



**Educators' experiences of the implementation of the inclusive education
policy over a twenty-year period**

by

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Supervisor: Prof Ruth Mampane

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Declaration

I declare that the dissertation, which I hereby submit for the degree MEd LSGC at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.



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September 2023

Ethical Clearance Certificate



FACULTY OF EDUCATION
Ethics Committee

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

CLEARANCE NUMBER: **EDU058/22**

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This Ethics Clearance Certificate should be read in conjunction with the Integrated Declaration Form (D08) which specifies details regarding:

- Compliance with approved research protocol,
- No significant changes,
- Informed consent/assent,
- Adverse experience or undue risk,
- Registered title, and
- Data storage requirements.



Dedication

I dedicate this research to my mother, Estelle Lines, and my aunt, Marlene Brits. I would not have been able to do this without you. Thank you for all your support and assistance throughout this process. I also dedicate this research to my father, Ian Lines; I know you would've been proud.

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To have achieved this milestone in my life, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the following:

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to provide a deeper understanding of how educators experience the inclusive education policy and the implementation thereof in their classrooms. The study made use of a multiple-case study research design where two schools in Mpumalanga were selected, and each considered as a case. Data generation and documentation strategies included face-to-face, semi-structured interviews that took place at the educators' place of employment. An inductive thematic analysis of the data was applied to analyse the data. The findings of the study indicate that educators have a sound understanding of the inclusive education policy, but are not confident to implement the policy. Educators' attitudes were both positive and negative. The majority of educators could provide clear strategies of how they adapt the curriculum to accommodate the needs of individual learners who require additional educational assistance. It can be concluded that educators accommodate learners regardless of their attitude towards inclusive education. Educators face challenges such as insufficient resources and funds, a lack of training, as well as overcrowded classrooms. The study recommends that funds, resources and workshops should be made available to assist educators on this journey.

Key Terms: Educators, Inclusive Education, Accommodation, Adaptation

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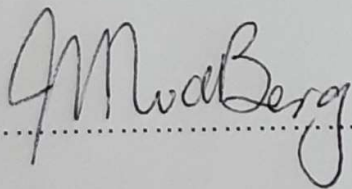
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Signed



List of acronyms

CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy
FCUBE	Free Compulsory Basic Education programme
Gr.1-Gr.7	Grade 1 – Grade 7
HED	Higher Education Diploma
HEQF	High Education Qualifications Framework
IE	Inclusive Education
ISP	Individual Support Plan
P1-P10	Participant 1 – Participant 10
SASA	South African Schools Act
SEN	Special educational needs
SIAS	Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support
SSE	School Self Evaluation
THED	Transvaal Higher Education Diploma

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CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

During the years South Africa experienced apartheid, learners had to be educationally separated according to their race and they had to be placed in a separate education system for learners with special educational needs (SEN). In order to promote the concept of inclusive education (IE) across the country, the South African School Act 84 of 1996 (SASA) was published by the Department of Basic Education (Department of Basic Education, 1996). One of the main aims of SASA is to give all learners equal opportunity in mainstream education without the possibility of discrimination (Geldenhuys & Wevers, 2013).

The study by Donohue and Bornman (2014), found that there are almost seventy percent of learners who are of school-going age and present with a disability, but who are not currently in a school within South Africa. Out of those learners who are enrolled in a school, the majority attend “special” schools, particularly schools for learners presenting with academic challenges (Auxadmin, 2017).

Viewing inclusive education from a South African perspective, it is seen as an education system where every learner is included and accepted, both educationally and socially (Mpu & Adu, 2021). The Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education (2001) acknowledges that learners are unique, and as a result, each learner has their way of learning. The main goal of inclusive education is to offer education that is impartial as well as accessible to all learners while still making adaptations to every learner’s individual needs (Department of Education, 2001).

The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) (Department of Basic Education, 2011) document provides educators with best practices on how to incorporate learner diversity in the classroom and includes guidance for educators on lesson preparation and instruction to guarantee that the requirements of various learners’ needs are met. The CAPS document has been amended to account for curriculum changes, and the updated version is a

component of the CAPS orientation training for educators in the provinces (Dalton et al., 2012).

The goal of the Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) is to create a policy framework that will enable identification and assessment procedures to, in return, create programmes for learners who need extra support to engage more and be more involved in school (Department of Basic Education, 2014). Primary schools and secondary schools within South Africa apply the SIAS policy. In addition, educators play a critical role in, and have a massive responsibility in the screening, identifying, and assessing learning obstacles in their day-to-day method of teaching (Department of Basic Education, 2014).

The attitudes of educators also play an important role with regards to developing and implementing inclusive education. Mere knowledge of the educational needs of learners is not sufficient for the successful implementation of inclusive education (Navarro-Mateu et al., 2020). It is expected that educators have specific skills, strategies, abilities, and attitudes that could assist them to support equal learning opportunities for optimal education (Navarro-Mateu et al., 2020).

Educators perceive certain behaviours as complex and cause anxiety and irritation in classrooms as learners and educators are not used to this. Educators sometimes do not have the expertise or know-how to calm such learners or reduce their behavioural difficulties. And due to the above-mentioned factors, behavioural problems of learners and educators occur, and the educators do not want to interact with such learners (Weiss et al., 2018).

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problem is that the South African education system is not as inclusive as it should be. Furthermore, should learners not perform academically well enough in the mainstream classroom, they are sent to schools that are specifically designed for learners with SEN or to the special needs class within the mainstream school. Thus, inclusive strategies are not practiced in the classroom, but learners are rather removed from their classrooms to attend special classes during school time (Garcia-Carrion et al., 2018).

Little is known about the techniques and approaches educators employ to incorporate inclusive education into their classrooms. Furthermore, the study seeks to clarify educators' knowledge of inclusive education, especially since its introduction in 2001.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study looked at how educators experience the implementation of the inclusive education policy, looking back over a twenty-year period. This study considered the experience of educators and why learners who require additional educational support are separated from others. This included looking at educators' views on inclusive education and how they implement it, as well as whether their views influenced their experiences with inclusive learning in the classroom (Saloviita, 2020).

Ultimately, this research seeks to add to the body of knowledge in the larger educational system, but more specifically which abilities and skills are necessary for educators to successfully include every learner in their teaching to ensure that no learner is excluded.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND WORKING ASSUMPTIONS

Table 1 provides an outline of the research questions under investigation as well as the working personal assumptions.

Table 1: Research questions and working assumptions

Research questions	
Primary question	What is the educator's knowledge and understanding of the implementation of IE in their classroom?
Secondary question	How do educators enable learners with special educational needs to access the curriculum in their classroom?

Working personal assumptions	
It is assumed that:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Educators do not have a sound understanding of inclusive education. 2. Educators are reluctant to implement inclusive education. 3. Learners with special needs are removed from mainstream class and not accommodated. 4. Educators have a negative attitude towards IE.

1.5 OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY

Table 2 provides an outline of the chosen methodological approach undertaken in this study. The methodology will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

Table 2: Overview of methodology

Research paradigm	
Interpretivist approach	Interpretivism is concerned with extensive context-related aspects and variables (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). The interpretive paradigm allows researchers to take a variety of things into account, including behavioural aspects that are based on participant experience (Thanh & Thanh, 2015).
Research approach	
Qualitative research method	A common description of qualitative research is that it takes an interpretive, naturalistic approach that focuses on examining occurrences from the participants' points of view as a starting point (Ofiazoglu, 2017).



Research design	
Multiple-case study design	With a multiple-case study research design, comprehensive exploration of theory development and research questions can take place (Heale & Twycross, 2017).
Sampling method	
Purposive sampling	Recruitment of individuals with certain traits that are crucial to the study is known as purposeful sampling. These participants have knowledge or information on the specific topic of the study that enables the researcher to develop a thorough understanding (Hennik et al., 2020).
Data collection	
Semi-structured interviews	Semi-structured interviews ensures that the researcher engages with participants through open-ended questions which allow the participants to provide their own opinions and perspectives with the opportunity to elaborate on the topic at hand (Wholey et al., 2010).
Data analysis	
Thematic analysis	Thematic analysis is used to analyse data <u>with regard to</u> the opinion of people, their knowledge or own personal experiences related to a specific topic (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2017).

1.6 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

1.6.1 Curriculum adaptation

Curriculum adaptation takes place when amendments and improvements are made in the teaching methods the educator makes use of, as well as the educational structures, so that all learners are accommodated (Adewumi, 2017). It is an ongoing dynamic process that adapts and modifies the prescribed

programme in order for the learning needs of a learner to be met. Curriculum adaptation is needed in every part of the learner's day, and it always requires additional educational support. Both the learner and the educator benefit when an assistant is present to provide tutoring, material preparation and supervision (Mishra et al., 2019).

The curriculum in an inclusive classroom needs to be flexible and adjustable to fit the learners' individual needs. It is a single curriculum that all learners are able to access, including learners with special educational needs (SEN). An inclusive educator must be able to use multilevel teaching, or, at the very least, make adaptations to take the diversity into account. This is very important, as there are likely to be learners functioning at two or three levels of the curriculum (Mitchell & Sutherland, 2020).

1.6.2 Disability

People who present with a disability include individuals with long-term impairments of a sensory, physical or mental nature. These impairments together with an interaction with various barriers may restrict these individuals from fully participating on an equal basis with other people in society (Vornholt et al., 2018).

Such a physical or mental impairment prevents a person from performing specific tasks or interacting with the environment in which they live (Donohue & Bornman, 2014). Disability can be viewed as a restriction or disadvantage by a social organisation and it takes little account of people who present with physical impairments. As a result, they are excluded from participation in the main stream (Retief & Letsosa, 2018).

According to the World Health Organization (2004), disability can be referred to as an overarching term for impairments, restrictions and limitations to activities. Additionally, it refers to the negative effects of a person's contact with their environment (World Health Organisation, 2004).

1.6.3 Educator

An educator is a person whose work is to educate others; i.e. an educator is someone who inspires, informs and teaches others (Korth et al., 2009).

According to the Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF) (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2007), educators need to possess the following qualities: Educators should have sound subject knowledge. Educators should know their learners and be familiar with their preferred method of learning; they should understand these learners' individual needs and adapt their teaching methods to suit these needs. Furthermore, educators need to have knowledge of the school curriculum and they must have the necessary skills to use the resources that are available to them in an effective manner, such as planning and designing individual learning plans to suit learners' SEN. Educators should be able to manage their classrooms effectively, so that diverse learners are included and so that the classroom environment is conducive to effective learning. Learners need to be assessed in various ways and the results of the assessments should be used by the educator to improve learning (Jacobs et al., 2016).

1.6.4 Experience

Experience is seen as something personally encountered, lived through or undergone. Experience is the process through which knowledge or skill is acquired from seeing, feeling or doing things (Korth et al., 2009). Experience can be seen as a coherent structure of what a person feels and senses at present, informed by past experiences. Experience is a specific structure that brings awareness of the act of feeling and sensing by questioning how valid the past experiences are. Experiences occur whether they are planned or unplanned, designed or not. They are incidents that occur during the routines of everyday life. Such incidences might not be difficult to recall and remember. Experiences are subjective, because they stem from people's interactions with their surroundings (Jantzen, 2013).

1.6.5 Attitude

Attitudes are pervasive aspects of human life. Attitudes are made up of groups of thoughts, ideas, behavioural intentions, their likes as well as their dislikes, or feelings a person has about things or people they encounter in their daily lives (Maio et al., 2019). Attitudes affect an individual's thoughts, their feelings, and what they do. People utilize their attitudes to interpret their environment and

make sense of it. People use attitudes as shortcuts when they make decisions on how to react in situations in their daily lives, or when they meet new people or answer political questions (Loreman et al., 2005).

1.6.6 Inclusive education

Inclusive education is a collaborative learning model that is designed for all students to learn together in one setting, no matter what their skill set is. It can be seen as a tool for transformation and an opportunity to take part in an education system that is accepting of human diversity (Yoro et al., 2020). According to Nguyet and Thu Ha (2010), the process of responding to the various needs of all learners once their initial needs have been addressed is known as inclusive education. This can be achieved through a reduction in exclusion and a greater involvement of students in the educational system. Inclusive education is the process of finding schools, classes, lessons, programmes and approaches that are designed to enable all learners to engage and learn (Nguyet & Thu Ha, 2010).

Inclusive education is perceived as a variety of activities, processes and strategies that aim to make appropriate, relevant and quality education a reality. It is a dynamic process that is constantly growing and recognises diversity, including the diversity based on age, gender, language, health status, ethnicity, religion, impairments, and other categories. Inclusive education aims to make adaptations to the system so that it fits the learner instead of attempting to change the learner to fit the system. Additionally, it aims to remove barriers to learning, to promote engagement for everyone and to celebrate diversity by enabling institutions, organizations, and communities to do so (Nguyet & Thu Ha, 2010).

1.6.7 Knowledge

Knowledge is the familiarity, understanding or awareness of something or someone. Knowledge can be seen as facts, skills and information which a person acquires through either experience or education; the practical understanding or theoretical understanding of a subject (Bolisani & Bratianu, 2018).

There are three types of knowledge according to Pavese (2022). The first type is known as acquaintance knowledge; this is when we know someone because we are acquainted with them, for example friends, parents, family and pets. The second type is known as propositional knowledge; this is when we acquire knowledge by learning, for example that Turin is located in Italy. The third type of knowledge is known as the knowledge. Knowledge is acquired when we know how to do something. Examples of this type of knowledge include: playing the piano, walking and speaking (Pavese, 2022).

Knowledge is an important tool because educators use it when they need to make decisions of an instructional nature in their classrooms. Instruction is formed by knowledge, which in its turn is linked to learning taking place (Schachter et al., 2016).

1.6.8 Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support

The SIAS document is a policy that provides a framework for assessments that are standardised in order to identify the needs of the learner, assess what can be done and to provide programmes that are tailored to every individual learner's needs so that every learner that requires additional support, can participate and be included in school (Department of Basic Education, 2014).

The SIAS document offers instructions on early identification and support, establishing the type and level of help needed by learners, choosing the appropriate learning environments for support, and the roles of both educators and parents in the implementation of this strategy. By doing this, it defines the process of identification, assessment and enrolment of learners in specific schools and avoids placing learners in special needs schools, which might not be necessary (Landsberg, 2017).

1.7 VALUE OF THE RESEARCH

The value of this research is to build knowledge on inclusive education and provide a deeper understanding on how educators implement it in their classrooms. It aims to understand issues and increase awareness on including learners in the classroom by adapting the curriculum so that it fits the learners' needs instead of excluding the learner and removing them from the classroom

completely. This study aims to support what is known about inclusive education and to disprove myths in this regard. Educators will benefit from the study, as their experiences will be highlighted and educators can learn from one another and support one another.

1.8 METHODS TAKEN TO ENSURE RIGOUR OF THE STUDY

In respect of steps taken to ensure the quality of the study, researchers make use of dependability, trustworthiness, credibility, transferability and confirmability. The quality of the data, how it is interpreted, and the methods used to validate the results of the study are referred to as trustworthiness (Connelly, 2016). Trustworthiness is a process where researchers convince the readers of the study, as well as the researchers themselves, that the study that they are undertaking is worth pursuing (Nowell et al., 2017). In every research study that is undertaken, procedures and protocols should be put in place that are necessary for a study to be deemed as worthy of consideration by the readers. The criteria to establish trustworthiness include credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability (Connelly, 2016).

Credibility focuses on the confidence in the truth of the study and as a result, the most important criterion is the findings. The researcher should ask whether the study was conducted by using procedures that had been standardised and that would typically be used in qualitative research. Prolonged engagement with participants, member-checking, as well as reflective journaling are techniques used by the researcher to establish credibility (Connelly, 2016). Member-checking involves contacting the participants and discussing the answers they gave to ensure that the researcher recorded and interpreted the data correctly (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). The interview transcripts and research reports might be given to the participants and they might be asked to either agree or disagree with them. By doing member-checking, the credibility of the findings is ensured. Member-checking was used by the researcher for the aim of this investigation.

Transferability refers to applicability or generalisability. It is the researcher's responsibility to provide an in-depth description of the participants and the research procedure, without providing any personally identifiable information about the participants, so that the reader can evaluate whether the findings can

be applied to the environments in which they find themselves (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). A detailed description of the setting within which the research study was conducted was provided, as well as the context of the research study. This was done so that the readers can judge whether the research and the results are applicable to their own settings (Mandal, 2018).

Confirmability refers to how consistent the findings of the research are and whether or not these findings can be repeated (Connelly, 2016). It furthermore refers to whether the research was objective during the collection of the data as well as the analysis thereof. In terms of relevance, accuracy or the meaning of data, congruency needs to be present between two or more independent people (Mandal, 2018). Detailed notes of analysis as well as all the decisions made are kept by qualitative researchers as they progress. Additionally, researchers may utilize member-checking with study participants.

Researchers might also make use of member-checking by arranging a follow-up interview with the participants to ensure that the data is accurately captured by the researcher (Connelly, 2016). Confirmability furthermore states that the interpretation should not be based on the personal perspective and preferences of the researcher, but that it should be grounded in the data (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

Dependability refers to the stability of data over a period of time as well as regarding the conditions of the study. It refers to the confirmation that the changing conditions of the phenomenon under study are represented by the data and it should be consistent as regards researchers, analysis techniques and also across time (Sikolia et al., 2013). The researcher should keep process logs, which are notes of everything that happens during the course of the study and decisions that the researcher makes about aspects of the study (Connelly, 2016).

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Upon undertaking any research project, the researcher needs to adhere to certain ethical principles in order to protect the rights as well as the dignity of the participants (Hasan et al., 2021). The University of Pretoria provided the

necessary ethical clearance, granting permission for this research to be conducted. Since this study involved interviewing educators from public schools, the Department of Basic Education additionally provided the necessary permission to conduct the study.

1.9.1 Nonmaleficence

The researcher took precautions to protect the study subjects from any harm during the course of the investigation. It was attempted to protect the participants from any physical as well as mental harm, embarrassment, being offended, frightened or harmed in any way (McLeod, 2015). Nonmaleficence does not only include physical or mental harm, but it can also include deception. Participants should, for example, not be deceived that they would receive rewards for participating or that their responses would not be used and published. Participants should not be wronged. For example, if a person's private behaviour is observed the person is not necessarily harmed, but nevertheless wronged. Participants should as far as possible be fully and accurately informed and protected from all forms of nonmaleficence (Terre Blanche et al., 2014).

