accommodate in that sense. Then within the classrooms, adapting the curriculum. (Teacher #2)

There is an understanding in the school that the changes for inclusive education implementation should address more than just the changes to the building. It should also seek to address other forms of barriers within the school, such as the curriculum. These educators identified the need for change in the curriculum to increase participation by all learners.

Whilst the changes to the building would facilitate greater access for some learners, the changes to the curriculum would ensure greater participation within the school.

The holistic change within the school could thus be seen as a change that would ensure both access and participation of all learners and, as such, seeks to address barriers on all levels.

### ***Inclusive education as an approach to teaching***

There was a belief amongst the teachers that learners are differently abled and also learn differently. They indicated that a variety of teaching methods must be used to cater for a variety of learning needs.

When it comes to teaching itself I think that inclusive education suggests that school should move beyond stereotyping and mediocrity of just having one system of teaching for just your moderate to good student, The school has moved beyond that. I would say the school has moved towards viewing the curriculum intensely and looking at alternative methodology of accommodating and teaching learners. (Teacher #3)

Some teachers also focused on the fact that they themselves need to be empowered to employ different teaching strategies to facilitate learning for a diverse group of learners.

To help these learners, the educators are willing to learn. So we have multi-level teaching strategies and also outsourced training to Inclusive Forum Western Cape, to train us in multi-level teaching strategies and methodologies. (Teacher #4)

The teachers differed in terms of understanding how and where learners' needs should be addressed. Most teachers felt that those learners who experience barriers to learning should be placed in unit classes so that their unique needs can be addressed. Some participants claimed that these must be taught in the same classroom as other learners.

In addition to the above notion, inclusive education is understood as an approach that provides opportunities for academic and social interactions. In other words, inclusive education is viewed as an approach that enables learners with disabilities to work together with the so-called 'normal' learners in academic projects and social activities. One participant describes:

Inclusive education as an approach that seeks to address the learning need of all children, it also looks into educational transformation and provides all students with opportunities for academic and social interactions. (Teacher #10)

### ***Inclusive education as concerned with disabled learners***

A large number of teachers (98%) described inclusive education as being concerned with the education of disabled learners, or those learners with special educational needs, or those experiencing barriers to learning in mainstream schools. There was a perception amongst teachers that disabled learners have been marginalised and that inclusive strategies are geared toward correcting that process of marginalisation by admitting these learners into mainstream. As some respondents commented:

Inclusive education is basically about including those learners with disabilities, learning disabilities, physical disabilities . . . in mainstream schools. (Teacher #13).

These teachers concentrated on the rights of disabled learners to be included in mainstream schools. They believed that inclusive education can be viewed as a transformative strategy that facilitates an educational response to diversity.

The philosophy that underpins this belief seems to be that disabled learners need to be included in mainstream.

### ***Inclusive education as concerned with all groups seen as being vulnerable to exclusion***

There was a common understanding amongst the large majority of teachers that inclusive education is concerned with more than just learners termed as disabled. For them inclusive education is concerned with all categories of learners vulnerable to exclusion.

Inclusive education caters for barriers to learning and development, be it intrinsic or extrinsic. The community the child goes into . . . be it drugs, alcohol abuse even gangsterism in the area that affects the child's ability to come to school. (Teacher #14)

The teachers indicated that inclusive education is about the school coming alongside the learners who are affected by intrinsic barriers and effectively addressing these, to the extent that these barriers are minimised. They also pointed to extrinsic barriers such as societal barriers created by drugs and gangsterism as concerns that inclusive education seeks to address. Teachers relayed how their learners are exposed to drugs and alcohol abuse by their community and sometimes by their own parents. The senior management team cited many incidents of learners succumbing to these pressures, resulting in teenage pregnancies and learners dropping out of school because of neglect and abuse.

Teachers indicated that inclusive education is about abandoning rigid ways of dealing with learners and following traditional methods of teaching by making ‘allowances’ for learners, in order to accommodate their unique circumstances.

Inclusive education is about making allowances for everyone, catering for different levels for everyone that comes into the school. (Teacher #18)

They also indicated that inclusive education is about schools engaging in practices that seek to increase the learners’ chances of success by supporting them with extra opportunities, such as classes on a Saturday for learners who struggle with academic work, but also for learners serving detention for misbehaviour. These classes are conducted and supervised by educators out of a deep concern and caring for learners who display problematic behaviour and who are in danger of dropping out of school. It seems as if they hold a deep belief in the fact that all learners can learn, as indicated by this educator:

Any child can learn irrespective of what their barriers are . . . (Teacher #18)

The teachers believe that inclusive education in its broadest sense is about *all* vulnerable groups of learners, including learners from poor socio-economic circumstances, learners who are on drugs or who are exposed to drug and alcohol abuse, learners whose parents are still children and who attended this particular primary school not long ago, and also learners who display problematic behaviour and those who are bullies and victims of bullying.

### ***Inclusion as concerned with social justice***

Educators describe inclusive education as being a principled approach to education and society, in the sense that it articulates the values that the school community is committed to, and the practices it embodies. One educator articulated this:

The ethos and the structure of the school should be inclusive, and also coming through from your senior management team right down to your teachers. Their mind sets . . . how they deal with the children should be inclusive. (Teacher #23)

The idea conveyed here is one of change in mindsets, of how learners are treated, that should filter down from management as leaders of the school, but having every single educator buying into the set of values that promote social justice and being committed to upholding those values. The participants were unanimous in the understanding that all practices that the school engages in should reflect the values that they espouse. There should be a shared

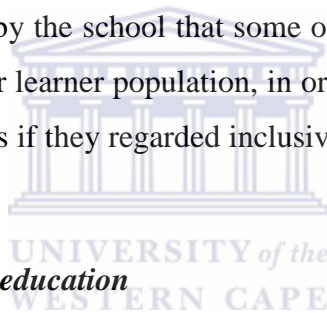


commitment amongst staff to treat all learners equally in all respects. The respondents consistently referred to the efforts of the school to increase the social participation of all learners and reduce their exclusion from curricula, cultures and communities of local schools. These values permeate all the practices at school and in an increasing manner are being made part of the policies, whether written or unwritten.

The acknowledgement and participation of all learners vulnerable to exclusion, not just those of learners with barriers to learning, was regarded as a social justice issue by the school. They believed that all learners must be valued as equal citizens, be allowed access and be given equal opportunities for participation, I documented numerous field notes to support this fact but it was also explicitly expressed by respondents:

Inclusive education also includes learners without barriers. So whatever plans you have for those with barriers you also have them for learners without barriers. (Teacher #19)

There was an acknowledgement by the school that some of the policies needed restructuring to respond to the diversity of their learner population, in order to increase the participation of all learners in the school. It was as if they regarded inclusive education as a strategy to ensure social justice for all learners.



### ***Parents conceptions of inclusive education***

During the parent interviews, the following categories emerged. Some parents identified inclusion as a strategy for developing the school for all, while others viewed inclusive education as a human right of all learners. Parents also indicated that inclusive education is a response to challenging behaviour. The parent responses are presented in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5 Parents' conceptions of inclusive education

Categories	Participant responses
Inclusion as a strategy for developing the school for all	Inclusive education is about what the school offer all children  Inclusive education is a comprehensive response to the needs of all learners
Inclusive education as a human right for all learners	No person can be discarded if they want to apply for admission at a school  Disabled people have the right to education
Inclusive education as a response to challenging behaviour	Inclusive education is about catering for all your children, irrespective of what challenges they might have, socially, cognitively and behaviourally  Inclusive education is about assisting learners that struggles with behaviour  We are trying to give the child an opportunity to correct their wrong behaviour with our Merit/Demerit system
Inclusive education is about the removal of barriers to learning	Inclusive education is about education making provision for all kinds of children

***Inclusive education as developing the school for all***

Parents viewed inclusive education as a strategy that develops a comprehensive school for all, where every child can receive a quality education, as opposed to learners leaving their area of residence to go to a special school. They were proud to enrol their children in this school and felt that all stakeholders contribute towards developing the school into a school of excellence and a school for everybody. They claimed that inclusive education provides for all categories of the learner population and that the community should not be divided into different racial groups, achievement levels, disability or ability groups etc., by allocating children to different types of schools. The school is in the process of developing a proud history and setting an excellent example of racial tolerance, religious coexistence and acceptance of diversity. They

defined inclusive education as making provision for specialist support rather than sending certain categories of learners to special schools.

Inclusive education is about what you offer the children, as the previous speaker has said, you look to your professional services of psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Speech Therapists and things like that, to come in and identify and assist you to identify and empower you to identify the barriers of children that you are interacting with, in order to draw up an intervention plan to assist whatever challenges the learners are facing. (Parent #1)

### ***Inclusive education is about the removal of barriers to learning***

The parents in this study claimed that an inclusive school should be responsive to the needs of the learners of its community. The school should provide education on different levels and should go beyond academic provision. One parent claimed that inclusive education is about removal of barriers to learning when he made the following statement:

Inclusive education is about education making provision for all kinds of children. Children must understand that education is just the foundation. When they are going to grow up, where they heading to, what careers they are going to follow. So maybe the child is only at foundation phase academically but might be excelling in sports where it actually open the child's mind to what more is actually available. Like when I look at the sportsmen on television more than half of them only went to grade ten. Now the child can actually see what education is all about lacking, but I think this (inclusive education) will actual help them as well. (Parent #2)

This parent felt that inclusive education is about the school creating opportunities beyond academics for all children of a particular community. He was particularly concerned about the diversity amongst learners and mentioned learners who were academically strong, the non-academically inclined, those gifted in sports and also the behaviourally challenged.

### ***Inclusive education as a human right of all learners***

Parents indicated that inclusive education is concerned about the rights of learners to be included in mainstream schools. They made sense of it by relating it to what was happening in the workplace:

You can even see it in the workplace. No person can be discarded if they want to apply for a position. They make it freely available. You see these people they are on crutches,

they are disabled but they are working . . . So I also think that if we do that (allowing disabled children access to mainstream schools) children are growing up and understanding, from a foundation side already, no matter if you're not proper physical (disabled) you can basically achieve what you want to achieve. (Parent #4)

### ***Inclusive education as a response to challenging behaviour***

Most parents defined inclusive education as more than just delivering a curriculum. For them it was also concerned with how schools make provision for learners who are at risk of being excluded because of behaviour and other challenges. One parent articulated the feelings of the group in this manner:

As the word indicates 'inclusive', . . . it's about catering for all your children irrespective of what challenges they might have, socially, cognitively and behaviourally . . . that you try to put in place plans of interventions to try and improve these learners so they can achieve certain desired outcomes and that they can become competent in terms of whatever mainstream challenges there are for them. (Parent #18)

Another parent focused on teaching behaviourally challenged children, what he termed as 'manners' in addition to delivering a syllabus.

You can have the best education but if you do not have the manners what does that help you? You get children growing up and they're good in academic but in behaviour they are lacking, but I think this (inclusive education) will actually help them as well. (Parent #14)

Parent respondents were also very vocal about how they think inclusive schools should handle such learners:

One thing I can mention is our discipline structure. We are trying to give the child an opportunity to correct their wrong behaviour with our Merit/Demerit system. Not just looking at expulsions. We got this whole policy in place where everybody, teachers and the Governing Body are involved. Whereby we offer up our Saturday mornings between 9:00 and 11:00am, where we get in those who are struggling discipline-wise. And then we come there and show them that there are better ways of dealing with things. (Parent #9)

These parents defined inclusive education as finding alternative ways of dealing with behaviourally challenged learners. They moved beyond expulsion by finding ways of increasing participation for learners in this category.

### 5.2.3 Stakeholders' perceptions of inclusive cultures

The participants who that responded to this question consisted of focus groups of teachers (33) and parents (62). This question was asked to explore the participants' understanding of what the indicators of inclusive cultures were. It was important for me to know what the stakeholders' regarded as indicators of inclusive cultures that need to be developed as the school journeys towards greater measures of inclusivity.

