

The role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion at school level

Michele Berger

2013

The role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion at school level

by

Michele Berger

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS
(Educational Psychology)

Department of Educational Psychology
Faculty of Education
University of Pretoria

Supervisor
Prof Kesh Mohangi

August 2013

PRETORIA

Dedication

*To my family -
Richard, Thandeka and Ayanda.
You made this possible.*

Acknowledgements

- ❖ My supervisor, Professor Kesh Mohangi. You were my guiding light. Thank you for your endless support, patience and wisdom.
- ❖ Gauteng Department of Education, for granting me permission to conduct my research.
- ❖ My research participants, for being so willing to openly share your thoughts with me.
- ❖ Karen and Jolene, my fellow Research Musketeers. You made this a much less lonely road.
- ❖ My parents, Mike and Sheila. Thank you for your unconditional love for me, the example you have set for me, and the opportunities you have afforded me in life.
- ❖ My brother, Greg. Thank you for always being there for me.
- ❖ My 'sister', Jenni. You have always believed in me.
- ❖ My husband, Richard, and children, Thandeka and Ayanda. I love you. You have borne the burden alongside me. Thank you for your patience, support and love.

Declaration

I, Michele Berger (student number 11233070), hereby declare that all the resources consulted are in the reference list and that this study titled: *The role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion at school level* is my original work. This dissertation has not been previously submitted by me for any degree at another university.

Michele Berger

August 2013

Abstract

The role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion at school level

Supervisor: Prof Kesh Mohangi
Department: Educational Psychology
Degree: MEd Educational Psychology

The purpose of this study was to explore the role that the educational psychologist can play to support inclusion at school level in South Africa. The study aims to provide national, provincial and district support teams with information that could guide them on how best to utilise educational psychology services within the context of limited resources. It also aims to guide the educational psychology profession in how best to provide support within the South African public inclusive schooling system.

The research was conducted using a conceptual framework based on three matrices designed by Wedell (2005) to address some of the 'rigidities that hamper inclusion' (Wedell, 2005, p. 4). My deduction was that these matrices do not adequately capture the stage of development of inclusive education in the South African context, and that additional matrices are needed which show the key variables that are impacting on the ability of the educational psychologist to support learners with barriers to learning in the South African public education context.

In this study, I followed an interpretivist paradigm, and adopted an instrumental case study design. The intention was to gain insight at a very practical level, namely the school, into how the challenges related to inclusion are being, and could be, addressed. Data was collected in one Gauteng public school through semi-structured face-to-face interviews with the school principal, a private educational psychologist providing services to the school community, a parent and national Department of Basic Education officials, and focus groups with teachers and district officials. Three main themes emerged following thematic content analysis of the data: Participants' understanding and experiences of inclusion and inclusive education at school level, perceptions of the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion in schools, and the future role of educational psychologists in supporting inclusion in schools.

The findings indicate that inclusion remains more of an aspiration than a reality, and show the important role the educational psychologist can play in helping to build collaborative approaches to planning and implementation of policy. Amongst other things, educational psychologists should find a way, collectively, of engaging with district offices to structure planning and implementation that includes the profession.

Keywords:

- ❖ Barriers to learning
- ❖ Collaboration
- ❖ Educational psychologist
- ❖ Inclusion
- ❖ Inclusive education
- ❖ Mainstreaming

Contents

Chapter 1: Contextualising the study	1
1.1 Introduction and rationale	1
1.2 Purpose of the study	3
1.3 Research questions.....	3
1.4 Assumptions of the study.....	3
1.5 Concept clarification	3
1.5.1 Inclusion and inclusive education	4
1.5.2 Mainstreaming	4
1.5.4 Barriers to learning	4
1.5.5 Educational psychologist	4
1.6 Paradigmatic perspectives	5
1.6.1 Metatheoretical paradigm: Interpretivism.....	5
1.6.2 Methodological paradigm: Qualitative enquiry	5
1.7 Brief overview of research methodology	5
1.8 Quality criteria.....	6
1.9 Ethical considerations	6
1.10 Outline of the study	6
1.11 Conclusion	7

Chapter 2. Literature review	8
2.1 Introduction.....	8
2.2 Inclusion at a societal level	8
2.2.1 International movement towards inclusive education	8
2.2.2 Defining inclusion.....	9
2.2.3 Mainstreaming	10
2.3 Inclusive education in South Africa.....	10
2.4 Challenges relating to inclusion	11
2.4.1 Conceptual and practical challenges during implementation.....	11
2.4.2 Challenges specific to South Africa	13
2.5 The field of educational psychology in South Africa	14
2.5.1 The role of educational psychologists.....	15
2.5.2 Where to in the future?	17
2.5.3 Challenges for educational psychologists in South Africa	19
2.5.4 Collaboration to support inclusion.....	19
2.6 Conceptual framework	21
2.7 Conclusion	25

Chapter 3: Research design and methodology	26
3.1 Introduction.....	26
3.2 Paradigmatic perspectives	26
3.2.1 Meta-theoretical paradigm: Interpretivism	27
3.2.2 Methodological paradigm: Qualitative enquiry	28
3.3 Research methodology	29
3.3.1 Research design and approach.....	30
3.4 Selection of site and participants	31
3.5 Data collection and documentation	33
3.5.1 Face-to-face and telephonic interviews	34
3.5.2 Focus groups	34
3.5.3 Observation	35
3.5.4 Document review	36
3.5.5 Reflective journal	37
3.6 Data analysis and interpretation	37
3.7 Quality criteria.....	38
3.7.1 Trustworthiness and dependability	38
3.7.2 Credibility	39
3.7.3 Authenticity	39
3.7.4 Transferability	39
3.8 Ethical considerations	39
3.8.1 Informed consent and voluntary participation	40
3.8.2 Right to privacy, confidentiality and anonymity	40
3.8.3 Respect and caring	41
3.8.4 Beneficence and non-maleficence.....	41
3.9 Reflecting on my role as researcher.....	41
3.10 Conclusion	42

Chapter 4: Research results and discussion of findings	43
4.1 Introduction.....	43
4.2 Results of the thematic content analysis	43
4.2.1 Theme 1: Participants' understanding and experiences of inclusion and inclusive education at school level	43
4.2.2 Theme 2: Perceptions on the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion in schools.....	57
4.2.3 Theme 3: The future role of educational psychologists in supporting inclusion in schools.....	65
4.3 Conclusion	73

Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations	74
5.1 Introduction.....	74
5.2 Addressing the secondary research questions.....	74
5.2.1 Secondary question 1: What are participants' views on inclusion?	74
5.2.2 Secondary question 2: What do participants view as the role of educational psychologists in inclusive classrooms and schools?	75
5.2.3 Secondary question 3: What are the challenges experienced by participants in accessing educational psychology services in an inclusive school?	77
5.2.4 Secondary question 4: How could the effectiveness of educational psychology services be improved to support inclusion?	78
5.3 Addressing the primary research question	80
5.3.1 Supporting the inclusion of individual learners	80
5.3.2 Supporting the system to enable inclusion	80
5.4 Revisiting the conceptual framework	81
5.4.1 Matrix One	82
5.4.2 Matrix Two	85
5.4.3 Matrix Three.....	87
5.5 Silences in the data	88
5.6 Revisiting assumptions	89
5.7 Potential contributions of the study	89
5.8 Possible limitations of the study.....	90
5.9 Recommendations.....	90
5.9.1 Brokering a framework for success	90
5.9.2 Recommendations for training, practice and future research	92
5.10 Concluding remarks	94
 References	 96
Additional references consulted	103
 Addenda	 106

List of Tables

Table 1.1:	Summary of the research methodology	5
Table 1.2:	Outline of the study	7
Table 3.1:	Philosophical assumptions and implications for practice	26
Table 3.2:	Dimensions of the interpretive paradigm	27
Table 3.3:	Research process	29
Table 3.4:	Description of participants	33
Table 4.1:	Themes	43
Table 4.2:	Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 1	44
Table 4.3:	Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 2	58
Table 4.4:	Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 3	65

List of Figures

Figure 2.1:	Matrix One	22
Figure 2.2:	Matrix Two	23
Figure 2.3:	Matrix Three	24
Figure 5.1:	Matrix One for a South African inclusive education system	83
Figure 5.2:	Johari window of key variables	84
Figure 5.3:	Johari window showing the skills sets relevant to different scenarios	87

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DBST	District-based support team
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
EFA	Education For All
ELSEN	Education for learners with special education needs
EP	Educational psychologist
GDE	Gauteng Department of Education
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HOD	Head of Department
IEP	Individual education programme
ILST	Institutional-level support team
IQMS	Institutional Quality Management System
LSEN	Learner with special education needs
OT	Occupational therapy
SBST	School-based support team
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

Chapter 1: Contextualising the study

1.1 Introduction and rationale

Accommodating learners with barriers to learning within South Africa's mainstream education system has been both a publicly stated priority objective and, at the same time, one of the least successful policies in terms of implementation (Department of Education, 2001). *Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education* (Department of Education, 2001) clearly articulates that barriers to learning need to be removed and support provided to enable all learners to develop to their full potential (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002, p. xv; Department of Education, 2001). However, the design of an education system that can achieve these goals has been extremely difficult. Many specific initiatives proposed to develop such a system have not been implemented because of cost implications, and many opportunities to harness available resources appear to have been lost due to poor planning and management (Naicker, 2006).

It is not only schools which can ameliorate barriers to learning. Families and communities are also important in this regard. Professionals such as educational psychologists, health workers, social workers and others must be involved; they can, for example, eliminate certain causes of barriers or confirm others, and where necessary, provide support to the learner over and above that being provided by the school. It is my contention that an educational psychologist needs to engage and collaborate with other professionals, as well as teachers, families and communities in identifying potential barriers to learning (Farrell, 2004), overcoming difficulties, and helping to prevent and address barriers to learning (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2010). The educational psychologist can play a significant role in supporting and mentoring teachers to be able to recognise barriers to learning. In addition, s/he can provide support to parents to recognise, accept and manage their children's difficulties as well as supporting children to perform to the best of their potential.

The educational psychologist expects that s/he will make a difference to individual learners, and that by doing so will support the teacher to be more effective in delivering quality education in an inclusive learning environment. However, realising these expectations involves some complex dialogues and decisions to be made by teachers, school and district managers and professionals such as educational psychologists. A teacher who identifies a learner facing barriers should in the first instance discuss the matter with the parent. The teacher may also discuss the challenge with other teachers, the head of department or the principal of the school. Various strategies could be explored, including the possibility of asking an educational psychologist to assist. A process of engaging the required expertise for assessment and intervention should then follow. This could include a discussion with the district-based support

staff. At each stage in the process, decisions are needed which require dialogue and a common understanding and approach. Ideally, this process will lead to an accurate diagnosis of the challenge being experienced by the learner, an appropriate intervention or interventions being agreed upon, and then processes put in place to provide the agreed upon services. In practice, this logical sequence of diagnosis, agreement on the intervention and provision is difficult to achieve, particularly in relation to children whose parents are in the lower income categories, as they are likely to have limited access to expert services. Often, children are not effectively diagnosed, or there is no agreement on the intervention, and even when the parent is able to pay for services, there may be a barrier to implementation. Many children do not receive the support they need and teachers and parents are left to deal with this as best they can without the level of professional help that may be required (Pillay & Di Terlizzi, 2009).

This has created enormous challenges for educational psychologists, who attempt to make a contribution but often find their work marginalised, undervalued and lacking in strategic application (Engelbrecht, 2004). Teachers are also frustrated, because when they identify learners with barriers to learning and seek assistance, very often no such assistance is forthcoming. Teachers are often expected to manage classes of 35, 45 or more children, which may include learners with special educational needs; they do so in a situation where help is promised but rarely provided by district offices (Daniels, 2010). It is true that funding and human resourcing are inadequate, and that improving resource provision to support inclusion would make a difference, but there are also other factors at play. Differing levels of understanding of issues relating to inclusion, systems failings, poor management at school, provincial and district levels, and poor communication all play a role (Naicker, 2006).

However, even when there is agreement, challenges remain. Overall, there appear to be numerous factors that impact on the ability of the educational psychologist to play a meaningful role in the support of inclusion. Such factors include the lack of a common understanding of what inclusion is striving to achieve, and the practical and funding arrangements for implementation and provision of psychological support services.

It is my contention that in order for inclusion to be successful, professionals such as educational psychologists are essential. There is a need for everyone in the system to think carefully about how to make the best use of available resources, and how all parties in the system can work together to optimise these resources and achieve improved provisioning to support inclusion (Wedell, 2005). Given the resource constraints within the government education system, and the fact that the majority of parents are not able to afford to pay for private psychological services, I argue that there is a need to consider carefully the role of the educational psychologist within the government schooling system.

1.2 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to explore the role that the educational psychologist can play in supporting inclusion at the school level in South Africa. The study intends to provide national, provincial and district support teams with information on how best to make use of educational psychology services within the context of limited resources. It is also hoped that this study can serve as a guide for the educational psychology profession on how best to provide support to the system, and for teachers on how to make better use of available resources through working collaboratively with educational psychologists.

1.3 Research questions

The research for the current study was guided by the following primary research question: How can educational psychologists support greater levels of inclusion at school level?

In order to answer my primary research question, I addressed the following secondary questions:

1. What are participants' views on inclusion?
2. What do participants view as the role of educational psychologists in inclusive classrooms and schools?
3. What are the challenges experienced by participants in accessing educational psychology services in an inclusive school?
4. How could educational psychology services be improved to support inclusion?

1.4 Assumptions of the study

Based upon my review of relevant literature, I approached the study with the following working assumptions:

1. That there is an on-going commitment at policy level to inclusion as the best way to address barriers to learning faced by learners.
2. That at the level of policy and strategy, educational psychologists are viewed as having a crucial role to play to support inclusion.
3. That some of the challenges faced in providing educational psychology support lie in a lack of shared understanding of the role and potential contribution of educational psychologists at the level of implementation.
4. That there is generally within the education system, particularly at the level of the school, a commitment to addressing problems through collaborative working relationships.

1.5 Concept clarification

In the paragraphs that follow, I clarify how the key concepts in the study were understood.

1.5.1 Inclusion and inclusive education

For the purposes of this study, I use the terms ‘inclusion’ and ‘inclusive education’ interchangeably. My experience in reviewing the literature is that this is a common practice. It is possible to differentiate slightly by viewing inclusion as both school and system-wide restructuring (Walton & Nel, 2012, p. 1), and reducing exclusion within and from education (UNESCO, 2008), while inclusive education is more specifically about meeting the diverse needs of learners in the classroom through the provision of appropriate support (Walton & Nel, 2012, p. 1). In this study, I define inclusion or inclusive education as the inclusion and full participation of all learners with a range of diverse needs within a school (Forlin, 2010). The human rights foundation to inclusion or inclusive education suggests that a learner should be able to choose his/her classroom and school, and that adequate support should be provided at this site (Hay, 2003, p. 306). In other words, the focus is on the provision and adaptation of support systems in the classroom (Department of Education, 2001, p. 17) so that all learners “receive their entire academic curriculum in the general education” programme (Idol, 2006, p. 78).

Inclusive education entails the active participation of every learner in all aspects of the school. For this to be realised, the education system must be “receptive to diversity and ... physically, pedagogically and socially accessible to all” (OECD, 2008, p. 262) learners. When a learner experiences a barrier to learning, the mainstream school tries to accommodate this learner rather than pursuing specialised education for this learner (Department of Education, 2001).

1.5.2 Mainstreaming

In a mainstream schooling system, learners with learning difficulties or special educational needs are registered in their local school but may be taken out of their regular classroom for part of the day for specialised interventions. Such interventions are usually facilitated by a specialist support teacher (Forlin, 2006; Idol, 2006, p. 78).

1.5.3 Barriers to learning

Barriers to learning may be caused by a multiplicity of factors, which are not necessarily of the learner’s making. Barriers may include “socio-economic barriers, such as lack of access to basic services, poverty and under-development,” (Muthukrishna & Schoeman, 2000, p. 325), the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the curriculum, communication and language, physical facilities, attitudes and parental involvement (Makoelle, 2012, p. 98-99; Muthukrishna & Schoeman, 2000, p. 325).

1.5.4 Educational psychologist

According to the Health Professions Act, 1974 (Act No. 54 of 1974), the scope of an educational psychologist is: “assessing, diagnosing, and intervening in order to optimise human functioning in learning and development...; applying psychological interventions to enhance, promote and facilitate optimal learning and development”. In this study, the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion at a school in South Africa will be discussed.

1.6 Paradigmatic perspectives

In this section, I briefly describe the paradigmatic perspective adopted for this study. A detailed discussion follows in Chapter 3.

1.6.1 Metatheoretical paradigm: Interpretivism

Maree (2007b) argues that paradigmatic assumptions inform the basic belief system or world view that guides the researcher on how s/he undertakes research. This is guided by ontological, epistemological and methodological considerations. Here, ontological refers to the nature of reality, epistemological to the relationship between knower and non-knower, and methodological to how the unknown can become known (Maree, 2007b). All of these considerations relate to one another in that a response on one level will inform the responses on subsequent levels. In this study, I adopted an interpretivist lens. Within the interpretivist paradigm, the researcher aims to understand the phenomena being researched against the perceptions and frame of reference of participants (Nieuwenhuis, 2010; Creswell, 2009; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2003).

1.6.2 Methodological paradigm: Qualitative enquiry

I adopted a qualitative research approach to address the objectives of my study. Qualitative research follows an inductive style of inquiry intended to accumulate rich, descriptive data (Creswell, 2007b; Nieuwenhuis, 2007a). Using this approach, I was able to understand the viewpoint of teachers, educational psychologists, school and district managers in inclusive schools and the education department. I did this by studying participants within their system by interacting with and observing them. As I did this, I concentrated on their meaning-making and interpretations of phenomena (Creswell, 2009; Nieuwenhuis, 2007b).

1.7 Brief overview of research methodology

A summary of the research methodology employed is provided in Table 1.1. A detailed description appears in Chapter 3.

Table 1.1: Summary of the research methodology

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	
Research design	Instrumental case study
Selection of site and participants	Purposive sampling of sites ❖ Primary school in the city of Pretoria in Gauteng Province ❖ District Office servicing this school ❖ National Department of Basic Education (DBE) Purposive sampling of participants ❖ Principal ❖ Head of department for guidance ❖ Five teachers and members of the school-based support team ❖ Educational psychologist who formerly provided support to the school ❖ Church counsellor who services the school ❖ Parent from the school whose child received support from educational psychologist

	❖ Three educational psychologists from the District Office ❖ Two officials from the national DBE's Inclusive Education Directorate
Data collection methods	❖ Focus groups ❖ One-on-one interviews ❖ Telephonic interview ❖ Observation ❖ Documentary analysis ❖ Reflective journal
Data documentation	Audio recording and transcriptions
Data analysis	Thematic content analysis
Criteria to ensure rigour	Credibility, transferability, authenticity, dependability, confirmability
Ethical considerations	Informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity

1.8 Quality criteria

Throughout my study, I endeavoured to ensure that my research work was credible and trustworthy. I thus strove to adhere to the quality criteria of trustworthiness, credibility, transferability and generalisability (Mertens, 2010; Nieuwenhuis, 2010; Maree, 2007b; De Vos, 2005; Patton, 2002). In Chapter 3, I elaborate on the strategies used to ensure rigour in the study.

1.9 Ethical considerations

Ethical concerns are part of the everyday practice of doing research. In my study, I continuously gave consideration to these as I planned, thought about and discussed each aspect of the research (Glesne, 2006). I took an ethical stance, which means taking responsibility for making decisions and minimising harm (Josselson, 2007).

According to Glesne (2006, p. 130), conducting research ethically means the researcher must provide sufficient information to participants to allow them to make an informed decision regarding their participation in the study. This includes allowing participants to withdraw at any time from the study, eliminating all unnecessary risks to participants, and guarding the confidentiality of the material (Josselson, 2007). The ethical codes are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

1.10 Outline of the study

The layout of this mini-dissertation is outlined in Table 1.2 (Maree, 2007b).

Table 1.2: Outline of the study

Chapter 1: Introduction	Overview of the study; research problem; research questions; purpose; concept definitions
Chapter 2: Literature review and conceptual framework	Exploration of the literature on the research topic; conceptual framework for the study
Chapter 3: Research methodology	The research process followed, including details on the research design and methodology
Chapter 4: Research results and integrated findings	Presentation of data; analysis and discussion on the results and the findings; discussion of research findings in relation to relevant literature
Chapter 5: Conclusion and recommendations	Summary of the study's results; conclusions; recommendations, including recommendations for further research

1.11 Conclusion

The intention of this chapter was to orientate the reader to the background and purpose of the research study, and to discuss my motivation for undertaking this particular research. The relevance and possible contributions of the study were presented. Key concepts were clarified. I provided an outline of the selected paradigm, research design and methodology. I also briefly considered the quality criteria and ethical issues relating to this study. Finally, I outlined the chapters that follow.

In Chapter 2, I will review the existing literature related to the current study, and present my chosen conceptual framework.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 Introduction

In Chapter 1, I introduced this study on the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion at school level in South Africa. In this chapter, I review and provide a synthesis of literature relevant to the study, in order to investigate established information and to identify possible gaps in research in an attempt to inform future practice. The chapter initially focuses on understanding inclusion at a societal level, and looks at the international movement towards inclusive education. It explores definitions of inclusion, and discusses the difference between inclusion and mainstreaming. The second section explores literature on inclusive education in South Africa. The third section considers implementation challenges, including conceptual challenges during implementation and practical difficulties, as well as challenges specific to South Africa. The next section considers literature on the field of educational psychology in South Africa, examining the role of educational psychologists and the challenges that they face in South Africa, as well as options for the future. It also considers how collaboration can support inclusion. The final section outlines the conceptual framework developed for this study.

2.2 Inclusion at a societal level

Around the world over the past three decades, there has been a major policy shift with regard to the education of learners with special educational needs (Forlin, 2010). While the previous approach was to educate learners by categorising them together according to (dis)ability (Forlin, 2010), the emerging movement has its roots in human rights, social justice and equity (Wah, 2010; Kinsella & Senior, 2008); this latter approach has a philosophy of welcoming, valuing and respecting diversity among all people (Carrington & Robinson, 2004). This movement, known as inclusion or inclusive education, focuses on the provision of equal educational opportunities for all learners, including placing all learners together in the same classes, regardless of barriers to learning they may face (Forlin, 2010).

2.2.1 International movement towards inclusive education

The movement towards inclusive education is being embraced internationally (Ngcobo & Muthukrishna, 2011; Forlin, 2010; Engelbrecht, 2006), and has found voice in international legislation, notably policy documents from the United Nations (UN). Inclusive education has been articulated in numerous policy documents, including: the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1990); the UNESCO Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994); the Dakar Framework for Action, Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments (UNESCO, 2000) and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2006).

At the World Conference on Special Needs Education, held in June 1994, in Salamanca, Spain, 92 governments and 25 international organisations endorsed the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action. By doing so, they endorsed inclusive education, proclaiming that “every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs” and that “those with special education needs must have access to regular schools which should accommodate them with a child-centered pedagogy capable of meeting those needs” (UNESCO, 1994, cited in Peters, 2004, p. 5). The argument is that regular schools with an inclusive orientation are “the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all” (Ainscow, 2009, p. xi). Such schools supposedly can “provide an effective education for the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system” (Ainscow, 2009, p. xi).

2.2.2 Defining inclusion

While there is now a recognised inclusion movement across the globe, the meaning of inclusion has evolved over time. One of the earliest definitions was that of Sebba and Ainscow (1996, p. 9, cited in Wah, 2010, p. 99), who defined inclusion “as a process by which a school attempts to respond to all learners as individuals by reconsidering its curricular organisation and provision.” By doing so, a school “reduces the need to exclude learners” (Sebba & Ainscow, 1996, p. 9, cited in Wah, 2010, p. 99). Later, Friend (2005) considered inclusion as being an on-going developmental process, with schools being able to work towards greater levels of inclusion in order to respond to diversity (Friend, 2005). Wedell (2005) disagrees, stating that the current school system is too rigid for inclusion to work. While policies and practices have been developed to promote inclusion, education and other children’s services are compartmentalised. In addition, schools still tend to group learners into classes, with the emphasis on summative rather than formative assessment. Wedell (2005, p. 6) argues that the diversity of learners’ needs must be a determinant in planning the education system rather than an “add-on” (Wedell, 2005, p. 6).

More recent definitions of inclusion focus on the inclusion of all learners with a variety of barriers to learning, and not just specific disabilities (Forlin, 2010; Wah, 2010; Hay, 2003). In South Africa, Swart et al. (2004, p. 81) state that an inclusive school is “built on shared responsibility and a sense of belonging – a community where diversity and human relations are valued”. Inclusive education has thus evolved from a segregated education system based on disability to one that supports the education of all learners within the same schools irrespective of barriers to learning (Forlin, 2010, p. 618). Thus it can be seen that, in addition to an evolution of the concept of inclusion over time, the concept has different meanings in different contexts. Notwithstanding this, a common thread is social justice, equity and the ability of schools to respond to diversity (Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff & Pettipher, 2002, p. 176).

2.2.3 Mainstreaming

It is important not only to discuss inclusion as a concept in this research, but also to consider the concept of mainstreaming or integration, as this is a concept that is still confused with inclusion. Some schools profess to be practising inclusion while in reality what they offer is mainstreaming (Bourke, 2010, p. 286). Mainstreaming is a concept that pre-dates the movement towards inclusion, but it remains a common practice. The concept refers to the practice of integrating learners with barriers to learning in the general education programmes of local schools for a portion of the school day, and removing them from regular classes for another portion to receive special education programmes (Idol, 2006, p. 78), usually by a specialist support teacher (Forlin, 2006). Learners with barriers to learning who enter general education schools must adapt to the school, rather than the school adapting to accommodate the learner (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). This appears to be a common practice in South Africa. In a study by Ntombela (2011, p. 10), it was found that 67 per cent of teachers in South Africa associated inclusive education with teaching learners with disabilities in mainstream schools; the rest either did not answer or responded that they did not know how to answer.

2.3 Inclusive education in South Africa

South Africa has followed the worldwide movement towards inclusion, although in this country, inclusive education has not yet been legislated. Instead, it is supported by a policy, *Education White Paper 6: Education for Learners with Special Education Needs* (Department of Education, 2001), as well as related implementation documents (Hay & Beyers, 2011). Inclusive education, according to Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001), is based on the constitutional ideals of freedom and equality, and is seen as a “single system of education dedicated to ensuring that all individuals are enabled to become competent citizens in a changing and diverse society” (Engelbrecht, 2006, p. 256; Department of Education, 2001). The drafting of Education White Paper 6 follows from the South African Schools Act (Department of Education, 1996), which acknowledges parents’ rights to place their children in their local schools.

In Education White Paper 6, inclusive education entails acknowledging that all learners can learn and are entitled to support, enabling education structures to meet the needs of all learners, acknowledging and respecting differences in all learners with regard to age, ethnicity, gender, language, socio-economic status and disability, changing attitudes and environments to maximise the participation of all learners, and minimising barriers to learning (Department of Education, 2001, p. 16). The White Paper signalled a shift in thinking from “special needs education” to “barriers to learning and development”. This has broadened the concern from a small group of learners who are vulnerable to exclusion from education to all learners who are subject to exclusionary pressures within schools and communities (Muthukrishna & Schoeman, 2000, p. 315). In Education White Paper 6, full-service schools and the strengthening of existing

special schools are envisioned as a core part of the new inclusive system (Department of Education, 2001, p. 21). In addition, there is an emphasis on parents being involved as partners in developing an inclusive education system. The need for better collaboration between parents and schools is also identified (Swart, et al., 2004, p. 81).

More recently, the Department of Education (Department of Basic Education & MIET Africa, 2011, p. 5) has published *Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of Inclusive Education: District-based Support Teams* (2005), *Special Schools as Resource Centres* (2005), *Full Service Schools* (2005) and *Draft Guidelines for the Inclusive Learning Programmes* (2005). In 2010, the Department of Basic Education published guidelines for full-service and inclusive schools, which outline criteria for inclusive schools. These guidelines describe the services and facilities that full-service schools should provide, and the approach they should take (Walton & Nel, 2012, p. 2; Department of Basic Education, 2010). The document provides “minimum standards with which a school must comply to be considered an inclusive or full-service school/institution” (Department of Basic Education, 2010, p. 5). The Department of Basic Education and MIET Africa (2011, p. 4) has also published a conceptual framework document aimed at providing guidance to all role players within and outside the Department who support learners and teachers. These role players include decision-makers and managers in national and provincial departments of education, district-based education officials who support schools, school management teams and teachers, government officials from other departments such as Social Development, Health, Home Affairs, Public Works and Agriculture who play a role in addressing barriers to learning, and civil society partners who work with schools to support learners with barriers to learning (Department of Basic Education & MIET Africa, 2011, p. 14).

2.4 Challenges relating to inclusion

2.4.1 Conceptual and practical challenges during implementation

There are examples of successful implementation of inclusive education. One notable one is the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), whose non-formal primary education programme provides schooling to disadvantaged rural children who cannot access formal schooling. BRAC's schools have a dropout rate of less than 5 per cent (Asian Development Bank, 2010, p. 15). However, despite its growing popularity, inclusion is not without its challenges. In the United Kingdom (UK), for example, which has practiced inclusion for longer than South Africa, and has enacted legislation and policies, the state is committed to promoting inclusion of learners with special education needs in mainstream education. However, the policies have been severely criticised (Lloyd, 2000; 2008), with critics stating that the government's strategy for special education needs is still founded on the deficit approach, and fails to recognise the complex nature of inclusion (Lloyd, 2000; 2008).

There are key factors which can determine the success of inclusive education (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Fox, Farrell & Davis, 2004; Lipsky & Gartner, 1998, cited in Wah, 2010). From an administrative perspective, it is essential to have well-defined policies that can support communities, schools and education systems in responding to the diversity of learners (Booth, 1999, cited in Wah, 2010, p. 99). Separate policies for special education and general education may perpetuate the exclusion of learners with barriers to learning as they foster the notion that a separate intervention system is required to look after such learners (Booth, 1999, cited in Wah, 2010, p. 99).

In addition to a cohesive policy on inclusive education, it is viewed essential to have well managed and organised support and resources (Fox, Farrell & Davis, 2004; Lo, 2007). Support includes resources such as funding, facilities, equipment and teaching materials (Lo, 2007). Resources include human resources, such as teachers with knowledge and expertise to handle the pedagogical challenges of inclusive education, and according to Farrell (2001), trained support personnel.

Challenges are prevalent in many countries that have adopted inclusive education policies. For example, a study in the Netherlands (Houtveen & Van de Grift, 2001, cited in Wah, 2010, p. 103) found that a significant number of learners with disabilities remain in special schools. Even though in inclusive classrooms teachers are more likely to use differentiated instruction, remedial teaching and other resources, there are still frequent examples of the old practice of pull-out service delivery systems; in other words, a special education system appeared to be developing within the regular education schools. This is a prevalent practice in South African schools, where learners who require additional support for numeracy or literacy will be taken out of the mainstream classes during the school day and taught in a parallel class until they are able to catch up to the level expected for that grade (Krüger & Yorke, 2010).

In another example, teachers in Hong Kong have been found to have rather poor attitudes towards the inclusion of learners with anything more than mild educational needs (Forlin, Au & Chong, 2008, cited in Forlin, 2010, p. 621). There is pressure in the UK, among other countries, to maintain separate special schools, despite policies promoting inclusion (Hick, Kershner & Farrell, 2009, p. 2). According to Bourke (2010, p. 286), teachers are confused about what inclusion actually means, with many teachers and the schools in which they work operating from a deficit model of disability, which expects the learner to adapt to the school rather than the other way around.

There are many reasons for such difficulties. In general, school reform is challenging (Fullan, 1992, cited in Ntombela, 2011) and inclusion is more complex than other educational reforms (Burstein, Sears, Wilcoxon, Cabello & Spagna, 2004). According to Doyle (2002) and Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff, Pettipher, and Oswald (2004), inclusion is complex because it is not a simple shift from one form of service provision to another; rather it involves a deeper transformation in beliefs and values. Effective implementation requires careful planning and preparation, including the development of new strategies for teacher and school development (Doyle, 2002). In addition to its conceptual complexity, inclusion is resource-intensive. For example, schools in the UK are likely to have a range of additional support staff to ensure the well-being and educational progress of all learners. These staff may include special education needs coordinators and learning support specialists, teaching or learning support assistants, behavioural and attendance officers, home–school liaison officers, learning mentors, and coordinators for more abled learners as well as those requiring support for barriers to learning. This is in addition to physical and material resources and accommodations that may need to be made (personal communication, Lammas School and Sports Academy, 9 July 2013).

The adoption of a new policy by a Ministry does not mean that teachers will immediately change their practice. They may be reluctant to change something that they view as working. According to Mathibe (2007), teachers' professional development must focus on instilling in them appropriate skills, attitudes and values to enable them to perform their work well and resourcefully. Teachers working in an inclusive education system need to understand what barriers to learning are and how to address them in the classroom. In addition, they must learn how to promote inclusion (Walton, Nel, Hugo & Muller, 2009). Unless this can be achieved, the challenges will remain.

Thus, it can be seen that despite the commitment to inclusive education, policy implementation remains a challenging and controversial issue around the world. Furthermore, not all stakeholders are convinced of the benefits of an inclusive system (Forlin, 2006; Hilton, 2006; Farrell, 2004, p. 5). There is uncertainty about the definition of inclusion, and there are groups who advocate separate schooling for learners with barriers to learning.

2.4.2 Challenges specific to South Africa

In South Africa, inclusive education has been promoted as an educational strategy that can contribute to a democratic society (Engelbrecht, 2006, p. 253). The post-apartheid government made a commitment to transforming South African society, including its education. One aspect of this was the focus on building an inclusive education and training system (Sayed & Soudien, 2005) which values equality and human rights, and recognises diversity (Sayed & Soudien, 2005). Since the publication of Education White Paper 6 in 2001, there have been a number of successes in the roll-out of inclusive education in South Africa's schooling system. Amongst

these have been the publication of the *National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS)* (Department of Education, 2008), the *Guidelines for Full-service/Inclusive Schools* (Department of Basic Education, 2010), and the *Guidelines for Responding to Learner Diversity in the Classroom through Curriculum and Assessment Policy statements* (Department of Basic Education, 2011). In addition, there has been growth in enrolment in the early grades of schooling, in particular for girl children (UNESCO, 2008). The inclusive education policy framework has required that attention be given to issues such as language policy, curriculum reform and programmes to address the needs of disadvantaged learners, such as nutrition programmes and free education. Attention has also been given to community inclusion in managing education through creating democratic and inclusive structures of school governance (UNESCO, 2008). Despite such successes, implementation has faced unique challenges in addition to those mentioned in the previous section. As Engelbrecht (2006, pp. 253-254) argues, the “institutionalisation of apartheid in every facet of South African life after the Apartheid government came to power in 1948 had a significant impact on education... Educational provision was fragmented, based on ethnic separation and discrimination”, and transformation has been difficult and slow. In South Africa, although inclusive education embraces the values of equality and human rights, as well as the recognition of diversity, multifaceted societal reforms and changes have had a negative impact on its implementation. As a result, enabling the constitutional right of all South Africans to basic education and access to educational institutions remains a challenge (Engelbrecht, 2006, p. 253; Republic of South Africa, 1996).

In terms of how inclusive education is understood, there are various interpretations of the concept in South Africa. In a study by Smit and Mpya (2011, p. 28), it was found that, among those who understand inclusive education, it is seen as “promoting education for all children irrespective of their disability so that they can be educated in the same classroom with other learners of their age”. People who have little understanding of inclusion believe that learners who experience barriers to learning should be placed in separate classes. In addition, Education White Paper 6 is not matched with funding for the requisite human, physical and material resources (Pearce, Gray & Campbell-Evans, 2010, p. 297), and parents often find themselves responsible for costs associated with therapy, extra tutoring and so on. Those that cannot afford it, may not get the support they and their children need (Yssel, Engelbrecht, Oswald, Eloff & Swart, 2007).

2.5 The field of educational psychology in South Africa

Support for learners with barriers to learning can, in part, be provided by educational psychologists, whose scope of practice includes “assessing, diagnosing, and intervening in order to optimise human functioning in the learning and development; assessing cognitive, personality,

emotional and neuropsychological functions of people in relation to the learning and development in which they have been trained” (Department of Health, 2011, p. 6). Given this scope, it would appear that educational psychologists have a key role to play in an inclusive education system.

2.5.1 The role of educational psychologists

Through working with schools and district offices of the provincial departments of education, educational psychologists can help to develop inclusive policies and practices. They can advise parents and teachers on the benefits of placing learners in an inclusive school environment, and they can advise and support teachers on types of support that can be provided, how to develop learning programmes for individual learners, and how the curriculum can be adapted. At a systems level, they can also support school staff in reflecting on their practice, and how to plan and implement change and develop the whole school for the benefit of all learners (Farrell, 2004, pp. 12-13). Educational psychologists can be an important resource in a school. According to Shaddock (2009), their knowledge of the school and the context in which it operates is crucial. Through regular consultation with schools, educational psychologists can provide support in clarifying problems and assisting school communities to devise problem-solving strategies. Besides working with individual children, educational psychologists can work with groups of learners or teachers and other members of the school community to, for example, develop policies around supporting learners with barriers to learning, help develop knowledge and skills for school staff and assist with projects that promote inclusion (Reinke, Stormont, Herman, Puri & Goel, 2011; Shaddock, 2009). In a review of the functions and contributions of educational psychologists, Farrell, Long, Moore, Sharpley and Sigafoos (2007, cited in Mitchell, 2010) found that educational psychologists contribute to promoting children’s physical, mental, emotional and sexual health, assisting children and young people to be safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation, and bullying and discrimination. They also help to ensure children are ready for school, attend and participate meaningfully in school, achieve their potential, and are able to engage in decision-making and support their communities and environments, as well as achieve economic well-being once they leave school. Educational psychologists contribute to these objectives through individual assessment of learners, consultancy, intervention and training (Mitchell, 2010). In the US, the National Association of School Psychologists views educational psychologists as playing a fundamental role in developing the knowledge bases for both psychology and education, using effective strategies and skills to help learners succeed academically, socially, behaviourally and emotionally. Educational psychologists may also collaborate with families and schools in relation to knowledge of principles and research related to family systems, strengths, needs and culture, evidence-based strategies to support family influences on children’s learning and mental health, and strategies to develop collaboration between families and schools (Mitchell, 2010).

Similarly in South Africa, educational psychologists should provide holistic health-promoting, developmental and preventative support to learners, schools, parents and communities. To achieve this, educational psychologists should work collaboratively with schools, district offices, parents and the broader community, intervening not just on an individual level but also at a systems level to implement and evaluate their programmes (Engelbrecht, 2004, p. 23). Educational psychologists in South Africa operate within the context of a Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996) which embraces the democratic values of equality, human rights, social justice and acceptance of diversity. As a result, they should promote positive learning environments within which learners and teachers from diverse backgrounds have equal access to their services (Engelbrecht, 2004, p. 23).

However, while there is acceptance of the key role that educational psychologists can play in meeting the needs of learners, and particularly in helping to minimise the exclusion of learners with special education needs or other barriers to learning from mainstream schools (Engelbrecht, 2004, p. 21), the field of educational psychology still seems to be marginalised, and none the less so in South Africa. This may be due to unhappiness with the role of educational psychologists in the past, or to a focus on a medical deficit approach by educational psychologists, among others. According to this approach, difficulties are related to deficits identified in the individual learner (Engelbrecht, 2004, p. 21; Muthukrishna & Schoeman, 2000). The learner is viewed as a patient to be diagnosed and provided with the correct treatment (Hay, 2003). In this approach, educational psychologists base their work on formal assessment of learners with special educational needs and recommend segregated provision of education (Farrell, 2006, p. 294; Thomas & Loxley, 2001, cited in Hick, Kershner & Farrell, 2009, p. 1).

In addition, there have been many challenges associated with the movement towards inclusive education in mainstream schools. With inclusive education has come a change in the roles and responsibilities of professionals working with children, including educational psychologists (Forlin, 2010; Engelbrecht, Oswald & Forlin, 2006). According to Forlin (2010, p. 617), the role of the educational psychologist has moved from a case-based, individual withdrawal model to a more collaborative whole-school-based approach. In countries such as the UK, it appears that educational psychologists are assuming either a more managerial role within local education authorities or are working privately and having their services contracted in by schools when needed (personal communication, Lammas School and Sport College, 9 July 2013).

It may be that educational psychologists have not collaborated sufficiently or successfully with teachers. A study reported by Anderson, Klassen and Georgiou (2007, p. 146) showed that educational psychologists were generally “below the radar screen” of teachers with regard to supporting inclusion, and that teachers may not associate educational psychologists’ traditional

medical deficit model practices with classroom implementation of inclusion. Given that teachers are viewed as the key role players in determining the quality of implementation of new education policies (Fullan, 1993, cited in Hay, Smit & Paulsen, 2006), including the successful implementation of inclusive education (Bothma, Gravett & Swart, 2000; Swart & Pettipher, 2000), it would appear that paying close attention to working with teachers would be an important part of the educational psychologist's role in supporting inclusion.

2.5.2 Where to in the future?

If educational psychologists are to play a key role in promoting and supporting a system of inclusion, including working closely with teachers, the profession must respond to the shift away from the medical deficit model towards a more ecological and systemic approach which is in line with South Africa's inclusive education approach (Daniels, 2010, p. 635; Engelbrecht, 2004, p. 23). Hay (2003) contends that in a developing country like South Africa, the ecosystemic model which shifts away from a focus on the individual to a broader assessment of all systems impacting on barriers to learning and development is more relevant than the medical deficit model. Sheridand and Gutking (2000, p. 485, cited in Forlin, 2010) put forward an "ecological framework of service delivery that addresses the needs of learners" at "multiple ecosystemic levels". They propose a movement away from the predominant psychological assessment focus of educational psychology towards a greater emphasis on developing prevention and early intervention models, which involve a wide range of stakeholders in all decision-making.

It has been argued that, in order to build the capacity of teachers to support inclusion, educational psychologists need to listen carefully to teachers to understand the support they need and how they can possibly provide it (Anderson, et al., 2007, p. 146; Wedell, 2005). Communication about a learner with a physical or other disability is a potential area of stress, and should be an important aspect of the inclusion process (Eloff, Engelbrecht & Swart, 2002, p. 96). Educational psychologists play an important role in this communication, especially in the South African context where large class sizes and untrained or under-trained teachers, as well as negative attitudes to disability and a lack of support services, have resulted in inclusion being viewed as unworkable (Hay et al., 2006). Research conducted by Eloff, Engelbrecht and Swart (2002, p. 98) indicates that it is necessary to address inadequate pre-service training and to improve collaborative communication. Much of the stress that was experienced by participants related to the communication processes about the inclusion of a learner with a physical disability. Limited contact with parents places more of a burden on the teachers and support staff who are accommodating learners with disabilities. The most stressful issues for teachers during the inclusion process of a learner with a physical disability were reported as being the socio-economic disadvantage of the family, insufficient pre-service training, being held accountable for the learner's educational outcomes, and the short attention span of the learner (Eloff, Engelbrecht & Swart, 2002).

Several international studies have concluded that teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education determine their commitment to inclusive practices and influence the outcomes of their practice (Baguwemu & Nabirye, 2002; Burstein et al., 2004; Rose, 2001; UNESCO, 1999, cited in Ntombela, 2011). A prerequisite for effective inclusionary teaching practices would thus appear to be effective support for teachers in inclusive education (Burstein et al., 2004). According to Muthukrishna (2002, pp. 149-150), teachers need to see themselves as "facilitators of learning", which means they must create meaningful classroom environments where learners take responsibility for their own learning. The teacher must guide them to use their skills in the learning process, and allow individual learners to develop at their own pace in accordance with their own learning style. Educational psychologists could take on a mentoring and support role for teachers, guiding them in facilitating the learning of a class full of individual children. They could, for example, support teachers in exposing learners to personal and group empowerment sessions that could help learners change their negative perceptions of themselves. This type of support could be done in life skills programmes, team-building workshops and through the establishment of support groups (Pillay, 2004, p. 8). In the UK, for example, nurture groups are run in schools to support vulnerable learners (personal communication, Lammas School and Sports Academy, 9 July 2013).

It has been argued that the educational psychologist should focus more on the social and emotional outcomes of learners, and be pivotal in addressing these in schools (Ross, Powell & Elias, 2002, cited in Forlin, 2010). The University of Hong Kong devised a model which conceptualises the educational psychologist as having three dimensions (developmental, preventative, remedial) with three target levels (individuals, groups, systems) that use both direct and indirect services. The educational psychologist must work simultaneously across all these domains in order to respond to a school's needs (Forlin, 2010, p. 622).

Despite the challenges, a number of good practices involving educational psychologists working to improve quality learning outcomes for learners within a whole school approach to inclusive education have emerged. Examples include the role of educational psychologists in supporting the development and implementation of inclusion policy, the way in which they work with teachers, and how they listen to the learner's voice and work with parents. According to Forlin (2010, p. 625), such strategies can be adopted in a school-based support model. In order for educational psychologists to provide such support within an inclusive school setting, they need to change their practice from a case-based clinical approach to a school and community-based preventative model (Forlin, 2010). A focus of their work should be on mentoring and empowering teachers to identify and effectively support learners who experience barriers to learning (Bourke, 2010; Pearce, Gray & Campbell-Evans, 2010; Prinsloo, 2001).

2.5.3 Challenges for educational psychologists in South Africa

If educational psychologists are to play a role in supporting inclusion in South African schools, then they must understand and be able to confront the challenges they face. There are many challenges in a country like South Africa, where districts often incorporate schools operating in both well-resourced and under-resourced communities. In other words, services offered by district offices cross the social divide. On the one side, teachers may be over-burdened by large class sizes, a lack of educational resources, learners who may be traumatised by violence, under-nourished, infected or affected by HIV/AIDS, or whose home language is not the language of learning and teaching of the school. Teachers may feel under-equipped because of poor training received under the apartheid education system, and unable to plan lessons that can span abilities, or feel overwhelmed at having to cope with a range of learners (Sayed & Soudien, 2005).

On the other side, teachers may have smaller classes and be generally better trained, with more resources at their disposal, as well as access to additional specialised support, often funded by the parents. A district educational psychologist may have to cater for 40 schools, and even in communities where parents can afford to pay for extra services, attitudes of teachers, learners and parents may still be exclusive (Daniels, 2010, p. 640). In a study reported on by Forlin (2010, p. 626), educational psychologists cited lack of government planning, poor promotion prospects and very high caseloads as impeding the development of the educational psychology service. High caseloads may have an enormous impact on educational psychologists' ability to adequately support inclusion. Properly supporting all learners, their families and communities requires a new analysis of the role that educational psychologists can and should play.

2.5.4 Collaboration to support inclusion

As discussed above, collaboration with teachers and other role players is one of the areas on which educational psychologists should focus. Numerous authors emphasise collaboration as a necessary, albeit complex, process to support inclusion (Kinsella & Senior, 2008; Slee, 2006, in Bourke, 2010; Cutter, Sullivan Palincsar & Magnusson, 2002; Booth, Ainscow, Black-Hawkins, Vaughan & Shaw, 2000; Yssel, Engelbrecht, Oswald, Eloff & Swart, 2007). Collaboration is based on belongingness, alliances and mutual support, but collaboration in education is not a naturally occurring phenomenon (Engelbrecht & Green, 2002). Schrage (1993, cited in Engelbrecht and Green, 2002, p. 113) explains collaboration as a creative partnership: "two or more individuals with complementary skills interacting to create a shared understanding that none had previously possessed or could have come to on their own". Collaboration is also seen as a community of practice that connects individual staff members with others in their school community (Engelbrecht & Green, 2002).

In South Africa, collaborative support is included as part of a strategy for developing an inclusive system of support. Such collaborative support includes the development of school-based support teams and district support teams which comprise educational psychologists and school counsellors, as well as the use of existing special schools as resource centres (Engelbrecht, 2004, p. 22). According to Kinsella and Senior (2008, p. 658), parties to these types of structures should engage in collaborative problem-solving to decide how change will be implemented, managed and evaluated.

Collaboration between general and special education teachers as well as other stakeholders is regarded as critical for the successful implementation of inclusive education (Lipsky & Gartner, 1998, cited in Wah, 2010, p. 99). In addition, the context of change (as in the reform of the South African education system) demands a revision of the traditional roles of teachers to a more collaborative role which can support the accommodation of diversity in inclusive classrooms (Engelbrecht, 2006). It can no longer be assumed that teaching professionals know what is best for learners with disabilities. There is a need for constant collaboration and communication among all the stakeholders in the inclusion process (Eloff, Engelbrecht & Swart, 2002, p. 80), with stakeholders being encouraged to share and build on their knowledge in order to increase inclusivity in the school (Engelbrecht, 2006). Each school should have a school-based support team (SBST) – also referred to as an institutional-level support team (ILST) - comprised of teachers, special needs teachers, care staff, learners, parents, caregivers, members of DBSTs and local community members when appropriate. The team should coordinate the institutional support of the school, identify institutional needs, develop strategies to address barriers to learning, monitor availability and use of resources and assess the general operation of a school in terms of inclusion (Jafthas, 2008). However, teachers often have limited or no training in collaborative approaches, and thus may not have adequate capacity to address the diverse needs of learners. If SBSTs are to succeed, they need to be able to access support from the District and the community. If district officials resist change, are uncertain about their role or lack the necessary skills, the system cannot operate (Stofile & Green, 2007, p. 58). They need training in collaboration skills and experiences of structured and supported collaboration (Engelbrecht & Green, 2002).

Another type of collaboration is proposed in the form of district-based support teams. Provincial departments structure services to schools through district offices. There should be a district-based support team in each district office, which comprises staff, including psychologists and learning support advisors, from provincial departments of education, their district, regional and head offices, and special schools (Jafthas, 2008; Department of Education, 2001, p. 47). The primary function of the DBST is to evaluate and support the building of capacity in schools in order to recognise and address severe learning difficulties and to accommodate a range of

learning needs (Pather, 2011; Department of Education, 2001, p. 47). In addition, the DBST should ensure that special schools support surrounding schools by serving as resource centres, and that implementation of national inclusive education policies is monitored (Jafthas, 2008; Department of Education, 2001). As schools do not function in isolation but are embedded within broader communities, a community-based approach may contribute to the development of inclusive learning communities.

Benefits of collaborative partnerships include the enhanced psychological well-being of children, parents and school communities. Collaboration forms an essential part of the development of inclusive school and community partnerships. It moves away from traditional power relationships to partnerships between equals who share in decision-making (Engelbrecht & Green, 2002). However, translating such partnerships into practice has proven difficult, as shared problem-solving requires that parties first recognise a shared need, recognise the expertise of all partners, and accept diverse views and backgrounds (Engelbrecht & Green, 2002, p. 184).

Finally, Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001) has acknowledged the central role played by parents in being part of a collaborative approach in the placement of learners in special schools. Parents are seen as equal partners, and as such should be part of joint efforts to support their children. To support this, the Constitution of South Africa recognises the right of parents to be involved in the education of their children, as does the South African Schools Act (Engelbrecht & Green, 2002).

2.6 Conceptual framework

In this section, I outline my emerging conceptual framework based on three matrices designed by Wedell to address some of the “rigidities that hamper inclusion” (Wedell, 2005, p. 4). I have revised the matrices to suit my research questions. The purpose of this conceptual framework is to anchor the organisation of data and its analysis so as to enable me to answer the research questions (Athanasou, Mpofu, Gitchell & Elias, 2012).

In exploring the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion in South African schools, the nature of the vertical and horizontal relationships that exist within the schooling and education support system appear to be a critical issue. The educational psychologist has to work with a set of policy and administrative frameworks developed nationally, in districts and in schools. This can be regarded as the macro-framework within which s/he works. S/he also works within a micro-framework involving the learner, parents and the teacher.

The child and parent have to relate to the teacher and the school in what probably should not be, but is, a hierarchical relationship. The relationship between the school and the education

department is normally through the district office, with districts having to work within the national policy, legislative and provisioning framework. Horizontally, there is the relationship between the parent and the teacher, and how the needs of the child are addressed within that relationship. There is also a grouping of professionals who are expected to work together within the school – teacher, educational psychologist, occupational therapist, speech therapist and others (Department of Basic Education, 2010) – and who need specific skills, knowledge, understanding and attitudes towards inclusion and how to manage it in order to implement it effectively.

Matrix One

Matrix One (see Figure 2.1) “provides the framework for discussing some of the rigidities emerging from the education structures listed in the vertical dimension of Matrix One”, as well as policy and administrative frameworks “listed in the horizontal dimension” (Wedell, 2005, p. 4). According to Wedell (2005), some of the rigidities that impact on inclusive education, and hence on the role of the educational psychologist, include: funding issues; national education policies that conflict with one another or that differ from practice; inflexible timetables and staffing; the dichotomy whereby the school is being urged to pursue inclusion but at the same time is under serious pressure to produce good learner test results (often achieved through a deliberate policy of excluding those deemed likely to fail); the way learners are grouped within schools; conventional teaching methods; and curriculum and assessment specifications. The challenge in my study is to pinpoint the rigidities in the system as a whole, and to ascertain what hinders or enhances the inclusive processes and what role the educational psychologist can play to support inclusion.

EDUCATION SYSTEM	POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORKS
	National - extent to which policies, funding norms, systems and processes support the national policy
	District - extent to which resources allocated at district level and the processes for accessing them support national policy
	School - extent to which schools are able to access resources and implement national policy

Figure 2.1: Matrix One (adapted from Wedell, 2005)

In Matrix One, the vertical dimension of the education system is concerned with the rigidities in the system that affect all learners, teachers, parents and others who are in the education system. For example, services such as health, social welfare and education are segregated, funding is fragmented and diverse learner needs are not being addressed appropriately.

National education policies often “frustrate each other in their implementation” (Wedell, 2005, p. 4) – for example, the policy commitment to the provision of specialist support, but the lack of that very support in the norms and standards for staffing. Rigidities in individual schools that impact on inclusive education include inflexible timetables, lack of innovation in service delivery and reluctant staff. Most schools still tend to set classes based on traditional dominant groupings of learners into grades, and place learners who do not fit in with these groupings into alternative streams or refer them to other schools.

The horizontal dimension of the matrix refers to the policy and administrative framework, neither of which, as currently formulated, is suitable for effective inclusive education. For the purposes of this study, I was particularly interested in how the national Department of Basic Education, as the policy-making body, viewed the inclusive education policy and its implementation, how the District Office and school participants adapted their service delivery, human resources, staff training, timetables, curricula and assessment procedures in an attempt to honour the provisions stipulated in Education White Paper 6, and how that policy was eventually understood and interpreted in the reality of a school.

Matrix Two

Matrix Two measures the interrelatedness between learner diversity and expectations, and emphasises that this diversity has to be taken into account when the education system is being planned (Wedell, 2005). In addition, an essential principle of inclusion is that it is not just about the “type of school that children attend: it is about the quality of their experience; how they are helped to learn, achieve and participate fully in the life of the school” (DfES, 2004, p. 25, cited in Wedell, 2005, p. 6). The key determinants of an education system are the skills, knowledge, understanding and attitudes (Wedell, 2005, p. 6) that are essential to ensure successful implementation of inclusion (see Figure 2.2).

LEARNER DIVERSITY	Skills	Knowledge	Understanding	Attitudes
	- extent to which the skills of teachers and other professionals enable inclusion	- extent to which knowledge of supporting diverse learners enables inclusion	- extent to which understanding of inclusion enables policy implementation	- extent to which attitudinal change within the system enables inclusion

Figure 2.2: Matrix Two (adapted from Wedell, 2005)

Matrix Two suggests a “different starting point for moving towards [the] flexibility” (Wedell, 2005, p. 6) required for successful implementation of an inclusive education policy. It shows the interrelatedness between learner diversity and the expectations of those implementing inclusion at various levels. The matrix shows that what is required is a change in attitude and an

understanding of the nature of diversity and the types and levels of needs. This includes needs that are common to all, needs that are common to some but not to others, and needs that are unique to an individual (Lewis & Norwich, 1999, cited in Wedell, 2005, p. 6). These varying needs have implications for the types of expertise that are required to support inclusion. In my study, the key focus is on the role of the educational psychologist in supporting the development of the requisite expertise, as well as in collaborating with other players in the system to develop expertise to support the inclusive system.

Matrix Three

Matrix Three (see Figure 2.3) examines the problems of implementing inclusive education in conjunction with the concern that the present system fails to prepare learners for their adult lives. Wedell (2005) argues that what is required is a realistic evaluation of the changes that need to be made if inclusive education is to be successful, including the interrelatedness of teaching–learning approaches, the nature and level of expertise and collaboration required, and the variety of learner groupings and locations where learning occurs. Studying these features could have implications for policy and practice, and, in terms of my study, could also indicate how the educational psychologist can support inclusion.

IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES	Teaching–learning approaches - extent to which teaching and learning approaches support and enable inclusion
	Nature and levels of expertise and collaboration - extent to which expertise and collaboration mechanisms are in place to enable inclusion
	Varieties of learner groupings and locations - extent to which the location, socio-economic background and diversity of learners impact on inclusion

Figure 2.3: Matrix Three (adapted from Wedell, 2005)

Matrix 3 offers a framework for a realistic evaluation of the changes that are needed for a more inclusive system, especially the interrelatedness of teaching–learning approaches, the nature and levels of expertise, and the variety of learner groupings and the locations in which learning occurs (Wedell, 2005). For the purposes of my study, I was interested in how educational psychologists could support greater levels of inclusion in schools. In other words, how could educational psychologists support the implementation of personalised learning for learners in schools, encourage collaboration between themselves, teachers, district officials, parents and other professionals, and suggest how classes be grouped for learning.

These three matrices were pertinent to the research questions for my study. Matrix One helped me to focus on how the understanding of inclusive education by national and district government

officials as well as school personnel shaped the school system and policy implementation, and how this was played out in individual classes. Matrix Two highlighted how the understanding of inclusive education influenced the school in terms of its learner population, as well as the skills of its teachers and other support staff. Matrix Three addressed how the understanding of the inclusive system affected the school's attempts to make itself more inclusive.

2.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I positioned the current study within existing literature and a conceptual framework. I commenced by exploring the concept of inclusion at a societal level, as well as in South Africa. I then explored challenges relating to inclusion, again highlighting challenges pertinent to South Africa. Thereafter, I explored the field of educational psychology, addressing the role of educational psychologists in an inclusive environment, as well as challenges for educational psychologists in South Africa. Finally, I looked at collaboration in support of inclusion. I concluded the chapter by providing my conceptual framework for this study, together with a visual representation of this framework which I employed to make meaning of the literature I reviewed. In Chapter 3, I will discuss the meta-theoretical paradigm, research design and methodology that framed my study.

Chapter 3: Research design and methodology

3.1 Introduction

In Chapter 2, I explored existing literature related to inclusion, and presented a conceptual framework within which to anchor the findings of this study. In this chapter, I discuss the methodological choices I made for this study. I describe the selected paradigmatic perspectives and the research design. I then provide a detailed account of the actual methodology, including sample selection, data collection methods, data analysis and interpretation procedures. Thereafter, I discuss the quality criteria and ethical guidelines I adhered to within the study.

3.2 Paradigmatic perspectives

A paradigm is a world view, a way of thinking about and making sense of the complexities of the world (Patton, 2002). According to Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2002), paradigms highlight perspectives that provide the rationale for research and guide the researcher in the choice of methods for data collection, observation and interpretation; in other words, it is a way of viewing one's research material (De Vos, 2005, p. 40). Maree (2007b) argues that paradigmatic assumptions inform the basic belief system or world view that guides the researcher on how to undertake research. One's world view is guided by ontological, epistemological and methodological considerations (Creswell, 2007b). All of these considerations relate to one another in that a response on one level will inform the responses on subsequent levels. Table 3.1 outlines the philosophical assumptions and implications for practice of these three types of considerations.

Table 3.1: Philosophical assumptions and implications for practice

Assumption	Question	Characteristics	Implications for practice (examples)
Ontological	What is the nature of reality?	Reality is subjective and multiple, as seen by participants in the study.	The researcher uses quotes from and themes in the words of participants to provide evidence of different perspectives.
Epistemological	What is the relationship between the researcher and that being researched?	The researcher attempts to lessen the distance between herself and that being researched.	The researcher collaborates, spends time in the field with participants and becomes an "insider".
Methodological	What is the process of research?	The researcher uses inductive logic, studies the topic within its context and uses an emerging design.	The researcher works with details before generalisations, describes in detail the context of the study, and continually revises questions based on experiences in the field.

(Creswell, 2007b, p. 17)

3.2.1 Meta-theoretical paradigm: Interpretivism

In this study, I adopted an interpretivist paradigm or lens as I attempted to gain a deep understanding of the experiences of the participants by relying on their perceptions and interpretations thereof. My intention was not to describe a single truth or provide objective interpretations, but rather to gain an in-depth understanding of the case that I was studying (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

Cohen et al. (2003) explain that the central aim of Interpretivism is to understand the subjective world of human experience. Efforts are made to get inside the individual and understand from within, in order to retain the integrity of the phenomena (Nieuwenhuis, 2010, p. 59). In other words, interpretivist research allows the researcher to gather rich experiential data from participants in order to form an understanding of a situation within its context (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). Interpretivist researchers attempt to understand the way individuals interpret the world around them. Theory is emergent and must be grounded in the data being generated. The researcher works directly with experience and understanding to build theory, which becomes sets of meanings that give insight and understanding into people's behaviour (Cohen et al., 2003). Table 3.2 shows the ontological, epistemological and methodological dimensions of Interpretivism.

Table 3.2: Dimensions of the interpretive paradigm

Ontology	Epistemology	Methodology
❖ Internal reality of subjective experience	❖ Empathy ❖ Observer subjectivity	❖ Interactional ❖ Interpretative ❖ Qualitative

(Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002, p. 6)

Choosing Interpretivism as a meta-theoretical paradigm appeared suitable because of the exploratory nature of the study (Cohen et al, 2003). Considering that interpretivist research relies mainly on first-hand experiences, the interactive nature of my research approach supported an Interpretivist paradigm (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). In this research, I used open-ended interviews and focus groups as data generation strategies because they allowed for interaction among the participants, as well as between the participants and myself as researcher. By using interpretivism, I gained insight into how participants understand and experience the role of the educational psychologist within an inclusive education system. I had to remain cognisant of my subjective interpretation of the data. I attempted to control for any potential bias and subjectivity by debriefing with my supervisor and reflecting in my research journal.

3.2.2 Methodological paradigm: Qualitative enquiry

I chose a qualitative research approach to this study. In a qualitative study, the researcher seeks to understand phenomena within their natural settings, and often studies people or systems through interacting with and observing them (Creswell, 2007a). Qualitative research aims to examine the construction of meaning, to make sense of the predominant features of peoples' lives or their frames of reference, and then to reflect on the role of the researcher in the generation of data (Gibson & Brown, 2009, p. 8). I undertook a qualitative study in a school in Pretoria's inner city. Using qualitative methods, I aimed to obtain an in-depth understanding of a specific intervention, practice and setting, namely, inclusive education implemented in a school in South Africa, and the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion (Mertens, 2010; Patton, 2002). In this study, I sought to understand the viewpoints of teachers, educational psychologists, education specialists and parents, as well as school and district managers in an inclusive school setting and within national and provincial education departments.