1.9.2 Informed consent

This basic principle upholds that the researcher is only justified to use a participant for research purposes if the participant has provided the necessary consent to be used for the project. Informed consent takes place after the selection of participants, but before their participation in the project begins (Cottrell & McKenzie, 2011). In order for consent to be considered as valid informed consent, four elements need to be present (Corrigan et al., 2009). The first element required is that the participants should be given the relevant information; the second element refers to the relevant information being understood by the participants. The third element requires that the participants should be capable of providing consent and the last element refers to the participant not being coerced to participate. The third and fourth element refers to valid consent being voluntary; this is explained in more detail in the next ethical consideration (Corrigan et al., 2009).

Participants signed a consent form where they agreed or gave consent to take part in the study and understood what was expected of them and what the study

entails (Arifin, 2018). The form was signed out of the participant's own free will, which is called voluntary participation. Without any form of pressure, individuals should be free to decide whether or not they want to take part in the study. (Ritchie et al., 2014). Participants should not feel persuaded or forced to participate. Participants should give their written consent to participate in the study out of their own free will, and they are free to cease their participation from the study at any time without any repercussions (Arifin, 2018).

1.9.3 Privacy and confidentiality

Privacy and confidentiality are two very important terms that need to be addressed when conducting research. These two terms are often assumed to have the same meaning. Although they are related, they have different meanings (Anderson & Corneli, 2017). Privacy should be thought of as protecting the individuals and confidentiality can be thought of as protecting the information or data that the participants share with the researchers (Anderson & Corneli, 2017).

Privacy can be described as having control over oneself; in other words, people can decide when they want to share information about themselves and with whom they want to share this information (Anderson & Corneli, 2017).

Confidentiality can be defined as an agreement between the researcher and the participant; and is a promise made by the researcher not to disclose specific personal information of the participants (Bos, 2020). When there is a connection between a participant's personal information and their identity, but that information is kept secret from others, it is known as confidentiality. It is the responsibility of the researcher to take every precaution to ensure that the participant's personal information is protected (Cottrell & McKenzie, 2011).

Confidentiality refers to collecting data from participants whilst ensuring that any and all identifying information is safeguarded. One way of ensuring confidentiality is to separate the data collected from identifiable individuals. This can be done by using codes associated with the participants or giving them pseudonyms and storing the data securely (Barnes & Forde, 2021). The researcher made sure that the confidentiality of the participants was maintained by keeping their names and other identifying information anonymous throughout

the processes of data collection and analysis as well as when disclosing the study's conclusions (Arifin, 2018).

Identifiable information of the participants is collected, but this information is removed in order to prevent anyone from outside the research to connect the responses with the participants (Barnes & Forde, 2021). Participants' names are not mentioned in the study. Although the information in the study would be published, it would not be possible to trace back to the person who provided the information (Allen M., 2017).

1.10 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 provided an introduction and rationale for this study. The chapter furthermore explained the purpose of the study, which was to explore educators' experience on the implementation of inclusive education policy twenty years after its development. The primary research question was identified, followed by the secondary research question. Some key concepts were mentioned in order to provide clarity with regard to curriculum adaptation, disability, educator, experience, inclusive education, knowledge and the SIAS policy. The chosen research design, approach and conceptual framework was furthermore explained. Lastly, the population and sampling were described, followed by the method of how the data would be collected and analysed, concluding the chapter with the ethical considerations adhered to by the researcher when working with the participants.

Chapter 2

In Chapter 2, a literature review presents related literature on the chosen topic, both national as well as international. This literature review examines the prevailing views of educators on the concept of IE, the responsibilities of the educator, and the role of education. The definition of IE is also considered, as well as its challenges, and lastly, the Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education is discussed.

Chapter 3

In Chapter 3, the research paradigm is discussed, which is that of an interpretivist approach. Furthermore, the research method used in the study is discussed, followed by the research design, i.e., a multiple-case study research design. The chapter discusses the sampling strategy as well as how the data was gathered and documented. This chapter will conclude with an analysis of the data and its interpretation, as well as the ethical principles followed by the researcher throughout the study.

Chapter 4

In Chapter 4, the results of the research are presented, and the findings discussed. Themes that developed from the data are presented and examined, along with any subthemes that may have emerged. The data was subject to an inductive, thematic analysis. The analysed data assisted in painting a picture of educators' experience on the implementation of IE in their classroom. It furthermore assisted in representing an indication of the attitudes that educators have with regard to the implementation of IE in their classroom.

Chapter 5

In Chapter 5, the results, recommendations and limitations of the study are discussed. This chapter reports on how educators experience the IE policy over the past twenty years as well as how they implement it. The chapter also responds to the research questions and compares the findings with prior research. Finally, the chapter examines the research's shortcomings and offers suggestions for further investigation.

CHAPTER 2

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 aims to provide an overview of national and international research on inclusive education and the implementation thereof since it was developed in 2001.

The chapter begins with a background on education and discusses the role of the educator in the education process. Furthermore, the meaning of inclusive education is provided, including the strengths as well as the challenges thereof and the attitudes that educators have towards implementation in their classroom. Lastly, the Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education is presented, and the explanation also includes the SIAS document. The chapter concludes with Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory (1979), explaining the different entities the environment consists of; how they fit within each other just like Russian dolls. An explanation is also provided as to why this theory was chosen and why it is a good fit for this study.

2.2 EDUCATION

2.2.1 Background of education

The educational process begins at birth and continues until death (Arslan, 2018). There are two types of schools in South Africa, namely public or government schools, and independent or private schools. Independent schools are controlled by individuals or structures that are privately owned, whereas public schools in South Africa are controlled by the government through the Department of Education (Balfour, 2015).

For years leading up to 1994, South Africa was the perfect example of a society of inequality; this includes inequality in education, with regard to race. White schools were deemed to be equal to the best schools in affluent countries, whereas black schools were viewed to be far behind white schools with regard to infrastructure, educator qualifications and learning outcomes. During the era commencing in 1994, segregated educational policies were desegregated to

enhance equalisation. Twenty-five years after 1994, despite the government's intentions, the historically black schools still lack essential resources and are more poorly equipped than in the era of historical segregation of white and black schools (Wolhuter, 2020; Jacobs et al., 2016).

South Africa's democracy was enacted in 1994. Since then, the government's policy has undergone a significant change in order to offer all South Africans equal access to services. This approach included providing education for learners with SEN in line with Act No. 108 of 1996 (South African Government, 1996), the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, which is credited with the construction of an inclusive educational system (Dalton et al., 2012).

The World Conference on Special Needs Education took place in June 1994 in Salamanca, Spain, with attendees from 92 countries and 25 international organizations (UNESCO, 1994). They introduced a new declaration on the 'Education for All Children with Disabilities', with inclusion at its core (UNESCO, 1994). During the conference, a new framework was established that was intended to serve as a model for mainstream classrooms for all learners, irrespective of the social, physical, academic, linguistic or any other challenges they might have. The Framework mandates of signatories that all educational policies consider to require that all practice inclusive education. Learners with or without disabilities should be able to go to the school in their neighbourhood that they would attend if they didn't have a disability (UNESCO, 1994).

South Africa developed an Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education (2001) and SIAS document that offers methods for providing educational assistance for learners who encounter obstacles to their learning and development (Mpu & Adu, 2021). Basic Education Minister Motshekga adopted the SIAS policy on December 19, 2014. The SIAS document provided strategies to implement inclusive education in schools and sought to guarantee that all children who encounter learning obstacles would have access to inclusive, free, high-quality education along with other young people living in their neighbourhood (Department of Basic Education, 2021).

Education is seen as a process whereby an individual acquires knowledge from another person. Education is where a person develops skills crucial for everyday

life; develops reasoning and judgement and learns how to differentiate wrong from right. The main purpose of education is to assist individuals in navigating everyday life and evidently contributing to society once they are older (Abulencia, 2021).

Education functions optimally when a relationship exists between an individual and their environment. The educational system focuses on children from pre-school (around age five) until graduate education. The primary goal of basic education is to assist children in developing intellectual skills and to improve their physical capabilities. Furthermore, children should be motivated at school to obtain moral values that are expected from them by political society (Arslan, 2018).

Parents strive to make their children attend school for as long as possible, as education eliminates hunger and poverty and gives people a chance to have a better life (Buheji, 2019). Education is important for various reasons. Some of these reasons include the following: It develops critical thinking. This is necessary when people are taught how to use logic in the decision-making process and interacting with people (McPeck, 2016). Education promotes gender equality and empowers women and girls. Research suggests that if girls attended a year of extra schooling, the teen pregnancy rate was reduced by six percent and women had more control over the number of children they had (Abulencia, 2021).

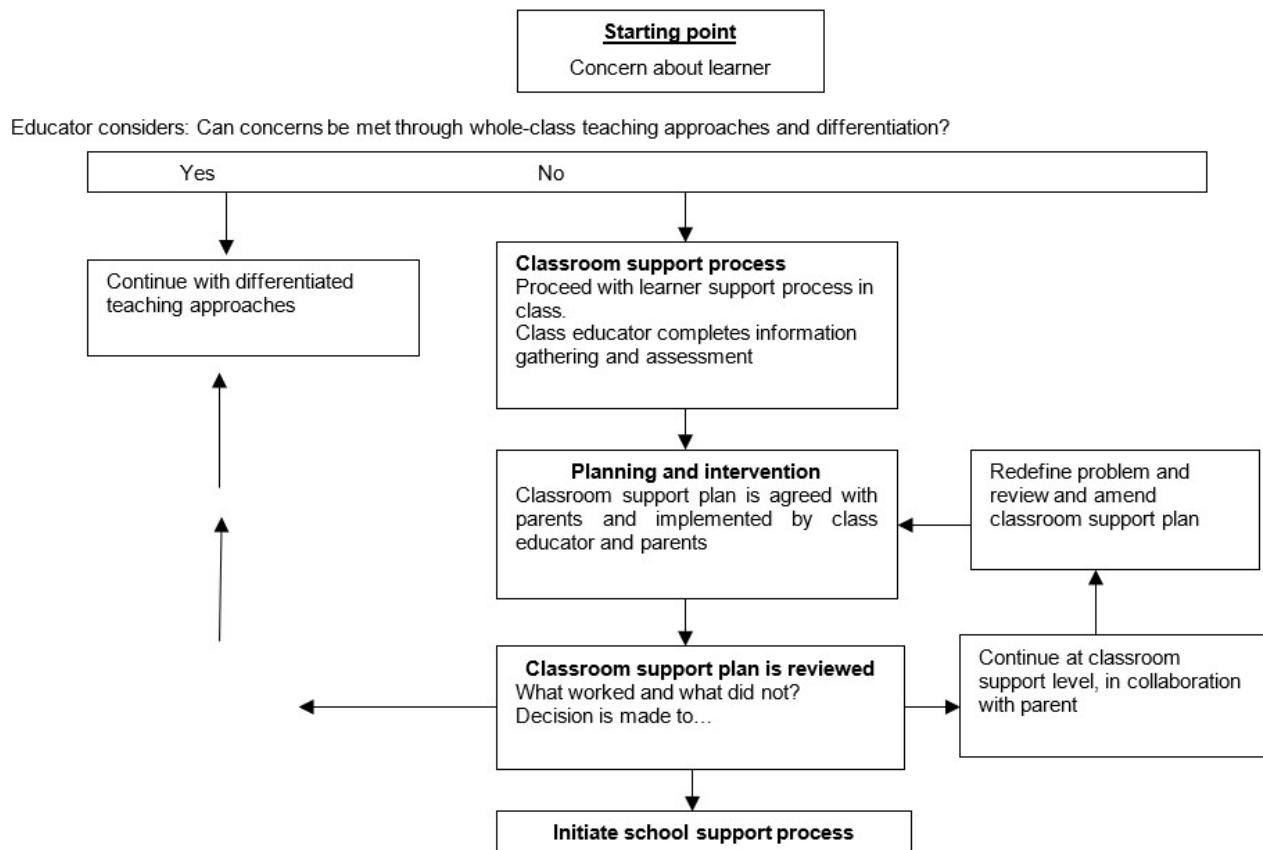
2.2.2 Role of educators within inclusive schools

Educators, regardless of the subjects that they teach, should be able to identify the level of support that learners require in their learning. Educators should be on the lookout for learners not participating in class and this should raise concern (Lunenburg et al., 2014). Educators should then respond and take all the necessary steps to address the situation by either seeking assistance or to directly intervene (Makoelle, 2016). All learners should feel that they belong in the classroom, despite having learning difficulties; they should feel part of the group and that they are capable of making a valuable contribution (Makoelle, 2016).

To successfully incorporate inclusive education in the classroom, educators need to rethink the way they approach helping learners with learning challenges and adapt their teaching approaches in order for the needs of these learners to be met (Lunenburg et al., 2014). The SIAS document clearly states that educators should possess specific competencies and expertise so that they can identify and provide help to learners who present with barriers to learning in the classroom (Makoelle, 2016).

Landsberg (2017) upholds that it is irrelevant what the source of concern is (whether it is social, learning, behavioural or emotional) that is affecting the learner’s ability to progress. Educators should identify the difficulties by means of classroom screening, observation and assessment procedures and continue to address them. The figure 1 below shows a flow chart explaining what the educator’s classroom support process might look like (Landsberg, 2017, p.102).

Figure 1: Classroom support process adapted from (Landsberg, 2017, p.102)



According to Landsberg (2017) the educator should take on the role as a mediator in the learning process. In this context, mediation is any contact when

an adult aims to teach a child a specific skill or meaning and encourages them to transcend, which is to connect the meaning to an additional experience or thinking. Vygotsky's theory of mediated learning (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978) upholds that the educator (mediator) should provide an appropriate stimulus to which the learner then responds. The response elicits further interaction between the learner and the educator (Kozulin et al., 2003). This process will continue until the learner or the adult is satisfied with the learning experience. Educators mediate academic as well as social learning (Landsberg, 2017).

Educators in inclusive schools, plan and teach collaboratively. They plan and deliver their lessons based on the individual needs of the learners with disabilities. They also have to consider what the most effective method of instruction is, to ensure learning takes place across all learners, with or without disabilities. According to Murphy (2018), a *one teach, one assist* model is used when one educator teaches a lesson and the other educator provides support for learners within the group. With this model, the assistant continuously monitors learners' performance throughout the lessons (Murphy, 2018).

Even though it is not expected of educators to have all the answers, they need to realise that the principles of learning and teaching do not change; they might just need to apply it in a different way (Makoelle, 2016).

According to the SIAS document, the role of the educator in an inclusive environment is very important. The educator needs a comprehensive understanding of inclusion and the various requirements of all the learners. The Learner Profile is the main SIAS tool used by educators to plan daily interventions and support for all learners in the context of learning and teaching. Importantly, educators need to be mindful so as to not label learners who need to receive extra support, because this might contribute to exclusionary practices (Ben-Peretz, 2013). Another important step for educators is to make use of the Guidelines for Responding to Diversity in the Classroom (Department of Basic Education, 2011) as the procedures outlined in this document would assist in designing a support plan which is tailored to the individual needs of learners who experience challenges with learning. The support that these learners receive will include differentiation of content. In addition to this, they need to adjust the

methodologies used in the classroom as well as the classroom environment, and lastly, they need to apply the necessary accommodations in assessments as well as examinations. All these SIAS requirements of implementing inclusive education demand that educators change their attitudes, teaching methods, behaviours, the current curriculum and the environments that are needed so that the needs of the learners are met (Department of Basic Education, 2021).

Regardless of a learner's sensory, intellectual, emotional, physical, or other unique requirements, schools should accommodate all learners according to the fundamental principles of inclusive education. Educators and learners should respect one another and acknowledge that each person is distinctive in their own way; educators should understand that learners have different needs and that they should accept and embrace those needs (Makoelle, 2016).

Stofile and Green (2007) as well as Swart and Pettipher (2007), mentioned that the majority of educators agree with the concept of inclusion but are uncertain about how to implement it. According to Stofile and Green (2007) and Swart and Pettipher (2007), the following is required for successful inclusion: First, more time needs to be made available to educators to help them plan activities that will reach a wider range of learners. Second, educators need in-depth training, whether it's part of the initial training programme or provided at a later date by knowledgeable and experienced professionals. Thirdly, educators need to be provided with support from other professionals for advice and guidance if and when needed. Fourth, educators need the right learning tools for learners who need extra support; and last but not least, educators need the skills to adjust the curriculum to fit the learners' needs (Mehdipour & Zerehkafi, 2013).

2.2.3 The meaning of inclusive education

The experience and understanding of people towards inclusive education differs across the world. The different understandings of the concept across the world led to different implementation strategies of the inclusive pedagogy. Multiple attempts have been made to universalise the concept, with not much success (Makoelle, 2016).

Accordingly, Ainscow et al (2006) declared that the definitions of inclusion could be prescriptive or descriptive. A prescriptive definition of inclusion refers to the

way a person intends to make use of the concept and how they would like others to use it. The numerous applications of inclusion in practice are included in the descriptive definition. These definitions are both very important to understanding inclusion (Ainscow et al., 2006).

Inclusion is not merely a strategy or a curriculum; it is about being valued, having a sense of belonging and having choices. Inclusion allows learners to feel part of their community and it better prepares them to function optimally in the community as children and as adults (Thwala & Makoelle, 2022). Inclusion also involves valuing and accepting human diversity and providing the support that is necessary for all children as well as their families to successfully participate in the programmes that they choose. Inclusion is about children and families being and feeling accepted as well as supporting them and their participation in the programmes (Allen & Cowdery, 2015).

Inclusive education can be viewed as a continuous process of development and it is ideological. In order for educational settings to be fully inclusive, they need to make adaptations to their methods, their resources and the way that they implement the curriculum to accommodate the various needs of learners in the setting (Brown, 2016). According to Mitchell (2014), educators must use the best evidence in planning, implementation and assessment to improve their teaching.

There are many different interpretations and understandings of inclusive education and these can determine the effectiveness of interventions. One of the core values of inclusive learning is that it respects that no learner should be discriminated against. Save the Children (2016) believes that inclusive education means embracing all children and preventing discrimination against them by parents, educators, classmates, rules, school curriculum, or other parts of education. (Save the Children, 2016).

Schools are expected to incorporate diversity into the curriculum with the intention of meeting the various needs of learners. In doing so, they contribute to achieving a global goal. One of the goals of inclusive education is to provide education of a high standard and to get rid of any barriers that prevent learning. Learners that encounter educational challenges are more vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion. The responsibility lies with the educator to

encourage the learners and to keep them motivated and interested (Makoelle, 2016).

Naicker (2018) upholds that mainstream education should take ownership of inclusive education. The question that should be asked is: How does one bring vulnerable children to the middle of the system? This refers to the child being the centre or point of departure within the educational system. The middle of the system should embrace diversity. Placing learners in the middle of the system simply means that this should be the point of departure for any education system across the world (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2020). Educators in South Africa should be creative when they take the theory that they have learnt and put it into practical lessons in class. A new framework that should be adopted by the education system is to move away from the thought of disability and rather place the focus on the type and amount of support that is required by a learner. Attempts should be made to look at how learners are prevented from having access to the education system. So in other words, the focus should not be placed on which deficiencies the learners' experience, but rather which barriers exist in the system (Naicker, 2018).