#### *Teachers' conceptions of inclusive cultures*

The teachers seemed to be in unison in their understanding of indicators that mark inclusive cultures. Their responses varied from describing indicators for culture in general to somewhat more specific indicators. The responses from the teachers were: Indicators of an inclusive culture are: *different languages, cultures and religions are welcomed and celebrated; there is evidence of teachers and parents working together.* They all claimed that an indicator for inclusive culture could be identified by *evidence of teamwork amongst staff, collaboration amongst staff and parents including governing body members*, and that an important indicator for an inclusive culture is that *the school community strive towards removing barriers to learning.*

A summary of their findings are presented in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6 Teacher's conceptions of inclusive cultures

Categories	Responses
Building communities where everyone is made to feel welcome	Different cultures, backgrounds and languages are welcomed and celebrated  Religious holidays of the different holidays should be respected and explained to everyone  Everybody at the school is made to feel safe by Security Officer for access control
Staff working together	Evidence of teamwork between staff members
Staff and parents working together	There is mutual respect between staff and parents

	<p>The school and community work together</p> <p>Parents help with making the school a safe place</p> <p>Parents donate food parcels to the school</p> <p>Computer classes are presented for the community</p>
All learners are treated equally	<p>Learners with different backgrounds are accepted and are treated equally</p> <p>All learners are given the opportunity to showcase their culture “gewoontes”</p> <p>The school respects the different cultures of the learners.</p> <p>All learners are treated fairly, given equal opportunities and are encouraged to be different</p>
Removing all barriers to learning and participation	<p>The school is a made a safe place for all</p> <p>Scholar patrol and playground supervision to ensure the safety of all children</p>
Remove or minimise all discriminatory practices	<p>No discrimination is prevalent</p> <p>No name-calling happens</p> <p>No bullying is tolerated</p>

***The school strives to remove or minimise all discriminatory practices***

Sixty per cent of the teachers identified the principle of removing discriminatory practices as an indicator of inclusive cultures. The teachers viewed their role as doing everything within their power to remove discriminatory practices from their school. To this extent they remarked:

I think there should be no discrimination prevalent in inclusive cultures. (Teacher #3)

The respondents were very aware of the discriminatory practices that were inherent in school cultures. They mentioned a few practices, including institutional discriminations, whereby only certain categories of educators are promoted within the school. Their main concern, however, was the learner on learner discrimination and as such mentioned the following:

No name-calling happens and no bullying should be tolerated within a school with an inclusive school culture. (Teacher #4)

The teachers seemed to think that discrimination between learners was more prevalent and of bigger concern in their school. There was a feeling amongst staff that discrimination is much wider than racism and could include all forms in which exclusions can occur at school level: gender, disability, classism, homophobia and ethnicity. They all held the view that that these forms of discrimination all hold the same root in intolerance of difference and abuse of power to create and perpetuate inequalities. The respondents were quite willing to reflect on their own discriminatory attitudes and practices.

### ***Inclusive culture is about staff and parents working together***

There was a 100% agreement amongst teachers that an indication of an inclusive culture is that staff and parents work together. This collaboration between parents and staff is seen as having, as a desired outcome, the formation of a closely knit structure that works towards a school where everybody is treated fairly and where there is achievement for all learners. Some educators referred to the relationship between staff and parents and made comments such as:

Mutual respect has been inculcated between parents, staff and learners when there is an inclusive culture in schools. (Teacher #5)

Other educators referred to the nature of the collaboration and mentioned some specific activities as evidence of inclusive cultures at their school.

An indicator of an inclusive culture is when the school and community work together.

Parents helping with the soup kitchen is an example. (Teacher #6)

Teachers indicated that when parents and staff work together, they pursue the same goals, based on interdependence and mutual obligation. Providing soup for learners was a concern for the teachers because they believe that a hungry child finds it difficult to learn. They intend forming partnerships with parents to provide that identified need. Teachers were of the opinion that parents who might not have the means to provide food for their children could offer their time and services to prepare the food. In this way the learners are fed and the educators can proceed to teach well fed and happy learners.

Teachers were of the opinion that where a school is situated in an area that has a high rate of unemployment, alcohol and drug abuse, leading to thefts, house-breakings and vandalism, the parents could work with the school to secure the buildings, school possessions and safeguard the learners. A teacher remarked:

Parents helping with making the school a safe place is part of an inclusive culture.  
(Teacher #7)

Teachers perceived inclusive culture as one where parents volunteer to patrol the school yard during the day in an attempt to secure access control to the school and make sure the learners are safe. The collaboration between parents and the staff takes different forms. Some teachers pointed out the following:

The fact that parents donate food parcels to the school is a sign of an inclusive culture of the school. (Teacher #8)

The reciprocal relationship between parents and staff is evident in the following response from an educator:

Computer classes are presented for the community. (Teacher #9)

The relationship between the parents and staff is shown to be a two-way affair, with educators contributing towards the up-skilling of parents by conducting computer classes for parents.

### ***Inclusive cultures is about creating a welcoming school***

All teachers in the study indicated that an important indicator for inclusive cultures is a school where all the stakeholders are made to feel welcome. They showed awareness of the cultural diversity of their school community and felt that it should be encouraged and celebrated. Participants indicated that the negotiation of difference should be the heartbeat of the school community and that the creation of a sense of belonging and active and meaningful participation for all stakeholders of the school should be predominant. A teacher summarised the views of the group in this manner:

An indicator of an inclusive culture is one where different cultures, backgrounds and languages are recognised and celebrated. (Teacher #10).



The teachers in the study indicated that the school has a rich diversity of nationalities as the local community has experienced an influx of foreign refugees of Pakistani, Congolese and Nigerian descent. Their perception of an inclusive culture of a school is that it should have a welcoming ethos that attracts learners. The teachers expressed a belief that where learners from different cultures are accommodated in a school, an effort should be made to integrate the different cultures as part of the school community.

Policies and newsletters to parents should be written in all languages spoken at this school. (Teacher #11)

Another sentiment about integration and celebration of the different religions and cultures was voiced in this manner:

Religious holidays of the different cultures should be explained to everyone. (Teacher #12)

The teachers indicated that an inclusive culture of a school has an ethos of celebrating diversity by fostering acceptance of difference, and creating mutual tolerance of each other through awareness and understanding. They asserted that an inclusive culture should be cohesive and harmonious, with all stakeholders committed to a shared view of inclusive education and with all efforts devoted to fostering an inclusive school culture. There is also a view amongst staff members that it is important to build a school community that increases the chances of learners and parents participating and achieving within the school, by eliminating or reducing exclusions on all levels:

Parents and the community of the school should be made aware of the various school policies and should be invited to make input in the formulation of policies for their children. After all, we are educating their children. (Teacher #13)

This teacher focused on the aspect of the school making parents feel welcome to participate and making meaningful contributions to their school. Some educators also felt that it was important for the stakeholders to contribute towards, and ensure the safety of, learners at the school. To this end a respondent made this observation:

Security is an important issue in our culture; therefore we have employed a Security Officer at the gate to control visitors to the school. (Teacher #14)

The staff members indicated that creating a welcoming school should include creating a school where everybody feels safe. This aspect is particularly important for this community that is known for drug and alcohol abuse incidents and is characterised by break-ins and vandalism.

### *All learners are treated equally*

All teachers claimed that treating all learners equally should be an indicator of an inclusive culture. The participants were unanimous in identifying this aspect, with one of them citing the following:

Learners with different backgrounds should be accepted and are treated equally. (Teacher #15)

Teachers were aware of the racial composition of the school community and therefore carefully considered how they treated all the learners. Another dimension to this aspect refers to the socially disparate nature of the learners, with a mix of poor and middle class learners at the school. Educators indicated that a school should ensure that all the learners are treated equally, irrespective of their social status in the community. In this way they would ensure that a cohesive school community is established, where difference is celebrated rather than frowned upon. Teacher respondents often made the following statement during semi-structured group interviews:

All learners are given the opportunity to showcase their culture, their 'gewoontes'. (Teacher #16)

The school shows respect to the different cultures of the learners. (Teacher #17)

There is a general feeling amongst respondents that further evidence of an inclusive culture is found in the opportunities given to learners without making them feel 'odd':

All learners are treated fairly, given equal opportunities and are encouraged to be different. (Teacher #18)

The previous statement seems to refer to the exclusionary practices often found in schools where only learners from certain social or economic status groups are given the opportunity to be class captains or to fill other positions of prominence in the classroom or wider school life. With different nationalities present in the school, such practices are avoided, as it could easily be construed as racial bias.

### ***Inclusive culture is about staff working together***

The respondents felt that staff working together is a sign of an inclusive culture in a school. There is a feeling of connectedness amongst all staff members that make them function like a family rather than a group who competes against each other. A sense of a collegial community is established where staff members are connected to pursue common goals based on interdependence and mutual obligation. The educators agreed that:

Evidence of teamwork amongst staff members is an indicator of an inclusive culture.

(Teacher #19)

It seems that the participants believed that teamwork amongst staff members is based on relationships of mutual respect, where differences are respected and reflective practices are promoted. Collaborative teamwork amongst staff at this school seems to centre around a whole host of activities, amongst others: *subject teaching*, where the strengths of different educators are drawn upon to teach the same class different subjects; *phase planning*, where all the educators in the phase do planning together to ensure a coordinated approach to addressing academic issues such as learner achievement and discipline; the *soup kitchen*, where some educators manage the vegetable garden to grow ingredients for the soup, while other educators are responsible for soliciting donations of bread, and yet other educators are responsible for preparing the food and feeding the learners; *Saturday classes*, managed on a Saturday and facilitated by various teachers across grades for behaviourally challenged learners; *induction of new educators*, on an informal basis whereby departmental heads and phase leaders take the responsibility of introducing the school and the wider community to new teachers; *sport activities*, run by more than one educator per team and all educators collaborating and sharing the responsibilities for teams.

### ***Parents' conceptions of inclusive cultures***

Parents responded in both structured and semi-structured interviews to the question about what they would identify as indicators of an inclusive culture. To most parents the terminologies around inclusive cultures are foreign, but they nonetheless gave their opinions on inclusive cultures. The following categories emerged from the responses of parents:

Table 5.10 Parents understanding of inclusive cultures

Categories	Responses
Staff and governing bodies work together	<p>Staff and school governing body members share responsibilities of Saturday classes</p> <p>Staff and parents facilitate the soup kitchen together</p> <p>Parents are invited to get involved in the education of their children</p>

***Staff and governing bodies work together***

Collaboration between staff and school governing bodies was cited by more or less half of the parents as an important indicator of an inclusive culture. There seemed to be recognition of the interdependence of all stakeholders within an inclusive culture where collaboration is identified as a core element. Parents mentioned a myriad of incidents of collaboration between staff and governing body members. One such incident is:

Staff and school governing body members share responsibilities of Saturday classes.  
(Parent #1)

According to parents, the school is currently embarking on Saturday classes where a combination of parents and educators supervise behaviourally challenged learners. This was regarded as one of the desired indicators of the inclusive nature of the school culture. The respondents felt that both the parents and the teachers had to take the responsibility of turning these learners' behaviour around. The collaboration between governing body and staff extended beyond the one category of children mentioned, to include all children. They mentioned the following in this regard:

Parents must work with the educators and should be involved in the education of their children. (Parent #2)

Parents felt that they got better participation from learners if they (the learners) knew that their parents were working with the teachers. An indicator of inclusive cultures is thus seen in the working together of governing bodies and educators in various aspects of the education of children. This could include sports, academics or, as the following educator posited, feeding of children:

Staff and parents facilitate the soup kitchen together. (Parent 3#).

Governing bodies are traditionally seen in roles of governance of schools and seldom get involved with the actual education of children. This is viewed as the domain of the educators who receive their parameters within which to operate from the governing body. This often results in a hierarchical relationship that does not bode well for sound collaboration. It seems as if these parents have redefined this relationship between staff and governing body to one of mutual respect, working together towards a common goal. The soup kitchen of the school provides both parties with an opportunity to contribute towards, and work together on, the same project. In the end the benefits to both parties are better relationships, greater understanding and the fostering of closer ties between all the stakeholders of the school.

#### **5.2.4 Stakeholders' conceptions of inclusive policies**

All the stakeholders of the school were asked to share their understanding of what inclusive policies are. They responded to unstructured and semi-structured interviews. All these participants viewed inclusive policies as an embodiment of the inclusive values and beliefs of the stakeholders of the school.