Qualitative research approaches have various strengths. One of the main advantages is that I was able to gain an in-depth understanding of what I was studying, without trying to manipulate the phenomenon under study (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a, p. 78; Willig, 2008; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). Qualitative research attempts to explore and understand the meaning that participants attribute to social phenomena (Creswell, 2009; Willig, 2008). Qualitative methods allow the researcher to understand how individuals experience events and make sense of the world and, as a result, are best suited to answering questions related to world views and a particular phenomenon (Willig, 2008; Adams, Collair, Oswald & Perold, 2004). In my study, I observed the participants and attempted to capture the attitudes and inner meanings they ascribed to the experiences they had with educational psychologists, and their views on the role educational psychologists can play in supporting inclusion.

In qualitative research, the research process is emergent; in other words, the initial research plan and subsequent phases of the process may shift once the researcher enters the field and begins collecting data. The researcher also draws on multiple sources of data. I drew on interviews, observations and documents to gain a wide perspective on what I was studying (Creswell, 2007b, pp. 38-39). The researcher's subjectivity in qualitative research is accepted as "something that cannot be eliminated" (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a, p. 78). The researcher is essentially seen as a "research instrument in the data gathering process" (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a, p. 78). As a qualitative researcher, I was able to immerse myself in the study through interacting with the participants, and to gain an in-depth perspective. I observed the participants closely and captured the attitudes and inner meanings they ascribed to their experiences (Nieuwenhuis, 2010; Creswell, 2007a).

In addressing the limitations of qualitative research, I was aware that it might be regarded as subjective because the researcher is the primary data collection instrument. Qualitative research is also viewed as exploratory, as “researchers have no way of verifying their truth statements” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 8). Findings may not be generalisable to wider society, and data collection may be more time-consuming and costly than with quantitative research (Cohen et al., 2007). Qualitative research emphasises the quality of the process or meanings, and does not focus on quantitative measurement. It was therefore necessary for me to reflect through regular sessions with my research supervisor, as well as by keeping a research journal. This reflection helped to limit subjectivity and bias in my research. I also engaged in member checking, by sharing the main findings of my research with my participants. The various strategies I employed to ensure the trustworthiness of my study (see section 3.7) helped to ensure the rigour and dependability of my research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Patton, 2002).

3.3 Research methodology

In this section, I discuss the research methodology selected. I also discuss my selection of the case site and participants, as well as the data collection strategies I employed to answer the research questions. Table 3.3 illustrates the research process followed.

Table 3.3: Research process

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	
Purpose	To explore the role that the educational psychologist can play in supporting inclusion at school level in South Africa
Research design	Instrumental case study
Research questions	Primary research question: ❖ <i>How can educational psychologists support greater levels of inclusion at school level?</i> Secondary research questions: ❖ What are participants’ views on inclusion? ❖ What do participants view as the role of educational psychologists in inclusive classrooms and schools? ❖ What are the challenges experienced by participants in accessing educational psychology services in an inclusive school? ❖ How could educational psychology services be improved to support inclusion?
Research site and participants	Research site: ❖ Government primary school in Pretoria, Gauteng Province Participants: ❖ 2 officials from the Department of Basic Education (DBE) ❖ 6 participants from the school (research site) ❖ 1 educational psychologist who provided support to the case-study school ❖ 1 counsellor from a Pretoria-based church who supports learners at the school ❖ 3 district officials ❖ 1 parent whose child received support from the educational

psychologist	
Data collection	❖ Face-to-face interviews ❖ Telephonic interviews ❖ Focus groups ❖ Observation ❖ Document review ❖ Reflective journal
Data documentation	❖ Field notes ❖ Audio recordings and transcriptions ❖ Research diary
Data analysis and interpretation	❖ Transcriptions of interviews ❖ Thematic content analysis ❖ Coding and categorisation ❖ Document analysis
Quality criteria	❖ Trustworthiness and dependability ❖ Credibility ❖ Authenticity ❖ Transferability
Ethical considerations	❖ Informed consent and voluntary participation ❖ Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity ❖ Respect and caring ❖ Beneficence and non-maleficence ❖ Protection from harm

3.3.1 Research design and approach

Research design can be defined as “a strategic framework that serves as a bridge between research questions and the implementation of research” (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002, p. 29). For this research, I utilised a case study research design. Case study research is defined by Yin (1989, p. 23) as an “empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used”. In other words, a case study is an “in-depth exploration of a bounded system based on extensive data collection” (Creswell, 2007a, p. 246). According to Morgan and Sklar (2012, p. 75), case study research is an approach to research rather than a research method in itself. A case study aims at understanding how participants make meaning of a phenomenon under study. According to Nieuwenhuis (2007a, p. 294), the case study design is useful for learning about situations which might not be well understood or about which not much is known, as was the case with the current research focus area. From an interpretivist perspective, a case study attempts to gain a holistic understanding of how participants interact with one another regarding a particular situation and how they make meaning of the phenomenon being researched (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a, p. 75).

Specifically, I chose an instrumental case study design to illuminate and gain a better understanding of a particular social issue (Creswell, 2007a; De Vos, 2005, p. 272). My aim was to obtain a deep understanding of the experiences of national and district government officials, principals, teachers, educational psychologists and other counselling staff, as well as parents,

within a particular context (a South African public school) within a particular environment (Gauteng) and time (2012) (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006).

An advantage of employing a case study design is that the focus is on one or two issues that are essential to understanding the phenomenon being studied (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a, p. 76). Using this design allowed me to focus on a specific school, principal, group of teachers, the educational psychologist providing services to the school, and an education District as well as the national education department. This design also allowed me to explore my research focus in a naturalistic environment. Another strength of case study research is the depth and detail one can go into to gain insight into the phenomenon under investigation. This can help one to determine, for example, how policies have an effect on society at a micro level (in this study, on a school community), and where challenges may lie. Case study research uses multiple techniques (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a, p. 76) and “sources to obtain multiple perspectives” which offers the researcher multi-layered insights into the phenomenon being studied (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 105). Considering the descriptive nature of case study research, it is envisaged that new ideas or hypotheses could emerge (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). The present case study may thus provide further insight into similar situations within the South African schooling system, especially in the light of the South African government’s inclusive education policy (Department of Education, 2001).

Despite the advantages of using a case study design, I was also faced with challenges. One challenge of the case study design is that data is generated from a single case, and one thus cannot generalise to a broader population (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a, p. 76). Related to this is the lower sample numbers inherent in the design. Participants in my study were selected on the basis of convenience and may therefore not be representative of the natural population. This means that findings may not be generalisable to society. However, in this study, the aim of the research was not to generalise knowledge but rather to obtain a deep understanding of the experiences of stakeholders (Lincoln & Guba, 2000), which was possible with a smaller sample. Despite the fact that these findings may not be generalisable, the results may be replicable using similar approaches. This means that other researchers at other sites may obtain similar results (Kalat, 2010).

3.4 Selection of site and participants

When selecting the research site and participants, I conducted a first-phase and second-phase of purposive sampling. In this form of sampling, the site and then the participants are selected with the intention that they will be able to help the researcher better understand the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2007b). Since the intention of the study was to explore the role that educational psychologists can play in supporting an inclusive education system, the criteria I used to select the case study site were important. I wanted a government school which received

support both from professional support staff in the school District and from external (private) psychological service providers. The Gauteng Department of Education does not fund posts for educational psychologists in schools (except in selected schools for learners with special needs), and so schools which provide access to the services of an educational psychologist generally require that the parents pay for the services. Another criterion was to ensure that the site I selected had a well-functioning school-based support team, which worked collaboratively with the educational psychologist. An individual within the District in which the school is based served as a gatekeeper and assisted me in identifying an appropriate site (Creswell, 2007a). Once she had assisted me to identify two potential sites, I contacted the school principals and arranged to meet with them before deciding on which site to select for the case study. My final choice of site met the criteria stipulated above.

The school I selected is a primary school predominantly serving learners from Pretoria's central business district and surrounding areas. This area is characterised, *inter alia*, by language challenges (the learners' home languages being different to the school's language of teaching and learning), unemployment and poverty. The learners are predominantly black African, with an African language as home language. The school's language of learning and teaching is English. The school has a multi-grade class for approximately 20 learners with special education needs (LSEN), who require additional support for what the school classifies as mild cognitive disabilities. There is also a learning support teacher (referred to by the school as a remedial teacher) who works with small groups of up to ten learners for half-hour periods during the school day to help them "bridge the gap" – in other words, to help them catch up with their classmates in learning areas in which they have difficulty. In particular, learners who do not have English as their home language receive support for language enrichment (Interview, P4,¹ 24 May 2012).

Since the purpose of my research was to obtain a deep understanding of how participants perceive the role of educational psychologists in supporting inclusion within the context of the South African government schooling system, I utilised a purposive and convenient sampling procedure: participants were selected because they had certain defining characteristics that meant they were holders of the data needed for the study (Nieuwenhuis 2010b, p. 79; Creswell, 2007a; Cohen et al, 2003). The participants in my study had been involved in implementing inclusive education at their school, or in supporting the school, or in developing and ensuring the implementation of Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001); they were thus perceived as having in-depth knowledge of the topic. Convenience sampling was based on the

¹ P stands for participant. I assigned each participant a number – for example, P1, P2 – to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

² For ease of reference, I have used a different colour for each theme. These colours are also used for

fact that the participants were available for the study (Henry, 2009), which limited the time I had to spend finding suitable participants. Details of the participants are provided in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Description of participants

Participant	Interview site	Role in education	Gender	Participated in
P1	Department of Basic Education, Inclusive Education Directorate	Official	Male	Interview
P2	Department of Basic Education, Inclusive Education Directorate	Official	Female	Interview
P3	School	Principal	Male	Interview
P4	School	HOD for Guidance (also teacher and SBST member)	Female	Interview, focus group and observation
P5	School	Teacher, SBST member	Female	Focus group and observation
P6	School	Teacher, SBST member	Female	Focus group and observation
P7	School	Teacher, SBST member	Female	Focus group and observation
P8	School	Teacher, SBST member	Male	Focus group and observation
P9	School	Counsellor	Male	Interview and observation
P10	Telephonic	Educational psychologist	Female	Telephonic interview
P11	District Office	Official (educational psychologist)	Female	Focus group and observation
P12	District Office	Official (educational psychologist)	Female	Focus group and observation
P13	District Office	Official (manager)	Female	Focus group and observation
P14	Telephonic	Parent	Female	Telephonic interview

3.5 Data collection and documentation

A characteristic and strength of case study research is that extensive data is collected from multiple sources (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a). In this study, I used four data collection methods, including interviews, focus groups and observations, as well as document analysis (Creswell, 2007a). These methods are described below.

I used a range of qualitative methods to document the interviews, focus group discussions and observations. I used field notes and a research diary for descriptive and reflective notes

(Creswell, 2007a). In addition, I used a voice recorder to record my sessions, so that I could transcribe the information shared by participants.

3.5.1 Face-to-face and telephonic interviews

The main data collection instrument was semi-structured interviews. I used these interviews to obtain detailed factual information as well as to explore in an in-depth manner the interviewee's understanding of approaches and interventions, roles and responsibilities, challenges and visions for the future. I developed a set of pre-determined, open-ended questions on an interview schedule to guide the interview process, and empathically encouraged participants to share their experiences and views (Maree, 2007a, p. 296; Seabi, 2012). (See Addendum D for a sample of the interview questions.)

The advantage of individual in-depth, semi-structured interviews is that they are personal and flexible (Cohen et al., 2003), as they allow the interviewee's thoughts to be probed (Trochim, 2001). Because the opinions stem from one source only, that of the participant, the researcher is able to locate specific ideas with specific participants (Denscombe, 2007, p. 177). A benefit of conducting face-to-face interviews is that it enabled me to establish a relationship with each participant and gain his or her cooperation (Maree, 2007b). Once this relationship has been established, a participant may feel comfortable sharing his or her thoughts in a one-on-one interview, and such an interview also enables the interviewer to observe non-verbal cues such as facial expression and body language (Cohen et al., 2000). An advantage for me was that one-on-one interviews are relatively easy to arrange as they involve only two people. The interviews were also easier to transcribe than a group interview, as there was only one person talking at a time (Denscombe, 2007, p. 177). I recorded and then transcribed all interviews, and used field notes to support the recordings (Maree, 2007b, p. 297).

A disadvantage is that interviewing one person at a time restricts the number of voices that can be heard within the research timeframe. This was a challenge for me in my study, in particular in arranging interviews with the national and district education department officials. My interview with one of the DBE participants had to be rescheduled as, when I arrived for the interview, I found that both he and his assistant were on leave. I had to interview one of my participants telephonically as she no longer resides in Gauteng Province. I used a speaker phone to enable me to take notes and digitally record the interview. The disadvantage of this telephonic interview was that I could not observe her non-verbal reactions.

3.5.2 Focus groups

A focus group interview is the process of collecting data through an interview with a group of people who are selected as having common characteristics related to the phenomenon being investigated (Greef, 2005). It is a useful data collection method to elicit different perspectives on a particular phenomenon. The informal nature of the discussion may encourage participants to

speak without constraint (Berg, 2001), and individuals often clarify their own opinions and understandings by listening to others (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Since meaning-making is a collective and socially shared activity, the group discussion format can elicit thoughts and ideas that participants may not have considered during an individual interview (Babbie, 2005). Information emerges as the participants engage in discussion with each other (Cohen et al., 2003; Nieuwenhuis, 2007a). Participants build on each other's ideas to provide an in-depth view (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a). In this study, I conducted a focus group with six teachers at the research site, as well as with two district officials. I had intended to conduct a focus group with the district-based support team, but because of restructuring taking place, the District was unable to accommodate this request. I asked six questions and elicited responses from all participants (Creswell, 2007a). I developed a questionnaire to guide the focus group discussions on how the participants experience the various educational psychology actions and interventions.

An advantage of conducting focus groups is that they may be time-saving, and may produce a substantial volume of detailed data through joint meaning-making (Babbie, 2005; Creswell, 2007a). A disadvantage is that it may be threatening to some participants who do not want to disclose their views in a group context. In both the focus groups, the participants were well acquainted with each other and the subject matter was not particularly sensitive. Initially in the school focus group, there were two dominant participants, but once I, in my role as moderator (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a), encouraged the less dominant members to participate, they did so and the discussion flowed. Another disadvantage of focus groups is that they usually consist of a small sample which may make representation difficult and can generate less data than would individual interviews. Analysis of data may also be difficult, as the researcher must be able to both transcribe and analyse the verbal data from numerous participants as well as observational data such as non-verbal expressions, group dynamics and so on (Babbie, 2005; Cohen et al., 2003; Nieuwenhuis, 2007a). It can also be difficult to control group dynamics and to ensure that some group members do not dominate the discussion. Domination by one member reduces the likelihood of less assertive individuals participating (Babbie, 2005). I attempted to control for this by indicating at the outset of the focus group that all voices should be given equal opportunity to be heard, and that participants should respect one another's opinions. In the focus groups I conducted, all participants gave voice to their views.

As with the individual interviews, I digitally recorded my focus group sessions and used field notes to support the recordings. I transcribed the focus group sessions and noted observations (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a).

3.5.3 Observation

Observations of both the behaviour and setting of participants are considered by social scientists to be a fundamental basis of various research methods (Angrosino & de Perez, 2003).

According to Creswell (2007a, p. 221), observation is the process of gathering open-ended, first-hand information by observing people and places at a research site. Observations can also provide a check on what is reported in interviews (Patton, 2002). In this study, I utilised informal observation (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a) during observations of meetings of the SBST, as well as during my individual and focus group interviews. I focused on verbal responses to understand and interpret data (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002). I considered observations to be particularly useful as they enabled the collection of evidence on the impact of collaboration, and potentially could enable examples of observed collaboration to be used to amplify or clarify a conclusion (De Vos, 2005).

I followed the ethical guidelines stipulated in the University of Pretoria Code of Ethics, and in accordance with my ethics clearance from the University of Pretoria. I recorded data gathered during observations, as field notes (Creswell, 2007a).

3.5.4 Document review

It is important to gather documentary communication that can shed light on the concepts being studied (Nieuwenhuis, 2007a). Documents can include published and unpublished material, such as government policy. In this study, the following documents were collected for review as part of the literature review and data analysis phases of the study:

- ❖ the Constitution of South Africa
- ❖ legislation, such as the South African Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996
- ❖ policy documents, including Education White Paper 6 and the National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support
- ❖ relevant documents from my case study school, including the school's mission statement, admissions criteria, Support Needs Assessment Form, School-Based Support Team case summaries and recommendations document, School-Based Support Team Referral Form, Counselling Referral Form, and GDE Support Form 450.

These documents were selected because educational psychologists must operate within the South African constitutional principles of non-discrimination, democratic and participatory decision-making and redress of inequalities, as well as within the framework of related and relevant policies and legislation (Engelbrecht & Green, 2002). I also asked participants to guide me to other relevant documents.

Documents have limitations in that they may be incomplete or inaccurate. However, document review can provide a behind-the-scenes look at the issue being researched that may not be directly observable and about which I may not have been able to ask appropriate questions without the leads provided through documents (Patton, 2002, p. 307). I included relevant

findings from the documents I reviewed in Chapter 2, the literature review, as well as in Chapter 4, my data analysis chapter.

3.5.5 Reflective journal

A reflective journal is used to record one's thoughts as a researcher whenever one notices anything, has a discussion with someone about the research, participates in an activity or observes anything that may help one to better understand the phenomenon being investigated. Such reflections can form the basis of one's findings and conclusions (Kumar, 2011, p. 130). In addition, keeping a reflective journal allows a researcher to reflect on his/her role within the research process, and to think about how his/her reactions to the research context and the data may result in certain insights and understandings (Willig, 2008, p. 18).

As a researcher, I kept a reflective journal throughout the study to record ideas, thoughts and reflections regarding my experiences. I also used the journal to record any assumptions or biases I became aware of during the research process, and whether I considered my assumptions to be accurate or refuted during the process. Using a journal allowed me to record thoughts, hunches, working hypotheses and evolving understandings of the setting and participants. I began to generate constructs and patterns in my data (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. 50). My journal recordings assisted me in validating themes and adding descriptive detail to the case study. I was also able to use my journal to reflect on the process in order to make changes when necessary, and to reflect on my own abilities as a researcher (Maree, 2007b).

3.6 Data analysis and interpretation

In case study research, interpretation of data collected is a recursive process in which the researcher interacts with the data throughout the study, and tries to make sense of the data collected from multiple sources. This on-going examination and interpretation allows for the drawing of tentative conclusions and the refinement of the research questions (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006).

The primary data analysis technique I used was thematic content analysis. This involves identifying, analysing and reporting emerging themes from all data collected (Braun & Clarke, 2006). An advantage of thematic content analysis is that it allows for flexibility and the ability to reflect reality (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

I followed the thematic content analysis steps proposed by Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2002). The first step was to transcribe interview and focus group data after each session. I regularly reviewed the data collected in order to become immersed in it (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Once acquainted and familiar with it, I generated preliminary codes and code headings through which to categorise the data (Creswell, 2007a). Coding represents the operations by which data are

broken down, conceptualised and put back together in new ways. It is the central process by which theories are built from data (De Vos, 2005, p. 340). Examples of my data transcriptions and codings are shown in Addendum E.

I used different colours to highlight phrases and paragraphs in my transcripts that were related to potential emerging themes. Once the data had been coded, I generated themes which I tabulated and from which I could make inferences to address the research questions (Maree, 2007b). I revised and defined themes by tabulating emerging themes and sub-themes. And finally, I interpreted the data in accordance with these themes and sub-themes. In Chapter 4, I discuss the interpretation of the data in terms of the themes and sub-themes that emerged.

In order to validate my findings, I used triangulation and member checking (Creswell, 2007b). Triangulation involves collecting data in as many different ways and from as many diverse sources as possible (Willig, 2008) to clarify, verify and validate the meaning of the data (Gibson & Brown, 2009; Creswell, 2007b). This process helped me to better understand the phenomenon being studied, as meaning is being approached from different angles (Kelly, 2006a; Maree, 2007b). I also used methodological triangulation to study the problem, looking for convergent evidence from different sources, such as interviews, focus groups, observation and documentary review (Kelly, 2006b). In member checking, the researcher solicits participants' views of the accuracy of the findings and interpretations (Creswell, 2007b). I confirmed the findings and my interpretations thereof by discussing identified themes with participants (Creswell, 2007a).

3.7 Quality criteria

In an attempt to ensure rigour in my study, I strove to adhere to the quality criteria associated with qualitative research as outlined by Durrheim and Wassenaar (2002). These criteria are discussed below.

3.7.1 Trustworthiness and dependability

The term "trustworthiness" refers to the way in which the researcher is able to persuade the reader that the findings of the study are of a high quality and are worthy of attention. Related to this is "dependability" which refers to the extent to which the reader is convinced that the findings occurred as the researcher said they did (Maree, 2007b, p. 299). I achieved this through providing rich and detailed descriptions of the data collected by using transcriptions and field notes (DiFabio & Maree, 2012), as well as through member checking. I also used triangulation of data to search for common themes which could help to ensure reliability of findings. I monitored the quality of my audio recordings and interview transcriptions, and reflected regularly in my research journal on the research process to help to eliminate any bias (Maree, 2007b).

3.7.2 Credibility

Credibility focuses on matching the constructed realities of the participants with the realities represented by the researcher (Sinkovics, Penz & Ghauri, 2008); in other words, it refers to the assurance that the researcher's conclusions are drawn from the raw data and therefore correspond to the perceptions of the participants. Credibility answers the question: To what extent are the findings truthful (Patton, 2002)? I established credibility through triangulation and member checking to clarify my understanding of the emerging themes and findings, as well as by keeping a reflective journal in which I documented my thoughts throughout the study.

3.7.3 Authenticity

Authenticity refers to providing a balanced and fair view of the various perspectives in the research study (Mertens, 2010; Guba & Lincoln, 2005). In the following chapter, I present the participants' views by providing direct quotations from the participants, thus providing insight into each participants' views and experiences. In addition, I reflected in my journal as well as with my research supervisor on the influence my own views and biases may have had.

3.7.4 Transferability

Transferability refers to the dependability and generalisability of the findings. It answers the question: Are the findings applicable and can they be transferred to other contexts? In other words, are they representative of the wider population? Since this study was a case study of a selected group of participants who are part of a specific community, the findings do not necessarily represent the voices of the total community. Thus, the findings are not generalisable. Rather, the intention of the study was to gain a deeper insight into the phenomenon being studied (Patton, 2002). As such, my intention was to provide rich descriptions which will allow the audience to determine whether the findings could apply to similar contexts and to learn lessons from this case.

3.8 Ethical considerations

Ethical concerns are part of the everyday practice of doing research. During my study, I strove to adhere to ethical considerations. I remained aware of these and continuously gave consideration to them as I planned, thought about and discussed each aspect of the research (Glesne, 2006).

Ethical research codes include the basic principles of ensuring that research subjects have sufficient information to make informed decisions about participating in a study, allowing participants to withdraw at any time from the study, eliminating all unnecessary risks to a research subject, ensuring that the benefits to the subject and/or society outweigh all potential risks (Glesne, 2006, p. 130), and guarding the confidentiality of the material (Josselson, 2007). As mentioned in Chapter 1, the research participants were made aware of the research process, they were not deceived and they did not experience harm from participating in my research study (Josselson, 2007).

3.8.1 Informed consent and voluntary participation

Informed consent means that participants are given all information necessary for them to make an informed decision about participation. I ensured that my participants were aware of the purpose of the research, what was required of them and whether any potential for harm existed for them through their participation in the study (Strydom, 2005; Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 2002). I did this by providing each participant with a letter detailing the relevant information. I also explained this verbally at my first meeting with each participant. They were asked to give their written consent, but were informed that they could withdraw at any stage – that is, their participation was voluntary.

Voluntary participation means that participants have the right to choose whether or not they want to participate in the study. Such a decision is made after they have been informed of all the facts that could influence their decisions (Cohen et al., 2003). As I indicated in the previous paragraph, this was done verbally and in writing. I endeavoured at all times to keep participants fully informed about the research process and purpose (Glesne, 2006, p. 141).

3.8.2 Right to privacy, confidentiality and anonymity

Qualitative researchers develop relationships with their research participants. Yet, the relationship is unequal, with power located on the side of the researcher. I am aware of this and endeavoured to protect the right to privacy of my participants. The principle of privacy incorporates the principles of confidentiality and anonymity. In accordance with the Health Professions Act 56 of 1974 (Department of Health, 2011), I have an obligation as a student psychologist to safeguard the confidential information obtained during my research project, and may not disclose any confidential information obtained to others, except with the written, informed consent of the person concerned. In a case study where research partners are all members of a school community, it is not easy to maintain the anonymity of participants. However, data collected during the research process must be kept confidential. I assigned codes to the research sites and participants to protect them. I explained to all research partners how this would be done, and how all data created would be stored in such a form that it remains anonymous and hidden from anyone seeking to identify them. In addition, I did not discuss my observations with others in a way that would identify my site or participants (Glesne, 2006).

The principle of trust is especially important because trust develops gradually when one is doing interpretive research, conducting interviews over a period of time, and utilising in-depth data collection methods. The nature of the material that is disclosed might be influenced by the relationship between myself and the participants. I had to ensure that I did not betray this trust for personal gain, deceive participants or betray their confidences during the research process or in the published outcomes.

3.8.3 Respect and caring

Showing respect and caring for research partners is perhaps the most important of the ethical guidelines, because research is more than just a set of techniques. It must be a well-considered, ethically grounded process that enhances values such as trust, respect, empathy and dignity. In addition to respecting participants during the research process, it is important to write about them in a respectful way, recognising that what is written may be read by those participants. I cannot predict how participants will respond to what I have written in my research report, but I have at all times tried to ensure that I did not harm my participants (Josselson, 2007).

3.8.4 Beneficence and non-maleficence

Participants must be protected not just from physical but also from emotional and psychological harm (Strydom, 2005; Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 2002). I employed the principle of non-maleficence, meaning that my research did not harm participants or other persons involved in the study. No known form of deception occurred during my study and participants were not knowingly exposed to harm (Cohen et al., 2003).

3.9 Reflecting on my role as researcher

Prior to commencing my Masters in Education (Educational Psychology), I worked in an organisation that, among other things, provided support to South African government departments, including the Department of Education, with policy development and the evaluation of policy implementation. In selecting my research topic, my starting point was that government has clearly stated its intentions with regard to inclusion in Education White Paper 6 and related documentation. Given this, how would I as a newly qualified educational psychologist wanting to practice within the government schooling system be of most use? I wanted to use my policy and systems knowledge to delve into how best educational psychologists, including myself, can best support government's stated policy. Throughout my years in policy development and evaluation, I encountered many children with barriers to learning who were either not at school or were not being provided with support to help them overcome or manage their barrier/s and develop to their full potential. On deciding to research the particular area I have selected, I was aware of the shift I was making from being involved at a systemic level to looking at the role of individual educational psychologists in supporting inclusion. I constantly had to remind myself of the biases I carried within me from my previous experiences, as well as any views I had already gathered through my interactions with others. I used my reflective journal to record these biases, my reflections on what I was observing and hearing in my research, and how it differed from or was similar to my views.

As a researcher, I had a number of roles. I acted as a facilitator in the focus group, an interviewer in the one-on-one and telephonic interviews, an observer in all processes (Creswell, 2007a), a reviewer in the triangulation process, and a reflective researcher throughout the process. In addition, I had informal discussions with colleagues, fellow students, parents and

teachers, as well as in-depth discussions with my research supervisor, to examine my thoughts, observations and emerging conclusions. These different roles, together with my previous experience, brought home to me how essential on-going reflection and recording of my reflections in a journal was. Doing this allowed me to continuously review the ways in which my perceptions, values, background and paradigmatic perspectives might be shaping my research (Cohen et al., 2003; Willig, 2008).

3.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed the research methodology I followed during my study, and the reasons for my choices. I also presented the research design I selected and the reasons for my choice of site and participants. I gave a detailed overview of my data collection process and strategies, and elaborated on the method of thematic content analysis I employed. I also discussed the quality criteria I adhered to as well as the ethical issues considered.

In Chapter 4, I present the results of the study in terms of the themes and sub-themes as they emerged during the analysis process. I conclude by discussing the findings of the study in relation to relevant literature and the underpinning conceptual framework.

Chapter 4: Research results and discussion of findings

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed the research process and methodology that guided this study. In this chapter, I present the results of my research according to the themes that emerged during an analysis of the data. At the end of each theme, I discuss the findings in relation to the relevant literature. Throughout, I aim to highlight similarities and explain potential contradictions.

4.2 Results of the thematic content analysis

From the patterns arising from the analysis and interpretation of the raw data generated during the interviews and focus groups, three themes emerged: participants' understanding and experiences of inclusion and inclusive education at school level; perceptions on the current role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion in schools; and the future role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion in schools. I outline these themes, as well as sub-themes and categories, in Table 4.1. These themes are supported by statements made by participants during the data collection process, as well as by reflective notes recorded in my research journal.

Table 4.1: Themes²

Theme 1: Participants' understanding and experiences of inclusion and inclusive education at school level ❖ Sub-theme 1.1: Understanding of inclusion and inclusive education ○ <i>Category 1.1.1: Understanding of mainstreaming and integration</i> ❖ Sub-theme 1.2: Participants' experiences of inclusion and inclusive education in schools ❖ Sub-theme 1.3: District, school and teacher capacity to support inclusion
Theme 2: Perceptions on the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion in schools ❖ Sub-theme 2.1: Perceptions of government participants ❖ Sub-theme 2.2: Perceptions of school and teacher participants ❖ Sub-theme 2.3: Perceptions of educational psychologist ❖ Sub-theme 2.4: Perceptions of parent participant
Theme 3: The future role of educational psychologists in supporting inclusion in schools ❖ Sub-theme 3.1: Support by educational psychologists and their relationship with the school ❖ Sub-theme 3.2: Employment of educational psychologists ❖ Sub-theme 3.3: Institutional collaboration (District, school and educational psychologist)

4.2.1 Theme 1: Participants' understanding and experiences of inclusion and inclusive education at school level

In this theme, participants' understanding of inclusion and their experiences of working in an inclusive education system are explored. Three sub-themes emerged: participants' understanding of inclusion and inclusive education, as well as mainstreaming or integration;

² For ease of reference, I have used a different colour for each theme. These colours are also used for comments from participants.

current experiences of inclusion and inclusive education in the South African schooling system, and particularly within the school participating in this study; and the capacity of the school and teachers to support inclusion. The inclusion and exclusion criteria for these sub-themes are outlined in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 1

THEME	INCLUSION CRITERIA	EXCLUSION CRITERIA
Subtheme 1.1: Understanding of inclusion and inclusive education	Any reference to what inclusion in the context of schooling means, as well as to the meaning of integration or mainstreaming	References to inclusion in environments other than the schooling system
Subtheme 1.2: Participants' experiences of inclusion and inclusive education in schools	Any reference to the system that prevails in the South African government schooling system	References to past or future systems, or to the independent school sector
Subtheme 1.3: District, school and teacher capacity to support inclusion	Any reference to the capacity of government and teachers to support inclusion	References to capacity extraneous to the school and government education system to support inclusion

4.2.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: Understanding of inclusion and inclusive education

In order to understand the context and capacity of stakeholders to support inclusion, I explored participants' views on how they understood "inclusion" and "inclusive education". The concepts were defined differently by different participants.

It appears that participants' understandings are guided institutionally. National government participants defined inclusion in terms of the inclusion of all learners with a range of diverse needs in schools. It is a response that seeks to *maximise learner participation in their own learning and development and to reduce exclusion within education and from education* (I1 P1,³ lines 168-170). Another government participant described inclusive education similarly: *...it's to maximise the participation of children and reducing the exclusion of children, mainly those who are minority groups, marginalised children. And, um, and children who are vulnerable to dropping out of the system, by reducing the barriers to learning that they experience...* (I2 P2, lines 63-71). A district participant appeared to agree with this definition: *You don't have to discriminate. The child, for as long as the child has the potential, the child can cope in a mainstream school, so that school it's an inclusive school.* (F2 P12, lines 465-467). Government participants stated that inclusion is not about placing the deficit within the learner, but rather

³I stands for interview; F stands for focus group; P stands for participant.

about accommodating all learners: *and you often find people falling back on a narrow special needs vision of inclusion, placing the deficit within the learner, and thinking you need one-on-one remedial kind of support, which is what we've been really trying to get away from* (I2 P2, lines 63-71). This implies that national government participants believe that schools do not fully understand the concept of inclusion, and relate to it as a deficit within the individual learner rather than as something that can originate from many sources: *For me, the barriers could be within the cultures of the school, within the ethos of the school, within the policies of the school, as well as within the practice of the school* (I2 P2, lines 49-57).

Another participant explained that South African schooling is guided by Education White Paper 6 which outlines government's understanding of inclusion: *It talks to right to basic education which any child may not be deprived of. Secondly, it talks to the quality of education that individual children are given, making sure that every learner benefits from attending school, that there are no learners that are neglected and therefore are not excluded from attending school* (I1 P1, lines 220-223). According to this participant, the definition of inclusion does not mention disabilities, *because inclusion is not just about disability, it's about a wide range of barriers to learning – some barriers to learning emanating from the system itself and some emanating from pedagogical issues. For instance, you have a number of teachers who do not have appropriate qualifications to teach or who use methodologies that are not appropriate* (I1 P1, lines 175-179).

Despite emphasising that inclusion is about accommodating all learners in the same classrooms, government participants also spoke about the need to take learners out of their regular classes for periods during the day for learning support. Here, reference was made to practice in other countries, where learners who need academic support are periodically taken out of their regular class: *I think international best practice shows it shouldn't be more than 25% of the week they are withdrawn, so that they never lose their identity as a member of that class and their sense of belonging to the class* (I2 P2, lines 128-134). So an inclusive system allows for specific learners to be identified and removed from their classes for specific periods of time. In my research diary, I reflected the following:

I know inclusion is complex, and listening to [government participants] speak about it, this is confirmed. They appear to be saying that inclusion is about including learners with any barriers to learning, ensuring that no one is excluded from school, and making sure the barrier is not placed within the learner, yet at the same time, they talk also of the practice of pulling learners out of regular classes for periods of time for learning support. Isn't this mainstreaming rather than true inclusion? (25/5/2012)

Inclusion was defined differently by school participants, who saw it more in terms of learning difficulties or barriers faced by the learners and what this means for the school, than about the right of learners to a basic education in the school of their choice. The school's HOD for Guidance defined inclusion as *helping any child with a learning difficulty or barrier to learning, and you include them within the mainstream classes* (I4 P4, lines 37-38). *We have to help any learning disability or learning barrier. We have to include them* (I3 P3, line 10). Teachers felt unequipped to deal with a range of barriers to learning: *At our school, we just include the ADHD learners. We don't have any physical disabilities at our school...* (I4 P4, lines 5-9). Learners who require additional support are either placed in the school's ELSEN⁴ class or are referred to an alternative school: *Children that are in the ELSEN class, LSEN⁵ children are special needs children ... they won't be able to cope in a normal classroom situation. They've got a barrier to learning concerning whatever ...* Learners in the ELSEN class are considered part of the school: *They form part – at this school, they form part of the school, they are not separate, or they don't run to a different timetable or anything, they are here, they are part of the school. The difference is that each child there is on a different level concerning the Maths and the English and the life skills and the whatevers* (I3 P3, lines 11-21). In other words, children with barriers to learning are accommodated in the school but in a separate class. Learners with other barriers, such as social or emotional difficulties, were not considered by school participants in their discussion on inclusion. When commenting on his understanding of inclusion being different to that of his colleague at another school, one participant contended: *I have the ELSEN class, he doesn't ... They don't understand there's a difference between remedial and special needs* (I3 P3, lines 133-137).

An educational psychologist drew on a similar definition of inclusion, explaining it in terms of barriers to learning: *There are not enough institutions that they can go to so they have to go to mainstream schools. Inclusion is about including kids that are not reaching their full potential because of a learning barrier – for any reason* (I5 P5, lines 27-33). However, she did add that inclusion can mean including learners with emotional difficulties: *or they have emotional difficulties* (I5 P5, lines 27-33).

The parent I interviewed did not know what inclusion meant. She was also not aware of Education White Paper 6, stating that her child attended this school because it is convenient for her: *No, I don't know that word... I don't know about this White Paper. We don't hear these things... This school is the easiest for me because we live here* (I7 P14, lines 2-5).

⁴ELSEN is the acronym for education for learners with special education needs.

⁵LSEN is the acronym for learners with special education needs.

Thus, it can be stated that participants in this study understand inclusion differently. Their understandings appear to stem from their institutional affiliation. School participants focused their definition of inclusion on the accommodation of learners with barriers to learning, while government participants drew on the conceptualisation of inclusion as outlined in Education White Paper 6. Clearly, both the staffing and skills-set requirements of separate classes and of inclusive classes are different. Inevitably, the role and effectiveness of the educational psychologist will be affected by the type of provision offered at the school at which s/he is employed.

4.2.1.1.1 Category 1.1.1: Understanding of mainstreaming and integration

In the literature (see section 4.2.1.4 below), there is a distinction between inclusion and mainstreaming or integration. Yet, during the data collection process, it was clear that some participants consider mainstreaming or integration to mean the same as inclusion. The participating school in this study is a mainstream school, offering learning support (still commonly referred to as remedial support) to learners who appear to be experiencing academic barriers: *...the remedial children are in the mainstream* (I3 P3, lines 157-159). *Remedial is basically where we re-teach a concept because that's what we are trained for* (I4 P4, lines 163-164). Remedial education was further defined as: *A remedial child is a child that has got the ability, where she came and is battling with a certain concept and that concept is remediated... then he carries on, but where the LSEN child can't, the LSEN child just hasn't got that* (I3 P3, lines 31-35). In other words, it seems that a learner with special education needs would not be able to master the work in his/her grade even with the re-teaching of concepts.

At the research site, apart from remedial/learning support, there is a class for learners with special education needs: *We only have our LSEN class, and that's learners with a mild disability* (I4 P4, line 11). *Um... Now there's a [pause] distinction between an LSEN child and a remedial child, and a lot of teachers don't understand that concept. They think that if a child is battling with whatever he or she is battling with, that child is an LSEN child, and that's not the case* (I3 P3, lines 24-29). Learners who participate in the school's remedial programme are able to master grade-level work, with additional support for certain concepts. For example, a learner may require additional English language support, as a result of having a home language that is not English. This learner may be taken out of his/her class for specific periods of the day for additional English language support. Once s/he is deemed to have mastered the English language sufficiently to be able to complete the work in his/her mainstream class, s/he will no longer have to attend the remedial classes.

Within government, there appears to be a different opinion with regard to the support classes that many schools offer to children with academic challenges: *The serious problem that I have*

with those is the permanency factor, where a learner is pulled out of the regular classroom and put in a special class or remedial class, and the learner will have to stay in that class for the duration of his or her years of attending school... It's labelling, stigmatisation (I1 P1, lines 181-185). Furthermore, there were different opinions on mainstreaming: *For me, mainstreaming would be close to integration, which I think has a negative connotation because it expects the child to change. There's also this whole latent thing of if he's a low needs child, then he's allowed to be in the mainstream. If ability becomes moderate, then he can't. Then that would be counter-productive for our inclusion* (I2 P2, lines 178-184). In terms of government thinking, *even a severe child should have the right to be in the mainstream* (I2 P2, lines 178-184), implying that the expectation is that schools should be able to accommodate learners with a diverse range of barriers to learning.

In addition to having different understandings of inclusion, participants also presented with different understandings of mainstreaming or integration. Government participants view mainstreaming as a philosophy that expects the learner to adjust to fit in with the school's ethos and expectations. School participants and the educational psychologist, on the other hand, view mainstreaming as a way to accommodate learners with mild barriers to learning within the school, in many cases by pulling them out of the regular class periods for remedial support. Again, these differences appear to derive from their institutional contexts. School participants appear to confuse inclusion with mainstreaming or integration, whereas government participants clearly differentiate between the two. This poses serious difficulties for the educational psychologist in understanding his or her role in a school environment.

4.2.1.2 Sub-theme 1.2: Participants' experiences of inclusion and inclusive education in schools
Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001) sets out criteria for the implementation of inclusion in South African government schools. Twelve years after the publication of this White Paper, the system being implemented in schools in relation to inclusion and providing support to learners who are identified as needing it does not appear to have been operationalised according to the guidelines in Education White Paper 6: *What is happening is that parents or schools refer learners to educational psychologists and they will do the assessment, make their findings and then prescribe to schools or parents what should happen to the child or learner. That's not the way it should work* (I1 P1, lines 32-35)...*They won't have this aspect of pedagogy, this educational aspect* (I1 P1, lines 40-41).

The school at which I conducted my research has a system for identifying and providing support for learners with special educational needs. In the first instance, teachers are responsible for identifying that a learner has a difficulty. They discuss *the problem of the child* (F1 P7, line 38) or, if it is a new learner transferring from a different school, they will look out for any problems that were identified in his/her previous school reports. Then learners who are identified as

needing support are referred to the SBST, which includes the Head of Department (HOD) for Guidance. The HOD for Guidance chairs the SBST meetings and records a summary of each case discussion, as well as recommendations, on the school's form for this (School-based Support Team case summaries and recommendations document). Before any support can be provided, the parents are consulted and interviewed to ensure they understand what support their child needs. The parents will be asked to give their consent for any interventions the school would like to implement, for example, placing the learner in the remedial class for language support. Alternatively, parents will be asked to contact a professional such as an educational psychologist to have their child assessed, *so we have their consent and they need to know their child has a problem* (F1 P7, lines 40-41). In this case, parents are given a referral letter from the School-based Support Team which indicates what assistance or support their child is being referred for and lists six possible professionals who can provide this support. These professionals include a clinical psychologist, an educational psychologist, a pastoral counsellor, a speech therapist and an occupational therapist (School-based Support Team Referral). If the parents do not have medical aid or cannot afford to pay for the services of a professional in private practice, the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) will be asked to assist *which usually doesn't happen* (F1 P7, lines 42-43). The parent participant was referred to the educational psychologist to have her child assessed for attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). She paid for the assessment and for the subsequent neurologist's consultation, but did not follow the recommendations for medication: *I took him to the person [educational psychologist] because his teacher said I must because he was not good in school, he wasn't sitting still and listening to the teacher. But the doctor said I must give him medicine. It is too expensive. I can't afford the medicine every month. So I tell him he must listen to his teacher* (I6 P14, lines 14-17). When a learner is identified as having special educational needs, the school *will get the ELSEN teacher to have a look at the child, perhaps test the child, interview the parents, and because she is qualified to do that, we will then obviously have the child tested with the parents' consent, get the Department in, and that's now all to identify the child as LSEN* (I3 P3, lines 214-222).

If a learner is identified as needing learning support, *the teacher will see there's a problem that needs to be remediated, and that child will then go to the remedial teacher* (I3 P3, lines 214-222). The school tries to provide support to learners who have come from other schools. One participant provided an example of how language support is given to learners: *They've been taught English but not on the same standard... Mrs L the LSEN teacher, she'll include them in her class for specific things like spelling. Our Grade 1 teachers also take some of our learners with language barriers and they teach them sight words. So we go between the grades but it's only for a specific time* (I4 P4, lines 39-50). This process was referred to as bridging the gap, in other words, improving learners' English language skills to enable them to participate equally in

class: *Those learners are usually the new learners with language barriers. We call it bridging, we bridge the gap* (I4 P4, lines 39-57).

If a learner is experiencing social or emotional difficulties, the process followed is similar, but a psychologist will be consulted: *The same process, but then we'll get a psychologist in, or the Department's psychologist, and we take it from there* (I3 P3, lines 223-225). There is a psychologist who provides services to the school community for a fee, or the psychologist from the District Office will be asked to come if there is a problem: *Then we will also notify the Department through the school-based support team and they would most probably come. We've got [a psychologist from the District] who comes to the school and he is quite religious about it* (I3 P3, lines 240-243).

With regard to referring learners to other schools, there are specific procedures that need to be followed by the school. These procedures are stipulated by the provincial department of education. An interview form must be completed and signed by the parents and the HOD. The parents are asked to take their child for an assessment by the appropriate professional: *Ask parents to have the learners tested by either a psychologist or a speech therapist or whatever it may be* (I4 P4, lines 31-32). If parents cannot pay for assessments, the school completes the support assessment form and refers them to the Department. Where necessary, learners are referred for other support to the counsellor who is employed by a local church to provide services to the school twice a week: *We also refer them for trauma, grieving, abuse, neglect and character building* (I4 P4, lines 32-33).

The school refers a learner to a special needs school under certain circumstances, again following the provincial department of education's procedures: *We do it once they've failed twice in a phase. They can't fail twice* (I4 P4, line 22). In this case, the learner is assessed, *usually by our own psychologist, and we get the referral forms, we complete the referral forms and then we apply for LSEN numbers* (I4 P4, lines 23-25).

In urgent cases, support is provided by the District Office. A participant gave an example: *Dr X is assisting us now with parents we suspected of sexual abuse. We are not sure so we got the school nurse in, and he [the Doctor] has been here twice and he's coming tomorrow morning again and he's got an interview with the parents. So with those types of things, he is assisting us* (I4 P4, lines 192-200). A district participant indicated that the District is available to provide support, although they are challenged by a shortage of educational psychologists: *We can't provide support to individual schools and learners the way we want to, the way we have been trained to, because there are not enough of us* (F2 P11, lines 721-722).

From the above discussion, it is evident that government and school participants gave differing views on the system being implemented to support inclusion at school level. Government participants contend that learners are being referred to specialists such as educational psychologists for assessments, and that schools are determining what should happen to learners needing support. The school is of the opinion that it is following government procedure, because it has an SBST which discusses individual cases, and the required documentation is completed to refer a learner who is viewed as needing additional support. The SBST will either refer a learner to an educational psychologist in private practice or, if the parents are not able to afford this professional's fees, to the educational psychologist in the District Office. I reflected in my journal:

The impression given is that teachers must cope with ever more complex challenges in their classrooms and this is leading to resistance - even though this is not expressly stated, it simmers under the surface, manifesting in how the school does not actively engage with government policy. So schools try and exclude rather than include, which is what [government participants] specifically hope to avoid. So it seems that those outside of government are adopting a definition of inclusion that is not inclusion, but is what they consider to be practical. For them, even this is dependent on resources being made available. (20/8/2012)

4.2.1.3 Sub-theme 1.3: District, school and teacher capacity to support inclusion

The human resource capacity of the District Office, both in terms of the numbers and range of specialist staff, emerged as an important area if inclusion is to be supported within schools. Within national government, there was a view that district capacity is not as strong as it should be to provide optimum support: *If the District is unable to provide adequate and appropriate support, you are just setting up those schools for failure. It will be like they are not complying with the vision and principles of inclusivity whereas what we haven't done is to put all systems in place and make sure support is available to the schools whenever they need them* (I1 P1, lines 156-160). A district participant appeared to support this statement: *We don't even have a framework for our work and we don't have support from head office. We don't have job descriptions* (F2 P11, lines 270-272).

According to school participants, in the past, the systems were there to support schools and their learning community, but the capacity within the district offices has declined: *And, um, in the past, those systems were there. And they're not there any more and that is a problem... You get one psychologist who has to service 20 or 30 schools, and it's a problem* (I3 P3, lines 106-109). With this workload, district-based psychologists are often unable to provide support to individual learners and their families. At the research site, the implication of this is that parents are referred

to a private educational psychologist. However, the parents often do not follow through, probably because they are unable to afford the fees associated with private educational psychology services.

The school participants spoke positively of the educational psychology services provided to the school by the District. However, they gave an example of the challenges they experience in receiving support when it is urgently required: *We phone and he says, “I am coming, I’ve just got to be at the next school”, and then that school’s got problems, and he has to address those problems* (I3 P3, lines 111-114). *Now we phone the Department, and the Department says, “Okay, I can see you next Thursday”* (I3 P3, lines 205-207). The challenge in receiving immediate support for urgent issues appears frustrating to the teachers: *If we identify a child, then me personally as their teacher, I want them to act. They must immediately deal with that child. But they are not involved* (F1 P8, lines 144-145).

The frustration of the school at being unable to receive prompt services is evident: *Working through the Department takes a long time* (F1 P4, lines 64-65) *...It’s as if they [the Department] have been so long out of teaching and education that they have lost touch with reality. They don’t know what’s going on* (F1 P4, lines 67-69). *We see the total problem. The Department doesn’t, and they don’t know what’s going on* (F1 P5, lines 73-74).

School-based participants expressed the view that inclusion is not workable, especially where children with cognitive barriers to learning are in the mainstream class with their peers. The teachers would not be able to manage with this: *I don’t agree with that, not at all. It won’t work, not at all* (I3 P3, line 163). One school participant gave an example of why including learners with cognitive barriers to learning in their classes is not workable: *If you have a severely intellectually disabled child in the mainstream, you are going to demoralise the teacher, you are going to demoralise the child, and you are going to have a discipline problem with the children, the other children in the class, because the teacher is going to – her attention is going to be with this child all the time and not with the majority of the class* (I3 P3, lines 164-168).

The view of the school is that inclusion could be effective if there were teachers’ assistants in the classroom, as well as a special class for learners with more severe cognitive challenges: *You would need an assistant. Each teacher needs – that’s first world, hey? [small laugh] – a teacher’s assistant* (I3 P3, lines 182-183). In addition, teachers need special skills or specialised training to manage diversity in their classes. A national government participant stated: *Without sounding too idealistic about it, I do think that the skills of inclusion are the skills to help teachers with these complex schools that they’re dealing with* (I2 P2, lines 112-124).

It is not just an issue of teacher capacity to support a diverse range of learners, but also of other resources that are considered important in unfolding inclusion: *The main barrier in that classroom is the class size, and the inability of the teacher to teach a big class, and the lack of space so that she can't do effective group work and so on* (I2 P2, lines 112-124). Teachers agreed that they do not have the expertise to manage all types of learners, and that they do need support at times: *There are different styles and teaching methods, and even the teachers need to be educated on all this. We don't know it all... You should show them how and which method would help which children* (F1 P5, lines 259-262).

The Head of Department for Guidance at the school expressed the view that there is a need for an educational psychologist at each school. She gave an example of how new learners to the school who do not have a strong Grade 1 foundation need support which could be provided by an educational psychologist: *For instance, the Grade 4 teachers are desperate because we've got eight new learners from other schools in Grade 4 and they are showing no progress because they are Grade 4 and they don't have a Grade 1 foundation. And that's the problem; we can't build on their learning because they haven't got the basics. So they said, "What must we do?" The children are going for bridging, they are going for remedial classes in the afternoon, they are getting their reading, they are getting extra work sent home. It's not working. Most of these parents also don't speak English* (I4 P4, lines 90-96). I reflected in my journal:

I feel as though teachers are essentially rejecting inclusion as being impractical, at least the way that government would like to see it. This is not stated outright but is couched by the school as only being able to do what they have the resources for.

(1/6/2012)

However, according to a national government participant, teachers will be reluctant to take ownership of and provide the necessary support to learners with barriers to learning if they have an educational psychologist they can turn to: *Otherwise, that's what we're finding in some of the Model C schools where they do appoint these outside people on a permanent basis; you have a reluctance on the part of the teachers themselves to take ownership of the support and to go the extra mile with planning and so on* (I2 P2, lines 146-151). Yet, there was also an acknowledgement within government that there are barriers that would require professional interventions, as well as mentoring and knowledge sharing: *Sometimes if it's something like Aspergers or ADHD, any kind of condition of which the teacher has no experience, I do think there needs to be a bit of an intervention in terms of training or mentoring or knowledge sharing* (I2 P2, lines 98-100).

National government participants agreed that teachers need additional support in the form of training. However, this training cannot take place in a vacuum; it will only be beneficial once teachers have experienced working with a wide range of learners from different backgrounds and cultures and with different barriers to learning: *People will only feel the need to be trained once they are confronted with those kinds of issues. And I feel the training they would get would enhance their teaching skills in general. And I think we need to also get schools to take ownership of that training process by inviting people to come and so on* (I2 P2, lines 97-109).

Government has established full-service schools⁶ in each province. These are schools which are able to meet a range of moderate support needs, and also provide expertise, mentoring and knowledge sharing to other schools: ... *acting as a resource centre in the cluster where it is so that it would just be a recipient of your, or a focus of your, training of the first core groups who would then start mentoring other groups of teachers in the surrounding schools* (I2 P2, lines 166-170). However, according to a district participant, the teachers at the full-service schools also need support: *These teachers need to be supported, and who can do that properly? We don't have time* (F2 P11, lines 653-654).

In addition to needing teachers who have the capacity to manage diverse learner abilities in their classrooms, there is the issue of cultural competence. It appears that some teachers may still be grappling with understanding children from different cultures and backgrounds: *These children, because of the culture differences, they need a lot of love and a lot of attention. They are very clingy. They've got self-confidence but they want approval and they want praise and they thrive on things like that. I don't know why. I think white children are more independent. I've just noticed it* (I4 P4, lines 293-296). Other teachers added to this: *I had two Israelis in my class who didn't speak English and a hyperactive child. And I could keep the hyperactive child busy and teach those two to speak English. But you had a different type of child. Society is changing* (F1 P5, lines 280-283). Teachers seem at a loss as to how to understand different cultures within their classrooms: *It is the type of children we are getting in... The demographics are changing and this plays a big role. Culture plays a big role. We don't know the cultures of the children. I don't even want to think about it because one child must first go home and be washed before you can teach him. So it's a cultural thing* (F1 P6, lines 266-270). *They [the parents] feel the teacher knows everything and that she will make sure her child will pass the different grades* (F1 P6, lines 97-99). In my journal, I reflected that

⁶A full-service school is a school that is designated to accommodate learners who require moderate to high level support. Such a school is provided with physical and material resources and the staff and professional development that are necessary to accommodate learners with the full range of learning needs (Department of Basic Education & MIET Africa, 2010, p. 42).

There appear to be so many reasons why a school might struggle to implement inclusion. Long after apartheid, schools may be more demographically representative in terms of their learner populations but this is not the case in terms of staffing. I am not surprised by the comments made today about cultural differences and how teachers feel they can't cope. This would seem inevitable in an essentially unchanged teaching force. But it also gives me food for thought on what I could do as an educational psychologist to help develop cultural awareness. So here is a role, and an area that might require additional training for us in our Masters programme.
(24/5/2012)

Government and school participants thus agreed that there is a lack of capacity in district offices and schools to support inclusion. However, they disagreed on how best to develop this capacity. For example, teachers and district officials in this study believed that capacity-building starts with the appointment of additional support staff, such as educational psychologists and teacher assistants, whereas government officials believed that experience of inclusion followed by training is the way forward. In such circumstances, the role of the educational psychologist becomes complicated. On the one hand it can be seen as “an extra pair of hands”, and on the other hand as support for particular learners but without giving the kind of practical support that the teacher is seeking.

4.2.1.4 Discussion of findings for Theme 1

The definition of inclusion has evolved over time. While early definitions focused on including learners with specific disabilities, more recent interpretations have broadened this to include learners with a range of diverse needs (Forlin, 2010), drawing on ideas about human rights, social justice and equity. Through this process, the school is able to build its capacity to accept all learners from the local community who wish to attend and, in so doing, reduce the need to exclude pupils (Wah, 2010). The definition put forward in Education White Paper 6 matches this, stating that all children and youth can learn and all need support, that education structures, systems and learning methodologies must meet the needs of all learners, that the differences in learners must be acknowledged and respected, and that learning occurs not just in formal schooling but also in the home and community, and within formal and informal settings and structures (Department of Education, 2001, p. 6). This definition is closely matched by the government participants in this study, with one participant defining inclusion as a response that seeks to reduce exclusion of learners within and from education (I1 P1, lines 167-175).

Inclusion focuses on a comprehensive approach to learning, advocating the full participation of learners in all aspects of schools (Swart & Pettipher, 2000). Given this, inclusive education assumes that when a child experiences some form of barrier to learning, the teacher strives to accommodate the learner within the mainstream school environment rather than pursuing

specialised schooling (Department of Education, 2001). I found that government participants in this study see inclusive education as being broader than just coping with disability; rather, it is about schools accepting and supporting learners with a wide range of barriers to learning. This view is supported by earlier statements of Carrington and Robinson (2004) that inclusion has come to mean a philosophy of acceptance where diversity among all people is welcomed, valued and respected.

However, there appears to be uncertainty about the definition of inclusion. Among the non-government participants in the study, inclusion was defined more in terms of learning difficulties or barriers faced by the learners and what this means for the school. In other words, their definitions were not related to what is stated in Education White Paper 6. School participants see inclusion as meaning that learners with specific disabilities are assigned to special needs schools. In other words, they advocate separate schooling for learners with barriers to learning (Forlin, 2006). Those with minor difficulties may be accommodated in the mainstream school but might need to be taken out of their classes periodically for learning support sessions. This is more in line with earlier definitions of inclusion (Forlin, 2010), or with definitions of integration and mainstreaming. Inclusion is viewed as being interpreted one way theoretically, but in practice there are still significant findings that show that pull-out service delivery systems, where learners are taken out of class for specific periods of time, are still common around the world (Forlin, Au & Chong, 2008, cited in Forlin, 2010, p. 621; Houtveen & Van de Grift, 2001, cited in Wah, 2010, p. 103). This practice of mainstreaming is prevalent at the current research site, but there it is referred to as “inclusion” by school participants. This juxtaposition between theory and practice is also seen in Wedell’s (2005) second matrix. This shows that, given the complexities of implementing inclusion, what is required is a change in attitude and an understanding of the nature of diversity and types and levels of needs – needs that are common to all, needs that are common to some but not to others, and needs that are unique to an individual.

Mainstreaming was viewed negatively by government participants, who see it as a system that expects the child, rather than the school system, to change. As stated by Peters (2004), integration is based on a deficit model which is concerned with the physical placement of learners with special needs in mainstream schools. Learners have to become ready to be accommodated, rather than a school climate being fostered that values diversity, and that is a safe and supportive environment with positive attitudes. In a study by Ntombela (2011, p.10), it was found that 67 per cent of teachers equated inclusive education with teaching learners with disabilities in mainstream schools, while the rest said they did not know or did not answer. This supports the notion that there is insufficient understanding of the meaning of inclusion.

Participants expressed the view that schools and teachers are not adequately prepared to support inclusion. Wah (2010) expresses similar concerns. There are a number of reasons for this, including insufficient training or experience of working with a range of learners with different barriers to learning, as well as inadequate resources and large class sizes. The view was expressed that in order for an inclusive system to work, teachers need teaching assistants to support them in their classrooms. In the literature, support is identified as referring to extra resources such as suitable funding, facilities, equipment and teaching materials (Lo, 2007). Teachers are also acknowledged as being the most important resource, and lack of experience or training is problematic. According to Farrell (2001), it is essential for teachers to have the appropriate knowledge and expertise to handle the challenges of inclusive education. The challenges mentioned by participants are also prevalent in other countries, such as in Hong Kong where teachers have been found to have a poor attitude towards inclusion of learners with anything more than mild educational needs (Forlin, Au & Chong, 2008, cited in Forlin, 2010, p. 621). In the UK, there is also pressure to maintain separate special schools, despite inclusion-oriented policies (Hick, Kershner & Farrell, 2009, p. 2).

In the current study, participants expressed, through describing their experiences, a lack of cultural competence to work with learners from different cultures and backgrounds. This is described by Doyle (2002), as well as Swart et al. (2004), as a particularly complex aspect of inclusion because providing education in an inclusive environment involves more than a superficial shift from one form of service provision to another; it necessitates a deeper transformation of beliefs and values. Appropriate implementation requires careful planning and preparation, including the development of new strategies for teacher and school development (Doyle, 2002). Mathibe (2007) also observes that teachers' professional development must focus on instilling in them appropriate skills, attitudes and values to enable them to perform their work well and resourcefully (Walton, Nel, Hugo & Muller, 2009).

4.2.2 Theme 2: Perceptions on the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion in schools

In Theme 2, I discuss the results relating to the participants' perceptions on the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion in schools. Three subthemes emerged, relating to perceptions of government participants, school and teacher participants and educational psychologist, respectively. Table 4.3 outlines the inclusion and exclusion criteria that categorised the data for Theme 2.

Table 4.3: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 2

THEME	INCLUSION CRITERIA	EXCLUSION CRITERIA
Subtheme 2.1: Perceptions of government participants	Any reference to the perceptions of government participants to the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion in schools	References to the perceptions of participants not working for government to the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion in schools, as well as any reference to the role of other professionals or to the role of the educational psychologist in other respects
Subtheme 2.2: Perceptions of school and teacher participants	Any reference to the perceptions of school and teacher participants to the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion in schools	References to the perceptions of participants not working within the school to the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion in schools, as well as any reference to the role of other professionals or to the role of the educational psychologist in other respects
Subtheme 2.3: Perceptions of educational psychologist	Any reference to the perceptions of educational psychologists to the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion in schools	References to the perceptions of participants who are not educational psychologists to the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion in schools, as well as any reference to the role of other professionals or to the role of the educational psychologist in other respects
Subtheme 2.4: Perceptions of parent participant	Any reference to the perceptions of parents to the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion in schools	References to the perceptions of participants who are not parents to the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion in schools, as well as any reference to the role of other professionals or to the role of the educational psychologist in other respects

4.2.2.1 Sub-theme 2.1: Perceptions of government participants

During my research, many views were expressed on the role of the educational psychologist within an inclusive schooling system. From the perspective of the national Department of Basic Education, the educational psychologist should have a primary role in the screening of learners with possible barriers to learning: *But their main role is with the screening – we are finalising the screening tool which every teacher, every school will have to use* (I1 P1, lines 272-273). Besides having a role in screening learners, government also views the role of educational psychologists as being part of a district-based team that provides support to schools: *... part of an interdisciplinary team that goes to schools from a district level to provide all forms of support, of course, in their areas of specialisation* (I1 P1, lines 275-276).