Within South Africa, it seems as if educators still view inclusive pedagogy as a mystery, as they are not sure of what an inclusive pedagogy consists of in a country that is so diverse. There seemed to be an association between special needs education and inclusion, which dominated the education system before 1994. The crucial difference between the two terms is that special needs education refers to learners being excluded from the mainstream and placed in special schools, whereas inclusion refers to learners with different abilities being accommodated in mainstream education (Mitchell, 2004). Makoelle (2016) recommends that a better definition of inclusion should be formulated so that there can be a switch from a special needs perspective. He furthermore stated that such a definition should clearly define what the agenda would consist of so that quality education could be provided and facilitated for all learners, regardless of the learners' backgrounds (Makoelle, 2016). Within South Africa, it is crucial to understand that inclusion does not only mean that learners with disabilities should be accepted and included, but that all learners should be

included, regardless of their age, what language they speak, what gender they identify with or what their socio-economic status might be (Akbarovna, 2022).

Looking at inclusive education on a broader basis than in South Africa, the concept is not new to Ghana. Ghana's first attempts to educate learners with SEN started in 1936, when the subject was pioneered by missionaries. The government assumed the responsibility as well as the role of educating learners with disabilities when The National Education Act of 1961 (International Bureau of Education, 1961) was established. The inclusive education policy of Ghana, called FCUBE, which is their Free Compulsory Basic Education Programme, advocates increased access, retention and involvement of all learners who are of school-going age (Ntuli & Traore, 2013).

The United Nations (1989) conceptualised inclusion by addressing the issue of the development of educational policies as interwoven with active participation and "education for all" by UNESCO (1994). The education for all concept withheld that operating in diverse classrooms required the identification and inclusion of individuals who, for various reasons, are excluded. Inclusion in education aims to eliminate barriers that prevent learning to take place and hinders learners to actively participate in the classroom, irrespective of their social background, sexuality, race, gender or disability (Angelides & Hajisoteriou, 2013). The Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons was ratified in December 2006 during the 61st session of the United Nations General Assembly, which included a strong commitment to inclusive education. As of October 2018, altogether 187 nations had signed the Convention, and 177 of those nations had ratified it. South Africa signed and ratified this in 2007. Notably absent from this list was the United States (Mitchell & Sutherland, 2020).

2.2.4 Strengths of inclusive education

According to Murphy (2018), inclusive education can be more effective to all learners than mainstream education. Not only learners with disabilities can benefit from inclusive education, but all learners can benefit, and this is seen as a major strength of this inclusive system. Learners with and without disabilities show social and emotional growth; increased academic outcomes for learners

with or without disabilities; learners with disabilities present with an enhanced self-image and preparation for the world outside for all learners (McMillan, 2008).

The involvement of parents is one of the strengths that can be indirectly observed. Schools urge parents to actively take part in their children's education and their school activities. Inclusion fosters a sense of community and respect by enabling children to grow and learn to embrace their differences, which can only be achieved through an inclusive community. It allows learners the opportunity to develop friendships with each other; and friendships in return provide role models and opportunities for the learners to grow (Thwala & Makoelle, 2022).

McMillan (2008) further found that inclusive education improved the learner's behaviour; learners are more inclined to behave appropriately amongst other learners than they would have behaved in isolation with other learners with disabilities. When learners are surrounded by peers who do not have disabilities, they are taught how to behave correctly in a variety of circumstances (McMillan, 2008). Furthermore, inclusive education provides better opportunities for learning. When learners are put in classrooms with other learners of similar skills, they frequently feel more driven to learn. Inclusion allows learners to talk about how they learn in their own way and through this, they might discover they share more things in common than they originally believed. This can also teach learners that difference is a normal part of life and it can help them build and maintain friendships (Foreman & Arthur-Kelly, 2017).

I believe that children with disabilities who are in inclusive classes receive a more rigorous education with peers, which enables them to learn new skills and make academic progress. It is thought that learners with a range of abilities in inclusive environments follow an educational programme that is of a higher standard than in segregated settings (Gokdere, 2012). Children in these settings display higher academic outcomes as a result of them spending more time with their academics (Loreman et al., 2005).

One of the other strengths of inclusive education is that it also addresses diversity within the framework of an inclusive education. The learner progresses not only in terms of their academic performance but also in terms of their overall development, such as cognitive or social-emotional development. The aim is for

every learner to fully participate in school, in terms of involvement, attendance, academically as well as socially. Another great strength is that learners are socially accepted and it helps them to develop a sense of belonging. The Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) asserts that the most effective means of overcoming prejudice is through inclusive education; it builds a society that is inclusive, with the aim to achieve education for all; it presents a system that provides effective education for learners, simultaneously amplifying the effectiveness and efficiency of the overall educational system while reducing costs. As a result, it is not only the child that benefits, but the whole society (Sander, 2021).

It is thus evident that every learner can benefit from inclusive education, whether they have a disability or not (Sander, 2021). A study done by Abu-Hamour and Muhaidat (2013), yielded similar results, stating that the main focus for educators who agreed to implement inclusive education was to encourage a good self-esteem and self-confidence; to provide the opportunity for all learners to learn from one another and to interact with each other; and to prepare children for an inclusive life (Abu-Hamour & Muhaidat, 2013).

2.2.5 Challenges of inclusive education

International challenges include large classes; a lack of support services; strict methods of teaching; education systems that are examination oriented; negative attitudes towards disability; parents not being involved enough; and in some countries, the national policies are not clear (Mitchell & Sutherland, 2020). Within a South African context, some of the main barriers that deprive learners from receiving the education they deserve include: socio-economic factors; parental attitude; language; negative attitudes; educators not being able to freely access the curriculum and a lack of appropriate and clear policy (Naicker, 2018).

According to Mpu and Adu (2021), two of the main challenges that interfere with implementing inclusive education are that educators do not have enough time or resources. These challenges are school-based as well as classroom-based issues. In South-Africa, in some cases, there are between 90 and 100 learners in a class due to infrastructure (Mpu & Adu, 2021). Class size is a challenge as it is

vital to reach every learner and it becomes more difficult, if not impossible, to reach every learner when the class sizes are too large (Simba et al., 2016).

The success of inclusive education greatly depends on training and education. Many educators say they are not prepared to teach in an environment that is inclusive and that they have not received the necessary training to effectively incorporate inclusive education in their classrooms (McMillan, 2008).

Legotlo (2014) divided the challenges into three categories, namely issues with resources, staff-related issues and issues relating to learners. Among the resource issues is the poor condition of school buildings, i.e. schools are not properly equipped to handle the large amount of learners in every classroom. Shortage of textbooks is a problem in some schools. In such cases, educators have to copy the work for the learners to accommodate the shortage of textbooks (Walton & Engelbrecht, 2022). Shortage of classroom space is another issue of concern in South Africa year after year. Some schools struggle to accommodate learners and are forced to have up to 40 learners per classroom due to various reasons, such as not having enough space, a shortage of educators and not enough financial resources, just to name a few (Legotlo, 2014). The problematic situation of overcrowded classrooms with a high educator learner ratio, does not support inclusive strategies.

Issues that learners might encounter include not having enough discipline, high absenteeism, poor study and life skills, poverty and learner motivation problems, just to name a few. Learners can, however, be absent from school due to various reasons which can include transport challenges, financial struggles and illness or health issues (Singh, 2021).

Perceptions of disability vary across the African continent. There seems to be a predominantly negative view based on the cultural beliefs of people and this in return leads to discrimination. Some people believe that God is punishing them. Some parents refrain from sending their children with disabilities to school, because they believe these children cannot be educated (Pather & Slee, 2019).

According to Kumar (2018), the biggest challenge to inclusion is community norms. Numerous members of the community refuse to accept learners with disabilities and learning needs, and thus show prejudice. Challenges regarding

the educator involves lack of training or unwillingness to work with learners with disabilities. Educators with high workloads may be reluctant to come up with different techniques for the same lesson. as that would add to their workload (Mngo & Mngo, 2018).

Language poses another challenge, as more learners learn in a language that is new and sometimes unknown to them (Naicker, 2018). Furthermore, funding is seen as the biggest challenge. Inclusion is only possible if there is adequate funding. Schools frequently lack properly trained and qualified educators as well as other staff members, educational equipment and support (Kumar, 2018).

One of the huge challenges that South African educators face is HIV/Aids. The impact of HIV/Aids has on schools is significant, as learners are absent for days at a time because they have to take care of family members who are sick or they miss school because they are infected and are physically ill, or due to doctor's visits. This illness causes learners to constantly feel tired and they are not able to focus in class or they might experience psychological problems because of their experience of living with HIV/Aids (Makoelle, 2016).

According to the Global Education Monitoring Report of 2020 (UNESCO, 2020), challenges that occur and hinder inclusive education from being implemented successfully, included constant discrimination and prejudice; negative attitudes towards inclusion; inadequate laws and policies; lack of financial provision; a lack of data and research to monitor progress; poor-quality education; and inaccessible curriculum and schools (UNESCO, 2020). From an international perspective, according to Beyene and Tizazu (2010), Ethiopia reported similar challenges to implementing inclusive education. Some of the challenges reported, indicate that educators are reluctant to include learners with disabilities in mainstream education. They believe that it is better to place these learners in separate institutions with specialised educators. Furthermore, a lack of support, materials or equipment; a lack of training; large classes; and negative community attitudes were more challenges reported in Ethiopia (Naicker, 2018).

In Zanzibar, the government is committed to implement inclusive education, but faces a number of structural challenges, including poorly trained and inadequate educators; large class sizes; a shortage of classrooms as well as inadequate

learning/teaching materials (Mariga et al., 2014). Zanzibar relies on international donors which make up 70% of their educational budget. In 1998, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training established a Special Education Unit to formally care for children with unique educational needs (Naicker, 2018).

2.2.6 Attitudes of educators towards inclusive education

Attitudes are responding to dispositions or evaluating attitude objects. One person or a group of persons are referred to as attitude objects and can be judged favourably or unfavourably (Pit-ten Cate et al., 2018). Affective, behavioural, and cognitive components may be present in attitudes, which frequently direct social behaviour or affect judgments (Pit-ten Cate et al., 2018). According to research, educators' attitudes and beliefs about inclusive education have a great impact on the success of inclusive education (de Boer et al., 2011). The reason it is such an essential component is that the degree to which educators accept the policy, will have an impact on the degree to which they are committed to implement it (Hassanein, 2015; Saloviita & Schaffus, 2016).

In order for educators to effectively function in inclusive settings, they must not only possess the necessary information, skills, and understanding, but also a specific set of attitudes and values, according to the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (Pit-ten Cate et al., 2018).

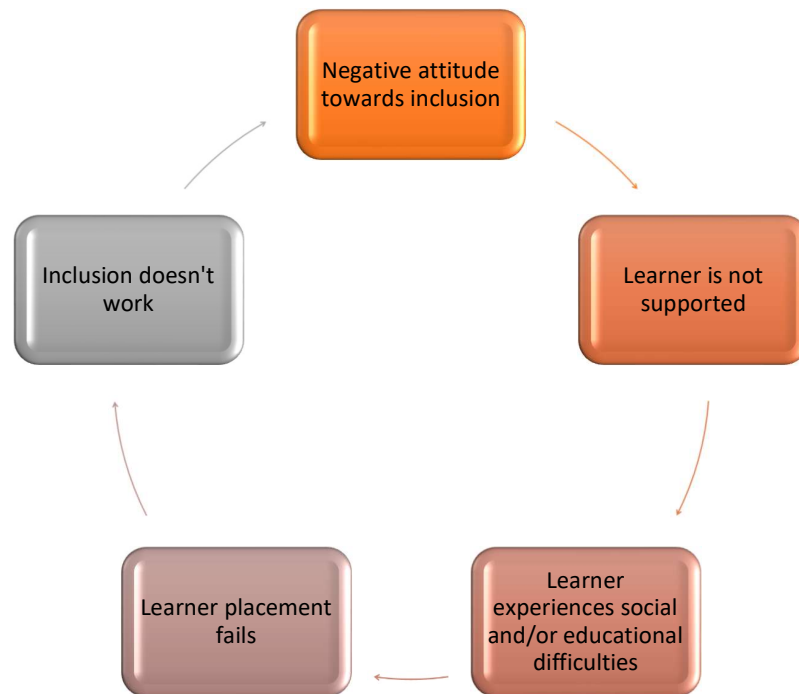
A study done by Abu-Hamour and Muhaidat (2013) with regards to the attitudes that educators have towards inclusion, showed that the educators varied in their attitudes. Although the majority of educators displayed a more positive attitude, they indicated that they had no training and very little knowledge on preparing learners for inclusive education. Even though most educators were positive towards inclusive education, they were hesitant to implement it in their classrooms (Abu-Hamour & Muhaidat, 2013).

According to Chhabra et al., (2009) the majority of educators taking part in inclusive education programmes, reported negative attitudes about inclusion. Furthermore, those educators expressed which factors contribute to successfully implement inclusive education, which included: the size of the classes; educators who are insufficiently trained; and resources which are not up to standard. Educators support the idea that every child has the right to learn in the

mainstream classroom, but they were unsure about how practical it would be to implement. The educators specifically displayed a negative attitude towards including learners with behavioural problems and learners with severe hearing or visual difficulties (Chhabra et al., 2009).

A contributing factor to the negative attitude that educators display with regards to inclusive education is their previous exposure to it. This may be because educators did not have enough experience or knowledge about the inclusive process. That's why it's essential for educators to be trained so that they have as many hands-on experiences as possible with inclusive education and inclusive classrooms. The figure 2 below shows the possible effect of negative attitudes towards inclusion (Boyle et al., 2020).

Figure 2: The influence of negative attitudes towards inclusive education adapted from (Boyle et al., 2020, p.4)



Negative attitudes are learnt, and as a result can be unlearned. These attitudes can be challenged at university during training as a preventative measure to foster progressive teaching around inclusion (Boyle et al., 2020).

According to Kraska and Boyle (2014), educators who had a more positive attitude had studied a module on inclusive education. This supports the idea that

if educators complete a module on inclusive education, they would be better prepared to teach diverse children and it would also improve their attitude towards inclusive education. A positive attitude has also been linked with educators making use of more inclusive strategies (Schwab, 2018). Varcoe and Boyle (2013), similarly, found that educators who had been trained in special education had more positive experiences.

According to Lambe (2007), a study conducted in Ireland found that educators who seemed to have a positive attitude towards inclusion, practiced integration instead, where learners were forced to fit in. These findings were similar to a study conducted in Malaysia according to Ali et al. (2006), where educators were enthusiastic about the concept of inclusion but lacked the self-confidence to put it into practice, which led to a negative attitude toward inclusion (Boyle et al., 2020).

2.2.7 Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education

The definition of inclusive education in the Education White Paper 6 is consistent with the Salamanca Statement from 1994, which embraces the global trend of universal education. The most effective strategy to eliminate discriminatory attitudes, to cultivate welcoming attitudes, and to develop an inclusive society, is through regular education with an inclusive orientation (Makoelle, 2016).

Inclusive education is a common term used and attempts have been made to implement it across the world. South Africa introduced a White Paper 6 in 2001 and has made huge effort to make the education system inclusive (Naicker, 2018).

The Education White Paper 6 on the Special Needs Education policy provides strategies to make provision for educational support of learners who have barriers to learning and development. Providing educational support is one of the key objectives of the policy to build an inclusive education and training system (Mpu & Adu, 2021).

The Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education discourages the practice that learners are excluded in schools and views it as being ignorant and lacking compassion (Mpu & Adu, 2021). The goal of inclusive education is to

alter the attitudes, behaviours, teaching strategies, curricula, and different learning environments that contribute to satisfying the needs of the learner (Makoelle, 2016).

Since the development of the Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education in 2001, Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga reported that significant progress had been made, but that more effort was still required to reach the next level. Motshekga further reported that 137 332 and 121 461 learners were enrolled in special and ordinary schools respectively, compared to 64 000 and 77 000 learners in 2002 (Arcangeli, 2021).

2.2.8 Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support

Screening refers to testing for the absence or presence of a barrier to learning. To screen a learner also means to obtain knowledge from the specific learner. In order to assess whether a learner has been identified as having learning difficulties in earlier grades, the educator must first gather information about the learner's background by completing a learner profile. When these barriers to learning are identified, educators do not only look for barriers within the learner, but also for contributing barriers in their environment (Matolo & Rambuda, 2022).

The SIAS policy was approved by Minister Motshekga on 19 December 2014. This policy seeks to guarantee that all children who encounter learning obstacles would have access to inclusive, free, high-quality education along with other young people living in their neighbourhood. The policy aims to standardise procedures in order to identify, assess and provide programmes for every learner who is in need of additional support in order for them to fully participate in school without being excluded by making educators and parents the centre focus of the support process (Department of Basic Education, 2021).

The SIAS document offers guidelines for early identification and support, defining the type and amount of support learners need, choosing the appropriate learning environments for support, and the roles of educators and parents in the implementation of this strategy. By doing so, it clarifies the procedure for identifying, evaluating, and enrolling learners in certain schools and prevents the needless placement of learners in special education facilities (Landsberg, 2017).

This policy targets all learners who are in need of support; it is not only limited to learners with disabilities. The SIAS policy outlines the process that educators should adhere to in order to identify learners who are experiencing learning barriers as soon as possible and to offer the support required to ensure that modifications may be made (Makoelle, 2016).

During the identification stage, a barrier to learning that prevents effective learning from taking place, is recognised. Educators identify the nature of the barrier either within the learner or in the learner's environment that interrupts the learning process. The educator will look at various sources when identifying the barriers such as the Learner Profile; the School Self Evaluation (SSE) tool; and will consult with parents or care-givers to gain the necessary information required to determine which barriers prevent learners from receiving effective learning. The Special Needs Assessment 1 (SNA 1) form guides the educator to identify the nature of barriers in the SIAS 2014 document. After a learner has been identified, it is the educator's responsibility to coordinate the support process by involving the learner's parents and learners over the age of twelve years. Thereafter, an Individual Support Plan (ISP) is drawn up for learners who are experiencing barriers to learning (Matolo & Rambuda, 2022).

Assessment refers to exploring the barriers to learning that the learner experiences. The assessment process can be explained as placing the focus on the extent to which learners cope when they are introduced to a new skill, and it is taught so that the necessary adaptations can be made. Learners should be given the opportunity, through the assessment process, to show what they can or cannot do and what they know and do not know. Educators then use this information to provide the necessary learning support within the inclusive education system. The learning support is designed to meet the unique learning needs of diverse learners (Matolo & Rambuda, 2022).