##### ***Teacher's conceptions of inclusive policies***

All teachers in the study responded to this question in both unstructured and semi-structured interviews. The categories that emerged from their responses were: The school seeks to admit all learners from its local community. There was a view that the school provided access to all stakeholders through its buildings. It was also felt that the code of conduct was used to reduce barriers to participation. Furthermore, there was a belief amongst the respondents that the school's policies should allow curricular access. The teacher's conceptions of inclusive policies are summarised in Table 5.12.

Table 5.12 Teacher's perceptions of inclusive policies

Categories	Responses
The school should admit all learners from its local community	<p>All learners must be accommodated. Our language policy must be reviewed to accommodate all</p> <p>Policies should include everybody</p> <p>All our policies must be aligned to inclusivity: language, Health, HIV/Aids etc.</p>
The school should admit learners irrespective of attainment or impairment	<p>Policies should give clear admission to learners with different kinds of barriers to learning</p>
The code of conduct should be used to reduce the barriers to learning and development	<p>Our discipline policy is inclusive as it seeks to minimise exclusions</p> <p>Special provision should be made for learners with barriers</p>
Inclusive policies should ensure curricular access	<p>Assessment policies should accommodate various learning styles, levels and pace of learning</p> <p>Formative assessment should have accommodation for the child who cannot learn to inform teaching</p> <p>Cooperative teaching and cooperative learning should make use of the strengths of educators and learners</p> <p>Parenting skills should be taught to strengthen parental corps</p>

***The school should admit all learners from its local community***

There was a 100% consensus amongst the respondents that inclusive policies should embody the values and beliefs of the school, through its stakeholders. The participants suggested that

the school's policies should be adapted to make sure it keeps up with the changing nature of its local community. They stated that policies should ensure that all learners are accommodated, but also qualified their reasons by mentioning specifics about what should be included in the policies and for what reason:

All learners must be accommodated ... Our language policy must be reviewed to accommodate all. (Teacher #1)

The teachers seemed to suggest that the admission of foreign learners to the school should be acknowledged and also be explicitly accommodated through the policies of the school. Those learners who were not English mother tongue speakers should be made to feel welcome by officially recognising their own language in the language policies of the school. They stated that inclusive policies should also ensure the inclusion of all categories of learners from the local community:

Policies should include everybody. (Teacher #2)

There was an assertion by staff that, although the school is developing into a school for all by accommodating different categories of learners, it should also be expressed in the school's policies. The school is known to not exclude any category of learner from the local community. All teachers expressed that even the foreign nationals felt welcome at the school. Learners with barriers to learning and those vulnerable to exclusion should be accommodated through the school's policies, as desired by the respondents through the following statements:

All our policies must be aligned to inclusivity: Language, Health, HIV/Aids etc. (Teacher #3)

Policies should give clear admission to learners with different kinds of barriers. (Teacher #4)

The teachers claimed that if these values and sentiments are not expressed or embodied in the policies and practices of the school, it will make the school vulnerable to exclusionary practices.

Teachers felt that inclusive admission policies should encourage all students in the local community to attend the school, regardless of attainment or impairment. Many of the respondents (29) felt that this is the case at their school, while 11 of the 29 respondents felt

that, although it was true that no learner was ever turned away, it is not explicitly made known in the admission policy. These respondents were vociferous in stating:

Policies should give clear admission to learners with different kinds of barriers. (Teacher #5)

Most teachers held the belief that inclusion of all students should thus be publicised in all admission policy documents. It seemed as if these educators felt that every learner in the community, but especially learners with special educational needs and their parents, should be supported in enrolling their children. These parents should also be encouraged to share their concerns about the children's needs in the belief that the school would provide adequate support to them. Respondents often remarked:

Special provision should be made for learners with barriers. (Teacher #6)

It seems as if these respondents believed that an important indicator of inclusive policies that expresses the inclusion of all learners is the increase in the diversity of the learner population. However, when these learners' access to the school is ensured through the policy, their participation should be made possible by making special provision for them.

***The code of conduct should be used to reduce the barriers to learning and participation***

All educators viewed the *Code of conduct* as an important policy document. There was a strong view amongst participants that this document has the potential of either legitimising exclusionary practices or reducing barriers to participation of learners. The Code of conduct for learners regulates the practice that guides the stakeholders' decision on dealing with behaviour of learners. Educator respondents made the following statement with regard to their code of conduct:

Our discipline policy should be inclusive as it seeks to minimise exclusions. (Teacher #6)

Participants indicated that schools often employ the code of conduct to exclude learners with defiant or negative behaviour such as bullying, smoking, sexual exploration at school, swearing, etc. The teachers indicated that at this school the code of conduct should be utilised to increase the participation of learners who fall into these categories or those who are vulnerable to exclusion. They believed that the school is supporting these learners with pastoral care and support and specifically designed programmes, and that care is taken that support is extended to both the victim and perpetrator in cases of bullying and other forms of



abuse. They are proud of their intervention programmes for learners vulnerable to exclusion as well as pastoral care programmes for misbehaving learners, and indicated that special care should be taken, through the behaviour support interventions, to address barriers to learning and participation.

The participants believed that rehabilitation of students, rather than retribution, is always the school's response to concerns about learner behaviour. They have started a '*merit/ de-merit system*' to deal with problematic behaviour rather than engaging in exclusionary practices with these learners. The school proudly reports that their attitude to minimise all forms of disciplinary exclusions has resulted in zero 'push-outs' in the last fifteen years. Parents and teachers collaborate in making their behaviour intervention programmes work by running these programmes at school on a Saturday.

### ***Inclusive policies should ensure curricular access***

Three of the more experienced educators mentioned the fact that inclusive policies should also explicitly state the fact that schools ensure curricular participation of all learners. These educators were: the Learning Support educator, ILST coordinator and a Head of Department. They mentioned the following with regard to assessment policies:

Formative assessment should have accommodation for the child who cannot read, to inform teaching. (Teacher #7)

They suggested that greater emphasis should be placed on promoting success for all learners. They regard Formative assessment as very helpful as an indicator for planning the success of those learners who have cognitive barriers to learning. They suggested that educators should use this type of assessment to direct the teaching of those learners who find the academic curriculum challenging. Eighty per cent of the teacher respondents regarded assessments as very important when it comes to accommodating various learning styles. They remarked:

Assessment policies should accommodate various learning styles, levels and pace of learning. (Teacher #8)

Participants cautioned that learners employ different learning modalities and their learning rate differs. Assessment policies should thus make provision for different learners to be assessed differently. An interesting phenomenon was that the newly qualified educators and

the Learning Support Educator were the only educators who concentrated on teaching and learning strategies that could benefit both learners and educators. To this end they said:

Cooperative teaching and cooperative learning should make use of the strengths of educators and learners. (Teacher #9)

According to these participants, much benefit for the learners could be derived from teachers employing cooperative learning and teaching strategies. Assessment policies should embody the inclusive culture that seeks to understand how learners learn, and in turn it should guide or direct the assessment practices at the school. Cooperative learning strategies are employed at this school as an educational innovation which forms an integral part of the teaching and learning of teachers and learners.

Participants mentioned that many of the learners taught at the school fall pregnant a year after leaving for high school. As a consequence the parenting corps is getting younger each year. This, coupled with the low socio-economic state of the local community, leads to low academic achievement amongst parents. This in turn results in a parenting corps that cannot adequately assist the learners with academic schoolwork. The respondents feel that inclusive policies should include strategies to encourage development amongst parents so that they are empowered to help their own children. The Learning Support educator made the following statement:

Parenting skills should be taught to strengthen the parental corps. (Teacher #10)

There was a belief amongst educators that the education of the learners at this school is not just the task of the educators, but a collective effort between school and community. Inclusive policies should thus embody this belief by giving impetus to the development of the parents through workshops that are coordinated by the school.

### ***Parents' conceptions of inclusive policies***

The same parent respondents as outlined in 5.3 responded to this question. Their responses foregrounded the following categories: They said that inclusive policies should ensure that *the school admits all learners from its locality*, *all forms of support are coordinated* and that *all pressures for disciplinary exclusions are decreased*. Next, these categories and responses will be presented.

Table 5.13 Parents' perceptions of inclusive policies

Categories	Responses
<i>Intervention and Support Policy</i> should coordinate all forms of support	Various intervention strategies should help struggling learners
<i>Discipline Policy</i> decreases pressures for exclusions	We should not have no expulsions

***The intervention and support policy coordinates all forms of support***

Parents all seemed to acknowledge that there are learners who really struggle with academic work. They considered many options on how to deal with these learners, including referring them to Special Needs schools. Finally they decided not to refer their learners to other institutions, but rather to devise plans to support these learners at their school. A parent respondent remarked in this regard:

We have various intervention strategies in place to help those struggling learners. Money has been set aside to pay for these services to come to our school. (Parent #1)

According to the parents, inclusive intervention and support policies should be formulated to coordinate support for learners where they are at, rather than to take them out of the school. They believed that a school's intervention policy should concentrate on all aspects that the learners find challenging, including LITNUM (Literacy and Numeracy), that seems to be a challenge in most schools. They further indicated that an inclusive policy should coordinate interventions for a whole range of learners, based on their achievement. They proposed a policy that does not exclude any learner. Even those who achieved average to high results are included.

Learners are divided into three categories. These categories included those learners above 55%, those between 40 and 54.9% and those learners below 40%. The staff then plans targeted support for every group of learners with the intention of increasing learning for each group and for each individual learner. (Parent #2)

It seemed as if the parents were saying that the policy should encapsulate all support plans as part of a strategy for the development of teaching diversity throughout the school. They indicated that the school has a clear teaching and learning support policy which is clear to

everyone within the school as well as to those who support learning from outside the school. This support is given to learners with the aim of increasing their independence. It is also clear that the support policies are guided by what is best for the learners rather than merely for the maintenance of professional territories.

### ***Discipline policy decreases pressures for exclusions***

All the parents perceived inclusive policies as preventing or decreasing exclusions of learners on grounds of discipline. The attitude of these parents was to rather have measures in place that could prevent or deal with problems that stem from learner behaviour before it escalates. They indicated that records of learners who display problematic behaviour are kept at the school and the principal reports these to the School Governing Body who works with the staff to intervene when problematic behaviour occurs. A parent proudly reported:

We have no expulsions for the last 15 years because of how we deal with the discipline of our children. (Parent #3)

The parents expressed that, although disciplinary problems occur on a daily basis, the school deals with them in such a manner so as to prevent them from becoming the basis of which a learner is excluded from the school. The parents cited various reasons why they think disruptive or challenging behaviour at school was on the increase. In their opinion, the family structures in the community are not the same as they used to be. Single parenthood was reportedly on the increase, with the result that family values and principles such as respect are no longer inculcated at home. Children thus show no respect for educators who might also contribute to the situation through lack of skills to adequately deal with challenging behaviour.

The majority of the parents indicated that inclusive policies should aim at minimising all forms of disciplinary exclusions, whether temporarily or permanent. In the event that these unfortunate exclusions occur, the school should have a positive plan for re-introducing such learners to the school.

### **5.2.5 Stakeholders' conceptions of inclusive practices**

As inclusive education means different things to different people, it was important to find out what perceptions of inclusive practices could be found amongst the stakeholders. All

stakeholders responded to this question in both unstructured and semi-structured interviews. Their responses foregrounded specific categories that are presented next.

***Educator’s conceptions of inclusive practices***

The perception of educators about inclusive practices was solicited during both structured and semi-structured interviews. During these interviews they strongly voiced their opinions, foregrounding certain categories. These categories were: *Teaching strategies are responsive to learning needs and are based on theories of learning that develop the full potential of the learner.* They also said that *teachers get support from inside and outside the school,* and that *teacher, school management and parents work together to address barriers to learning. Teachers are concerned with the learning and participation of all learners. Student difference is used as a resource for teaching and learning.* These categories and teachers responses will now be presented.