During further discussion, national government participants expanded on this, suggesting that educational psychologists, as highly skilled professionals, should be managers and coordinators of support in an inclusive system, rather than focusing on working one-on-one with children. This is because they are scarce: *They need to be managers and coordinators of support in an*

inclusive system, because of their short supply in developing countries. According to a district participant, district-based educational psychologists have become managers of cases out of necessity: *There are only four educational psychologists serving 260 schools... So there is no way we can give intense support to a child in need. We gather information on what is the reason for referral and then we network with other external service providers* (I7 P11, lines 67-77). A national government participant believed that educational psychologists often join the profession because of a desire to work individually with children: *And now I think that the problem is - and that is where the conflict arises - is that many people who go into the profession are people who would like to work individually with children. It's in their nature* (I2 P2, lines 202-204). A challenge was identified in that educational psychologists have not necessarily received adequate training to take on this management role: *They've not necessarily been trained for it, to fulfil such a management and monitoring role or mentoring role. But I do think that even if you want to work on individual learners, you most effectively work if you see your role as debriefing teachers* (I2 P2, lines 198-210). Another government participant confirmed this view of the educational psychologist as taking on a mentoring role: *You fulfil a kind of a mentoring role and empower people to take ownership of issues. In a nutshell, that is what it was about* (I2 P2, lines 23-25). National government participants viewed it as imperative that educational psychologists are able to support the transfer of skills to teachers, as teachers have to work daily with all the learners in their classes: *But it's so important, the skills transfer component, because the child is with the teacher much more than she is with the professional. The professional is not going to come back to where the child is learning and advising how things can change within that context...*(I2 P2, lines 213-15). The mentoring role of the educational psychologist was once more emphasised: *So for me, it would be that if there are individual cases, they can advise the teacher, but their main role would be to train and mentor the teachers* (I2 P2, lines 242-243). In the view of government participants, teachers have to be very skilled to manage diversity in the classroom, but this skill is lacking: *The teacher in the classroom needs to be very skilled with managing diversity in teaching and learning and to differentiate the curriculum. And I think that's where we are actually lacking at the moment. Because I think teachers sort of teach for the middle; they ignore those who are having difficulties or those who are gifted* (I2 P2, line 83-85). Educational psychologists are among those professionals who can support the development of skills for teachers: *I think that all, you know, outside support people should be geared at enhancing the skills of the teachers to differentiate* (I2 P2, lines 94-96).

From the above discussion, it is evident that government participants view the primary role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion as being to mentor, provide support and impart skills to teachers. Essentially, what is being said is that the educational psychologist should not be a direct support to learners but should support other professionals in the system to provide that support. While this might be part of the educational psychologist's scope of practice, it is not

the only role. These seemingly concurrent roles thus pose difficulties for the educational psychologist who seeks to make a difference in respect of individual learners. Nevertheless, it seems to be increasingly expected that the educational psychologist be part of a management and support structure for teachers.

4.2.2.2 Sub-theme 2.2: Perceptions of school and teacher participants

From the school's perspective, the role of the educational psychologist has a different focus than that expressed by national government participants. The school views the role of the educational psychologist as being one of working with the learners, bonding with their parents and offering advice to teachers: *She's assessing the learners in the first place, forming a bond with the parents, working with parents and teachers and learners, giving advice to teachers – advice. Therapy with the learners during school time... Also emotional support for the teachers, they can knock on her door...* (I4 P4, lines 272-278).

The role of the current educational psychologist, who is in private practice but offers services for a fee to the parents, focuses primarily on assessment: *The one we have now, she assesses them – scholastic assessment. She basically tells us where the barriers lie* (I4 P4, lines 76-77). The educational psychologist also interacts with the teachers at the school and gives them feedback: *And she's assisting us and she spoke to the Grade 4 teachers today and she gave feedback. She told them the problems, this is how you can handle the learners and things like that* (I4 P4, lines 85-87). The intention is that this professional will take on a broader role. This participant gave an example of a parent who is going to make use of the services of the educational psychologist: *One little girl in my class, her mom says she will come because she has the baggage and now it is influencing the child. There's another child she's going to do play therapy with* (I4 P4, lines 83-85).

Another school participant sees the role of the educational psychologist as being primarily that of providing support to teachers: *Look, a lot of children have issues, have problems. And depending on what the field of the psychologist is, they are here to help, um, because we as teachers are only trained up to a certain point. After that, I can't help this child, I need somebody else to come and help me* (I3 P3, lines 104-106).

Despite feeling fortunate to have a post for a special needs teacher, the school has other needs that are not met, that the school believes could be met by an educational psychologist: *But we also need therapy, remediation, we need assistance with the child* (F1 P4, line 165). *We've got the teacher doing bridging and remedial in the afternoons. We're trying everything we can but it's not enough. We need an educational psychologist at the school* (F1 P4, lines 170-171). Teachers feel challenged by what they are expected to be, and that they are expected to take on roles other than teaching: *It's just funds. Sometimes you feel that your hands are cut off because*

you want to help but you're not capable of helping. You are not a psychologist. They expect teachers to be mothers, the nurse, the teachers, everything (I4 P4, lines 291-293).

A school participant further advocates that the educational psychologist has a role to play in parental guidance, which is seen as a crucial area of need at the school: *She or he would help with the education process, the remedial process, the character-building process, um, parents – help train parents... and if a school calls you in and says to you, “Mr So and So, your child is an LSEN child”, 9 out of 10 times, parents say, “Not my child”.... it has to be explained to them that it's not the end of the world. And that, an educational psychologist can do. And you need that all the time at this school, all the time* (I3 P3, lines 200-205). In addition, the school can draw on the expertise of an educational psychologist to support children who have lost their parents: *A lot of children lose their parents, in accidents or whatever the case is, and that child needs support* (I3 P3, lines 252-254). In other words, the educational psychologist can provide emotional and psychological support to learners as well as to their families.

At the current research site, the teachers in the first instance will consider whether further interventions are required for a specific learner, and then talk about this with other teachers or take it to the HOD for Guidance or the SBST: *You talk to your other grade teachers, then you take it to the SBST and then you say, “Cindy has this problem and this is what we are going to recommend”* (F1 P6, lines 49-50). *If we feel a child needs to be referred to a psychologist, we would first take this to the SBST or to [our guidance HOD]. Then we will decide what we think we should do. The [guidance HOD] will take the case forward. So we will recommend it but we don't really have anything to do with the psychologist* (F1 P6, lines 109-112). So the approach taken is coordination internally within the school; where necessary, a case is referred to the educational psychologist. It is not the teachers who interact with the District or psychologist, but only those who are part of the SBST: *Only the SBST do it* (F1 P6, line 62).

Educational psychologists at a school could also chair the SBST: *If you were at the school, you would be on that committee, and you would actually then chair it* (I3 P3, lines 324-325). This school participant expressed a need for a full-time educational psychologist, to take responsibility for the psychological needs of the school, as well as any traumatised learners and staff: *I would appoint a psychologist full-time. I would do that. Um, and then she or he would then be in charge of, um, the psychology of the school, the discipline of the school, the children that are battling with the academics, the LSEN children, um, the traumatised learners, traumatised staff* (I3 P3, lines 341-345). This participant expressed the view that teachers become traumatised when a learner is not coping: *You must remember that a staff member also becomes traumatised if a child is not coping, the teacher becomes – because she's not getting the work done* (I3 P3, lines 341-345).

Focus group participants expressed the need for collaboration and working together with the educational psychologist, stating that, *We would like her to help us in class. We need detailed programmes* (F1 P5, lines 225-226). However, they also felt that teachers have expertise that must not be overlooked: *We work with the children so we see where the problems lie and what we have to do* (F1 P7, lines 27-28). Despite this, teachers do see the need for someone who has a different perspective to step in: *But we need someone with a different perspective to see a child differently. Sometimes, you keep on looking at the same problem and you don't look beyond* (F1 P8, lines 46-47).

Thus, from the school's perspective, there are multiple roles for the educational psychologist within the school. These roles include providing support to teachers, learners and parents. In addition, the educational psychologist is viewed as being part of a collaborative effort to support learners, such as the SBST, where cases can be discussed and decisions on the best support for each case can be made jointly.

4.2.2.3 Sub-theme 2.3: Perceptions of educational psychologist

From the educational psychologist's point of view, the most important role should be to identify and diagnose learners with difficulties who have not been previously diagnosed: *... to identify and diagnose the kids with the problems that haven't been diagnosed before. And then to make the teacher aware of a specific child's needs* (I5 P10, lines 7-11). In addition, the role should be to guide teachers, parents and learners on how to manage learning problems: *... to guide the teacher and parents and child on how to manage learning problems* (I5 P10, lines 35-36). If parents give permission, the educational psychologist would have a session with teachers to discuss the learners' report: *I would have a session with all the teachers and discuss the report with them. I would tell them the extent of the problem and suggest management skills* (I5 P10, lines 35-39). However, the educational psychologist found that the teachers appeared to be reluctant to work with her initially. Then, once she gave them feedback on a case, they seemed to be more willing to engage with her: *Initially, some were very reluctant. Teachers would have a bit of an attitude. When you give feedback on a report and the teacher sees, then they would feel validated and would come on board. Most teachers were very willing to follow through on suggestions. If they could see I understood the problem, they were very willing to help* (I5 P10, lines 39-44).

The role of an educational psychologist, according to the educational psychologist interviewed in this study, is to identify people who can provide support to a learner and his/her family once a problem has been identified: *The main role of the educational psychologist comes in once the problem has been clearly defined. It is to find people to assist and also to manage. It is to follow up and see if it is working and then try another approach... Where the educational psychologist*

can play a big role is with parent guidance. Ultimately, the parent has to drive (I5 P10, lines 69-74). The educational psychologist also sees the need to work together in a collaborative effort to support children: *Ideally, there would be a team on board that you can discuss cases with* (I5 P10, lines 27-33).

4.2.2.4 Sub-theme 2.4: Perceptions of parent participant

The parent participant commented that she had been to see the educational psychologist because of pressure from the teacher. She had met with the educational psychologist twice, *once to talk about my son's problems – um, he was being naughty in class and wasn't listening... And then after this person had a session with my son, then I went back to see her to find out what she said* (I6 P14, lines 30-35). This participant continued that she thought the role of the educational psychologist was *to help children when they had problems, and to talk to the parents and the teachers* (I6 P14, lines 44-45). She could not elaborate beyond that, saying that she had only short exposure to the educational psychologist. She also stated that the educational psychologist had suggested further sessions with both her and her son: ... *but I am not sure why I should do this. It is expensive, and I don't have the money* (I6 P14, line 47).

Thus, it can be seen that educational psychologists see their role as providing support to teachers, parents and learners, as well as identifying and diagnosing difficulties a learner may face. Parents, however, may not understand the role of the educational psychologist. The challenge here will be for the educational psychologist to develop a relationship of trust with the teachers and parents so that they can work collaboratively to provide support that will serve the learner's best interests. I reflected in my journal on this:

I am not sure what to make of what I have heard. There is a sense of unreality almost, with DBE expounding theoretical positions that are at odds with the reality on the ground. Surely this has implications for the reality of inclusion in schools? If policy is divorced from reality, is it meaningful? As a start, there seems to be a lack of advocacy on the content and intent of White Paper 6, and so it is getting lost in translation. This reminds me of the theory of street level bureaucrats [where policy makers intend one thing but implementation is achieved through the interpretation that people put on it on the ground]. On the ground, people are not saying they don't agree with the policy, but they implement it in such a way that it is toothless and at variance with what government intended. (15/9/2012)

4.2.2.5 Discussion of findings for Theme 2

According to Wedell (2005), there are rigidities that impact on inclusive education, and hence on the role of the educational psychologist. These include funding issues, national education policies that conflict with one another or that differ from practice, inflexible timetables and staffing, the dichotomy that is created by schools trying to be inclusive and produce better

academic results at the same time, the way learners are grouped within schools, conventional teaching methods, and curriculum and assessment specifications.

In this study, some of these rigidities were raised by participants as impacting on their ability to implement inclusion. Participants viewed the educational psychologist primarily as a professional who can screen learners with barriers to learning, and mentor and advise teachers. In addition, the educational psychologist was viewed as having a role in assessing and counselling learners, and acting as a manager and coordinator of support in an inclusive system. This would include playing a role within the SBST. This ties in with views from other countries, such as Hong Kong, where the role of the educational psychologist is described by the Education Bureau as assessing learners, supporting and consulting schools, developing screening tools, and training school personnel (Forlin, 2010). However, the role of the educational psychologist is broader in the literature than that suggested by the participants in my study. In Hong Kong, for example, besides the above-mentioned activities, educational psychologists are also considered to be responsible for or involved in supporting and consulting with schools on the provision of appropriate intervention for learners with special educational needs, supporting schools in adopting a whole school approach to catering for learners with diverse educational needs, and crisis management support to schools (Forlin, 2010). So it seems that an educational psychologist may perform certain types of work that have thus far only been considered by some schools in South Africa.

Participants mentioned that educational psychologists can advise parents and teachers on the most appropriate support for a particular learner. This is supported by the literature, which says that the educational psychologist can advise on the benefits of placing learners in an inclusive school environment; they can also advise and support teachers on how to develop learning programmes for individual learners, types of support, and how the curriculum can be adapted to accommodate the needs of diverse learners. At a systems level, they can also support school staff in reflecting on their practice, and how to plan and implement change and develop the whole school for the benefit of all learners (Farrell, 2004, pp. 12-13).

Participants mentioned collaboration between the educational psychologist and teachers as an important aspect of the former's role. In support of such collaboration, Forlin (2010, p. 617) mentions that the role of the educational psychologist has moved from a case-based, individual withdrawal model to a more collaborative whole-school-based approach. In addition, educational psychologists need to collaborate with teachers, listening carefully to teachers to understand the support they need and how they can possibly provide it (Anderson, et al., 2007, p. 146). Teachers interviewed also considered a role of the educational psychologist to be that of giving them advice to cope in an inclusive classroom. In addition, government participants considered

training and empowering teachers, through mentoring and skills transfer, to be important roles of the educational psychologist. These roles are supported by the literature, for example, by Engelbrecht and Green (2002), who state that educational psychologists can play a role in empowering teachers with the skills to address the unique needs of all learners in their classrooms. Muthukrishna (2002, pp. 149-150) also agrees with the notion that educational psychologists can take on a mentoring and support role for teachers, guiding in facilitating the learning of a class full of individual children. In many schools which employ an educational psychologist, he or she serves as the head of the SBST and coordinates the development of individualised education programmes for learners requiring support. The success of inclusive education depends on the availability and quality of educational support that is offered in mainstream schools (Farrell, 2004, cited in Engelbrecht & Green, 2002, p. 85), and educational psychologists can help to ensure this.

4.2.3 Theme 3: The future role of educational psychologists in supporting inclusion in schools

In Theme 3, I discuss the results relating to the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion going forward. Three subthemes emerged, namely, support by educational psychologists and their relationship with the school, employment and placement of educational psychologists, and institutional collaboration. Table 4.4 outlines the inclusion and exclusion criteria that categorised the data for Theme 3.

Table 4.4: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 3

THEME	INCLUSION CRITERIA	EXCLUSION CRITERIA
Subtheme 3.1: Support by educational psychologists and their relationship with the school	Any reference to support that should be provided by educational psychologists to schools, and the relationship that should exist between educational psychologists and schools	References to support provided by other professionals to schools, and the relationship of such professionals with schools
Subtheme 3.2: Employment of educational psychologists	Any reference to the employment of educational psychologists in the schooling system	References to the employment of educational psychologists outside of the schooling system
Subtheme 3.3: Institutional collaboration (district, school and educational psychologist)	Any reference to collaboration between the district, school and educational psychologist	References to collaboration outside of the schooling system

4.2.3.1 Sub-theme 3.1: Support by educational psychologists and their relationship with the school

Support by educational psychologists has been considered in various ways. There is a generic job description which has been developed by government for therapists providing support to schools: *We've had discussions on the role of therapists...They even came up with some kind of a generic job description and even a report template that when you've been out to school, how do you write a report that will be meaningful and would make sense to everybody who has to read that report* (I1 P1, lines 331-336). In addition, government believes that the educational psychologist should be part of a multi-disciplinary team to identify barriers and types of support: *Psychologists should be part of a multidisciplinary team in identifying barriers to learning and what kind of support needs to be packaged together* (I1 P1, lines 21-23). In this team, the *pedagogical voice should also be heard* (I1 P1, lines 29-30). It appears that this generic job description has not been implemented in the District Office yet. A district participant commented: *We don't have job descriptions yet* (I7 P11, line 45).

Besides a generic job description for therapists (including educational psychologists), the roles of the DBST and SBST were also discussed by participants. According to the Department, there are *guidelines in terms of what a DBST should be doing, how must it be constituted – it must be constituted across disciplines, of course. You need people from curriculum, infrastructure, school governance and management* (I1 P1, lines 341-343). Yet, from the district participants' perspective, the DBST is not functional: *The DBST is not functioning. It should have representation from each circuit* (I7 P12, line 58). With regard to the SBST, the Department has proposed a specific model: *The few people that we have that are knowledgeable in the remedial – if you want to call it that, or learning support skills – that they actually act as advisors and mentors to ordinary teachers and to SBSTs. It would be the best use of their expertise* (I2 P2, lines 135-139).

The teachers at the research site appear receptive to working with the psychologist, commenting that she has expertise that they do not have, and is able to help the learners in ways they cannot: *We don't have problems between the teachers and the psychologist. Because the learners we are teaching – I mean, what can we do, we are not psychologists. We feel desperate when we can't help this child and we welcome any help we can get* (I4 P4, lines 99-102). Additionally, the school appears to have had positive experiences working with educational psychologists: *No [negative experiences]. And I haven't had any complaints from other teachers* (I4 P4, lines 148-149). Both the past and present educational psychologists have interacted with the teachers. A school participant commented on interactions with the educational psychologist: *She did give us feedback, she did talk to us and she talked directly to the teachers. So I don't*

always know what's going on (I4 P4, lines 247-249). The teachers appreciate the approach the psychologist takes: *The way A is doing it, she is giving us advice. You can take it or you can leave it. She is not enforcing anything* (I4 P4, lines 252-253). The psychologist providing services to the school has had engagements with the teachers of the learners she has assessed thus far, but she cannot give them detailed feedback because she does not have the parents' consent yet: *She can't tell us everything but she just confirms our suspicion – yes, this child should fail or she needs remedial or OT [occupational therapy]. She has to ask the parents for consent. She includes recommendations for the teachers* (F1 P4, lines 210-212).

A teacher gave an example of a case she had where she referred a learner to the psychologist, and the psychologist gave feedback to the teachers: *[The new psychologist] is seeing the mom tomorrow. And then she's also seeing me (laughs). I have to report on his progress... It has been positive and the mommy is open to it. ...She [the psychologist] gives us feedback which is nice* (I4 P4, lines 227-243). The school appeared desperate for support from an educational psychologist. One teacher commented: *We need help, we want help. We want to improve* (F1 P4, line 245). Another school participant commented: *Look, at this school I think they will only welcome it [having an educational psychologist on site], because they pick up a problem much quicker because of the small classes. We can identify a child more easily and then to get that help for that child so that he can go out and come back again* (I3 P3, lines 210-211).

Thus it can be seen that the school supports the idea of having an educational psychologist providing on-site support. There appears to have been a generally favourable relationship between the school and the educational psychologist that provided services to the school community, although this depended in part on teachers feeling that their concerns about the learners in question were accurate. From government's perspective, the educational psychologist should be part of a multi-disciplinary team that identifies barriers to learning and possible approaches to address the barriers. This appears to be more of a case management role than working one-on-one with learners and their families.

4.2.3.2 Sub-theme 3.2: Employment of educational psychologists

In South Africa, there are very few government-funded posts for educational psychologists in individual schools. The exception is some special needs schools, but even here, support is often provided by district-based psychologists. When asked about where educational psychologists are likely to be employed in the future, a government participant commented that a factor that must be considered is how and how often the service is provided: *So we need to look at how is the service provided, what is the frequency. And that can also come from yourself, to say the way I see my role is if I have an intervention to make, there are learners I need to see on a daily basis, or I need to see a learner once a month or once in three months. That could provide ideas in terms of how we could norm the provision of services, what kind of services you provide, what*

is the frequency, do you find yourself having to work with an individual learner on a day-to-day basis, or only occasionally? (I1 P1, lines 301-308).

There is also the view from government that, should educational psychologists be employed in individual schools, it would be seen as limiting access to their services: *We cannot as a country afford to give individual schools these professionals. We will deprive millions of learners of these services if we do that* (I1 P1, lines 113-115). Even the full-service schools should not have educational psychologists on their staff: *No. You'd have them at the District* (I1 P1, line 144). Their key role is viewed as being from the District Office, but there is also a role for them at national level: *We also need them here, by the way, because their role is actually with early identification of barriers to learning and the packaging of support for learners experiencing barriers to learning* (I1 P1, lines 260-262). National government sees a role for educational psychologists at a district level, and that their expertise is better placed there than in individual schools: *I am not in favour of an approach whereby educational psychologists will be employed for individual schools because it limits the access. I would like to see them... support all schools in the district* (I1 P1, lines 262-265). *I think their expertise can be much more effectively utilised in the District* (I2 P2, lines 240-241). *And I feel that some special schools don't have to have one full time. It would be best if the person could be appointed at the district. I don't out-rule that that person can actually spend four days of the week at the school, but what I do find a big problem in our system is that people are under-utilised at the schools* (I2 P2, lines 228-232).

Government seemingly contradicts itself by admitting that the need is more at the school level, but placing educational psychologists at the district level means that certain schools do not monopolise their services: *Whereas the need is actually more at a school level to have access to these professionals, but because of their scarcity our approach is to place them at district level so that they can provide services across the schools from the District so that you don't give certain schools a monopoly of having access to their services* (I1 P1, lines 102-106). However, there was agreement that educational psychologists at district offices are frustrated because there are not enough of them to support all the schools within their jurisdiction: *They support all schools in the District. In which case, one educational psychologist cannot manage to do... You are frustrating those people because they can't cope* (I1 P1, lines 265-268). A district participant concurred: *We can't cope. We don't have enough educational psychologists* (I7 P11, lines 121-122). She commented further: *As a trained educational psychologist, I feel I am not using my skills. The District does not have enough staff to really support individual learners, so we do more liaising with service providers like social workers, NGOs and others to do the work we are trained to do* (I7 P11, lines 231-234).

There was a view that educational psychologists were being prioritised for schools for children with disabilities, when there are many other barriers to learning faced by children. The education system cannot be designed to support only learners with specific disabilities. There appears to be contestation over resources: *...schools where half the children came from broken homes, there were child-headed households, there were parents who were prostitutes, children who were being abused, and there was just no service for them. Because we were just tying them up and attaching them to children with disabilities* (I2 P2, lines 237-240).

The Department does, however, acknowledge that there are circumstances where certain schools would need a psychologist on the staff: *Yes, but I do acknowledge that some schools will have to have full psychologists to deal with complex issues. If it's a very big school or say a school for the blind with more than 300 children, I can't say that it wouldn't be good for that school to have some psychologist* (I2 P2, lines 226-228).

Educational psychologists find being part of the staff makes it easier for them to work with the families of the learners as well: *Being part of the staff makes a big difference. I can phone the parents and make an appointment* (I5 P5, lines 80-81). At the case study school, the arrangement is that a private psychologist provides services to the school, for a fee from the parents: *They sit here and they contact the parents and then they get payment through the medical aid. That's how it works for us* (I3 P3, lines 117-119). For the school, the problem is that parents do not always pay for the services of the educational psychologist: *If parents just paid them it would have been positive. They are very helpful* (F1 P4, line 80), *but they are quite expensive. The parents can't always pay, and the District can't always send someone to help when we need it* (F1 P7, lines 86-87). In the school's view, the ideal is to have one educational psychologist at each school, but they realise that this will not happen: *The ideal is like the Americans; they have one per school. I realise that will never happen. But I would say you need one for a region* (I3 P3, lines 291-294).

Thus it can be seen from the above discussion that government has a different view with regard to the provision of educational psychology services. Government participants believe that professionals such as educational psychologists must be employed by district offices so that they can provide support to all schools in the District. The educational psychologist and the school have a different view, believing that the ideal is to have such professionals in each school, so that their services can be accessed easily and affordably. The District participants would like to see more educational psychologists employed, and they appear to want to work more one-on-one with learners and their families, although they do acknowledge there is a role for them as case managers.

4.2.3.3 Sub-theme 3.3: Institutional collaboration (District, school and educational psychologist)

The Department's perspective is that educational psychologists can provide support to teachers in terms of the kind of support a learner needs. The educational psychologist can inform the support programme's development, content and how it can be implemented: *You would understand how certain developmental delays, behaviours and all that play themselves out as a barrier to learning. You will be able to break it down for a teacher... then you can agree in terms of what kind of support does the child need* (I1 P1, lines 279-283). In order to provide this support, government believes that there is a need for collaboration between the educational psychologist and the teachers: *You will need to collaborate. You can inform how the support programme can be dealt with, what components it needs to be effective, from the perspective of your discipline* (I1 P1, lines 285-287). For this reason, a government participant argued that educational psychologists should not be employed in schools: *That is why I am arguing against having educational psychologists employed at individual schools* (I1 P1, lines 287-288).

The psychologist who was providing services to the school at the time of my study did not participate in SBST meetings. However, she had expressed a desire to meet with and work with the teachers and parents of learners who are struggling, so that she could explain her role and try to become part of the school "family": *Today, she said she wants to have a general meeting with the teachers and the parents of the learners who struggle and explain what she does and the therapy* (I4 P4, lines 254-261). This approach was viewed positively by the school as a collaborative approach: *She wants to include the parents. That's a nice approach, a collaborative approach* (I4 P4, lines 254-261).

An educational psychologist commented that it is difficult to collaborate with other professions when one works in private practice, but that collaboration is important in assisting the learner: *If I can train teachers to rather send a child that's been identified to an educational psychologist than to make up their own minds about where they should go, this would go a long way to helping and being useful. We are in the best position to look at the bigger picture. We must focus on teacher education. I try to collaborate with other professions, but it is difficult if in private practice* (I5 P5, lines 90-94).

Teachers believed that the relationship between themselves and the educational psychologists would improve if the latter were employed full-time at the school, as they would be able to interact more easily: *They don't know the child. They come here in the morning for a half an hour or so and they want to solve the problem. We know the child. But we need their support and we can't get it in an hour* (F1 P6, lines 160-162). *Personally, I would love to have someone here. It's like an open door policy, I can just walk in and say, "This is the problem, do you agree and what can I do about it?"* (F1 P4, lines 201-203).

Another teacher commented that, ideally, the educational psychologist and teacher should work closely together, and observe the children without them knowing they are being watched. Then you can jointly come to an agreement on the best approach: *So you need to observe them from a distance, and then sit with the teacher and discuss... You can come to an agreement about what the child needs and what you will do. It will have to be a situation where you work closely with the teacher, in a perfect world* (F1 P6, lines 253-257).

The school does collaborate with other schools when there is a need, and sometimes draws on their psychologists to help with assessments: *People at different schools can assess and I ask them to help us* (F1 P4, line 64).

The above discussion indicates that collaboration is viewed by participants as an important aspect of providing support to learners within an inclusive environment. The challenge for the educational psychologist who is not part of the school establishment is to find a pattern of work that enables him/her to become part of the school “family” and to develop the required relationships, even though they are not there on a full-time basis. Whether or not employed full-time at the school, it appears to be critical for the educational psychologist to build relationships with teachers, parents and school managers. I reflected thus:

Each time I reflect, I am struck anew by the disjuncture between policy and how it is unfolding on the ground. I firmly believe that collaboration is necessary in an inclusive system. However, it seems to me that everyone is collaborating to “pretend” that there’s inclusion. Is our inclusive education policy a type of symbolic policy?

Going forward, there appear to be many challenges that I, as a newly qualified educational psychologist, will have to confront. The educational psychologist wants to support inclusion by providing direct support to learners, but government appears to be saying that we should play our role through being part of its management echelon. So are we supposed to be “watching over” how practice is being experienced on the ground?

For myself, the irony is that I am trying to get out of the policy and implementation environment into practice with learners and their families within the government school system, and now I may be faced with playing a management and advisory role! My vision of collaborating with teachers and learners, parents and others to make inclusion work may not materialise because the reality on the ground is that there aren’t enough educational psychologists, and those few are located in district structures that are seemingly organised to provide broad advisory and other services, rather than more direct support. So who does provide support to those who need it? (15/9/2012)

4.2.3.4 Discussion of findings for Theme 3

Teachers commented that they would welcome help, feedback and advice from educational psychologists. There also appears to be a desire for collaboration, which is seen as a community of practice that connects individual teachers with others in their school community. According to Schrage (1993, cited in Engelbrecht and Green, 2002, p. 113), two or more individuals with complementary skills interact to create a shared understanding that neither had possessed previously or could have arrived at on their own.

In terms of my conceptual framework, Wedell (2005) considers it necessary to study the nature and level of expertise and collaboration required, the variety of learner groupings and locations where learning occurs in order to understand the implications for policy and practice. Numerous aspects relating to collaboration and coordination were mentioned by participants, including the need for supportive structures to ensure that collaboration is not *ad hoc*. There is a need for regular meetings and discussions about classroom practice. These views are supported by the literature, where findings show that collaborative partnerships require supportive structures characterised by joint planning and participatory leadership. Critical collaborative processes also involve frequent teacher discussions of teaching practice, sharing resources and decision-making, and so on (Engelbrecht & Green, 2002).

Teacher training and networks of support (such as cluster schools and resource centres) reduce the need for identification and referral (Peters, 2004, p. 43). In my study, participants spoke about full-service schools which are intended to be resourced and staffed so as to be able to support clusters of schools. South Africa also has a system of collaborative support teams – the DBSTs and the SBSTs. This correlates with the literature I reviewed which refers to collaborative support teams. These can extend beyond being district-based and school-based education support to including collaboration with other sectors such as health. A government participant in my study talked about the need for South African government departments to work in a more coordinated and integrated way, and to ensure that scarce resources and expertise are shared. An example of such a team approach is in Vietnam where collaborative support teams link education and health sectors to provide joint training, and are fully integrated into the Primary Health Care Network. Then there are also local community support teams consisting of community leaders, education, health and social workers, representatives from women's and youth unions, and parents of children with disabilities (Peters, 2004, p. 20). These ideas are still fledgling in South Africa.

Enabling of teachers to effectively manage inclusive classrooms emerged as an issue during my research. Schwille (2007, cited in Ntombela, 2011, p. 7) suggests an alternative approach to teacher development, including opportunities to collaborate and collectively decide about their

professional development needs within schools. Cutter et al. (2002, p. 196) found that teachers in a collaborative professional development community recognised, acknowledged and adopted new understandings about how to better support identified learners in challenging science instruction. Again, participants in the current study spoke about the need to develop teachers' capacity, but how this should be done was not clear.

4.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented the results of my study and then situated these results within the framework of literature on the subject. My intention was to illustrate corroborations as well as differences between the literature and my findings.

In the following chapter, I present my final conclusions based on my research findings. I present these in relation to the research questions that guided my study. I also present possible contributions of the study as well as recommendations for future research and training.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Introduction

In Chapter 4, I presented the results of the study and discussed the findings of this study. In this chapter, I answer the research questions that guided this study, revisit the conceptual framework and come to conclusions based on the research. I then discuss the potential contributions of the study, as well as the challenges faced. I conclude the chapter with recommendations for further research, training and practice.

5.2 Addressing the secondary research questions

The purpose of the current study was to explore the role that the educational psychologist can play in supporting inclusion at the school level in South Africa. In Chapter 1, I posed research questions to guide this inquiry. In this section, I begin to address those questions. In an attempt to understand and support the primary research question, I first answer the secondary research questions.

5.2.1 Secondary question 1: What are participants' views on inclusion?

Among my participants, there appeared to be differences of opinion about what inclusion means. Government participants at both the national and district levels seemed to share the view of inclusion that is contained in Education White Paper 6. In other words, they viewed inclusive education as including learners with a wide range of learning difficulties and who experience barriers to learning in classrooms, with these learners being supported and accepted in schools and empowered to overcome the barriers they experience. In addition, government participants from the national Department of Basic Education (DBE) viewed inclusion as seeking to maximise learner participation in their own learning and development and to reduce exclusion within and from education.

School-based participants, on the other hand, viewed inclusion more in terms of learning difficulties or barriers faced by the learners and what this means for the school. For them, inclusion meant that learners with specific disabilities might be assigned to special needs schools; they advocated separate schooling for learners with moderate to severe barriers to learning. Those with minor difficulties, they felt, might be accommodated in mainstream schools but might be taken out of their classes for learning support sessions, and would require additional support that is not currently available. Teachers felt unequipped to deal with a range of barriers to learning. The case-study school did not accommodate learners with physical disabilities, and those with learning difficulties were sometimes referred to a separate ELSEN class. This appears to be describing integration or mainstreaming, rather than inclusion. School participants did not discuss learners with other barriers, such as social or emotional difficulties.

Despite emphasising that inclusion is about accommodating all learners in the same classrooms, government participants also spoke about the need to take learners out of their regular classes for periods during the day for learning support. So an inclusive system still allows for specific learners to be identified and removed from their classes for varying periods of time.

The educational psychologist interviewed in this study appeared to understand the national policy of inclusion as conceptualised in Education White Paper 6 and agreed with it in broad terms. She then defined inclusion in a similar manner to the school participants. She suggested that the primary reason that learners with barriers to learning would attend a mainstream school was that there were not enough alternative schools to accommodate such learners. It is interesting to note that the view of this particular professional appeared to be based not so much on theories of inclusion or on national policy documents, but on the reality as experienced at school level. This reality is different to that expressed by the DBE representatives interviewed.

From these different responses it would appear that inclusion is perceived, experienced and understood differently by various stakeholders in the schooling system. Their understandings appear to stem from their institutional affiliation or their specific relationship to the schooling system. School participants defined inclusion by focusing particularly on the accommodation of learners with barriers to learning, while government participants drew on the conceptualisation of inclusion according to Education White Paper 6. What this means in reality is that schools such as research site appear to be practising mainstreaming or integration, where learners have to adapt to the school. Government participants, too, seemed to view mainstreaming as a system that expects the child, rather than the school system, to change. National policy is that schools must foster a climate and culture that values diversity and provides a safe and supporting environment so that learners do not experience barriers. However, learners with educational difficulties would not experience this policy when engaging with the school. Thus, it seems that inclusion is a complex policy concept that has a range of possible interpretations and applications.

5.2.2 Secondary question 2: What do participants view as the role of educational psychologists in inclusive classrooms and schools?

According to participants, educational psychologists have multiple roles in inclusive classrooms and schools. From my research, it is evident that national government participants view the role of the educational psychologist primarily as being to mentor and support schools and teachers, as well as to impart skills to teachers who have to work daily with the learners in their classes. Teachers have to be very skilled to manage diversity in their classrooms and to differentiate the curriculum; educational psychologists can support the development of such skills. For example, the educational psychologist should understand certain developmental delays and behaviours and how these play themselves out as barriers to learning. This professional can then break

these down for the teacher. Once the teacher has an understanding of what the learner is experiencing, there can be agreement on the kind of support the learner might need. In other words, the support could be developed through collaboration between the teacher and the educational psychologist.

As part of the DBST, the educational psychologist should also screen learners with possible barriers to learning. According to government participants, the educational psychologist should be part of an interdisciplinary team that visits schools in each district to provide support in their areas of specialisation. Educational psychologists were viewed by government participants as being able to provide support to learners from child-headed households, or to those who come from broken homes. They are also viewed as being able to provide counselling to learners who have been abused. National government participants view educational psychologists as playing a role within the DBST, rather than as part of the staff of individual schools. In addition, they view the role of educational psychologists as being managers and coordinators of support in an inclusive system, rather than focusing on working one-on-one with children. The reason given for this is partly philosophical – the belief is that effective teachers should be able to provide an inclusive environment in their class – but also practical in that there are not enough educational psychologists. By coordinating support to schools, it is expected that there will be a transfer of skills to and mentoring of teachers. However, government participants acknowledged that educational psychologists have in all likelihood not been sufficiently trained to mentor and transfer skills to teachers.

From the school's perspective, having an educational psychologist on the staff (either full-time or part-time) is an essential component of a school's inclusion or mainstreaming approach. The role of the educational psychologist was viewed by school participants and by the educational psychologist primarily as one of screening learners with barriers to learning and advising teachers on how to support particular learners, as well as providing learning support to learners. In addition, the educational psychologist was viewed as having a role in counselling learners and providing parental guidance. In addition, according to school participants, the school can draw on an educational psychologist to provide bereavement counselling to children who have lost their parents. In addition, teachers see the educational psychologist as being able to provide emotional support to teachers.

In theory, the role of an educational psychologist, according to the educational psychologist interviewed, is to find people to assist school staff, especially teachers, and also to manage situations once a problem has been clearly identified. The educational psychologist should follow up and see if what is being done is working and if not, then suggest an alternative approach. S/he needs to look at the bigger picture and guide the relevant role players. The challenge for

the educational psychologist is to develop a relationship of trust with the teachers and parents so that they can work collaboratively to provide support that will serve the learner's best interests. The educational psychologist was also viewed by school participants as having a role to play on the SBST, where s/he could collaborate with teachers in planning interventions from a range of professionals for learners requiring support, as well as discussing classroom practice. Participants mentioned collaboration of the educational psychologist with teachers as an important aspect of her role. School participants saw a need to collaborate with educational psychologists, because while these professionals have specific expertise, teachers also do and this must not be overlooked. The perspectives of all parties should be taken into account when working in the school environment. Numerous aspects to collaboration and coordination were mentioned by participants, including the need for supportive structures to ensure that collaboration is not *ad hoc*.

It would appear from the above range of perspectives that the reality of how inclusion policy is being implemented, including how the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion is experienced and understood, is dependent on who is being interviewed and their relationship to inclusion within the schooling system.

5.2.3 Secondary question 3: What are the challenges experienced by participants in accessing educational psychology services in an inclusive school?

There appear to be many challenges in accessing educational psychology services to support inclusive education. Participants expressed the view that schools and teachers are not adequately prepared to support inclusion, and that this includes a lack of educational psychology services. Educational psychologists are not part of the school staff; instead, they may offer their services as private professionals for a fee. In a school where parental income levels are not high, and many parents are not on medical aid, such payments may be unaffordable. The school has had a number of problems in this regard, and the result is that the educational psychologists may not provide services to the school for a long period of time. When I visited the school, one had left and the person who had replaced her was considering leaving because of difficulties in getting parents to pay for her services.

Apart from the fact that fees were not always paid, another challenge expressed by the educational psychologist was that staff in the school did not always want to work with an educational psychologist. According to her, the teachers felt that the educational psychologist was intruding on their area of expertise, and that as teachers who work day-to-day with the learners, they knew what the problems were and how to address them. However, an alternative challenge to this appears to be that the school population is diverse and teachers may not have the cultural competence to manage all learners.

Another challenge was evident in the agreement by government participants that insufficient resources have been dedicated to the implementation of Education White Paper 6, and that without resources, the policy could not be successful. Without additional financial resources, professional staff such as educational psychologists could not be employed within government or in schools. Government participants acknowledged that the majority of South African government schools cannot afford to employ educational psychologists, and that government rarely allocates educational psychology posts to individual schools. Perhaps of even more concern than insufficient resources, according to a government participant, is that there appear to be discrepancies within the DBE as to the status of the White Paper 6, which has resulted in the DBE not setting norms for educational psychologists. Thus, there is no real sense of the number of educational psychologists which are needed or where the need is greatest.

According to a government participant, implementing inclusive education has resource implications, not only financially but also in terms of human resources. Teachers in inclusive classrooms have to be very skilled in managing diversity and in differentiating the curriculum. From the school's perspective, funding is possibly the biggest challenge they face, as they cannot afford to pay for the services of an educational psychologist.

While there is a view within government, both national and district, that educational psychologists should be employed by districts, there is awareness that district capacity needs to be strengthened to support schools. Currently, each psychologist within the local district office is servicing upwards of 30 schools, and these professionals are not managing to meet all the expectations that schools have of them.

It would appear that there are a wide range of challenges in accessing educational psychology services spanning a number of causes ranging from lack of agreement on the role, lack of familiarity with the possible benefit – and in some cases suspicion and distrust, financial and human resourcing, and procedural or systemic issues.

5.2.4 Secondary question 4: How could the effectiveness of educational psychology services be improved to support inclusion?

In my research, it was considered crucial by government participants that teachers have the appropriate knowledge and expertise to handle the challenges of inclusive education. This includes having the right attitude towards inclusion of learners with anything more than mild educational needs. Government participants agreed that teachers' professional development, especially for an inclusive environment, needs to focus on giving them appropriate attitudes, knowledge, skills and values to perform their tasks well and resourcefully. It is believed that educational psychologists can help to build the capacity of teachers, yet they are not given posts

in schools to facilitate this. The view was expressed by teachers that in order for an inclusive system to work, teachers need teaching assistants to support them in their classrooms.

According to national government participants, there is a role for educational psychologists at the national level, where they could assist with early identification of barriers to learning and the packaging of support for learners experiencing barriers to learning. This would, in the view of government, improve the effectiveness of their services. For government, the priority is the district level because there is a view that if psychologists are based at schools, then their services will not be accessible to the majority of South Africans. However, there was agreement that educational psychologists at district offices are frustrated because there are not enough of them, and more attention needs to be given to increasing the number of posts available within districts.

Government seemingly contradicts itself by admitting that the need is greater at school level, but they believe that placing educational psychologists at the district level avoids certain schools monopolising their services. The view of the educational psychologist interviewed is that it is better to be part of the school staff, as this gives easier access to both learners and their families.

Government respondents spoke about the need to collaborate with other departments such as Health and Social Development to provide access to specialised services for learners. They spoke of the need to develop a coordination framework within government to ensure that scarce resources and expertise are shared. The government participants expressed a desire for psychologists to be part of a multi-disciplinary team to identify barriers and types of support. The school participants stated that the psychologist who was providing services to the school at the time of this study did not participate in SBST meetings. However, she had expressed a desire to explain her role and work with the teachers and parents of learners who might benefit from her intervention.

Given the divergent views on inclusion and on the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion, it is not surprising that there are differing views on how psychology professionals can achieve greater impact. Essentially, there does not seem to be a common view, and there is a divergence between the view that the role of educational psychologists in structuring provision should be strengthened nationally and in districts, and the view that there should be a greater presence and role for educational psychologists within schools.

5.3 Addressing the primary research question

The current study was guided by the following primary research question: *How can educational psychologists support greater levels of inclusion at school level?*

5.3.1 Supporting the inclusion of individual learners

According to school participants and the educational psychologist, the primary focus of the educational psychologist in supporting greater levels of inclusion at school level should be supporting individual learners with barriers. This includes assessing, counselling, providing learning support and guiding parents. Thus, the role of the educational psychologist has to be understood as primarily providing psychological services to individual learners who are located in inclusive classes.

From the research, it appears that this is not the understanding of many people in the system. At a policy level, the educational psychologist appears to be seen more as being a member of a multi-disciplinary team creating conditions for inclusion but not necessarily spending much time with individual learners. The latter is acknowledged as an important aspect of the educational psychologist's role, but not the most fundamental.

Educational psychologists who operate as an independent resource external to the system, work primarily with children whose parents can pay. Thus they may find themselves practising primarily with socio-economically better-off families and schools. In providing psychological services to children in such schools, the educational psychologist plays an important direct role in enabling and supporting inclusion. The child who is diagnosed (when necessary) and who is engaged in a programme of treatment is being enabled to remain in a regular class. However, an independent educational psychologist will only play that role in respect of children whose parents can pay the professional fees. Non-payment of fees was a challenge at the research site, according to the educational psychologist and the HOD for Guidance. Similarly, the school appeared to feel challenged by not having an educational psychologist on the staff. There was a sense that, although the school wanted the assistance of educational psychologists to support individual children, in practice such support was not available on a reliable basis. Parents were advised of the possibility of their children being supported in this way, but the reality of parental budgets meant that there would be limited uptake. Nevertheless, at a school level, the understanding is that educational psychologists do have a role, and in some cases an important role, in enabling learners to remain in a mainstream class and to develop progressively according to their abilities.

5.3.2 Supporting the system to enable inclusion

In the view of government participants, schools should on the whole not have an educational psychologist on the staff; rather, such professionals should be employed in district offices. From

there, educational psychologists should mentor schools and teachers, and impart skills to teachers who work day-to-day with diverse learners in their classes.

According to government participants, educational psychologists can support inclusion by helping teachers to develop their skills to manage diversity in their classrooms and to differentiate the curriculum. By being part of the DBST, educational psychologists can serve as managers and coordinators of support in an inclusive system. This, according to government participants, would also encourage collaboration between educational psychologists, other professionals, teachers, other school staff and parents.

Educational psychologists serving on the DBST should interact with the school's SBST to share ideas and expertise on cases. Although not explicitly stated, it was implicit in the interview with one government participant that a collaborative team approach could enable relationship-building between the teacher, the principal and the District, as well as the development of shared principles and values.

With regard to cultural issues, teachers report challenges in terms of working with different cultural groups. Educational psychologists and other professionals should understand these issues, and work with teachers and parents to take them into account in developing interventions. Again, implicit from the findings is that it would be useful to develop a shared set of principles and values (such as confidentiality, consent, a partnership approach), and learn how to work collaboratively to ensure the best possible outcome for the learner. It appears possible for educational psychologists to play this supportive role. However, it should be noted that this is not the primary focus of the training provided for educational psychologists.

5.4 Revisiting the conceptual framework

In Chapter 2, I outlined the underpinning conceptual framework, which was based on three matrices designed by Wedell (2005) to address some of the "rigidities that hamper inclusion" (Wedell, 2005, p. 4). In this chapter, as I conclude this study, I believe it is necessary to revisit this conceptual framework, in order to locate the findings within the framework.

Although these matrices may well be important in terms of the global experiences of inclusion, I have formed the view that they do not capture adequately the stage of development of inclusive education in South Africa. I believe there is a need for additional matrices which show the key variables that affect the ability of the educational psychologist to support learners with learning difficulties in the South African public education context. I have therefore developed two Johari's windows (Luft & Ingham, 1955) that show the key variables and the impact that they have, or are likely to have, on the evolution of the role of the educational psychologist in the South African

schooling system. I have drawn on Wedell's (2005) three matrices to suggest the type of scenario thinking that I believe is needed for the educational psychologist and organisations representing and/or building the capacity of educational psychologists.

5.4.1 Matrix One

The systemic rigidities that create barriers to inclusion that Wedell (2005) highlights were clearly evident from the interviews conducted. In the eyes of policy makers (government participants), there appears to be conceptual clarity around an understanding of inclusion, and limited scope to deviate from that understanding. In the District, it appears that inclusion is implemented without the resources that are implied in national policy (as set out in Education White Paper 6). A small number of professionals are employed and organised within district offices to provide advice and support to schools, teachers and learners, but in reality direct services to learners are offered only at a minimum level. At a school level, this rigidity means that there is no adequate support for inclusion. Mainstreaming appears to be the way inclusion is understood at school level, and even this is viewed by participants in the study as difficult to achieve with the available resources.

Some of the factors contributing to these difficulties in implementing inclusion are related to broader education policies. For Education White Paper 6 to be effectively implemented would require the staffing formula, norms and standards for post provisioning (Department of Education, 1998) to be amended to enable additional specialists and support staff – such as educational psychologists, counsellors, occupational therapists, teaching assistants – to be employed. However, the rules in relation to additional staff are currently strictly applied, and so the room to manoeuvre within districts and schools, particularly the majority of schools that do not have a large income from school fees, is very limited. In schools where parents have sufficient income, the expectation is that referrals to educational psychologists will be funded directly by the parents. So it seems that the ability of an educational psychologist to engage meaningfully at school level is determined to a great extent by the socio-economic status of the parents. Clearly, the opportunities for learners, while not guaranteed, are significantly greater in fee-paying schools. Such schools are also more likely to engage with educational psychologists and other professional services, and so are also more likely to form their own views about the role of these professionals in supporting learners in their schools.

So while Wedell's first matrix is useful in that it shows rigidities that are present in the South African education system, the reality in South Africa is that there remains a two-tier education system, with the majority of (poorer) schools having one set of rigidities and the (better resourced) minority of schools having another set of rigidities. There is a need, therefore, to look carefully at the current situation within South Africa and to explore how this impacts on the ability of educational psychologists to address the need of the majority and not just a minority of

children in the schooling system. Figure 5.1 summarises how policy, implementation and practice differ, and in particular how educational psychologists understand their relationship to the inclusive education implementation framework.

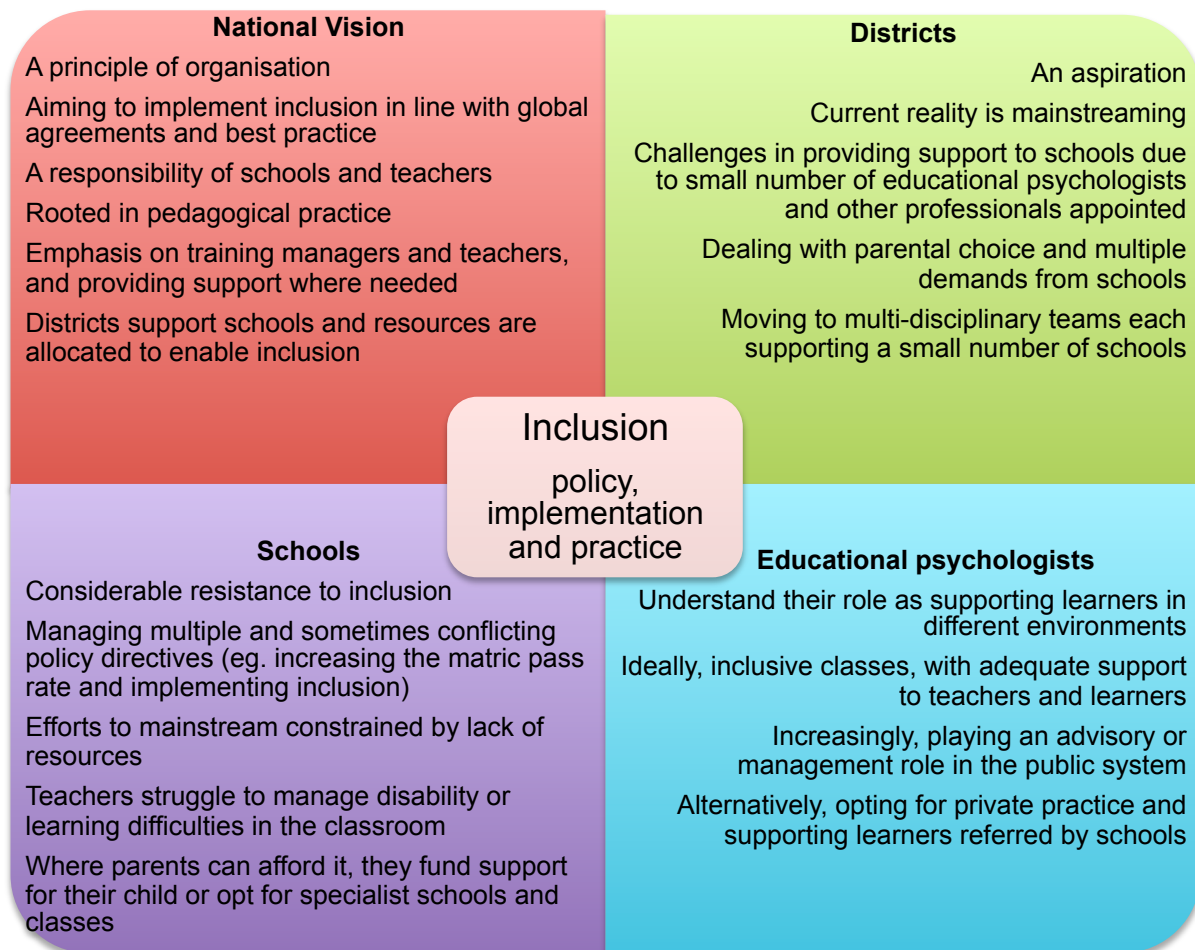


Figure 5.1: Matrix One for a South African inclusive education system

This summary reflects my research findings, and in turn leads to the need to develop a revised matrix reflecting the role of the educational psychologist within the South African context. There are many variables that will affect the role of the educational psychologist, but there are two key variables that incorporate most of the factors. These are:

1. Policy, including both policy on inclusion (for example, differentiating it from mainstreaming), and policy implementation guidelines and documents (including norms and standards for educators, post provisioning norms, etc.).
2. The actual funding and people available for the provision of educational psychology services. At present, these are limited and so most of the services provided to learners are based on parents paying professional fees directly to an educational psychologist.

The key variables are reflected in the Johari window in Figure 5.2. Although the four quadrants show options that are described in terms of the specific conditions related to the two variables, it is not necessary to see them as completely separate options. Scenario thinking (Ogilvy & Schwartz, 2004) is based on the concept that if you can imagine the future, you can prepare yourself for all likely scenarios, but at the same time act to influence the future and bring about the preferred scenario. Each of the four quadrants can therefore be viewed as suggesting skills and capacity needs that are relevant to all educational psychologists seeking to work with learners in the public education system.

If the current lack of policy coherence continues but resourcing improves, services can be expanded. (Improved resourcing would include, for example, improved pay for educational psychologists (EPs), and more of them hired in districts.) One possibility would be for a funding formula to be developed for poorer schools to access EP services for learners, while EPs located in district offices provide management and advisory support. In the absence of a mechanism for poorer children to access EP services, EPs may opt to stay in private practice and provide services to children whose parents can afford the professional fee charged.	High levels of resourcing for support	One of the main constraining factors in achieving policy agreement is the lack of resources to support inclusion. As resources increase, greater policy coherence may be achieved, facilitating an expansion of both EP management and advisory capacity and direct access of learners to EP services. In schools with the greatest need, EPs could be employed on a part-time or full-time basis, and budgets could be made available to either employ EPs or fund access to privately provided services based on an agreed formula.
Low levels of coherence in inclusive education policy and policy implementation		High levels of coherence in inclusive education policy and policy implementation
This is the current situation. There is very little agreement on the role of educational psychologists. It is unclear whether EPs based in district offices are supposed to be supporting individual learners or providing a management and advisory role. Most EPs are located in the private sector and take referrals from teachers, mainly located in private and better resourced schools. Parents pay directly for the services. The small number of EPs located in district offices provide limited support to learners in the more poorly resourced schools.	Low levels of resourcing for support	A greater degree of policy agreement between policy makers and implementers in schools would create the possibility of better targeting of limited resources. Choices would need to be made based on the agreed role of EPs. If the agreed role is to provide management and advisory services, then improved pay may enable vacant posts to be filled and this service to be developed. If the agreement is that funding should be used for direct access for learners in priority needs groups, then funds could be allocated in schools or at district level to provide such access.

Figure 5.2: Johari window of key variables

As can be seen, the scenario thinking set out in this figure does not contradict the Weddell matrix, but rather attempts to describe the challenges within the context of the realities faced in the country's education system. The educational psychologist may experience his or her engagement with the public education system in terms of the scenarios set out in the four quadrants. It is important to emphasise that the four scenarios are not solely dependent on government or on the market that exists within education, but are affected by a range of

influencing factors that do include government policy but also district and local factors, including the way policy is interpreted and the efforts made to make resources available. So the Johari window does not narrowly take account of national policy and funding, but enables the situation to be assessed at different levels, including at district and school level, which in reality is the main area where the educational psychologist will engage.

5.4.2 Matrix Two

The challenges related to skills, knowledge, understanding and attitudes are extremely complex, and also relate to the overarching problems of different conceptual understandings of inclusion. If the understanding at a policy level is that those with varying barriers to learning should be included in the classroom, the focus will be on the skills of educators to address the associated challenges. The Norms and Standards for Educators (Department of Education, 2000), which was published at about the same time as Education White Paper 6, includes in one of the skills sets the capacity to provide support to learners with learning difficulties within the classroom. The implication is that teachers should have some of the skills usually associated with various professions, including educational psychology. On the other hand, at a school level there is a general rejection of this approach. This is seen in the comments by teachers, who state that they cannot cope, and that it is unfair on the learners and the teachers to have such expectations. They view inclusion from the perspective of large classes (mostly over 40 learners in township schools⁷) and their experience of being able to access limited if any support where a proportion of the class experiences barriers. They believe they are being asked to address an unreasonable and unrealistic set of challenges without adequate support. Although teachers claim to support inclusion, it seems that they actually support mainstreaming, and even this perhaps only conditionally. In reality, they do not seem to support inclusion in the manner envisaged by policy makers. At a management level, schools may also be ambivalent. While they may publicly endorse inclusion as a policy goal, they are also likely to be mindful of resource constraints as well as the pressure to achieve improved examination results within the resources they have available. So in practice, support for inclusion at school level is likely to be influenced by the assumptions that a school can make about the willingness and ability of parents to fund support for inclusion.

There is clearly a challenge for educational psychologists. On the one hand, they have to engage with a policy framework that envisages teachers doing much of their work; on the other, teachers at school level are saying they cannot do this and they need much more hands-on support from professionals such as educational psychologists. How do educational psychologists deal with what appears to be a poorly conceptualised and inadequately funded notion of inclusion? It seems there is an expectation at national policy level that educational

⁷Schools serving learners living in townships. A township refers to an urban living area that until the end of Apartheid was reserved for Blacks.

psychologists should be part of the “management” of inclusion within the District, and that as such should develop skills associated with management (communication, managing expectations, facilitating access to services within limited resources, and so on). In essence, this involves a set of skills and knowledge that appear to be at variance with those learned at university. In this context, it might be wise for educational psychologists to be trained as managers rather than limiting training to the skills needed to practise as psychologists. The problem with accepting the national policy directive is that the policy appears not to be the reality at a school level. There, the expectation is that educational psychologists, along with other professionals, should directly support teachers, learners and parents to enable learners with barriers to learning to participate on an equal basis with other learners. In such circumstances, the educational psychologist plays a much more hands-on role. In schools where parents are both able to pay fees and fund services to meet their children’s needs, the educational psychologist can practise as a psychologist, and not as a manager or advisor. So even though the national policy might be clear that they should be managers and advisors, this is not the reality at school level in more affluent areas. Policy is not being implemented uniformly throughout the schooling system; rather, much depends on where in the system one engages.

Given the contradictory signals, educational psychologists should perhaps consider developing another set of skills related to negotiating a direct role for themselves in the public schooling system. However, in addition to considering this set of skills, one must also consider “attitude” within the profession. The majority of educational psychologists appear to work in private practice, possibly because there are limited job opportunities in the public sector. Educational psychologists in private practice generally do not engage with the challenges that are evident in the public schooling system, where there are many learners who would benefit from support but whose parents cannot afford to pay for it. These learners and their families therefore often do not get the support that they require to develop to their full potential. Given South Africa’s constitutional values of equality, human rights and social justice (Republic of South Africa, 1996), I would argue that the profession needs to organise itself to enable these systemic challenges to be addressed and for the profession to assert itself in the public space. The problem appears to be how each individual educational psychologist, as well as the profession as a whole, can find a way to locate itself within the public education system. There is no simple answer to this, because in spite of the very clear view of inclusive education at national level, it is equally clear that policy is being implemented in a diverse way. At the end of the day, it is implemented in individual schools, each of which has its own dynamics and pressures. It is therefore necessary to conceptualise skills needs within the different scenarios that will face educational psychologists attempting to provide their services in the different contexts. Figure 5.3 provides a revised matrix for understanding differing skills sets related to the roles that educational psychologists could find themselves playing within the different scenarios.

Low levels of policy coherence but improved resourcing ❖ EPs who wish to work in the public education system need to have greater management and advisory skills because support must be provided to teachers and school managers on how to manage inclusion and how to support learners with special needs. ❖ EPs who seek to work directly with learners will only be able to do so in private practice. If access is to be provided to poorer learners, the profession must be organised and negotiate mechanisms to enable this.	High levels of resourcing for support	High levels of policy coherence and improved resourcing Increased access to EP services for poorer children may require EPs to develop a whole range of additional skills. Language skills are the most obvious, but also skills relating to networking within townships and rural areas, understanding local culture, relationship-building with managers and teachers, etc
Low levels of coherence in inclusive education policy and policy implementation		High levels of coherence in inclusive education policy and policy implementation
Low levels of policy coherence and low levels of resourcing ❖ Given the current approaches and funding, it would be very difficult for a newly qualifying EP to build a career in the public education system. There is a need for much greater understanding of inclusive education policy and practice so as to be able to engage with the system at its various levels. ❖ Given that the management and advisory role of the EP at district level is prioritised, there is a need for training in what this entails.	Low levels of resourcing for support	High levels of policy coherence but continuing low levels of resourcing ❖ This requires the EP profession to develop representation and negotiating skills, so as to be able to organise and focus the attention of policy makers on how to use limited resources to achieve effective use of EPs. ❖ It may be necessary for the profession to organise itself separately to agree a mechanism for enabling access (e.g. pro bono work or special rates).

Figure 5.3: Johari window showing the skills sets relevant to different scenarios

5.4.3 Matrix Three

A striking feature of the discussions with all participants was the difficulty in obtaining insight into inclusive practice in schools. There were examples of learners with learning difficulties and barriers to learning, and there were examples of mainstreaming. However, examples of practical inclusion that can be explored in terms of teaching practice, psychological support and collaboration in support of inclusion could not be identified. Perhaps this is not surprising given the findings in relation to the lack of a common understanding of inclusion, as well as the shortage of resources to enable inclusion to be practised more effectively in the classroom. It would seem that collaboration and changed practice can only really occur when resources allow a level of genuine inclusion.

Participants explained that the potential exists in the context of mainstreaming, for increased collaboration. Teachers would welcome educational psychologists providing support to particular learners in the school, preferably taking them out of the class and helping them to achieve what they are unable to achieve in the class. Their role would not be to adjust curricula or provide support to enable the particular child to achieve learning outcomes in the curriculum but rather to

enable the learner to address some of the challenges that s/he has and which make it difficult to learn in a mainstream school environment. While this might not be the ideal condition for the educational psychologist to support inclusion, it is perhaps the reality that he or she will have to work with, and so this must be taken into account.

In a sense, this reality underpins other findings related to the necessity for the profession to engage in policy and policy implementation, so as to help create the conditions in which educational psychologists can engage at the level of the school. Perhaps in supporting mainstreaming in this manner, conditions may be created for increased levels of genuine inclusion. The indications are that this may be a long process, linked as it must be to the releasing of resources to support teachers where it counts – in the classroom.

Given this analysis, it is suggested that Wedell's third matrix (Figure 2.3 in Chapter 2), while providing an important framework for discussion on support for inclusion at a school level, is limited in relation to the majority of South African schools today. Rather than attempt to address these important and complex issues in a narrow manner, and on the basis of limited evidence derived from this research, I would suggest that further research is needed before conclusions may be reached.

5.5 Silences in the data

There appears to be a divergence between the articulation of policy by policy makers and the understanding of policy at school level. This would render it beneficial to interview policy makers again. The reasons for this divergence should be explored further, as the data collected does not adequately explain it. For example, no evidence could be found of the educational psychologist supporting the system and mentoring teachers in the manner envisaged by policy makers. The data is also lacking in detail in relation to policy levers – it is unclear what levers the policy makers have designed to achieve implementation. Although teachers and others in the system all state that they support the policy of inclusion, it seems that in reality they do not. They have adopted a definition of inclusion that is not inclusion as conceptualised by policy makers. In fact, they appear to state that even the type of inclusion they practise is dependent on resources being made available. None of the participants openly stated that inclusion is not a viable policy, and so this appears to be an unstated view wrapped up in intellectual terms at policy level, and a more blunt and pragmatic “only when we have the resources” argument at school level. The data does not enable this perception to be fully fleshed out and explained.