Support is a solution-oriented process that focuses on recognizing and responding to the learner's unique needs that need additional assistance. The support provided to the learners should involve different approaches; there should be as many different approaches explored as there are differences in learners. Supporting learners should start with an ISP where a specific barrier is

selected to be targeted for observing, measuring and tracking its frequency before the educator can begin with reinforcement (Matolo & Rambuda, 2022).

2.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

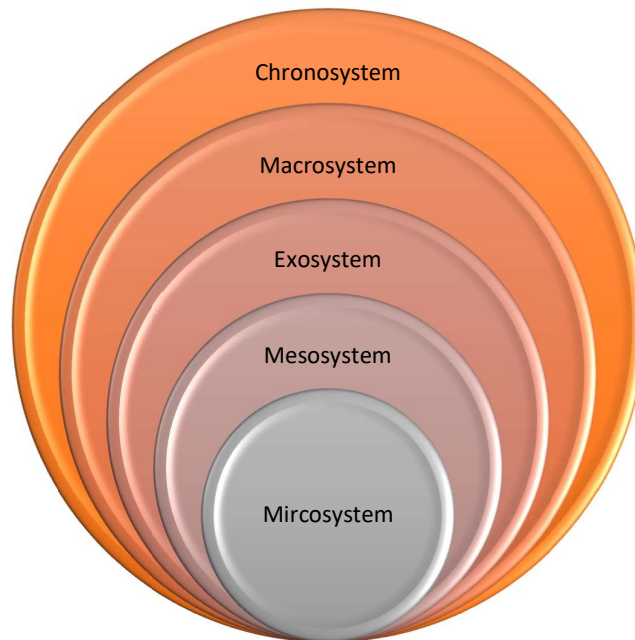
Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory (1977) will be used in this study. With the help of Bronfenbrenner's theory, the process of education as well as the various systems of education, such as educators, learners, care and teaching, can be better understood and implemented. This theory looks at the developing person as well as the education environment and the people that form part of this environment with all the relationships and roles that accompany them (Bronfenbrenner, 1977).

Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory reported two core propositions. The first stated that human development moves through a process of progressively more intricate mutual interactions between a human being and the environment that they find themselves in. The second proposition focused on the impact of these interactions and how they vary, based on the changing environment, the developmental factors under consideration as well as the unique functioning of the developing person (Killam & Degges-White, 2017).

Bronfenbrenner followed a constructivist model of development where the individual is trying to make sense of the experience they are actively participating in. During the process of exploring the environment and trying to adapt to it, the individual establishes an understanding of the environment, and obtains skills to deal with it. Furthermore, Bronfenbrenner believed that the environment is ever changing and adapting to the developing person. As a result of this, the accommodations made by the individual and the environment in which they find themselves, are mutual and reciprocal (Shelton, 2018).

The visual representation of the environment consists of different-sized entities that are placed within one another (Figure 3), namely microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem (Guy-Evans, 2020). According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the ecological environment consists of a set of structures, each structure fitting inside the next, like Russian dolls. Figure 3 below is a visual representation of the systems.

Figure 3: Visual representation of Bronfenbrenner's theory



The closer the system is to the individual (immediate system), the greater the degree of influence on the individual and their development. The microsystem represents the innermost layer of the environment and is made up of the interactions and behaviours of the environment around the individual (Killam & Degges-White, 2017). The microsystem consists of influences closest to the individual and has an intimate personal relationship with them. Examples of the microsystem can be family, the school, peer groups and even the neighbourhood (Hayes et al., 2017).

The mesosystem is referred to as the interactions between the microsystems which foster development. Elements of the mesosystem may include, but is not limited to, the workplace, religious involvement, family and social and recreational connections (Killam & Degges-White, 2017). The exosystem is described as the system that the individual is not directly a part of, yet they are still influenced (Hayes et al., 2017). Elements of the exosystem may include local disasters affecting the community, or an individual's place of employment implementing policy changes from administration (Killam & Degges-White, 2017). The larger socio-cultural context makes up the macrosystem and it

consists of the policies, customs, values, and resources of a specific culture (Hayes et al., 2017).

The chronosystem was only developed over the years as research was conducted and the theory further developed. Bronfenbrenner only introduced the concept of time in 1986, and also how it had an impact on the developmental process. The chronosystem focuses on the significance of time and the impact it has on the development of the individual through various environmental subsystems (Killam & Degges-White, 2017). It consists of all the factors and circumstances that occur over time and has an impact on the individual's psycho-social development. The chronosystem can consist of normative (for example marriage) as well as non-normative (for example divorce or the death of a loved one) life transitions (Hayes et al., 2017).

According to Bronfenbrenner's theory, development occurs only when there is a relationship between the individual and the environment. This was called the proximal process and was considered the essence of this model. Proximal processes can be found in activities between the parent and child and between peers. However, proximal processes cannot result in effective developmental functioning on their own, but could be used as guidance in the process (Landsberg, 2017).

2.3.1 Relevance of the conceptual framework to this study

Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory is well suited for this study, as the educators within the school system are seen as the microsystem and their interactions with other systems and the influences thereof were be studied (Killam & Degges-White, 2017). With the help of Bronfenbrenner's theory, a better understanding of the process of education as well as the various systems of education will be gained. This theory looks at the developing person, which in this case would be the educator, as well as the people that form part of this environment with the relationships and the roles that accompany them (Bronfenbrenner, 1977).

The microsystem is the innermost level of the environment and it is made up of patterns and activities of the immediate surroundings of the individual. For the purpose of this study, the educator, who is the participant in this study, is seen

as the centre of the microsystem. The educator has personal relationships with the school, learners and their co-workers (Hayes et al., 2017).

The mesosystem refers to the interactions between microsystems. The educator here interacts with the school (district level, community, family), and the school must provide support to the educator so that they can successfully implement inclusive education in their classrooms (Killam & Degges-White, 2017).

The exosystem refers to the system within which educators are not directly involved, but which still has an influence on them. Educators might face challenges that could hinder them and exert an influence on the successful implementation of inclusive education in their classrooms (Killam & Degges-White, 2017).

In this study, the macrosystem includes the policy of inclusive education and the SIAS document, which are part of the larger socio-cultural framework made up of the laws, practices, resources, and values of a particular culture. The educators' attitude might be influenced by these values or laws and these have an impact on how they view and implement inclusive education (Hayes et al., 2017).

The chronosystem places focus on the influence of time on the development of the individual through the various systems in the environment. Time thus plays a role in the attitudes of educators, as they might over time become either more positive or more negative and this in return would have a positive or negative effect on their willingness to implement inclusive education in their classroom and they might exclude learners from the mainstream due to their attitude change (Killam & Degges-White, 2017). The inclusive education policy was introduced in 2001, which is over twenty years ago, thus this study looks at how this policy has influenced education over the years.

CHAPTER 3

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

To better understand the history of education, the role of the educator, the definition of inclusive education, its advantages and disadvantages, and the attitudes of educators toward and willingness to implement the inclusive education policy, a literature review was presented in the preceding chapter. Lastly, the Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education and SIAS documents were discussed. The chapter concluded with the conceptual framework chosen for this study and reasons were provided as to why it was the correct fit for the study.

The research approach selected to address the questions under study, is detailed in this chapter. Additionally, this chapter discusses the research paradigm, research methodology, study design, sampling research methodologies, data gathering techniques, and documentation strategies. The strategy for data analysis and interpretation is presented as the chapter's conclusion.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

This study was looked at through the lens of an interpretivist approach. An interpretivist approach maintains that humans construct knowledge as they interpret the way they experience the world and they reject the notion that knowledge is objective and merely exists to be identified and collected (Hiller, 2016). The primary focus of interpretivism is to recognise the meaning and action of human experiences. Interpretivists accept various meanings and ways of knowing and accept that an objective reality can never be observed; it can only exist through representations (Levers, 2013).

This study followed an interpretivist approach. Interpretivism is concerned with intricate context-related aspects and variables. Because they develop deeper meanings than physical phenomena, humans are thought to be distinct from them, and they are supposedly unable to be examined in the same manner as

physical phenomena (Willis, 2007). Interpretivism accounts for differences such as situations, cultures, and historical eras that influenced how social reality evolved (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020).

The premise of interpretivism is that reality is subjective and varies from person to person (O'Donoghue, 2007). The interpretive paradigm enables researchers to take a variety of things into account, including behavioural aspects that are based on participant experience (Given, 2008). Furthermore, it allows researchers to treat every situation and context of research as unique, given the circumstances and participants involved (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). The interpretivist method makes it possible for the research to be more narrowly focused on the current issue and prevents the research from being too generic (Thanh & Thanh, 2015).

Interpretivists have an individual perspective and interpret reality in their own unique way. Furthermore, interpretivist researchers aim to understand the in-depth relationship that humans have with the environment that they find themselves in (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). The foundation of interpretivism is the basic principle that social reality is not a single, objective concept, but instead of this, is formed by social situations and human experiences. An advantage of interpretivism is that it can uncover underlying hidden reasons behind complex social processes. Interpretive research can help bring relevant and interesting research questions to the table and thus pave the way for follow-up research (Williams, 2019).

3.3 RESEARCH APPROACH

This study made use of a qualitative research method. With the help of qualitative approaches, questions regarding experience, viewpoint, and meaning are attempted to be answered (Hammarberg et al., 2015). A common description of qualitative research is that it takes an interpretive, naturalistic approach that focuses on examining occurrences from the participants' points of view as a starting point (Ofiazoglu, 2017).

With qualitative research, the researcher shows interest in understanding what the participants' interpretations on a specific topic are at a specific point in time

and in a certain context (Merriam, 2002). Qualitative research focuses on the study of phenomena from the perspective of the participants; in this case it would be the perspective of educators. This study aims to explore the educators' own experience and knowledge of inclusive education and their implementation thereof in their classrooms (Lapan et al., 2012).

Qualitative research aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the subject matter rather than generalizing the findings. The purpose of qualitative research is to deconstruct; i.e. researchers are trying to disprove stereotypes or assumptions (Bhattacharya, 2017). The significance that people ascribe to items in their lives is a topic of study for qualitative researchers. It attempts to understand people from their own frame of reference and experience the reality that the participants experience. Furthermore, the researchers empathise and identify with the participants taking part in the study in order to understand how they view and experience a certain topic (Taylor et al., 2016).

Qualitative research is inductive; it develops insights, concepts and understandings from patterns derived from the collected data rather than collecting data in order to assess preconceived methods, theories or hypotheses. Researchers look at people and settings from a holistic point of view; settings, groups or people are not reduced to variables, they are viewed as a whole. The qualitative researcher studies individuals in the context of their pasts as well as the current situation in which they find themselves. Researchers are interested in how people behave and think in everyday life (Taylor et al., 2016).

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study made use of a multiple-case study method. A case study is a large-scale investigation of a subject or group of subjects with the goal of extrapolating conclusions across multiple units (Heale & Twycross, 2017). A case can be a group (for example a family) or an individual; it can be an institution, for example a school, or it can be a large-scale community, for example a profession. The above-mentioned are single cases, but the research can also study multiple cases, which can consist of a number of single parents; multiple schools or two or more professions. A case study is something that investigates the single

cases as mentioned above in order to answer specific research questions (Gillham, 2010).

The case study research design is employed in a variety of contexts to advance our understanding of phenomena that are related to groups, organisations, or individuals. Using this technique, researchers are able to preserve the significant and comprehensive aspects of actual events (Yin, 2003). With a multiple-case study research design, comprehensive exploration of theory development and research questions can take place (Heale & Twycross, 2017).

A case study method is mostly used by researchers doing qualitative research. The most effective way to conduct a complete, in-depth, and thorough research of a complicated subject in context is through the use of a case study design, which may be characterised as a multifaceted kind of qualitative inquiry. It is multifaceted in the sense that it can be used to study a wide range of topics and purposes. The primary purpose of a case study design is to gain an understanding of the issue in real-life environments and the focus is on answering 'how' and 'why' research questions (Harrison et al., 2017). This study is viewed as being a multiple-case study design, as the participants will be recruited from three different schools and each school was handled as a case.

3.5 RESEARCH METHODS

3.5.1 Sampling and sampling strategy

Sampling is the process of selecting a sample from a broad population for a particular study objective (Bhardwaj, 2019). Purposive sampling, or non-probability sampling, was used in this investigation. With purposive sampling, there are no obstacles and the process of sample selection is convenient, as the selection is done by an experienced researcher. As the samples that were selected for the particular study, relevant and specific participants, the researcher almost came across real-time results, as the participants had the necessary knowledge and understanding of the subject (Bhardwaj, 2019).

The deliberate selection of participants based on the attributes they possess is known as purposeful sampling (Etikan et al., 2016). Purposive sampling is flexible; it allows the sample to change as the study progresses instead of

following a strict structure from the beginning. The flexibility allows the researcher to select a sample that is diverse to understanding the various perspectives on the topic, and this strengthens the sample (Hennik et al., 2020).

Purposive sampling aims to concentrate on persons who have particular qualities and is able to help with the appropriate study. Purposive sampling requires that the participants be ready, willing, and able to articulate their thoughts and experiences in a deliberate and expressive manner (Etikan et al., 2016).

Purposive sampling involves recruiting participants purposefully with certain characteristics that are important to the study. These participants have knowledge or information on the specific topic of the study that allow the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding (Hennik et al., 2020). Purposive sampling was chosen for this specific study because it can be used to identify and select individuals (in this study it would be the educators) who possess certain characteristics which include: having knowledge about inclusive education and the implementation thereof in their classrooms (Hennik et al., 2020).

Table 3: Cases selected using purposive sampling

School name	Type of school	Primary or Secondary school	Total number of participants per school	Province
School 1	Public school	Primary school	6 educators	Mpumalanga
School 2	Public school	Primary school	4 educators	Mpumalanga

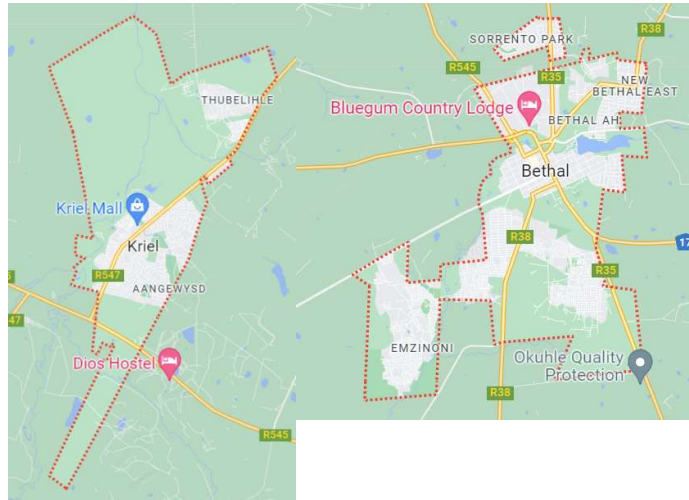
3.5.2 Sample size

For this study, a total of 10 participants were selected from two primary schools in Mpumalanga and the educators within the schools were selected based on what their understanding is in terms of the inclusive education policy and which strategies they utilize to implement the policy in their classrooms. Figure 4 below shows a map of Kriel and Bethal in Mpumalanga, where the two schools are situated.

Figure 4: Map of Kriel and Bethal. Maps were obtained from Google Maps.

Kriel: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Kriel/@-26.2560384,29.1869049,12z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m6!3m5!1s0x1eeb030d293d13ff:0xde2404b775fabe93!8m2!3d-26.2519432!4d29.2603634!16s%2Fm%2F0j3csly?entry=ttu>

Bethal: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Bethal/@-26.4664901,29.371533,12z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m6!3m5!1s0x1eeba043908169fb:0x9193dce81e753746!8m2!3d-26.4578664!4d29.466654!16zL20vMDU0dmts?entry=ttu>



3.6 DATA GATHERING AND DOCUMENTATION STRATEGIES

Data was generated using individual, semi-structured interviews. This study used individual, face-to-face, semi-structured interviews as a method of data collection. In a semi-structured interview, the researcher interacts with participants by asking them questions that are open-ended and give them the chance to share their thoughts and feelings with the researcher, allowing them to expand on the subject (Wholey et al., 2010).

Semi-structured interviews allow participants to challenge, discuss and question dimensions of the topic of the study that is very valuable to the research. This method also provides a space for the researcher to probe the participants' responses and allow participants to bring meaning to the table that the researcher might not have been searching for from the start (Galletta, 2013).

By examining their attitudes, perceptions, and experiences, semi-structured interviews are used to understand why people act in particular ways. They consist of a set of open-ended questions relating to the topic the researcher

endeavoured to cover, and in return the responses were analysed and themes and sub-themes emerged (Galletta, 2013).

When there is adequate objective knowledge about a subject, but insufficient subjective knowledge, semi-structured interviews are performed. The interview questions are relatively detailed; the responses to these questions are the primary focus and provide the structure of the semi-structured interviews. Participants are allowed to respond to these open-ended questions as they see fit and the researcher is allowed to probe the participants on the responses they provide (Flick, 2018).

Interviews were conducted at the school where the educators work. In case educators were ill or concerned about the Covid-19 pandemic that South Africa was facing, interviews were conducted via Zoom or Microsoft Teams.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data retrieved in this study was analysed by means of thematic analysis. A technique for organising, analysing, recognising, and characterising themes identified in a data set is called thematic analysis (Nowell et al., 2017). Thematic analysis requires more interpretation on the part of the researcher, and requires the researcher to be more involved. It is the technique most frequently employed in qualitative research and is most effective at capturing the complexity of meaning present in a set of data (Guest et al., 2012).

Thematic analysis is used to analyse data with regard to the opinion of people, their knowledge or own personal experiences, related to a specific topic. Thematic analysis is very flexible when interpreting data and it allows the researcher to sort the data into broad themes (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2017).

Thematic analysis consists of two types: an inductive approach and a deductive approach. Using the inductive methodology, the themes are determined by the data. In the deductive method, the researcher has some ideas about topics prior to the data collection and these ideas are expected to be incorporated into the data after the data collection. This study made use of an inductive approach (Caulfield, 2022).

Braun and Clarke (2022) proposed a six-phase approach to thematic analysis (see Figure 5). Step 1 is to familiarise yourself with the data. This step involves reading and re-reading of the interviews and listening to the recordings of the initial interviews. One of the most important steps in interpretive qualitative investigations is the word-for-word typing or transcription of the interviews, which must be flawless (Kuckartz, 2014). It is necessary for the researcher to have a general understanding of the entire set of data before the coding process commences. It is during the process when the data is examined that specific meanings and patterns in the writing systematically emerges (Javadi & Zarea, 2016).