Table 5.15 Teachers’ perception of inclusive practices

Categories	Responses
Teaching strategies that are responsive to learning needs	<p>Find out about the learner. It’s through that assessment that we know what teaching strategies to employ</p> <p>Through that assessment you can actually know what teaching strategies I need to employ so I can accommodate those learners</p> <p>Okay, we have for our Grade one the <i>Early Identification Tool</i>, right? So we would test the learners. The Early Identification Tool basically assesses the learners’ motor and perceptual development</p>
Teachers get support from inside and outside the school	We need more outside help from Psychologists, Occupational Therapists to tap into their expertise
Teachers, school management and parents work together to address barriers to learning	Sharing best practices within their classrooms, with others; teamwork and collaborative teamwork

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	The management and parents buy whatever resources we as teachers need to ensure a quality education for all
Teachers should ensure that learning and participation of all learners take place	To accommodate the learner in the classroom in terms of his learning  Learner assessment indicates what teaching strategies should be employed to accommodate all learners.
Student difference is used as a resource for teaching and learning	Every learner should be accommodated within the curriculum, and assessment strategies of the school  Alternative assessment strategies should be used to assess learners with barriers

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***Educators are concerned with the learning and participation of all learners***

All teachers were concerned with the participation of all learners in the learning programmes of the school. Inclusive practices to them meant that they should ensure that after the learners had gained access to the school, they participated in all the activities the school offers to all its learners. One teacher defined inclusive practices in the following manner:

To accommodate the learner in the classroom in terms of his learning, I think when learners are included within the learning programme you wouldn't find them just willy-nilly sitting one side doing nothing. So I think including them in the teaching situation .... making sure that they are participating by employing different strategies in the classroom. (Principal #1).

There was a belief amongst the teachers that the school should admit all learners in its local community, regardless of ability, cognitive level or any other barrier to learning. This presents a real challenge to some teachers when all learners are not on the same level. The teachers shared their views about the challenges they face and suggested ways in dealing with a diverse classroom:

This is something that all teachers need to work on and I think if we want to be inclusive in our classrooms we need to find out the needs of the learners. So, we need to look at the individual learners and we need to do our pre-tests. Do the diagnostic tests and find out the specific problems. What specifics do you do around the child in terms of the

academic curriculum? Through that assessment you can actually know what teaching strategies I need to employ so I can accommodate those learners. (Teacher #2)

Another teacher made a similar remark:

I think it is a good teaching practice to actually do that if you want to include all learners. First do your baseline test, get your data, find out what are your learner needs. But then look at strategies that's gonna accommodate all learners. (Teacher #3)

### ***Teaching strategies should be responsive to learning needs***

Most teachers relayed that one way to ensure learner participation in all learning programmes of the school is to have learning needs assessments done for each learner and then to tailor a teaching strategy in response to the learning need. The ILST Coordinator shared her views in relation to baseline assessments of learners:

Find out about the learner. It's through that assessment that we know what teaching strategies to employ. (Teacher #4)

Through that assessment you can actually know what teaching strategies you need to employ so I can accommodate those learners. (Teacher #5)

Teachers suggested that the foundation phase section of the school could employ a strategy to ensure participation through needs analysis and could employ strategies that address specific areas of need. The foundation phase educator explained:

Okay, we could have for our Grade one the **Early Identification Tool**, right? So we should test the learners. The Early Identification Tool basically assesses the learners' motor and perceptual development. It's actually about five areas. You've got Motor development and Perceptual Development – which is divided into Visual and Auditory, then you get Language Development, Mathematical Ability as well as Social and Emotional Testing. So after you've tested the learners in those areas you can actually make a need analysis. And if you make your needs analysis you can actually see how many learners are struggling in the different areas. (Teacher #6)

According to the teachers, after the assessment to determine the learning needs of learners is done, the school should employ several teaching strategies to respond to the learning, as the following teacher explained:

Okay, after the Early Identification Tool has been applied you should draw up your teaching strategies to respond to that. We have found that the tool is closely linked to the

academics of your Mathematics. So the teaching strategies should be employed to teach and re-teach those skills that are lacking within the subject area. So it's an integrated approach. (Teacher #7)

... and different learning styles. So if you're going to teach you're not going to teach an isolated group. You teach the whole group. So in that sense your curriculum is then adapted to accommodate everybody. (Teacher #8)

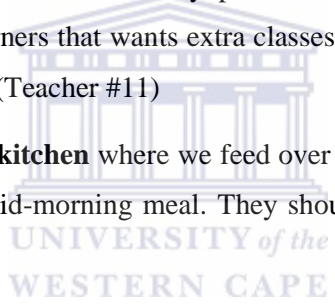
The teachers also mentioned several other inclusive teaching practices that could be used.

Differentiated teaching strategies should be used to accommodate learners within the classroom, okay, should have differentiated teaching techniques to accommodate all groups. (Teacher #9)

Then you could also have a **Home Programme** which is an extension of activities that come from the Early Identification Tool. (Teacher #10)

The **Saturday Enrichment Classes** whereby parents and teachers work together in running programmes with learners that wants extra classes and for those learners in need of positive behaviour classes. (Teacher #11)

You should also have a **soup-kitchen** where we feed over 200 learners that need a meal. We could give a breakfast, mid-morning meal. They should get a good meal. (Teacher #12)



### ***Teachers get support from inside and outside the school***

The senior management team members explained that they believed support from outside the school is important for them. Their perception was that an inclusive school should form collaborative partnerships with outside agencies that collaborate with the school. The teachers believed that organisations that contribute financially to the school, businesses in the area, district officials and NGO's should be examples of partnerships that inclusive schools could form in order to strengthen them. The principal explained that a healthy co-curricular as well as an extra-curricular involvement should be part of inclusive practices of any school. During the interviews about the support the school provides to learners, a teacher remarked:

An inclusive school should get more outside help from Psychologists, Occupational Therapists to tap into their expertise and assistance in our efforts to address barriers to learning. (Teacher #13)



Teachers indicated that, in order for them to deal effectively with all kinds of barriers to learning, they needed to form partnerships with outside agencies that could add value to their educational programme.

We can ask outside agencies like Inclusive Education Western Cape - IEWC to train our educators on Multi-level Teaching and the Inclusive Outreach Team of the District could also work with our educators, learners and parents. (Teacher #14)

The teachers indicated that they had a clear plan to deal with their educational challenges. They believed that strong support structures inside the school with inter-phase planning, collaborative teaching and a functional ILST should be established. Teachers cited as examples of outside support the collaboration with Inclusive Education Western Cape (IEWC), an outside agency which does training in schools in Multilevel Teaching, Barriers to learning, Whole school approach to implementing inclusive education, Anti-bullying etc. The principal also mentioned that when schools become an Inclusive or Full-service school, the Education District would render support through the deployment of an Inclusive Education Team that would support the stakeholders of the school on a regular basis. The inclusive education team consists of a speech therapist, occupational therapist and a psychologist. Teachers were informed by the education department that this team would be interacting with and supporting individual teachers, learners and parents. The teachers further indicated that this team should interact with the staff in the different phases, the ILST and their collaboration with and input in the School Improvement Plan (SIP). Teachers cited further functions of this team as working extensively with parents to capacitate them about teaching reading to primary school children, how to help with homework and general support to parents. They believed that comprehensive internal as well as external support for all the stakeholders on a regular basis should be a feature of an inclusive school.

***Teachers, school management and parents should work together to address barriers to learning***

Teachers expressed the view that inclusive practices should be marked by high levels of collaboration between educators, school management and parents. There was an understanding amongst participants that there should be commitment not only to the teaching task and learners, but also to each other as teachers worked collaboratively, in order to address the barriers to learning in the school. There was the belief in the school that

cooperative teaching should be the norm rather than the exception. One educator described the nature of the desired teamwork between educators in this way:

Sharing best practices within their classrooms, with others; teamwork and collaborative teamwork works best in addressing barriers to learning in the school. (Teacher #15)

Teachers indicated that teamwork extended to a higher level when educators share their expertise and best practices with each other. They believed that the practice of subject teaching ensured that teachers used their area of expertise to provide the best learning experience to learners, rather than being generalist and trying to teach all learning areas. The management of the school was very supportive towards educators and provided effective leadership and guidance to the teaching corps.

... then also good management structures. I think management structure should be well-established, should provide strong leadership and they should be team-players. And I think that is one of the areas that if the school do not have a strong manager inclusive education will not get the support needed to be established . . . Strong manager, strong Senior Management Team and educators that are willing to change are the requirements for implementation of inclusive practices. (Teacher #16)

Teachers also reported that the leadership together with the parents should provide funding for Learning and Teaching Support Material (LTSM) needed in the classroom:

The management and parents should buy whatever resources we as teachers need to ensure a quality education for all. (Teacher #17)

We bought LTSM, balancing-beams, occupational therapist equipment and balls to use in the Foundation Phase. (Teacher #18)

There was a view that the more experienced teachers should be providing collegial leadership to the younger teachers, while the younger teachers could share their insight on the latest developments in specific methodologies.

The increased level of involvement of the parents was viewed as most desirable. These parents should work in partnerships with the school, either receiving input from teachers through the Home Programme on how to help learners with reading and homework, or providing the funding for what teachers needed. Teachers and parents raise a considerable amount of money to buy in services of other experts to assist the school in addressing barriers

to learning. The educators felt strongly that this kind of collaboration should be part and parcel of any school.

***Student difference should be used as a resource for teaching and learning***

Teachers perceived the diversity amongst learners positively and were of the opinion that it should be used as a resource for teaching. One educator passionately described possible utilisation of learner diversity in this manner:

It is not just to tolerate learner diversity but to make it part of the school, respecting one another and learning from one another. In that way you make everybody feel welcome.  
(Teacher #18)

Another educator explained further, using her own difference as an example of how the school could accommodate people in general. She then explained how the different cultures could be accommodated and viewed as a family:

Being a Muslim and the dress-code that I wear I feel that I'm being accommodated as an educator. The learners are afforded the same courtesy. We have isiXhosa speaking, French, Afrikaans and English speaking learners in our school. We have a range of different cultures within the school and everybody should take part as one family.  
(Teacher #19)

Another teacher distinguished between mere accommodating and being aware of difference, to really integrating the different cultures and how the learners should be allowed to learn from the different cultures. He expressed himself in this fashion:

I think what the school must still work towards is where we learn more about each other's cultures. Like an open conversation, really learning about each other ... But in terms of accommodating and being tolerant, and in terms of understanding, that is present already. (Teacher #20)

The teachers also believed that learner diversity is deeper than just cultures. There was a belief amongst them that it extends to abilities of learners and therefore it should be utilised within teaching practices. Some educators shared their views on how learner diversity could be utilised:

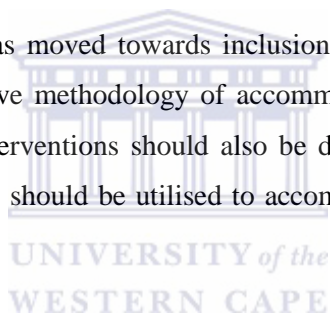
So you are looking at cooperative learning and spreading that cooperation into your teaching teams. (Teacher #21)

Cooperative learning could help learners, especially if you combine your weaker learners with the stronger ones, sharing ideas and working together. And so cooperative learning would mean that they would give their experiences to the groups. So, group sharing and assisting one another. (Teacher #22)

The teachers viewed cooperative teaching and learning as a way to utilise learner diversity for the benefit of the whole group. They seemed to believe that the different learning styles and multiple intelligences within the learner corps could be used as a resource rather than leading to discrimination between learners. An interesting view amongst the participants focused on how to use the information from assessments to inform educators of difference amongst learners, so that they could design different teaching responses for each learner:

Ultimately if you're going to have a changing curriculum you should accommodate everyone when it comes to formal assessment. Alternative assessment of learners with barriers makes provision for different ways of assessing learners. (Teacher #23)

So I would say the school has moved towards inclusion where the curriculum is now intensely looked at. Alternative methodology of accommodating and teaching learners should be done. Intensive interventions should also be done within the classroom and multi-level teaching strategies should be utilised to accommodate the different learners. (Teacher #24)



### ***Parents' conceptions of inclusive practices***

During parent interviews, parent participants foregrounded the following two categories with their responses: *Community resources are known and drawn upon* and *School governing body members understand and value the principles of inclusion*. These categories that emerged will now be presented.