With regard to the structuring of provision, if the objective is to provide a range of support to learners, then one would expect this support to be structured so as to enable that to happen. This would require more human resources, which could possibly be achieved by locating a

range of professionals, including educational psychologists, in the district offices, with responsibility for providing multi-disciplinary support to a small number of schools. Currently, educational psychologists in the District Office studied are each responsible for between 20 and 30 schools. Given the number of learners experiencing learning difficulties or other barriers, such a large number of schools seems quite unrealistic. It would have been useful to return to the national Department to explore whether there is an acknowledgement of this seeming lack of human resources to enable policy implementation. The data currently does not explain how human resources are planned to achieve implementation.

It would appear that the funding arrangements for payment of services received by an educational psychologist are not in place, and therefore access is mainly determined by the parent's ability to pay. It may be realistic for some parents to pay, but for the majority it is not. For example, if one takes a child with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) or a similar learning difficulty, costs for diagnostic assessments, medication, interventions such as extra reading classes, occupational therapy, and other services could cost, conservatively, R20,000 a year. Second language speakers may need extra support around language. Everything has a resource implication. The data is silent on how the current policy framework envisages low income families accessing such services. In addition, participants did not mention the role of the educational psychologist in developing individual education programmes (IEPs) for learners needing support; in fact, IEPs were not mentioned at all during the research.

5.6 Revisiting assumptions

I approached the current study with certain assumptions based on my review of the literature. During my research, I tested and reaffirmed these assumptions, and found that, amongst the policy makers interviewed, there is an on-going commitment to inclusion as the best way to address barriers to learning. In addition, educational psychologists are believed to have an important role to play in supporting inclusion. Many of the challenges do relate to the lack of a shared understanding of the role and potential contribution of educational psychologists. This assumption was underlined by the disparity of views expressed by policy makers and implementers at school level. Finally, the commitment to collaboration is evident in the interviews and focus groups with district and school participants. Those interviewed wanted to work with, and be able to count on, other professionals with a contribution to make to inclusion. This is important because it means that in spite of the problems, particularly in relation to funding and coordination, there remains a solid basis on which to build and strengthen the role of the educational psychologist in an inclusive schooling system.

5.7 Potential contributions of the study

The case study aimed to offer in-depth understandings of the experiences and views of participants on the role of the educational psychologist in supporting inclusion. In doing so, it

also brought to light how participants understand inclusion, and that what is being practised in South Africa may not be inclusion in accordance with Education White Paper 6 and the guidelines issued by the Department of Basic Education. The study highlighted challenges faced in achieving inclusive schools, as well as the need for more support from educational psychologists.

The study could help teachers, educational psychologists and staff in DBSTs to understand the potential for collaborative relationships to improve support to learners with barriers to learning. It could help educational psychologists to design interventions that are more likely to have an impact on the conditions that exist, and to plan psychological service provision on the basis of a more realistic understanding of how those services could be used.

5.8 Possible limitations of the study

I utilised a case study design for this research study. A limitation of such a design is that the findings cannot be generalised because of the small number of participants and research sites (Nieuwenhuis, 2010). However, given that the purpose of qualitative research is not necessarily to generalise, but rather to provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Mertens, 2010), I did not consider this to be a major hurdle.

I have deliberately used a case study approach, rather than focusing on the entire education system. This has potentially deprived the study of insights that would be gained from the experience of educational psychology as practised in other schools. By focusing on practice within one school and one school district, the situation may be presented in a more negative way than would have been the case if this study had been wider. The opposite is true, too. I may bring some bias into the debates over the role of the educational psychologist. I have sought entry to the profession because I wanted to work directly with learners and not be a direct part of policy and management; so when the policy implementation framework appears to be moving in the direction of incorporating my role into policy and management, I may express bias rather than being fully objective. However, I have also adopted a rights-based approach and have sought to understand how the educational psychologist can assist those learners who are most disadvantaged in the schooling system. The bias is therefore acknowledged, but on the basis that it is not of a personal nature, but rather a strongly held belief that disadvantaged children have a right to professional services and that it is my responsibility as a researcher to explore how such rights can be realised.

5.9 Recommendations

5.9.1 Brokering a framework for success

The above discussion raises a number of questions. For example, what could educational psychologists and other professionals do to contribute to an overall strategy? Educational

psychologists should perhaps find a way to engage collectively with district offices to structure planning and implementation that includes the profession. At the school level, there is a need to consider ways of helping to build that collaborative approach to planning and implementation of policy. It may be useful for psychologists committed to working in the public school space to meet and consider those things that could usefully be discussed at a school level, and identify examples of how educational psychology can help. It appears there is a need to be willing to engage in tackling the difficult issues that schools have to address within the realities in which they work – for example, language and culture, high levels of crime, drug abuse and other social challenges.

Educational psychologists should consider engaging with those debates. In order to participate meaningfully, there will most likely be a need for preparatory work, researching social and other realities and understanding some of the dynamics that unintentionally create barriers. It should be possible for an educational psychologist to develop a presentation to parent meetings around diversity, and to facilitate discussions. These are skills that may need to be developed in addition to the “hard skills” learned by educational psychologists. The challenge would appear to be to make the service offered by educational psychologists relevant, and be seen to be relevant, to the entire school. There appears to be a need to find a way, even with the large number of client schools that an educational psychologist has to work with, to be part of the fabric of the school rather than some external resource that is brought in when there is a crisis.

There would also seem to be a need for the profession, and in particular those who seek to work with township schools, to develop protocols for schools to engage educational psychologists. Educational psychologists should be part of district teams tasked with analysing this issue. The challenges in respect of this could be quite enormous. If a school needs a service, it must get approval at district level; at the same time, the teacher has to get permission from parents and make a plan about who pays. All of these issues sound like administrative problems, but may be larger systemic problems. This suggests that there is a need to develop a funding model. Access can only be a reality if the service is funded and paid for, and this means carefully crafting processes and criteria for accessing the service. It appears to go against the traditions of professions to get involved in such issues, but unless the profession addresses this – possibly via a professional association – and there is an engagement with provincial, district and national structures, the challenges so graphically depicted in the research may remain. Without these protocols and systems, it could be very difficult for teachers to make use of psychologists.

With regard to confidence-building among teachers and parents, educational psychologists could play an important role in school assemblies and other events. Educational psychologists

should probably be provided with opportunities to attend staff meetings and address parent meetings at school or even class level. Opportunities should be created for teachers to raise issues, rather than wait for the “problem” child to be identified. Events could be organised for parents to understand the role of educational psychology services and other professional services. Parental education at school level would appear to be vital to the building of trust and buy-in. Consideration should be given to developing a set of principles and values that enable parents to give their consent and feel they are part of a process of supporting their child, rather than feeling that they are somehow giving their consent to something being done to their child. There should be some way of breaking down the barrier that exists between those who can pay and those who cannot. A funding arrangement thus appears to be needed that can at least get things started. If a funding model could be developed that encourages educational psychologists to participate in the public education system in an affordable and sustainable manner, then conditions may also be created to enable the educational psychologist to become an accepted and valued resource within the education system.

It would appear that educational psychologists who want to work within the public system, enabling greater levels of inclusion, should accept that their role will be substantially different to that of educational psychologists working in a suburban practice serving the needs of better off schools. They could engage in building partnerships, understandings, support networks and so on, while retaining a primary focus on working with individual learners and their families. However, working in the public space within the government education system, the educational psychologist may have to work much more on the system itself to incrementally create the space for less well off learners to have access to such services.

5.9.2 Recommendations for training, practice and future research

Based on the findings of this study and the above discussion, I make specific recommendations for training, practice and future research in the fields of education and educational psychology.

5.9.2.1 Recommendations for training

- ❖ Training is needed in administrative and protocol arrangements related to access and funding. It is likely to be very difficult for educational psychologists to provide services to the less advantaged learners and less well resourced schools without a much greater level of understanding of how professional services are accessed and funded.
- ❖ Given the emphasis placed by policy makers on educational psychologists being engaged in management and coordination, there may be a need for management training to be made available as an elective. There are clearly a number of career paths for educational psychologists, one of which will be in management.
- ❖ Educational psychologists should be taught facilitation and communication skills that enable them to build buy-in, and promote collaboration. Whatever the route into the provision of

educational psychology services – via district teams, deployment from a district to a school, or working in private practice and having cases referred – individuals seeking to provide such services need to acquire a range of skills that are not strictly those of an educational psychologist, but will be an essential part of professional practice when working in the public space. There is also a set of skills related to the profession being organised to engage with policy and policy implementation. It appears that the profession needs to engage with the Department of Basic Education at various levels, so as to help shape the accessing of services for those whose parents cannot afford to pay fees.

- ❖ One of the challenges that educational psychologists may face when access improves is that an increasing number of learners will not have English or Afrikaans as their first language. Currently, most parents who can afford privately provided services are either English or Afrikaans home language speakers or attending schools that require them to learn in these languages. As the number of learners in township and rural schools increases, the challenges of language will increase. It is thus likely that educational psychologists will increasingly need African language skills as well as training in cultural issues impacting on their work. This would be necessary not only for communication purposes with learners and their parents, but also in the wider facilitation and brokering role motivated for as a result of this research.

5.9.2.2 Recommendations for practice

- ❖ The profession should be organised to engage at district and national level with policy makers and policy implementers.
- ❖ Attention should be paid to protocols for accessing services and funding models that are sustainable and practical.
- ❖ Educational psychologists should be provided with opportunities to communicate with their allotted schools – with management, with teachers and with parents.

5.9.2.3 Recommendations for further research

Based on the findings discussed in Chapter 4, as well as the insights and interpretations I have raised above, I recommend the following investigations:

- ❖ Further research on how collaborative partnerships between educational psychologists, government officials, teachers and other school staff can be developed and sustained.
- ❖ Research into various funding models used internationally to enable children from poorer families to access educational psychology services.
- ❖ Research in South Africa into successful educational psychology interventions in township and rural schools, and what makes them successful.

5.10 Concluding remarks

What is called inclusion by participants at the school level may actually be interpreted as integration – there should be separate classes or remedial classes to support learners with difficulties. Data analysis thus suggests that inclusion appears to be more of an aspiration than a reality. Schools are not equipped to achieve inclusion, and do not even have a coherent understanding of it or plan to achieve it. This is partly a resource issue, but it is also the result of a policy that has been adopted (Education White Paper 6) without any real detail being worked out in terms of practicality or implementation. Schools are left to manage each “inclusion” challenge on a case-by-case basis. Teachers and school managers do their best, but often find it impossible to offer any real inclusive solution. They work in the context of the objective conditions that prevail. Among these conditions is the reality that schools do not have access to regular educational psychology services. Some schools provide access to such services, but this comes at a cost to parents, who have to pay for the service.

In addition, the District Office appears to be inadequately staffed and structured and thus cannot offer in-depth services to individual schools. Visits by the District Office to the school are sporadic and primarily focused on institutional capacity, according to the Institutional Quality Management System (IQMS). There are few organised visits by professional services (such as psychological support). The school has to request support from the educational psychologists, but often there is a waiting period as the district professional staff are servicing between 20 and 30 schools each. It appears that the relationship between the school and the District is primarily one in which the SBST provides brief reports to the District Office about learners who require support or may need to be referred to a special school.

Teacher participants expressed the desire to collaborate with educational psychologists and other professionals to enable them to give support to all learners and their parents. Participants (school teachers and officials) indicated that there is a need for educational psychology services, and that the government’s stated intention of achieving inclusion cannot be achieved without these and other services being provided in all schools. Government acknowledges the need, but is grappling with the fact that once the need is addressed in one school, it has to be addressed in all schools, and the cost implications are prohibitive. It advocates that educational psychologists should not be employed in individual schools but should rather be employed in district offices. The problem is that in the absence of an effective implementation mechanism, the policy of inclusion does not appear to have credibility at a school level. Government does not appear to have found a way of moving from the current poor level of provision to incrementally improving the situation. So in addition to the lack of belief in the policy now, there seems to be no shared vision on the creation of an inclusive system over time. Thus, inclusion remains an aspiration. There is nothing substantial in place yet to enable inclusion to become a reality.

There is no doubt about the need for educational psychology services in schools. However, there appears to be great scepticism in schools as to the commitment of the education system to its stated policy of inclusion. Not only does it seem that there is no clear and shared understanding of inclusion, there is also an absence of practical implementation mechanisms to achieve it. Such a situation basically leaves the provision of educational psychology services to the market. Parents that can afford the services may choose to access them, whereas parents whose income is low will not be able to do so. Essentially, there appears to be a dual system, with unlimited access for those who can afford the services and no access for poorer families. This is an unfortunate situation that cannot be left to well meaning administrators to deal with. The profession should organise itself and negotiate access for the poor. This means learning new skills, adopting an activist mindset and engaging with the socio-economic realities of schools and families, particularly in the townships and rural areas. Unless the profession, or at least groupings of educational psychologists within the profession, engage in this manner, it seems the service will remain one that is only accessible to those who can pay.

References

- Adams, Q., Collair, L., Oswald, M., & Perold, M. (2004). Research in educational psychology in South Africa. In I. Eloff & L. Ebersohn (Eds.), *Keys to educational psychology* (pp. 354-373). Cape Town: UCT Press.
- Ainscow, M. (2009). Foreword. In R. K. P. Hick, & P.T. Farrell (Ed.), *Psychology for inclusive education: New directions in theory and practice* (pp. xi-xii). London: Routledge.
- Anderson, C.J.K., Klassen, R.M., & Georgiou, G.K. (2007). Inclusion in Australia: What teachers say they need and what school psychologists can offer. *School Psychology International*, 28(2), 131-147.
- Angrosino, M., & de Pérez, K.M. (2003). Rethinking observation: From method to context. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (2 ed., Vol. 3, pp. 107-154). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Ary, D., Jacobs, L.C., & Razavieh, A. (2002). *Introduction to research in education* (6th ed.). Belmont: Thomson/Wadsworth.
- Asian Development Bank. (2010). *Strengthening inclusive education*. Manila: Asian Development Bank.
- Athanasou, A., Mpofu, E., Gitchell, W., & Elias, M. (2012). Theoretical-conceptual and structural aspects of thesis writing. In J. G. Maree (Ed.), *Complete your thesis or dissertation successfully: Practical guidelines* (pp. 40-55). Cape Town: Juta.
- Avramidis, E., & Norwich, B. (2002). Teachers' attitudes towards integration/inclusion: A review of the literature. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 17(2), 129-147.
- Babbie, E. (2005). *The basics of social research*. Belmont: Thomson/Wadsworth.
- Berg, B.L. (2001). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences* (4th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Booth, T., Ainscow, M., Black-Hawkins, K., Vaughan, M., & Shaw, L. (2000). *Index for Inclusion*. Bristol: Center for Studies on Inclusive Education.
- Bothma, M., Gravett, S., & Swart, E. (2000). The attitudes of primary school teachers towards inclusive education. *South African Journal of Education*, 20(3), 200-204.
- Bourke, P. (2010). Inclusive education reform in Queensland: Implications for policy and practice. *The International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 14(2), 183-193.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Burstein, N., Sears, S., Wilcoxon, A., Cabello, B., & Spagna, M. (2004). Moving towards inclusive practices. *Remedial and Special Education*, 25, 104-115.
- Carrington, S., & Robinson, R. (2004). A case study of inclusive school development: A journey of learning. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 8(2), 141-153.

- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2003). *Research methods in education* (5th ed.). London: Routledge-Falmer.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6th ed.). London: Routledge.
- Creswell, J.W. (2007a). *Educational research: Planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (3rd ed.). New York: Pearson.
- Creswell, J.W. (2007b). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Creswell, J.W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Cutter, J., Sullivan Palincsar, A., & Magnusson, S. (2002). Supporting inclusion through case-based vignette conversations. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice*, 17(3), 186-200.
- Daniels, B. (2010). Developing inclusive policy and practice in diverse contexts: A South African experience. *School Psychology International*, 31(6), 631-643.
- Davidoff, S., & Lazarus, S. (2002). *The learning school* (2nd ed.). Cape Town: Juta.
- De Vos, A.S. (2005). Qualitative data analysis and interpretation. In A. S. De Vos, H. Strydom, C. B. Fouche & C. S. L. Delport (Eds.), *Research at grassroots for the social sciences and human services professions* (3rd ed.), (pp. 333-349). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Denscombe, M. (2007). *The good research guide for small-scale social research projects* (3rd ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (2005). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). California: Sage.
- Department of Basic Education. (2011). *Guidelines for responding to learner diversity in the classroom through curriculum and assessment policy statements*. Pretoria: Department of Basic Education.
- Department of Basic Education. (2010). *Guidelines for full-service/inclusive schools*. Pretoria: Department of Basic Education.
- Department of Basic Education, & MIET Africa. (2011). *Action step: National model*. Pretoria: Department of Basic Education.
- Department of Education. (2008). *The national strategy on screening, identification, assessment and support (SIAS)*. Pretoria: Department of Education.
- Department of Education. (1996). *South African Schools Act*. Pretoria: Department of Education.
- Department of Education. (1998). *Employment of Educators Act*. Pretoria: Department of Education.
- Department of Education. (2000). *Norms and standards for educators*. Pretoria: Department of Education.
- Department of Education. (2001). *Education White Paper 6: Special needs education*. Pretoria: Department of Education.

- Department of Health. (2011, September 2). Health Professions Act, 1974, Act no. 56 of 1974. *Regulations defining the scope of the profession of psychology*, no. R. 704. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- DiFabio, A., & Maree, J.G. (2012). Ensuring quality in scholarly writing. In J. G. Maree (Ed.), *Completing your thesis or dissertation successfully: Practical guidelines* (pp. 136-144). Cape Town: Juta.
- Donald, D., Lazarus, S., & Lolwana, P. (2010). *Educational psychology in social context: Ecosystemic applications in southern Africa* (4th ed.). Cape Town: Oxford.
- Doyle, L.H. (2002). Leadership and inclusion: Reculturing for reform. *International Journal of Educational Reform* (11), 38-62.
- Durrheim, K., & Wassenaar, D. (2002). Putting design into practice: Writing and evaluating research. In M. T. Blanche & K. Durrheim (Eds.), *Research in practice: Applied methodologies for social science*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.
- Eloff, I., Engelbrecht, P., & Swart, E. (2002). Including a learner with physical disabilities: Stressful for teachers? *Koers*, 67(1), 77-99.
- Engelbrecht, P. (2004). Changing roles for educational psychologists within inclusive education in South Africa. *School Psychology International*, 25(1), 20-29.
- Engelbrecht, P. (2006). The implementation of inclusive education in South Africa after ten years of democracy. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, 21(3), 253-264.
- Engelbrecht, P., & Green, L. (2007). *Responding to the challenges of inclusive education in Southern Africa*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Engelbrecht, P., Oswald, M., & Forlin, C. (2006). Promoting the implementation of inclusive education in primary schools in South Africa. *British Journal of Special Education*, 33(3), 121-129.
- Farrell, P. (2001). Special education in the last twenty years: Have things really got better? *British Journal of Special Education*, 28(1), 3-9.
- Farrell, P. (2004). School psychologists: Making inclusion a reality for all. *School Psychology International*, 25(5), 5-19.
- Forlin, C. (2006). Inclusive education in Australia ten years after Salamanca. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, XXI(3), 263-277.
- Forlin, C. (2010). The role of the school psychologist in inclusive education for ensuring quality learning outcomes for all learners. *School Psychology International*, 31(6), 617-630.
- Fox, S., Farrell, P., & Davis, P. (2004). Factors associated with the effective inclusion of primary-aged pupils with Down's Syndrome. *British Journal of Special Education*, 31(4), 184-190.
- Friend, M.P. (2005). *Special education: Contemporary perspectives for school professionals*. Boston: Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.
- Gibson, W., & Brown, A. (2009). *Working with qualitative data*. London: Sage.

- Glesne, C. (2006). 'But is it ethical?' Learning to do it right. In C. Glesne (Ed.), *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (pp. 129-146). Upper Saddle Creek: Pearson.
- Greef, M. (2005). Information collection: Interviewing. In A.S. de Vos, H. Strydom, C. Fouché & C. Delport (Eds.), *Research at grass roots* (3rd ed., pp. 286-313). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Guba, E.G., & Lincoln, Y.S. (2005). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions and emerging confluences. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). California: Sage.
- Hancock, D.W., & Algozzine, B. (2006). *Doing case study research: A practical guide for beginning researchers*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Hanko, G. (1999). *Increasing competence through collaborative problem-solving: Using insight into social and emotional factors in children's learning*. London: David Fulton.
- Hay, J., & Beyers, C. (2011). An analysis of the South African model of inclusive education with regard to social justice. *Africa Education Review*, 8(2), 234-246.
- Hay, J.F. (2003). Implementation of the inclusive education paradigm shift in South African education support services. *South African Journal of Education*, 23(2), 135-138.
- Hay, J.F, Smit, J., & Paulsen, M. (2006). Teacher preparedness for inclusive education. *South African Journal of Education*, 21(4), 213-218.
- Henry, G.T. (2009). Practical sampling. In L. Bickman & D. J. Rog (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of applied social research methods* (pp. 77-105). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Hick, P., Kershner, R., & Farrell, P.T. (2009). Introduction. In P. Hick, R. Kershner & P. T. Farrell (Eds.), *Psychology for inclusive education: New directions in theory and practice* (pp. 1-10). London: Routledge.
- Hilton, Z. (2006). Disaffection and school exclusion: Why are inclusion policies still not working in Scotland? *Research Papers in Education*, 21(3), 295-314.
- Idol, L. (2006). Toward inclusion of special education students in general education. *Remedial and Special Education*, 27(2), 77-94.
- Jafthas, J. (2008). New role of special schools: Empowering mainstream teachers to enhance inclusive education in Western Cape, South Africa. *The Journal of the International Association of Special Education*, 9(1), 105-108.
- Josselson, R. (2007). The ethical attitude in narrative research: principles and practicalities. In D. J. Cladinin (Ed.), *Handbook of narrative enquiry: Mapping a methodology* (pp. 537-566). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Kalat, J. (2010). *Introduction to psychology*. Belmont: Wadsworth.
- Kelly, K. (2006a). From encounter to text: Collecting data in qualitative research. In M.T. Blanche, K. Durrheim & D. Painter (Eds.), *Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences* (pp. 285-319). Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

- Kelly, K. (2006b). Calling it a day: Reaching conclusions in qualitative research. In M.T. Blanche, K. Durrheim & D. Painter (Eds.), *Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences* (pp. 370-390). Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.
- Kinsella, W., & Senior, J. (2008). Developing inclusive schools: A systemic approach. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 12(5-6), 651-665.
- Krüger, D., & Yorke, C. (2010). Collaborative co-teaching of numeracy and literacy as a key to inclusion in an independent school. *South African Journal of Education*, 30(2).
- Kumar, R. (2011). *Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.
- Lincoln, Y.S., & Guba, E.G. (2000). The only generalization is: There is no generalization. In R. Gomm, M. Hammersley & P. Foster (Eds.), *Case study method: Key issues, key texts* (pp. 27-44). London: Sage.
- Lloyd, C. (2000). Excellence for all children – false promises! The failure of current policy for inclusive education and implications for schooling in the 21st century. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 4(2), 133-151.
- Lloyd, C. (2008). Removing barriers to achievement: A strategy for inclusion or exclusion? *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 12(2), 221-236.
- Lo, L.N.K. (2007). The sustainable development of inclusive education. *Chinese Education and Society*, 40(4), 44-62.
- Lomofsky, L., & Lazarus, S. (2001). South Africa: First steps in the development of an inclusive education system. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 31(3), 303-317.
- Luft, J., & Ingham, H. (1955). *The Johari Window: A graphic model of awareness in interpersonal relations*. Paper presented at the Western Training Laboratory Ingroup Development, Los Angeles.
- Makoelle, T.M. (2012). The state of inclusive pedagogy in South Africa: A literature review. *Journal of Sociology and Social Anthropology*, 3(2), 93-102.
- Maree, K. (2007a). Appendix A: Sample of a research proposal: Exploring the use of television guidance to expectant fathers. In K. Maree (Ed.), *First steps in research* (pp. 286-304). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Maree, K. (2007b). *First steps in research*. Cape Town: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Mathibe, I. (2007). The professional development of school principals. *The South African Journal of Education*(27), 523-540.
- Mertens, D.M. (2010). *Research and evaluation in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods* (3rd ed.). California: Sage.
- Mitchell, D. (2010). Education that fits: Review of international trends in the education of students with special educational needs. Retrieved 20 November, 2013, from http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/special_education/education-that-fits-

review-of-international-trends-in-the-education-of-students-with-special-educational-needs

- Morgan, B., & Sklar, R.H. (2012). Sampling and research paradigms. In J. G. Maree (Ed.), *Complete your thesis or dissertation successfully: Practical guidelines* (pp. 69-80). Cape Town: Juta.
- Muthukrishna, A. (2002). Building an inclusive education and training system. What is next for educational psychologists in South Africa? *Educational and Child Psychology*, 19(2), 24-32.
- Muthukrishna, N., & Schoeman, M. (2000). From 'special needs' to 'quality education for all': A participatory, problem-centred approach to policy development in South Africa. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 4(4), 315-335.
- Naicker, S. (2006). From policy to practice: A South African perspective on implementing inclusive education policy. *International Journal of Whole Schooling*, 3(1), 1-6.
- Ngcobo, J., & Muthukrishna, N. (2011). The geographies of inclusion of students with disabilities in an ordinary school. *South African Journal of Education*, 31(3), 357-368.
- Nieuwenhuis, J. (2007a). Qualitative research designs and data gathering techniques. In K. Maree (Ed.), *First steps in research* (pp. 70-97). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Nieuwenhuis, J. (2007b). Analysing qualitative data. In K. Maree (Ed.), *First steps in research* (pp. 98-122). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Nieuwenhuis, J. (2010). Introducing qualitative research. In K. Maree (Ed.), *First steps in research* (2nd ed., pp. 47-66). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Ntombela, S. (2011). The progress of inclusive education in South Africa: Teachers' experiences in a selected district, KwaZulu-Natal. *Improving Schools*, 14(1), 5-14.
- Ogilvy, J., & Schwartz, P. (2004). *Plotting your scenarios*. Emeryville: Global Business Networks.
- Pather, S. (2011). Evidence on inclusion and support for learners with disabilities in mainstream schools in South Africa: Off the policy radar? *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 15(10), 1103-1117.
- Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Pearce, M., Gray, J., & Campbell-Evans, G. (2010). Challenges of the secondary school context for inclusive teaching. *Issues in Educational Research*, 20(3), 294-313.
- Peters, S.J. (2004). Inclusive education: An EFA strategy for all children. Retrieved 10 October, 2011, from <http://www.worldbank.org>
- Pillay, J. (2004). Experiences of learners from informal settlements. *South African Journal of Education*, 24(1), 5-9.
- Pillay, J., & Di Terlizzi, M. (2009). A case study of a learner's transition from mainstream schooling to a school for learners with special educational needs (LSEN): Lessons for mainstream education. *South African Journal of Education*, 29, 491-509.

- Prinsloo, E. (2001). Working towards inclusive education in South African classrooms. *South African Journal of Education*, 21(4), 344-348.
- Reinke, W.M., Stormont, M., Herman, K.C., Puri, R., & Goel, N. (2011). Supporting children's mental health in schools: Teacher perceptions of needs, roles, and barriers. *School Psychological Quarterly*, 26(1), 1-13.
- Republic of South Africa. (1996). *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Rossmann, G.B., & Rallis, S.F. (2003). *Learning in the field. An introduction to qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Sayed, Y., & Soudien, C. (2005). Decentralisation and the construction of inclusion education policy in South Africa. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 35(2), 115-125.
- Seabi, J. (2012). Research designs and data collection techniques. In J. G. Maree (Ed.), *Complete your thesis or dissertation successfully: Practical guidelines* (pp. 81-95). Cape Town: Juta.
- Sebba, J., & Ainscow, M. (1996). International developments in inclusive schooling: Mapping the issues. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 26(1), 5-19.
- Shaddock, A.J., Nielsen, A., Giorcelli, L., Kilham, C., & Hoffman-Rapp, L. (2007). *What are the critical factors in ensuring successful collaboration between mainstream teachers and teaching assistants?* Report to the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training, Canberra.
- Sinkovics, R., Penz, E., & Ghauri, P. (2008). Enhancing the trustworthiness of qualitative research in international business. *Management International Review*, 48(6), 89-714.
- Smit, E., & Mpya, G.N. (2011). How educator perception has shaped inclusive teaching at a rural village school in South Africa. *Child Abuse Research in South Africa*, 12(2), 25-35.
- Stofile, S., & Green, L. (2007). Inclusive education in South Africa. In P. Engelbrecht & L. Green (Eds.), *Responding to the challenges of inclusive education in Southern Africa* (pp. 52-65). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Strydom, H. (2005). Scientific theory and professional research. In A.S. de Vos, H. Strydom, C. B. Fouche & C. S. L. Delport (Eds.), *Research at grass roots for the social sciences and human services professions* (pp. 27-43). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Swart, E., Engelbrecht, P., Elof, I., & Pettipher, R. (2002). Implementing inclusive education in South Africa: Teachers' attitudes and experiences. *Acta Academica*, 34(1), 175-189.
- Swart, E., Engelbrecht, P., Elof, I., Pettipher, R., & Oswald, M. (2004). Developing inclusive school communities: Voices of parents of children with disabilities. *Education as Change*, 8(1), 80-108.
- Swart, E., & Pettipher, R. (2000). Barriers teachers experience in implementing inclusive education. *International Journal of Special Education*, 15(2), 75-80.

- Terre Blanche, M., & Durrheim, K. (2002). *Research in practice: Applied methods for the social sciences*. Cape Town: UCT Press.
- Trochim, W.M.K. (2001). *The research methods knowledge base* (2nd ed.). Cincinnati: Atomic Dog.
- UNESCO. (1994). *The Salamanca statement and framework on special needs education*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2000). *The Dakar framework for action*. Paris: UNESCO.
- United Nations. (1990). *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Washington, DC: United Nations.
- United Nations. (2006). *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. Washington, DC: United Nations.
- Wah, L.L. (2010). Different strategies for embracing inclusive education: A snap shot of individual cases from three countries. *International Journal of Special Education*, 25(3), 98-109.
- Walton, E., & Nel, N. (2012). What counts as inclusion? *Africa Education Review*, 9(1), 1-26.
- Walton, E., Nel, N., Hugo, A., & Muller, H. (2009). The extent and practice of inclusion in independent schools in South Africa. *The South African Journal of Education*, (29), 105-126.
- Wedell, K. (2005). Dilemmas in the quest for inclusion. *British Journal of Special Education*, 32(1), 3-11.
- Willig, C. (2008). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology: Adventures in theory and method* (2nd ed.). Maidenhead: McGraw Hill-Open University Press.
- Yin, R.K. (1989). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Yssel, N., Engelbrecht, P., Oswald, M., Eloff, I., & Swart, E. (2007). Views of inclusion: A comparative study of parents' perceptions in South Africa and the United States. *Remedial and Special Education*, 28(6), 356-365.

Additional references consulted

- Ainscow, M., Booth, T., & Dyson, A. (2004). Understanding and developing inclusive practices in schools: A collaborative action research network. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 8, 125-139.
- Allan, J. (2008). *Rethinking inclusive education: The philosophers of difference in practice*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Du Toit, P., & Forlin, C. (2009). Cultural transformation for inclusion, what is needed? A South African perspective. *School Psychology International*, 30(6), 644-666.

- Department of Education. (1995). *White Paper on education and training in a democratic South Africa: First steps to developing a new system*. Pretoria: Government Printer.
- Eloff, I., Maree, J. G., & Ebersohn, L. (2006). Some thoughts on the perceptions of the role of educational psychologists in early childhood intervention. *Early Child Development and Care*, 176(2), 111-127.
- Eloff, Irma, & Kgwete, LK. (2007). South African teachers' voices on support in inclusive education. *Childhood Education*, 83(6), 351-355.
- Engelbrecht, P., & Green, L. (Eds.). (2001). *Promoting learner development: Preventing and working with barriers to learning*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Farrell, P. (2006). Developing inclusive practices among educational psychologists: Problems and possibilities. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, XXV(3), 293-304.
- Gabel, S.L. (2011). Politics of silence or politics of hope? *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 15(2), 281-284.
- Gallagher, D. (2007). Challenging orthodoxy in special education: on long standing debates and philosophical divides. In L. Florai (Ed.), *The Sage Handbook of Special Education*. London: Sage.
- Holz, Tania, & Lessing, Ansie. (2002). Reflections on Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in an inclusive education system. *Perspectives in Education*, 20(3), 103-110.
- Hoy, Anita Woolfolk. (1987). *Educational psychology*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.
- Kershner, R., & Farrell, P. (2009). *Psychology for inclusive education: New directions in theory and practice*. Taylor & Francis.
- Kokot, Shirley. (2006). The nature and incidence of barriers to learning among Grade Three learners in Tshwane. *Africa Education Review*, 3(1-2), 134-147.
- Landsberg, E., Krüger, D., & Nel, N. (2005). *Addressing barriers to learning: A South African perspective*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Liddell, C., & Kemp, J. (1995). Providing services for young children in South Africa. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 15(1), 71-78.
- Lubbe, Carien, & Eloff, Irma. (2004). Asset-Based Assessment in Educational Psychology: Capturing Perceptions during a Paradigm Shift. *California School Psychologist*, 9, 29-38.
- Naicker, S.M. (2005). Inclusive education in South Africa. *Contextualising inclusive education*, 230-251.
- Norwich, B., & Lewis, A. (2007). How specialised is teaching children with disabilities and difficulties? *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 39(2), 127-150.
- OECD. (2004). Comparative child wellbeing across the OECD. Retrieved 15 November, 2012, from <http://www.oecd.org/els/familiesandchildren/43570328.pdf>
- OECD. (2008). *Reviews of national policies for education: South Africa*. Paris: OECD Publications.
- OFSTED. (2005). *Promoting health and well-being in schools*. London: OFSTED.

- OFSTED. (2006). *Inclusion: does it matter where pupils are taught? Provision and outcomes in different settings for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities*. London: OFSTED.
- Osafo, J., Knizek, B. L., Akotia, C. S., & Hjelmeland, H. (2012). Attitudes of psychologists and nurses toward suicide and suicide prevention in Ghana: A qualitative study. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 49(6), 691-700.
- Oswald, M., & de Villiers, J.M. (2013). Including the gifted learner: perceptions of South African teachers and principals. *South African Journal of Education*, 33(1).
- Owen, K. (1992). The suitability of Raven's standard progressive matrices for various groups in South Africa. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 13(2), 149-159.
- Pieterse, G., & Quilling, R. (2011). The impact of digital story-telling on trait Emotional Intelligence (EI) amongst adolescents in South Africa – a case study. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 28(0), 156-163.
- Prinsloo, E. (2001). Working towards inclusive education in South African classrooms. *South African Journal of Education*, 21(4), 344-348.
- Prinsloo, E. (2006). Working towards inclusive education in South African classrooms. *South African Journal of Education*, 21(4), 344-348.
- Ravens-Sieberer, U., Kokonyei, G., & Thomas, C.E. (2004). School and health. In C. Currie, C. Roberts, A. Morgan, R. Smith, W. Settertoltbulte, O. Samdal & V. Barnekow-Rasmussen (Eds.), *Young people's health in context: health behaviour in school-aged children (HBSC) study: international report from the 2001/2002 survey*. Denmark: WHO.
- Roach, V., & Salisbury, C. Promoting systemic, statewide inclusion from the bottom up. *Theory into Practice*, 45(3), 279-286.
- Sayed, Y., Soudien, C., & Carrim, N. (2003). Discourses of exclusion and inclusion in the South: Limits and possibilities. *Journal of Educational Change*, 4(3), 231-248.
- Sayed, Y., & Soudien, C. (2003). (Re) Framing Education Exclusion and Inclusion Discourses. *ids Bulletin*, 34(1), 9-19.
- Singal, N., & Rouse, M. (2003). 'We do inclusion': Practitioner perspectives in some 'inclusive schools' in India. *Perspectives in Education*, 21(3), 85-97.
- Soodak, L.C., & Erwin, E.J. (2000). Valued member or tolerated participant: Parents' experiences in inclusive early childhood settings. *The Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps*, 25, 29-41.
- Soudien, C., Carrim, N., & Sayed, Y. (2004). *School inclusion and exclusion in South Africa: Some theoretical and methodological considerations*. Paper presented at the Reflections on school integration: Colloquium proceedings.
- Watson, D., Emery, C., & Bayliss, P. (2012). *Children's social and emotional wellbeing in schools: A critical perspective*. Bristol: The Policy Press.

ADDENDA

Addendum A:

Ethics Clearance Certificate

Addendum B:

Gauteng Department of Education Research Approval Letter

Addendum C:

Sample of Informed Consent from Participant

Addendum D:

Sample of Interview Questions

Addendum E:

Sample of Transcriptions of Audio Recording and Coding

Addendum F:

Sample of Thematic Analysis

See included compact disc for full set of addenda.

INTERVIEW WITH DBE PARTICIPANT (P1)

[Introductory remarks blocked to avoid identification]

M – [REDACTED]?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

M – What I am looking at is what role educational psychologists can play to enable greater levels of inclusion in the South African schooling system. From your perspective, what is it that is necessary and what role can we play? Has the Department conceptualised a role for educational psychologists within the system?

P1 – The question is broad in a sense, but I'll just attempt to give you a response. My response is, I think, not only in South Africa, I think also in other countries – I can talk about Sweden because I have had some kind of experience or exposure in terms of how they make use of psychologists. But to start with, psychologists should be part of a multidisciplinary team in identifying barriers to learning and what kind of support needs to be packaged together. So they will come from a behaviour perspective, from a psychological perspective, whatever their specialisation suggests. From that perspective, one would expect that you would have experts from different disciplines coming together and getting to understand a barrier to learning that a learner or group of learners experience, from their area of specialisation. What needs to happen is there must be a decision taken on what would be an appropriate intervention to reduce or eliminate barriers. In that space, the pedagogical voice should also be heard.

What is happening is that parents or schools refer learners to educational psychologists and they will do the assessment, make their findings and then prescribe to schools or parents what should happen to the child or learner. That's not

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:19 PM

Comment [1]: Sharing of expertise – multidisciplinary team

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:19 PM

Comment [2]: Sharing of expertise – multidisciplinary team

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:20 PM

Comment [3]: Sharing of expertise – multidisciplinary team

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:20 PM

Comment [4]: Decisions on interventions

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:21 PM

Comment [5]: Multidisciplinary team

35 the way it should work. Because they come from a different discipline and you also
36 have teachers who come from a discipline of pedagogy so it is in understanding the
37 barrier to learning together that we can plan an intervention or support plan for an
38 individual learner. What's happening is you get these professionals prescribing. They
39 will tell a school – if a child goes to a mainstream school – they will tell the school,
40 the child needs to go to a mainstream school. Based on what? They won't have this
41 aspect of pedagogy, this educational aspect. That needs to be reviewed. We are not
42 there yet to clarify the roles of these experts. But slowly we are moving in that
43 direction.

44
45 M – When you say educational psychologists don't have that pedagogy, are you
46 referring to the training that educational psychologists should have?

47
48 P1 – No, let me correct that. With educational psychologists, it's much different, it's
49 better off in terms of the role they play. What I was referring to was in the case of
50 clinicians, clinical psychologists. That's where you will find a problem. With
51 educational psychologists, they should understand both the psychological makeup of
52 an individual within an education space. At the moment, it's a bit better. But I would
53 still dare to say that they may be prescriptive. What should be taken away is for any
54 expert or specialist to be prescriptive. Teachers should not be prescriptive and
55 neither should any expert.

56
57 M – How would you see that working? What is the thinking about how you can make
58 use of the services of educational psychologists?

59
60 P1 – My response is based on the assumption that educational psychologists will be
61 employed in the education system. If that is a true assumption, then it will be different.
62 But what I know to be reality, is they may start within education and offer their
63 services, but then they open private practices. There are many reasons for them to
64 follow this trajectory. When they work in private practice, I think that's where you will
65 find some of the problems, in terms of the role they should play. In terms of
66 developments, what I have identified in terms of implementing White Paper 6, is that
67 in the first place, the other disciplines like social workers, psychologists, therapists,
68 are very few employed in DBE. In the main, they are employed by Health and Social

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:21 PM
Comment [6]: Current system and processes

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:22 PM
Comment [7]: Need for multidisciplinary approach

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:22 PM
Comment [8]: Current system and processes

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:23 PM
Comment [9]: Departmental direction - future

Michele Berger 12/11/20 12:41 PM
Comment [10]: Clinical psychologists - role

Michele Berger 12/11/20 12:42 PM
Comment [11]: Ed psychs - role

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:24 PM
Comment [12]: Future – what should happen

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:25 PM
Comment [13]: Departmental direction – future – employment of ed psychs

Michele Berger 12/11/20 12:49 PM
Comment [14]: Ed psychs – role (in private practice)

69 Development. So from an education perspective, those health professionals are
70 regarded as a scarce skill. In view of that, the proposal we are making increasingly is
71 that we need to collaborate or cooperate with DoH and DSD in terms of providing
72 learners with access to these specialised services. That includes assistive devices
73 because learners with disabilities do require in the main to be provided with these,
74 and access to such specialist services like psychologists, therapists, etc. But I
75 haven't found that government has in place a coordination framework that will
76 coordinate access to these specialist services so that as government we can share
77 these scarce resources. If you look at procurement of devices, devices are different –
78 there are 2 categories – those that are education-specific which have to be provided
79 by DBE and then there are those that are health-related which must be provided by
80 DoH, but we as DBE have to buy hearing aids, wheelchairs, which do not fall under
81 our ambit but we cannot at programme level go to DoH and demand they provide so
82 many learners with these kinds of devices. Coming back to health professionals, my
83 take is that with a screening tool that we are introducing in the Department to be
84 used for identification of barriers to learning and what kind of support will be
85 appropriate, we need health professionals yet we don't have them in large numbers.
86 So it is through a coordination framework that government could put in place that we
87 could access the services of health professionals.

88
89 M – For what reason are educational psychologists not being employed by DBE?

90
91 P1 – There are many reasons. It's not just budgetary constraints. There are quite a
92 few factors that are standing in the way of DBE having access to these specialists. I
93 have mentioned the coordination framework. But why we have so few professionals
94 like this in DBE, it is how White Paper 6 is funded at the moment. I can even dare to
95 say that White Paper 6 is not funded as a programme but what government is
96 funding in the main, in every province, year in and year out, you only get an
97 allocation that goes to special schools. Yet special schools are only a sub-
98 programme, not the main programme. So the budget is skewed because it is
99 recognised as a sub-programme only. There is also an urban-rural divide. That goes
100 for teachers as well. Even with health professionals, in the main you will find them in
101 urban areas. They don't want to go to rural settings. It's a challenge across the
102 professions. Whereas the need is actually more at a school level, the need is more at

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:26 PM

Comment [15]: Collaboration (across govt departments)

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:27 PM

Comment [16]: Collaboration (across govt departments)

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:28 PM

Comment [17]: Employment of ed psychs in DBE - barriers

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:09 PM

Comment [18]: Funding of White Paper - viz employment of ed psychs

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:10 PM

Comment [19]: Placement and employment of ed psychs and other professionals – urban-rural divide. And attitude to working in rural areas

103 a school level to have access to these professionals but because of their scarcity, our
104 approach is to place them at district level so they can provide their services across
105 the schools from the district so you don't give certain schools a monopoly of having
106 access to their services.

107
108 M – Are there plans to employ educational psychologists in schools? Or what is the
109 thinking?

110
111 P1 – At the moment, it's a bit difficult to call, in terms of how many you would require
112 at district office. But definitely, the priority is district level – you bring these
113 professionals to the district level or circuit level, but we cannot as a country afford to
114 give individual schools these professionals. We will deprive millions of learners of
115 these services if we do that. That is why we are advocating the creation of posts for
116 professionals at district level. When we produce more of them, we can take them to
117 circuit level. And maybe in 50 years, we can consider placing them at schools. There

118 are posts. I have just collected data (see presentation). As a country, we are only
119 providing access to psychologists to 1700 schools across the country when we have
120 between 25000 and 27000 schools. The majority of these are special schools and a
121 few full service schools. We have been making very few strides with developing full
122 service schools. We have 553 mainstream schools that have been designated as full
123 service schools across the country. But in provinces such as Northern Cape,
124 Limpopo, Free State they have made very slow progress. In Northern Cape, you only
125 have about 10 mainstream schools that have been designated as full service. And
126 there is only one that has been upgraded to give access to physically disabled
127 learners. So that is a serious backlog. To look at the target we have met to date of
128 553 schools, I think we have far exceeded the target from White Paper 6 – it was
129 looking at designating 500 in a period of 20 years. So in 11 years, we have already
130 reached the target.

131
132 M – Are the full service schools doing what you envisioned?

133
134 P1 – We haven't monitored that. We developed guidelines for districts to follow to
135 convert schools. They are spelling out added roles and responsibilities of a full
136 service school. It can't be business as usual as when they were just an ordinary

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:10 PM

Comment [20]: Placement and employment of ed psychs and other professionals – district level

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:11 PM

Comment [21]: Placement and employment of ed psychs – district level

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:12 PM

Comment [22]: Current provision of ed psychs to schools

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:13 PM

Comment [23]: White Paper – full service schools

137 school. What we haven't done is mediated those guidelines so we take district
138 officials through the guidelines so that the practice is approached in the same light
139 across provinces. Support and capacity should follow the same trend. For now, it's
140 only those progressive provinces that are doing some kind of serious work.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:13 PM
Comment [24]: White Paper – guidelines for full service schools

141
142 M – Would a full service school have educational psychologists on the staff?

143
144 P1 – No. You'd have them at the district.

145
146 M – Are they servicing the full service school?

147
148 P1 – No.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:13 PM
Comment [25]: Placement of ed psychs

149
150 M – How is the model working?

151
152 P1 – It is difficult to tell. Maybe what we should do is to fast-track the mediation of
153 these guidelines and make sure we bring on board all districts in terms of what is in
154 the guidelines. And strengthening the capacity of the districts so they are able to
155 provide support to all schools. It doesn't help to have the status of a full service
156 school and there's no support forthcoming from the district. If the district is unable to
157 provide adequate and appropriate support, you are just setting up those schools for
158 failure. It will be like they are not complying with the vision and principles of inclusivity
159 whereas what we haven't done is to put all systems in place and make sure support
160 is available to the schools whenever they need them. This is what is in our plan for
161 2012/13 – we have this thing of mediating training for officials for guidelines for full
162 service and special schools.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:14 PM
Comment [26]: White Paper – implementation and capacity building around guidelines

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:14 PM
Comment [27]: District capacity to support schools

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:15 PM
Comment [28]: Plans for building capacity in districts

163
164 M – How do you define inclusion?

165
166 P1 – For me, a definition that I've been throwing around whenever I'm given any
167 platform from 2011 is one that defines inclusion as a response to learner diversity in
168 the classroom in particular. So it's a response that seeks to maximise learner
169 participation in their own learning and development and to reduce exclusion within
170 education and from education – within education, there is exclusion. There are

Michele Berger 12/11/20 3:35 PM
Comment [29]: Definition of inclusion

171 learners who access education, who are in school, but they are not benefiting they
172 are excluded. So in fact their time is wasted. That happens in the main in mainstream
173 schools. And then of course you have out of school children and youth who are
174 excluded because they are not accessing it at all. That to me is the definition of
175 inclusion. If you listen to it, it says nothing about disabilities, because inclusion is not
176 just about disability, it's about a wide range of barriers to learning – some barriers to
177 learning emanating from the system itself and some emanating from pedagogical
178 issues. For instance, you have a number of teachers who do not have appropriate
179 qualifications to teach or who use methodologies that are not appropriate. Then
180 coming to this set up that you find in most former Model C schools, you have special
181 units or classes – remedial classes – the serious problem that I have with those is the
182 permanency factor, where a learner is pulled out of the regular classroom and put in
183 a special class or remedial class and the learner will have to stay in that class for the
184 duration of his or her years of attending school at that particular school. It's labelling.
185 stigmatisation, all of that. I criticise the concept of special classes or remedial classes.
186 And how we have as a system been using remedial teachers. Remedial teachers
187 need to be itinerant. They can't be fixed in one class and wait for those special needs
188 learners to come to them and they keep them there and they progress in that kind of
189 setting throughout their schooling. That's totally against inclusion. It's actually
190 integration or mainstreaming, it's not inclusion. I was saying to Western Cape last
191 year – I attended a meeting in the CFO's office in the Western Cape - I was asking
192 them about developments in terms of mainstreaming support, taking support to
193 mainstream schools through the full service schools concept. They were saying to
194 me they have 108 full service schools. But it turns out that 106 of these are the
195 mainstream schools that have remedial classes. I told them this is not inclusion,
196 those are not full service schools, you still have to convert schools and make them
197 inclusive in the true sense of the word. They are starting all over this year with 32
198 schools. They are progressive but it's how they conceptualised full service.
199
200 It took me years for people to start listening. Provinces are now listening. Even here
201 in this building, it took me 3 years to begin to have a voice that people would listen to.
202 From last year, a lot of changes. White Paper 6 has been in place in this building but
203 the problem is still at the top, top layer even now. But at programme level, I can
204 assure you... I don't think the blockage is intentional, I think it's in terms of

Michele Berger 12/11/20 3:36 PM

Comment [30]: Definition of inclusion

Michele Berger 12/11/20 3:38 PM

Comment [31]: Definition of inclusion

Michele Berger 12/11/20 3:39 PM

Comment [32]: Definition of inclusion –
teacher qualifications

Michele Berger 12/11/20 3:40 PM

Comment [33]: Remedial classes

Michele Berger 12/11/20 3:42 PM

Comment [34]: Remedial teachers - role

205 understanding the intentions of White Paper 6 and the policy on inclusivity. I don't
206 think as a Department we have done enough to advocate the intentions of White
207 Paper 6. What we need to do is to put together a very strong, powerful and
208 unambiguous advocacy programme. So that the messages we send across the
209 system, within the department at different levels, the message is the same. It will be
210 difficult but we haven't yet been given the space and the platform to actually present
211 on what White Paper 6 is about.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:15 PM
Comment [35]: White Paper – blockages
in implementation

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:15 PM
Comment [36]: White Paper - advocacy

212 [REDACTED]
213 [REDACTED].

214
215 M – Is inclusive education practical?

216
217 P1 – It is doable. I have many such questions from different quarters. My take is that
218 the implementation of White Paper 6 is possible and also has to happen. We cannot
219 debate whether or not we need to implement White Paper 6 because in the end, it
220 talks to key things. It talks to right to basic education which any child may not be
221 deprived of. Secondly, it talks to the quality of education that individual children are
222 given, making sure that every learner benefits from attending school, that there are
223 no learners that are neglected and therefore are not excluded from attending school.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:16 PM
Comment [37]: Implementation of
inclusive education

224 On that basis, to get it right, we can only get it right as a country, when we can begin
225 not to use inclusivity and special needs interchangeably. For as long as we have that
226 misconceptualisation of inclusion and we think it deals with disabilities, when you pay
227 attention to disabilities, then you are doing inclusion. If you focus on this, you won't
228 get it right. Number 2, after changing the mindset, we need to look at how we

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:16 PM
Comment [38]: White Paper 6 – key
concepts

229 resource the development of an inclusive system. White Paper 6 talks about
230 development of an inclusive system that has every learner's interests at heart. And
231 that's how a system should be. A system should be inclusive. In terms of resourcing,
232 at the moment we have gaps. As a department, we don't have funding norms for an
233 inclusive system. We have never developed them. Provincial departments allocate
234 resources as per their capacity in terms of resourcing but there are serious disparities.
235 Partly, this is because of the lack of support from the top, but again, I think the other
236 thing – some people argue, some administrators argue and say the status of the
237 inclusive education policy is a worrying factor because it is only a white paper, so it's
238 not a fully fledged policy therefore we cannot enforce implementation and resource it.

Michele Berger 12/11/20 3:50 PM
Comment [39]: Inclusive ed and special
needs - difference

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:16 PM
Comment [40]: White Paper - resourcing

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:17 PM
Comment [41]: White Paper 6 – key
concepts

239 That is why even the development of norms for resourcing, either in terms of how do
240 you provide educational psychs, how many you need per district, we have not done
241 the norming because there are still questions about the status of White Paper 6. I
242 have a problem with this, whenever that argument is raised, I always question that
243 argument against WP5 (ECD). It is recognised as a programme and is provided for at
244 NT for budget allocation. So why the difference between 2 white papers? [REDACTED]
245 [REDACTED]
246 [REDACTED]
247 [REDACTED]
248 [REDACTED]. We need to make submissions to NT for a review of the budget structure.
249 It's only then that we are going to get the policy properly resourced. He gave me his
250 word that he will fight for that. But since when have I been making this noise. I even
251 wrote a concept document in terms of how the budget needs to be restructured so it
252 includes this as a complete policy.
253
254 M – What role, if any, do you see educational psychologists playing to enable greater
255 levels of inclusion?
256
257 P1 – First of all, I think I would like to see more and more educational psychologists
258 coming at a district level. At national, we don't have schools, schools belong to
259 provinces. It would be useful for an educational psychologist to start working at a
260 district office. We also need them here, by the way, because their role is actually with
261 early identification of barriers to learning and the packaging of support for learners
262 experiencing barriers to learning. That's their critical role. I am not in favour of an
263 approach whereby educational psychologists will be employed for individual schools
264 because it limits the access. I would like to see them going out to schools wherever
265 there is a need – they support all schools in the district. In which case, one
266 educational psychologist cannot manage to do. That's the situation that we have, that
267 you do find at least one educational psychologist at a district level, but it's very few
268 districts that have them. You are frustrating those people because they can't cope.
269 The other frustration is that DBE is one department that has fallen behind in terms of
270 paying them their occupation specific dispensation. DoH and DSD are advanced in
271 terms of providing that incentive. This is why we are struggling to attract these health
272 professionals to work for DBE. But their main role is with the screening – we are

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:17 PM

Comment [42]: White Paper 6 –
resourcing and status

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:17 PM

Comment [43]: White Paper - resourcing

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:18 PM

Comment [44]: Placement of ed psychs

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:18 PM

Comment [45]: Placement of ed psychs

273 finalising the screening tool which every teacher, every school will have to use. It is
274 going to be rolled out and institutionalised. So far, we have only piloted it. Their role
275 is to be part of an interdisciplinary team that goes to schools from a district level to
276 provide all forms of support, of course, in their areas of specialisation. That's how I
277 am hoping we can bring in educational psychologists and have them working.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:18 PM
Comment [46]: Role of ed psychs

278
279 I think from an educational psychologist's perspective, you would understand how
280 certain developmental delays, behaviours and all that play themselves out as a
281 barrier to learning. You will be able to break it down for a teacher, and then the
282 teacher, on being aware of what is happening in the mind of the child, the emotions
283 and all of it, then you can agree in terms of what kind of support does the child need.
284 Even the teacher will expect to have support from you as an educational psychologist.
285 You will need to collaborate. You can inform how the support programme can be
286 dealt with, what components it needs to be effective, from the perspective of your
287 discipline. That is why I am arguing against having educational psychologists
288 employed at individual schools. According to the new structure, districts are
289 supposed to have between 200-300 schools. If you are qualified at the end of this
290 year and get employed at a school, you are only providing your services to one
291 school of those 300.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:19 PM
Comment [47]: Collaboration and sharing of expertise

292
293 M – What ratio do you see?

294
295 P1 – It's difficult to state in this case. It also depends on the need and how many are
296 already available because if I say it depends on the need, what I am saying is what is
297 the frequency at which you need to provide support to individual learners if you
298 provide it at individual level or group level. Is it a daily thing, doing one and the same
299 thing? Is there a learner who would require an educational psychologist on a daily
300 basis? If that is the case, then the frequency is high for support to be provided. The
301 high frequency and the total number of learners in a district which could be tens of
302 thousands, then you can't cope, we would need more. So we need to look at how is
303 the service provided, what is the frequency. And that can also come from yourself, to
304 say the way I see my role is if I have an intervention to make, there are learners I
305 need to see on a daily basis, or I need to see a learner once a month or once in 3
306 months. That could provide ideas in terms of how we could norm the provision of

307 services, what kind of services you provide, what is the frequency, do you find
308 yourself having to work with an individual learner on a day to day basis, or only
309 occasionally?

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:19 PM

Comment [48]: Employment and placement of ed psychs

310
311 M – What would you say in the case of a learner who needs regular support for
312 whatever reason? Is it the role of these professionals in the district to provide that?

314 P1 – What I am trying to run away from is the current practice whereby parents have
315 to pay separately for such services for starters. Even if you go to former Model C
316 schools, they do have or they have some that are contracted to provide services, but
317 parents have to pay. And then you wonder, because those professionals are paid a
318 salary by the school – usually, they are brought in through SGB posts – but parents
319 still have to pay. To me, it's an injustice. We are not serving the public the way we
320 should. That is why earlier on, I mentioned the issue of a coordination framework
321 developed by government which forces departments to provide the services that are
322 needed by other departments, for instance, the education department. So that at
323 local level, district level, the education district could be working with a health district
324 or a health institution that would have such professionals so that we could share such
325 scarce resources. Therefore the issue of the norm could be addressed as we go
326 along.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:19 PM

Comment [49]: Accessing ed psych services

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:20 PM

Comment [50]: Accessing ed psych services

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:20 PM

Comment [51]: Coordination and collaboration – between govt departments

328 M – What is or will be the role of professionals such as educational psychologists on
329 DBSTs?

331 P1 – We haven't thrashed that out from an educational psychologist perspective, but
332 we've had discussions on the role of therapists, but the initiative was done by the
333 GDE where therapists came together and they sort of looked at the role of therapists
334 in providing support to schools from the district. They even came up with some kind
335 of a generic job description and even a report template that when you've been out to
336 school, how do you write a report that will be meaningful and would make sense to
337 everybody who has to read that report. Otherwise, therapists have been writing
338 reports in different ways, using different templates or frameworks so it is difficult to
339 consolidate from a therapeutic point of view what we are doing or what therapists are
340 doing. I think it will be prudent for us to actually consider looking at each health

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:21 PM

Comment [52]: Role of ed psychs in providing support to schools

341 profession and try to look at the role that they can play when they are part of a DBST.
342 We have sort of generic guidelines in terms of what a DBST should be doing, how
343 must it be constituted – it must be constituted across disciplines, of course. You need
344 people from curriculum, infrastructure, school governance and management – the
345 role of school governing bodies is to develop school policies, even language policy
346 and admissions policy. So you find if the admissions policy is put together in such a
347 way that it discriminates against certain children getting admission, it acts against
348 inclusion. So you need people across disciplines. It's how we reorganise support
349 coming from the district, going to the schools, as opposed to going to schools in silos
350 and as individual programmes. It starts from planning. When we plan support we play
351 interventions, we plan as a multidisciplinary team because each discipline has a role
352 to play in inclusion.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:21 PM

Comment [53]: Collaboration

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:21 PM

Comment [54]: Collaboration – role of DBST

353
354 M – Any documents I need to look at?

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:21 PM

Comment [55]: Collaboration and multidisciplinary teams

355
356 P1 - I would recommend that you look at guidelines for responding to learner
357 diversity in the classroom through the national curriculum statement. We developed
358 these alongside CAPS. It's talking more to methodologies to try and improve the
359 teaching methodology in the main. It's for every teacher.

360
361 M – What progress has there been in bringing in teacher assistants?

362
363 P1 – There has been progress for instance in KZN. But we need to clearly define
364 their role. At the moment, the role they play in different schools and provinces will be
365 different. We need to try and standardise that practice as well which is also
366 something that we need to do with remedial teachers. My sense is that by the end of
367 this financial year, I should be knowing how many remedial teachers we have as a
368 system, what are they doing, what's their role, what role have they been playing. If
369 need be, we need to refocus their role or redefine their job description so that their
370 practice is not seen as anti-inclusion.

371
372 M – Is 'remedial' still a term that is used?

373

374 P1 - They are called different things in different provinces. For me, those are what we
375 refer to as learning support educators who we believe should be placed at a district
376 level and provide itinerant support and move around to schools. I am advocating for a
377 redefined role for that. And then we can decide and agree what we need to call them.
378 Some are called learning support educators in different provinces. We need to come
379 up with one name. The name is not the issue, the issue is the role they play in
380 providing support to schools and teachers.
381
382 M – Anything else you want to tell me?
383
384 P1 – Best wishes in your studies. We hope to hear about you providing your service
385 soon! Or coming to join us here, so we carry the headache together!

Michele Berger 12/11/20 9:32 PM

Comment [56]: Definition – learning support educator

DBE INTERVIEW (P2), 28 May 2012

P2 – I found the traditional models, you know, according to which the helping professions work highly unsuitable for developing contexts. The over-reliance on expert opinion and expert assistance which is sent out – the message is sent out to parents and teachers – disempower people, you know, to use their own commonsense, to try things and to come up with commonsense solutions to some problems. And therefore it builds up a whole industry of dependency which is negative for community work, you know. And also in communities, children with problems easily get labelled and marginalised while people wait for the so-called experts to come, of which there are few in the developing context. So it puts children on hold until someone is coming, and it is actually negative. But it is the whole society, the bigger society's over-reliance on the helping professions. And the article is quite outspoken. We said it is not an issue of client or professional relationships that need to be transformed, we must be honest to say that actually the clients are the raw material of their industry! [laughs] That's a very radical look into the work that they do, unless they have a totally radically transformed approach to their work. And the people I have been working with over the years, like [REDACTED], they all were educational psychologists who actually came out of that profession completely transformed, with a whole new idea of what their role should entail.

M – I didn't know XX was an educational psychologist.

P2 – Yes. They all just felt the need to work differently. Their work radically departed from a kind of individual interventionist approach to a whole school change. I think from what I've heard often is that it is not that you lose your clinical knowledge or don't use your clinical background, it is how you use it to guide people to find their own solutions. You fulfil a kind of a mentoring role and empower people to take ownership of issues. In a nutshell, that is what it was about.

M – You've been here for how long?

[REDACTED]

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:01 AM

Comment [1]: Institutionalisation of WP

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:02 AM

Comment [2]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:03 AM

Comment [3]: Role of EP

33 [REDACTED]
34 [REDACTED]
35 [REDACTED]
36 [REDACTED]

37 M – Your specialisation is captured in the name.

38 P2 – Yes. I came when [REDACTED] was here. [REDACTED]
39 [REDACTED]
40 [REDACTED]
41 [REDACTED]
42 [REDACTED]
43 [REDACTED]
44 [REDACTED]
45 [REDACTED]
46 [REDACTED]
47 [REDACTED]

48 M – What is your definition of inclusive education?

49 P2 – Well, I have quite a broad definition of it. I think one should – for me, it's to maximise
50 the participation of children and reducing the exclusion of children, mainly those who are
51 minority groups, marginalised children. And, um, and children who are vulnerable to
52 dropping out of the system, by reducing the barriers to learning that they experience. For
53 me, the barriers could be within the cultures of the school, within the ethos of the school,
54 within the policies of the school, as well as within the practice of the school. So I think
55 inclusive education has to target all those areas. From the ethos to the classroom practice.
56 There's no one section that you could leave out. It goes broader than the school. It involves
57 the community

58 M – Do you think we are succeeding?

59 P2 – I have a permanent inclination to be negative about the rate of change. I personally feel
60 responsible also for the fact that we haven't been able to do more, to move further, but
61 when I do engage with schools and I come in a context where the role of teachers is present,
62 and provincial people are present, then I am actually to some extent surprised by how wide
63 the knowledge and awareness of inclusion is. I think we've already transcended the first

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:08 AM

Comment [4]: Definition - IE

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:09 AM

Comment [5]: Institutionalisation of WP

stage of getting people to understand the basics of it. What we are now hitting is the lack of practical skills and knowledge to do that. But where I do think we are failing most is that key political decision makers and key decisions makers within departments, especially newer people coming into posts that don't know where we are coming from, they might not understand really what we mean with inclusion, and you often find people falling back on a narrow special needs vision of inclusion, placing the deficit within the learner, and thinking you need one on one remedial kind of support which is what we've been really trying to get away from.