Step 2 is to develop initial codes. This step consists of looking for key concepts that are similar in the majority of the interviews so that the themes can be identified (Braun & Clarke, 2022). It is advisable to compile a list of initial concepts related to the data. The data should be organised into groups and initial codes should be given to the data. The codes could either have meanings that are implicit or explicit and are related to the raw information or data that is meaningfully evaluated with regard to the phenomenon under study (Kuckartz, 2014). Systematically, the method starts with the broad set of data. Important components of the data that might or might not be repeated should be the focus. Notes can be made in the margin with different colours or cards to assign codes. The data should be kept nearby and referred to later when the researcher refers to the text for coding (Javadi & Zarea, 2016).

Step 3 involves searching for themes. In this step, the codes are transformed into themes (Braun & Clarke, 2022). When the initial codes are formed, the themes are observed and emerge from these codes. During this phase researchers should be familiar with their codes and might have numerous codes. Similar codes are gradually gathered and brought under one set. The researcher can then provide a name for each set of codes and write a more detailed description for every name separately. The code sets are then systematically organised (Kuckartz, 2014). These codes are then used to create themes and sub-themes and some codes do not belong to a specific theme, but it is necessary to temporarily write them down so that they can be assigned to the

theme that they belong to at a later stage. Although it has not been finalised yet, a preliminary map is beginning to take shape (Javadi & Zarea, 2016).

Step 4 involves reviewing potential themes where the developing themes are considered again in relation to the entire dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2022). In this step, the internal and external homogeneity of the themes, as well as other key qualities of the topics, should be recognised. The data within the themes should be related to one another in a meaningful way and should be explicit by nature (Kuckartz, 2014). When reference is made to the initial themes, it might become clear that some themes cannot really be identified as a theme due to a lack of data to support it. Themes may even be combined to one another since they overlap, or new themes might be developed in combination with existing themes because they are similar. During this phase, new themes that had not been evident before, can be expected to emerge for the first time. By the conclusion of this phase, the researcher should have a solid understanding of what distinguishes the themes, how they are connected, and the narrative they convey about the data (Javadi & Zarea, 2016).

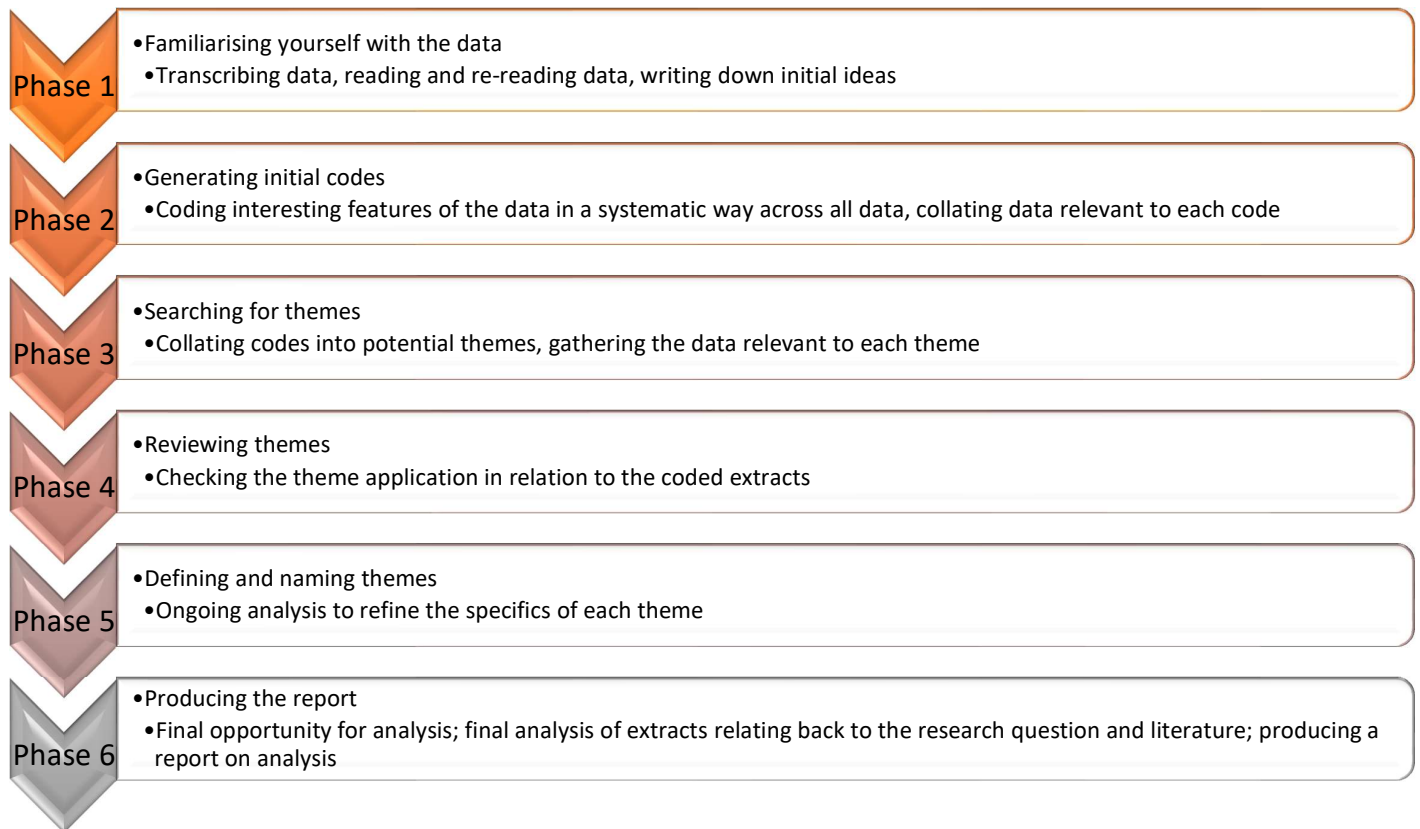
Step 5 involves defining and naming the themes where each theme is named and it is clearly stated what makes each theme unique and how they emerged, and why (Cooper, et al., 2012). During this phase the themes are defined, and they are refined and reviewed while the researcher is doing the analysis. The essence of the themes is reached through the process of defining and refining. The data is interpreted and interesting ideas that emerge from the data and the process of how it became important, is established (Kuckartz, 2014). During the process of refinement, the researcher determines whether the themes have sub-themes or not. At the conclusion of the phase, the researcher should specify what the themes are and what they are not. A summary of not more than two sentences is provided about the scope and contents of each theme. The themes are named after the process of defining and it should be clear, evident, and accurate and should transfer to the reader what the theme are about (Javadi & Zarea, 2016).

Step 6 involves producing the report where the dissertation is written and produced (Cooper et al., 2012). The sixth phase commences when the

researcher has a good set of themes, and the final analysis is done by writing and reporting on the themes. The story of the themes is expressed in a logical, accurate, consistent manner and avoiding repetition (Javadi & Zarea, 2016).

The figure below is a visual summary of the six phases of thematic analysis.

Figure 5: Visual summary of six-phase thematic analysis



CHAPTER 4

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 focuses on the findings of the research. Literature control was focused on in Chapter 5, where the results are discussed. The findings are presented from themes that emerged during thematic analysis. The participants are numbered from one to ten and will be referred to by the participant number; for example, Participant 1 is referred to as P1 and so forth, as indicated in Table 5. Table 4 provides a summary of the demographic information of the participants.

Table 4: Demographic information

Summary demographic info - participants							
	Name of school	Age	M/F	Qualification	Nr of years teaching	Nr of years inclusive	Grade
P1	Public primary school	63	F	HED diploma + remedial teaching diploma	38 years	38 years	1-3
P2	Public primary school	29	M	B.Ed Senior Phase and FET (major Maths)	9 years	4 years	4,6,7
P3	Public primary school	25	F	B.Ed Intermediate Phase	4 years	2 years	LSEN class
P4	Public primary school	26	F	Honours in Educational Psychology	3 years	3 years	R,1
P5	Public primary school	57	F	THED Diploma	20 years	11 years	1
P6	Public primary school	27	F	B.Ed Foundation Phase (studying honours)	7 years	7 years	3
P7	Public primary school	38	F	B.Ed Foundation Phase	15 years	10 years	3
P8	Public primary school	65	F	BA + minimal brain functioning + HED	38 years	15 years	1
P9	Public primary school	54	F	Honours B.Ed. educational management	22 years	22 years	1
P10	Public primary school	65	F	HED	40 years	40 years	1

Table 5: Participants key

Participant number	Key
Participant 1	P1
Participant 2	P2
Participant 3	P3
Participant 4	P4
Participant 5	P5
Participant 6	P6
Participant 7	P7
Participant 8	P8
Participant 9	P9
Participant 10	P10

4.2 IDENTIFIED THEMES AND SUB-THEMES

Five themes were identified through inductive thematic analysis. Themes 1, 2, 4 and 5 do not present with any sub-themes and Theme 3 comprises of two sub-themes. The themes and sub-themes are be outlined in Table 6 and discussed in the order in which they are presented.

Table 6: Themes from data analysis

Theme	Sub-theme
1. The understanding of inclusive education by educators	
2. Inclusion practices in the classroom	
3. Educators' attitudes towards inclusive education	3.1. Educators who present with a positive attitude towards inclusive education 3.2. Educators who present with a negative attitude towards inclusive education
4. Challenges of implementing inclusive education	
5. Strengths of implementing inclusive education	

4.2.1 Theme 1: The understanding of inclusive education by educators

Literature defines inclusive education (IE) as promoting the inclusion of certain learners, mainly, but is not exclusive to learners with disabilities in the mainstream education (Armstrong et al., 2010). For the purpose of this theme, inclusive education is discussed according to how educators view and understand inclusive education.

Table 7: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 1

Theme	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
The understanding of IE by educators	All data reference by the participants that mentions what inclusive education is.	All data references by the participants that does not refer to the definition of inclusive education.

Table 8: Number of participants that reported on the theme

Theme	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10
Understanding of inclusive education by educators	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

In response to understanding inclusive education, nine out of ten participants, as shown in Table 8, presented their own definitions of inclusive education. Participants shared that inclusive education involves including learners who present with disabilities in the mainstream classroom. P1 shared that inclusive education is having learners in the same class where they are all accommodated so that no child is excluded from education. P8 shared that it is basically to accommodate all learners with different abilities.

P1 (line 8): *All children across all spectrums are in one class.* This links to P5 (line 628) sharing that *the children in the class are very diverse, they are not all the same, but they are put in the same class.* Similarly, P3 (line 311) confirmed that inclusion refers to: *the inclusion of learners with barriers to learning in mainstream education,* while P6 (line 814) made reference to learners with different abilities: *All children are included in day-to-day schooling, no matter*

their ability, disabilities or learning needs. This links with P8 (line 1181): who confirmed that inclusion *is basically to accommodate all learners with all their different abilities in one class.*

P9 (line 1332): *It is to help every child in your class; whether they have any disability, you must be able to accommodate everyone in your class.* P10 (line 1464) shared the same view stating that: *it is to include all learners, even learners with learning difficulties and even if they are disabled. It is to include them in the one mainstream school.*

Participants further stated that inclusive education is to make adaptations in your classroom. P4 (line 426): shared that: *children that have special needs are incorporated into your class, and you have to adjust your class so that they have the opportunity to have ordinary education needs met.*

P7 (line 1030): *It is children that have different needs than other children, and those needs must be satisfied in a class.*

4.2.2 Summary of Theme 1

Theme 1 looked at how educators define inclusive education. Nine out of ten participants' definitions fit in the provided inclusion criteria, and they proved to have a significant understanding of the concept of IE. Furthermore, participants understood that inclusive education is not only for learners with disabilities, but for all learners.

4.2.3 Theme 2: Inclusion practices in the classroom.

This theme looked at how educators implement inclusive education in their classrooms by including all learners, especially those with learning barriers. When learners are integrated into the classroom their needs are being addressed. Every learner is integrated meaningfully and every learner is actively participating and physically involved. The curriculum and classroom are adapted to fit the learners. The educator chooses methodologies and activities that fit the needs of the children. Generally, every learner has the right to participate (Whelan, 2023).

Table 9: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 2

Theme	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Inclusion practices in the classroom.	All data that explain inclusion practices that take place in the classroom.	Data that does not explain inclusion practices that take place in the classroom.

Table 10: Number of participants reported on the theme

Theme	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10
Inclusion practices in the classroom	X			X	X	X	X		X	

Learners in the classrooms are diverse and educators need to make sure that all learners are accommodated in their diversity. This view is demonstrated below. P1 (line 19): *We have heterogeneous classes, not homogenous so all the children are divided into heterogeneous classes where the educators must accommodate them.*

P4 explained that she had a learner with a disability in her classroom. The strategy that she uses in her class is to move the learner to the front where she stands so that she can make sure he is paying attention when she teaches. P4 (line 453): *I moved him to the front of my class. It was the easiest because that is where I stand most of the time so if I need to explain something, I am standing right in front of him and I talk and make sure that he listens.* P4 further explained that she would sometimes sit with him when he did his work. P4 (line 459): *A lot of times when the other children need to write words, I would let him draw pictures instead of writing words or I would show him pictures rather than showing him words in my class.*

P5 shared similar strategies and explained that she takes learners that are not up to standard in Gr.1, who fail the grade, and work with them and elevates them so that they can get where they need to be and proceed to the next grade. P5 (line 656): *In the class itself, in Gr.1, they struggle a lot and do not pass. So, I*

like to work with those children to elevate them and to get them where they can go to the next class and not struggle further in school. The strategies she uses in the classroom include giving work that is a little easier to those learners who struggle; she gives them more attention and one-on-one time. P5 (line 688): I always give them easier work and I put a lot of attention, or I put in a lot of time with them so I will work one-on-one with them for example until they understand.

The strategies that P6 uses to accommodate learners in the classroom include group work; she breaks up activities for learners that present with ADHD. P6 (line 869): *I've had quite a few learners with ADHD. I tend to break up their activities.* For those learners who are not up to standard after performing a baseline assessment, she would take time and make an effort to teach them the basics to ensure that they have a solid foundation before moving on to the next grade. P6 (line 886): *After starting with a routine baseline assessment, it was clear that this child did not know how to read or write basic words. The child did not even know when his birthday was. I went back to the basics. I taught him Gr.1 sounds, we started with basic Mathematics, and at the end of the year, this child went through to Gr. 4 normally like the other children.* She further mentioned that they worked out of different books, read books and wrote stories, and they learned through role play in class. P6 (line 898): *The basic strategy we do in class is to work out of different books.*

P7 and P9 mentioned that they make use of assistants in their classes to help the learners who struggle. P7 (line 1046) stated that she implements IE in her classroom by: *making use of different ways of instruction, different ways of explaining and also intervention where it is needed.* As a part of the intervention, she includes the parents to show and explain to them where the child needs extra help. P7 (line 1049): *By doing an intervention, also include the parents and show and explain where the child requires extra help.* Furthermore, learners who need extra help are placed next to learners who are stronger academically so that they have help in that regard as well. P7 (line 1052): *What I experienced helps a lot is to put a child with restrictions or a child that needs more attention next to a stronger academic child to help the child that struggles in this manner, and by doing this the child also feels more included if the stronger academic child helps them in that respect.* Learners also receive individual attention after

the period or after school. P9 (line 1350): *I have an assistant in my class who studies education.*

4.2.4 Summary of Theme 2

Theme 2 highlighted strategies that educators use in their classrooms to make sure that all learners participate in class and are included in the process of teaching and learning. Special attention was given to learners with disabilities in the mainstream classrooms. The educators mentioned specific teaching and learning strategies they use in their classrooms to ensure that all learners are accommodated according to their specific needs. Of the ten participants interviewed, six presented sufficient evidence of strategies they actively implement in their classrooms.

4.2.5 Theme 3: Educators' attitudes towards inclusive education

This theme presents the attitudes of educators towards inclusive education. An attitude is a set of beliefs or concepts about one's feelings that guide behaviour in relation to a certain topic. A person's attitude is their perspective or disposition towards a specific item (a person, a thing, or an idea) (Singh et al., 2020). In this case, educators' attitude towards inclusive education is focused on.

Theme 3 presents two sub-themes, namely: Sub-theme 1, educators who present with a positive attitude towards inclusive education and Sub-theme 2, educators who present with a negative attitude towards inclusive education.

Sub-theme 1: Educators who present with a positive attitude towards inclusive education. A positive attitude has been linked to educators encouraging the inclusion of all learners into the mainstream classroom (Subban & Sharma, 2005).

Table 11: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Sub-theme 1

Sub-theme 1	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Educators that have a positive attitude towards inclusive education	Data that fits the description of educators encouraging the inclusion of all learners in the classroom	Data that does not fit the description of educators encouraging the inclusion of all learners in the classroom

Table 12: Number of participants that reported on the theme

Sub-theme 1	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10
Educators that have a positive attitude towards inclusive education			X				X	X	X	

As regards response to the sub-theme on educators with a positive attitude towards inclusive education, four out of ten participants presented with a response that fit the criteria. Educators experience feelings of joy, a sense of commitment and duty and feel rewarded when a learner achieves success.

P3 (line 343) said: *...find it rewarding, for me, for example, because I get to witness first-hand how the learners with barriers to learning thrive in my classroom setting.* P3 (line 355): continued to say: *I think they are definitely for it because all children have to get equal opportunities to learn.*

P7 (line 1084) reported that: *at our school, everyone has a positive attitude, and I don't think anyone feels that it is disruptive or extra work.* P9 (line 1370) had a similar response: *I don't think they have a negative attitude. I think they are positive about it.*

P8 (line 1232) reported that educators had a positive attitude, stating furthermore: *we want to do it because it benefits your weaker child. Your weaker child in such a situation benefits from it because it elevates the child, and he has many challenges, and he must adjust and so forth.*

Sub-theme 2: Educators who present with a negative attitude towards inclusive education. Negative attitudes from educators are linked to not accepting learners into the classroom and low achievement of learners with disabilities in mainstream classrooms or schools (Subban & Sharma, 2005). Educators with a negative attitude would resist the implementation of inclusive education and would not support learners in their classrooms.