Table 5.16 Parents' perceptions of inclusive practices

Categories	Responses
Community resources are known and drawn upon	<p>We have a number of partnerships with people and organisations in our community</p> <p>A soccer club in our community approached us to build a clubhouse on the school-grounds</p> <p>We are engaging with many outside agencies to assist with the school, for example SAPS is training our learners as a drilling squad</p>

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We are in partnership with jag foundation who volunteers their coaches to train our learners in Athletics and also ‘Anti-Bullying Strategies’

The Promenade approached us to make a need analysis for learners who are interested in tenpin bowling. We view inclusive practices as all kinds of practices that prevents learners from dropping out of school and therefore we are encouraging this kind of involvement

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School Governing Body members understand and value the principles of inclusion

Our discipline structures has gone the extent to where the SGB and leadership sacrifice our time on a Saturday mornings to show those learners that are struggling that there is a better way

We are one of the first schools in Mitchell’s Plain that opened our doors for a Grade-R section attached to the school

May I just say, we did not have the space to do it, but we had the vision for Early Childhood Development, (ECD) and therefore we had to build three classrooms.

When the learner passed Grade 7 the mother came to the school and wanted to kiss the principal’s feet. She said that we were the only school that gave her child an opportunity

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***School governing body members understand and value the principles of inclusion***

During the data-collection phase at the school it became clear that all stakeholders believe that the principles of inclusion should be entrenched firmly amongst them. These principles might not have been stated overtly, but it did permeate into everything they did. One example of the kind of inclusive practices they engaged in was highlighted by a parent when he said the following:

Our discipline structures has gone the extent to where the SGB and school leadership sacrificed our time on a Saturday morning to show those learners that are struggling that there is a better way. (Parent #1)

The parents understood and believed in the principles of providing access and participation to all learners of the school, including those learners who were struggling academically and those with behavioural difficulties. Another parent reflected on how they had extended the

principle of access for Early Childhood Development (ECD) section and proudly voiced the effort made to establish it:

We are one of the first schools in Mitchell's Plain that opened our doors for a Grade-R section attached to the school. (Parent #2)

The parents realised the role an Early Childhood Development section in the community could play in preparing the learners for Grade One. Parents viewed an ECD section of the school as important and thus pursued this possibility with such enthusiasm that management had to extend the school to make it a reality, as some parents explained:

May I just say, we did not have the space to do it, but we had the vision for ECD and therefore we had to build three classes. (Parent #3)

Also, we did it to serve the need of the community. They had their children in private ECD centres but were not satisfied with the service they were getting. (Parent #4)

### *Community resources are known and drawn upon*

Parents indicated that an important indicator for inclusive practices is to utilise all resources both inside and outside the school in order to make an impact. A concerted effort was made to form links with the community and to utilise the organisations as resources, as became evident in one parent's response:

We have a number of partnerships with people and organisations in our community. A community member requested to use our grounds for a community garden and in return she would be looking after the school after hours. (Parent #5)

Parents viewed the community, and some individuals in the community, as resources to the school. They indicated that the partnership with this person has mutual benefits to both parties. Other parents highlighted how a partnership with a soccer club and other organisations could be utilised as a resource, with huge benefits to the school.

We encourage participation in sports for all our learners and our community. A soccer club in our community approached us to build a clubhouse on the school grounds. In exchange for that the club members are looking after the school's ground and property and gave us the usage of the clubhouse for our learners. (Parent #6)

Our school-grounds are very well kept. It is because we are employing people from the community to come alongside the school to beautify the school and to do security and

access-control during the day. As a result we did not have any incidents or losses for a long time. (Parent #7)

We are engaging with many outside agencies to assist with the school, for example SAPS is training our learners as a drilling squad. They are being coached at school and represent our school in different competitions. We are in partnership with Jag Foundation who volunteers their coaches to train our learners in Athletics and also Anti-Bullying Strategies. (Parent #8)

The Promenade approached us to make a needs analysis for learners who are interested in tenpin bowling. We view inclusive practices as all kinds of practices that prevent learners from dropping out of school and therefore we are encouraging this kind of involvement. (Parent #9)

The parents indicated that there are many opportunities for schools to draw on community resources for the benefit of the school and its learners. They held the believe that schools should be seen as institutions that are an integral part of society and, as such, should be able to gain access to the resources available in its local community.

### **5.3 INDICATORS BASED ON STAKEHOLDERS' PERCEPTIONS**

The stakeholders' perceptions pertaining to inclusive education, inclusive cultures, inclusive policies and inclusive practices were explored. This exercise yielded certain general as well as more specific aspects that the school could utilise as indicators for inclusive education development. The next section contains all these general as well as specific indicators.

#### **SUMMARY OF INDICATORS:**

##### **SECTION A: INCLUSIVE CULTURES**

###### **INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES**

Everyone in the community is made to feel welcome

Staff should work together

Respect for diverse cultures, religions and backgrounds

Staff forms partnerships with parents

Local communities are involved in the school

Staff and school governing body works together

## INCLUSIVE VALUES

High expectations for all learners

All learners are valued equally

Staff seek to remove all barriers to learning and participation

Removing all forms of discrimination

## SECTION B: INCLUSIVE POLICIES

### INCREASING ACCESS

Admission policy ensures access to every learner

Language policy caters for all

Religious policy celebrates diversity of religions and cultures

HIV/AIDS policy prevents exclusion

Bullying policy ensure restorative interventions

Learning Support Policy coordinates support for learners with learning barriers

Assessment policy ensure that different learning styles are accommodated

### DECREASING EXCLUSIONS

Discipline policy decreases pressure for disciplinary exclusions

Policy that prevents bullying

Policy that prevents expulsion of pregnant girls

Assessment policy accommodates all learners

## SECTION C: INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

### INSTRUCTION

Multi-level teaching

Adapting Learning and Teaching Support Material to learner needs

Teaching strategies are responsive to learning needs

### SUPPORT

Learners help each other

Support from outside the school is mobilised

Teachers share best practices



Teacher collaborate to draw on each other's strengths

Community services are known and drawn upon

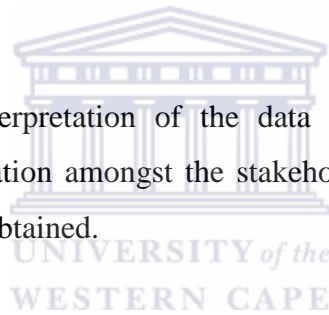
School Governing Body members understand and value the principles of inclusion

Teachers and school management working together to provide support

## **5.4 SUMMARY**

This chapter provided a presentation and analysis of the data collected sequentially through unstructured and semi-structured focus group interviews. Data was collected from a sampling group or population that consisted of teachers and parents and at a particular school in the Western Cape. The stakeholders of the school were interviewed to determine their perceptions of the indicators for inclusive cultures, inclusive policies and inclusive practices. The chapter concluded with a summary of the indicators of the three dimensions of inclusive education.

A preliminary analysis and interpretation of the data revealed that there is a diverse understanding of inclusive education amongst the stakeholders. The following chapter will integrate and discuss the results obtained.



## CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*We must not cease from exploration and the end of our exploring will be to arrive where we began and to know the place for the first time. T.S Elliot*

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter five the results of the research were presented. The chapter concluded with the summary of indicators that emerged from the participants' responses. This chapter concentrates on a discussion of those results and concludes with recommendations for the research.

### 6.2 DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

This research set out to answer the main research question: What are the indicators that can be used to monitor and evaluate the development of inclusive practices, cultures and policies in a mainstream school in the Western Cape context? In an attempt to answer the main question four sub-questions were asked: What are participants' perceptions of inclusive education? What are participant perceptions of inclusive cultures? What are participant perceptions of inclusive policies? What are participant perceptions of inclusive practices?

#### 6.2.1 Participants' conceptions of inclusive education

Participants in this study conceptualised inclusive education in a variety of ways. The discussions of participant perceptions followed no specific order of importance.

Firstly, participants perceived inclusive education as a strategy to effect change in educational institutions and ultimately to society. Secondly, participants perceived inclusive education as being concerned with disabled and other learners with special educational needs. Thirdly, participants perceived inclusive education as being concerned with all groups vulnerable to inclusion. Fourthly, participants perceived inclusive education as an approach to teaching. The last view of inclusive education amongst participants is concerned with developing a school for all.

#### *Inclusive education as change*

Participants in this study indicated that inclusive education for them is about change. They explained that the current design of schools does not allow for the implementation of inclusive education without drastic modifications. They identified physical change and also

holistic change as indicators for inclusive education. They suggested that the nature of the change is complex and various aspects about schools should be targeted. In this regard they mentioned the different aspects that should be targeted for change as being: the physical building and infrastructure of the school, the curriculum, the school's approach to learners and the community from which they come and, lastly, they indicated that the practices of the school should change to enable the retention of all categories of learners.

In describing inclusive education as 'change', the participants' perception resonates with Barton (1997), who describes inclusive education as an education system or strategy that seeks to transform a society. In his view, this author asserts that inclusive education is not integration and is not concerned with the assimilation or accommodation of discriminated groups or individuals within existing socio-economic conditions and relations. It is also not about making people as 'normal' as possible. For him it is ultimately about transformation of a society and its institutional arrangements such as education. Barton (1997) further argues that inclusive education is not about closing down an unacceptable system of segregated provision and dumping those pupils in an unchanged mainstream system. Inclusive education, in his view, is concerned about changing structures and institutions to accommodate learners, rather than changing learners to fit in. When inclusion is defined as a change in schools, it supports the concept of inclusive education as a process rather than as a specific philosophy or a set of practices. Armstrong (2005), supported by Ainscow (1999), contends that inclusive education requires an overhaul of current school cultures that are often driven by deeply embedded negative values and beliefs. The perception of inclusive education as a change in the way schools and society think about disabled learners is also supported by Ainscow (1999), who contends that inclusive education should challenge deficit thinking and practices which are still ingrained in society and too often lead many to believe that some learners have to be dealt with in different ways.

While there is a persistent view that inclusive education is about moving disabled learners from special schools to mainstream schools, the findings of this research advocate for a much broader and more dynamic role for inclusion. Within this view inclusive education has a major role to play in affecting wider changes in schools and indeed in society. The role of inclusion is not merely the provision of access into mainstream schools for categories of learners who had previously been excluded. The current schooling systems in terms of physical factors, curriculum aspects, teaching expectations and styles, and leadership roles, as

identified by participants in this study, will have to change. This proposed change is underpinned by the belief that inclusive education is about access and participation of all learners in education, and the removal of all forms of exclusionary practices, to allow such access and participation. Participants suggested the establishment of principles, values and practices which can be employed in the social transformation of education systems and communities.

***Inclusive education as being concerned with disabled learners and those with special educational needs***

Participants also perceived inclusive education to be *concerned with disabled learners*. They suggested that disabled learners were marginalised and that inclusive strategies should be geared towards correcting the process of marginalisation by admitting these learners into mainstream schools. This perspective of inclusive education is underpinned by a belief that disabled learners have a right to be included in mainstream education. This belief enjoyed extensive support amongst the participants. It is also endorsed by the South African Schools Act (1996).

Perceptions of participants that inclusive education is concerned with disabled learners are aligned to literature that states unequivocally that inclusive education means that schools should accommodate all children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions (UNESCO, 2003:4), and also explicitly states that this should include disabled children. Support for this participant perception is found in the definition of some scholars who define inclusive education by concentrating on the rights of disabled young people to attend a local mainstream school, as advocated by many such as Lipsky and Gartner (1997) and Peters (2003).

The perception that inclusive education is about disabled learners ascribes a very narrow focus to inclusive education. Although there seems to be overwhelming support for the assumption amongst participants that inclusive education is primarily about educating disabled learners in mainstream schools, the usefulness of an approach to inclusion that, in its attempt to increase the participation of learners, focuses on 'disabled' or 'special needs' learners is questionable. The literature research has revealed that, although there is a discourse of inclusive education that is founded on this view, recent developments in the field of inclusive education adopt a much broader focus than just disabled learners (Mittler, 2006).