M – What is the vision here, in terms of inclusive education in a school? If you were to take your most well resourced school, where you could see they have the resources to make it work according to your definition of inclusive education, what would that school look like for a child who has a barrier to learning? What is the school going to provide?

P2 – Well, what we've – we could never in South Africa have the kind of – we could never go the road that say more well resourced countries went. They would have had a child coming with a package of support already available and you find that in many of the countries, you have people actually replicating a special school in the mainstream which I don't think is necessarily the best thing. I don't think you must come with the assumption that a child who experiences complex barriers needs to have his own little personal support team. What I think is needed is, firstly, a principal who is understanding of what I am saying – all children belong. I think a school shouldn't be selective in its intake and should acknowledge there's diversity in the school of various kinds which need to be part of the planning in the way the school structures its whole system. The second level is there must be support in the school, there must be ownership in the school of support for all learners. And it mustn't be seen as the task of outsiders to provide the support. So for me, the whole notion of school-based support team is absolutely critical. And the school-based support team, for me, is a kind of problem-solving team, relying on the commonsense and experience of the teachers there, you know, to find contextual solutions. I think this is critical. Then at the third level, I think that the teacher in the classroom needs to be very skilled with managing diversity in teaching and learning and to differentiate the curriculum. And I think that's where we are actually lacking at the moment. Because I think teachers sort of teach for the middle, they ignore those who are having difficulties or those who are gifted. I think that all, you know, outside support people should be geared at enhancing the skills of the teachers to differentiate.

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:10 AM

Comment [6]: Institutionalisation of WP

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:11 AM

Comment [7]: Institutionalisation of WP

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:13 AM

Comment [8]: Institutionalisation of WP

97 Then I do want to not be, you know, too much of my head in the clouds, and I do
98 acknowledge that sometimes if it's something like Aspergers or ADHD, any kind of condition
99 of which the teacher has no experience, I do think there needs to be a bit of an intervention
100 in terms of training or mentoring or knowledge sharing. And I think that is probably what
101 most people say we are waiting to be trained before we can do it. I differ from that position
102 because we will never train people in a vacuum. People will only feel the need to be trained
103 once they are confronted with those kinds of issues. And I feel the training they would get
104 would enhance their teaching skills in general. And I think we need to also get schools to
105 take ownership of that training process by inviting people to come and so on. We have put
106 in a lot of energy in the way that we have restructured the national strategy on screening,
107 identification, assessment and support, to capture all these steps of school change,
108 classroom change, equipping the teachers. And we also want to convert our whole funding
109 system into one that acknowledges those kinds of needs.

110 M – Just to go back to your schools, you say teachers need to be skilled. What about the
111 common refrain that you hear: 'Our classes are too big, we can't manage'?

112 P2 – Look, you see, the first point is... I try and not speak of children with barriers. I find a lot
113 of people talk about children with barriers and I think that is becoming a new word for
114 children with special needs. It is as if, here you have a whole class of normal kids and then
115 you have a few with special needs and they are the tip-over factor, whereas I think that the
116 main barrier in that classroom is the class size, and the inability of the teacher to teach a big
117 class, and the lack of space so that she can't do effective group work and so on. So I feel the
118 knowledge and skills that you bring in are not for her primarily to deal with those learners
119 with so called special needs, but it's to manage that complex class with all the barriers that
120 are there and are more effective. I have always believed that class size shouldn't really be
121 the big reason why inclusive education should be deferred. I think it's a way for us to get the
122 to address big class size, and prevent barriers from arising. Without sounding too idealistic
123 about it, I do think that the skills of inclusion are the skills to help teachers with these
124 complex schools that they're dealing with.

125 M – If a child has a specific difficulty, do you advocate that they would then be in inclusive
126 education? Should they be taken out of the mainstream class for periods of the day, for
127 example, to work with a support teacher?

128 P2 – I'm not against it. I've seen in the Finnish system, for instance, it works very well.
129 There's constant in and out, with children needing support getting it and going back. I've

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:14 AM

Comment [9]: Capacity of teachers

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:16 AM

Comment [10]: Capacity of teachers

130 read widely about it. I don't believe in a permanent special class or permanent withdrawal
131 and I think international best practice shows it shouldn't be more than 25% of the week they
132 are withdrawn, so that they never lose their identity as a member of that class and their
133 sense of belonging to the class. My big motto is that you shouldn't think that you should
134 segregate children to support them. I think there are several ways, flexible ways, and I also
135 think that very often – at the moment, you know, remedial teachers are in short supply, and
136 a school like that they are far and few between. So the model that we proposed is rather
137 that the few people that we have that are knowledgeable in the remedial – if you want to
138 call it that, or learning support skills – that they actually act as advisors and mentors to
139 ordinary teachers and to SBSTs. It would be the best use of their expertise.

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:18 AM

Comment [11]: Implementation of WP

140 M – Is that full service schools?

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:19 AM

Comment [12]: Role and function of SBST

141 P2 – No, not necessarily. We have made proposals and provinces have started introducing
142 these itinerant learning support teachers. So they have a group of schools, a cluster of
143 schools, falling under them. They visit the schools and advise the teachers on how to assess
144 and adapt. So even if they are not fulltime at the school, they are there on call and they can
145 deal with problems. Slowly but surely, they mobilise and capacitate the teachers to take
146 ownership for that support. Otherwise, that's what we're finding in some of the Model C
147 schools where they do appoint these outside people on a permanent basis, you have a
148 reluctance on the part of the teachers themselves to take ownership of the support and to
149 go the extra mile with planning and so on. Worst case scenario is they say it will take away
150 the time that other children need and that it's infringing the rights of other children. I think
151 this is the worst possible thing you could ever say.

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:23 AM

Comment [13]: Building capacity in districts

152 M – In terms of the full service schools?

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:23 AM

Comment [14]: Capacity of teachers

153 P2 – I have a lot of issues with the full service schools. I am extremely nervous about the
154 notion of a full service school. The way that the White Paper and all our guidelines and all
155 our documents positioned the full service school is that they are flagships and models of
156 best practice and that they should never become a place to which children are sent as a sort
157 of school for moderately... children with moderate needs. That's my biggest fear. And that's
158 the misinterpretation of the notion that we're seeing everywhere, because it's very
159 problematic. We can't wait for enough schools to become full service schools before we can
160 start with inclusion. And you do find malevolent people who say that we haven't got a full
161 service school so we can't admit you, or you are a child who should be going to a full service
162 school – the people who are antagonistic towards inclusion. So people tend to fall back on

163 preconceived ideas. For me, the full service school would make sense in a case where you
164 have to have ramps and a child really needs the ramps. But for children with learning
165 difficulties and other issues where the curriculum differentiation is the key support
166 mechanism, I really don't think the child should be going to a full service school. And
167 therefore we would also like to provide an idea of a full service school also acting as a
168 resource centre in the cluster where it is so that it would just be a recipient of your, or a
169 focus of your, training of the first core groups who would then start mentoring other groups
170 of teachers in the surrounding schools. And it's happened very successfully in countries like
171 Brazil and India. So very fast, you can have a whole network of inclusive schools and
172 examples of best practice. That's also the Unesco approach, to create as many as possible
173 examples of best practice. But right at the start, this whole conceptual lack of clarity of what
174 inclusion is – many people attach a kind of a special needs tag to the full service schools and
175 then the professionals and managers would say we've got that school, let the disabled child
176 go there.

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:26 AM

Comment [15]: Institutionalisation of WP

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:27 AM

Comment [16]: Capacity of teachers

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:29 AM

Comment [17]: Institutionalisation of WP

177 M – So how would you define mainstream then?

178 P2 – Well, you know, we've had that long debate of mainstreaming versus inclusion. For me,
179 mainstreaming would be close to integration which I think has a negative connotation
180 because it expects the child to change. There's also this whole latent thing of if he's a low
181 needs child, then he's allowed to be in the mainstream. If ability becomes moderate, then
182 he can't. Then that would be counter-productive for our inclusion. For me, even a severe
183 child should have the right to be in the mainstream. I don't believe at all in this low,
184 moderate and high kind of placement model.

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:29 AM

Comment [18]: Definition – mainstream vs inclusion

185 M – So you'd like to see...

186 P2 – Full inclusion. It's our obligation in terms of the Convention on the Rights of Persons
187 with Disabilities. How fast we'll get there, and how and when is the issue, but that we should
188 go there we can't deny. We have an obligation. The rural areas, deep rural areas, the choice
189 for a child is not whether he goes to a full service or special school, it's whether he goes to
190 school or not. And I find the only way in which we'll change societal attitudes towards
191 difference would be to get more children into mainstream schools.

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:31 AM

Comment [19]: Institutionalisation of WP

192 M – Now to the role of the educational psychologist. What is your view on the role of
193 educational psychologists in inclusive education?

194 P2 – Look, in 1996, I heard a paper by Lena Sale who was then the head of inclusive
195 education at Unesco. She organised the Salamanco conference. And that sentence has stuck
196 with me, that one shouldn't over-emphasise the special skills that you need to work with a
197 child with a disability or a learning difficulty because those are skills that can actually be
198 transferred. Parents and community workers, if they learn how to do it, teachers can learn
199 to do it. And I feel that the professionals – highly skilled professionals, of which educational
200 psychologists are probably the most important or one of the most important groups, they
201 need to be managers and coordinators of support in an inclusive system, because in
202 developing countries, of their short supply. And now I think that the problem is and that is
203 where the conflict arises, is that many people who go into the profession are people who
204 would like to work individually with children. It's in their nature. At the times when I've
205 lectured, and asking the students, I find that many of them haven't even taught, that they go
206 straight into educational psychology as a professional area. So I know that it's hard to find
207 people in the profession to fulfil this role. They've not necessarily been trained for it, to fulfil
208 such a management and monitoring role or mentoring role. But I do think that even if you
209 want to work on individual learners, you most effectively work if you see your role as
210 debriefing teachers. I read a wonderful book of Gerda Hanko

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:33 AM

Comment [20]: Role of EP

211 M – You told me about it.

212 P2 – I don't know why I always fall back on that. I don't want it to sound like it's the only
213 book. But it's so important, the skills transfer component, because the child is with the
214 teacher much more than she is with the professional. The professional is not going to come
215 back to where the child is learning and advising how things can change within that context.
216 Not much can change for that child. You have to change the context. I do think that you
217 need to – all this training – it's like a doctor being able to diagnose a condition. Those are the
218 tools of your trade but it shouldn't stop there. It's how you apply to change the context of
219 your child that I think is absolutely right. An educational psychologist at the lowest levels
220 would fulfil the role in that way, and then from there, have her career path where through
221 her experience and knowledge of classrooms and contexts would go to a point where they
222 could mentor and monitor bigger teams and groups of people. They are the kind of people
223 who should be advising these itinerant learning support teachers on a constant basis, giving
224 them more skills

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:33 AM

Comment [21]: Role of EP

225 M – Structurally, could you see them being attached to a district office?

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:35 AM

Comment [22]: Role of EP

226 P2 – Yes, but I do acknowledge that some schools will have to have full psychologists to deal
227 with complex issues. If it's a very big school or say a school for the blind with more than 300
228 children, I can't say that it wouldn't be good for that school to have some psychologist. And I
229 feel that some special schools don't have to have one full time. It would be best if the person
230 could be appointed at the district. I don't out-rule that that person can actually spend 4 days
231 of the week at the school, but what I do find a big problem in our system is that people are
232 under-utilised at the schools. So they would sit at a school and they would be doing
233 admissions and all kinds of unnecessary tests and have their private practices in the
234 afternoons. I think they should be at the district where they belong to the district. You know,
235 when I was with a district, I found it lamentable that we had 12 schools within the district
236 where I worked and some of them had more than one psychologist appointed on their staff.
237 And then we would have within the same district schools where half the children came from
238 broken homes, there were child headed households, there were parents who were
239 prostitutes, children who were being abused, and there was just no service for them.
240 Because we were just tying them up and attaching them to children with disabilities. I think
241 their expertise can be much more effectively utilised in the district if they played this
242 broader role. So for me it would be that if there are individual cases, they can advise the
243 teacher but their main role would be to train and mentor the teachers. And my colleagues
244 who are educational psychologists in the district felt even more fulfilled in their work when
245 we introduced this model. They also weren't happy to run with their case to test children
246 from morning to..., they couldn't reach all the children, you have a pile up of files, and in the
247 end, it's just not beneficial for anyone.

248 M – So do you see a role for them on the SBST?

249 P2 – Well, I would say in a special school where you have big admission pressures and so on,
250 and constant assessment, evaluation of children, interventions, probably there, but I don't
251 see that it's necessary in an ordinary school. That's not how we've conceptualised the SBST.

252 M – What would you say now, given the current situation, what needs to be done to
253 improve the effectiveness of educational psychological services to support inclusion?

254 P2 – You know, I think the educational psychological services at universities where they are
255 situated, to start with is a bit problematical for me, because I... My perception is that some
256 universities, um, work parallel and separately from the learning support training. I think
257 there should be closer collaboration between them and the curriculum training, you know,
258 and I think that more, you know, you should have more ordinary teachers trained also to

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:36 AM
Comment [23]: Placement of EPs

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:36 AM
Comment [24]: Placement of EPs

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:38 AM
Comment [25]: Placement of EPs

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:38 AM
Comment [26]: Placement of EPs

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:38 AM
Comment [27]: Role of EP

259 understand support and how to address barriers to learning. Ja, ja. Look, I am not clear now
260 what I'm saying. What I'm actually saying is that I found that some universities, the
261 messages came to us that the educational psychology people said that the White Paper 6
262 has nothing to do with them, it doesn't affect their work and they are under no obligation to
263 train teachers to implement White Paper 6, which is extremely dangerous position to take.
264 And there needs to be a complete, um, there needs to be a revision of how education
265 psychologists see their work, and it must start at universities and how they are trained. And
266 it's not just to please the White Paper 6. I don't think it's internationally acceptable best
267 practice to work in such a narrow interventionist model, you know, which is more medical in
268 its approach. And how do you get an educational psychologist to understand curriculum
269 support I think is the second picture. How do they see their role as a supporter of curriculum
270 support? How do they engage with teachers through observation and mentoring to advise
271 teachers how to teach differently, what to do differently in their ordinary classrooms? So
272 their skills of observation and problem-solving, some of the new kind of things, skills that I
273 think they need, and interviewing of people, interviewing of parents, facilitation of
274 relationships, you know, that have gone wrong. Acting as advocates between parents and
275 schools and teachers and... And they would have to have skills to train and to mentor
276 teachers. Those aren't skills that they necessarily just get automatically. It must be part of
277 the training. So if you don't start off by the point of what should the vision work be, you
278 can't get the training right, you know. You can't send people out with a toolkit of tests and
279 think that they don't know what to do. I don't want to misconstrue what the training
280 contains. I think that most of the faculties have gone a long way with changing their
281 approach. We know which are the faculties that are still more conservative and traditionalist.

282 M – Can you describe a case where you've felt there was a need for some form of
283 educational psychological support? Or are you willing to talk about your experience even?
284 And what was the process that was followed, the challenges and the outcome?

285 P2 – I can briefly tell you of a bad case that I've referred to often. I'll tell you a good case, is
286 that alright?

287 M – Yes.

288 P2 – I once saw a report of a little girl, she was referred to... It was a black girl who was
289 attending Laerskool X. She was sent to town. Her mother was a domestic worker. She was
290 assessed by an educational psychologist here in the city. And I saw the report of the
291 psychologist. She put all the test results on there, saying what scores the child had achieved,

292 this test, that test, and the recommendation was that the child should be referred for
293 further speech therapy assessments and occupational therapy assessment, for which the
294 mother still also had to pay privately. And not once in the whole report was there mention
295 made of the context. The assessment was done completely out of context. It was clear that
296 this was a Zulu-speaking girl in an Afrikaans school with language barriers, you know. And I
297 felt that was the worst practice that one could ever imagine. It was like robbing people of
298 money because they put all their reliance on that person and what did they get out of it?
299 Nothing. You've got to start addressing where the child is learning and what has to happen
300 there. Where I do, however, find that, you know, you, you have some children – we have
301 lots of children, we have children in the townships who had been raped and we were called
302 at the district, you know. And we relied very heavily on psychologists to go and visit the
303 school and intervene immediately with some intervention. Although from what I've heard,
304 you actually need to be a clinical psychologist to do that kind of work. I don't know if I'm
305 wrong.

306 M – The scope has changed.

307 P2 – But I mean you do need these kind of urgent interventions. It's the whole thing of, I
308 think, the author pedagogy, the whole part which has to be revisited and restructured to be
309 closer to the skills and knowledge for curriculum differentiation, curriculum support. So this
310 is for me the two pegs, the psycho-social support aspect of it which I also don't think that
311 teachers and school-based support teams should be mentored and monitored, you know,
312 because very often, like in that one case in the Hanco book of a child who was withdrawn
313 and showing problem behaviour and going on and on, and the psychologist was taking
314 debriefing with the teacher and in the end they found the father had been in jail. They
315 would never have discovered this if the teacher didn't get close enough to the child. And she
316 did it through rigorous mentoring by the psychologist. We have too few such people that
317 they don't transfer those skills to teachers. You've got to work with the people closest to the
318 children, changing their approaches, working with them, debriefing them. So for me, in a
319 nutshell, I think teachers need to have psychologists on tap, you know, people who know
320 more and to whom they can go to help them to include a child. But the worst case is if a
321 psychologist is used to assess a child for the purpose of segregating the child.

322 M – Have you picked up cases like this?

323 P2 – It's happening all the time. And psychologists should be believing in inclusion, and
324 wanting to make it work and playing a facilitating role. Like I personally had such a lot of

325 support, you know, from the educational psychologists who supported me, went with me to
326 parent-teacher meetings, facilitated, empowered me, you know, supported me as a parent,
327 to keep my child in the school.

328 M – What would you as a parent expect from...

329 P2 – I would expect a person having the knowledge to be able to negotiate with the school,
330 telling the school how to include the child. The worst that I can do is if the psychologist – and
331 there are many of them working in the districts – act as an antagonist towards the parents,
332 and say that the child must be protected against the parent because the parent's unrealistic
333 about the child's ability. And that you find a lot as well, you know, ja. But those have been
334 our worst case scenarios.

335 M – You were saying as we arrived that you have had some negative experiences.

336 P2 – [REDACTED] ... it was very early days, 1993, the educational
337 psychologists in the district, they played the most important role to prevent it. They wrote
338 reports about why it shouldn't happen. They advised the districts against it, advised the
339 department against it. They said it's not viable, not in the best interests of the child,
340 unrealistic. Because they had a very conservative view about inclusion. They felt inclusion
341 can't work. And now I'm afraid there are still many of them in the system. At least I think all
342 the departments believe in inclusion and they are training the people to... Whenever I
343 lecture at university to the Masters, every time that I've lectured there, I've been attacked a
344 bit – is it workable, can it work? I never get them to be the first people to be supportive of it,
345 you know. So that keeps on as a niggling feeling that I'm having that they are not the
346 frontrunners. For me, the point is we have this very negative idea about teachers. We keep
347 on saying they're lazy, they're not committed, they don't want to support children who are
348 different and all of that, and if we train them all, then it will change. I believe radically
349 differently. I believe that if you put trust in teachers and you make an appeal to their best,
350 um, side of their professional character, that they are there actually to get all children to
351 learn. And you come and help them with skills. If they don't know how to deal with a reading
352 problem, giving them answers, you know, then you would empower them. If you keep on
353 sending the message that you are not specialised enough to deal with this, you will not
354 change, you know. I think the progress made in any country in inclusion was where the
355 whole support structure was changed in such a way that the messages that went to teachers
356 were that of empowering them, you know, and affirming their own ability to support
357 children. I always think of my mother who taught [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]

358 [REDACTED]
359 [REDACTED] her primary goal was to get every child to read, and help
360 every child who was struggling. She never knew about any other options, or that there was
361 going to be someone to relieve her of that duty. It was her duty, you know. And it wasn't
362 easy necessarily, but they just did it. In the '70s and '80s, it was this whole notion of
363 professionalism and specialisation and so entered into the debates that made teachers
364 mistrust their own ability, you know, to help children. [REDACTED]
365 [REDACTED]
366 [REDACTED]
367 [REDACTED] You can speak to any parent of a child with Down Syndrome. They are like
368 cheese and chalk, the two populations, those who have been in special schools and those
369 who have been in mainstream. It's just two complete different populations, you know. The
370 children who have been in the mainstream are so independent, so articulate, so pleasant to
371 be with, so socially adapted, their speech is better, they're academically better. There's just
372 been such overwhelming longitudinal studies on the benefits. And he wasn't in good
373 inclusive settings. You know, some years they just refused to teach him, and [the parents]
374 didn't get any phenomenal support from the school, but just him being there and
375 participating had a very good impact. I can imagine if your child has dyslexia or has some
376 other learning difficulties which you would like to have remediated, that you would perhaps
377 wonder is it the best, you know, if the child doesn't get that kind of attention that he or she
378 needs. But I think there are ways of getting that. What I do think what you expect from a
379 teacher is an attitude of support and acceptance. I think that's the worst for the children for
380 ADHD is that they are, because of their behaviour problems, they are very often not well
381 treated, you know. There's so much literature that says that the minute there's a special
382 class at the school, that's the attitude of the teachers, that these children must go there.
383 That's why I don't believe that there should be a special class at a school. But it's a growing
384 trend at the model C schools, but I think with the economic recession, it might change. I
385 would like to see that teacher acting as a mentor. That's how it works in Finland, and that's a
386 well resourced system. Those people are just around, you know. They even take the children
387 just for a few minutes in the corridor, they are not even removed from the class.
388 M – These are the itinerant teachers?
389 P2 – Well, in Finland, they have the luxury of having a person in each school.

390 M – What is your view on teaching assistants?

391 P2 – Yes, you have to manage that very carefully, because in many cases, because of the
392 same attitude, the teachers leave the teaching to the teaching assistant [laughs], whereas
393 here you have an untrained person teaching a child with a complex need, while the teacher
394 who is supposed to do it teaches the children without the need. That's not making sense.
395 But I, I honestly feel that apart from it being a developing world model, I feel it's the best
396 model. I think that countries of the north can actually learn – if we get it right, and we are
397 getting it right in many schools, there are some absolutely fantastic inclusive schools here in
398 Centurion where they are working with an itinerant learning support teacher, they are doing
399 so well that the teachers are taking ownership of the differentiation, they are doing it
400 themselves, and those kids are just flourishing. And it's just a much better model than you
401 have like in some European countries where the child has a person and an assistant and so
402 on. We've seen it over and over with Down Syndrome that if you send a personal assistant in,
403 the teacher also doesn't take responsibility. Ja. And I also think, I never think, I think that no
404 specialists should ever stand between a child and his primary learning context, you know. I
405 know some of the special schools like for children with physical disabilities, we worked with
406 them during the inclusive education field test, and I find it very sad if you speak to the
407 children, to see how they've internalised their disability, how it's become part of their
408 identity, whereas had they been in an ordinary school, they wouldn't have carried this label
409 so much. Although that's the opposite of what the special schools say – the reason why they
410 should be removed from the mainstream is because they get bad treatment, they are
411 marginalised. I believe that, you see with where I started, you have to change the ethos and
412 the attitudes of everyone in the school. You've got to work with it, you can't just say kids are
413 cruel, kids will be cruel, so that's why disabled people don't belong. How can you say that?
414 It's such an indictment on the school, you know. If you read the Index for Inclusion, you
415 know, the kind of language you speak, the kind of attitudes you have, the subtle ways in
416 which you exclude people, you've got to work with the school and with the whole
417 understanding of themselves. It doesn't just happen. It's not about training on remedial skills,
418 it's about working with people to change it and get a team change going. And it's not going...
419 if you put all the effort and resources that we're putting into segregation into that, into that
420 change in every school, then you'll see inclusion happening. We haven't even spent money
421 on inclusion in this country. A big allocation that we got in 2007 was never used for that
422 purpose. It was used for other deficits within departments, and it was used to build special
423 schools in most cases. Only a few provinces used it for the purpose that it was meant for. So

424 you can't say that we've actually put a lot of money and energy into making inclusion work.

425 Where it is now is just because of the force and the movement from the department.

426 M – Is there anything else you want to share?

427 P2 – I think I've said enough [laughs].

428 M – You were talking about documents earlier – is there anything that is not available

429 online?

430 P2 – I've got some old articles that I've collected over the years on the role of psychologists

431 that I will send you.

432 M – Thanks.

433 P2 – We haven't written... The SIAS will emerge now in the role functions of the professions.

434 That will be the next step. Okay?

435 M – Thank you very much.

436 P2 – It's a pleasure.

DISTRICT FOCUS GROUP

[Transcript commences 20 minutes into the session; initially, one of the participants did not want me to record the session. I began recording only once she consented.]

1 We were more in a management position, the four of us.

M So there were four of you at the two levels?

1 No, four of us DCES level. Two of us, and then another two, X and Y. Ja. And then on post level 3, the Senior Education Specialists, we had to be 11 but we were only 8. Ne?

2 Mm.

1 And between these 12 people, we had to deal with all the emotional, behavioural, scholastic, um, special concessions, career guidance, um, any kind of referral, any kind of support, abuse cases, we had to deal with that in total. Plus we were responsible to develop the school-based support teams in each school. It's very important that there must be a functional SBST in each school for them also to support us so that they don't refer each and every single case to us. They must try to solve the problem there or make use of their service providers in their area. If they can't get any help or support, then they come to us. Um, so as you can see, then we were...

M This is from 1996?

1 No, that started in ... Those days, we were, we were the psychological – we were first ESS, Education Support Systems, and then we were Psychological Services, and then we were... We were so many things.

M Did you start when the districts were set up?

1 Ja. This is my 28th year now.

M And 2, you?

2 I started in 2010. I have been with the district, but as a teacher. I was at a school. So I joined the district in 2010.

M Okay.

1 So then we were – at a certain stage, everybody did everything. Round about 2001, we were in the Education Support System Unit, the psychologists, the sport people, the HIV and AIDS, the youth and culture, the Tirisano, the... So everybody did everything in that unit. I think we were 5 people. So serving all those schools – nutrition – everything.

M How many schools were you supporting?

48 1 There are about 260 schools in the district. So we were just supported each other with the
49 sport, with the HIV and AIDS, with everything between the few of us. And then the
50 organogram in 2006 about, 5-6, they brought in the DCESSs. Am I right, A?

51
52 2 I wasn't here.

53
54 1 It was about then, ja. Ja, um, ja. And I must be honest with you, then again we were the
55 Psychological Services. You know, I don't know, because they change every second or third
56 year, and ja. But to tell you what's going on now, from April – no, from January.

57
58 2 Officially, April.

59
60 1 April. The Inclusion and Special Schools... We were – what was D's unit? We were e-
61 learning and curriculum support programmes. That was the subdirectorate – E-learning and
62 Curriculum Support Programmes. And she was the head as well. Then under her
63 subdirectorate, there were the inclusion and special schools, the ISS, there were ESS,
64 Education Support System, the multi-media and LTSM, and E-learning, that is the
65 computers. So Education Support System, Multi-media and Learning and Teaching Support
66 Material and E-learning. That was under the subdirectorate. Okay now, under ESS, but that's
67 now not really important, you've got the HIV and AIDS, the sport, the, um, youth and culture,
68 school safety, values. That's under Education Support System – youth and culture, values,
69 HIV and AIDS, ja, safety, all of that under ESS. They dealt with teenage pregnancy,
70 everything, okay. So this is not there anymore from this year.

71
72 M But you were under...

73
74 1 We were under Inclusion and Special Schools. Four middle management level people, and
75 8 ... So we spent most of the time in the office because we had to respond on all kinds of
76 reports and it is referrals from the office, etc, etc. So then they brought in the new
77 organogram. Now the new organogram, we are now under EOS – Education Operations and
78 Support. That's now our new subtitle, Education Operations and Support. Okay, this is on the
79 one hand, because on the other hand, you get your 5 circuits. Okay.

80
81 M So there's...

82
83 1 Ja, you get the EOS and you get the 5 circuits. The 5 circuits, the person that's taking the
84 lead there is a circuit manager. Circuit manager in each of those 5 circuits. And the circuit
85 manager has got a team of district officials supporting that circuit manager to support the
86 schools in that circuit. So they work as a team, the 5 teams. There's curriculum people in
87 here, there's a IDSO in here. And then they took these ISS people, the 8 people that we had,
88 they took and placed 2 here and 2 here and 2 here and 2 here. So the post level 3 people
89 were placed in this team because most of the people in this team, they are post level 3
90 people. Not the circuit managers, they are the same as D, post level 6.

91
92 2 So it means each circuit comprises of different units.

93
94 1 Of a district.
95

96 2 A district. So they form a team.
97
98 M And each circuit is responsible then for a smaller grouping. How many...
99
100 1 In each circuit, you get three clusters, and in each cluster, there's about 15 schools, so say
101 45 in total per circuit, plus-minus. Fifteen schools, there are 3 clusters in each circuit, and
102 each cluster has got, say, 15 schools. So 15 times 3.
103
104 M And then the staff in the clusters is...
105
106 1 It's curriculum people, IDSO, ja. The same that you get here, you've got to get them here.
107 But sometimes it's not easy because if you think of the foundation phase, we've got, say, one
108 person at the district that specialises in, say, maths. Now that person is placed here, what
109 about the foundation phase people here? Now what they've got to do is that the foundation
110 phase people must deal with any query regarding foundation phase work in each. Even if
111 your field is more whatever. What can I say? But they've got a foundation phase person. But
112 the 2 people that they placed here from the ISS, they tried to say one person must be an
113 inclusion specialist in each of these to deal mostly with inclusion work, with scholastic work.
114 And the second one, a psychologist or counsellor.
115
116 M Not necessarily an educational psychologist?
117
118 1 No, a psychologist or counsellor. So we get psychologists the same as us on post-level 3
119 as well. We just applied for a management post and we got it. Some people, they decided
120 they would...
121
122 M So you had the option to choose to stay in the district rather than move to a circuit?
123
124 1 No, the people on DCES level, all districts, were placed in this EOS unit. Post level 3
125 people were placed in circuits. And they tried...
126
127 2 This unit is called District Education Support. That is where we are. We support them.
128
129 1 And this is School Support.
130
131 M You said there are 3 clusters per circuit but there is an inclusion specialist and an
132 educational psychologist or a counsellor in a circuit. Do they work across the clusters?
133
134 1 They, ja, ja, ja.
135
136 M So they support 45 schools?
137
138 2 Mm.
139
140 1 Ja. We've got, um, um, cluster managers, that's the old IDSOs. Cluster leaders. So they
141 are ahead of a cluster now, but this team does work in all the clusters, so they've got to serve
142 45 schools. So again, it's quite difficult because now you've got one psychologist or
143 counsellor who has got to deal with 45 schools already.

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:22 AM

Comment [1]: Capacity

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:23 AM

Comment [2]: Capacity

144
145 2 Mm.
146
147 1 So you can think the amount of work, the amount of referrals in our schools in today's life,
148 um, you can't do it alone. So that's why we've got to link with people and say, 'I'm on my
149 knees, there's no money. Please, have you got students that's got to do their internship?' But
150 then it's got to go through Policy and Planning because they've got to tell us exactly what
151 times they're going into schools, is it going to disrupt the teaching and learning time, what are
152 they going to do with the learners? We've got to receive reports on a monthly basis. So it's
153 not...
154
155 2 It's managed arrangement.
156
157 1 We've got to manage them and see what are they doing, because after all, we will stay
158 responsible.
159
160 M These are interns who apply to be based in the district for their internships?
161
162 1 Some of them apply, but it's more... We've got this [company] now, that's getting students
163 from different places and then through [this company], they place them in our schools.
164
165 M Is that private?
166
167 1 Ja, it's an NGO. Here's her letter [shows me letter].
168
169 2 It's a community organisation.
170
171 1 Ja, ja. She is herself a psychologist, and she decided instead of so many companies
172 coming to us and saying they can help, or universities, or... Let's work through [this
173 company].
174
175 2 She's in a way giving the students an opportunity to do their practicals but she is managing
176 the whole thing. She's providing them with material. She's been placing them in different
177 schools.
178
179 1 Because as you can see, we are now under EOS. I tell you, what this woman and her team
180 are doing for us, it's wonderful. You know, what she's also doing is, the Masters students, the
181 schools are paying R5,000. Those that can – the student is getting R5,000 per month if the
182 school can pay that. So I really think she's doing wonderful work, um, it's a person that you
183 perhaps can talk to. I think she's a wonderful person as well, and you can talk to her and tell
184 her these are the people you know, how can she assist by placement. We opened our doors
185 for all the students, um, and I must be honest with you, they're doing wonderful work. Two
186 schools asked this morning to have a permanent counsellor on their grounds, they are willing
187 to pay R5,000 per month for this student. Now, for a student to get R5,000 is not bad.
188
189 M Ja.
190

191 1 And the experience, and she's buying the material. That's the other thing that I want to tell
192 you. We've got psychologists and we've got the... Okay, let me first tell you. This Education
193 Operations and Support, we are district-based. So these teams, they must go into schools
194 and support the school support in the circuit. As soon as they get to a point that they don't
195 know what to do, or they need more intervention, meaning there's a big drug problem or
196 something, can't you sit and write some programme or what and then we go as a team and
197 we go and address it. Not that these psychologists can't deal with the problem because we're
198 all the same there, but they received 200 referrals from a specific school. Like yesterday, 2
199 secondary schools, they mentioned the Grade 8s and 9s, they can't read. So we can't leave
200 that to that one person. We must sit around and say but how are we going to address it? So
201 we step in when the circuits request for more intervention.

202
203 M So the schools in the first instance contact the cluster or the circuit?

204
205 1 The circuit.

206
207 2 The circuit.

208
209 1 The circuit. I just wanted to show you that they divided for meetings and stuff. It's more the
210 circuits, the 5 circuits. They make contact directly, especially the school-based support team.
211 They do that with that support needs assessment form, as you know, SNAF.

212
213 M What is your assessment of the SBSTs?

214
215 2 I would say they do have but most are not functional. It is expected and from the reports
216 that we are having, they do have SBSTs. But as to the functionality, then it's another thing.

217
218 1 They see that as a extra burden on their shoulders. They are busy already, and now we've
219 got to look, we're not counsellors, we're not psychologists, so why are you placing this on our
220 shoulders?

221
222 2 And usually, even with the ones that we say SBST is functional, you will find that only one
223 person is very active because of the passion she has.

224
225 1 The former Model C schools often have a private psychologist working there, on their staff,
226 and it's not allowed, it's not right. Most schools can't.

227
228 M Do all schools have an HOD for Guidance or someone who is allocated this responsibility?

229
230 2 There is, there is an HOD for Life Orientation in all the schools.

231
232 1 No, but it's not to say that he must run it or she must run it. No, it must be people that's
233 really willing to go the extra mile to get more knowledge, to share the knowledge with the
234 staff and who is willing to look after the wellbeing of the child. And you can't just say the HOD
235 Life Orientation must do that. We want the support of the principal. The principal must be part
236 of that panel. But it's not always like that. Some schools decide to make a SBST for their
237 foundation phase, SBST intermediate, a SBST... They've got three different ones. Some feel
238 every Monday morning, when the whole staff are together, we discuss crisis cases in the

239 school, so that's their SBST. So as long as there's a functional way of dealing with the
240 learners, but not only a private psychologist, because we want the school, the educators'
241 input in these cases. It's easy to say there's 15 learners that I would like you to see. We
242 haven't got a problem that the school has that, but the private psychologist mustn't be the
243 SBST. So to come back, the SBST refer the cases through the support needs assessment
244 form, the SNA form, to the circuits. Sometimes they do it via the circuit manager, or they give
245 it to the psychologist or the inclusion specialist directly.

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:26 AM

Comment [3]: Collaboration

246
247 M So the psychologists and counsellors in the circuits are active in the schools.

248
249 1 Yes, they are in the schools a lot. But we also go out to the schools.

250
251 2 It was more of giving extra hands, like today, and meeting with the service provider
252 because of a learner we have identified as needing support from us. The circuit staff are not
253 able to give the support sometimes so that is why we roped in a service provider.

254
255 1 What we thought of yesterday and we gave to the director and circuit managers is to say
256 that, because there is lots of confusion, the schools know the four of us well, and sometimes,
257 they prefer working with one of us instead of the people that's allocated to that circuit, but we
258 are not circuit-linked, even on our appointment letters. So they would like us to service the
259 whole district, you understand? The suggestion we came up with yesterday, but it's not to
260 say it's going to work all across, and we must still decide on that, that all referrals that come
261 from national or provincial level, that normally, they send it to the director, director to D, must
262 come to us. Because then it's definitely, there is perhaps a legal case, um, already or the
263 parent reported the school to the MEC or the HOD or whatever. So those cases, plus
264 expelled cases, we're going to deal with those cases immediately. Those are really things
265 that you need to give feedback within 7 days, there must be reports written, and whatever.
266 They can call you in. Sometimes you've got to be registered to deal with some of those
267 cases. That was our suggestion yesterday, that national, provincial and expelled cases come
268 to EOS immediately. It can be any of these circuits, and between the four of us, we will see
269 what is the best, how are we going to deal with that. That's what we said yesterday. We don't
270 even have a framework for our work and we don't have support from head office. We don't
271 have job descriptions. We haven't had job descriptions from January. No, it's from January.
272 But our director decided we are going to build it up until April and in April, the district will
273 function according to the new organogram. We started with the process in January this year
274 already, so we are awaiting a job description from them. But we haven't had job descriptions
275 this year. You see now, there's certain things that, um, both groups must deal with, like full-
276 service schools.

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:27 AM

Comment [4]: Capacity of district

277
278 M How many full-service schools are there in this district?

279
280 1 Five. Because head office still asks us here, on this side, to provide them with reports on
281 full-service schools, on learning support educators – that's also inclusion coaches – we've
282 got 20 educators like that in our district, we will tell you about them, special school reports
283 about our special schools, SBST information, special concessions, career guidance. So they
284 still expect from us to give them reports but these people immediately give feedback to their
285 circuit managers. On the organogram, there's this dotted line to us, and that's what causes

286 the problem at this stage, because they feel the people working here, they've got nothing to
287 do with us. This is their direct line.

288
289 M So those in the circuit, they liaise or collaborate with external service providers...

290
291 2 They can do that.

292
293 1 That's fine, they can do it, because they've got to serve the schools in that circuit, but
294 concerning these things where head office require reports from us, we've got to work as a
295 team together. They are doing the assessments with the learning support educators in the
296 full-service schools. They are getting the learning support educators' reports on a monthly
297 basis, they are working directly with the SBSTs directly on a daily basis. So if they don't
298 share this info with us on the dotted line, how can we take this to head office? Do you
299 understand? So without clear direction by head office, this thing will not be sorted out, and
300 now we are behind with reports so we look terrible but we don't get support from this side,
301 because they said sorry, I've got a line manager now here, and that's my circuit manager. In
302 the past, we worked together in ISS and we had to report and we went out to schools
303 together, and now you're mos a unit on your own. You understand? So it's causing lots of
304 tension at this stage. It's not only just in our district. In some districts where this thing started,
305 especially the psychologists, we are lost. We had a meeting one afternoon where the DCEs
306 from the XXX districts came together, and you ask A, everybody said we don't know and it's
307 getting worse by the day. We need direction. That's why the DBST at this stage is also not
308 really – we feel we are the DBST because there must be a IDSO, there must be... If you look
309 in this new organogram, there must be a rep from each circuit in a certain way at the DBST. I
310 think so. I don't know.

311
312 M How was the DBST constituted before the restructuring?

313
314 1 My dear, it was people from...

315
316 2 The IDSOs.

317
318 1 The IDSOs.

319
320 2 CESs.

321
322 1 CESs, curriculum people.

323
324 2 Representatives from the different sections in the district.

325
326 M From schools?

327
328 1 Learning support educator – one learning support educator and then... The full-service
329 school principals. But we never had a meeting like that. What they want from the DBST is
330 that [sighs] if schools experience a problem, but not only concerning learners, it can be
331 something else, guess what, it must come to the DBST, the district-based support team. And
332 that team must try to solve the problem or give it to the relevant unit to look into that, you
333 understand? But at this stage, the only things that we discussed was, um, referrals regarding

334 learners. And we can't always put a report on the table for everybody to read. That is
335 confidential. So that's why in a certain way we feel like we are the DBST, because who else -
336 if they've got a problem with salaries, they go to that section, the principals. If they've got a
337 problem with staff that's not getting along, they go to their IDSO to deal with that. So I don't
338 know in the new organogram – and head office is still functioning the same way they
339 functioned before, am I right?

340
341 2 Yes, mm.

342
343 1 But we had to change. So now they've still got their units and all the units expect things
344 from us, but they don't realise that we are not together any more.

345
346 M So are you saying that at this stage, you don't really have a DBST constituted as it should
347 be?

348
349 1 Ja. And you see, I don't want to come over too negative, and I know I am doing that, but it
350 is difficult. And then the other thing, we psychologists here, at the beginning of the year, we
351 said, okay, the budget, we decided on certain material that we want to buy. **How can I be a**
352 **psychologist without assessment material, without a therapy room, without a car? There is no**
353 **resources,** my dear.

354
355 M What are the challenges for educational psychologists within the system that we have? It
356 sounds that you are expressing these.

357
358 1 Ja, how can we work without, say, social workers with us? Sometimes OTs, sometimes
359 speech therapists. I am not saying they must employ 20 speech therapists in this. But as I
360 said to you, in the early '90s, the Aid Centre, it worked so good. You were like a medical
361 team.

362
363 M That was government?

364
365 1 Government, ja. And you had your panel discussions every Friday or Monday or whatever
366 you decided on. But you had your OT there, you had your speech therapist there, you had
367 your different... your educational psychologist, you had a remedial person there. So when
368 you had the panel discussions, you could really solve the problem there and say, 'Okay, let
369 us go that route,' or what. I know that, but that's the only way. You see they're moving away
370 from the medical model. Sorry, A...

371
372 2 No. Another thing maybe that is of concern is like White Paper 6, if you can check how long
373 it took for it to be unfolded, and being understood. Yes, we are somewhere with it, but in the
374 process, check as to how many transitions in the education system took place within the
375 timeframe of the rolling out of White Paper 6, and the impacts, the challenges that were
376 encountered in the interim. Now you are in a new dispensation, you are realigning, it is
377 another change. So compare all these changes and maybe they will give you a picture as to
378 where you are heading to. We are not sure where we are getting to, but we have been
379 transforming and transforming and transforming.

380

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:29 AM
Comment [5]: Capacity of district

381 M As an educational psychologist within the school system, what would you like to see to
382 improve the effectiveness of your services as educational psychologists?

383
384 1 The first thing is to be recognised as a psychologist, not only just on paper. How can you
385 employ a motor mechanic and not give him any tools? Um [sigh], so it's wonderful now that
386 we've got on paper [me] DCES psychologist EOS unit.

387
388 2 And the manner we are working, we are expected to go to schools, and when I get to a
389 school, when I have a client, I need a private space. So usually, the schools don't have this.
390 So that comes within the tools she's talking about.

391
392 1 I think resources in general, my dear.

393
394 2 And, and timeframes. We engage, we interact with a client, then to make follow ups, it's
395 another thing because of the number of schools. You only make one follow up or two follow
396 ups to see whether the client.

397
398 1 We are in a situation now with a specific service provider, and the lady said okay, she has
399 as OT and a speech therapist. But they haven't got a education psychologist. One of our
400 colleagues said, okay, but we've got education psychologists. So she said, okay, so you can
401 do this test. We said no, I will have to look at the child and say I think the way you sit, I think
402 you can perhaps be a child having this kind of ... And then we sat... I felt terrible to say to
403 this outside service provider, sorry, we haven't got material. I don't know what I can really do
404 for you.

405
406 M Do you ever do an assessment of a child?

407
408 2 Screening, screening, just to screen academic stuff. And we interview.

409
410 M Where do you do this?

411
412 2 In the office.

413
414 M What kind of cases would be referred to you?

415
416 2 Learning problems.

417
418 1 Learning and emotional. We know the uncompleted sentences. You know, those things
419 that I got from Tukkies in 1988, things like that. But still, if you find out that this child needs
420 intense help, then you've started the process already. That child's got perhaps used to you in
421 one session, and thinks, but I would like to stay with this person, I've got confidence in this
422 person already. And then you must but I think I will see you next month. There is no use, and
423 it's not that we don't want to. And then also in the education system, um – okay, inclusive
424 education and I think we are one of the districts that's really the best – not one, we are the
425 best district – in inclusive education. There is no doubt about that. Um, I... I can be corrected
426 but I think we've got in the 60s and 70s Down Syndrome learners in mainstream schools.
427 Really, we are far ahead.

428

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:31 AM

Comment [6]: Improve services of EP

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:32 AM

Comment [7]: Capacity of district

429 M To what do you attribute this?

430

431 1 Just to really not only talk about inclusive education, but to...

432

433 2 To implement.

434

435 1 To implement it. And we go the extra mile with the Down Syndrome Society, with parents
436 that help, our learning support educators that will go into a classroom where we place a child
437 like that for the first month to support that educator. And not only that, we've got a blind
438 learner in one of our... that we've placed now a while ago. And I really think that's one thing
439 that they can't point fingers to us, to say you are not going that route. But still, there's certain
440 learners that you can't place in mainstream, that needs other intervention and help, and
441 there's no resources. You know, sometimes you sit with parents here, kids that are, say,
442 turning 16, then schools refer too late, or whatever, or the child will not be able to speak
443 Afrikaans or English. So we can't put him in a pre-vocational school like Kwaggasrand or,
444 um, Suiderberg, or Magalies, so where now? They sit here with the education department
445 and not with a district office, and then [clicks fingers] newspapers. But what can we do?
446 Clinic schools? They've closed all the clinic schools. So our pre-vocational schools are filled
447 with learners who have behavioural problems. What can we do? How can [interrupted by
448 phone call].

449

450 M So A, when would you refer learners to special needs schools rather than mainstream
451 schools?

452

453 2 For special schools, we check the medical reports of the learner, then we also check the
454 severity of the barrier. We only put severe cases to special schools. We have to look into the
455 documents. We don't just say because the school says the learner must go to a special
456 school, and then we refer. We do a thorough check as to is this child really to an extent that
457 we have to see the child before we can refer to a special school. Referrals must via the
458 district, via us.

459

460 M How do you define inclusion? Or inclusive education?

461

462 2 Maybe I always define it looking into the different types of schools and the different
463 services that are provided in those different types of schools. And then you check now that
464 the child who has to be placed in a school. So to me, inclusive is... You don't have to
465 discriminate. The child, for as long as the child has the potential, the child can cope in a
466 mainstream school, so that school it's an inclusive school. As long as there can be support
467 for that child. As long as the teachers are able to adapt the curriculum and those are some of
468 the things that need to be provided for the school, like we have the support education
469 operations support. So as long as the school can access support – it doesn't matter from
470 whom, as long as the school can access support for this child, then it's an inclusive school.

471

472 1 I feel exactly the same, that each and every child has got the right to be included, where
473 any other child, um... [pause] is placed at the end of the day. But it is important and that's
474 why I think from an education psychology point of view, you've got to look into that child
475 holistically. It's easy to say, 'Ah, let's place so many Down Syndromes here,' but for this
476 child, at the end of the day, it's about the child. This child must benefit where you place him

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:33 AM

Comment [8]: Definition of inclusion

477 because one aspect of that child perhaps will not fit into that specific environment and you
478 will harm that child. So it's easy to organise a placement and to turn to the principal and say
479 take this child, but at the end of the day, you turn your back, and there's that little individual
480 alone there. The same with full-service schools, I think it's a wonderful idea, but these
481 schools, they need support. If you want to place any kind of learner with any kind of barrier in
482 that full-service school, then you must develop and support the educators, or get at least
483 professional people, meaning a psychologist, a remedial person, on the school grounds, to
484 support, because you can't expect from a educator who has got 70 kids already in her class.
485 She is standing in the corner because there's no space for her to move, to sit with a autistic
486 child, a Down Syndrome child, whatever child in that classroom, you can't expect that from
487 her.

488
489 2 This is where we appreciate what [XXX company] is doing, because they really help a lot.
490

491 M The full-service schools, do they act as resource centres to other schools?
492

493 1 No we have resource centres which are separate. In our district, we've got two now. They
494 are special schools. It is expected from them to provide support and training to schools who
495 is in need of support. Both of them have got a psychologist, an occupational therapist,
496 speech therapist, but also not all of them appointed by the Department, it is SGB positions.
497 So the Department make the school a resource centre but they're not putting the staff there.
498 Same with FSS – all these schools were promised that they were going to get a psychologist
499 and a remedial and a learning support educator.
500

501 M What makes a school full-service?
502

503 1 It's a normal school. We just looked into the – firstly, the SMT, will they buy into this, will
504 they be positive? The staff, you look into the school grounds if they have got to bring in more
505 classrooms. Am I right there, A?
506

507 2 Mm.
508

509 1 We look into all those things. The kind of problems in that area, because kids, they set a 40
510 kilometre radius, they've got to service or to support. Um, but what we did now is we gave
511 ELSEN numbers to learners in that school that's already learners who is experiencing
512 barriers to learning, and not taking learners from outside, because the kids that's there
513 already belong in a full-service school, like in most primary school. We said today to the
514 school that we visited again, that please, don't think it's an extra burden on your shoulders.
515 You've been adapting the curriculum for years, you had different levels of learners in your
516 class, it's just there's now a name, and you're in a privileged position that we will need to
517 support you more, but we can't sit there the whole day. So automatically, those educators
518 must do all the work. There's no financial support from the Department, no placement of
519 specialists there, so you can see they start to roll the ball and then at a certain stage, we
520 must mar push the ball if we want to continue. And things like this must be discussed at the
521 DBST, but who is the DBST at this stage? What are we going to discuss there? Will the
522 schools not go directly to the circuit manager to solve the problem? In the previous
523 organogram, we were different subdirectorates, so it was good if we got together with a
524 specific problem and we've got a rep from all over and we tell this rep, 'Please go back to

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:34 AM

Comment [9]: Definition of inclusion

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:35 AM

Comment [10]: Capacity of district

525 your subdirectorate, and tell your subdirectorate to solve it.' Now, we've got a team who has
526 got almost all the sections in there already.

527
528 M So it is sliced a different way now? The same people but instead of having the specialists
529 managed across the district, they are in circuits?

530
531 1 If the psychologist in a circuit is sick or something then they've got to call us and see what
532 we can do. And not all these posts are filled. In two circuits, we've only got inclusion
533 specialists, there's no psychologist there, so that person must in a certain way deal alone
534 with all the schools there. And we must see how we can support.

535
536 M Do you see yourselves as managers of cases, as psychologists?

537
538 1 Let me tell you what the Department did at a certain stage to get psychologists to apply for
539 positions in the education department, they said that this middle management level must only
540 be given to registered psychologists. So then you are on a higher salary scale and at least
541 you will apply because of the salary maybe. And they didn't give DCES positions to anybody
542 else like inclusion specialist or what, only to – the advertisement was that you must be
543 registered at Health Profession Council, seven year teaching experience, blah, blah, blah.
544 And that's how they got psychologists not only going into private practice the whole time, but
545 at least because the Department is in need of psychologists. And now with the OSD that's
546 coming in, the psychologists here and the psychologists there, salary-wise, you will perhaps
547 be on the same level because you get people here who has got longer experience than, say,
548 A, so some of them, their salary can even be higher than some of us that's on this level. Do
549 you understand? And that's why our job description in a certain way, theirs must also be
550 according to Health Professions Council. They've got to serve their circuits.

551
552 M I was asking about the management of cases, because it sounds as though as
553 psychologists in the district, you are dealing with reports and referrals from schools and you
554 are taking these cases and getting service providers and...

555
556
557 1 It all depends what kind of problem, ne?

558
559 2 I wanted to say it looks like little, but when you look at the activities that we engage on, on
560 a daily basis, yes, one-on-one becomes limited, but the other activities take up all the time
561 that we should be using on one-on-one. And again, the number of referrals that we refer
562 because of our limited time and the number of activities that we engage on, if we take the
563 number of referrals we will refer to external service provider, if we were to deal with them on
564 one-one-one sessions, then you would realise that there are a number of learners that are
565 referred for support. It's not that... That is why I say it appears limited if you count the
566 number of learners that I personally engaged with, and started with the initial intake
567 interview, it appears to be limited.

568
569 M Do you do therapy, counselling with learners?

570
571 2 Ja, we do with emotional problems. We do counselling, but it boils down to the same. It
572 appears to be limited but like I'm saying, we get background information then we check what

573 can we do and then we refer, we place, we place, we place. One-on-one, we do it. Like last
574 week, we had sessions with parents individually, so now we must make a follow up, but we
575 don't want to lose touch with those learners, but it's not possible with us. So we are already
576 planning to engage the external service provider. But at the same time, even if we engage
577 the service provider, we make a follow up, we check, we monitor the process. The child, how
578 is he, are you seeing progress in the classroom? Before we can close the case, we must be
579 sure as to how is the child at that point in time.

580
581 M What is the relationship between you in the district and the provincial department?

582
583 2 I know they are referring cases to us. I don't know if there is a service that parents can get
584 there. Parents report there but they are being cascaded to us. It's not the correct procedure
585 for them to go there, but they do go there.

586
587 1 If they feel they didn't get any help, they will go there and then to us.

588
589 2 Some do not know the procedure and they go directly there.

590
591 M Do you think it will be useful to have a psychologist in each school?

592
593 1 Oh yes.

594
595 2 It will help a lot.

596
597 1 No doubt about that. How can you just look into the scholastic needs of the learner? If the
598 child is not emotionally looked after, how can you perform? You can't perform. So ja, I know
599 there must be educators because that is why schools are there, but you can't take a sick
600 person and ask that person or ask an educator to develop this. You can't, you won't get
601 anywhere. You've got to look into the... - as I said again, the holistic person, you've got to
602 you can't just look into one side. And that's why I said they are moving away from the
603 medical model. In the past sometimes - I am talking about the '80s, 90s - you placed the
604 child easily according to the IQ. Ja, IQ is below 75, you must go to that school. Yes, it
605 happened but not with everybody. I never, never looked into just the IQ to place a child,
606 never. How can you do that. So but that, at some stage, they took away even our IQ tests.
607 We were not allowed to do these, but sometimes it gives you really direction, how to help this
608 child that's really in need. You can't go to a dentist and just sit on the chair and he must look
609 at you like... He must take photos, xrays, he must - um, I'm the same, but just as a
610 psychologist. I am not a fortune teller, by playing cards and looking into your eyes and
611 decide. I need tools. So I feel half a person, half a psychologist.

612
613 M So you would like to see a movement back towards the medical model?

614
615 1 Absolutely. Not in total, not in total, please don't get me wrong, because some people
616 misuse the medical model. But ja, there are truth in the medical model as well.

617
618 M And you would like more psychologists in schools?

619
620 1 Teams. Even at the district, appoint people that can make a difference.

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:37 AM
Comment [11]: Role of EP

621
622 M When you are working with schools, if they phone you, do you go and engage with the
623 SBST? Is there collaboration?
624
625 2 Yes, there is. It is why we have referring procedure. To avoid confusion, we have a form –
626 we call it a Special Needs Assessment Form – that we use as a means of communication
627 between us and the schools. So that is how we communicate with the school. And then in a
628 way, it gives us structure because after it has been sent to us, we must also intervene and
629 then at the end of the day, we must give the school feedback as to what is happening, what
630 are the recommendations, what needs to be done to support the child.
631
632 M How do you give feedback?
633
634 2 We usually, once we've received the referral form, we get the parent. So we give the
635 feedback to the parent. But the school must also get the feedback so they know what is
636 happening. We invite the parents to meet us.
637
638 M And when you are engaging other external service providers, what sort of relationship do
639 you have?
640
641 2 Ja, we collaborate with them. With a case now, unfortunately, the mother couldn't come but
642 she sent her aunt and a meeting is arranged with her for next week. So the mother must go
643 and – unfortunately, we are not going to be there in that meeting – but the mother is going to
644 be with the service provider that we collaborated with, so they are going to intervene with the
645 mother and maybe do the assessment.
646
647 1 We are responsible to train our SBSTs. In the past, we had every term a training with all
648 the SBST coordinators or members of the SBST teams. So that's one thing we had. And we
649 had a two to three day seminar every second year at Unisa that we organised. We had one
650 on cyber-bullying two years ago. Um, our training is on scholastic or emotional or
651 behavioural, because how can we expect from them to try to help the referring teacher and
652 the school without us giving them any knowledge? These teachers need to be supported,
653 and who can do that properly? We don't have time. So then we had our school handouts, but
654 we don't always know what they do with it because they've got to go back to the principal,
655 organise the training for the whole staff, to develop the whole staff. And I promise you,
656 sometimes you go back to schools and they can't even remember where the handouts are.
657
658 2 Unfortunately, the SBST is just a small team in the school. And usually, when we do such
659 trainings, we will say one or two members of the team.
660
661 1 It depends on also how much support that person gets from the principal, because if the
662 driver of the team is not positive – we will sometimes get calls from principals to say, 'We've
663 got here an SBST invitation, what is SBST?' Ah, hello!
664
665 M Is it called SBST or ILST?
666
667 1 It was CLBT at a certain stage. In the late '90s, it was Centre of Learning Based Training.
668 Then it was I... On the level above us, they talk about ILST, ja. We are still school-based

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:38 AM

Comment [12]: Collaboration

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:38 AM

Comment [13]: Collaboration

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:39 AM

Comment [14]: Capacity of district

669 support team. The ILST is more head office and national, all their communication is ILST. We
670 are SBSTs. At a certain stage, we started changing it and then we realised, it's not on our
671 level, we are still SBST. And even the DBST, we spoke about R at head office. DBST must
672 reps from all over, but at head office, the driver of the DBST is part of our subdirectorate. So
673 automatically, when we attend DBST meetings called by head office, it is our unit people, or
674 one of us. Always the psychologists that attend head office DBST because it's our
675 subdirectorate there that's head of DBST. So why must policy and planning and curriculum
676 people go there, because it's not their subdirectorate? And even then, if we go there, not one
677 district functions in the same way. Some it's the district director, some it's only two
678 psychologists that's the DBST of the district. So that's why we weren't sure who you wanted
679 to meet when you said DBST.

680

681 M How do you define mainstreaming compared to inclusive education?

682

683 2 Mainstreaming, it's... [pause]... it's the school that's only focusing on developing learners
684 academically and... We have mainstream schools, but we encourage inclusion, especially if
685 there's a learner with some barriers within the vicinity, we encourage the school to admit the
686 learner.

687

688 M In an inclusive school, how does the school provide support when a learner needs it?

689

690 1 Some schools take kids out of school sometimes, but the kids are in the classroom and it's
691 been expected from that educator to adapt the curriculum. Sometimes, they do that, but it's
692 not allowed – in certain periods, ja. Some schools, at a certain stage we had these aid
693 classes and the special classes. I think we have two or three schools that still have got a
694 special class, but these aid class educators, they are now our learning support educators. So
695 we said instead of supporting only 20 schools and there are, say, 15 learners per school in
696 that class, we said let us take them out, place them also in the circuit now, previously we had
697 10 clusters when we were still here in our ISS. So we had 10 clusters, so we had, say, two
698 LSEs per cluster, and they move from school to school, supporting educators to support
699 learners. So they are not there as a remedial educator and then this learner comes for 10
700 minutes and then the next one comes in. They go into the classroom, look into the situation,
701 give them support to the learners sometimes in front of the educator so that the educator can
702 continue with the support, or work out a support programme for the educator to implement.

703

704 M How is this working?

705

706 1 I think we were also one of the first districts. We did this in about 2004 about, and they are
707 trying to get all the districts to function that way, instead of aid class educators. So we
708 wanted to move away from this, you are in a separate class and you can support, and if
709 you're okay, you go back, or otherwise, you go to a special school in the year you turn 13.
710 But sometimes, we feel that some learners still belong in a class like that, even if we talk
711 inclusive education, really. But sometimes, the child is just, just between mainstream and,
712 say, um, a special school. He doesn't belong there, too low-functioning for the mainstream,
713 too high functioning for that. Where to now? Where do you fit in that child? And then at the
714 end of the day, that child starts with behavioural problems, and low self-esteem because they
715 don't really fit in here. And I am asking for help, can't you see it in my behaviour, but what
716 can we do? So it's really because of the fact that the education closed so many systems just

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:39 AM

Comment [15]: Mainstreaming

717 to put inclusive education there, that I'm very positive about, but you can't all be in inclusive
718 education. And there is not enough people like us psychologists, like remedial people, like
719 OTs, like speech therapists, to support the educators to help that child that the child can
720 benefit in a certain way there. We can't provide support to individual schools and learners the
721 way we want to, the way we have been trained to, because there are not enough of us. We
722 are, say, four, and here we've got three at this stage, three psychologists in the circuits. Two
723 are vacant. So we are then seven psychologists, one is a counsellor, that's got to deal with
724 260 schools in total. Tell me how is... Without saying anything, and you can't expect from us
725 just to develop the SBSTs, if they are not even motivated, and telling you right in your face,
726 'But I'm not a counsellor, I'm not a psychologist, how can you expect from me to deal with
727 this child and the police and abuse cases and...?' And sometimes, they are too afraid to talk
728 because they will come and burn their house or they will do this. So it's not easy, but we are
729 trying, trying to stay positive. And developmental courses, as psychologists, for CPD points.
730 No, we pay for this ourselves. They appoint us as psychologists, but SAPSAC was now
731 R3,000. We go to those that, say, take 3 days and it's done but we've got at least, say, 20
732 points already. Registration fees. Now and then we try to push it through and then through
733 the grace of God, the RLS will go through and they will pay for it, but most of it, no. We took
734 a chance this year, me and her, to say let us wait, otherwise, hopefully... I went there almost
735 every day, to Health Professions, and to my procurement section, to say please how far is
736 this payment. Some of the psychologists, they pay it out of their pockets, because they are
737 not going to take the chance. I said that I haven't got a private practice, so my department
738 must pay for me if they want me to be a registered psychologist, otherwise why must I be
739 registered, you understand? So it's again the sources, they don't, they put the name
740 psychologist there, but what do they... I don't think they know who we are, the, the main role
741 that we can play in a child's life. And with inclusive education [pause] because if you're a
742 psychologist in the department, you – I must tell you, we can't think the same as a private
743 psychologist in practice. Am I right, 2?

744
745 2 – Mm.