Table 13: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Sub-theme 2

Sub-theme 2	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Educators that have a negative attitude towards inclusive education	Data that fits the description of educators having a negative attitude and not accepting learners with disabilities into the mainstream schools	Data that does not fit the description of educators having a negative attitude and not accepting learners with disabilities into the mainstream schools

Table 14: Number of participants that reported on the theme

Sub-theme 2	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10
Educators that have a negative attitude towards inclusive education	X			X	X	X				X

This view of resistance is seen in P1, as they viewed inclusive education as a policy that is forced upon educators who are then compelled to comply irrespective of their views. P1 (line 62) reported that inclusive education: *is a paper handed to them, and it is not shared with them, so they are not very keen to do it.*

On the other hand, P4 experienced inclusive education as difficult to implement. P4 (line 476): *in my opinion, I don't think they have a very good attitude about inclusive education; I think we all feel the same, or most of us feel the same way. It is very difficult.*

One concern with P5 was that learners would experience discrimination if they had barriers to learning, but the participant externalised the discrimination and referred to other educators and not to herself. P5 (line 704) reported that: *many educators are not up to it; they don't want to work with those children.*

P6 seemed to assume gender issues, where female educators are seen as having the ability to work with learners with disabilities while male educators are not able to do that. P6 (line 931) reported that in their school: *male educators are more prone to having a poor attitude towards learners with challenges.* P6 (line

935) furthermore stated that: *out of experience, they don't have the patience or will to work with these learners*. P10 referred to age differences in the ability and knowledge (training received) to implement inclusive education in the classroom. P10 tended to question the education received by newly qualified educators to implement inclusive education. P10 (line 1521) said: *for educators, it's just a challenge and especially your young educators who just qualified, they haven't got enough experience or training to implement it, and they stand quite sceptical about inclusive education, and your older educators still see it as a challenge, and others see it as a problem and time-consuming*.

4.2.6 Summary of Theme 3

Theme 3 looked at the positive and negative attitudes of educators towards IE, as discussed in the sub-themes respectively. Four participants displayed a more positive attitude towards IE, and six displayed a negative attitude toward IE. The participants also gave a general opinion of the attitudes at the school where they work and not only their opinions and views. The participants with a more positive view indicated that the educators they spoke to felt the same. The positive attitude was based on the educators' commitment, sense of duty and experiences of joy in experiencing positive rewards from implementing inclusive education. On the other hand, the participants with a more negative attitude indicated the difficulty of implementing the policy, the challenges of the policy, and the gender and age influences in the implementation of the policy. It also seemed that educators had spoken to each other about IE and the reported feeling was a general negative experience regarding the implementation of policy.

4.2.7 Theme 4: Challenges of implementing inclusive education

This theme presents the challenges that educators experience with the implementation of IE. A challenge is a situation where a person is faced with an obstacle that requires physical or mental effort to successfully overcome and therefore a person's ability is tested (Goldstein & Kuru, 2023).

Table 15: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 4

Theme	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Challenges of implementing inclusive education in mainstream schools	All data reference by the participants that indicates the challenges of inclusion of learners in mainstream schools	All data reference by the participants that does not indicate the challenges of inclusion of learners in mainstream schools

Table 16: Number of participants that reported on the theme

Theme	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10
Challenges of implementing inclusive education in mainstream schools	X			X	X	X	X			X

Lack of training and access to resources was one of the challenges. P1 (line 109) said: *the challenges are to train people and to give them the necessary resources because there are no resources*. P5 (line 779) had a similar response saying that: *educators need to be trained, they are not trained to teach like that*. Lack of training seems to be a recurring concern for educators. P6 (line 978) commented: *First of all, the lack of training, of educators who are willing to implement IE*. P6 furthermore stated that inadequate support for example, funding is a challenge. P6 (line 987) said: *Inadequate support such as funding to make it possible to run an inclusive education programme such as you know, funding for laptops, where laptops are needed*. Lastly, P6 indicated that she felt strongly about the last challenge she mentioned; that is that the classes are too full, which makes it very difficult to implement IE. P6 (line 993) commented: *And then I feel very strong about this one, a very large class makes it very difficult to implement inclusive education. I speak out of experience as I had fifty-two children at once in my class, and yes it made it very difficult to give attention to the children who needs more attention*.

P7 mentioned that the attitudes of people towards children with special needs posed a challenge to schools. This participant further stated that educators with the wrong attitude was also a challenge. P7 (line 1133) said: *I think the challenges are the attitudes of people towards children with special needs and disabled children are sometimes negative and they are easily discriminated against so that can be a challenge to schools and also educators with the wrong attitude. A shortage of the correct educators, correct resources, not enough training and then financial shortcomings.*

P4 (line 566) stated that from her experience in her own classroom, one of the challenges was time. *Because the curriculum is so full, there is not necessarily time in a class to take a couple of minutes to 100% focus on the child that needs your attention.*

According to P10, a big challenge was the language barrier, as the educator does not always speak the home language of the learner. P10 (line 1567): *I will say that the language barrier is an extremely big challenge. Some of the children, especially come to Gr.1 they can't even speak English. The other problem is 99% of the cases, the educators cannot speak the child's home language.*

4.2.8 Summary of Theme 4

In theme 4, the participants expressed the personal challenges that they encountered daily with implementing IE in their classroom. Six participants expressed concerns that hindered them from implementing IE. The overall challenges expressed by the participants were lack of training, lack of resources, restrictions with regard to time and language barriers and also having to work with educators who have a negative attitude towards inclusive education.

4.2.9 Theme 5: Strengths of implementing inclusive education

This theme presents the strengths of implementing inclusive education according to educators. Strength can be defined as: "...character traits or skills that are considered positive. Strengths include knowledge, attributes, skills, and talents" (Davis, 2023, p.1).

Table 17: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for theme 5

Theme	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Strengths of implementing inclusive education	All data reference by the participants that indicates the strengths of implementing inclusive education	All data reference by the participants that does not indicate the strengths of implementing inclusive education

Table 18: Number of participants that reported on the theme

Theme	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10
Strengths of implementing inclusive education			X		X	X	X		X	X

Ensuring all learners are afforded equal opportunity is one of the strengths of inclusive education. P3 (line 409) described it as: *equal opportunities for children without any discrimination*. P7 (line 1146) showed a similar response, saying: *it definitely creates an environment for children that all children get equal opportunities regardless of their shortcomings*. P9 responded that learners feel part of the class. These learners are accepted. P9 (line 1427): *They feel part of the class. They are accepted in the community or in the class. There are no stigmas that are attached to them*. P10 showed a similar response, stating that all the learners were treated in the same way. P10 (line 1588): *The learner is in an environment; he gets treated the same as each and every other child*. P10 (line 1594) furthermore stated that: *They're part, they get accepted as part of a crowd and there's no stigma whether you clever or you're struggling*.

P5 and P6 demonstrated similar responses, which came down to a culture of acceptance. P5 (line 784): *I think it is nice to just be accepted among other children that are not the same as they are and one can actually do so much to create awareness among children that everyone is not the same*. P6 (line 1009) said the following: *I believe it creates a culture of acceptance amongst children*. P6 explained that learners were more confident and that they had increased self-esteem when they received the correct support. It also helped the learners to feel valued and to be seen, regardless of their differences or abilities.

4.2.10 Summary of Theme 5

In Theme 5, the participants discussed the strengths of implementing IE; these strengths related to their personal experiences and differences that they experienced in their classroom as well as their school. Six participants presented strengths that fit the provided criteria.

CHAPTER 5

5. RESULTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

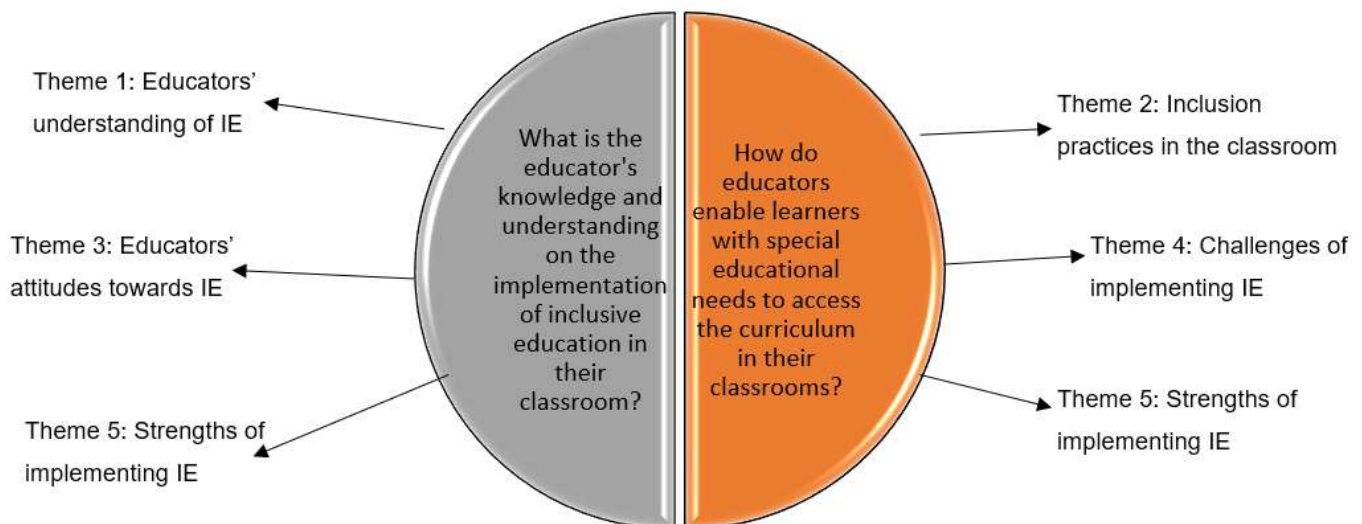
5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports on the educators' experiences with implementing the inclusive education policy, extending over a twenty-year period. This chapter will answer the research questions in the following order: First, the secondary research question will be answered which will lead up to and ultimately contribute to answering the primary research question. The research results are discussed and contrasted with existing literature. Ultimately, the limitations of this particular research study are discussed, and the chapter concludes with suggestions for future research.

5.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS REVISITED

The primary question of the study was: "What is the educator's knowledge and understanding of implementing inclusive education in their classroom?" The primary research question was supported by the following secondary research question: "How do educators enable learners with SEN to access the curriculum in their classrooms?" I will begin by addressing the secondary research question and then move on to addressing the primary research question. Figure 6 below shows how the research questions relate to the themes that support it.

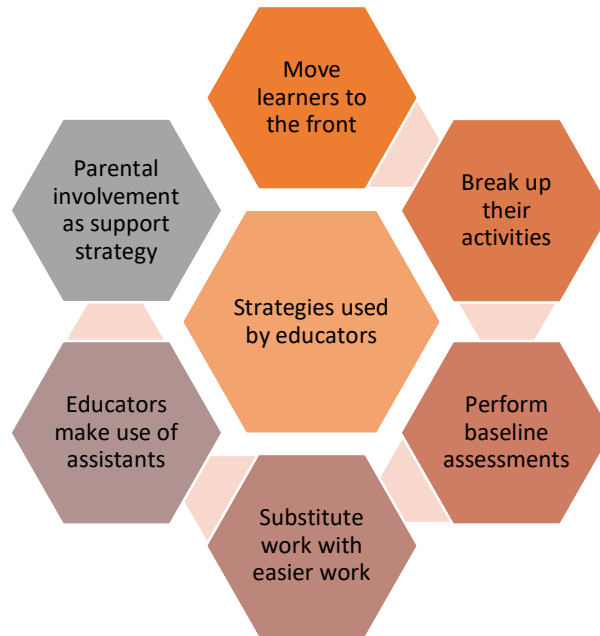
Figure 6: Visual representation of the relationship between the research questions and themes



5.2.1 Secondary research question: How do educators enable learners with special educational needs to access the curriculum in their classrooms?

Figure 7 below summarises the strategies that the educators reported using daily as a part of their teaching methods to ensure that learners with special needs have the same access to the curriculum as their peers.

Figure 7: Summary of strategies used by educators.



Accessing the curriculum means putting supports in place that allow all learners to use the same curriculum. For learners to access the curriculum, it must be adapted for them. Curriculum adaptation takes place when educators amend and improve their teaching methods in order to accommodate learners (Adewumi, 2017). For educational settings to be fully inclusive, educators need to make adaptations to their methods of teaching, their resources as well as the implementation of the curriculum to accommodate the needs of all learners in the classroom (Brown, 2016).

The data showed that educators have a variety of support structures in place, and they adjust their teaching methods as well as the curriculum to ensure that learners with SEN have access to the same curriculum and quality education as their peers. Learners in the classroom are diverse and educators ensure that all

learners are accommodated in their diversity. When learners are integrated into the classroom their needs are being addressed, every learner is integrated meaningfully, and every learner is actively participating and physically involved. The educator selects methodologies and activities to suit the learners and every learner has the right to participate (Whelan, 2023).

The following strategies were identified in this study. The first strategy was that learners are moved to the front of the class to be closer to the educator so that they pay more attention and can hear clearly. There is a dearth of literature on this specific strategy as a method of inclusive practices. This is mostly used as a strategy for visually impaired learners or learners with behavioural problems. Learners with ADHD should be moved to a space in the classroom where they cannot be easily distracted, i.e. the front of the class (Cooper & Bilton, 2002).

The second strategy identified by the educator was to perform baseline assessments to identify the areas in which the learners struggle and to then revert to the basics; start education there and work their way up until they are on par with their peers. Landsberg (2017) upholds that educators should identify the areas in which learners struggle by means of classroom screening and assessment procedures.

This links to Vygotsky's theory of scaffolding (1978) where he proposed that in order to qualify for scaffolding. The educator and learning event should: enable learners to successfully complete a certain activity that might have been nearly impossible for them to complete independently and enabling a learner to reach a state of competence where they in the future would be able to complete such a task independently. Collaboration exists between the educator and learner in constructing skill and knowledge (Verenikina, 2003). An educator mentioned that as a strategy, she breaks up the activities of learners who present with ADHD. She sends them to the office or another educator so that when they return, they feel refreshed and are better able to continue with their work. This strategy aligns with Cooper and Bilton (2002), who suggested that within each lesson, there should be a breaking down of activities or tasks. This keeps the child focused and not overwhelmed with enormous tasks. The educators also mentioned that they would sometimes substitute the hard work for easier work, or they would

allow learners who struggle to write, to rather draw pictures and learners who struggle to read, to have them look at pictures. Mitchell and Sutherland (2020) reported that some learners grasped information better when it was presented to them through text; other learners are more visual; some learners prefer being orally spoken to and other learners are kinaesthetic learners. Some learners perform best with a combination of the above (Mitchell & Sutherland, 2020).

The next strategy that was identified was that educators made use of assistants in their classroom, i.e. students who are currently studying towards an education degree. The educators furthermore expressed the view that having assistants allowed them more time with learners that required individual attention. Murphy (2018) called this strategy the *one teach one assist* model to education where the educator teaches a lesson and the person who assists, supports the learners and monitors their progress throughout the lesson (Murphy, 2018).

Educators highlighted the need as well as the importance for parents to be involved and provide guidance throughout the inclusive learning process. Parents should be involved so that they can better understand where their child needs additional support or assistance and how they can provide that to their children at home (Thwala & Makoelle, 2022). The involvement of parents is a benefit to inclusive education that can be directly observed. Schools support and highly encourage parents to take part in their children's education and activities. Inclusion fosters a sense of community, belonging and respect by enabling children to understand and embrace their differences, which can only be achieved through an inclusive learning environment (Thwala & Makoelle, 2022). Most educators mentioned that one of the advantages of inclusive education is that learners feel a sense of belonging; they feel part of the class and they are not discriminated against. The data thus aligns with and supports previous research.

5.2.2 Primary research question: What is the educator's knowledge and understanding on the implementation of inclusive education in their classroom?

As supported by the secondary research question, the primary research question addressed the educators' knowledge and understanding on the implementation of inclusive education in their classroom. Additionally, the question would

address factors which have an influence on or impacts the educators' knowledge or understanding of inclusive education. The figure below is a visual representation of their knowledge and understanding as well as themes that emerged that could have an influence on or impact this.

Figure 8: Summary of educators' knowledge and understanding of inclusive education.

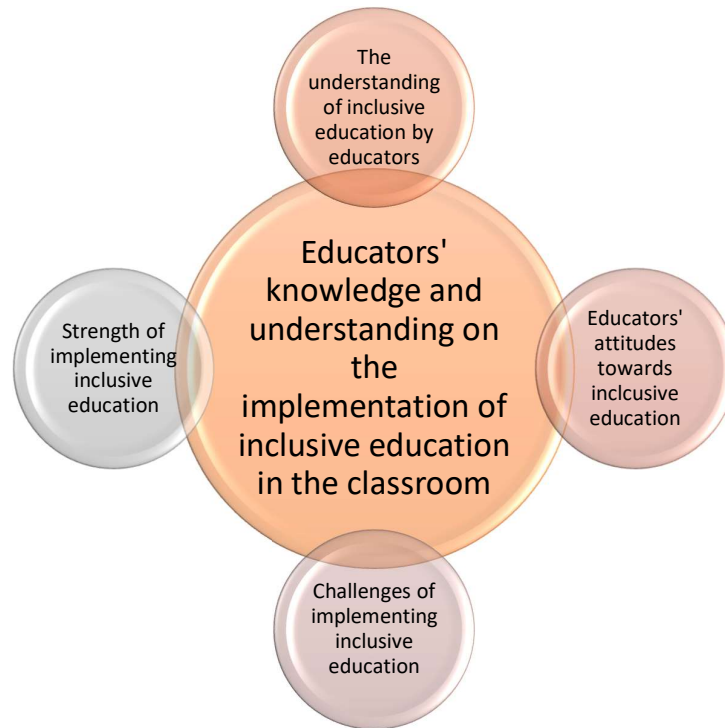


Figure 9 below provides a summary of the educators' responses to the primary research question.

Figure 9: Educators' responses to the primary research question



Inclusive education provides an inclusive learning environment where all students have the chance to learn together in a safe and inclusive setting, regardless of their ability. It can be seen as a tool for transformation and an opportunity to take part in an education system that is accepting of human diversity (Yoro et al., 2020). Firstly, educators were asked what they know about inclusive education and how they would define the term, and nine participants fully understood what it means and they could provide an acceptable definition and explanation of inclusive education. The educators defined inclusive education as having learners in the same heterogeneous class that should be diverse. Educators understood that learners with SEN in a diverse classroom need to be placed in an environment where they can receive the same quality of

education as other learners. Literature supports these views. Inclusive education is defined by Armstrong et al. (2010) as promoting the inclusion of certain learners, mainly, but is not exclusive to learners that present with disabilities who are incorporated in the mainstream.