The thinking that informs the perception of participants that inclusive education is primarily about disabled learners, and more particularly their placement in mainstream schools, needs to be examined against the emergence of new knowledge about human nature. This exercise becomes necessary because changes in society are paralleled by alternative ways of thinking about human nature, which in turn should inform how schools operate. The categorisation of children as having special needs undermines a transformative view of inclusion in which diversity is seen as making a positive contribution to the creation of inclusive schools. Participants focused on the rights perspective.

### ***Inclusive education as being concerned with all groups vulnerable to exclusion***

Inclusive education was also perceived by the participants in this study as being *concerned with all groups vulnerable to exclusion*. This perspective of participants is based on the belief that inclusive education is concerned with more than just learners termed as ‘disabled’. It is concerned with all learners who are vulnerable to exclusion. Examples of learners vulnerable to exclusion, as identified by the participants, are learners from poor socio-economic circumstances, learners on drugs or those who are exposed to drug and alcohol abuse, learners whose parents are still children, those who are bullies and those who are victims of bullying.

Literature supports this perspective of participants in the way that UNESCO (2003:4) defines inclusive education. It articulates inclusive education as being: “... a developmental approach that seeks to address the learning needs of all children, youth and adults with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion”. Ainscow and Booth (2006) identified the broader perspective of inclusion to be associated with the terms ‘social inclusion’ and ‘social exclusions’. When used in the educational context, social inclusion tends to refer to issues of groups whose access to schools is under threat, such as girls who become pregnant or who have babies while at school, children who are in the care of carers and the children of passing travellers. In this regard, the perspectives of participants in this research were aligned to the broader view of groups vulnerable to exclusion.

In identifying learners from poor socio-economic circumstances as a group vulnerable to exclusion, participants believed that inclusive education is about addressing all barriers that impact negatively on learning. Researchers found that non-existent learning opportunities in high-poverty schools, where teachers are inadequately prepared and hold low expectations for

learners in overcrowded and under-resourced classrooms, are attributed to the interaction between ethnicity and poverty that collaborate to create special educational needs (Dyson & Kozlesky, 2008:174).

The combination of poverty and ill health of learners in these circumstances contributes to their vulnerability to exclusion. It then follows logically that an effective healthcare system that is accessible by people across different socio-economic backgrounds will potentially minimise disability and dependency, as families living in poverty are highly vulnerable to ill health as well as educational failure (Turnbull, 2009). The identification of the critical transformative role that inclusive education could play in the lives of learners in this group is vital, as it focuses on issues of marginalisation, power, justice and social transformation, that can mobilise new theories with regard to the complex nature of disability and the ways in which disabled learners are socially and educationally positioned.

Against this backdrop, inclusive education seeks to explore issues of deprived socio-economic background and educational failure as much as it seeks to address other issues that render learners vulnerable to exclusion. This view of inclusive education amongst participants represents a broad focus which is well represented within current literature.

### ***Inclusive education as an approach to teaching***

Participants believed that all learners are differently abled and also learn differently. They felt that any education system and the schools that are under its supervision should thus provide a variety of teaching methods that cater for a variety of learning needs and learning styles.

An important view amongst the participants was the following:

When it comes to teaching itself I think that inclusive education suggests that schools should move beyond stereotyping and mediocrity of just having one system of teaching for just your moderate to good student, by looking at alternative methodology of accommodating and teaching learners.

This participant believed that teachers in an inclusive school should make use of a variety of teaching methods to accommodate all the learning styles and learning needs in a class.

Teachers in this study also focused on the fact that they themselves need to be empowered to employ different teaching strategies to facilitate learning for a diverse group of learners.

To help these learners, the educators are willing to learn. So we have multi-level teaching strategies and also outsourced training to Inclusive Forum Education Western Cape, to train us in multi-level teaching strategies and methodologies.

There seemed to be a realisation that inclusive education is about approaching teaching from a refreshing new angle that is learner centred. Teacher participants indicated that they themselves need more training to teach better as they became aware that barriers to learning are not only found within learners but also within other aspects such as teaching practices.

Inclusive education is understood as an approach that provides opportunities for academic and social interactions. In other words, inclusive education is viewed as an approach that enables learners with disabilities to work together with the so-called normal learners in academic projects and social activities. A participant described it in this manner:

Inclusive education is an approach that seeks to address the learning need of all children. It also looks into educational transformation and provides all students with opportunities for academic and social interactions.

The lack of teaching practices that respond to diversity in mainstream schools often results in learners with barriers to learning leaving their local communities to attend special schools in other areas. For many learners, attending school with their peers in neighbourhood schools, learning the core curriculum that their school community deems essential, participating in all facets of school life, and having relationships with people of their own choosing, are reality, according to Genot-Scheyer, Fischer and Staub (2001:1). The ultimate goal of a strategy for disabled children must be inclusion and acceptance in their own community. This goal is embedded in the Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989), articulated through the right to non-discrimination, to participate in all matters affecting the child, to name and to have a birth registered, to the fullest possible social integration, to equality of access to education, to participate in cultural life.

### ***Inclusive education as a strategy for developing the school for all***

Another perspective of participants was that inclusive education is a strategy that develops the school for all, so that all children could have a school where a quality education is provided. In this regard, there was a belief amongst participants that the school should cater for all the learners in its community regardless of race, achievement levels of learners,

disability, etc. They believe that every learner in the catchment area or local community of the school should have access to the school, regardless of the learner's ability, impairment or socio-economic background. Learners should not leave the local community to attend a Special Needs School in another community. There was a feeling amongst all participants that inclusive schools should be developed so that they could respond to the diversity of the learner population.

This perception of participants is represented in literature that states that a school for all should be created by addressing issues relating to how schools operate through the development of a whole school policy for inclusive education, as advocated by Stakes and Hornby (2000). This approach in inclusive education is seen by Mukhopadhyay (2002:142) as the most powerful approach in ensuring a school for all.

Any particular school is a reflection of the community that it serves. If schools are not able to respond to the diverse needs of its learner population, it will inevitably divide its community along racial lines and ability groupings. Inclusive education strategies should thus be geared towards generating innovation for the improvement of a school, to enable the participation of diverse learner groups from cultural backgrounds, religious orientations and language groupings. In so doing, inclusive education is seen as a strategy to develop a school for members of a given community.

### **6.2.2 Indicators of inclusive education**

#### ***Inclusive cultures***

Participants in this study conceptualised inclusive cultures in schools as the establishment of common social values that are embraced by parents, teachers and children. They indicated that inclusive cultures articulated the social values of inclusive education such as equity, participation, community, compassion, and respect for diversity, sustainability and entitlement. Participants in this study identified key indicators that mark inclusive cultures. The first indicator is about *building communities where everyone is made to feel welcome*. They indicated that different cultures, backgrounds and languages are welcomed and celebrated in an inclusive school that subscribes to an inclusive culture. In this way learners are made to feel welcome and part of the school community. They further qualified their perception when they mentioned that learners will feel welcome in a school where the different religions that they belong to are recognised and respected through the celebration of



their respective religious holidays. In this way they are made to feel proud of their religions, but are also ensured respect from their fellow learners who will learn more about religions that they had not understood or been exposed to before. Participants also indicated that the *staff works together*, as well as *staff and parents work together* as key indicators of an inclusive culture. Participants identified indicators of inclusive values as: teachers and parents have *high expectations of learners*, *all learners are valued*, the staff seeks to *remove all barriers to learning and participation* and, most importantly, the *removal of all forms of discrimination*.

Literature supports participant conceptions of inclusive cultures by stating that if the aim is to create inclusive cultures in schools, according to Thomas & Glenny, (cited in Sheehy, Nind, Rix & Simmons, 2005), more emphasis should be placed on ideals such as equity, human rights, social justice and opportunities for all. The authors explain that these elements form the basis on which an inclusive culture is built. In addition, the index for inclusion of Booth and Ainscow (2006) presents inclusive culture as one of three interconnected dimensions that is used to explore inclusion in schools. The benefits of an inclusive culture is highlighted by Ainscow (1994:26) when he suggests that the creation of an inclusive culture within mainstream schools will enable these schools to be more flexible in responding to all children in the community. Participant perceptions of collaboration between staff and parents, and staff and learners, working together is aligned to literature that proposes a '*cultural vigilantism*' to be established in schools, with the aim of exposing exclusion in all its changing forms and seeking instead to foster an inclusive educational culture (Thomas & Loxley, 2001). In an inclusive culture, members are connected to pursue common goals based on interdependence and mutual obligation. In the same vein, Ainscow (1994:26) postulates that schools are advised to create a culture within mainstream schools that will enable them to be more flexible in responding to all children in the community. Participant perceptions of collaboration between staff and parents, and staff and learners, working together, is aligned to literature that proposes a '*cultural vigilantism*' to be established in schools, with the aim of exposing exclusion in all its changing forms, seeking instead to foster an inclusive educational culture (Thomas & Loxley, 2001). In an inclusive culture members are connected to pursue common goals based on interdependence and mutual obligation. In the same way, Ainscow (1994:26) postulates that schools are advised to create a culture within mainstream schools that will enable them to be more flexible in responding to all children in the

community. Such a culture would encourage teachers to see pupils experiencing difficulties, not as problems, but as a source of understanding how their practice could be developed and seeking to explore the nature of the challenges their learners might experience. Ainscow (1994) is supported by Skrtic (1991), who states that schools with an inclusive culture are most likely able to respond to student diversity in positive and creative ways.

Schools therefore need to understand that when learners with special educational needs are allowed to be rendered invisible (not ensured access and curricular participation) by the dominant cultural practices, through non-recognition and disrespect, they are inflicting self-hatred on these learners, according to Taylor (1992:25). The manner in which teachers in an inclusive culture respond to their learners is always characterised by the fact that they focus their efforts on *ensuring access*, and in achieving that goal they focus on *increasing participation*. In this way *all learners are treated equally*. Inclusive cultures are thus underscored by an environment where all learners are treated equally.

From the perception of participants, it was clear that an inclusive culture is developed in schools when a common culture is embraced that pervades the whole school environment. Schools with an inclusive culture are concerned with welcoming and celebrating diversity by having inclusion integrated into every fibre of the school, rather than having it as a separate policy. Participant perceptions in this research are aligned to the view of Booth (1996) that describes inclusive education as a process of addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. Participants' conceptions that identify a welcoming school as an indicator of an inclusive culture, point to teachers in such a school who make use of opportunities to enrich the curriculum by embracing the diversity of their learners. An example of how teachers can embrace the different religions of their learners is by enriching the curriculum through creating an awareness of different religions represented amongst their learners. Each learner can be given the opportunity to explain the basics of their religions and the meanings of their different religious holidays. All the learners in the class will be enriched by understanding each other's religious beliefs and will thus cultivate a culture of tolerance and mutual respect. A culture that responds to, and values, diversity would encourage teachers to see pupils experiencing difficulties not as a problem, but as a source of understanding as to how their practice could be developed. The participants believed that an inclusive school should be responsive to the needs of all its learners. There

was a belief that the school should go beyond academic provision and should provide an education that is concerned about the removal of barriers wherever they exist. They furthermore asserted that inclusive education should have as an aim the removal of barriers that prevent learners from access and participation in schools. Learners should be enabled to go to their local school regardless of their disabilities or other barriers, knowing that the school will provide an education that will respond to their diverse needs.

### ***Inclusive policies***

Participants indicated that inclusive policies should ensure that marginalisation, exclusion and even demonisation of groups of children do not occur in schools. They made clear reference to learners from different cultures and religions, the disabled and learners with various barriers to learning, learners who are HIV positive, poor learners and children of foreigners in the local community, whose access to the school must be ensured through policies. They then suggested a number of inclusive policies that they believed would ensure participation of all learners, including those learners who are under exclusionary pressures. An inclusive *admission policy*, to them, is an example of such a policy of schools, as it ensures quality access to educational programmes or curriculum, without discrimination on any grounds. They believed that the school should have a *language policy* in place to ensure communication with parents of foreign learners and to make sure that foreign language speakers' acquisition of English is supported. Participants strongly felt that an *HIV/AIDS policy* should be aimed at protecting the status and treatment of HIV positive learners and members of the school community so affected.