746
747 1 – Lots of parents will come from the private psychologists who don't understand our
748 policies and stuff and tell the parent, according to this IQ, this, and they will come here and
749 we will say, 'Uh-uh, we can't. Please, your child can't be placed there or there.' And then
750 because they paid that psychologist, they believe in that report. We can't sing the same song
751 as a private psychologist in practice.

752
753 M – Can you elaborate on this a bit?

754
755 1 – Ja. The private psychologists don't visit the schools to observe the child, it's a paper
756 exercise sometimes. And I think if the other two psychologists here – X and Y – I really think
757 the four of us feel exactly the same. So even if they are not here, they would've phrased it
758 perhaps in another way, or X that's very good with her English [laughs], she would've said
759 some nice wording here, and used nice words and stuff, but we feel exactly the same, we're
760 a team, we're in this together. And, and we've got to motivate each other. We've got to
761 motivate each other because, argh, sometimes in meetings they don't even recognise us,
762 we're not even on the agenda. So ja, I don't know.

763

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:40 AM

Comment [16]: Capacity of district

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:41 AM

Comment [17]: Role of EP, perceptions

764 M – Is there anything else you would like to tell me – about your role, or what role you feel an
765 ed psych should play, or about the challenges?

766
767 1 – I spoke a lot. 2?

768
769 2 – It's more of challenges. Yes, we have a role to play but it's more of challenges than that,
770 because the challenges we encounter, it's like they are an obstacle for us to achieve what we
771 intend to achieve. We are not able to do our work as we would wish to because of these
772 challenges. And the structure itself, in one way or the other, poses some limitations because
773 there are certain things that we feel if we were doing them, or we could be doing them, then
774 we would be able to reach our goals, or make an impact in the lives of the children. But due
775 to the structure, at some point we find that we can't do that. We sit back and see what will
776 happen.

777
778 1 – And what plays a role as well is the different managers. Some of the districts, they – with
779 the support of the managers, they decided that psychologists are here, they only doing
780 psychological, only emotional and behavioural problems. The inclusive specialists that deal
781 with all the other scholastic sections, full service schools, learning support educators,
782 everything. And it's okay. Here, it's not the same. In another district, not the same. So again,
783 if head office not going to give all fifteen districts the same job description, this – because
784 now you hear what's happening in another district, you think that is wonderful, they see you
785 as a psychologist there, you can function, they go out and they only doing psychological
786 work, that's it. Nothing, nothing, nothing else. So what? We can't do it.

787
788 2 – May, maybe another reason is because we are still at the conception – or not necessarily
789 the conception, but the beginning of the new dispensation – we are still learning. Come five
790 years later, then...

791
792 1 – Then you will be HOD and you will change the organogram!

793
794 2 – [laughs]

795
796 1 – But then we're closer to retirement! [laughs]

797
798 2 – To get other people to interview, we won't be there!

799
800 M – 2, you worked as a teacher previously. Did you train later on as a psychologist?

801
802 2 – Uh uh, I came here as a psychologist. I trained while I was still at school.

803
804 1 – And she was also a learning support educator.

805
806 M – Okay, so you had that background. Were you working in this district?

807
808 1 – She did really well because these learning support educators, they are on post-level 1, as
809 normal teachers' starting level. And she got a DCES position, post-level 5. 2, am I right?

810
811 2 – Mm.

812
813 M – What are the grades on the OSD?
814
815 1 – We don't know. We thought the money would be in yesterday and it's not. We thought
816 head office is dealing with it, it's on a high level, but it's still very, very deurmekaar.
817
818 [Director entered office. Stopped focus group for a while in order to bring her up to date and
819 get her consent to continue.]
820
821 1 – We explained to her the new organogram. It's mostly about the psychologists, so about
822 the circuits, and about the OSD and the job descriptions that in a certain way it's got to look
823 the same, even if they're in circuits because of the Health Professions Council. So we
824 explained to her about that, and then the full-service schools and the LSEs and special
825 concessions and career guidance and there are certain aspects that we've all got to deal
826 with, and that's why there must still be elaboration.
827
828 M – What would be the role that you play as educational psychologists and what, ideally,
829 kind of role should you be playing, and what your challenges are?
830
831 3 – Okay. It's actually. I always look at the functions that we have been given, in terms of
832 right now, as the organogram changes, and the psychological services, the big question
833 mark is what happens to the functions because we still have the same functions. They've
834 actually removed some of the things that we were doing.
835
836 1 – That's what I tried to explain to her, that not all the districts are working in the same way.
837 Some districts, all the psychologists are this side and they're only doing psychological
838 service work, nothing about full-service schools, nothing about LSEs and the inclusion
839 specialists are dealing with all those aspects. But it differ from district to district, you know. If
840 you look into my appointment letter, that's they way it's got to function. We've got to function
841 only as, only as psychologists, not dealing with learning support educators, because they're
842 working with the scholastic side of the child's life. And we as well – please don't read me
843 wrong – but more as the behavioural and emotional side. That makes sense to me, and
844 leave the rest for the full-service schools, all those for the people in the circuits who are the
845 inclusion specialists. But it's not always that easy, you know, because of the workload and...
846 But if other districts can cope that way, I... But it's got to come from head office, to say that is
847 how we would like the psychological services to function. And this is what is being expected
848 from them. That's it. And now we're hanging in the air. That's the problem. And I think that's
849 where they - especially the psychologists - in general, are now saying, 'Sorry, we're not
850 contracting until you tell us, you put psychologists behind my name now. What sources are
851 you going to give me, how are you going to support me, what training are you going to help
852 me with to stay registered, etc, etc?' And I think at the end of this, this thing is going to end
853 up not in a nice way, the same as what the IDS is.
854
855 3 – If you look at the framework of a full-service school, I think that's where we are leaning
856 towards. The directorate at head office is the one that is responsible for the ...
857
858 1 – Am I wrong if I say that in a certain way, we still fall under all the directorates there? It is
859 psycho-social...

860
861 3 – The issues come from psycho-social, ja. They are with X.
862
863 1 – Am I right, isn't X with...
864
865 3 – X, the impression I am getting, X is driving the inclusive education, and X is... X's agenda
866 is full-service schools. And Y is with her. Y is with her. Like a sub-directorate. I think. I am
867 saying this is my personal opinion, my personal opinion, because you know, ISS, we fall
868 under ISS. You know, Y talks about full-service schools and resource centres and how these
869 services are provided.
870
871 1 – And the inclusion specialists, where do they fall?
872
873 3 – Also. They do, they fall under that.
874
875 1 – This is our CES now, and she's not even clear.
876
877 3 – We didn't get X's full explanation of what it is that she expects, by the way, at that
878 presentation. Maybe we don't need to analyse. Let's focus on what we need to provide and
879 make sure we provide a service. I think your line is...
880
881 1 – Especially now with the OSD, there are certain things that's got to appear on the job
882 description. Otherwise, if they pull our job description, they ask for it, and it's not according to
883 Health Profession Council, they will say, 'Sorry, you don't qualify for OSD.' And they can't
884 say that because they've put 'psychologist' on our appointment letters. So it is really
885 unnecessary tension. Do it right the first time, give us our stuff and lead us.
886
887 3 – Perhaps we should also remember that our processes are not yet sorted. They have got
888 to go to the chamber to negotiate, you see? I know OSD was negotiated, but some of these
889 things have to go back and people have to put their signatures there.
890
891 1 – There is someone who is apparently going to support Y with a job description. She
892 wanted the name of the psychologists. But this one is telling you this, and that one is telling
893 you that, and ja.
894
895 M – At least the process has started.
896
897 1 – Oh yes, and they must just stay positive. That is the main thing. You can't – especially
898 the four of us – you can't be each one in your own office now, doing your own thing. We are
899 trying to plan together and solve problems together and share and...
900
901 M – Could I get a copy of the organogram?
902
903 1 – F has got something which we can perhaps email to you, but I am not sure if we can yet.
904 What you need to know is what I have drawn for you. In the past, there were 4 units under
905 our head. Now, she's got ten. So it is, ja, it is a big change.
906
907 3 – And very diverse.

908
909
910
911
912
913
914
915
916
917
918
919
920
921
922
923
924
925
926
927
928
929
930
931
932
933
934
935
936
937
938
939
940
941
942
943
944
945
946
947
948
949
950
951
952
953
954

1 – She is going to the hairdresser every week now to colour the hair because it is getting greyer and greyer! We've been a long time together [laughs].

3 – I think, Michele, what is important and which is what I sometimes mention to colleagues is not losing focus on what is important. There was one gentleman who said if I can just reach one child. It's about them really. When things are not okay for them, we are not okay. We can't sit here and say we are okay. It's not okay. So that's what keeps us going. We have got a duty towards them and a responsibility. And it makes one look good to know that I made a difference in a child's life. **We know we are not reaching all of them, but we hope we are able to get quite a few and make a difference in their lives.**

1 – I think what's nice is if you assisted a child and a few years later, the child recognises you somewhere in the street. We dealt with lots of cancer at a certain stage, and suddenly kids afterwards, 5 or 8 years later, they see you and recognise you, 'Ha, I'm so glad to see you. Thanks for what you did on that camp.' Or that we organised the camp like that, that was the first holiday they had. And it can be a big man who recognises you like this. Like today, it meant a lot to me. We are trying to place a Down Syndrome child in an FSS school, and the other two learners we dealt with, it's again nice to see that we are so spoiled in life that one little girl, she opened her little bag and there's just tissues in there, nothing else. And you know sometimes you've got to experience that again in life, to come back and think, the problems we are facing, it's nothing. So there is, um...

3 – There is good things, there is. And we want to see the teachers doing things for the learners' sakes.

1 – And that they appreciate your presence.

3 – And we don't acknowledge that sometimes, because we are always rushed. You know, then you go back to them and you say this. And you go back to them and you want this. And this one and ... Without really acknowledging, you've got more on your plate and you're doing a wonderful job. Very few people will do it the way you do it, but... But we've got some wonderful teachers now. They forget themselves. They do things in the best interests.

1 – And some principals and educators are full of wonderful ideas. They don't even have lunch. Anyway, what is lunch? Last Friday, she came to my office with cookies! I can't believe it. [laughs]

3 – We must go now.

M – Thank you so much.

2 – So you also in a way assisted us in revising and thinking back as to these things, this is how we do it. It was a reflection moment for us.

M – Thank you so much.

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:43 AM

Comment [18]: Capacity

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Educational psychologist

M - What do you view as your role in inclusive classrooms and schools?

L - From experience, the most important role would be to identify and diagnose the kids with the problems that haven't been diagnosed before. And then to make the teacher aware of a specific child's needs. I worked at [the school] last year. I would go there once or twice a week. I only did 8 or 9 cases in the year. The teachers told the parents but only a very few followed up. [The school] has an LSEN class. They are very knowledgeable about kids. One Grade 1 child had a very experienced teacher who would assess that the child needs a different school. It was more backup for special needs than ordinary. If you are at the school, you get more problems. Another school I worked at was used to it. There was one that the teacher thought if the emotional stability was better, then he would perform better at school. It worked well but half the cases were charity cases. Teachers brought a child to you and asked for an assessment. But there was no money. But I made up for this through working with parents that had medical aid. These were also black parents but some of them had medical aid and so they could pay for my services. But many of the parents could not. The teachers identified the kids that they thought needed to be assessed or needed support and then they contacted the parents. I prefer not to get an historical background before seeing a child. I evaluate first and then speak to the parents. They filled in a questionnaire. I had guidelines. And then I also got the teachers' input. But I called in the parents before I spoke to teachers. Parents had to give consent. Report went to parents first. I had to judge.

M - How do you define inclusion?

L - There are not enough institutions that they can go to so they have to go to mainstream schools. Inclusion is about including kids that are not reaching their full potential because of a learning barrier – for any reason, or they have emotional difficulties. In my current school, the classes are small, so you can have kids with learning problems and manage. I worked at a school in W. But this school also didn't employ me either. Ideally, there would be a team on board that you can discuss cases

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:45 PM

Comment [1]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:45 PM

Comment [2]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:47 PM

Comment [3]: Role of EP

33 with It is much better to be in a school than in a private practice. This year, I am
34 teaching and doing psychology. It is one thing diagnosing and another being with kids.
35 My role should be to guide the teacher and parents and child on how to manage learning
36 problems. In a school, you can immediately see what is not working so you can try
37 something else. If parents gave me permission, I would go to see the school. I would
38 have a session with all the teachers and discuss the report with them. I would tell them
39 the extent of the problem and suggest management skills. It was unsatisfying. Schools
40 are so busy so you can't go back to them regularly. It is idealistic. Initially, some were
41 very reluctant. Teachers would have a bit of an attitude. When you give feedback on a
42 report and the teacher sees, then they would feel validated and would come on board.
43 Most teachers were very willing to follow through on suggestions. If they could see I
44 understood the problem, they were very willing to help.

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:48 PM

Comment [4]: Definition of IE

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:49 PM

Comment [5]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:49 PM

Comment [6]: Relationship betw school and EP

45 M - What are the challenges you face in providing support?

46 L - Last year, I was at a practice when I wasn't so reliant on the income. I wanted to get
47 into a multicultural exposure. I wanted to do that for myself and for the school. One of
48 the problems is that the things that we as psychologists suggest isn't always practical for
49 the school to do. It is one thing to say put a child in front of the blackboard and another
50 to say make sure the child is paying attention. People should see the educational
51 psychologist as coming on board and now we are managing this problem. We are not
52 solving it by evaluating and diagnosing the problem. People see you and take the report
53 home and follow through on a bit. Unless I follow up, it often dwindles. I would like to
54 see something more sustainable. For 6 months, I want weekly feedback or I want to see
55 the child every month. I did see one or two of the kids for emotional therapy, but not
56 really. Kids go home after school with a taxi, so it was logistically difficult. I didn't want
57 to take them out of the classes.

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:50 PM

Comment [7]: Effectiveness of EP services

58 M - Can you illustrate through describing a case in which you have been involved?

59 L - There was a girl in Grade 6. I suggested she go to another school. I saw her parents
60 for guidance. She was dyslexic. A year later, the mom phoned to say she's not coping in
61 this other school. I didn't know what to do so I referred her to a colleague. We need
62 assistance. A big learning problem can't be rectified within the current set up.

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:51 PM

Comment [8]: Effectiveness of EP services

63 M - What needs to be done to improve the effectiveness of educational psychological
64 services to support inclusion?

65 L - We must talk to Grade R and 1 teachers. If there is a psychologist in the school, they
66 must know from day 1. They can identify the kids early because they are knowledgeable.
67 They must refer the kid to someone. Early identification is essential. There should be
68 intense input in the first 3 years. The SBST just referred kids to me. They had an OT
69 there. The SBST is the Skool Ondersteuning Span. The main role of the educational
70 psychologist comes in once the problem has been clearly defined. It is to find people to
71 assist and also to manage. It is to follow up and see if it is working and then try another
72 approach. If you can suggest OT, it might not be right route to go. Someone needs to look
73 at the bigger picture and guide. Where the educational psychologist can play a big role is
74 with parent guidance. Ultimately, the parent has to drive

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:51 PM

Comment [9]: Effectiveness of EP services

75 Where I am now, I am teaching. Next year, I will only take one class to stay connected
76 but I would like ideally to get teachers to come to me. I feel that I am doing more of a
77 managing the kids than doing therapy or teaching a child new skills. If the environment
78 is friendly for the kid, they will develop to the best of their capabilities. After I've done
79 an evaluation and I tell the child what the problem is, they cooperate and they think they
80 are not dumb, there's a problem. They are more motivated. Being part of the staff makes
81 a big difference. I can phone the parents and make an appointment. Parents pay if they
82 have medical aid. I am now employed as a teacher. The closest high school to where I am
83 now is H. There are kids from the coloured and black community, and also the white
84 community. We try to develop their potential as leaders. Kids that are drawn to this
85 school are the ones that needed small classes. That wasn't the original plan. The Grade
86 8's now are the ones where the school has a good name. The kids are more normal than
87 problem kids, but out of the 50 Grade 8s, there are at least 12 kids who need special
88 attention. The racial mix is half white, quarter coloured, quarter black. Fees are R900 a
89 month, which is same as the government high school. We should train teachers. If I can
90 train teachers to rather send a child that's been identified to an educational psychologist
91 than to make up their own minds about where they should go, this would go a long way
92 to helping and being useful. We are in the best position to look at the bigger picture. We
93 must focus on teacher education. I try to collaborate with other professions, but it is
94 difficult if in private practice. At W, I could do it. Now that I am in a high school, I see the

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:52 PM

Comment [10]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:53 PM

Comment [11]: Employment of EPs

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:54 PM

Comment [12]: Collaboration

95 results of things not being done earlier. I should interview Lorraine du Toit – in
96 Constantiapark. She opened a high school for kids with educational problems. She has
97 created guidelines on what schools can do. 10 kids in a class, 20 in a grade.

1 **INTERVIEW WITH GUIDANCE HOD, 24 MAY 2012**

2

3 J – This morning was hectic. I came to school with one pink earring and one blue earring.

4 M – What do you see as the definition of inclusion?

5 J – We have to help any learning disability or learning barrier. We have to include them. At our
6 school, we just include the ADHD learners. We don't have any physical disabilities at our school. One
7 of our teachers, HOD Foundation Phase, her daughter goes to a school where they've got physically
8 disabled learners in their classrooms, they've Down Syndrome. And the teachers are really struggling
9 to cope with them. We don't have it here. We haven't included learners like that here.

10 M – Have you had any applications?

11 J – None. We only have our LSEN class, and that's learners with a mild disability.

12 M – Do they specifically apply to come here, the LSEN learners, or is it both that are in your class?

13 J – We feed the class with our learners, and we get learners from outside. The Department phones
14 us and asks if we have space and then we have to accommodate them. But most of them are from
15 here, 60% of them.

16 M – That class ranges from Grade 1 to Grade 7?

17 J – Yes, different levels.

18 M – The kids there stay in that class?

19 J – She puts them back into mainstream if they've closed the gap. Some of them have been placed
20 back, and some of them get placed into Magalies or elsewhere when they turn 13.

21 M – At what point would you refer a learner to a special school?

22 J – We do it once they've failed twice in a phase. They can't fail twice. So for instance, if a Grade 3
23 has failed in Grade 2, then he cannot fail again. Then we get them assessed, usually by our own
24 psychologist, and we get the referral forms, we complete the referral forms and then we apply for
25 LSEN numbers at the ISS unit.

26 M – So there's a child like that, you'd need to get the parents' permission first to get the
27 assessment?

28 J – We have an interview form, then our school referral form, this is what the Department has given
29 us (gives me copy). I'm having all my interviews tomorrow afternoon. This is our interview form, the
30 parents sign it, I sign it and the FP HOD signs mine. This is from the whole school. I just want to get
31 you. We have an interview and then we ask parents to have the learners tested by either a
32 psychologist or a speech therapist or whatever it may be. And then we also refer them for trauma,
33 grieving, abuse, neglect and character building.

34 M – You have to get the parents' permission for this?

Michele Berger 12/12/4 9:55 AM

Comment [1]: Interpretation/definition of inclusion

Michele Berger 12/12/4 9:56 AM

Comment [2]: Interpretation, who school caters for

Michele Berger 12/12/4 9:57 AM

Comment [3]: LSEN class

Michele Berger 13/1/11 3:59 PM

Comment [4]: LSEN class

Michele Berger 13/1/11 5:06 PM

Comment [5]: Current system and processes – referring learners

Michele Berger 13/1/11 5:08 PM

Comment [6]: Current systems and process – referring learners

35 J – K sees the parents first before he sees the kids. We have a little form that the parents have to
36 sign to say they are going to character building.

37 M – Back to inclusion – you see that as helping any child with a learning difficulty or barrier to
38 learning and you include them within the mainstream classes?

39 J – The remedial teacher takes from Grade 1 to Grade 7. We have a roster, she takes them half an
40 hour a day. They are included for specific things and then they come back to class. For literacy.
41 Those learners are usually the new learners with language barriers. We call it bridging, we bridge the
42 gap. Usually I try to do my handwriting or my lifeskills when they go. They catch up. They have to get
43 3 for Afrikaans (40%), mathematics 40%, English 50%. And they are all doing very well at their
44 mathematics, but they've got poor English abilities. You can't send them on, how are they going to
45 learn, write exams.

46 M – So those are learners who are coming from other schools where they were not learning English
47 mainly?

48 J – They've been taught English but not on the same standard. The other thing we're going to do
49 now, Mrs L the LSEN teacher, she used to take a few of our learners, but this year, we haven't had
50 any learners yet. She'll include them in her class for specific things like spelling. Our Grade 1 teachers
51 also take some of our learners with language barriers and they teach them sight words. So we go
52 between the grades but it's only for a specific time. We haven't done it this year. But we do it, we've
53 done it in the past.

54 M – What's the reaction of the class?

55 J – We try to make them – I, for instance, say, 'You're so lucky, you can go and do this now.' And
56 they are eager to go. They keep on reminding me they have to go. And the others are jealous
57 because they are not getting special attention.

58 M – Are the LSEN learners integrated into the school for other activities?

59 J – They do everything with us.

60 M – That's a multigrade class basically?

61 J – Yes. She's got a little one who repeated Grade 1. We are struggling to get a placement for him
62 because he is not doing anything in the class. She's teaching him art, teaching him basic sounds but
63 nothing is sticking. He has been assessed, XX has also assessed him. We said we will keep him till the
64 middle of the year but it's almost the middle of the year. So she will keep him, she will keep him but
65 what's he going to do after school?

66 M – So could you see a situation where learners with any difficulties, or barriers to learning, are
67 actually in the mainstream classes all the time?

68 J – We do it. That's our other means of support, that's the other support we give, we give them
69 reteaching in class. If, for instance, we are busy with mathematics and they struggle, then we will
70 give them individual attention.

Michele Berger 13/1/11 5:10 PM

Comment [7]: Definition – inclusive education

Michele Berger 13/1/11 5:15 PM

Comment [8]: Current system and processes – school learning support

Michele Berger 13/1/11 5:16 PM

Comment [9]: Current system and processes – school learning support

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:47 PM

Comment [10]: Current system and processes – school learning support

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:48 PM

Comment [11]: Current system and processes – school learning support

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:48 PM

Comment [12]: Current system and processes – school learning support

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:50 PM

Comment [13]: Current system and processes – school learning support

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:51 PM

Comment [14]: Current system and processes – school learning support

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:51 PM

Comment [15]: Current system and processes – school learning support

- 71 M – While the others are doing work?
- 72 J – Yes. For reading and mathematics. Sentence construction. I mark behind the children. I mark
73 here, but also, while they are working, I move around. So no one will feel like I'm always at this
74 child's desk because I am moving around.
- 75 M – What do you as a teacher view as the role of educational psychologists?
- 76 J – The one we have now, she assesses them – scholastic assessment. She basically tells us where the
77 barriers lie. And then what I would like for her to do is to give parents counselling, learners
78 counselling – therapy – which she is going to do now. She is going to do reading therapy with them.
79 She bought the programme, R5000 for the programme. She will charge if the parents can afford it. I
80 hope they will. We already have a few learners. It's Reading for Better Learning. There's a little ant
81 on the cover. She's going to email the information. That's her therapy, and she's also going to take
82 parents for therapy, parents who have got problems. She is going to do it in my office. So parents
83 that have problems that are affecting the learners, she is going to see them which is wonderful. One
84 little girl in my class, her mom says she will come because she has the baggage and now it is
85 influencing the child. There's another child she's going to do play therapy with. And she's assisting us
86 and she spoke to the Grade 4 teachers today and she gave feedback. She told them the problems,
87 this is how you can handle the learners and things like that.
- 88 M – This is about specific learners?
- 89 J – Mm.
- 90 M – Do you see a role for the educational psychologist to support inclusive schools?
- 91 J – Definitely. For instance, the Grade 4 teachers are desperate because we've got 8 new learners
92 from other schools in Grade 4 and they are showing no progress because they are Grade 4 and they
93 don't have a Grade 1 foundation. And that's the problem, we can't build on their learning because
94 they haven't got the basics. So they said what must we do? The children are going for bridging, they
95 are going for remedial classes in the afternoon, they are getting their reading, they are getting extra
96 work sent home. It's not working. Most of these parents also don't speak English.
- 97 M – What does the psychologist recommend?
- 98 J – A reading programme, therapy with the parents as well, counselling.
- 99 M – And what is the response of the teachers?
- 100 J – They are very receptive. We don't have problems between the teachers and the psychologist.
101 Because the learners we are teaching – I mean, what can we do, we are not psychologists. We feel
102 desperate when we can't help this child and we welcome any help we can get.
- 103 M – Are there opportunities for the teachers to approach her if they need to talk to somebody?
- 104 J – Yes, yes, yes. We also have – if teachers have problems – we have just received a memo about
105 counsellors that can counsel teachers as well. But she's open to it. And K's also open to it and he'll

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:56 PM

Comment [16]: Current system and processes – school learning support

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:57 PM

Comment [17]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:58 PM

Comment [18]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:59 PM

Comment [19]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:10 PM

Comment [20]: Relationship of school with EP

106 ask assistance from the church if teachers want to talk about it. But we've got the school based
107 support team. You saw how we discuss every learner?

108 M – The SBST meets every Monday at break?

109 J – Or a Wednesday.

110 M – How often do you talk about a specific grade?

111 J – Once a term. We've got a meeting every week. Learners who have been assessed, we speak
112 about more. I spoke to Grade 5 teachers today and asked if they have seen the parents and made
113 the referrals.

114 M – Do you feel that the SBST, the way it's structured now, works for the school?

115 J – I think so. Mm. The teachers come and talk all the time. It's not just in our meetings. And if we
116 really have a problem, we speak to the principal, we have the parents in, we have meetings
117 throughout the term. The meetings are just the formal administration part.

118 M – To meet GDE requirements?

119 J – Mm. Next week's Grade 2 and the week after is Grade 1. Maybe you can sit in the Grade 2 group.

120 M – What are your experiences of inclusion and working with an educational psychologist?

121 J – The only thing is, if it's private, the parents don't always pay. And like we had one group here,
122 they started off as one group and then they changed to something else and the parents owed them
123 R20000. They did therapy, they did play therapy, they did therapy on the computers, the school
124 bought them a programme (Big Boot). They got little reports, they sent reports home. They were all
125 educational psychologists, or studying to become, doing their practicals. Any assistance we get, we
126 welcome. We were supposed to get two Child Welfare, or social work students, and with K's
127 programme, they wanted to do character building as well. I said no. We haven't had him in the past.
128 I think this is his second year, and before that, we used them to do bullying counselling and
129 character building. And now we've got him. But it's only till the end of the year. It's sponsored. I
130 hope it will be renewed. It has been positive, especially with the LSEN class learners.

131 M – What does he do with them?

132 J – The same. Character building, the same programme. But they've really changed and it's like a
133 secret society and he's very secretive about it.

134 M – Does he take the whole class together?

135 J – There's about 6 or 7 of them. The teacher likes it because they can't wait to go and they are
136 discussing among themselves what they've done. It's this big secret and she's not supposed to know
137 about it and she can see this change in attitude and the way they are working. So I think it's... I like
138 it. I appreciate it.

139 M – He's also doing some individual sessions?

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:11 PM

Comment [21]: Relationship of school with EP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:12 PM

Comment [22]: Role and function of SBST

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:12 PM

Comment [23]: Role and function of SBST

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:14 PM

Comment [24]: Role and function of SBST

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:14 PM

Comment [25]: Role of function of SBST

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:17 PM

Comment [26]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:17 PM

Comment [27]: Roles of others (church counsellor)

140 J – Yes, grieving, counselling. And we have a little boy who has got long fingers. He's helping him
141 with that. He's here at school which is nice. If we have a problem and he has to debrief someone,
142 trauma counselling or something, it's wonderful to have him because he's got the experience, the
143 training, which we don't have. We don't have the training

144 M – Do you do any counselling?

145 J – No. I haven't had any training. It's not just SBST, it's detentions, the needy, applications for the
146 bursary fund. I did the prefects as well but they took that away when I had my baby. There's a lot of
147 things. It's not just SBST. SBST, I'm just the coordinator.

148 M – Have you had any negative experiences working with educational psychologists?

149 J – No. And I haven't had any complaints from other teachers.

150 M – You've been here since before the White Paper came out?

151 J – Mm.

152 M – Have you noticed any changes in the way the school operates in respect to learners with
153 barriers to learning?

154 J – Definitely. We are trying to assist more.

155 M – What did you do before?

156 J – We always had our remedial classes. We always wrote – the beginning of the year, we would
157 write a baseline assessment test in maths and English where we compile a list of learners who
158 struggle. We've always done that. And then from there, we put them on a list for remedial and they
159 went to remedial. We had an aid class for learners with ADD, ADHD, and it was basically she worked
160 with children with reversals, problems like that, she worked with them. I miss that. They took it away
161 from all the schools. There's a difference between LSEN and aid.

162 M – What's the difference between LSEN and remedial?

163 J – Remedial is basically where we reteach a concept because that's what we are trained for. We
164 reteach basic concepts.

165 M – Is that (remedial – reteaching concepts) successful?

166 J – Yes, definitely. Definitely. Um, our one Grade 2 teacher has all the NAS learners in Grade 2 in her
167 class this year. I thought she's crazy, personally, I won't do it. I like having my little stars. But she's
168 doing a wonderful job with them. She's got background, but not a specialised remedial teacher. She
169 taught Grade 1 so she knows how to lay a good foundation. I think she taught Grade 1 for 16 years
170 and now she's in Grade 2. So she took the whole bunch and now she's started from the beginning.
171 These are learners who came up from Grade 1 to Grade 2. There are more than 30 of them who
172 struggled, and she was willing to do it. It's an experiment. We're doing it for the first time. It's
173 working. After every break, they go out and they go on the field and they do a little bit of OT. Not
174 that she's specialised in it but she knows the exercises and she plays with them, and she says it's
175 making a big difference.

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:23 PM

Comment [28]: Role of others (church
counsellor)

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:25 PM

Comment [29]: Relationship of school with
EP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:30 PM

Comment [30]: Implementation of WP -
changes

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:45 PM

Comment [31]: Implementation of WP -
before

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:46 PM

Comment [32]: Definition - remedial

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:47 PM

Comment [33]: Role of teachers
(remedial)

176 M – What will happen to them next year?

177 J – They are coming through the mainstream and they are coming through as NASs and we will
178 divide them equally.

179 M – What’s NAS?

180 J – Needs additional support. It’s basically labelling but it’s not. If the child has this, then you know
181 they need additional attention. I’ve got three NASs in my class this year that came up from Grade 2
182 and they are doing so well. I took them off the SBST list because they are progressing so well. Just
183 the first term. We monitored them. But from Grade 1 to Grade 2, there was a big problem. There
184 were many, many learners. It’s because they don’t have the language, most of them, and they were
185 brought up in townships and then they come to our schools and they have to learn in English and
186 they can’t speak a word of it or understand it. And we can’t let them all repeat, that’s a third of a
187 grade. I am very surprised. She drills the whole day, drill, drill, drill. You hear her constantly drilling. I
188 take my hat off to her. That’s things that have changed, things that we are doing. When I started – I
189 think I’ve got the post for 5 years now - we really started to look at it. There was SBST but not like
190 we’ve got it now. In those days, the ISS unit would come out to the school and they tested the
191 learners before they gave LSEN numbers. Now they expect us to have the learners tested.

192 M – So what’s the process you follow?

193 J – We interview the parents, then we refer them. If they don’t get tested, they don’t have the
194 finances, then we complete the support assessment form and then refer them to the Department.
195 But we’ve never had it, they’ve never visited us with that. Usually, our LSEN learners we get tested
196 by ourselves. XX is assisting us now with parents we suspected sexual abuse. We are not sure so we
197 got the school nurse in and he’s been here twice and he’s coming tomorrow morning again and he’s
198 got an interview with the parents. So with those types of things, he is assisting us and we’ve got a
199 teacher that has problems and he is helping her. And I am sure if I ask him to come and test a
200 learner, he will definitely help us. He is eager and open to this.

201 M – But he’s on the staff of the District?

202 J – Yes. And I report to him.

203 M – So he should do it but he is servicing many schools.

204 J – Yes. We had a learner support educator. She was here last term, last year she came for 3 terms
205 then they had to go and do screening. She’s assigned to our school but they use her everywhere.
206 She’s working at one or two other schools. She just disappeared. She told me she’s going to do
207 screening in May but I haven’t heard anything since the beginning of the term, so I don’t know
208 where she is or what’s going on. I just received a memo saying they are going to reassign schools.
209 They would like to have a school-based educator at our school for 5 days a week. That’s the plan. But
210 they are also just educators in excess. They give them training, but they didn’t go and study
211 remedial. They are just educators like me.

212 M – What would their role be?

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:50 PM

Comment [34]: Current system and processes

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:42 PM

Comment [35]: Current system and processes

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:44 PM

Comment [36]: Current system and processes

213 J – She’s been helping the Grade 3s this year with language barriers. She basically did what our
214 remedial or bridging teacher is doing. She’s supposed to work out programmes and give it to the
215 teachers, but we’ve got our remedial classes where the learners go in the afternoon, so there’s no
216 other time to do a remedial programme in class time. We do reteaching, yes. So that’s her role. Last
217 year, she did a lot of Grade 1 assessment. Those 30 sitting across the passage, they are there now
218 because the one teacher decided to take them.

219 M – But then you also do remedial after school?

220 J – Yes.

221 M – Is that just additional? Is it the same children?

222 J – Yes, it’s additional, also literacy, the same children. They go twice a week so we are really trying
223 to help them.

224 M – Can you describe a case where you felt as a teacher there was a need for some form of
225 psychological support for one of your learners? Who did you talk to, what happened, what was the
226 outcome?

227 J – I just have this one little boy, but it’s not a... The one the psychologist is going to do therapy with
228 the mother. The mother’s baggage is influencing the learner’s scholastic progress. Before I was HOD,
229 I remember there was one child they sent to a psychological hospital (Groendakkies). They had the
230 learner assessed there, but that was before my time.

231 M – This boy, did you refer him to the psychologist?

232 J – Yes, first spoke to the mom. Then I had him referred for scholastic and emotional testing and she
233 came back to me and said there are emotional problems and he’s got a problem with barriers. In my
234 class, he’s progressing because there are certain rules and he knows what he’s supposed to do and
235 at home there are none. That’s what she’s going to help them with.

236 M – You spoke to the mother, she agreed to the testing which was done by the psychologist. And
237 now they are going for therapy.

238 J – Yes, with the new psych. She is seeing the mom tomorrow. And then she’s also seeing me
239 (laughs). I have to report on his progress. We do that once a term. She is first goin to work with the
240 mom and then with the learner. It has been positive and the mommy is open to it. When I saw her
241 the first time, she sat here and she cried and she told me the whole story about what’s going on and
242 why. She’s on medication to cope but the children don’t know she’s on medication. The sister is in
243 Grade 2. It’s very positive. She gives us feedback which is nice.

244 M – You didn’t refer previously?

245 J – Yes, many.

246 M – Did you have any feedback?

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:45 PM

Comment [37]: Current system and processes

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:47 PM

Comment [38]: Current system and processes

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:48 PM

Comment [39]: Capacity of teachers

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:52 PM

Comment [40]: Capacity of teachers

247 J – Yes. I must say, Z is more – the personalities differ. She... I don't know, people do things
 248 differently. She did give us feedback, she did talk to us and she talked directly to the teachers. So I
 249 don't always know what's going on.

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:53 PM

Comment [41]: Relationship of school with EP

250 M – If you were to look at the approach that this psychologist is taking versus the previous one, do
 251 you see a difference in their roles?

252 J – The way Z is doing it, she is giving us advice. You can take it or you can leave it. She is not
 253 enforcing anything. Try this, try that, see if this works. So it's the approach.

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:54 PM

Comment [42]: Relationship of school with EP

254 M – She doesn't participate in your SBST meetings?

255 J – Not yet. Today, she said she wants to have a general meeting with the teachers and the parents
 256 of the learners who struggle and explain what she does and the therapy and how it's going to work
 257 and she wants to introduce the reading therapy to the parents. She wants to be a part of the ... We
 258 always say we are a family, because we are. She wants to include the parents. That's a nice
 259 approach, a collaborative approach. In future, she might be part of SBST meetings, but then who is
 260 going to pay her? The school can't afford it, it's her time. We haven't spoken about it yet. She said
 261 she has to go to Johannesburg as well so I don't know if she lives there or what.

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:55 PM

Comment [43]: Collaboration – school and EP

262 M – What would you say needs to be done to improve the effectiveness of educational psychology
 263 services to support an inclusive school?

264 J – The Department's or ours?

265 M – Both.

266 J – If only it could be for free! That's our biggest... If we could afford an educational psychologist, she
 267 would be here every day, but we are referring to different people now. K, do this counselling, and
 268 we ask the parents to take the learners for assessment but then they can't afford it and then we
 269 have to beg the Department. Money is an issue. If we could pay someone, it would be wonderful.
 270 Remedial is not therapy, there are also emotional problems that hamper a child's learning.

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:57 PM

Comment [44]: Resourcing of WP

271 M – So what kind of things would this person do?

272 J – She's assessing the learners in the first place, forming a bond with the parents, working with
 273 parents and teachers and learners, giving advice to teachers – advice. Therapy with the learners
 274 during school time. We don't have a problem with taking learners out of the class for specific times.
 275 They usually enjoy the therapy more than they enjoy the class. That's basically what we need. Also
 276 emotional support for the teachers, they can knock on her door and ask questions, make an
 277 appointment, ask for assistance, or just talk about a learner with someone that's got psychology. The
 278 learners are going to K at this stage. But he's just a counsellor.

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:58 PM

Comment [45]: Role of EP

279 M – Do they approach him?

280 J – They are supposed to go through the system. But if a child goes and talks to a teacher... We had a
 281 little girl, she went up to the intermediate phase and she just couldn't cope with the changes. In FP
 282 we are like mothers to them, and when they go upstairs, they change classes every period and they
 283 have got different teachers and no one is really bonding with her. She spoke to the teacher first, she

284 told the teacher lots of things. The teacher realised there's emotional problems. She filled in the
285 form and came to me and we discussed it, and we sent her to K. So it's a process. But I don't know if
286 they just go and talk to him. I asked him if he could circulate on the playground. But now he's doing
287 his character building during breaktime. He's taking the Grade 4s during school time but the rest he's
288 taking during break. He's only here twice a week. He said he's going to come on a Wednesday also
289 but he's never here.

290 M – Is there anything else you want to share with me?

291 J – It's just funds. Sometimes you feel that your hands are cut off because you want to help but
292 you're not capable of helping. You are not a psychologist. They expect teachers to be mothers, the
293 nurse, the teachers, everything. These children, because of the culture differences, they need a lot
294 of love and a lot of attention. They are very clingy. They've got self-confidence but they want
295 approval and they want praise and they thrive on things like that. I don't know why. I think white
296 children are more independent. I've just noticed it. It's different, especially the Grade 1s. They are
297 babies, they are clingy. I've got children that have been through my hands that still come and hug
298 me. You're like a mother figure to them. There's really a bond. And then they get to Grade 7 and
299 they ask if I remember them. I say I remember your face, but please don't ask me what your name
300 is! There's definitely a need for educational psychologists at schools, definitely. If every school could
301 have one, I think there'd be a lot less problems. Really. If XX could sit here every day, I would be very
302 happy. You should do community service in schools to qualify. We had H and then they changed to L.
303 H started with one woman, she studied educational psychology but pastoral psychology. And we
304 worked with someone from Unisa who supervised her. She came in, she tested, she did therapy, he
305 came in and spoke to her every week. It worked so well because there was a lot of interaction and
306 we knew what was going on. And then she qualified and took in interns under her and they started
307 working here. That's when we bought BB. And they brought in play therapy in the loft outside. Then
308 she started working at a church. She left us. But she left the interns who stayed, they qualified, there
309 was a psychometrist and two qualified as pastoral counsellors. They did so well. We thought it was
310 going very well. They took the children for therapy and we could see a change and it was wonderful.
311 Then I went on maternity leave for 6 months, and when I came back in the December to hand out
312 our reports, and they handed me a letter and said they are leaving. There was a R20000 debt. They
313 have to earn a living. Funds is definitely a problem. We are open to interns, we have done it. Last
314 year, we had a play therapist. I thought it was a spelling therapist, because she said 'spel therapy'.
315 Then I realised what it was. She walked a path with us with one of the learners that had to be placed
316 in a special school and she was so concerned about this little child. She was supposed to be here 3
317 months, but she stayed on because she got so involved and attached to the children. We are open to
318 things like that.

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:59 PM

Comment [46]: Resourcing of WP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 9:00 PM

Comment [47]: Cultural competence

Michele Berger 13/1/31 9:02 PM

Comment [48]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 9:03 PM

Comment [49]: Resourcing

Interview with parent participant

[Transcript starts after introductory remarks, to maintain anonymity, and to allow parent opportunity to understand and sign consent.]

M - How you understand the term 'inclusive education'?

P14 – I don't really know that. I think that about your child getting everything at the school.

M – You have had an experience at your child's school, working with the educational psychologist. Can you share with me your experiences of working with [this person]?

P14 – I took him to the [educational psychologist] because his teacher said I must because he was not good in school, he wasn't sitting still and listening to the teacher. But the doctor said I must give him medicine. It is too expensive. I can't afford the medicine every month. So I tell him he must listen to his teacher.

M – What did the educational psychologist tell you about your child?

P14 – She said he has ADHD. About his attention. She said I must take him to a doctor to get some medicine for him to help with his attention. He is always moving around, he doesn't want to keep still, even at home. [The educational psychologist] also talked to his teacher. She told the teacher what she told me.

M – Did you meet with her more than once?

P14 – Yes. I met her after the teacher told me to make an appointment. Then she asked me lots of questions about my child and about the family and about how he is at home and how he behaves. So, um, once to talk about my son's problems – um, he was being naughty in class and wasn't listening. She said she would meet my son and then she would do some tests and she would talk to me again. She asked me to fill in some forms also about my son's behaviour. And then after [the educational psychologist] had a session with my son, then I went back to her to find out what she said. She told me what she found. I told you about that.

M – So what was your experience working with the educational psychologist?

P14 – She was nice. She wants to help us but it's just that I can't afford the medicine. I think I will take him to the clinic but that takes time. So I will try.

M - What do you view as the role of educational psychologists?

Michele Berger 13/8/28 9:56 PM

Comment [1]: Experiences of EP

Michele Berger 13/8/28 9:58 PM

Comment [2]: Perceptions

44 P14 – I think it is to help children when they had problems, and to talk to the parents
45 and the teachers. But is this right, I don't know for sure. I only spent a short time with
46 her. She said it would be good for my son to come to her again for some more times.
47 But I am not sure why I should do this. It is expensive, and I don't have the money.
48

49 M - What are your views on how educational psychology services are being provided
50 and how they could be improved?

51

52 P14 – I don't know. I think she is good. She wants to help us, to help the children. But
53 we have to pay so this makes it difficult. Maybe it could be for free. Then we could go
54 to her and see how she can help.

Michele Berger 13/8/28 9:58 PM

Comment [3]: Perceptions

1 **INTERVIEW WITH PRINCIPAL, 24 MAY 2012**

2

3 M – Thank you for giving me time. I know how busy school principals are.

4 P – No, it's fine.

5 M – I don't know if you remember when I came here about 2 months ago before I had my consent
6 from GDE and I was telling you about my research, that I am looking at the role of educational
7 psychologists in supporting inclusion, and that I wanted to use this as my case study school.

8 P – Yes, I remember. We met in Mrs P's office.

9 M – Yes! So to start, what's your understanding of inclusion?

10 P – If you... I think there are various, um, methods of inclusion and if it's not explained properly,
11 people will have the wrong conception of inclusion. Um, children that are in the ELSEN, LSEN
12 children are special needs children. Depending on what their need is, in my opinion, won't be able to
13 cope in a normal classroom situation. They've got a barrier to learning concerning whatever, if it's
14 maths or language or whatever the case is. But they might be good in a certain area, and that area,
15 they can go back to the normal mainstream. And vice versa. A child who has got a problem in a
16 language problem can be included into the ELSEN class back to the level where he or she is, or into
17 the remedial class. We've got remedial here as well. And that is my – how I understand inclusion.
18 They form part – at this school, they form part of the school, they are not separate, or they don't run
19 to a different timetable or anything, they are here, they are part of the school. The difference is that
20 each child there is on a different level concerning the maths and the English and the lifeskills and the
21 whatevers

22 M – What is your school's approach? In terms of children who need additional support, they are in
23 the classroom...

24 P – No, no, no. We've got an ELSEN class. There are 20 children in the ELSEN class that have been
25 identified as LSEN or special needs children. At this school, they are mildly intellectually disabled.
26 Um... Now there's a [pause] distinction between an LSEN child and a remedial child, and a lot of
27 teachers don't understand that concept. They think that if a child is battling with whatever he or she
28 is battling with, that child is an LSEN child, and that's not the case. A remedial child is something
29 totally different, in my opinion, than what the LSEN child is

30 M – How would you differentiate?

31 P – A remedial child is a child that has got the ability, where she came and is battling with a certain
32 concept and that concept is remediated. A child can be a very clever child but he can have a
33 language barrier. If you reach that language barrier, for instance, if he's taught to read and
34 understand the language properly, then he carries on, but where the LSEN child can't, the LSEN child
35 just hasn't got that. And that's why you have to - that's why they're also taught on different levels

36 M – So your class here, the 20 children, is that across the grades?

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:18 PM

Comment [1]: inclusive education

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:18 PM

Comment [2]: inclusive education

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:18 PM

Comment [3]: Remedial

- 37 P – Yes, across the grades. They are with this teacher all the... Depending. Sometimes, we send the
38 child across to the grade ones for reading or this or that, according to his or her age group, they go
39 to the grade 4s or 5s or whatever.
- 40 M – It's from which grade?
- 41 P – It's from 7 years old to 12, because the year in which they turn 12 they must go to the LSEN high
42 school. We don't say grades, because they are not really in a grade.
- 43 M – And the teacher in that class, what are her qualifications?
- 44 P – She's qualified in ELSEN. Not remedial, but ELSEN, special needs.
- 45 M – Is that a post that's funded by GDE?
- 46 P – Yes. We had 2 at the school, and through lack of foresight, I think, the Department took the one
47 away, and they were on the verge of taking the second one away and we have managed to stop
48 that. There's a definite need, I think, there's no doubt. So that's how the ELSEN class works.
- 49 M – Are you oversubscribed here?
- 50 P – By far. We have a waiting list. Then those that we can't help, we send to the Department and the
51 Department then has to find a place for them.
- 52 M – Do you have to take kids from the area?
- 53 P – We turn a lot away from the area. Lots, lots. And that's sad, because they live across the road
54 and they can't come to us. You must work and live in the area. For us, we are in the city centre, 10
55 zillion people work in the city centre, so they can all bring their children here although they live in
56 Garsfontein.
- 57 M – How many kids do you have in a class?
- 58 P – We have got 30.
- 59 M – Do you keep it at that?
- 60 P – We try, because more than 30 is not conducive.
- 61 M – How many classes per grade?
- 62 P – 3 per grade.
- 63 M – You start from Grade R?
- 64 P – We started Grade R this year. So we have one Grade R this year, and next year, we'll have 2.
- 65 M – Do you charge fees for Grade R?
- 66 P – Yes, we charge fees throughout the school, but the fees are more for Grade R. It's like a crèche. If
67 you want to be in Grade R, you have to pay. But Grade R just helps you with entrance into the school
68 because the inception year is now Grade R and not Grade 1.

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:47 PM

Comment [4]: inclusive education -
definition

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:48 PM

Comment [5]: Learning support/remedial

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:50 PM

Comment [6]: Resourcing

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:51 PM

Comment [7]: Resourcing

- 69 M – Are you going to add Grade R classes?
- 70 P – Yes, 2 more. Hopefully, next year, but definitely one class next year. And we will see how it goes.
- 71 Depedning on the number, we will see. If you’ve got three Grade Rs, you’ve got to feed three Grade
- 72 Rs into the school, because you can’t have the parents sitting here and paying all that money, and
- 73 then at the end of that year, you can’t say you don’t have place. You can’t do that. That’s not right. I
- 74 don’t have the space, but I’ve got 90 Grade 1s so my Grade R must be 90 in 2014 when it’s
- 75 compulsory. So that’s what we are working towards. And, um...
- 76 M – How many learners are there at this school in total?
- 77 P – 713.
- 78 M – And race groups?
- 79 P – Mostly black. There’s one or 2 Indians, coloureds, and then we’ve got one little white girl in
- 80 Grade X.
- 81 M – And the home languages?
- 82 P – That varies from English to Afrikaans to Sotho to Zulu to Xhosa, all the official languages. That
- 83 varies.
- 84 M – What about the origins of the children? Where are they coming from?
- 85 P – Most of our children – it all depends on who is in power, I think, because when President Mbeki
- 86 was in the Union Buildings, we had a lot of Xhosas coming from the Eastern Cape, lots and lots and
- 87 lots. Now President Zuma, we see more and more people from Natal. So... The parents work here,
- 88 they work for government. Lots of our parents work for government. So that’s just interesting. That’s
- 89 what we’ve picked up. Our two main groups at the school are the Xhosas and Zulus.
- 90 M – What about children from outside South Africa?
- 91 P – Yes, we have a little bit, but at our school, we have our immigrants but I wouldn’t say they are a
- 92 large group. And most of the immigrant children that we have are immigrants that were born here.
- 93 In other words, the parents are immigrants but the children are South African born, but they still
- 94 speak French at home and Portugeuse, depending on which country they’re from.
- 95 M –Are there a lot of children for whom English is their second language?
- 96 P – Look, because there’s Grade R now, it sort of seems as if it’s becoming less and less and less
- 97 because they are taught English in Grade R. But we find that children that come in what we call from
- 98 the side, in other words, he was in a vernacular school in KwaZulu-Natal and he comes in Grade 5,
- 99 and he comes into our school in Grade 5, they battle.
- 100 M – So it’s not a big problem?
- 101 P – It can be a big problem but we deal with it. That’s why we’ve got our remedial programmes or
- 102 whatever, and then we specifically try and help those children.

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:52 PM

Comment [8]: School demographics

103 M – So what do you as a principal view as the role of educational psychologists?

104 P – Look, a lot of children have issues, have problems. And depending on what the field of the
105 psychologist is, they are here to help, um, because we as teachers are only trained up to a certain
106 point. After that, I can't help this child, I need somebody else to come and help me. And, um, in the
107 past, those systems were there. And they're not there anymore and that is a problem. I wouldn't say
108 they are not there anymore, but they're not... You get one psychologist who has to service 20 or 30
109 schools, and it's a problem.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:18 PM

Comment [9]: Role of ed psych

110 M – Is that from the District?

111 P – Yes. We phone and he says I am coming, I've just got to be at the next school, and then that
112 school's got problems, and he has to address those problems because while he's there, he must
113 address those problems and they keep him or her there, and then by the time they get to your
114 school, um, the problem might have escalated or whatever, you know. Um, yah.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:18 PM

Comment [10]: District capacity to support schools

115 M – So your main experience with educational psychologists is through the services provided by the
116 District?

117 P – Yah, and actually, guidance has arranged with you, a person like yourself, to come to the school,
118 and then they sit here and they contact the parents and then they get payment through the medical
119 aid. That's how it works for us.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:18 PM

Comment [11]: District capacity to support schools

120 M – So working parents have the services of a psychologist.

121 P – Yes, we have a private psychologist here now.

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:54 PM

Comment [12]: Placement of EPs

122 M – And what are your experiences? How long have you been principal?

123 P – XX years.

124 M – In this school?

125 P – Yes.

126 M – So you were already principal when the White Paper came out?

127 P – Yes.

128 M – Has this always been an English language school?

129 P – Yes.

130 M – So it would be interesting to hear what your experiences of inclusion have been, because you
131 were here when the policy came into effect?

132 P – I've always had an ELSEN class at my school. Inclusion, as I said to you earlier, the way that I see
133 it, has always been part of the school, where a principal who hasn't – a colleague of mine up the
134 road doesn't understand inclusion the way that I understand it. I have the ELSEN class, he doesn't.
135 And then obviously, I have to take children from neighbouring schools as well because the LSEN class
136 is here. But then they would send me a child that just needs remedial. They don't understand there's

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:55 PM

Comment [13]: Implementation of WP – accessing of services

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:56 PM

Comment [14]: Institutionalisation of WP

137 a difference between remedial and special needs. Inclusion can work, it can work if you do it
138 properly but these children have to feel safe in an inclusion environment. And they also have to feel
139 that they are getting the attention that they are getting. They are in this class, there's 20 children in
140 the class, the teacher can get to all of them, more or less. In a bigger class - at this school we are
141 fortunate we've got 30 children in a class - but in a bigger school where there are 40 children in a
142 class, an inclusion child or a special needs child, will disappear, in my opinion because the teacher
143 can't get to that child.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:19 PM

Comment [15]: Inclusive ed and remedial

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:58 PM

Comment [16]: Institutionalisation of WP

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:19 PM

Comment [17]: Resourcing of WP

144 M – What happens to the children who need remedial support?

145 P – There's a remedial programme here. We are fortunate enough to have a remedial teacher
146 fulltime. We've got a businessman in the community that sponsors the salary for a remedial teacher,
147 so she has got her class at our school and there's a programme worked out which children go to
148 remedial and they follow a timetable and they go and visit the remedial teacher and she remediates
149 concepts, whatever, and then they go back to the normal class.

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:58 PM

Comment [18]: Resourcing of WP

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:19 PM

Comment [19]: Remedial

150 M – So that's also in groups?

151 P – That's also in groups, by grade or whatever is the problem. So you can have a Grade 7 child who
152 has come in from a rural school or some other school who has got the same problem as a child in
153 Grade 4 and then they will go together. And they will then work out a programme.

154 M – So the remedial is done for as long as the child needs that support?

155 P – Yes.

156 M – The ELSEN is likely to be longer-term?

157 P – The ELSEN is – I wouldn't say it's permanent, because we've had children in the ELSEN class that
158 have developed to such an extent that we've placed them back into mainstream. But the remedial
159 children are in the mainstream.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:19 PM

Comment [20]: Special needs

160 M – So what's your view if you look at inclusion in the pure sense of the word? Would you have
161 these ELSEN classes, or would you have the learner in their home class being supported by the
162 teacher and the teaching assistant maybe?

163 P – I don't agree with that, not at all. It won't work, not at all. Um, uh, for instance, a child who has –
164 I don't know – how can I put it? – my children are all mildly intellectually disabled. If you have a
165 severely intellectually disabled child in the mainstream, you are going to demoralise the teacher, you
166 are going to demoralise the child, and you are going to have a discipline problem with the children,
167 the other children in the class, because the teacher is going to – her attention is going to be with this
168 child all the time and not with the majority of the class. So everybody is going to be – in my opinion,
169 it's not going to be a workable situation.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:17 PM

Comment [21]: Capacity and competence of teachers

170 M – And if you didn't have this ELSEN class, and the kids were in the regular classes, what would...

171 P – It would then be the same as the next school who doesn't have the class, I would apply to the
172 school that has the class, and send the child there. They get lost. It's not, in my opinion, sound
173 educational norms to have a child that is battling to be in a class where there are hundreds of

174 children, there's a noise. These children next door, if you disrupt them, they've got a set routine, the
175 teacher's worked out the routine, and they know the routine., and if that routine is disrupted by
176 anything, an announcement or I go into the class and I say to the teacher, 'Right, we are going to...'
177 For instance, fire drill, if we have a fire drill, the ELSEN class is totally, totally mixed up and to get
178 them back into their rhythm is... The rest of the day is a waste

179 M – Could you see a situation... Let's say you didn't have this class, could you see a situation – what
180 would be required to provide support to these learners in the regular classes with their home
181 teachers?

182 P – You would need an assistant. Each teacher needs – that's first world, hey? [small laugh] – a
183 teacher's assistant. I can tell you, I don't know offhand, but I am quite sure, if you go and look at the
184 more affluent schools, where they've got teachers' assistants, it helps – and they haven't got an
185 ELSEN class like we have, it helps with that child in the class while he or she is waiting for a place at
186 an ELSEN school. We can't afford that kind of thing. But we, as I said to you just now, we are lucky
187 we have a businessman who is paying for a remedial teacher for us. That is how we get around that

188 M – Could you see a role for an educational psychologist?

189 P – Yes, of course, all the time, all the time. As a support, yes.

190 M – Doing what kind of thing?

191 P – Helping the children, helping the teacher. I said to you just now, remember the teachers are only
192 trained up to a certain point. After that, we can't help this child. That is why you can't put a normal –
193 not a normal, that's not the right word – you can't put a – ja, let's call it a normally trained education
194 teacher into an ELSEN class. You've got to have somebody who specialises in that. And then an
195 educational psychologist, you need someone who specialises in that field of the education process.
196 And ja.

197 M – So if GDE were to provide you with a funded post for an educational psychologist...

198 P – It would be great.

199 M – What kind of work would you want this person to do?

200 P – She or he would help with the education process, the remedial process, the character building
201 process, um, parents – help train parents because we are all parents, and if a school calls you in and
202 says to you, 'Mr So and So, your child is an LSEN child,' 9 out of 10 times, parents say 'Not my child'
203 That parent has to be – what's the word I am looking for – it has to be explained to them that it's not
204 the end of the world. And that, an educational psychologist can do. And you need that all the time at
205 this school, all the time. Now we phone the Department, and the Department says 'Okay, I can see
206 you next Thursday.' By then, the problem has either escalated or the parents don't come back or
207 whatever.

208 M – What's your view on the teachers' perceptions of such a professional?

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:22 PM

Comment [22]: Capacity

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:00 PM

Comment [23]: Capacity of teachers

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:59 PM

Comment [24]: Resourcing of WP

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:00 PM

Comment [25]: Role of ed psych

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:00 PM

Comment [26]: Role of ed psych

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:00 PM

Comment [27]: District capacity to support schools

209 P – Look, at this school I think they will only welcome it, because they pick up a problem much
210 quicker because of the small classes. We can identify a child more easily and then to get that help for
211 that child so that he can go out and come back again.

212 M – So what is the process you follow here, if there is a child who is experiencing difficulties,
213 barriers?

214 P – First or all, in the class, yes, the teacher will. Or if it's a new child, we look at that profile. If the
215 previous school has written something in the profile, we will look and see that this child has
216 whatever problem, and then we will look out for it. And if there's a problem, the teacher will pick it
217 up in class, and then we will refer it to the support team, and then we will get the ELSEN teacher to
218 have a look at the child, perhaps test the child, interview the parents, and because she is qualified to
219 do that, we will then obviously have the child tested with the parents' consent, get the Department
220 in, and that's now all to identify the child as LSEN. To identify the child as remedial, that's totally
221 different. The teacher will see there's a problem that needs to be remediated, and that child will
222 then go to the remedial teacher.

223 M – And if there are any other, let's say, social or emotional difficulties?

224 P – The same process, but then we'll get a psychologist in, or the Department's psychologist and we
225 take it from there.

226 M – So you can draw on the Department's psychologists as much as you need to but you need to
227 wait?

228 P – Let's use an example of child abuse. If there's child abuse, according to the South African Schools
229 Act, we have to report it. So child X comes into the office, the teacher suspects there's abuse, um,
230 what we will do is we will get hold of the school nurse. She might be at another school somewhere.
231 We ask her, 'Listen, just come around here tomorrow morning and have a look at this child.' And
232 then we will have her medical opinion. She can't physically look at the child. She will then just ask a
233 few questions and then say, 'Listen, this is not true,' or 'Yes, I think you must take this further.' Then
234 we will contact the Department and say, 'Listen, this is what we suspect. What now?' And then they
235 will say, 'Okay, interview the parents, bring the parents in, we need to interview the parents, get the
236 parents in.' And say to them this is what we suspect, or we report to the South African Police or
237 whatever the case is. That's the route that we follow.

238 M – Can you describe a case where you felt that there was a need for some form of psychological
239 support for one of your learners? Who did you talk to, what happened, what was the outcome?

240 P – Um, if psychological support... Well, if I think of ... At our school, we've got the psychologists that
241 come, so we will ask them to have a look at the child if we think there's a problem. Then we will also
242 notify the Department through the school-based support team and they would most probably come.
243 We've got XX who comes to the school and he is quite religious about it.

244 M – Is he an educational psychologist?

245 P – I don't think he's an educational psychologist, I think he's just a normal psychologist, in the
246 support services at the Department. He's the one that supports our school. He doesn't just support

Michele Berger 12/11/26 4:58 PM

Comment [28]: Relationship betw
teachers and ed psych

Michele Berger 12/11/26 4:59 PM

Comment [29]: Support by ed psych

Michele Berger 12/11/26 4:59 PM

Comment [30]: Support by ed psych

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:02 PM

Comment [31]: District capacity to support
schools

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:03 PM

Comment [32]: Support by ed psych

247 our school, he's got about 20 other schools, I suppose, I'm not too sure. So when he does get here,
248 he gets here... Um, where's his card now? He's a psychologist (looks at card). He's been in education
249 all his life.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:04 PM

Comment [33]: District capacity to support schools

250 M – So you might have a child that the teacher identifies as needing support - in the first instance,
251 would you ask the parents?

252 P – A lot of children lose their parents, in accidents or whatever the case is, and that child needs
253 support. We'll get a psychologist in, from if it's the Department or if we've got the resident one that
254 comes and we'll ask him or her to have a word with the child and support in that way. Um, if it's a
255 more serious thing like rape or – not that the death of a mother or father is not serious – but then
256 we have to report it to the Department and they will then take it further. But that takes time.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:05 PM

Comment [34]: Role of ed psych

257 M – But you could ask the psychologist to...

258 P – The one who's at the school?

259 M – Yes.

260 P – But a lot of schools don't have the luxury that we have.

261 M – She's private.

262 P – She's private, yes.

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:03 PM

Comment [35]: Accessing of services

263 M – So would you first have to get the parents...

264 P – Well, I'll talk to her and say, 'Come on, I know you're private, but just have a look here.'

265 M – Get her to talk to the child first?

266 P – Yes.

267 M – Does that work?

268 P – Ja, sometimes. Sometimes the parents don't turn up. Lots of times, the parents don't. Then you
269 can't actually do anything. Then you report it to the Department and you follow that route. Because
270 somebody who is private is... You people have all got your client, your placement of privileges, of
271 confidentiality. I understand that, but through the Department, it's a bit different.

272 M – And if you've had a case where you've done this and you've followed the route and the parents
273 have cooperated and so on, what has been the outcome?

274 P – Most of the time, it's favourable. There are times that it isn't and then you start all over again.
275 But most of the time, it is.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:08 PM

Comment [36]: Role of ed psych

276 M – If you have a child who needs an assessment, scholastic or other assessment, do you have to get
277 the parents' permission or is that also done through the Department?

278 P – It can be done by the Department, but that takes very long. So we get the parents in and we find
279 out if they've got a medical aid, and then we ask them – we suggest a person or they know

280 somebody or whatever, or on the medical aid, there's a doctor or somebody that the medical aid
281 approves and we ask them to take the child there.

282 M – If there's no medical aid?

283 P – Then we wait for the Department.

284 M – What in your opinion needs to be done to improve the effectiveness of educational
285 psychological services to support inclusion?