Educators furthermore expressed that understanding what inclusive education means and what it entails is vastly different from implementing it in their classrooms; sharing that they might know how to define it but not necessarily how to implement it. Research conducted by Rakgalakane and Mokhampanyane (2022), suggests that in general, educators know what inclusive education is and they support the idea, but implementing it in practice is not so easy. Educators agreed that every child should have the opportunity to learn in a mainstream setting, but were uncertain about the practicality thereof (Chhabra et al., 2009). Research conducted by Hernandez et al. (2016) furthermore suggests that educators' attitude plays an important role in their understanding and implementation of inclusive education in their classrooms. Attitudes are pervasive aspects of human life. Attitudes are made up of thoughts, ideas, likes, dislikes, behavioural intentions or feelings of a person about things or people they encounter in their daily lives (Loreman et al., 2005). Those educators who showed a positive attitude, had studied a module on inclusive education, whereas educators with a negative attitude, might be due to a lack of understanding or experience, or it might be influenced by previous exposure (Boyle et al., 2020). The data showed that five educators showed negative attitudes and four educators displayed positive attitudes towards the implementation of inclusive education. The educators that had a negative attitude towards inclusive education still shared their inclusion strategies and thus still implemented it in their classroom. These educators furthermore expressed how they were unsure of how inclusive education should be correctly implemented and said that they needed more training and workshops for them to feel more confident and gain sufficient knowledge to implement it in their classrooms.

Inclusion practices in the classroom, as mentioned in the secondary research question, is linked with having a sound knowledge and understanding of inclusive education, as a person needs to understand it before they can

implement it. The inclusion practices were addressed in the secondary research question, where the educators explained that they all had learners in their classroom with SEN and they described how they had adapted their classroom and curriculum to make provision for those learners (Nguyet & Thu Ha, 2010).

According to the European Agency for Development of Special Needs Education, educators must not only have the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding, but also the right attitudes and values in order to work effectively in an inclusive environment (Pit-ten Cate et al., 2018). The data showed that the educators had an overall negative attitude; five educators displayed a negative attitude towards inclusive education and four educators displayed a positive attitude towards inclusive education. A negative attitude has been linked with educators excluding learners from the classroom and low achievement of learners with disabilities in mainstream schools (Subban & Sharma, 2005). In contrast, a positive attitude has been linked with educators encouraging the inclusion of all learners into the mainstream classroom (Subban & Sharma, 2005). Even though only five educators displayed a positive attitude, six educators provided sufficient evidence of how they implemented inclusive education in their classrooms. This indicates that even though educators might not have a positive attitude, they are still willing to implement it and accommodate learners in the mainstream classroom. One of the educators also mentioned that a negative attitude posed a challenge to schools – the overall attitude of people towards learners with special needs, and also educators with the wrong attitude.

In addition, educators who expressed a more negative view of inclusive education might be due to inexperience or a lack of understanding or experience about inclusive education. Hence the importance for educators to get the training they need to make inclusive learning a reality in the classroom (Boyle et al., 2020). According to the data, one of the obstacles that prevent educators from implementing inclusive learning practices in their classrooms is a lack of training, although they are currently actively implementing inclusive practices in their classroom. The educators expressed the view that they did not receive adequate training during their education studies, nor did they attend any workshops after they had finished their studies, as they were not aware of any such training

opportunities. Educators do not feel comfortable teaching in an inclusive environment and they feel that they did not receive adequate training to effectively implement inclusive education in the classroom (McMillan, 2008).

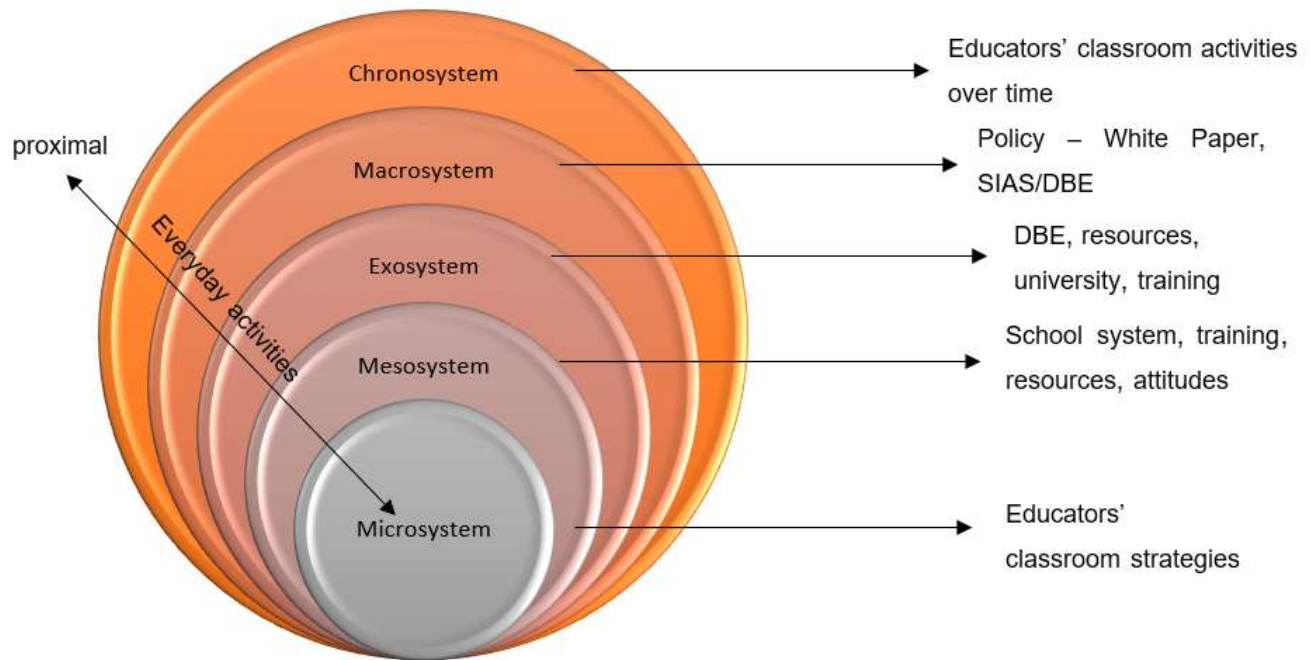
Educators furthermore expressed that overfull classes hinder their ability to implement inclusive education in their classroom. One of the educators mentioned that she once had a class with more than 50 learners, which made it almost impossible to reach every learner or to adjust your teaching strategies to fit every learner. Shortage of classroom space is a challenge that is growing bigger and bigger every year, especially in South Africa. Some schools are forced to accommodate up to 40 learners per classroom due to reasons such as a shortage of classrooms, shortage of educators and inadequate financial resources (Legotlo, 2014). Class size is a challenge with regard to inclusive education, as it is crucial that every learner in the class should be reached and it becomes more difficult, if not impossible, to reach every learner when the class sizes are too large (Mpu & Adu, 2021).

5.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK REVISITED

This research corresponds with Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory. This theory is used to better understand and implement the process of education as well as the various systems of education, such as the learners, educators and care and teaching. This theory looks at the developing person as well as the environment designed for education and the people that form part of that environment, with all the relationships and roles that accompany them (Bronfenbrenner, 1977).

The themes from Chapter 4 are summarized in the figure below, along with their connections to Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory.

Figure 10: Themes identified in Chapter 4 and how they relate to Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory.



Bronfenbrenner's theory, apart from the interrelated systems, assumed that development takes place when a person-environment interaction is present. This was called the proximal process and was considered the essence of the model. These interactions occur in parent-child and peer-peer activities (Landsberg, 2017). The educator thus interacts with the child and the parent and the child interacts with his/her peers.

The interaction patterns and activities of the person's immediate surroundings make up the microsystem, which is the environment's innermost level. The microsystem consists of influences closest to the individual and stands in an intimate personal relationship with them (Hayes et al., 2017). The educator is seen as the centre of the microsystem for the purpose of this study. The educator has intimate personal relationships with people closest to them, for example the school, the learners and their co-workers. The theme on inclusion practices in the classroom described how the educator in the centre of their environment, adapts and adjusts to ensure that every learner receives quality education.

The mesosystem refers to interactions that take place between microsystems which foster development (Killam & Degges-White, 2017). The school plays an important role, as the educator interacts with the school and the school should provide support and resources for the educator to assist them in successfully implementing inclusive education in their classrooms.

Although the individual is not actively participating in the exosystem, it nevertheless has an impact on them (Killam & Degges-White, 2017). The exosystem is strongly linked with the challenges that educators face with the implementation of inclusive education as the schools infrastructure, overfull classrooms, a shortage of educators and policy changes have an influence on the degree to which inclusive education is successfully implemented.

The macrosystem is the larger socio-cultural context which consists of the policies, customs, values and resources of a particular culture (Hayes et al., 2017). Within this study the educators' attitudes could be linked to the macrosystem, as their attitudes are influenced by their values as well as the values of their colleagues and peers. Their customs and culture can also play a significant role, as some cultures might dictate one's behaviour towards certain topics and influence a person's attitudes, views and perspectives. Moments of discomfort might arise within a community where there are difference as a result of seeing and doing things in different ways. Educators need to be reflective of their position in a community of difference in terms of their cultural, racialised and gendered identities. Schools thus have to become culturally astute and be capable of building a community of difference based on responsibility, respect, placing value on multiple languages, providing relevant assessment and embracing diverse perspectives (Blackmore, 2009).

The chronosystem was only later developed as part of the system and it focuses on the significance of time on the development of the individual through various environmental subsystems (Killam & Degges-White, 2017). It consists of all the factors and circumstances that occur over time and has an impact on the individual's psycho-social development. Time is a crucial element as the educator's attitudes towards inclusive education can change over time and as a result become positive towards inclusive education and educators would then be

more willing to implement it effectively and successfully. Time also allows educators to attend workshops and receive training on a regular basis so that they would have sufficient knowledge and might acquire the necessary skills to implement inclusive education in their classrooms so as to gain enough confidence to successfully implement it.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

One of the limitations of the study was the small sample groups. The data gathered for this study emerged from educators at two primary schools which made up the two case studies in the multiple case study design. Consisting of four and six educators per case study, respectively. Additionally, the goal of this research was to understand inclusive education in schools more thoroughly rather than to make generalizations. The research population consisted of educators from two primary schools in Mpumalanga, from neighbouring towns. Although the study was conducted in two schools from the same province, the results cannot be generalised to all primary schools across Mpumalanga or even South Africa. As a result, it is suggested that this data should be used for further research with more case studies and more schools so that more data could be generated and deeper understanding would be gained.

Another limitation was that the study was only conducted at primary schools and as a result, there is no data that represents the high school population in order to determine whether educators at high schools would be more willing to help learners with SEN and whether this continued throughout their school career.

5.5 REFLEXIVITY

Reflexivity is a part of the research process where the researcher does introspection on the role of subjectivity. It is a continuous process in terms of evaluating, examining, recognising and understanding how the researcher's location, social background and preconceptions affect their research practice (Palaganas et al., 2017). Reflexivity is a self-monitoring of, and self-responding to one's feelings, actions and thoughts as a researcher engages in research projects. Furthermore, reflexivity involves questioning about what is considered valuable and valid research.

Epistemological reflexivity is the process of acknowledging the researcher's assumptions about the world and their body of knowledge, as well as the potential effects those assumptions may have on the research and its conclusions (Cassell et al., 2018).

This research process taught the researcher a lot about how to conduct research and the write-up process. The researcher really enjoyed interviewing educators and being welcomed into their workplace and classrooms and seeing how they adapted the classroom as well as the curriculum to include the diverse learners in their mainstream classroom. From the ten participants interviewed, only one was male and the researcher found it very interesting to see how his interpretations, experiences, and perspectives differed from those of the rest of the participants. It was also interesting to observe how the older educators' views differed from the younger educators and how the results reflected all their perspectives.

Being an educator herself, it was interesting for the researcher to hear different perspectives from primary school educators, as she had more experience with high school learners. She currently works at a mainstream high school which makes provision for learners with SEN. The method of teaching is adapted to suit every individual's needs and every individual with challenges has their own Individual Support Plan (ISP) according to which they are taught. It was attempted to establish whether all schools made provision for such learners or whether they sent them to separate special schools. This also shed light as to whether or not much had been achieved with regard to the implementation of the inclusive education policy since it was developed in 2001.

The researcher kept a reflective journal on the research process, and it was astonishing to see which assumptions a person had made before conducting the study and how these assumptions were either proven to be correct or incorrect upon writing up the results.

Table 19: Summary of initial working assumptions vs end-of-study results

Initial working assumptions	End-of-study results
Educators do not have a sound understanding of inclusive education.	The data showed that the majority of the educators understood what inclusive education entails and what was required of them to successfully implement it in their classroom.
Educators are reluctant to implement inclusive education.	The results varied as educators expressed the notion that some educators are willing to implement it while others are reluctant. The conclusion was thus that the older educators are a little more reluctant to implement inclusive education, whereas the younger educators seemed more willing.
Learners with special needs are removed from the mainstream class and thus are not accommodated.	The data revealed that learners are accommodated into the mainstream and provision is made for them. One school has a special <u>class</u> but the parents have the option to keep their learners in the mainstream classroom if they wished to do so; it is not compulsory for them to go to the special class after they had been tested by the school's Educational Psychologist. According to the educators they try to make provision for these learners first and they do not just send learners to the special class. <u>So</u> it can be assumed that inclusive education takes place first before they resort to excluding the learners from the mainstream.
Educators generally have a negative attitude towards IE	The data showed that the educators have a positive attitude towards IE. Educators seemed to be willing to implement IE in their classroom and accommodate learners with various special educational needs in their classroom.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the findings of this study, the educators' experience of inclusive education was based on the educators' views, including their attitudes on inclusive education, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of inclusive education in their classroom. The researcher would recommend further studies to be conducted in the following areas:

Firstly, the experience of the learners could be recorded to determine how they feel in an inclusive classroom; whether they feel included and comfortable or if they would prefer to be in a classroom with learners who share the same abilities or disabilities as they do.

Secondly, it is recommended to have this study repeated with high school learners to see if the learners would feel the same way as they grow older and to record whether it is sustainable; i.e. does inclusive education work effectively in a primary school setting or throughout the schooling career?

Thirdly, it is recommended to repeat the study using a bigger sample of schools and educators, so that the study could likely be generalised. The results of this study are restricted to the two schools who took part in the study and it cannot be assumed that all primary schools across South Africa would yield the same results. Thus, if perhaps more schools took part and more educators with a wider variety of demographic information could be included, for example regarding their age, gender, ethnicity and the types of schools where they are employed, the results might represent outcomes that are more likely to be generalised over the broader population.

In the fourth place, a study could be undertaken to acquire the perspective of parents in terms of whether schools made them part of the inclusive learning process, whether they were constantly kept up to date with their child's progress and whether they were given support and resources to assist the learners at home. These are important additional studies that should be conducted, as parents are an important link between the child and the school and the parents should receive additional resources from the school to provide support for the learner at home.

5.7 CONCLUSION

This research allowed a deeper exploration of educators' experiences on the methods and strategies they use to implement inclusive education in their classroom. The educators' knowledge and understanding of inclusive education, as well as the strategies they implemented in their classrooms to ensure that all learners with special needs have access to the same quality of education and curriculum as their peers, were considered in the study. According to this study, educators have a good understanding of inclusive education, but that they were unsure about how to correctly and effectively implement it in their classrooms. As previous literature suggested, it is therefore crucial for workshops to be presented and continuous training to take place so that educators would stay up to date with the latest information and feel comfortable and willing to implement inclusive education strategies in their classroom.

This study also placed further emphasis on some challenges that South African educators already face on a daily basis in their classrooms, such as a lack of time, resources, CAPS training and qualifications. Focus cannot only be placed on the negative aspects and highlight the challenges towards implementing inclusive education, but light must also be shed on the strengths of inclusive education. Learners are included in day to day schooling and activities and they feel part of the classroom; they feel a sense of belonging. It is clear that South Africa still needs to make significant progress before being regarded as fully and successfully inclusive.

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LIST OF ADDENDA

Addendum A: Informed consent letter explaining the study – Educator

Addendum B: Informed consent letter explaining the study – Principal

Addendum C: Informed consent form to participate in the study – Educator

Addendum D: Ethical clearance obtained from UP

Addendum E: Ethical clearance obtained from DBE

Addendum F: Identifying themes from participants' interviews

Addendum G: Summary of participants' interviews and identified themes

Addendum A: Informed consent letter explaining the study – Educator

Lelie Street
Kriel

2271

6 July 2023

The Teacher

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

My name is Stephanie Lines, a Masters student at the University of Pretoria. My student number is 11149452. I wish to conduct a research study for my Master's dissertation on **“Educators’ experience on the implementation of inclusive education policy twenty years after its development”**.

I hereby seek your permission to conduct a study in your school in order to engage teachers in this research project.

The aim of the research is to explore and acquire a better understanding of inclusive education and the knowledge that educators have or lack on the matter. Furthermore, the aim is to explore the attitudes of educators and their willingness to implement inclusive education in their classrooms.

The broad purpose of this study is to contribute to the body of knowledge in the broader educational system. More specifically, which abilities and skills are required for educators to successfully include all learners in their teaching to ensure that no learner is excluded.

I would like to invite you to participate in an interview as part of the data collection process of this study. The interview will be conducted either face-to-face or virtually through a platform such as Whatsapp voice call or Zoom and the duration will be 1 hour. The conversation will be audio recorded whilst still taking the confidentiality of the



participant into account. The audio recording will be transcribed, keeping the identity of the participant anonymous. Participation is voluntary and participants are allowed to stop or withdraw at any time. The data that is collected will be used for the purpose of the research.

I will be grateful to engage you in this research project.

For further enquiries and clarity of the information presented above, please do not hesitate to contact me on:

- **Cellphone:** 0825727263
- **Email:** stephlines92@gmail.com

Yours faithfully
Stephanie Lines

REFERENCE

Prof Motlalepule Ruth Mampane
University of Pretoria
HOD: Education Psychology (Education Psychologist)
Tel: +27 (0) 12 420 2339
Email: ruth.mampane@up.ac.za



Addendum B: Informed consent letter explaining the study – Principal

Lelie Street
Kriel

2271

6 July 2022

The Principal

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY IN A SCHOOL

My name is Stephanie Lines, a Masters student at the University of Pretoria. My student number is 11149452. I wish to conduct a research study for my Master's dissertation on **“Educators’ experience on the implementation of inclusive education policy twenty years after its development”**.

I hereby seek your permission to conduct a study in your school in order to engage teachers in this research project.

The aim of the research is to explore and acquire a better understanding of inclusive education and the knowledge that educators have or lack on the matter. Furthermore, I would like to explore the attitudes of educators towards inclusive education and their willingness to implement it in their classrooms and ensure that every learner can fully participate in all activities.

The broad purpose of my study is to investigate and understand the educators’ experience in the implementation of inclusive education twenty years after it has been developed. Furthermore, the aim is to explore the attitude of educators towards inclusive education and the implementation thereof.

I intend to engage the participants in data collection methods. Participants will be invited to participate in a face-to-face interview or alternatively a virtual interview, explaining how they implement inclusive education in their classrooms and how they adapt the curriculum



to ensure all learners can fully participate in the given activities. The interview will last for 1 hour. The interview will be audio recorded whilst still taking the confidentiality of participants into account. The participation is voluntary and the participants will be informed that data collected will be used for the purpose of research.