Participants indicated that a comprehensive *Learning Support Policy* should coordinate the support for all learners with learning barriers in the school. According to participants, this policy must ensure that barriers to learning are identified early, especially in the foundation phase of the school, with the aim of implementing effective intervention and support measures. Closely related to this policy, participants indicated a policy on assessment as an indicator of inclusive policies. They indicated that an inclusive *Assessment policy* should have as its main objective the implementation of strategies that ensure that the different learning styles of learners are accommodated within the assessment practices of schools. Participants also indicated *policies that prevent the expulsion of pregnant girls* as an inclusive policy. They regarded these learners as having an inalienable right to education that must be ensured by policy. Another policy that the participants of this study regarded as an indicator

of inclusive education is an *Anti-Bullying policy* that ensures restorative interventions for both the bully and the victim of bullying. The participants were unanimous about the fact that the retention of learners with *disciplinary challenges* was their primary concern and they believed that expulsion of these learners was a last resort. An inclusive school policy for behaviour should aim to implement interventions and support strategies for learners in this category. They asserted that a *code of conduct for learners* in an inclusive school should be geared towards decreasing the pressure to exclude learners. In this regard participant perceptions are well supported by Booth, Ainscow and Kingston (2006).

Participant insistence that inclusive policies should aim to ensure participation of all learners resonates with Waterboer (2013), who advocates for the task of policies to be *creating equal opportunities* for all. He further states that international guidelines and commitments exist alongside the legal frameworks of nation states to ensure participation of all categories of learners. Participant perceptions that inclusive policies such as admission policies should ensure participation for all learners are thus in line with literature on inclusive education. Further alignment of participants' perceptions that policies should be formulated to ensure participation of all learners of a school community is found in the views of Booth, Ainscow and Kingston (2006), which suggest that an important function of an inclusive policy is to secure inclusion at the heart of school development.

Participants perceived inclusive policies as an effective way to respond to learner diversity. They cited learning support and assessment policies as examples of such policies. In this regard their views are well supported by literature. Various documents that were explored in the literature research of this study such as the Danida Final Report (Department of Education, 2002) and The Index of Inclusion (Booth, Ainscow & Kingston, 2006) confirmed that policies around curriculum and assessment should be formulated to ensure that learner diversity is catered for and that enough flexibility around teaching and assessment methodologies is allowed to include all learners. The Guidelines for Responding to Diversity through the Curriculum, CAPS, (Department of Basic Education, 2011:6) has identified a range of barriers amongst learners who need support within the curriculum. This document provides a number a teaching and assessment strategies that teachers can use to ensure that they respond to diversity within their classrooms.

Participants indicated a number of policies that would ensure that pressures to exclude learners are minimised by an effective policy environment. Their indication of a policy on discipline that decreases pressure to exclude is in alignment with Ainscow, Booth and Dyson (2006), who claim that inclusion with regard to discipline could be described as the overcoming of exclusionary pressures, whilst reducing exclusion involves finding ways to increase participation.

A remarkable feature of participant indicators of policies that mark inclusive education is the number of policies that decrease pressure on the exclusion of learners. The policies indicated by participants that fall into this category are: anti-bullying, exclusion of learners due to ill-discipline, expulsion of girls due to pregnancies and assessment policies that accommodate different learning styles. Participants in this study believed that policies should explicitly ensure the holistic development of the learner by positioning him at the centre of development. They indicated that the inclusion of some learners would impact on their results, but they felt that the right to education of learners weighs more than achieving excellent results.

The literature research, and in particular the documentary analysis of the index of inclusion, established that policies should encourage the participation of learners and teachers from the moment they join the school – they are concerned with reaching out to all children in the school and minimising exclusionary pressures. The development of inclusive school policies also entails the introduction of explicit aims for promoting inclusion in School Development Plans and other guidelines for practice in the management, teaching and learning in our schools.

### ***Inclusive practices***

The participants in this study indicated an appropriate and inclusive *curriculum* as an indicator of inclusive practices. They identified two broad aspects about the curriculum that should be concentrated on to make it appropriate and effective to facilitate learning to all learners, viz curriculum instruction and curriculum support.

Participants referred to curriculum instruction as being the set of practices and methodologies used by teachers to deliver the curriculum. They indicated the utilisation of several instruction methodologies such as *multi-level teaching, adaptations of learning and teaching*

*support materials for learners and teaching strategies that are responsive to learning needs*, as indicators of ways in which the curriculum can be delivered more effectively. Participants identified curriculum support as a support strategy that can be used to support learning and teaching needs or barriers to learning that prevent certain learners from learning. The following curriculum support strategies were identified by participants: *cooperative learning* strategies for learners, *mobilising support from outside the school* to support teachers and learners, *sharing of best practices amongst teachers* to share teaching strategies, *collaborative teaching* that allows teachers to draw on each other's strengths, *community services known and drawn upon* to enhance teaching and learning, *school governing body members understanding and valuing the principles of inclusion*, and *teachers and school management working together*.

Literature supports the perceptions of participants in this study that identified the curriculum and the related methodologies and support strategies as indicators of inclusive practices. Hart, Dixon, Drummond and McIntyre (2004) found that teaching approaches which seem intrinsic to inclusive learning are represented in many classrooms where emphasis is placed on pupils' dialogue, collaboration, choice, exploration and learning to learn, and where it is assumed that all learners are capable of learning.

Participants' indication of *teachers and learners working together* as an inclusive practice is supported by Kraker (2000), who contends that teacher-pupil interaction has proved useful in developing interactive, responsive teaching for pupils identified with specific learning difficulties. Literature also supports participant perceptions of teaching strategies that are responsive to learning needs as an indicator of inclusive practices. The CAPS document, (Department of Education, 2011) indicates that teachers in inclusive schools should facilitate respect for diversity by accommodating learners' different learning styles and building on the strengths of these differences in the teaching and learning process. In this regard the document: 'Responding to Diversity through Curriculum and Assessment Practices', (Department of Basic Education, 2011) advocates curriculum differentiation as an important strategy in an inclusive classroom. Curriculum differentiation involves the processes of modifying, changing, adapting, extending and varying teaching methodologies, teaching strategies, assessment strategies and the content of the curriculum. The curriculum is differentiated by adapting the content in such a way that it is manageable for a wider range of learners.

Participants identified the *adaptations of learning and teaching support materials* as another indicator of inclusive practices. This view of participants is aligned to the CAPS document (Department of Basic Education, 2011) that identified the following curriculum aspects that often need adaptation. These are the learning and teaching support materials, methods of presentation, learning activities and lesson organisation. The Department of Education further suggests that learners could be provided with a wide range of adapted materials that cater for different abilities, interests and learning styles. As an example, advice is offered for the adaptation of learning materials for a learner with poor vision by providing him with larger print which might be easier to read.

In addition, these participants' perceptions of curriculum support are in alignment with literature that identified *support* as the cornerstone of successful inclusion. Swart and Pettipher (2005) contends that; "No teacher, parent, education support professional, learner or volunteer should have to handle significant challenges without support" (Swart & Pettipher, 2005:19).

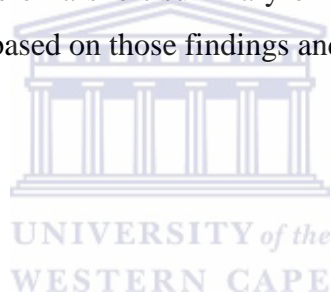
Participant perception that *learners supporting each other* is an indicator of inclusive curriculum practices is supported by Dednam (cited in Landsberg, 2013) who highlights several advantages of learners supporting each other. These include: intrinsic motivation which affects the learner's interests, attention and skills, while knowledge of content improves. According to Kagan (1998), cooperative learning is as old as education itself. Various researches on the topic (Kagan, Lotan & Whitcomb, 1998) have shown that cooperative learning leads to dramatically improving academic achievement and higher order thinking skills; it improves racial relations where learners from different racial groups are in a class; teachers' and learners' attitudes towards learners with impairments improves significantly; and the academic achievements of learners with impairments in ordinary schools are enhanced.

Participants further indicated that the successful implementation of inclusive education is dependent on the extent to which *community issues are recognised* as impacting on effective teaching and learning. They drew on their own experiences and cited a number of key factors that impacted negatively on effective teaching and learning. This resonates well with the findings in the Danida Report (Department of Education, 2002), which indicated that outside factors such as poverty, abuse and HIV/AIDS impact negatively on the learning process.

The participants in this study identified instruction methodologies and support strategies as indicators of inclusive education. These factors were aligned with literature around the curriculum as an indicator of inclusive practice, but they left out many other general and specific indicators of inclusive practices. However, they emphasised important indicators that mark inclusive practices.

### **6.3 SUMMARY**

This chapter discussed the main findings of the research as it relates to a definition and dimensions of inclusive education. Participants' conceptions of a definition of inclusive education, inclusive cultures, policies and practices were discussed with the aim of seeing its alignment to literature. Participants' perceptions showed great alignment to literature with various similarities found in the *Index for Inclusion* and even greater alignment to the *Danida Project*. However, several gaps in the participants' perception of the indicators were also evident. The next chapter focuses on a short summary of the main findings of the research, makes certain recommendations based on those findings and concludes the study.





# CHAPTER SEVEN: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

*Once leprosy had gone, and the figure of the leper was no more than a distant memory, these structures still remained. The game of exclusion would be played again, often in these same places.*  
Foucault

## 7.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter a discussion of the main findings of the research was done. This chapter provides a summary of the findings makes key recommendations and highlights certain limitations as the inquiry is concluded.

## 7.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### 7.2.1 How did the participants define inclusive education?

Participant responses were found to be in line with the understanding of the literature research of this study, which cautioned that many conceptions about inclusive education could be found. Teachers and parents had quite different conceptual views but, even within the different focus groups, participants held disparate beliefs. The main conceptions which were found described inclusive education as a change. In describing inclusive education in this manner, the participants concentrated on how inclusive education seeks to bring about change in schools, communities and to ultimately transform society and its institutional arrangements, such as education. Participants also described inclusive education as being concerned with disabled learners and those with special educational needs. This conception of participants was aligned with the UNESCO (2005) description of the group of learners, vulnerable to exclusion, that inclusive education is concerned about.

The participants then conceptually moved to what they perceived to be strategies that inclusive education employs in accommodating the group of learners that inclusive education is concerned about. In this regard, teacher participants foregrounded inclusive education as an approach to teaching and as a strategy to develop the school for all. The participants held sound conceptions of inclusive education and this was generally aligned to literature on definitions about inclusive education.

### **7.2.2 What were the participant's conceptions of inclusive cultures?**

The findings revealed that the participants conceptualised inclusive cultures as the establishment of shared motives, values, beliefs and interpretations of meaning embraced by parents, teachers and learners of a school community. The participants mentioned specific indicators that marked an inclusive culture. These included the social values articulated by an inclusive culture such as: equity, compassion, participation and respect for diversity. The school is situated in an area that is marked by a culturally diverse population. Participants perceived inclusive cultures to be about creating a welcoming ethos that embraces diversity and, in so doing, builds a community that celebrates different religions, languages and cultures. In essence they perceived inclusive cultures as consisting of inclusive communities on the one hand – indicated by respect for diversity, healthy collaborative partnerships, parental involvement in the school – and, on the other hand, entrenched inclusive values that are indicated by high expectations for all learners, equity amongst all members of the school community and the removal of all forms of discrimination amongst them all. The participants' perceptions revealed alignment to the indicators found in chapter 3.2.4 of the literature research of this study.

### **7.2.3 How did the participants perceive inclusive policies?**

In their articulation of their perceptions of inclusive policies, participants concentrated on aligning the policy environment with inclusive developments. They indicated that this would ensure that policy supports, rather than undermines, inclusive developments within the school. Participants perceived inclusive policies to be school policies that are permeated by inclusive values and which are characterised by a concern with excellence, high standards and accountability. For them, inclusive policies should encourage the participation of learners, teachers and parents from the moment they join the school. Participants also made a connection between an inclusive policy and the school's attempts to minimise exclusionary practices. The participants cited the curriculum policy document, *Responding to Diversity through Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements* (Department of Education, 2011) as an example of an inclusive policy about curriculum that ensures that learner diversity is catered for and that enough flexibility around teaching and assessment methodologies is allowed to include all learners. As a direct consequence of their exposure to this research study, participants embarked on a process of reviewing their own school policies to ensure that all their policies were inclusive and enabling, rather than found to be hampering

inclusive development. Such policies included admission, learning support, HIV/AIDS, language, anti-bullying and assessment policies.