286 P – Money. Money, money, money, money.

287 M – How will that help you?

288 P – If there's more money, you can appoint more people. It's as simple as that. You know, um, one
289 educational psychologist can't service 50 or 60 schools. You need so many for so many schools.

290 M – How many would you need, if there was the money?

291 P – The ideal is like the Americans, they have one per school. I realise that will never happen. But I
292 would say you need one for a region, like the inner city should have at least one and then the near
293 East, the far East, the West, the far West. They should have their dedicated psychologists. That's
294 how I see it, but I know that won't happen.

295 M – In terms of your SBST, currently, it's the guidance HOD and the grade teachers, the teachers
296 who are involved with the particular children whose cases are being discussed. Do you ever bring in
297 the psychologist, either from the District or the private one?

298 P – Look, they visit the school, yes, but they can't be here at every meeting, because P has her
299 meetings, she's busy with them now. But I think, like tomorrow, we've got XX coming in for a case.
300 So we do bring them in, but they can't be here all the time.

301 M – He's coming here to meet a child?

302 P – To talk to parents.

303 M – What's your view on how your SBST functions?

304 P – My SBST?

305 M – Yes.

306 P – Very effectively. The Department comes to us to see what we are doing. And I'm not just saying
307 that. They come to ask P how she does she do this, what does she do here, and so we are running
308 very, very effectively in my opinion.

309 M – And once a week you have a meeting by grade?

310 P – Not once a week. I'm not sure. Once a week the SBST meets. And then now she's busy
311 interviewing, for instance, the Grade 1s. She has all the teachers of Grade 1s and they discuss each
312 child that needs to be discussed. And tomorrow, it'll be Grade 2s, then 3s, then 4s.

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:04 PM

Comment [37]: Accessing of services

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:09 PM

Comment [38]: Effectiveness of services

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:10 PM

Comment [39]: Resourcing of WP

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:11 PM

Comment [40]: Placement of ed psychs

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:12 PM

Comment [41]: Role of ed psych

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:13 PM

Comment [42]: SBST capacity and effectiveness

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:14 PM

Comment [43]: Role of SBST and functioning

313 M – How often does that happen?

314 P – Once a term.

315 M – So that's different to the Monday meetings?

316 P – Ja. The Monday meetings, as I understand it, when the grade teachers have their meetings and
 317 there's a problem with a child, when they will record it in their file and when the SBST meeting for
 318 Grade 1 representative will say, 'Listen, we need to remember this child.'

319 M – You wouldn't like to see any changes in the way your...

320 P – If there's something to change for the better, yes, of course.

321 M – There's nothing you want to do differently?

322 P – I don't know. This works for us. Um, as I said, maybe there's something that you can suggest.

323 M – I'm not suggesting, I'm just asking.

324 P – Maybe there's something we're not doing or not seeing. If you were at the school, you would be
 325 on that committee, and you would actually then chair it. And you would then...

326 M – What is P's specific training?

327 P – She's head of department, educational guidance. And she's got her degree in ELSEN or remedial,
 328 I think. She has specific training. I think her honours degree is in that.

329 M – She teaches also. Does she do any counselling of children?

330 P – She can but that's why we've got people from outside.

331 M – And then you've got the church worker.

332 P – The church, Doxa Deo, sends us a worker who does character building.

333 M – How is that working?

334 P – It works alright, it works fine. They look forward to seeing him. But you know, that's also a
 335 benefactor that's paying for that. It can end tomorrow, unfortunately. So we are hoping it doesn't.
 336 But an educational psychologist at a school or at two or three schools would only benefit the school,
 337 the children and the community. Because you would also then service the parents. Definitely,
 338 there's no doubt about that. But if it's going to work, it's going to happen, there's going to be money
 339 – money, money, money.

340 M – Let's say you have all the money you need, what would be your priorities here.

341 P – First of all, I would appoint a psychologist fulltime. I would do that. Um, and then she or he
 342 would then be in charge of, um, the psychology of the school, the discipline of the school, the
 343 children that are battling with the academics, the LSEN children, um, the traumatised learners,
 344 traumatised staff. You must remember that a staff member also becomes traumatised if a child is
 345 not coping, the teacher becomes – because she's not getting the work done. I would, I would fully

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:05 PM

Comment [44]: Role of SBST and functioning

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:07 PM

Comment [45]: Role of SBST and functioning

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:16 PM

Comment [46]: Role of ed psych

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:17 PM

Comment [47]: Effectiveness of ed psych services

Michele Berger 12/11/26 7:41 PM

Comment [48]: Role of ed psych

- 346 incorporate something like that at this school, definitely. But then again, that would be the ideal
347 situation.
- 348 M – Did you say you at one stage had a psychologist?
- 349 P – Yah, but they were private.
- 350 M – So since the new dispensation, it hasn't changed?
- 351 P – What I said was, in the past, we had 2 ELSEN classes, I had a remedial class, a full time remedial
352 teacher paid by the Department, I had an aid class and I had an immigrant class.
- 353 M – What's the aid class?
- 354 P – A-i-d. That's the class where children with... It's actually just a remedial class, but it's called an
355 aid class, small class, 10 children, they battled with a concept. My son was in an aid class, and then
356 he'd go back to the mainstream. He would be there for a year or 2 years and then he'd go back.
357 Similar to remedial. We had all that, and it was all government-paid, and then they took it away.
- 358 M – How have the demographics of the school changed?
- 359 P – Totally, totally. Mostly white Portuguese in the past, white English-speaking children and white
360 Afrikaans speaking children who wanted to be taught in English. And then it changed, obviously.
- 361 M – Is this a former Model C school?
- 362 P – Yes.
- 363 M - What are the fees that you charge?
- 364 P – R370 a month. Grade R is more. There's no exemptions and no subsidy. So we have to pay the
365 teacher and buy the equipment.
- 366 M – Are there extra costs for books?
- 367 P – No, it includes everything. They must buy a stationery pack but that's a once-off, and then the
368 uniform. They don't pay to play sport or to get on the bus, that's all included. And then we have
369 parents coming to ask for exemptions. It's the community we live in, and it's part of it.
- 370 M – You've got some business people around who do sponsor you.
- 371 P – I've got one businessman. The others are not interested. I don't know why. We've tried. I've got
372 another one who came to see me yesterday. The owner of Debonairs Pizza wants to donate pizza to
373 the needy children once every term, once every 3 months. Only for 20 children or something. It's not
374 fair. So now I get all these pizzas. I have got to be very careful, because now I'm saying you can come
375 because you are needy. Father hears this and says, 'My child is not needy.' Although he might be
376 needy, the pride of the parent says no. I've got parents who pay the fees and don't ask for an
377 exemption because of the pride, even though they are destitute.
- 378 M – How many exemptions do you give?

379 P – Not many. For this year, it's about 50. I've got parents that are street vendors. They sit with a
380 table at the corner and they sell oranges, and they pay. Some employers could be paying. We always
381 used to get a Rotary bursary, but that has now stopped. I suppose they can't afford it anymore.
382 Things have changed, things have really changed over the years. I don't want to say for the worst or
383 the better, but there are things we had that we don't have anymore, and things that we have that
384 we didn't have. So you have to balance it. Being here so long, I know where we were and I know
385 where we are now. And also, you've got to have a very supportive governing body. If you don't have
386 a supportive governing body, then you're doomed. We have an active, supportive, open-minded, for
387 the benefit of all the children at the school. It is good to have that, because if you don't have that,
388 then there's a problem. It's not hunky dory all the time, because you do butt heads, but at the end of
389 the day, you walk out of a meeting and you agree on what must be done.

390 M – Do you fund any of your teaching posts from your fees?

391 P – Yes, about 8 or 9. To keep the class sizes down. The biggest portion of our budget goes to the
392 payment of SGB teachers. That's why we can have 3 classes per grade. If we didn't have this, we
393 would have 48 children in a class. All the old buildings around here have been turned into flats, and
394 nobody is thinking about where the kids are going to go to school. It's just this school in the city
395 centre area. The other one is down that way, and over there and whatever.

396 M – Which high schools do these kids go on to?

397 P – It all depends. There's one behind us and one just around the corner. They all try for Girls' High
398 and Boys' High, and Sutherland. What can I say? That's how it works. Unfortunately... And also, he
399 has to take my children because I am his feeder school but so is the next school and the next school,
400 and he's got place for so many children. And if all my children go there, he is almost full. Then he
401 can't accommodate the next school. At least it's not my problem! My problem starts in Grade R.
402 From next year, that problem will become less and less and less, because the Grade 1, we will be fed
403 by the Grade Rs. But then the problems will start earlier. That's why we must be paid more. I am not
404 a school with 5 grades, I am a school with 8 grades. A primary school is bigger than a high school.
405 The children in a high school are between the ages of 14 and 18. In primary school, they start at 5
406 and leave at 14. That is why our classes should be smaller, and not the high school. Their ratio is less
407 than ours. Where do you measure the education system? You measure it in matric, not what we do
408 here. If the matric results are fine, then it's... It doesn't matter what's happening down here. The
409 high schools complain and say the children are coming to high school and they can't read and write.
410 It's possible because there are 48 children in a class. You can't listen to 48 children reading, you can't
411 teach 48 kids to read. And that's where you come in. You can assist with that. But there are no posts.
412 The government needs to realise. There are a lot of good things in the education system, don't get
413 me wrong. There are a lot of things that will make the education system workable and more
414 productive if it is just managed properly. There are a lot of good things.

415

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:09 PM

Comment [49]: Role of EP

TEACHER FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPT

[Commenced recording after introductory remarks and consent obtained.]

M - What do you view as the role of educational psychologists in supporting inclusion?

P5 – Teachers don't have power – they are not empowered – to do things. We know what we can do but we don't have the power. I am speaking from an ELSEN side. In ELSEN education, we have to make adaptations, but nothing is written in black and white. We have to do what we think. We don't have the power and we are not given the ability to make the decisions

Michele Berger 12/11/21 10:46 AM

Comment [1]: Role and authority of teachers

P6 – We don't have the authority to do it. She is able to do it but we do not have the authority

Michele Berger 12/11/21 10:46 AM

Comment [2]: Authority of teachers - lack

P4 – We have to go through the Department before a child can go to a special school. X has the knowledge and skills and can identify a child but the Department won't let us go ahead. They don't give us permission – it takes a long time.

Michele Berger 12/11/21 10:45 AM

Comment [3]: Current system and processes

P7 – We should have one person appointed in that capacity in a school to do it.

Michele Berger 12/11/21 10:47 AM

Comment [4]: Future direction – what schools would like

M - What is the role of an educational psychologist?

P4 – It's assessment of the learners, therapy of the learners, and then assistance with the Department, with Departmental processes and collaborating and communicating with them.

Michele Berger 12/11/21 10:50 AM

Comment [5]: Role of ed psych

P7 – We work with the children so we see where the problems lie and what we have to do. We need back up.

Michele Berger 12/11/21 10:52 AM

Comment [6]: Role of teachers

M - What is our – the educational psychologists' - role in inclusive education?

Michele Berger 12/11/21 10:52 AM

Comment [7]: Support to teachers (by ed psych)

P7 - Inclusion to mainstream and then back to ELSEN – this works both ways

Michele Berger 12/11/21 10:53 AM

Comment [8]: Role of ed psych

34 M - If you identify a child with a specific barrier to learning, what is the process that
35 you follow to get that child assessed by an educational psychologist?

36
37 P7 – Usually, the teachers in the grade sit together and discuss the child. They sit
38 and agree on the problem of the child and then they go to the support team which is
39 E. Then they discuss it with her. Then we decide which will be the best way to
40 support the child. Parents need to be involved first and interviewed so we have their
41 consent and they need to know their child has a problem. Depending on if parents
42 have medical aid, and if we can get the Department here to assist us which usually
43 doesn't happen, the parents need to take it further. That doesn't always happen.
44 They send the children to me to assess the child but we all have classes and we
45 don't always have time to assess another child from another class we don't know.
46 But we need someone with a different perspective to see a child differently.
47 Sometimes, you keep on looking at the same problem and you don't look beyond.

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:47 PM

Comment [9]: Current system and processes - assessment

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:48 PM

Comment [10]: Role of ed psych - teachers' perspective

48
49 P6 - You talk to your other grade teachers, then you take it to the SBST and then you
50 say 'Cindy' has this problem and this is what we are going to recommend.

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:48 PM

Comment [11]: Role of SBST

51
52 P7 – Yes.

53
54 M - You have those meetings once a term for each grade?

55
56 P7 – But we deal with cases in between also. After the meeting, the parents are
57 informed and then E will say we have to report back and what happened. Depending
58 on the case, the principal and E will sit in.

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:49 PM

Comment [12]: Current system and processes

59
60 M - Do you as teachers interact with the Department or the psychologist?

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:50 PM

Comment [13]: Role of SBST and collaboration

61
62 P6 – Only the SBST do it.

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:51 PM

Comment [14]: Collaboration (with other schools)

63
64 P4 – People at different schools can assess and I ask them to help us. Working
65 through the Department takes a long time. At [another school], there are
66 psychologists and they help us. They know the Department and they know it's a
67 lengthy process and they help us. It's as if they (Department) have been so long out

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:52 PM

Comment [15]: District capacity to support schools

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:53 PM

Comment [16]: Collaboration (with other schools)

68 of teaching and education that they have lost touch with reality. They don't know
69 what's going on. They don't know what the standards of the different grades and
70 levels are.

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:53 PM

Comment [17]: District capacity to support schools

71
72 P5 – It's another thing seeing stuff on paper than seeing the child. They are not
73 robots. We are dealing with the child as a whole, in total. We see the total problem.
74 The Department doesn't and they don't know what's going on.

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:54 PM

Comment [18]: District capacity to support schools

75
76 M - Have you had experiences working with educational psychologists?

77
78 P5 – Yes. A few.

79
80 P4 – If parents just paid them it would have been positive. They are very helpful.
81 Some of them even did therapy on the computers. The one we have now would like
82 to do reading, remedial. We had an educational psychologist here but she left to go
83 to a school in another province. She wanted to work in a school, and here she was
84 independent. She was coming in but parents didn't pay and so it was a problem.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 10:56 AM

Comment [19]: School-ed psych relationship

Michele Berger 12/11/22 10:57 AM

Comment [20]: Role of ed psych – what did in school

85
86 P7 – But they are quite expensive. The parents can't always pay, and the district
87 can't always send someone when we need it.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 10:58 AM

Comment [21]: Resourcing – cost of services

88
89 P4 – The Department has educational psychologists but I think they are too busy with
90 the schools that are not performing.

91
92 P7 – We had a good thing going but the parents didn't pay. The parents perhaps
93 should be trained as well or informed, better educated in a sense so that they realise
94 the value of the assistance that they are getting for their kids. I would want everything
95 for my child regardless of the cost. If they don't see the value, they won't pay.

96
97 P6 – It's a cultural thing. They feel the teacher knows everything and that she will
98 make sure her child will pass the different grades. You have to have a mindshift with
99 these parents, you have to change their perception.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 12:00 PM

Comment [22]: Cultural differences and understandings

100

101 P4 – Parents abuse the system. We had LL and they owed them R20000 after 2
102 years. And those people had good hearts, they wanted to help them. They even got
103 reports that went home.

104

105 M – Can you describe a case where you felt as a teacher that there was a need for
106 some form of psychological support or intervention for one of your learners? Who did
107 you talk to, what happened?

108

109 P6 – If we feel a child needs to be referred to a psychologist, we would first take this
110 to the SBST or to [our guidance HOD]. Then we will decide what we think we should
111 do. The [guidance HOD] will take the case forward. So we will recommend it but we
112 don't really have anything to do with the psychologist. Also, like we were saying,
113 parents don't always want to pay or they can't pay. They don't always want to listen
114 when we say that their child should go to a psychologist.

115

116 M - What have your experiences been of inclusion?

117

118 P6 – I do adaptations, that's inclusion. I don't think in mainstream it's possible. It's
119 still very difficult. There are too many difficulties to work with and we don't have time
120 and there are too many children

121

122 P4 – You won't be able to work with Down Syndrome or physically impaired or blind.
123 It's too difficult. We won't be able to work with them.

124

125 P7 – There's too much pressure on the teachers in mainstream to perform and to do
126 all the assessments. The policy expects us to

127

128 P4 – So far, we've been lucky.

129

130 P8 – I think it's because most of the special high schools are so full, they put their
131 kids in a mainstream school.

132

133 P4 – They are building all inclusive schools – full service schools. They are doing that
134 now but it will take a few years.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 9:39 PM
Comment [23]: Role of SBST

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:18 PM
Comment [24]: What is inclusion?

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:18 PM
Comment [25]: Experiences of inclusion

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:18 PM
Comment [26]: Experiences of inclusion

135

136 P8 – Inclusion is so broad. You just have to deal with it. If a child is in your class, you
137 deal with it.

138

139 M - What is your view on what needs to be done to improve the effectiveness of
140 educational psychology services to support inclusion?

141

142 [Laugh].

143

144 P8 – The thing is, if we identify a child, then me personally as their teacher, I want
145 them to act. They must immediately deal with that child. But they are not involved.

146

147 P4 – They look for all kinds of excuses – try this, try that – but we know that it's not
148 going to work.

149

150 M – When you say 'they', are you referring to the district or private educational
151 psychologists?

152

153 P4 - This is the staff from the district office.

154

155 P6 – A few years ago, they had a clinic service that did something. But now, you sit
156 with a child and they don't tell you anything.

157

158 P8 – We can't even draw up an assessment plan.

159

160 P6 – They don't know the child. They come here in the morning for a half an hour or
161 so and they want to solve the problem. We know the child. But we need their support
162 and we can't get it in an hour.

163

164 P7 – The child won't open up to a stranger.

165

166 P4 – But we also need therapy, remediation, we need assistance with the child.

167

168 P8 – They must be developed on their own level.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:17 PM

Comment [27]: Role of district and capacity to support schools

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:19 PM

Comment [28]: Role of district and capacity to support schools

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:20 PM

Comment [29]: Collaboration – school with district

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:22 PM

Comment [30]: Resourcing – lack of – and capability to support inclusion

169

170 P4 – We've got the teacher doing bridging and remedial in the afternoons. We're
171 trying everything we can but it's not enough. We need a psychologist at the school.

172

173 P8 – Or they must visit the school at least every week.

174

175 M – The district?

176

177 P8 – Yah.

178

179 P7 – Every psychologist in the district should have 3 or 4 schools. They must be part
180 of the staff. The children must see this person as part of the staff.

181

182 P4 – XX doesn't even have a vehicle. He drives with his own car. It's dangerous! It is.

183

184 M – What role do you think the educational psychologists in the district should be
185 playing?

186

187 P6 – Well, it's not just an educational psychologist but also speech and other
188 specialisations, because there are lots of problems. They mustn't just specialise in
189 something.

190

191 P5 – We need an all-rounder. They need additional staff.

192

193 P6 – The parents first need to be educated on the service that the psychologist can
194 give their children and the importance of the service that the psychologist can give
195 their children. They must first be educated and then...

196

197 M - What would you as teachers like to see – if I were here, what would you like me
198 to do? What would my role be?

199

200 P4 – Personally, I would love to have someone here. It's like an open door policy, I
201 can just walk in and say do this, what can I do? This is the problem, do you agree
202 and what can I do about it?

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:23 PM

Comment [31]: Resourcing – lack of –
and capability to support inclusion

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:23 PM

Comment [32]: Role of district

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:24 PM

Comment [33]: Resourcing and role of
district

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:25 PM

Comment [34]: Resourcing and role of
district

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:25 PM

Comment [35]: Collaboration – school
and ed psych

203

204 P6 - I've tried everything, what can I do?

205

206 P4 – Z [the private psychologist providing services to the school] has spoken to the
207 teachers of the learners she has assessed so far, but she can't go in and give them
208 all the detail because the parents have to give consent before she can do anything.
209 She can't tell us everything but she just confirms our suspicion – yes, this child
210 should fail or she needs remedial or OT. She has to ask the parents for consent. She
211 includes recommendations for the teachers.

212

213 P6 – The parents usually give consent.

214

215 P4 – She's into computer programmes. But it's R200 a month, for individual sessions.

216

217 M - How do you feel about the recommendations you get?

218

219 P5 – Usually, the recommendations are very vague.

220

221 P4 – It's actually things we know.

222

223 P5 – It's not pinpointing anything. We would like her to help us in class. We need
224 detailed programmes.

225

226 P4 – Yes, we need programmes but we don't always have time for that. I work on a
227 different level. I've got three children that came from other schools and they are on a
228 Grade 1 level [she teaches Grade 3]. So I am giving them different attention but I am
229 a foundation phase educator. It is different when they are upstairs [Intermediate
230 Phase] where they have different teachers every half an hour.

231

232 P5 – In Intersen, when I take someone to my desk and work with her, the others stop
233 their work and want to know what you are doing with that child. They haven't got that
234 mindset that you can spend time with individuals. They either snigger, pass a
235 comment or start making a noise. I am quite strict in the class and it still happens. I

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:26 PM

Comment [36]: Role of ed psych

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:27 PM

Comment [37]: Role of ed psych

236 teach English and I notice that. If a person is struggling, the others won't give that
237 child an opportunity. Their values change as they grow bigger.

238

239 P6 – We need someone who is outside the class so the others won't see them.

240

241 M - If an educational psychologist writes a report, what would be helpful for you?

242

243 P4 – We need help, we want help. We want to improve.

244

245 M – What is your view, given that we have this White Paper, on what is needed to
246 make inclusion work, and what role can educational psychologists play to support
247 that?

248

249 P6 – In a perfect world, you would have a closed circuit TV where you can observe
250 the child in a classroom without them knowing you are watching. If you as an outsider
251 come into the class, they will either be impossible or as good as gold. So you need to
252 observe them from a distance, and then sit with the teacher and discuss. Then
253 nobody is going to take umbrage and say this or that. You can come to an agreement
254 about what the child needs and what you will do. It will have to be a situation where
255 you work closely with the teacher, in a perfect world.

256

257 P5 – There are different styles and teaching methods, and even the teachers need to
258 be educated on all this. We don't know it all. The mainstream teachers tend to teach
259 a certain way because they are mainstream teachers. You should show them how
260 and which method would help which children. You always have that percent of
261 children that cannot learn the way that mainstream teacher is teaching. You need
262 flexibility. We as educators need flexibility.

263

264 P6 – It is the type of children we are getting in and it is just going to get worse and
265 worse and worse. The demographics are changing and this plays a big role. Culture
266 plays a big role. We don't know the cultures of the children. I don't even want to think
267 about it because one child must first go home and be washed before you can teach
268 him. So it's a cultural thing.

269

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:28 PM

Comment [38]: Sharing of expertise, and collaboration

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:29 PM

Comment [39]: Collaboration – teachers and ed psych

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:31 PM

Comment [40]: Role of ed psych in supporting teachers

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:31 PM

Comment [41]: Culture – lack of understanding

270 P5 – It is getting worse. You are so fortunate in the Foundation Phase because you
271 have the children in hand. We do subject teaching, and it's very hard. Sometimes you
272 see the children for half an hour. They listen but they don't take in anything you said.
273 Then you need to take those children out who have that problem and explain it
274 another way.

275

276 P6 – It's auditory and visual – if they don't see it, they don't hear it.

277

278 P5 – There are quite a few like that in Grade 5 and 6 that I've seen. I had Grade 1
279 and 2's before and I had two Israelis in my class who didn't speak English and a
280 hyperactive child. And I could keep the hyperactive child busy and teach those two to
281 speak English. But you had a different type of child. Society is changing.

282

283 P4 – They were willing to learn.

284

285 P5 – People are dynamic. Society has changed a lot in the last 30 years or less.

286

287 P4 - They don't have that willingness. There's no pride.

288

289 P5 – It can happen. I am sorry for these young people because they never
290 experience that. They give up. Isn't it because we are in such a materialistic society
291 that we expect reward for everything?

292

293 P4 – There are some of them who have never even held a pencil when they come to
294 Grade 1.

295

296 P6 – I don't even want to talk about emotions. There are children who don't even get
297 a hug and so you must also deal with that.

298

299 P5 – You have more than one family sometimes living in one flat. I've stayed over at
300 the Y Hotel and I've looked out. And they are not visiting inside but they are sitting on
301 the pavement outside. The children are sitting on concrete. It's hard to understand
302 how they cope. Their playground is the pavement and there's a noise all night long.

303

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:33 PM

Comment [42]: Culture – lack of understanding

304 P7 – So if they are tired in class, you are not surprised because the noise never
305 stops.

306

307 P6 – How long from here? How long is it going to take? I know it comes from such a
308 long time now. Give us a bit...

309

310 P4 – We can't hire an educational psychologist because we would have to budget for
311 it and increase the school fees. Some really do try but their hands are cut off and
312 they can't do anything.

313

314 P7 – How many of you are there? There are 14 in my class which is the remedial
315 class.

316

317 P8 – It should be more like 40, not 14.

318

319 P4 - Have you read Animal Farm? It's like that. The pigs are getting fatter and fatter
320 and they are not looking after their own.

321

322 M – Thank you all so much for your time.

323

INTERVIEW WITH DBE PARTICIPANT (P1)

[Introductory remarks blocked to avoid identification]

M – [REDACTED]?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

M – What I am looking at is what role educational psychologists can play to enable greater levels of inclusion in the South African schooling system. From your perspective, what is it that is necessary and what role can we play? Has the Department conceptualised a role for educational psychologists within the system?

P1 – The question is broad in a sense, but I'll just attempt to give you a response. My response is, I think, not only in South Africa, I think also in other countries – I can talk about Sweden because I have had some kind of experience or exposure in terms of how they make use of psychologists. But to start with, psychologists should be part of a multidisciplinary team in identifying barriers to learning and what kind of support needs to be packaged together. So they will come from a behaviour perspective, from a psychological perspective, whatever their specialisation suggests. From that perspective, one would expect that you would have experts from different disciplines coming together and getting to understand a barrier to learning that a learner or group of learners experience, from their area of specialisation. What needs to happen is there must be a decision taken on what would be an appropriate intervention to reduce or eliminate barriers. In that space, the pedagogical voice should also be heard.

What is happening is that parents or schools refer learners to educational psychologists and they will do the assessment, make their findings and then prescribe to schools or parents what should happen to the child or learner. That's not

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:19 PM

Comment [1]: Sharing of expertise – multidisciplinary team

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:19 PM

Comment [2]: Sharing of expertise – multidisciplinary team

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:20 PM

Comment [3]: Sharing of expertise – multidisciplinary team

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:20 PM

Comment [4]: Decisions on interventions

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:21 PM

Comment [5]: Multidisciplinary team

35 the way it should work. Because they come from a different discipline and you also
36 have teachers who come from a discipline of pedagogy so it is in understanding the
37 barrier to learning together that we can plan an intervention or support plan for an
38 individual learner. What's happening is you get these professionals prescribing. They
39 will tell a school – if a child goes to a mainstream school – they will tell the school,
40 the child needs to go to a mainstream school. Based on what? They won't have this
41 aspect of pedagogy, this educational aspect. That needs to be reviewed. We are not
42 there yet to clarify the roles of these experts. But slowly we are moving in that
43 direction.

44
45 M – When you say educational psychologists don't have that pedagogy, are you
46 referring to the training that educational psychologists should have?

47
48 P1 – No, let me correct that. With educational psychologists, it's much different, it's
49 better off in terms of the role they play. What I was referring to was in the case of
50 clinicians, clinical psychologists. That's where you will find a problem. With
51 educational psychologists, they should understand both the psychological makeup of
52 an individual within an education space. At the moment, it's a bit better. But I would
53 still dare to say that they may be prescriptive. What should be taken away is for any
54 expert or specialist to be prescriptive. Teachers should not be prescriptive and
55 neither should any expert.

56
57 M – How would you see that working? What is the thinking about how you can make
58 use of the services of educational psychologists?

59
60 P1 – My response is based on the assumption that educational psychologists will be
61 employed in the education system. If that is a true assumption, then it will be different.
62 But what I know to be reality, is they may start within education and offer their
63 services, but then they open private practices. There are many reasons for them to
64 follow this trajectory. When they work in private practice, I think that's where you will
65 find some of the problems, in terms of the role they should play. In terms of
66 developments, what I have identified in terms of implementing White Paper 6, is that
67 in the first place, the other disciplines like social workers, psychologists, therapists,
68 are very few employed in DBE. In the main, they are employed by Health and Social

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:21 PM
Comment [6]: Current system and processes

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:22 PM
Comment [7]: Need for multidisciplinary approach

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:22 PM
Comment [8]: Current system and processes

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:23 PM
Comment [9]: Departmental direction - future

Michele Berger 12/11/20 12:41 PM
Comment [10]: Clinical psychologists - role

Michele Berger 12/11/20 12:42 PM
Comment [11]: Ed psychs - role

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:24 PM
Comment [12]: Future – what should happen

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:25 PM
Comment [13]: Departmental direction – future – employment of ed psychs

Michele Berger 12/11/20 12:49 PM
Comment [14]: Ed psychs – role (in private practice)

69 Development. So from an education perspective, those health professionals are
70 regarded as a scarce skill. In view of that, the proposal we are making increasingly is
71 that we need to collaborate or cooperate with DoH and DSD in terms of providing
72 learners with access to these specialised services. That includes assistive devices
73 because learners with disabilities do require in the main to be provided with these,
74 and access to such specialist services like psychologists, therapists, etc. But I
75 haven't found that government has in place a coordination framework that will
76 coordinate access to these specialist services so that as government we can share
77 these scarce resources. If you look at procurement of devices, devices are different –
78 there are 2 categories – those that are education-specific which have to be provided
79 by DBE and then there are those that are health-related which must be provided by
80 DoH, but we as DBE have to buy hearing aids, wheelchairs, which do not fall under
81 our ambit but we cannot at programme level go to DoH and demand they provide so
82 many learners with these kinds of devices. Coming back to health professionals, my
83 take is that with a screening tool that we are introducing in the Department to be
84 used for identification of barriers to learning and what kind of support will be
85 appropriate, we need health professionals yet we don't have them in large numbers.
86 So it is through a coordination framework that government could put in place that we
87 could access the services of health professionals.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:26 PM

Comment [15]: Collaboration (across govt departments)

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:27 PM

Comment [16]: Collaboration (across govt departments)

88
89 M – For what reason are educational psychologists not being employed by DBE?

90
91 P1 – There are many reasons. It's not just budgetary constraints. There are quite a
92 few factors that are standing in the way of DBE having access to these specialists. I
93 have mentioned the coordination framework. But why we have so few professionals
94 like this in DBE, it is how White Paper 6 is funded at the moment. I can even dare to
95 say that White Paper 6 is not funded as a programme but what government is
96 funding in the main, in every province, year in and year out, you only get an
97 allocation that goes to special schools. Yet special schools are only a sub-
98 programme, not the main programme. So the budget is skewed because it is
99 recognised as a sub-programme only. There is also an urban-rural divide. That goes
100 for teachers as well. Even with health professionals, in the main you will find them in
101 urban areas. They don't want to go to rural settings. It's a challenge across the
102 professions. Whereas the need is actually more at a school level, the need is more at

Michele Berger 12/11/22 7:28 PM

Comment [17]: Employment of ed psychs in DBE - barriers

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:09 PM

Comment [18]: Funding of White Paper - viz employment of ed psychs

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:10 PM

Comment [19]: Placement and employment of ed psychs and other professionals – urban-rural divide. And attitude to working in rural areas

103 a school level to have access to these professionals but because of their scarcity, our
104 approach is to place them at district level so they can provide their services across
105 the schools from the district so you don't give certain schools a monopoly of having
106 access to their services.

107
108 M – Are there plans to employ educational psychologists in schools? Or what is the
109 thinking?

110
111 P1 – At the moment, it's a bit difficult to call, in terms of how many you would require
112 at district office. But definitely, the priority is district level – you bring these
113 professionals to the district level or circuit level, but we cannot as a country afford to
114 give individual schools these professionals. We will deprive millions of learners of
115 these services if we do that. That is why we are advocating the creation of posts for
116 professionals at district level. When we produce more of them, we can take them to
117 circuit level. And maybe in 50 years, we can consider placing them at schools. There

118 are posts. I have just collected data (see presentation). As a country, we are only
119 providing access to psychologists to 1700 schools across the country when we have
120 between 25000 and 27000 schools. The majority of these are special schools and a
121 few full service schools. We have been making very few strides with developing full
122 service schools. We have 553 mainstream schools that have been designated as full
123 service schools across the country. But in provinces such as Northern Cape,
124 Limpopo, Free State they have made very slow progress. In Northern Cape, you only
125 have about 10 mainstream schools that have been designated as full service. And
126 there is only one that has been upgraded to give access to physically disabled
127 learners. So that is a serious backlog. To look at the target we have met to date of
128 553 schools, I think we have far exceeded the target from White Paper 6 – it was
129 looking at designating 500 in a period of 20 years. So in 11 years, we have already
130 reached the target.

131
132 M – Are the full service schools doing what you envisioned?

133
134 P1 – We haven't monitored that. We developed guidelines for districts to follow to
135 convert schools. They are spelling out added roles and responsibilities of a full
136 service school. It can't be business as usual as when they were just an ordinary

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:10 PM

Comment [20]: Placement and employment of ed psychs and other professionals – district level

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:11 PM

Comment [21]: Placement and employment of ed psychs – district level

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:12 PM

Comment [22]: Current provision of ed psychs to schools

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:13 PM

Comment [23]: White Paper – full service schools

137 school. What we haven't done is mediated those guidelines so we take district
138 officials through the guidelines so that the practice is approached in the same light
139 across provinces. Support and capacity should follow the same trend. For now, it's
140 only those progressive provinces that are doing some kind of serious work.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:13 PM
Comment [24]: White Paper – guidelines for full service schools

141
142 M – Would a full service school have educational psychologists on the staff?

143
144 P1 – No. You'd have them at the district.

145
146 M – Are they servicing the full service school?

147
148 P1 – No.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:13 PM
Comment [25]: Placement of ed psychs

149
150 M – How is the model working?

151
152 P1 – It is difficult to tell. Maybe what we should do is to fast-track the mediation of
153 these guidelines and make sure we bring on board all districts in terms of what is in
154 the guidelines. And strengthening the capacity of the districts so they are able to
155 provide support to all schools. It doesn't help to have the status of a full service
156 school and there's no support forthcoming from the district. If the district is unable to
157 provide adequate and appropriate support, you are just setting up those schools for
158 failure. It will be like they are not complying with the vision and principles of inclusivity
159 whereas what we haven't done is to put all systems in place and make sure support
160 is available to the schools whenever they need them. This is what is in our plan for
161 2012/13 – we have this thing of mediating training for officials for guidelines for full
162 service and special schools.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:14 PM
Comment [26]: White Paper – implementation and capacity building around guidelines

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:14 PM
Comment [27]: District capacity to support schools

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:15 PM
Comment [28]: Plans for building capacity in districts

163
164 M – How do you define inclusion?

165
166 P1 – For me, a definition that I've been throwing around whenever I'm given any
167 platform from 2011 is one that defines inclusion as a response to learner diversity in
168 the classroom in particular. So it's a response that seeks to maximise learner
169 participation in their own learning and development and to reduce exclusion within
170 education and from education – within education, there is exclusion. There are

Michele Berger 12/11/20 3:35 PM
Comment [29]: Definition of inclusion

171 learners who access education, who are in school, but they are not benefiting they
172 are excluded. So in fact their time is wasted. That happens in the main in mainstream
173 schools. And then of course you have out of school children and youth who are
174 excluded because they are not accessing it at all. That to me is the definition of
175 inclusion. If you listen to it, it says nothing about disabilities, because inclusion is not
176 just about disability, it's about a wide range of barriers to learning – some barriers to
177 learning emanating from the system itself and some emanating from pedagogical
178 issues. For instance, you have a number of teachers who do not have appropriate
179 qualifications to teach or who use methodologies that are not appropriate. Then
180 coming to this set up that you find in most former Model C schools, you have special
181 units or classes – remedial classes – the serious problem that I have with those is the
182 permanency factor, where a learner is pulled out of the regular classroom and put in
183 a special class or remedial class and the learner will have to stay in that class for the
184 duration of his or her years of attending school at that particular school. It's labelling.
185 stigmatisation, all of that. I criticise the concept of special classes or remedial classes.
186 And how we have as a system been using remedial teachers. Remedial teachers
187 need to be itinerant. They can't be fixed in one class and wait for those special needs
188 learners to come to them and they keep them there and they progress in that kind of
189 setting throughout their schooling. That's totally against inclusion. It's actually
190 integration or mainstreaming, it's not inclusion. I was saying to Western Cape last
191 year – I attended a meeting in the CFO's office in the Western Cape - I was asking
192 them about developments in terms of mainstreaming support, taking support to
193 mainstream schools through the full service schools concept. They were saying to
194 me they have 108 full service schools. But it turns out that 106 of these are the
195 mainstream schools that have remedial classes. I told them this is not inclusion,
196 those are not full service schools, you still have to convert schools and make them
197 inclusive in the true sense of the word. They are starting all over this year with 32
198 schools. They are progressive but it's how they conceptualised full service.
199
200 It took me years for people to start listening. Provinces are now listening. Even here
201 in this building, it took me 3 years to begin to have a voice that people would listen to.
202 From last year, a lot of changes. White Paper 6 has been in place in this building but
203 the problem is still at the top, top layer even now. But at programme level, I can
204 assure you... I don't think the blockage is intentional, I think it's in terms of

Michele Berger 12/11/20 3:36 PM

Comment [30]: Definition of inclusion

Michele Berger 12/11/20 3:38 PM

Comment [31]: Definition of inclusion

Michele Berger 12/11/20 3:39 PM

Comment [32]: Definition of inclusion –
teacher qualifications

Michele Berger 12/11/20 3:40 PM

Comment [33]: Remedial classes

Michele Berger 12/11/20 3:42 PM

Comment [34]: Remedial teachers - role

205 understanding the intentions of White Paper 6 and the policy on inclusivity. I don't
206 think as a Department we have done enough to advocate the intentions of White
207 Paper 6. What we need to do is to put together a very strong, powerful and
208 unambiguous advocacy programme. So that the messages we send across the
209 system, within the department at different levels, the message is the same. It will be
210 difficult but we haven't yet been given the space and the platform to actually present
211 on what White Paper 6 is about.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:15 PM
Comment [35]: White Paper – blockages
in implementation

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:15 PM
Comment [36]: White Paper - advocacy

212 [REDACTED]
213 [REDACTED].

214
215 M – Is inclusive education practical?

216
217 P1 – It is doable. I have many such questions from different quarters. My take is that
218 the implementation of White Paper 6 is possible and also has to happen. We cannot
219 debate whether or not we need to implement White Paper 6 because in the end, it
220 talks to key things. It talks to right to basic education which any child may not be
221 deprived of. Secondly, it talks to the quality of education that individual children are
222 given, making sure that every learner benefits from attending school, that there are
223 no learners that are neglected and therefore are not excluded from attending school.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:16 PM
Comment [37]: Implementation of
inclusive education

224 On that basis, to get it right, we can only get it right as a country, when we can begin
225 not to use inclusivity and special needs interchangeably. For as long as we have that
226 misconceptualisation of inclusion and we think it deals with disabilities, when you pay
227 attention to disabilities, then you are doing inclusion. If you focus on this, you won't
228 get it right. Number 2, after changing the mindset, we need to look at how we

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:16 PM
Comment [38]: White Paper 6 – key
concepts

229 resource the development of an inclusive system. White Paper 6 talks about
230 development of an inclusive system that has every learner's interests at heart. And
231 that's how a system should be. A system should be inclusive. In terms of resourcing,
232 at the moment we have gaps. As a department, we don't have funding norms for an
233 inclusive system. We have never developed them. Provincial departments allocate
234 resources as per their capacity in terms of resourcing but there are serious disparities.
235 Partly, this is because of the lack of support from the top, but again, I think the other
236 thing – some people argue, some administrators argue and say the status of the
237 inclusive education policy is a worrying factor because it is only a white paper, so it's
238 not a fully fledged policy therefore we cannot enforce implementation and resource it.

Michele Berger 12/11/20 3:50 PM
Comment [39]: Inclusive ed and special
needs - difference

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:16 PM
Comment [40]: White Paper - resourcing

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:17 PM
Comment [41]: White Paper 6 – key
concepts

239 That is why even the development of norms for resourcing, either in terms of how do
 240 you provide educational psychs, how many you need per district, we have not done
 241 the norming because there are still questions about the status of White Paper 6. I
 242 have a problem with this, whenever that argument is raised, I always question that
 243 argument against WP5 (ECD). It is recognised as a programme and is provided for at
 244 NT for budget allocation. So why the difference between 2 white papers? [REDACTED]
 245 [REDACTED]
 246 [REDACTED]
 247 [REDACTED]
 248 [REDACTED]. We need to make submissions to NT for a review of the budget structure.
 249 It's only then that we are going to get the policy properly resourced. He gave me his
 250 word that he will fight for that. But since when have I been making this noise. I even
 251 wrote a concept document in terms of how the budget needs to be restructured so it
 252 includes this as a complete policy.
 253
 254 M – What role, if any, do you see educational psychologists playing to enable greater
 255 levels of inclusion?
 256
 257 P1 – First of all, I think I would like to see more and more educational psychologists
 258 coming at a district level. At national, we don't have schools, schools belong to
 259 provinces. It would be useful for an educational psychologist to start working at a
 260 district office. We also need them here, by the way, because their role is actually with
 261 early identification of barriers to learning and the packaging of support for learners
 262 experiencing barriers to learning. That's their critical role. I am not in favour of an
 263 approach whereby educational psychologists will be employed for individual schools
 264 because it limits the access. I would like to see them going out to schools wherever
 265 there is a need – they support all schools in the district. In which case, one
 266 educational psychologist cannot manage to do. That's the situation that we have, that
 267 you do find at least one educational psychologist at a district level, but it's very few
 268 districts that have them. You are frustrating those people because they can't cope.
 269 The other frustration is that DBE is one department that has fallen behind in terms of
 270 paying them their occupation specific dispensation. DoH and DSD are advanced in
 271 terms of providing that incentive. This is why we are struggling to attract these health
 272 professionals to work for DBE. But their main role is with the screening – we are

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:17 PM

Comment [42]: White Paper 6 – resourcing and status

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:17 PM

Comment [43]: White Paper - resourcing

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:18 PM

Comment [44]: Placement of ed psychs

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:18 PM

Comment [45]: Placement of ed psychs

273 finalising the screening tool which every teacher, every school will have to use. It is
274 going to be rolled out and institutionalised. So far, we have only piloted it. Their role
275 is to be part of an interdisciplinary team that goes to schools from a district level to
276 provide all forms of support, of course, in their areas of specialisation. That's how I
277 am hoping we can bring in educational psychologists and have them working.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:18 PM
Comment [46]: Role of ed psychs

278
279 I think from an educational psychologist's perspective, you would understand how
280 certain developmental delays, behaviours and all that play themselves out as a
281 barrier to learning. You will be able to break it down for a teacher, and then the
282 teacher, on being aware of what is happening in the mind of the child, the emotions
283 and all of it, then you can agree in terms of what kind of support does the child need.
284 Even the teacher will expect to have support from you as an educational psychologist.
285 You will need to collaborate. You can inform how the support programme can be
286 dealt with, what components it needs to be effective, from the perspective of your
287 discipline. That is why I am arguing against having educational psychologists
288 employed at individual schools. According to the new structure, districts are
289 supposed to have between 200-300 schools. If you are qualified at the end of this
290 year and get employed at a school, you are only providing your services to one
291 school of those 300.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:19 PM
Comment [47]: Collaboration and sharing of expertise

292
293 M – What ratio do you see?

294
295 P1 – It's difficult to state in this case. It also depends on the need and how many are
296 already available because if I say it depends on the need, what I am saying is what is
297 the frequency at which you need to provide support to individual learners if you
298 provide it at individual level or group level. Is it a daily thing, doing one and the same
299 thing? Is there a learner who would require an educational psychologist on a daily
300 basis? If that is the case, then the frequency is high for support to be provided. The
301 high frequency and the total number of learners in a district which could be tens of
302 thousands, then you can't cope, we would need more. So we need to look at how is
303 the service provided, what is the frequency. And that can also come from yourself, to
304 say the way I see my role is if I have an intervention to make, there are learners I
305 need to see on a daily basis, or I need to see a learner once a month or once in 3
306 months. That could provide ideas in terms of how we could norm the provision of

307 services, what kind of services you provide, what is the frequency, do you find
308 yourself having to work with an individual learner on a day to day basis, or only
309 occasionally?

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:19 PM

Comment [48]: Employment and placement of ed psychs

310
311 M – What would you say in the case of a learner who needs regular support for
312 whatever reason? Is it the role of these professionals in the district to provide that?

314 P1 – What I am trying to run away from is the current practice whereby parents have
315 to pay separately for such services for starters. Even if you go to former Model C
316 schools, they do have or they have some that are contracted to provide services, but
317 parents have to pay. And then you wonder, because those professionals are paid a
318 salary by the school – usually, they are brought in through SGB posts – but parents
319 still have to pay. To me, it's an injustice. We are not serving the public the way we
320 should. That is why earlier on, I mentioned the issue of a coordination framework
321 developed by government which forces departments to provide the services that are
322 needed by other departments, for instance, the education department. So that at
323 local level, district level, the education district could be working with a health district
324 or a health institution that would have such professionals so that we could share such
325 scarce resources. Therefore the issue of the norm could be addressed as we go
326 along.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:19 PM

Comment [49]: Accessing ed psych services

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:20 PM

Comment [50]: Accessing ed psych services

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:20 PM

Comment [51]: Coordination and collaboration – between govt departments

328 M – What is or will be the role of professionals such as educational psychologists on
329 DBSTs?

331 P1 – We haven't thrashed that out from an educational psychologist perspective, but
332 we've had discussions on the role of therapists, but the initiative was done by the
333 GDE where therapists came together and they sort of looked at the role of therapists
334 in providing support to schools from the district. They even came up with some kind
335 of a generic job description and even a report template that when you've been out to
336 school, how do you write a report that will be meaningful and would make sense to
337 everybody who has to read that report. Otherwise, therapists have been writing
338 reports in different ways, using different templates or frameworks so it is difficult to
339 consolidate from a therapeutic point of view what we are doing or what therapists are
340 doing. I think it will be prudent for us to actually consider looking at each health

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:21 PM

Comment [52]: Role of ed psychs in providing support to schools

341 profession and try to look at the role that they can play when they are part of a DBST.
342 We have sort of generic guidelines in terms of what a DBST should be doing, how
343 must it be constituted – it must be constituted across disciplines, of course. You need
344 people from curriculum, infrastructure, school governance and management – the
345 role of school governing bodies is to develop school policies, even language policy
346 and admissions policy. So you find if the admissions policy is put together in such a
347 way that it discriminates against certain children getting admission, it acts against
348 inclusion. So you need people across disciplines. It's how we reorganise support
349 coming from the district, going to the schools, as opposed to going to schools in silos
350 and as individual programmes. It starts from planning. When we plan support we play
351 interventions, we plan as a multidisciplinary team because each discipline has a role
352 to play in inclusion.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:21 PM

Comment [53]: Collaboration

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:21 PM

Comment [54]: Collaboration – role of DBST

353
354 M – Any documents I need to look at?

Michele Berger 12/11/22 8:21 PM

Comment [55]: Collaboration and multidisciplinary teams

355
356 P1 - I would recommend that you look at guidelines for responding to learner
357 diversity in the classroom through the national curriculum statement. We developed
358 these alongside CAPS. It's talking more to methodologies to try and improve the
359 teaching methodology in the main. It's for every teacher.

360
361 M – What progress has there been in bringing in teacher assistants?

362
363 P1 – There has been progress for instance in KZN. But we need to clearly define
364 their role. At the moment, the role they play in different schools and provinces will be
365 different. We need to try and standardise that practice as well which is also
366 something that we need to do with remedial teachers. My sense is that by the end of
367 this financial year, I should be knowing how many remedial teachers we have as a
368 system, what are they doing, what's their role, what role have they been playing. If
369 need be, we need to refocus their role or redefine their job description so that their
370 practice is not seen as anti-inclusion.

371
372 M – Is 'remedial' still a term that is used?

373

374 P1 - They are called different things in different provinces. For me, those are what we
375 refer to as learning support educators who we believe should be placed at a district
376 level and provide itinerant support and move around to schools. I am advocating for a
377 redefined role for that. And then we can decide and agree what we need to call them.
378 Some are called learning support educators in different provinces. We need to come
379 up with one name. The name is not the issue, the issue is the role they play in
380 providing support to schools and teachers.
381
382 M – Anything else you want to tell me?
383
384 P1 – Best wishes in your studies. We hope to hear about you providing your service
385 soon! Or coming to join us here, so we carry the headache together!

Michele Berger 12/11/20 9:32 PM

Comment [56]: Definition – learning support educator

DBE INTERVIEW (P2), 28 May 2012

P2 – I found the traditional models, you know, according to which the helping professions work highly unsuitable for developing contexts. The over-reliance on expert opinion and expert assistance which is sent out – the message is sent out to parents and teachers – disempower people, you know, to use their own commonsense, to try things and to come up with commonsense solutions to some problems. And therefore it builds up a whole industry of dependency which is negative for community work, you know. And also in communities, children with problems easily get labelled and marginalised while people wait for the so-called experts to come, of which there are few in the developing context. So it puts children on hold until someone is coming, and it is actually negative. But it is the whole society, the bigger society's over-reliance on the helping professions. And the article is quite outspoken. We said it is not an issue of client or professional relationships that need to be transformed, we must be honest to say that actually the clients are the raw material of their industry! [laughs] That's a very radical look into the work that they do, unless they have a totally radically transformed approach to their work. And the people I have been working with over the years, like [REDACTED], they all were educational psychologists who actually came out of that profession completely transformed, with a whole new idea of what their role should entail.

M – I didn't know XX was an educational psychologist.

P2 – Yes. They all just felt the need to work differently. Their work radically departed from a kind of individual interventionist approach to a whole school change. I think from what I've heard often is that it is not that you lose your clinical knowledge or don't use your clinical background, it is how you use it to guide people to find their own solutions. You fulfil a kind of a mentoring role and empower people to take ownership of issues. In a nutshell, that is what it was about.

M – You've been here for how long?

[REDACTED]

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:01 AM

Comment [1]: Institutionalisation of WP

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:02 AM

Comment [2]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:03 AM

Comment [3]: Role of EP

- 33 [REDACTED]
- 34 [REDACTED]
- 35 [REDACTED]
- 36 [REDACTED]
- 37 M – Your specialisation is captured in the name.
- 38 P2 – Yes. I came when [REDACTED] was here. [REDACTED]
- 39 [REDACTED]
- 40 [REDACTED]
- 41 [REDACTED]
- 42 [REDACTED]
- 43 [REDACTED]
- 44 [REDACTED]
- 45 [REDACTED]
- 46 [REDACTED]
- 47 [REDACTED]
- 48 M – What is your definition of inclusive education?
- 49 P2 – Well, I have quite a broad definition of it. I think one should – for me, it's to maximise
- 50 the participation of children and reducing the exclusion of children, mainly those who are
- 51 minority groups, marginalised children. And, um, and children who are vulnerable to
- 52 dropping out of the system, by reducing the barriers to learning that they experience. For
- 53 me, the barriers could be within the cultures of the school, within the ethos of the school,
- 54 within the policies of the school, as well as within the practice of the school. So I think
- 55 inclusive education has to target all those areas. From the ethos to the classroom practice.
- 56 There's no one section that you could leave out. It goes broader than the school. It involves
- 57 the community
- 58 M – Do you think we are succeeding?
- 59 P2 – I have a permanent inclination to be negative about the rate of change. I personally feel
- 60 responsible also for the fact that we haven't been able to do more, to move further, but
- 61 when I do engage with schools and I come in a context where the role of teachers is present,
- 62 and provincial people are present, then I am actually to some extent surprised by how wide
- 63 the knowledge and awareness of inclusion is. I think we've already transcended the first

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:08 AM

Comment [4]: Definition - IE

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:09 AM

Comment [5]: Institutionalisation of WP

stage of getting people to understand the basics of it. What we are now hitting is the lack of practical skills and knowledge to do that. But where I do think we are failing most is that key political decision makers and key decisions makers within departments, especially newer people coming into posts that don't know where we are coming from, they might not understand really what we mean with inclusion, and you often find people falling back on a narrow special needs vision of inclusion, placing the deficit within the learner, and thinking you need one on one remedial kind of support which is what we've been really trying to get away from.

M – What is the vision here, in terms of inclusive education in a school? If you were to take your most well resourced school, where you could see they have the resources to make it work according to your definition of inclusive education, what would that school look like for a child who has a barrier to learning? What is the school going to provide?

P2 – Well, what we've – we could never in South Africa have the kind of – we could never go the road that say more well resourced countries went. They would have had a child coming with a package of support already available and you find that in many of the countries, you have people actually replicating a special school in the mainstream which I don't think is necessarily the best thing. I don't think you must come with the assumption that a child who experiences complex barriers needs to have his own little personal support team. What I think is needed is, firstly, a principal who is understanding of what I am saying – all children belong. I think a school shouldn't be selective in its intake and should acknowledge there's diversity in the school of various kinds which need to be part of the planning in the way the school structures its whole system. The second level is there must be support in the school, there must be ownership in the school of support for all learners. And it mustn't be seen as the task of outsiders to provide the support. So for me, the whole notion of school-based support team is absolutely critical. And the school-based support team, for me, is a kind of problem-solving team, relying on the commonsense and experience of the teachers there, you know, to find contextual solutions. I think this is critical. Then at the third level, I think that the teacher in the classroom needs to be very skilled with managing diversity in teaching and learning and to differentiate the curriculum. And I think that's where we are actually lacking at the moment. Because I think teachers sort of teach for the middle, they ignore those who are having difficulties or those who are gifted. I think that all, you know, outside support people should be geared at enhancing the skills of the teachers to differentiate.

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:10 AM

Comment [6]: Institutionalisation of WP

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:11 AM

Comment [7]: Institutionalisation of WP

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:13 AM

Comment [8]: Institutionalisation of WP

97 Then I do want to not be, you know, too much of my head in the clouds, and I do
98 acknowledge that sometimes if it's something like Aspergers or ADHD, any kind of condition
99 of which the teacher has no experience, I do think there needs to be a bit of an intervention
100 in terms of training or mentoring or knowledge sharing. And I think that is probably what
101 most people say we are waiting to be trained before we can do it. I differ from that position
102 because we will never train people in a vacuum. People will only feel the need to be trained
103 once they are confronted with those kinds of issues. And I feel the training they would get
104 would enhance their teaching skills in general. And I think we need to also get schools to
105 take ownership of that training process by inviting people to come and so on. We have put
106 in a lot of energy in the way that we have restructured the national strategy on screening,
107 identification, assessment and support, to capture all these steps of school change,
108 classroom change, equipping the teachers. And we also want to convert our whole funding
109 system into one that acknowledges those kinds of needs.

110 M – Just to go back to your schools, you say teachers need to be skilled. What about the
111 common refrain that you hear: 'Our classes are too big, we can't manage'?

112 P2 – Look, you see, the first point is... I try and not speak of children with barriers. I find a lot
113 of people talk about children with barriers and I think that is becoming a new word for
114 children with special needs. It is as if, here you have a whole class of normal kids and then
115 you have a few with special needs and they are the tip-over factor, whereas I think that the
116 main barrier in that classroom is the class size, and the inability of the teacher to teach a big
117 class, and the lack of space so that she can't do effective group work and so on. So I feel the
118 knowledge and skills that you bring in are not for her primarily to deal with those learners
119 with so called special needs, but it's to manage that complex class with all the barriers that
120 are there and are more effective. I have always believed that class size shouldn't really be
121 the big reason why inclusive education should be deferred. I think it's a way for us to get the
122 to address big class size, and prevent barriers from arising. Without sounding too idealistic
123 about it, I do think that the skills of inclusion are the skills to help teachers with these
124 complex schools that they're dealing with.

125 M – If a child has a specific difficulty, do you advocate that they would then be in inclusive
126 education? Should they be taken out of the mainstream class for periods of the day, for
127 example, to work with a support teacher?

128 P2 – I'm not against it. I've seen in the Finnish system, for instance, it works very well.
129 There's constant in and out, with children needing support getting it and going back. I've

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:14 AM

Comment [9]: Capacity of teachers

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:16 AM

Comment [10]: Capacity of teachers

130 read widely about it. I don't believe in a permanent special class or permanent withdrawal
131 and I think international best practice shows it shouldn't be more than 25% of the week they
132 are withdrawn, so that they never lose their identity as a member of that class and their
133 sense of belonging to the class. My big motto is that you shouldn't think that you should
134 segregate children to support them. I think there are several ways, flexible ways, and I also
135 think that very often – at the moment, you know, remedial teachers are in short supply, and
136 a school like that they are far and few between. So the model that we proposed is rather
137 that the few people that we have that are knowledgeable in the remedial – if you want to
138 call it that, or learning support skills – that they actually act as advisors and mentors to
139 ordinary teachers and to SBSTs. It would be the best use of their expertise.

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:18 AM

Comment [11]: Implementation of WP

140 M – Is that full service schools?

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:19 AM

Comment [12]: Role and function of SBST

141 P2 – No, not necessarily. We have made proposals and provinces have started introducing
142 these itinerant learning support teachers. So they have a group of schools, a cluster of
143 schools, falling under them. They visit the schools and advise the teachers on how to assess
144 and adapt. So even if they are not fulltime at the school, they are there on call and they can
145 deal with problems. Slowly but surely, they mobilise and capacitate the teachers to take
146 ownership for that support. Otherwise, that's what we're finding in some of the Model C
147 schools where they do appoint these outside people on a permanent basis, you have a
148 reluctance on the part of the teachers themselves to take ownership of the support and to
149 go the extra mile with planning and so on. Worst case scenario is they say it will take away
150 the time that other children need and that it's infringing the rights of other children. I think
151 this is the worst possible thing you could ever say.

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:23 AM

Comment [13]: Building capacity in districts

152 M – In terms of the full service schools?

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:23 AM

Comment [14]: Capacity of teachers

153 P2 – I have a lot of issues with the full service schools. I am extremely nervous about the
154 notion of a full service school. The way that the White Paper and all our guidelines and all
155 our documents positioned the full service school is that they are flagships and models of
156 best practice and that they should never become a place to which children are sent as a sort
157 of school for moderately... children with moderate needs. That's my biggest fear. And that's
158 the misinterpretation of the notion that we're seeing everywhere, because it's very
159 problematic. We can't wait for enough schools to become full service schools before we can
160 start with inclusion. And you do find malevolent people who say that we haven't got a full
161 service school so we can't admit you, or you are a child who should be going to a full service
162 school – the people who are antagonistic towards inclusion. So people tend to fall back on

163 preconceived ideas. For me, the full service school would make sense in a case where you
164 have to have ramps and a child really needs the ramps. But for children with learning
165 difficulties and other issues where the curriculum differentiation is the key support
166 mechanism, I really don't think the child should be going to a full service school. And
167 therefore we would also like to provide an idea of a full service school also acting as a
168 resource centre in the cluster where it is so that it would just be a recipient of your, or a
169 focus of your, training of the first core groups who would then start mentoring other groups
170 of teachers in the surrounding schools. And it's happened very successfully in countries like
171 Brazil and India. So very fast, you can have a whole network of inclusive schools and
172 examples of best practice. That's also the Unesco approach, to create as many as possible
173 examples of best practice. But right at the start, this whole conceptual lack of clarity of what
174 inclusion is – many people attach a kind of a special needs tag to the full service schools and
175 then the professionals and managers would say we've got that school, let the disabled child
176 go there.

177 M – So how would you define mainstream then?

178 P2 – Well, you know, we've had that long debate of mainstreaming versus inclusion. For me,
179 mainstreaming would be close to integration which I think has a negative connotation
180 because it expects the child to change. There's also this whole latent thing of if he's a low
181 needs child, then he's allowed to be in the mainstream. If ability becomes moderate, then
182 he can't. Then that would be counter-productive for our inclusion. For me, even a severe
183 child should have the right to be in the mainstream. I don't believe at all in this low,
184 moderate and high kind of placement model.

185 M – So you'd like to see...

186 P2 – Full inclusion. It's our obligation in terms of the Convention on the Rights of Persons
187 with Disabilities. How fast we'll get there, and how and when is the issue, but that we should
188 go there we can't deny. We have an obligation. The rural areas, deep rural areas, the choice
189 for a child is not whether he goes to a full service or special school, it's whether he goes to
190 school or not. And I find the only way in which we'll change societal attitudes towards
191 difference would be to get more children into mainstream schools.

192 M – Now to the role of the educational psychologist. What is your view on the role of
193 educational psychologists in inclusive education?

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:26 AM

Comment [15]: Institutionalisation of WP

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:27 AM

Comment [16]: Capacity of teachers

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:29 AM

Comment [17]: Institutionalisation of WP

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:29 AM

Comment [18]: Definition – mainstream
vs inclusion

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:31 AM

Comment [19]: Institutionalisation of WP

194 P2 – Look, in 1996, I heard a paper by Lena Sale who was then the head of inclusive
195 education at Unesco. She organised the Salamanco conference. And that sentence has stuck
196 with me, that one shouldn't over-emphasise the special skills that you need to work with a
197 child with a disability or a learning difficulty because those are skills that can actually be
198 transferred. Parents and community workers, if they learn how to do it, teachers can learn
199 to do it. And I feel that the professionals – highly skilled professionals, of which educational
200 psychologists are probably the most important or one of the most important groups, they
201 need to be managers and coordinators of support in an inclusive system, because in
202 developing countries, of their short supply. And now I think that the problem is and that is
203 where the conflict arises, is that many people who go into the profession are people who
204 would like to work individually with children. It's in their nature. At the times when I've
205 lectured, and asking the students, I find that many of them haven't even taught, that they go
206 straight into educational psychology as a professional area. So I know that it's hard to find
207 people in the profession to fulfil this role. They've not necessarily been trained for it, to fulfil
208 such a management and monitoring role or mentoring role. But I do think that even if you
209 want to work on individual learners, you most effectively work if you see your role as
210 debriefing teachers. I read a wonderful book of Gerda Hanko

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:33 AM

Comment [20]: Role of EP

211 M – You told me about it.

212 P2 – I don't know why I always fall back on that. I don't want it to sound like it's the only
213 book. But it's so important, the skills transfer component, because the child is with the
214 teacher much more than she is with the professional. The professional is not going to come
215 back to where the child is learning and advising how things can change within that context.
216 Not much can change for that child. You have to change the context. I do think that you
217 need to – all this training – it's like a doctor being able to diagnose a condition. Those are the
218 tools of your trade but it shouldn't stop there. It's how you apply to change the context of
219 your child that I think is absolutely right. An educational psychologist at the lowest levels
220 would fulfil the role in that way, and then from there, have her career path where through
221 her experience and knowledge of classrooms and contexts would go to a point where they
222 could mentor and monitor bigger teams and groups of people. They are the kind of people
223 who should be advising these itinerant learning support teachers on a constant basis, giving
224 them more skills

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:33 AM

Comment [21]: Role of EP

225 M – Structurally, could you see them being attached to a district office?

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:35 AM

Comment [22]: Role of EP

226 P2 – Yes, but I do acknowledge that some schools will have to have full psychologists to deal
227 with complex issues. If it's a very big school or say a school for the blind with more than 300
228 children, I can't say that it wouldn't be good for that school to have some psychologist. And I
229 feel that some special schools don't have to have one full time. It would be best if the person
230 could be appointed at the district. I don't out-rule that that person can actually spend 4 days
231 of the week at the school, but what I do find a big problem in our system is that people are
232 under-utilised at the schools. So they would sit at a school and they would be doing
233 admissions and all kinds of unnecessary tests and have their private practices in the
234 afternoons. I think they should be at the district where they belong to the district. You know,
235 when I was with a district, I found it lamentable that we had 12 schools within the district
236 where I worked and some of them had more than one psychologist appointed on their staff.
237 And then we would have within the same district schools where half the children came from
238 broken homes, there were child headed households, there were parents who were
239 prostitutes, children who were being abused, and there was just no service for them.
240 Because we were just tying them up and attaching them to children with disabilities. I think
241 their expertise can be much more effectively utilised in the district if they played this
242 broader role. So for me it would be that if there are individual cases, they can advise the
243 teacher but their main role would be to train and mentor the teachers. And my colleagues
244 who are educational psychologists in the district felt even more fulfilled in their work when
245 we introduced this model. They also weren't happy to run with their case to test children
246 from morning to..., they couldn't reach all the children, you have a pile up of files, and in the
247 end, it's just not beneficial for anyone.