I will be grateful to get your permission to carry out the study in your school and upon the approval of my request; I will then seek permission from teachers to engage in this research project.

For further enquiries and clarity of the information presented above, please do not hesitate to contact me on:

- **Cell-phone:** 082 572 7263
- **Email:** stephlines92@gmail.com

Yours faithfully
Stephanie Lines

The principal

REFERENCE

Prof Motlalepule Ruth Mampane
University of Pretoria
HOD: Education Psychology (Education Psychologist)
Tel: +27 (0) 12 420 2339
Email: ruth.mampane@up.ac.za

Addendum C: Informed consent form to participate in the study – Educator

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

Title of the research: Educators' experience on the implementation of inclusive education policy twenty years after its development

Name of principal researcher: Miss Stephanie Lines

Cell-phone: 0825727263

Email: stephlines92@gmail.com

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that I fully understand the nature of the research, what will be expected from me, the procedure of data collection, the potential benefits and possible limitations of participation.

I understand that the researcher subscribes to the principles of:

- Voluntary participation* in research: I understand that I am allowed to withdraw from the study at any time.
- Informed consent*: research participants will be fully informed at all times with regards to the purpose of the research and must give consent to their participation in the research study.
- Protection from harm*: participants should be protected from any physical or mental harm and participants should not be embarrassed, offended or frightened.
- Privacy and confidentiality*: I am aware that the findings of this study will be written into a research report where all participants will remain anonymous.

Full name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Full Name and surname of Researcher: _____

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date: _____

Addendum D: Ethical clearance obtained from UP



Make today matter
www.up.ac.za

FACULTY OF EDUCATION
Ethics Committee

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

CLEARANCE NUMBER: **EDU058/22**

DEGREE AND PROJECT

MEd

Educators' experiences of the implementation
of the inclusive education policy over a twenty
year period

INVESTIGATOR

Ms. Stephanie Lines

DEPARTMENT

Educational Psychology

APPROVAL TO COMMENCE STUDY

06 December 2022

DATE OF CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

13 September 2023

CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS COMMITTEE: Prof Funke Omidire



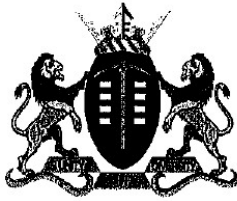
Mr Simon Jiane
Prof Ruth Mampane

This Ethics Clearance Certificate should be read in conjunction with the Integrated Declaration Form (D08) which specifies details regarding:

- Compliance with approved research protocol,
- No significant changes,
- Informed consent/assent,
- Adverse experience or undue risk,
- Registered title, and
- Data storage requirements.



Addendum E: Ethical clearance obtained from DBE



GAUTENG PROVINCE

Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

8/4/4/1/2

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	17 February 2023
Validity of Research Approval:	08 February 2023– 30 September 2023 2023/47
Name of Researcher:	Lines L
Address of Researcher:	552 Alaska Road Faerie Glen Pretoria
Telephone Number:	082 5727 263
Email address:	Stephlines92@gmail.com
Research Topic:	Educators' experience in the implementation of inclusive education policy twenty years after
Type of qualification	Med (LSGC)
Number and type of schools:	3 Primary Schools and 2 Secondary Schools
District/s/HO	Gauteng east and Gert Sibande

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

[Handwritten Signature]
17/02/2023

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below are met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001
Tel: (011) 355 0488
Email: Faith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

1. The letter would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
2. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.
3. **Because of the relaxation of COVID 19 regulations researchers can collect data online, telephonically, physically access schools, or may make arrangements for Zoom with the school Principal. Requests for such arrangements should be submitted to the GDE Education Research and Knowledge Management directorate.**
4. **The Researchers are advised to wear a mask at all times, Social distance at all times, Provide a vaccination certificate or negative COVID-19 test, not older than 72 hours, and Sanitise frequently.**
5. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s has been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.
6. A letter/document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs, and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.
7. The Researcher will make every effort to obtain the goodwill and cooperation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers, and learners involved. Persons who offer their cooperation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.
8. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school program is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Director (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.
9. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.
10. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.
11. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.
12. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes, and telephones, and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
13. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers, and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.
14. On completion of the study, the researcher/s must supply the Director: Knowledge Management & Research with one Hard Cover bound and an electronic copy of the research.
15. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings, and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.
16. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director concerned must also be supplied with a summary of the purpose, findings, and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards



Dr. Gurnani Mukatuni
Acting CES: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 17/02/2023

2

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001

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Addendum F: Identifying themes from participants' interviews

- 1 **Participant 1** 41
- 2 Interviewer: The following questions are about the 42
- 3 study as I explained above. 43
- 4 Interviewer: Ok so what do you understand in terms 44
- 5 of inclusive education or what do you 45
- 6 know about inclusive education? 46
- 7 Participant 1: Uhm according to me inclusive education 47
- 8 is that all children across all spectrums 48
- 9 are in one class. That means that there is 49
- 10 no distinction between culture, 50
- 11 performance ability or things like that. It is 51
- 12 uhm children are all put in the same 52
- 13 class, and they are all being 53
- 14 accommodated so that no child is 54
- 15 excluded from this education. 55
- 16 Interviewer: Ok does inclusive education take place at 56
- 17 your school? 57
- 18 Participant 1: Yes, to some extent but all the children, 58
- 19 we have heterogeneous classes, not 59
- 20 homogeneous so all the children are 60
- 21 divided into heterogeneous classes 61
- 22 where the teachers must accommodate 62
- 23 them. 63
- 24 Interviewer: Do you have examples of how inclusive 64
- 25 education is implemented in your 65
- 26 classroom? 66
- 27 Participant 1: Inclusive education is implemented in a 67
- 28 classroom, I did it in the following way. 68
- 29 You start on a Monday, then you do 69
- 30 classical teaching with all the children in 70
- 31 your class. Then on a Tuesday, you 71
- 32 quickly revise the work and take your 72
- 33 strong children out and give them 73
- 34 worksheets so that they can continue 74
- 35 with their work, and you divide your class 75
- 36 into four groups. So, the first group go 76
- 37 out on a Tuesday, and they do their work 77
- 38 at their table that is given to them, this is 78
- 39 your strong group. Then you have your 79
- 40 second group, you again do classical 80

Theme 1

Theme 2

910 and my class was on the third floor so it
911 was amazing to see how this child in the
912 beginning his friends carried his bag up
913 the stairs and then later on he got so
914 determined they were not allowed to carry
915 his bag up the stairs and he actually took
916 part in athletics. The mindset of this child
917 really it flabbergasted me, he ran athletics
918 normally and you know no one treated him
919 any differently so that was quite nice to
920 see. That's just a few examples to name it.

921 Interviewer: Thank you so much. The next question, in
922 your opinion, what are educators views
923 about inclusive education, or what do you
924 think their attitudes are with regards to
925 inclusive education?

926 Participant 6: Not everyone is for inclusive. You get less
927 than a handful that will go the extra mile
928 for learners who have challenges and then
929 the majority that is straight off negative
930 when they need to deal with learners with
931 challenges. If I may, (laugh), male
932 educators are definitely more prone to
933 having a poor attitude towards learners
934 with challenges. I've experienced this in
935 our school. Then out of experience they
936 don't have the patience or will to work with
937 these learners.

938 Interviewer: In your opinion, do you think much has
939 been achieved in the implementation of
940 inclusive education since it has been
941 implemented in 2001?

942 Participant 6: I would say yes, the newer generation of
943 educators are more empowered as
944 universities make quite an effort in
945 introducing inclusive education to us. Let
946 me just get my words straight, I believe
947 educators are more open minded to
948 inclusive education since it is not difficult

Theme 3

750 unnecessarily because they did not
751 receive individual attention.

752 Interviewer: If you could give advice to the Minister of
753 Education about inclusive education, what
754 would you say?

755 Participant 5: I would say that it is a very good idea but
756 they must better train their educators so
757 that they know how to work with those
758 children and not everyone can do it. If you
759 can create a positive attitude among
760 educators, then I think inclusive education
761 will be a lot better.

762 Interviewer: What are the challenges in implementing
763 inclusive education?

764 Participant 5: First and foremost, the school needs to be
765 equipped for something like that for
766 example if there are children in a
767 wheelchair, it is quite difficult if there are
768 stairs and stuff that they need to climb,
769 that is one thing. Then the second thing is
770 for example, if you have children that are
771 for example Dyslexic, it is very difficult to
772 teach them because they cannot read, so
773 you must actually put some of the stuff, I
774 would say, on a recording so that they can
775 hear it, because if they can hear it, they
776 can do it. But not if they have to read and
777 write it by themselves, remember the
778 writing thing is very difficult for them. More
779 challenges. Educators need to be trained,
780 they are not trained to teach like that and
781 then I cannot think of anything else.

782 Interviewer: What do you think are the strengths in
783 implementing inclusive education?

784 Participant 5: I think it is so nice to just be accepted,
785 among other children that are not the
786 same as they are and one can actually do
787 so much to create awareness among
788 children that everyone is not the same.
789 Some friends cannot walk, and some

Theme 4

Theme 5

Addendum G: Summary of participants' interviews and identified themes

P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	Define IE	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10
<p>IE: all children across all spectrums are in one class. There is no distinction between culture, performance ability. Children are all put in the same class, they are all being accommodated so no child is excluded from this education.</p>	<p>To use different ways to make sure all learners are kept active and engaged while you teach, I think using different forms of media while you teach, maybe use a bit of technology.</p> <p style="text-align: center; background-color: #f08080;">Theme 1</p>	<p>The inclusion of learners with barriers to learning in mainstream education. To adapt the work to suit their needs to make it more understandable or easier for learners who struggle.</p>	<p>Children that have special needs are incorporated into your class and you have to adjust your class so that they have the opportunity to have ordinary education needs met.</p>	<p>If the children in your class is very diverse, they are not the same i.e cognitive abilities, background, social circumstances. Can be black, white, brown children. It is also disabled children i.e deaf, wheelchairs, ADHD, Dyslexia and cerebral disabled. Same age, same environment</p>	<p>All children are included in day-to-day schooling, no matter their ability, disabilities or learning needs. These learners need to survive and function in the mainstream.</p>	<p>Education system or teaching model that focuses on children that have needs, that struggle with work and do not always understand immediately. System is put in place to include and help children with restrictions because education is a right to all children.</p>	<p>It is basically to accommodate all learners with different abilities. In one class you get children with different abilities, physical, emotional and cognitive.</p>	<p>You have to help every child in your class whether they have any disability, you must be able to accommodate everyone in your class.</p>	<p>To include all learners, even learning difficulties and even if they are disabled. If they've got Autism and learners of all races, it is to include them in the one mainstream school.</p>	
<p>Monday – do classical teaching with all children. Tuesday revise the work, take strong children out and give work to do independently. Divide class in 4 groups: 1st group go out on Tuesday, do work at table (strong group). Do classical teaching with everyone and take 2nd group out. On Wednesday (3rd day), teach, take out 3rd group so learner that struggles gets same education for 4 days. On day 4 do it again with weaker group and on day 5 you consolidate and do tests to see who stayed behind.</p>	<p>I have an interactive whiteboard which really helps. I show videos. For eg with PSW, I can show videos of things they might be experiencing at home or things other children might be experiencing. I use my proxy very often, basically every day. I also have a Bluetooth speaker so that everyone can hear and I make sure the class is tinted so that they can all see the proxy well.</p> <p style="text-align: center; background-color: #f08080;">Theme 2</p>	<p>In my classroom, the learners are tested when they get to the class. I test them to see on what grade level their brain is, and they get work according to their level.</p>	<p>Moved child in class with special needs to the front. That is where I stand and can ensure I stand in front of him and that he listens. I would sit with him with some of his work or give him easier work to do. Let him draw pictures instead of writing words or show pictures instead of showing words. I have a buddy system so there is a friend in class that makes sure he has his books and so forth.</p>	<p>If there are learners that struggle, they get easier work, I put a lot of time and attention, work one on one with them until they understand but it takes a long time. A lot of them don't like to write so I let them talk.</p>	<p>The English children that struggle – I see group work works a child with Epilepsy, I placed her next to the reading corner so if she falls to the side, she falls on the mat. I had learners with ADHD. I break up their activities or send them to the office. When they come back they feel fresh and continue with their activity like normal. G3 learner from rural farm school – could not read or write basic words. I started with G1 sounds, basic Math and at the</p>	<p>I put the stronger children next to the children that have a bigger need and I have a student in my class to help. It sometimes help if someone else explains it to the learner. I also let them stand next to my table and so the work orally with them.</p>	<p>You have a big class and divide them into groups so that you can know which children have which abilities. You work with certain groups at certain times during your lesson. Differentiation is being done continuously in class but specifically also takes place as activities.</p>	<p>I give extra attention, one on one attention. I have an assistant in my class, a student that studies education. Between the two of us we move between the children that cannot do the work and we help them one on one and give extra guidance and help afterwards.</p>	<p>Sometimes if a child struggles, you get another child to help him. This just offers the information in a different way. Children who struggle with reading, we will give the main class enrichment work and take the other children in group sessions or not more than 4 in a group to help them. In our school we try to help the children with language problems with extra classes but most kids come with taxi's so it is impossible to help in the afternoons – we have to try work around it in the</p>	

<p>These learners get remedial education or reeducation.</p>	<p>I think the older educators are less reluctant to use IE means. New educators (educators finishing studying now and completed degree not too long ago), they are a lot more enthusiastic about inclusive teaching. I think as the older educators habits have formed over the years, the older educators are a little bit reluctant to use it.</p>	<p>I think they are definitely for it because all children have to get equal opportunities to learn. Educators are for it, it is a good thing that they are included.</p>	<p>I don't think it's very good. Most of the people I've spoken to is sometimes not for it because everyone feel that children need to be assessed on their own level and to put those children in ordinary mainstream is not fair – they don't get the help they supposed to get. You have to work with it if you have it attitudes, is not really very good</p>	<p>Some educators are relatively positive about it. Others are not interested at all. They don't like such children because they say they cannot behave. They don't know how to act with other children of the same age so it is actually very sad that people don't really care for such children.</p>	<p>Not everyone is for inclusive. You get less than a handful that will go the extra mile for learners who have challenges. The majority is straight off negative. Male educators are definitely more prone to having a poor attitude towards learners with challenges. They don't have the patience or will to work with these learners.</p>	<p>I think it differs from educator to educator that are not trained or have enough knowledge about IE, their attitudes might be different than someone who has more knowledge or training. Our school – everyone has positive attitude. I don't think anyone feel it is disruptive or extra work. Goal: to help everyone to the best of our abilities.</p>	<p>Weaker child benefits in such situation. There are negative stuff as well – some children just cannot adjust in a big class. I think the educators find it difficult, especially the young educators.</p>	<p>I don't think they have a negative attitude.</p>	<p>It's a challenge for educators, especially young qualified – they don't have enough experience or training to implement it and they stand quite sceptical about IE. Older educators still see it as a challenge and others see it as a problem and time consuming.</p>	<p>classroom situation</p>
<p>Train people and give necessary resources – there are no resources. Department wants it but there is no time to do it because they aren't given assistance and parents aren't given assistance to help children at home</p>	<p>Electricity at the moment is a challenge. Some educators are reluctant to use it (they are used to old fashion way of talking and expecting children to learn)</p>	<p>Bullying (children who are different gets bullied).</p>	<p>In my class the challenge is time. Curriculum is so full, there is no time to take a couple of minutes to 100% focus on a child that needs your attention. Contrast between assessment and correct work is too big (learner gets taught different but assessed in the same way as others). Educators not trained. Not enough resources to help them. Classes are too big to spend time with those children</p>	<p>School needs to be equipped for something like that. Difficult to teach learners who struggle to read – maybe put some stuff on a recording (if they hear it they can do it). Reading and writing is difficult for them so if they don't have to read or write, they can do it. Educators need to be trained</p>	<p>Challenges to implementing IE</p>	<p>Attitudes of people towards children with special needs and disabled children are sometimes negative and they are easily discriminated against. Educators with the wrong attitude. A shortage of the correct educators, not enough training and financial shortcomings.</p>	<p>How to get to every individual child – that is very difficult. Your planning must be done very well otherwise you won't get to every individual. Must have experience, learn what works best and get to know every child. Know where they come from, their situation and if they get help at home – it is important to use that knowledge to get to every child.</p>	<p>I don't know what the challenges are. I do think some of the work we do is unnecessary, if I can talk about the departmental books that jump around and there is no structure. To still teach this to kids is difficult</p>	<p>Language barrier is an extremely big challenge. Some children come to G1 and can't even speak English. The other problem is that the educator in 99% of the cases cannot speak the child's home language. Educator needs to be creative to calm ADHD and Autistic kids down that disrupt the class. Learners who work at different pace gets naughty – educator must find a way for them to cooperate</p>	<p>Theme 3</p>
<p>Theme 4</p>	<p>Theme 4</p>	<p>Theme 4</p>	<p>Theme 4</p>	<p>Theme 4</p>	<p>Theme 4</p>	<p>Theme 4</p>	<p>Theme 4</p>	<p>Theme 4</p>	<p>Theme 4</p>	<p>Theme 4</p>

<p>Must have a educator committee that knows what IE is. These educators must be relieved from sport so that they have time to attend to the children.</p>	<p>It helps keep the learners engaged. They are more excited to learn</p>	<p>Equal opportunities for children without discrimination</p>	<p>Children are not used to other children that are not like them or that are special – it is a learning curve for such young children. Learn how to get along with them in a classroom setting.</p>	<p>It is nice to be accepted among children that are not the same as them – create awareness among children that everyone is not the same. Teach these children especially in a class situation without mocking them</p>	<p>Prepare these learners for life after school – encounter people from all walks of life. Learners are more confident, self esteem is increased. Correct support help learners feel seen and valued regardless of their abilities or differences. It creates a culture of acceptance</p>	<p>It creates a environment for children that all children get equal opportunities regardless of their shortcomings. Helps involve parents to better understand how to help children at home and support them.</p>	<p>The weaker child benefits, because he is integrated normally in a normal situation. They learn a lot from one another. Important to treat children equally in a school situation, then it is easier for them to integrate in a situation outside of school</p>	<p>They feel part of the class. They are accepted in the community or in class. There are no stigmas attached to them. They are more exposed to activities that they might not have been exposed to in mainstream education</p>	<p>The learner gets treated the same as each and every other child. It is easy in the class situation to differentiate your pupil that has problems that needs extra attention. On the playground there is no differentiation; they get accepted as part of the crowd. There is no stigma whether you are clever or not</p>
<p>Strengths to implementing IE</p>									
<p>Theme 5</p>									