#### **7.2.4 What were the participant's conceptions on inclusive practices?**

The findings revealed that participants perceived inclusive practices to be about activities that reflect inclusive cultures and policies. An outstanding feature highlighted by participants of inclusive practices is an inclusive curriculum, as an indicator of an inclusive practice that includes elements such as relevant content, a variety of teaching strategies and curriculum adaptations to accommodate an ever-increasing diverse learner population in schools. The participants indicated two main aspects that mark inclusive practices namely: instruction and support. Each of these indicators was in turn described by more specific indicators. Instruction as an indicator of inclusive practice was characterised by multi-level teaching, adapting learning and teaching support material, differentiating the curriculum for certain learners with special educational needs and a range of teaching strategies that could be utilised to accommodate the diverse learning needs of learners. In the same fashion, support has been defined by more specific indicators such as collaboration between learners, sharing of best practices between teachers, and teachers accessing support from their peers and the district offices.

### **7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations of this research are aligned to the indicators identified by the participants. These recommendations could be used for improvement of inclusive education development initiatives, or for implementation of newly identified indicators.

- A recommendation for Education Districts is to play a pivotal role in facilitating an understanding of inclusive education at school level. The myriad of definitions and discourses of inclusive education can potentially lead to a conceptual maze, if schools are left to negotiate the conceptualisation on their own.
- A strategy for schools is to adopt a common understanding that all stakeholders embrace. This will assist the school in finding conceptual clarity and uniformity in their approach towards implementation of inclusive practices.
- Departmental officials such as the Institutional Management and Governance (IMG) officials should play a pivotal role in developing and refining inclusive policies for schools identified in this study.

- The Specialised Learner and Educator Support (SLES) officials should assist schools with the transformation of cultures in schools so that they respond to diversity of learners. This exercise should include all stakeholders of the school namely: teachers, parents and learners.
- It is recommended that the Curriculum Advisors (CAs) play a key role in assisting schools to understand and implement inclusive practices around the curriculum, as identified in this research.
- Schools should review all their current policies and re-align them to an inclusive ethos. During the data collection phase of the research, teachers indicated that they do not feel adequately equipped to teach all learners. This challenge identified by teachers could be addressed through training workshops facilitated by the Education Department.
- It is also a strong recommendation of this study that capacity building of parents and learners should be prioritised.

#### **7.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The research that focuses on the implementation of inclusive education in schools is directed towards parents, principals, teachers, and learners as the participants.

During the data collection phase of the research, it was found that the understanding of the concept of inclusive education seemed problematic for primary school learners. It was then decided not to include data collected from these learners as it was not deemed accurate. A recommendation to any researcher who would endeavour to undertake similar research would be to conduct workshops and information sessions with the learners prior to data collection.

The demographical information of the participants revealed that the school personnel is relatively young and the majority of the teachers did not have sufficient training in inclusive education and other relevant courses such as barriers to learning. This could possibly account for the gaps in their understanding of inclusive education and could be the reason why not many more indicators of inclusive education could be solicited from them. As this study adopted a participatory action research design, I could not impose my knowledge of indicators from other studies.

## 7.5 FINAL CONCLUSION

There are several conclusions that can be drawn from this study.

The teachers who participated in this research were at different levels of understanding of the notion of inclusive education. Those who had received some training in inclusion held disparate beliefs about the concept as well as about its implementation. This caused confusion and frustration amongst the participants and much of the time led to inappropriate practices in schools, such as the establishment of unit classes. It is thus abundantly clear that the Department of Education has a huge responsibility to facilitate conceptual clarity in the schools which are earmarked to become inclusive schools, prior to implementation of inclusive education as a priority, and ultimately in all schools.

The expectation that schools implement inclusive education places a huge responsibility on principals, teachers, parents and learners. The success of the implementation hinges on their understanding and how well they are prepared. The fact that principals and teachers are at different levels of understanding, parents have had no training and learners had to be excluded from this research study because of their limited, or lack of, understanding of inclusive education, proves to hold immense implications for successful implementation. This in turn indicates the need for training and facilitation to be done by the Department of Education through its provincial, district and circuit levels.

This research inquiry was able to extract valuable indicators from the conceptions of the stakeholders of the school, which were then utilised to develop an instrument that supports and monitors inclusive cultures, policies and practices in a particular primary school in the Western Cape.

The study concluded by stating that the process of developing an instrument that supports and monitors inclusive education at primary schools could be facilitated at all primary schools, taking into account the different schools' unique circumstances, and by allowing schools to set their own priorities for inclusive education development.

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**APPENDIX A: APPROVAL LETTER: DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION**



UNIVERSITY *of the*  
WESTERN CAPE



**Western Cape  
Government**

Education

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**REFERENCE:** 20130204-24156

**ENQUIRIES:**

Dr A T Wyngaard

Mr Nickfred Sayser  
119 Bellingham Crescent  
Westridge  
Mitchells Plain  
7785

**Dear Mr Nickfred Sayser**

**RESEARCH PROPOSAL: DEVELOPMENT OF AN INSTRUMENT THAT SUPPORTS AND MONITORS THE DEVELOPMENT OF INCLUSIVE CULTURES, POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN A WESTERN CAPE SCHOOL**

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 **01 April 2013 till 30 August 2013**
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: Dr Audrey T Wyngaard

**Directorate: Research**

**DATE: 07 February 2013**

## APPENDIX B

### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Dear Teacher / Parent

**Title: Development of an instrument that supports and monitors inclusive cultures, policies and practices in a Western Cape School.**

You are hereby requested to participate in a research study conducted by **Mr Nickfred Sayer**, who studies at the Educational Psychology Department at The University of the Western Cape. The results obtained in this study will contribute towards a Masters Research thesis. You were selected as a possible participant in this study, because you are considered to be a stakeholder of the school in the capacity of either teacher or parent. This school will be the centre of the proposed study.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the ways in which the stakeholders of your school perceive inclusive education and in particular this study aims to look closely at the stakeholders' perceptions and understandings of inclusive education, inclusive cultures, inclusive policies and inclusive practices.

If you volunteer to participate in this study you would be required to do the following things: Listen to a brief explanation of the study, its purpose and aims, complete an Informed Consent form and be available to attend two to three focus group interviews where questions regarding your school, work environment, personal knowledge and perceptions will be discussed. The interview will take place at a time that suits you and the interview should take more or less one hour. It will be conducted at your school or at a place that suits your focus group, so as to minimise inconvenience to you as a participant.

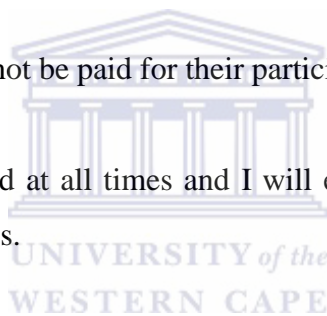
There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts associated with this research and you will potentially gain greater insight into your current working environment. You will also gain valuable insight into your own knowledge and perceptions about inclusive education. The method of data collection that will be used is called the participatory action research method

that views the participants as co-researchers. You will thus gain insight into research methodology as well as contribute towards a very important topic: inclusive education.

This study is extremely relevant and holds many benefits to individual stakeholders as well as for the school and its wider community. Your school has been selected to become an inclusive school and I believe that the engagement with this study will greatly benefit the school's functioning and put it further along the path of becoming more inclusive in comparison to other schools. The study aims to develop an instrument that could be used to support and monitor inclusive cultures, policies and practices at your school. It therefore may prove to be very useful to every member of your school and its larger community. As you are aware your school has been selected to become an inclusive school. This research will capacitate the stakeholders of the school with knowledge of an instrument that will guide the school through the processes to implement inclusive education and all its dimensions.

Please note that participants will not be paid for their participation in this study.

Confidentiality will be maintained at all times and I will ensure that all participants remain anonymous throughout the process.



Participation in this study is voluntary. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

---

Name of Participant

---

Signature of Participant

---

Date:



---

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCHER:

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to \_\_\_\_\_ (name of the subject/participant). (He/she) was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in English and no translator was used as the stakeholders all indicated that they clearly understood the researcher and did not have a need for a translator.



**APPENDIX C**

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR EDUCATORS / PRINCIPALS**

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**INSTRUCTIONS:**

- Please answer all the questions.
  - The questionnaire must be completed in ink.
  - Answer all questions as honestly as possible and please note that there are no wrong or right answers.
  - The questionnaire is anonymous and will be treated as highly confidential.
- 

**SECTION 1**

1. What does the term inclusive education mean? / What is your understanding of inclusive education?.....

.....

.....

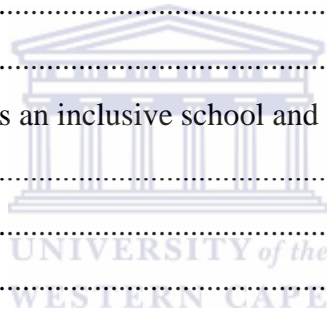
2. Would you regard this school as an inclusive school and why?

.....

.....

.....

.....



3. What should inclusive policies entail?

.....

.....

.....

4. Are your school policies inclusive, and why would you regard it as inclusive?

.....

.....

.....

.....

5. What would you regard as the indicators of an inclusive culture?

.....

.....

.....

.....

6. What would you regard as inclusive practices?

.....

.....

.....

.....

7. What inclusive practices are already in place in your school?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....



## DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF EDUCATOR :

### SECTION 1

---

1.1 What is your gender?

Female

Male

Decline to select

1.2 How long have you been teaching?

Less than a year

1 year to 3 years.

4 years to 6 years.

7 years and more

1.3 Which of the following training workshops have you attended?

Orientation to inclusive education

SIAS

Barriers to learning

Inclusive learning Programmes.



1.4 Which of the following positions do you hold in the school?

Educator

H.O.D

Principal

Deputy Principal

Learning support educator

1.5 Did you receive any formal training in Special Education?

Yes

No

# INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PARENTS/CARER/GUARDIAN

## SECTION 1

---

### GENERAL

1. My child is in Grade.....(Write down the grade of your child)
2. I am a Mother / Father: .....

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Please read all questions carefully. Select only ONE option by crossing the relevant box with a neat cross. For example:

At this school the interest of the children is always put first

- |               |                                     |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| Yes always    | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Yes sometimes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Never         | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Unsure        | <input type="checkbox"/>            |



---

UNIVERSITY of the  
WEST INDIES

1. Have you heard about inclusive education? Where have you heard about it?:

.....  
.....  
.....

2. Do Staff and learners treat each other with respect at this school?

.....  
.....  
.....

3. Is the local community involved in the school?

.....  
.....  
.....

4. Does the school community share the understanding that schooling includes everyone?

.....  
.....  
.....

5. Are all learners treated as being important in this school?

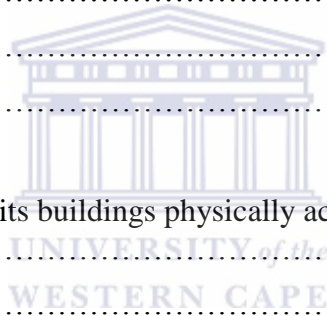
.....  
.....  
.....

6. Does the school strive to minimise discriminatory practices?

.....  
.....  
.....

7. The school seeks to make its buildings physically accessible to all people.

.....  
.....  
.....



8. Were your child/ children helped to feel welcome and settled at this school.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

9. Is there an attempt from Staff to make the school a safe place?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

10. Is the school doing all it can to minimise bullying?

.....

.....

.....

.....

11. Name THREE things you like about this school.

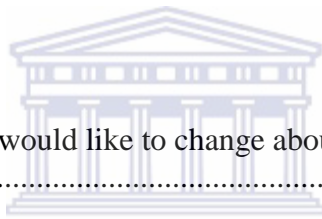
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12. Name THREE things you would like to change about this school.

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