248 M – So do you see a role for them on the SBST?

249 P2 – Well, I would say in a special school where you have big admission pressures and so on,
250 and constant assessment, evaluation of children, interventions, probably there, but I don't
251 see that it's necessary in an ordinary school. That's not how we've conceptualised the SBST.

252 M – What would you say now, given the current situation, what needs to be done to
253 improve the effectiveness of educational psychological services to support inclusion?

254 P2 – You know, I think the educational psychological services at universities where they are
255 situated, to start with is a bit problematical for me, because I... My perception is that some
256 universities, um, work parallel and separately from the learning support training. I think
257 there should be closer collaboration between them and the curriculum training, you know,
258 and I think that more, you know, you should have more ordinary teachers trained also to

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:36 AM
Comment [23]: Placement of EPs

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:36 AM
Comment [24]: Placement of EPs

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:38 AM
Comment [25]: Placement of EPs

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:38 AM
Comment [26]: Placement of EPs

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:38 AM
Comment [27]: Role of EP

259 understand support and how to address barriers to learning. Ja, ja. Look, I am not clear now
260 what I'm saying. What I'm actually saying is that I found that some universities, the
261 messages came to us that the educational psychology people said that the White Paper 6
262 has nothing to do with them, it doesn't affect their work and they are under no obligation to
263 train teachers to implement White Paper 6, which is extremely dangerous position to take.
264 And there needs to be a complete, um, there needs to be a revision of how education
265 psychologists see their work, and it must start at universities and how they are trained. And
266 it's not just to please the White Paper 6. I don't think it's internationally acceptable best
267 practice to work in such a narrow interventionist model, you know, which is more medical in
268 its approach. And how do you get an educational psychologist to understand curriculum
269 support I think is the second picture. How do they see their role as a supporter of curriculum
270 support? How do they engage with teachers through observation and mentoring to advise
271 teachers how to teach differently, what to do differently in their ordinary classrooms? So
272 their skills of observation and problem-solving, some of the new kind of things, skills that I
273 think they need, and interviewing of people, interviewing of parents, facilitation of
274 relationships, you know, that have gone wrong. Acting as advocates between parents and
275 schools and teachers and... And they would have to have skills to train and to mentor
276 teachers. Those aren't skills that they necessarily just get automatically. It must be part of
277 the training. So if you don't start off by the point of what should the vision work be, you
278 can't get the training right, you know. You can't send people out with a toolkit of tests and
279 think that they don't know what to do. I don't want to misconstrue what the training
280 contains. I think that most of the faculties have gone a long way with changing their
281 approach. We know which are the faculties that are still more conservative and traditionalist.

282 M – Can you describe a case where you've felt there was a need for some form of
283 educational psychological support? Or are you willing to talk about your experience even?
284 And what was the process that was followed, the challenges and the outcome?

285 P2 – I can briefly tell you of a bad case that I've referred to often. I'll tell you a good case, is
286 that alright?

287 M – Yes.

288 P2 – I once saw a report of a little girl, she was referred to... It was a black girl who was
289 attending Laerskool X. She was sent to town. Her mother was a domestic worker. She was
290 assessed by an educational psychologist here in the city. And I saw the report of the
291 psychologist. She put all the test results on there, saying what scores the child had achieved,

292 this test, that test, and the recommendation was that the child should be referred for
293 further speech therapy assessments and occupational therapy assessment, for which the
294 mother still also had to pay privately. And not once in the whole report was there mention
295 made of the context. The assessment was done completely out of context. It was clear that
296 this was a Zulu-speaking girl in an Afrikaans school with language barriers, you know. And I
297 felt that was the worst practice that one could ever imagine. It was like robbing people of
298 money because they put all their reliance on that person and what did they get out of it?
299 Nothing. You've got to start addressing where the child is learning and what has to happen
300 there. Where I do, however, find that, you know, you, you have some children – we have
301 lots of children, we have children in the townships who had been raped and we were called
302 at the district, you know. And we relied very heavily on psychologists to go and visit the
303 school and intervene immediately with some intervention. Although from what I've heard,
304 you actually need to be a clinical psychologist to do that kind of work. I don't know if I'm
305 wrong.

306 M – The scope has changed.

307 P2 – But I mean you do need these kind of urgent interventions. It's the whole thing of, I
308 think, the author pedagogy, the whole part which has to be revisited and restructured to be
309 closer to the skills and knowledge for curriculum differentiation, curriculum support. So this
310 is for me the two pegs, the psycho-social support aspect of it which I also don't think that
311 teachers and school-based support teams should be mentored and monitored, you know,
312 because very often, like in that one case in the Hanco book of a child who was withdrawn
313 and showing problem behaviour and going on and on, and the psychologist was taking
314 debriefing with the teacher and in the end they found the father had been in jail. They
315 would never have discovered this if the teacher didn't get close enough to the child. And she
316 did it through rigorous mentoring by the psychologist. We have too few such people that
317 they don't transfer those skills to teachers. You've got to work with the people closest to the
318 children, changing their approaches, working with them, debriefing them. So for me, in a
319 nutshell, I think teachers need to have psychologists on tap, you know, people who know
320 more and to whom they can go to help them to include a child. But the worst case is if a
321 psychologist is used to assess a child for the purpose of segregating the child.

322 M – Have you picked up cases like this?

323 P2 – It's happening all the time. And psychologists should be believing in inclusion, and
324 wanting to make it work and playing a facilitating role. Like I personally had such a lot of

325 support, you know, from the educational psychologists who supported me, went with me to
326 parent-teacher meetings, facilitated, empowered me, you know, supported me as a parent,
327 to keep my child in the school.

328 M – What would you as a parent expect from...

329 P2 – I would expect a person having the knowledge to be able to negotiate with the school,
330 telling the school how to include the child. The worst that I can do is if the psychologist – and
331 there are many of them working in the districts – act as an antagonist towards the parents,
332 and say that the child must be protected against the parent because the parent's unrealistic
333 about the child's ability. And that you find a lot as well, you know, ja. But those have been
334 our worst case scenarios.

335 M – You were saying as we arrived that you have had some negative experiences.

336 P2 – [REDACTED] ... it was very early days, 1993, the educational
337 psychologists in the district, they played the most important role to prevent it. They wrote
338 reports about why it shouldn't happen. They advised the districts against it, advised the
339 department against it. They said it's not viable, not in the best interests of the child,
340 unrealistic. Because they had a very conservative view about inclusion. They felt inclusion
341 can't work. And now I'm afraid there are still many of them in the system. At least I think all
342 the departments believe in inclusion and they are training the people to... Whenever I
343 lecture at university to the Masters, every time that I've lectured there, I've been attacked a
344 bit – is it workable, can it work? I never get them to be the first people to be supportive of it,
345 you know. So that keeps on as a niggling feeling that I'm having that they are not the
346 frontrunners. For me, the point is we have this very negative idea about teachers. We keep
347 on saying they're lazy, they're not committed, they don't want to support children who are
348 different and all of that, and if we train them all, then it will change. I believe radically
349 differently. I believe that if you put trust in teachers and you make an appeal to their best,
350 um, side of their professional character, that they are there actually to get all children to
351 learn. And you come and help them with skills. If they don't know how to deal with a reading
352 problem, giving them answers, you know, then you would empower them. If you keep on
353 sending the message that you are not specialised enough to deal with this, you will not
354 change, you know. I think the progress made in any country in inclusion was where the
355 whole support structure was changed in such a way that the messages that went to teachers
356 were that of empowering them, you know, and affirming their own ability to support
357 children. I always think of my mother who taught [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]

358 [REDACTED]
359 [REDACTED] her primary goal was to get every child to read, and help
360 every child who was struggling. She never knew about any other options, or that there was
361 going to be someone to relieve her of that duty. It was her duty, you know. And it wasn't
362 easy necessarily, but they just did it. In the '70s and '80s, it was this whole notion of
363 professionalism and specialisation and so entered into the debates that made teachers
364 mistrust their own ability, you know, to help children. [REDACTED]
365 [REDACTED]
366 [REDACTED]
367 [REDACTED] You can speak to any parent of a child with Down Syndrome. They are like
368 cheese and chalk, the two populations, those who have been in special schools and those
369 who have been in mainstream. It's just two complete different populations, you know. The
370 children who have been in the mainstream are so independent, so articulate, so pleasant to
371 be with, so socially adapted, their speech is better, they're academically better. There's just
372 been such overwhelming longitudinal studies on the benefits. And he wasn't in good
373 inclusive settings. You know, some years they just refused to teach him, and [the parents]
374 didn't get any phenomenal support from the school, but just him being there and
375 participating had a very good impact. I can imagine if your child has dyslexia or has some
376 other learning difficulties which you would like to have remediated, that you would perhaps
377 wonder is it the best, you know, if the child doesn't get that kind of attention that he or she
378 needs. But I think there are ways of getting that. What I do think what you expect from a
379 teacher is an attitude of support and acceptance. I think that's the worst for the children for
380 ADHD is that they are, because of their behaviour problems, they are very often not well
381 treated, you know. There's so much literature that says that the minute there's a special
382 class at the school, that's the attitude of the teachers, that these children must go there.
383 That's why I don't believe that there should be a special class at a school. But it's a growing
384 trend at the model C schools, but I think with the economic recession, it might change. I
385 would like to see that teacher acting as a mentor. That's how it works in Finland, and that's a
386 well resourced system. Those people are just around, you know. They even take the children
387 just for a few minutes in the corridor, they are not even removed from the class.
388 M – These are the itinerant teachers?
389 P2 – Well, in Finland, they have the luxury of having a person in each school.

390 M – What is your view on teaching assistants?

391 P2 – Yes, you have to manage that very carefully, because in many cases, because of the
392 same attitude, the teachers leave the teaching to the teaching assistant [laughs], whereas
393 here you have an untrained person teaching a child with a complex need, while the teacher
394 who is supposed to do it teaches the children without the need. That's not making sense.
395 But I, I honestly feel that apart from it being a developing world model, I feel it's the best
396 model. I think that countries of the north can actually learn – if we get it right, and we are
397 getting it right in many schools, there are some absolutely fantastic inclusive schools here in
398 Centurion where they are working with an itinerant learning support teacher, they are doing
399 so well that the teachers are taking ownership of the differentiation, they are doing it
400 themselves, and those kids are just flourishing. And it's just a much better model than you
401 have like in some European countries where the child has a person and an assistant and so
402 on. We've seen it over and over with Down Syndrome that if you send a personal assistant in,
403 the teacher also doesn't take responsibility. Ja. And I also think, I never think, I think that no
404 specialists should ever stand between a child and his primary learning context, you know. I
405 know some of the special schools like for children with physical disabilities, we worked with
406 them during the inclusive education field test, and I find it very sad if you speak to the
407 children, to see how they've internalised their disability, how it's become part of their
408 identity, whereas had they been in an ordinary school, they wouldn't have carried this label
409 so much. Although that's the opposite of what the special schools say – the reason why they
410 should be removed from the mainstream is because they get bad treatment, they are
411 marginalised. I believe that, you see with where I started, you have to change the ethos and
412 the attitudes of everyone in the school. You've got to work with it, you can't just say kids are
413 cruel, kids will be cruel, so that's why disabled people don't belong. How can you say that?
414 It's such an indictment on the school, you know. If you read the Index for Inclusion, you
415 know, the kind of language you speak, the kind of attitudes you have, the subtle ways in
416 which you exclude people, you've got to work with the school and with the whole
417 understanding of themselves. It doesn't just happen. It's not about training on remedial skills,
418 it's about working with people to change it and get a team change going. And it's not going...
419 if you put all the effort and resources that we're putting into segregation into that, into that
420 change in every school, then you'll see inclusion happening. We haven't even spent money
421 on inclusion in this country. A big allocation that we got in 2007 was never used for that
422 purpose. It was used for other deficits within departments, and it was used to build special
423 schools in most cases. Only a few provinces used it for the purpose that it was meant for. So

424 you can't say that we've actually put a lot of money and energy into making inclusion work.

425 Where it is now is just because of the force and the movement from the department.

426 M – Is there anything else you want to share?

427 P2 – I think I've said enough [laughs].

428 M – You were talking about documents earlier – is there anything that is not available

429 online?

430 P2 – I've got some old articles that I've collected over the years on the role of psychologists

431 that I will send you.

432 M – Thanks.

433 P2 – We haven't written... The SIAS will emerge now in the role functions of the professions.

434 That will be the next step. Okay?

435 M – Thank you very much.

436 P2 – It's a pleasure.

DISTRICT FOCUS GROUP

[Transcript commences 20 minutes into the session; initially, one of the participants did not want me to record the session. I began recording only once she consented.]

1 We were more in a management position, the four of us.

M So there were four of you at the two levels?

1 No, four of us DCES level. Two of us, and then another two, X and Y. Ja. And then on post level 3, the Senior Education Specialists, we had to be 11 but we were only 8. Ne?

2 Mm.

1 And between these 12 people, we had to deal with all the emotional, behavioural, scholastic, um, special concessions, career guidance, um, any kind of referral, any kind of support, abuse cases, we had to deal with that in total. Plus we were responsible to develop the school-based support teams in each school. It's very important that there must be a functional SBST in each school for them also to support us so that they don't refer each and every single case to us. They must try to solve the problem there or make use of their service providers in their area. If they can't get any help or support, then they come to us. Um, so as you can see, then we were...

M This is from 1996?

1 No, that started in ... Those days, we were, we were the psychological – we were first ESS, Education Support Systems, and then we were Psychological Services, and then we were... We were so many things.

M Did you start when the districts were set up?

1 Ja. This is my 28th year now.

M And 2, you?

2 I started in 2010. I have been with the district, but as a teacher. I was at a school. So I joined the district in 2010.

M Okay.

1 So then we were – at a certain stage, everybody did everything. Round about 2001, we were in the Education Support System Unit, the psychologists, the sport people, the HIV and AIDS, the youth and culture, the Tirisano, the... So everybody did everything in that unit. I think we were 5 people. So serving all those schools – nutrition – everything.

M How many schools were you supporting?

48 1 There are about 260 schools in the district. So we were just supported each other with the
49 sport, with the HIV and AIDS, with everything between the few of us. And then the
50 organogram in 2006 about, 5-6, they brought in the DCESSs. Am I right, A?

51
52 2 I wasn't here.

53
54 1 It was about then, ja. Ja, um, ja. And I must be honest with you, then again we were the
55 Psychological Services. You know, I don't know, because they change every second or third
56 year, and ja. But to tell you what's going on now, from April – no, from January.

57
58 2 Officially, April.

59
60 1 April. The Inclusion and Special Schools... We were – what was D's unit? We were e-
61 learning and curriculum support programmes. That was the subdirectorates – E-learning and
62 Curriculum Support Programmes. And she was the head as well. Then under her
63 subdirectorates, there were the inclusion and special schools, the ISS, there were ESS,
64 Education Support System, the multi-media and LTSM, and E-learning, that is the
65 computers. So Education Support System, Multi-media and Learning and Teaching Support
66 Material and E-learning. That was under the subdirectorates. Okay now, under ESS, but that's
67 now not really important, you've got the HIV and AIDS, the sport, the, um, youth and culture,
68 school safety, values. That's under Education Support System – youth and culture, values,
69 HIV and AIDS, ja, safety, all of that under ESS. They dealt with teenage pregnancy,
70 everything, okay. So this is not there anymore from this year.

71
72 M But you were under...

73
74 1 We were under Inclusion and Special Schools. Four middle management level people, and
75 8 ... So we spent most of the time in the office because we had to respond on all kinds of
76 reports and it is referrals from the office, etc, etc. So then they brought in the new
77 organogram. Now the new organogram, we are now under EOS – Education Operations and
78 Support. That's now our new subtitle, Education Operations and Support. Okay, this is on the
79 one hand, because on the other hand, you get your 5 circuits. Okay.

80
81 M So there's...

82
83 1 Ja, you get the EOS and you get the 5 circuits. The 5 circuits, the person that's taking the
84 lead there is a circuit manager. Circuit manager in each of those 5 circuits. And the circuit
85 manager has got a team of district officials supporting that circuit manager to support the
86 schools in that circuit. So they work as a team, the 5 teams. There's curriculum people in
87 here, there's a IDSO in here. And then they took these ISS people, the 8 people that we had,
88 they took and placed 2 here and 2 here and 2 here and 2 here. So the post level 3 people
89 were placed in this team because most of the people in this team, they are post level 3
90 people. Not the circuit managers, they are the same as D, post level 6.

91
92 2 So it means each circuit comprises of different units.

93
94 1 Of a district.
95

96 2 A district. So they form a team.
97
98 M And each circuit is responsible then for a smaller grouping. How many...
99
100 1 In each circuit, you get three clusters, and in each cluster, there's about 15 schools, so say
101 45 in total per circuit, plus-minus. Fifteen schools, there are 3 clusters in each circuit, and
102 each cluster has got, say, 15 schools. So 15 times 3.
103
104 M And then the staff in the clusters is...
105
106 1 It's curriculum people, IDSO, ja. The same that you get here, you've got to get them here.
107 But sometimes it's not easy because if you think of the foundation phase, we've got, say, one
108 person at the district that specialises in, say, maths. Now that person is placed here, what
109 about the foundation phase people here? Now what they've got to do is that the foundation
110 phase people must deal with any query regarding foundation phase work in each. Even if
111 your field is more whatever. What can I say? But they've got a foundation phase person. But
112 the 2 people that they placed here from the ISS, they tried to say one person must be an
113 inclusion specialist in each of these to deal mostly with inclusion work, with scholastic work.
114 And the second one, a psychologist or counsellor.
115
116 M Not necessarily an educational psychologist?
117
118 1 No, a psychologist or counsellor. So we get psychologists the same as us on post-level 3
119 as well. We just applied for a management post and we got it. Some people, they decided
120 they would...
121
122 M So you had the option to choose to stay in the district rather than move to a circuit?
123
124 1 No, the people on DCES level, all districts, were placed in this EOS unit. Post level 3
125 people were placed in circuits. And they tried...
126
127 2 This unit is called District Education Support. That is where we are. We support them.
128
129 1 And this is School Support.
130
131 M You said there are 3 clusters per circuit but there is an inclusion specialist and an
132 educational psychologist or a counsellor in a circuit. Do they work across the clusters?
133
134 1 They, ja, ja, ja.
135
136 M So they support 45 schools?
137
138 2 Mm.
139
140 1 Ja. We've got, um, um, cluster managers, that's the old IDSOs. Cluster leaders. So they
141 are ahead of a cluster now, but this team does work in all the clusters, so they've got to serve
142 45 schools. So again, it's quite difficult because now you've got one psychologist or
143 counsellor who has got to deal with 45 schools already.

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:22 AM

Comment [1]: Capacity

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:23 AM

Comment [2]: Capacity

144
145 2 Mm.
146
147 1 So you can think the amount of work, the amount of referrals in our schools in today's life,
148 um, you can't do it alone. So that's why we've got to link with people and say, 'I'm on my
149 knees, there's no money. Please, have you got students that's got to do their internship?' But
150 then it's got to go through Policy and Planning because they've got to tell us exactly what
151 times they're going into schools, is it going to disrupt the teaching and learning time, what are
152 they going to do with the learners? We've got to receive reports on a monthly basis. So it's
153 not...
154
155 2 It's managed arrangement.
156
157 1 We've got to manage them and see what are they doing, because after all, we will stay
158 responsible.
159
160 M These are interns who apply to be based in the district for their internships?
161
162 1 Some of them apply, but it's more... We've got this [company] now, that's getting students
163 from different places and then through [this company], they place them in our schools.
164
165 M Is that private?
166
167 1 Ja, it's an NGO. Here's her letter [shows me letter].
168
169 2 It's a community organisation.
170
171 1 Ja, ja. She is herself a psychologist, and she decided instead of so many companies
172 coming to us and saying they can help, or universities, or... Let's work through [this
173 company].
174
175 2 She's in a way giving the students an opportunity to do their practicals but she is managing
176 the whole thing. She's providing them with material. She's been placing them in different
177 schools.
178
179 1 Because as you can see, we are now under EOS. I tell you, what this woman and her team
180 are doing for us, it's wonderful. You know, what she's also doing is, the Masters students, the
181 schools are paying R5,000. Those that can – the student is getting R5,000 per month if the
182 school can pay that. So I really think she's doing wonderful work, um, it's a person that you
183 perhaps can talk to. I think she's a wonderful person as well, and you can talk to her and tell
184 her these are the people you know, how can she assist by placement. We opened our doors
185 for all the students, um, and I must be honest with you, they're doing wonderful work. Two
186 schools asked this morning to have a permanent counsellor on their grounds, they are willing
187 to pay R5,000 per month for this student. Now, for a student to get R5,000 is not bad.
188
189 M Ja.
190

191 1 And the experience, and she's buying the material. That's the other thing that I want to tell
192 you. We've got psychologists and we've got the... Okay, let me first tell you. This Education
193 Operations and Support, we are district-based. So these teams, they must go into schools
194 and support the school support in the circuit. As soon as they get to a point that they don't
195 know what to do, or they need more intervention, meaning there's a big drug problem or
196 something, can't you sit and write some programme or what and then we go as a team and
197 we go and address it. Not that these psychologists can't deal with the problem because we're
198 all the same there, but they received 200 referrals from a specific school. Like yesterday, 2
199 secondary schools, they mentioned the Grade 8s and 9s, they can't read. So we can't leave
200 that to that one person. We must sit around and say but how are we going to address it? So
201 we step in when the circuits request for more intervention.

202
203 M So the schools in the first instance contact the cluster or the circuit?

204
205 1 The circuit.

206
207 2 The circuit.

208
209 1 The circuit. I just wanted to show you that they divided for meetings and stuff. It's more the
210 circuits, the 5 circuits. They make contact directly, especially the school-based support team.
211 They do that with that support needs assessment form, as you know, SNAF.

212
213 M What is your assessment of the SBSTs?

214
215 2 I would say they do have but most are not functional. It is expected and from the reports
216 that we are having, they do have SBSTs. But as to the functionality, then it's another thing.

217
218 1 They see that as a extra burden on their shoulders. They are busy already, and now we've
219 got to look, we're not counsellors, we're not psychologists, so why are you placing this on our
220 shoulders?

221
222 2 And usually, even with the ones that we say SBST is functional, you will find that only one
223 person is very active because of the passion she has.

224
225 1 The former Model C schools often have a private psychologist working there, on their staff,
226 and it's not allowed, it's not right. Most schools can't.

227
228 M Do all schools have an HOD for Guidance or someone who is allocated this responsibility?

229
230 2 There is, there is an HOD for Life Orientation in all the schools.

231
232 1 No, but it's not to say that he must run it or she must run it. No, it must be people that's
233 really willing to go the extra mile to get more knowledge, to share the knowledge with the
234 staff and who is willing to look after the wellbeing of the child. And you can't just say the HOD
235 Life Orientation must do that. We want the support of the principal. The principal must be part
236 of that panel. But it's not always like that. Some schools decide to make a SBST for their
237 foundation phase, SBST intermediate, a SBST... They've got three different ones. Some feel
238 every Monday morning, when the whole staff are together, we discuss crisis cases in the

239 school, so that's their SBST. So as long as there's a functional way of dealing with the
240 learners, but not only a private psychologist, because we want the school, the educators'
241 input in these cases. It's easy to say there's 15 learners that I would like you to see. We
242 haven't got a problem that the school has that, but the private psychologist mustn't be the
243 SBST. So to come back, the SBST refer the cases through the support needs assessment
244 form, the SNA form, to the circuits. Sometimes they do it via the circuit manager, or they give
245 it to the psychologist or the inclusion specialist directly.

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:26 AM

Comment [3]: Collaboration

246
247 M So the psychologists and counsellors in the circuits are active in the schools.

248
249 1 Yes, they are in the schools a lot. But we also go out to the schools.

250
251 2 It was more of giving extra hands, like today, and meeting with the service provider
252 because of a learner we have identified as needing support from us. The circuit staff are not
253 able to give the support sometimes so that is why we roped in a service provider.

254
255 1 What we thought of yesterday and we gave to the director and circuit managers is to say
256 that, because there is lots of confusion, the schools know the four of us well, and sometimes,
257 they prefer working with one of us instead of the people that's allocated to that circuit, but we
258 are not circuit-linked, even on our appointment letters. So they would like us to service the
259 whole district, you understand? The suggestion we came up with yesterday, but it's not to
260 say it's going to work all across, and we must still decide on that, that all referrals that come
261 from national or provincial level, that normally, they send it to the director, director to D, must
262 come to us. Because then it's definitely, there is perhaps a legal case, um, already or the
263 parent reported the school to the MEC or the HOD or whatever. So those cases, plus
264 expelled cases, we're going to deal with those cases immediately. Those are really things
265 that you need to give feedback within 7 days, there must be reports written, and whatever.
266 They can call you in. Sometimes you've got to be registered to deal with some of those
267 cases. That was our suggestion yesterday, that national, provincial and expelled cases come
268 to EOS immediately. It can be any of these circuits, and between the four of us, we will see
269 what is the best, how are we going to deal with that. That's what we said yesterday. We don't
270 even have a framework for our work and we don't have support from head office. We don't
271 have job descriptions. We haven't had job descriptions from January. No, it's from January.
272 But our director decided we are going to build it up until April and in April, the district will
273 function according to the new organogram. We started with the process in January this year
274 already, so we are awaiting a job description from them. But we haven't had job descriptions
275 this year. You see now, there's certain things that, um, both groups must deal with, like full-
276 service schools.

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:27 AM

Comment [4]: Capacity of district

277
278 M How many full-service schools are there in this district?

279
280 1 Five. Because head office still asks us here, on this side, to provide them with reports on
281 full-service schools, on learning support educators – that's also inclusion coaches – we've
282 got 20 educators like that in our district, we will tell you about them, special school reports
283 about our special schools, SBST information, special concessions, career guidance. So they
284 still expect from us to give them reports but these people immediately give feedback to their
285 circuit managers. On the organogram, there's this dotted line to us, and that's what causes

286 the problem at this stage, because they feel the people working here, they've got nothing to
287 do with us. This is their direct line.

288
289 M So those in the circuit, they liaise or collaborate with external service providers...

290
291 2 They can do that.

292
293 1 That's fine, they can do it, because they've got to serve the schools in that circuit, but
294 concerning these things where head office require reports from us, we've got to work as a
295 team together. They are doing the assessments with the learning support educators in the
296 full-service schools. They are getting the learning support educators' reports on a monthly
297 basis, they are working directly with the SBSTs directly on a daily basis. So if they don't
298 share this info with us on the dotted line, how can we take this to head office? Do you
299 understand? So without clear direction by head office, this thing will not be sorted out, and
300 now we are behind with reports so we look terrible but we don't get support from this side,
301 because they said sorry, I've got a line manager now here, and that's my circuit manager. In
302 the past, we worked together in ISS and we had to report and we went out to schools
303 together, and now you're mos a unit on your own. You understand? So it's causing lots of
304 tension at this stage. It's not only just in our district. In some districts where this thing started,
305 especially the psychologists, we are lost. We had a meeting one afternoon where the DCEs
306 from the XXX districts came together, and you ask A, everybody said we don't know and it's
307 getting worse by the day. We need direction. That's why the DBST at this stage is also not
308 really – we feel we are the DBST because there must be a IDSO, there must be... If you look
309 in this new organogram, there must be a rep from each circuit in a certain way at the DBST. I
310 think so. I don't know.

311
312 M How was the DBST constituted before the restructuring?

313
314 1 My dear, it was people from...

315
316 2 The IDSOs.

317
318 1 The IDSOs.

319
320 2 CESs.

321
322 1 CESs, curriculum people.

323
324 2 Representatives from the different sections in the district.

325
326 M From schools?

327
328 1 Learning support educator – one learning support educator and then... The full-service
329 school principals. But we never had a meeting like that. What they want from the DBST is
330 that [sighs] if schools experience a problem, but not only concerning learners, it can be
331 something else, guess what, it must come to the DBST, the district-based support team. And
332 that team must try to solve the problem or give it to the relevant unit to look into that, you
333 understand? But at this stage, the only things that we discussed was, um, referrals regarding

334 learners. And we can't always put a report on the table for everybody to read. That is
335 confidential. So that's why in a certain way we feel like we are the DBST, because who else -
336 if they've got a problem with salaries, they go to that section, the principals. If they've got a
337 problem with staff that's not getting along, they go to their IDSO to deal with that. So I don't
338 know in the new organogram – and head office is still functioning the same way they
339 functioned before, am I right?

340
341 2 Yes, mm.

342
343 1 But we had to change. So now they've still got their units and all the units expect things
344 from us, but they don't realise that we are not together any more.

345
346 M So are you saying that at this stage, you don't really have a DBST constituted as it should
347 be?

348
349 1 Ja. And you see, I don't want to come over too negative, and I know I am doing that, but it
350 is difficult. And then the other thing, we psychologists here, at the beginning of the year, we
351 said, okay, the budget, we decided on certain material that we want to buy. How can I be a
352 psychologist without assessment material, without a therapy room, without a car? There is no
353 resources, my dear.

354
355 M What are the challenges for educational psychologists within the system that we have? It
356 sounds that you are expressing these.

357
358 1 Ja, how can we work without, say, social workers with us? Sometimes OTs, sometimes
359 speech therapists. I am not saying they must employ 20 speech therapists in this. But as I
360 said to you, in the early '90s, the Aid Centre, it worked so good. You were like a medical
361 team.

362
363 M That was government?

364
365 1 Government, ja. And you had your panel discussions every Friday or Monday or whatever
366 you decided on. But you had your OT there, you had your speech therapist there, you had
367 your different... your educational psychologist, you had a remedial person there. So when
368 you had the panel discussions, you could really solve the problem there and say, 'Okay, let
369 us go that route,' or what. I know that, but that's the only way. You see they're moving away
370 from the medical model. Sorry, A...

371
372 2 No. Another thing maybe that is of concern is like White Paper 6, if you can check how long
373 it took for it to be unfolded, and being understood. Yes, we are somewhere with it, but in the
374 process, check as to how many transitions in the education system took place within the
375 timeframe of the rolling out of White Paper 6, and the impacts, the challenges that were
376 encountered in the interim. Now you are in a new dispensation, you are realigning, it is
377 another change. So compare all these changes and maybe they will give you a picture as to
378 where you are heading to. We are not sure where we are getting to, but we have been
379 transforming and transforming and transforming.

380

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:29 AM
Comment [5]: Capacity of district

381 M As an educational psychologist within the school system, what would you like to see to
382 improve the effectiveness of your services as educational psychologists?

383
384 1 The first thing is to be recognised as a psychologist, not only just on paper. How can you
385 employ a motor mechanic and not give him any tools? Um [sigh], so it's wonderful now that
386 we've got on paper [me] DCES psychologist EOS unit.

387
388 2 And the manner we are working, we are expected to go to schools, and when I get to a
389 school, when I have a client, I need a private space. So usually, the schools don't have this.
390 So that comes within the tools she's talking about.

391
392 1 I think resources in general, my dear.

393
394 2 And, and timeframes. We engage, we interact with a client, then to make follow ups, it's
395 another thing because of the number of schools. You only make one follow up or two follow
396 ups to see whether the client.

397
398 1 We are in a situation now with a specific service provider, and the lady said okay, she has
399 as OT and a speech therapist. But they haven't got a education psychologist. One of our
400 colleagues said, okay, but we've got education psychologists. So she said, okay, so you can
401 do this test. We said no, I will have to look at the child and say I think the way you sit, I think
402 you can perhaps be a child having this kind of ... And then we sat... I felt terrible to say to
403 this outside service provider, sorry, we haven't got material. I don't know what I can really do
404 for you.

405
406 M Do you ever do an assessment of a child?

407
408 2 Screening, screening, just to screen academic stuff. And we interview.

409
410 M Where do you do this?

411
412 2 In the office.

413
414 M What kind of cases would be referred to you?

415
416 2 Learning problems.

417
418 1 Learning and emotional. We know the uncompleted sentences. You know, those things
419 that I got from Tukkies in 1988, things like that. But still, if you find out that this child needs
420 intense help, then you've started the process already. That child's got perhaps used to you in
421 one session, and thinks, but I would like to stay with this person, I've got confidence in this
422 person already. And then you must but I think I will see you next month. There is no use, and
423 it's not that we don't want to. And then also in the education system, um – okay, inclusive
424 education and I think we are one of the districts that's really the best – not one, we are the
425 best district – in inclusive education. There is no doubt about that. Um, I... I can be corrected
426 but I think we've got in the 60s and 70s Down Syndrome learners in mainstream schools.
427 Really, we are far ahead.

428

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:31 AM

Comment [6]: Improve services of EP

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:32 AM

Comment [7]: Capacity of district

429 M To what do you attribute this?

430

431 1 Just to really not only talk about inclusive education, but to...

432

433 2 To implement.

434

435 1 To implement it. And we go the extra mile with the Down Syndrome Society, with parents
436 that help, our learning support educators that will go into a classroom where we place a child
437 like that for the first month to support that educator. And not only that, we've got a blind
438 learner in one of our... that we've placed now a while ago. And I really think that's one thing
439 that they can't point fingers to us, to say you are not going that route. But still, there's certain
440 learners that you can't place in mainstream, that needs other intervention and help, and
441 there's no resources. You know, sometimes you sit with parents here, kids that are, say,
442 turning 16, then schools refer too late, or whatever, or the child will not be able to speak
443 Afrikaans or English. So we can't put him in a pre-vocational school like Kwaggasrand or,
444 um, Suiderberg, or Magalies, so where now? They sit here with the education department
445 and not with a district office, and then [clicks fingers] newspapers. But what can we do?
446 Clinic schools? They've closed all the clinic schools. So our pre-vocational schools are filled
447 with learners who have behavioural problems. What can we do? How can [interrupted by
448 phone call].

449

450 M So A, when would you refer learners to special needs schools rather than mainstream
451 schools?

452

453 2 For special schools, we check the medical reports of the learner, then we also check the
454 severity of the barrier. We only put severe cases to special schools. We have to look into the
455 documents. We don't just say because the school says the learner must go to a special
456 school, and then we refer. We do a thorough check as to is this child really to an extent that
457 we have to see the child before we can refer to a special school. Referrals must via the
458 district, via us.

459

460 M How do you define inclusion? Or inclusive education?

461

462 2 Maybe I always define it looking into the different types of schools and the different
463 services that are provided in those different types of schools. And then you check now that
464 the child who has to be placed in a school. So to me, inclusive is... You don't have to
465 discriminate. The child, for as long as the child has the potential, the child can cope in a
466 mainstream school, so that school it's an inclusive school. As long as there can be support
467 for that child. As long as the teachers are able to adapt the curriculum and those are some of
468 the things that need to be provided for the school, like we have the support education
469 operations support. So as long as the school can access support – it doesn't matter from
470 whom, as long as the school can access support for this child, then it's an inclusive school.

471

472 1 I feel exactly the same, that each and every child has got the right to be included, where
473 any other child, um... [pause] is placed at the end of the day. But it is important and that's
474 why I think from an education psychology point of view, you've got to look into that child
475 holistically. It's easy to say, 'Ah, let's place so many Down Syndromes here,' but for this
476 child, at the end of the day, it's about the child. This child must benefit where you place him

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:33 AM

Comment [8]: Definition of inclusion

477 because one aspect of that child perhaps will not fit into that specific environment and you
478 will harm that child. So it's easy to organise a placement and to turn to the principal and say
479 take this child, but at the end of the day, you turn your back, and there's that little individual
480 alone there. The same with full-service schools, I think it's a wonderful idea, but these
481 schools, they need support. If you want to place any kind of learner with any kind of barrier in
482 that full-service school, then you must develop and support the educators, or get at least
483 professional people, meaning a psychologist, a remedial person, on the school grounds, to
484 support, because you can't expect from a educator who has got 70 kids already in her class.
485 She is standing in the corner because there's no space for her to move, to sit with a autistic
486 child, a Down Syndrome child, whatever child in that classroom, you can't expect that from
487 her.

488
489 2 This is where we appreciate what [XXX company] is doing, because they really help a lot.
490

491 M The full-service schools, do they act as resource centres to other schools?
492

493 1 No we have resource centres which are separate. In our district, we've got two now. They
494 are special schools. It is expected from them to provide support and training to schools who
495 is in need of support. Both of them have got a psychologist, an occupational therapist,
496 speech therapist, but also not all of them appointed by the Department, it is SGB positions.
497 So the Department make the school a resource centre but they're not putting the staff there.
498 Same with FSS – all these schools were promised that they were going to get a psychologist
499 and a remedial and a learning support educator.
500

501 M What makes a school full-service?
502

503 1 It's a normal school. We just looked into the – firstly, the SMT, will they buy into this, will
504 they be positive? The staff, you look into the school grounds if they have got to bring in more
505 classrooms. Am I right there, A?
506

507 2 Mm.
508

509 1 We look into all those things. The kind of problems in that area, because kids, they set a 40
510 kilometre radius, they've got to service or to support. Um, but what we did now is we gave
511 ELSEN numbers to learners in that school that's already learners who is experiencing
512 barriers to learning, and not taking learners from outside, because the kids that's there
513 already belong in a full-service school, like in most primary school. We said today to the
514 school that we visited again, that please, don't think it's an extra burden on your shoulders.
515 You've been adapting the curriculum for years, you had different levels of learners in your
516 class, it's just there's now a name, and you're in a privileged position that we will need to
517 support you more, but we can't sit there the whole day. So automatically, those educators
518 must do all the work. There's no financial support from the Department, no placement of
519 specialists there, so you can see they start to roll the ball and then at a certain stage, we
520 must mar push the ball if we want to continue. And things like this must be discussed at the
521 DBST, but who is the DBST at this stage? What are we going to discuss there? Will the
522 schools not go directly to the circuit manager to solve the problem? In the previous
523 organogram, we were different subdirectorates, so it was good if we got together with a
524 specific problem and we've got a rep from all over and we tell this rep, 'Please go back to

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:34 AM

Comment [9]: Definition of inclusion

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:35 AM

Comment [10]: Capacity of district

525 your subdirectorate, and tell your subdirectorate to solve it.' Now, we've got a team who has
526 got almost all the sections in there already.

527
528 M So it is sliced a different way now? The same people but instead of having the specialists
529 managed across the district, they are in circuits?

530
531 1 If the psychologist in a circuit is sick or something then they've got to call us and see what
532 we can do. And not all these posts are filled. In two circuits, we've only got inclusion
533 specialists, there's no psychologist there, so that person must in a certain way deal alone
534 with all the schools there. And we must see how we can support.

535
536 M Do you see yourselves as managers of cases, as psychologists?

537
538 1 Let me tell you what the Department did at a certain stage to get psychologists to apply for
539 positions in the education department, they said that this middle management level must only
540 be given to registered psychologists. So then you are on a higher salary scale and at least
541 you will apply because of the salary maybe. And they didn't give DCES positions to anybody
542 else like inclusion specialist or what, only to – the advertisement was that you must be
543 registered at Health Profession Council, seven year teaching experience, blah, blah, blah.
544 And that's how they got psychologists not only going into private practice the whole time, but
545 at least because the Department is in need of psychologists. And now with the OSD that's
546 coming in, the psychologists here and the psychologists there, salary-wise, you will perhaps
547 be on the same level because you get people here who has got longer experience than, say,
548 A, so some of them, their salary can even be higher than some of us that's on this level. Do
549 you understand? And that's why our job description in a certain way, theirs must also be
550 according to Health Professions Council. They've got to serve their circuits.

551
552 M I was asking about the management of cases, because it sounds as though as
553 psychologists in the district, you are dealing with reports and referrals from schools and you
554 are taking these cases and getting service providers and...

555
556
557 1 It all depends what kind of problem, ne?

558
559 2 I wanted to say it looks like little, but when you look at the activities that we engage on, on
560 a daily basis, yes, one-on-one becomes limited, but the other activities take up all the time
561 that we should be using on one-on-one. And again, the number of referrals that we refer
562 because of our limited time and the number of activities that we engage on, if we take the
563 number of referrals we will refer to external service provider, if we were to deal with them on
564 one-one-one sessions, then you would realise that there are a number of learners that are
565 referred for support. It's not that... That is why I say it appears limited if you count the
566 number of learners that I personally engaged with, and started with the initial intake
567 interview, it appears to be limited.

568
569 M Do you do therapy, counselling with learners?

570
571 2 Ja, we do with emotional problems. We do counselling, but it boils down to the same. It
572 appears to be limited but like I'm saying, we get background information then we check what

573 can we do and then we refer, we place, we place, we place. One-on-one, we do it. Like last
574 week, we had sessions with parents individually, so now we must make a follow up, but we
575 don't want to lose touch with those learners, but it's not possible with us. So we are already
576 planning to engage the external service provider. But at the same time, even if we engage
577 the service provider, we make a follow up, we check, we monitor the process. The child, how
578 is he, are you seeing progress in the classroom? Before we can close the case, we must be
579 sure as to how is the child at that point in time.

580
581 M What is the relationship between you in the district and the provincial department?
582

583 2 I know they are referring cases to us. I don't know if there is a service that parents can get
584 there. Parents report there but they are being cascaded to us. It's not the correct procedure
585 for them to go there, but they do go there.

586
587 1 If they feel they didn't get any help, they will go there and then to us.
588

589 2 Some do not know the procedure and they go directly there.
590

591 M Do you think it will be useful to have a psychologist in each school?
592

593 1 Oh yes.
594

595 2 It will help a lot.
596

597 1 No doubt about that. How can you just look into the scholastic needs of the learner? If the
598 child is not emotionally looked after, how can you perform? You can't perform. So ja, I know
599 there must be educators because that is why schools are there, but you can't take a sick
600 person and ask that person or ask an educator to develop this. You can't, you won't get
601 anywhere. You've got to look into the... - as I said again, the holistic person, you've got to
602 you can't just look into one side. And that's why I said they are moving away from the
603 medical model. In the past sometimes - I am talking about the '80s, 90s - you placed the
604 child easily according to the IQ. Ja, IQ is below 75, you must go to that school. Yes, it
605 happened but not with everybody. I never, never looked into just the IQ to place a child,
606 never. How can you do that. So but that, at some stage, they took away even our IQ tests.
607 We were not allowed to do these, but sometimes it gives you really direction, how to help this
608 child that's really in need. You can't go to a dentist and just sit on the chair and he must look
609 at you like... He must take photos, xrays, he must - um, I'm the same, but just as a
610 psychologist. I am not a fortune teller, by playing cards and looking into your eyes and
611 decide. I need tools. So I feel half a person, half a psychologist.

612
613 M So you would like to see a movement back towards the medical model?
614

615 1 Absolutely. Not in total, not in total, please don't get me wrong, because some people
616 misuse the medical model. But ja, there are truth in the medical model as well.
617

618 M And you would like more psychologists in schools?
619

620 1 Teams. Even at the district, appoint people that can make a difference.

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:37 AM
Comment [11]: Role of EP

621
622 M When you are working with schools, if they phone you, do you go and engage with the
623 SBST? Is there collaboration?
624
625 2 Yes, there is. It is why we have referring procedure. To avoid confusion, we have a form –
626 we call it a Special Needs Assessment Form – that we use as a means of communication
627 between us and the schools. So that is how we communicate with the school. And then in a
628 way, it gives us structure because after it has been sent to us, we must also intervene and
629 then at the end of the day, we must give the school feedback as to what is happening, what
630 are the recommendations, what needs to be done to support the child.
631
632 M How do you give feedback?
633
634 2 We usually, once we've received the referral form, we get the parent. So we give the
635 feedback to the parent. But the school must also get the feedback so they know what is
636 happening. We invite the parents to meet us.
637
638 M And when you are engaging other external service providers, what sort of relationship do
639 you have?
640
641 2 Ja, we collaborate with them. With a case now, unfortunately, the mother couldn't come but
642 she sent her aunt and a meeting is arranged with her for next week. So the mother must go
643 and – unfortunately, we are not going to be there in that meeting – but the mother is going to
644 be with the service provider that we collaborated with, so they are going to intervene with the
645 mother and maybe do the assessment.
646
647 1 We are responsible to train our SBSTs. In the past, we had every term a training with all
648 the SBST coordinators or members of the SBST teams. So that's one thing we had. And we
649 had a two to three day seminar every second year at Unisa that we organised. We had one
650 on cyber-bullying two years ago. Um, our training is on scholastic or emotional or
651 behavioural, because how can we expect from them to try to help the referring teacher and
652 the school without us giving them any knowledge? These teachers need to be supported,
653 and who can do that properly? We don't have time. So then we had our school handouts, but
654 we don't always know what they do with it because they've got to go back to the principal,
655 organise the training for the whole staff, to develop the whole staff. And I promise you,
656 sometimes you go back to schools and they can't even remember where the handouts are.
657
658 2 Unfortunately, the SBST is just a small team in the school. And usually, when we do such
659 trainings, we will say one or two members of the team.
660
661 1 It depends on also how much support that person gets from the principal, because if the
662 driver of the team is not positive – we will sometimes get calls from principals to say, 'We've
663 got here an SBST invitation, what is SBST?' Ah, hello!
664
665 M Is it called SBST or ILST?
666
667 1 It was CLBT at a certain stage. In the late '90s, it was Centre of Learning Based Training.
668 Then it was I... On the level above us, they talk about ILST, ja. We are still school-based

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:38 AM

Comment [12]: Collaboration

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:38 AM

Comment [13]: Collaboration

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:39 AM

Comment [14]: Capacity of district

669 support team. The ILST is more head office and national, all their communication is ILST. We
670 are SBSTs. At a certain stage, we started changing it and then we realised, it's not on our
671 level, we are still SBST. And even the DBST, we spoke about R at head office. DBST must
672 reps from all over, but at head office, the driver of the DBST is part of our subdirectorate. So
673 automatically, when we attend DBST meetings called by head office, it is our unit people, or
674 one of us. Always the psychologists that attend head office DBST because it's our
675 subdirectorate there that's head of DBST. So why must policy and planning and curriculum
676 people go there, because it's not their subdirectorate? And even then, if we go there, not one
677 district functions in the same way. Some it's the district director, some it's only two
678 psychologists that's the DBST of the district. So that's why we weren't sure who you wanted
679 to meet when you said DBST.

680

681 M How do you define mainstreaming compared to inclusive education?

682

683 2 Mainstreaming, it's... [pause]... it's the school that's only focusing on developing learners
684 academically and... We have mainstream schools, but we encourage inclusion, especially if
685 there's a learner with some barriers within the vicinity, we encourage the school to admit the
686 learner.

687

688 M In an inclusive school, how does the school provide support when a learner needs it?

689

690 1 Some schools take kids out of school sometimes, but the kids are in the classroom and it's
691 been expected from that educator to adapt the curriculum. Sometimes, they do that, but it's
692 not allowed – in certain periods, ja. Some schools, at a certain stage we had these aid
693 classes and the special classes. I think we have two or three schools that still have got a
694 special class, but these aid class educators, they are now our learning support educators. So
695 we said instead of supporting only 20 schools and there are, say, 15 learners per school in
696 that class, we said let us take them out, place them also in the circuit now, previously we had
697 10 clusters when we were still here in our ISS. So we had 10 clusters, so we had, say, two
698 LSEs per cluster, and they move from school to school, supporting educators to support
699 learners. So they are not there as a remedial educator and then this learner comes for 10
700 minutes and then the next one comes in. They go into the classroom, look into the situation,
701 give them support to the learners sometimes in front of the educator so that the educator can
702 continue with the support, or work out a support programme for the educator to implement.

703

704 M How is this working?

705

706 1 I think we were also one of the first districts. We did this in about 2004 about, and they are
707 trying to get all the districts to function that way, instead of aid class educators. So we
708 wanted to move away from this, you are in a separate class and you can support, and if
709 you're okay, you go back, or otherwise, you go to a special school in the year you turn 13.
710 But sometimes, we feel that some learners still belong in a class like that, even if we talk
711 inclusive education, really. But sometimes, the child is just, just between mainstream and,
712 say, um, a special school. He doesn't belong there, too low-functioning for the mainstream,
713 too high functioning for that. Where to now? Where do you fit in that child? And then at the
714 end of the day, that child starts with behavioural problems, and low self-esteem because they
715 don't really fit in here. And I am asking for help, can't you see it in my behaviour, but what
716 can we do? So it's really because of the fact that the education closed so many systems just

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:39 AM

Comment [15]: Mainstreaming

717 to put inclusive education there, that I'm very positive about, but you can't all be in inclusive
718 education. And there is not enough people like us psychologists, like remedial people, like
719 OTs, like speech therapists, to support the educators to help that child that the child can
720 benefit in a certain way there. We can't provide support to individual schools and learners the
721 way we want to, the way we have been trained to, because there are not enough of us. We
722 are, say, four, and here we've got three at this stage, three psychologists in the circuits. Two
723 are vacant. So we are then seven psychologists, one is a counsellor, that's got to deal with
724 260 schools in total. Tell me how is... Without saying anything, and you can't expect from us
725 just to develop the SBSTs, if they are not even motivated, and telling you right in your face,
726 'But I'm not a counsellor, I'm not a psychologist, how can you expect from me to deal with
727 this child and the police and abuse cases and...?' And sometimes, they are too afraid to talk
728 because they will come and burn their house or they will do this. So it's not easy, but we are
729 trying, trying to stay positive. And developmental courses, as psychologists, for CPD points.
730 No, we pay for this ourselves. They appoint us as psychologists, but SAPSAC was now
731 R3,000. We go to those that, say, take 3 days and it's done but we've got at least, say, 20
732 points already. Registration fees. Now and then we try to push it through and then through
733 the grace of God, the RLS will go through and they will pay for it, but most of it, no. We took
734 a chance this year, me and her, to say let us wait, otherwise, hopefully... I went there almost
735 every day, to Health Professions, and to my procurement section, to say please how far is
736 this payment. Some of the psychologists, they pay it out of their pockets, because they are
737 not going to take the chance. I said that I haven't got a private practice, so my department
738 must pay for me if they want me to be a registered psychologist, otherwise why must I be
739 registered, you understand? So it's again the sources, they don't, they put the name
740 psychologist there, but what do they... I don't think they know who we are, the, the main role
741 that we can play in a child's life. And with inclusive education [pause] because if you're a
742 psychologist in the department, you – I must tell you, we can't think the same as a private
743 psychologist in practice. Am I right, 2?

744

745 2 – Mm.

746

747 1 – Lots of parents will come from the private psychologists who don't understand our
748 policies and stuff and tell the parent, according to this IQ, this, and they will come here and
749 we will say, 'Uh-uh, we can't. Please, your child can't be placed there or there.' And then
750 because they paid that psychologist, they believe in that report. We can't sing the same song
751 as a private psychologist in practice.

752

753 M – Can you elaborate on this a bit?

754

755 1 – Ja. The private psychologists don't visit the schools to observe the child, it's a paper
756 exercise sometimes. And I think if the other two psychologists here – X and Y – I really think
757 the four of us feel exactly the same. So even if they are not here, they would've phrased it
758 perhaps in another way, or X that's very good with her English [laughs], she would've said
759 some nice wording here, and used nice words and stuff, but we feel exactly the same, we're
760 a team, we're in this together. And, and we've got to motivate each other. We've got to
761 motivate each other because, argh, sometimes in meetings they don't even recognise us,
762 we're not even on the agenda. So ja, I don't know.

763

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:40 AM

Comment [16]: Capacity of district

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:41 AM

Comment [17]: Role of EP, perceptions

764 M – Is there anything else you would like to tell me – about your role, or what role you feel an
765 ed psych should play, or about the challenges?

766
767 1 – I spoke a lot. 2?

768
769 2 – It's more of challenges. Yes, we have a role to play but it's more of challenges than that,
770 because the challenges we encounter, it's like they are an obstacle for us to achieve what we
771 intend to achieve. We are not able to do our work as we would wish to because of these
772 challenges. And the structure itself, in one way or the other, poses some limitations because
773 there are certain things that we feel if we were doing them, or we could be doing them, then
774 we would be able to reach our goals, or make an impact in the lives of the children. But due
775 to the structure, at some point we find that we can't do that. We sit back and see what will
776 happen.

777
778 1 – And what plays a role as well is the different managers. Some of the districts, they – with
779 the support of the managers, they decided that psychologists are here, they only doing
780 psychological, only emotional and behavioural problems. The inclusive specialists that deal
781 with all the other scholastic sections, full service schools, learning support educators,
782 everything. And it's okay. Here, it's not the same. In another district, not the same. So again,
783 if head office not going to give all fifteen districts the same job description, this – because
784 now you hear what's happening in another district, you think that is wonderful, they see you
785 as a psychologist there, you can function, they go out and they only doing psychological
786 work, that's it. Nothing, nothing, nothing else. So what? We can't do it.

787
788 2 – May, maybe another reason is because we are still at the conception – or not necessarily
789 the conception, but the beginning of the new dispensation – we are still learning. Come five
790 years later, then...

791
792 1 – Then you will be HOD and you will change the organogram!

793
794 2 – [laughs]

795
796 1 – But then we're closer to retirement! [laughs]

797
798 2 – To get other people to interview, we won't be there!

799
800 M – 2, you worked as a teacher previously. Did you train later on as a psychologist?

801
802 2 – Uh uh, I came here as a psychologist. I trained while I was still at school.

803
804 1 – And she was also a learning support educator.

805
806 M – Okay, so you had that background. Were you working in this district?

807
808 1 – She did really well because these learning support educators, they are on post-level 1, as
809 normal teachers' starting level. And she got a DCES position, post-level 5. 2, am I right?

810
811 2 – Mm.

812
813 M – What are the grades on the OSD?
814
815 1 – We don't know. We thought the money would be in yesterday and it's not. We thought
816 head office is dealing with it, it's on a high level, but it's still very, very deurmekaar.
817
818 [Director entered office. Stopped focus group for a while in order to bring her up to date and
819 get her consent to continue.]
820
821 1 – We explained to her the new organogram. It's mostly about the psychologists, so about
822 the circuits, and about the OSD and the job descriptions that in a certain way it's got to look
823 the same, even if they're in circuits because of the Health Professions Council. So we
824 explained to her about that, and then the full-service schools and the LSEs and special
825 concessions and career guidance and there are certain aspects that we've all got to deal
826 with, and that's why there must still be elaboration.
827
828 M – What would be the role that you play as educational psychologists and what, ideally,
829 kind of role should you be playing, and what your challenges are?
830
831 3 – Okay. It's actually. I always look at the functions that we have been given, in terms of
832 right now, as the organogram changes, and the psychological services, the big question
833 mark is what happens to the functions because we still have the same functions. They've
834 actually removed some of the things that we were doing.
835
836 1 – That's what I tried to explain to her, that not all the districts are working in the same way.
837 Some districts, all the psychologists are this side and they're only doing psychological
838 service work, nothing about full-service schools, nothing about LSEs and the inclusion
839 specialists are dealing with all those aspects. But it differ from district to district, you know. If
840 you look into my appointment letter, that's they way it's got to function. We've got to function
841 only as, only as psychologists, not dealing with learning support educators, because they're
842 working with the scholastic side of the child's life. And we as well – please don't read me
843 wrong – but more as the behavioural and emotional side. That makes sense to me, and
844 leave the rest for the full-service schools, all those for the people in the circuits who are the
845 inclusion specialists. But it's not always that easy, you know, because of the workload and...
846 But if other districts can cope that way, I... But it's got to come from head office, to say that is
847 how we would like the psychological services to function. And this is what is being expected
848 from them. That's it. And now we're hanging in the air. That's the problem. And I think that's
849 where they - especially the psychologists - in general, are now saying, 'Sorry, we're not
850 contracting until you tell us, you put psychologists behind my name now. What sources are
851 you going to give me, how are you going to support me, what training are you going to help
852 me with to stay registered, etc, etc?' And I think at the end of this, this thing is going to end
853 up not in a nice way, the same as what the IDS is.
854
855 3 – If you look at the framework of a full-service school, I think that's where we are leaning
856 towards. The directorate at head office is the one that is responsible for the ...
857
858 1 – Am I wrong if I say that in a certain way, we still fall under all the directorates there? It is
859 psycho-social...

860
861 3 – The issues come from psycho-social, ja. They are with X.
862
863 1 – Am I right, isn't X with...
864
865 3 – X, the impression I am getting, X is driving the inclusive education, and X is... X's agenda
866 is full-service schools. And Y is with her. Y is with her. Like a sub-directorate. I think. I am
867 saying this is my personal opinion, my personal opinion, because you know, ISS, we fall
868 under ISS. You know, Y talks about full-service schools and resource centres and how these
869 services are provided.
870
871 1 – And the inclusion specialists, where do they fall?
872
873 3 – Also. They do, they fall under that.
874
875 1 – This is our CES now, and she's not even clear.
876
877 3 – We didn't get X's full explanation of what it is that she expects, by the way, at that
878 presentation. Maybe we don't need to analyse. Let's focus on what we need to provide and
879 make sure we provide a service. I think your line is...
880
881 1 – Especially now with the OSD, there are certain things that's got to appear on the job
882 description. Otherwise, if they pull our job description, they ask for it, and it's not according to
883 Health Profession Council, they will say, 'Sorry, you don't qualify for OSD.' And they can't
884 say that because they've put 'psychologist' on our appointment letters. So it is really
885 unnecessary tension. Do it right the first time, give us our stuff and lead us.
886
887 3 – Perhaps we should also remember that our processes are not yet sorted. They have got
888 to go to the chamber to negotiate, you see? I know OSD was negotiated, but some of these
889 things have to go back and people have to put their signatures there.
890
891 1 – There is someone who is apparently going to support Y with a job description. She
892 wanted the name of the psychologists. But this one is telling you this, and that one is telling
893 you that, and ja.
894
895 M – At least the process has started.
896
897 1 – Oh yes, and they must just stay positive. That is the main thing. You can't – especially
898 the four of us – you can't be each one in your own office now, doing your own thing. We are
899 trying to plan together and solve problems together and share and...
900
901 M – Could I get a copy of the organogram?
902
903 1 – F has got something which we can perhaps email to you, but I am not sure if we can yet.
904 What you need to know is what I have drawn for you. In the past, there were 4 units under
905 our head. Now, she's got ten. So it is, ja, it is a big change.
906
907 3 – And very diverse.

908
909
910
911
912
913
914
915
916
917
918
919
920
921
922
923
924
925
926
927
928
929
930
931
932
933
934
935
936
937
938
939
940
941
942
943
944
945
946
947
948
949
950
951
952
953
954

1 – She is going to the hairdresser every week now to colour the hair because it is getting greyer and greyer! We've been a long time together [laughs].

3 – I think, Michele, what is important and which is what I sometimes mention to colleagues is not losing focus on what is important. There was one gentleman who said if I can just reach one child. It's about them really. When things are not okay for them, we are not okay. We can't sit here and say we are okay. It's not okay. So that's what keeps us going. We have got a duty towards them and a responsibility. And it makes one look good to know that I made a difference in a child's life. **We know we are not reaching all of them, but we hope we are able to get quite a few and make a difference in their lives.**

1 – I think what's nice is if you assisted a child and a few years later, the child recognises you somewhere in the street. We dealt with lots of cancer at a certain stage, and suddenly kids afterwards, 5 or 8 years later, they see you and recognise you, 'Ha, I'm so glad to see you. Thanks for what you did on that camp.' Or that we organised the camp like that, that was the first holiday they had. And it can be a big man who recognises you like this. Like today, it meant a lot to me. We are trying to place a Down Syndrome child in an FSS school, and the other two learners we dealt with, it's again nice to see that we are so spoiled in life that one little girl, she opened her little bag and there's just tissues in there, nothing else. And you know sometimes you've got to experience that again in life, to come back and think, the problems we are facing, it's nothing. So there is, um...

3 – There is good things, there is. And we want to see the teachers doing things for the learners' sakes.

1 – And that they appreciate your presence.

3 – And we don't acknowledge that sometimes, because we are always rushed. You know, then you go back to them and you say this. And you go back to them and you want this. And this one and ... Without really acknowledging, you've got more on your plate and you're doing a wonderful job. Very few people will do it the way you do it, but... But we've got some wonderful teachers now. They forget themselves. They do things in the best interests.

1 – And some principals and educators are full of wonderful ideas. They don't even have lunch. Anyway, what is lunch? Last Friday, she came to my office with cookies! I can't believe it. [laughs]

3 – We must go now.

M – Thank you so much.

2 – So you also in a way assisted us in revising and thinking back as to these things, this is how we do it. It was a reflection moment for us.

M – Thank you so much.

Michele Berger 13/8/29 12:43 AM

Comment [18]: Capacity

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Educational psychologist

M - What do you view as your role in inclusive classrooms and schools?

L - From experience, the most important role would be to identify and diagnose the kids with the problems that haven't been diagnosed before. And then to make the teacher aware of a specific child's needs. I worked at [the school] last year. I would go there once or twice a week. I only did 8 or 9 cases in the year. The teachers told the parents but only a very few followed up. [The school] has an LSEN class. They are very knowledgeable about kids. One Grade 1 child had a very experienced teacher who would assess that the child needs a different school. It was more backup for special needs than ordinary. If you are at the school, you get more problems. Another school I worked at was used to it. There was one that the teacher thought if the emotional stability was better, then he would perform better at school. It worked well but half the cases were charity cases. Teachers brought a child to you and asked for an assessment. But there was no money. But I made up for this through working with parents that had medical aid. These were also black parents but some of them had medical aid and so they could pay for my services. But many of the parents could not. The teachers identified the kids that they thought needed to be assessed or needed support and then they contacted the parents. I prefer not to get an historical background before seeing a child. I evaluate first and then speak to the parents. They filled in a questionnaire. I had guidelines. And then I also got the teachers' input. But I called in the parents before I spoke to teachers. Parents had to give consent. Report went to parents first. I had to judge.

M - How do you define inclusion?

L - There are not enough institutions that they can go to so they have to go to mainstream schools. Inclusion is about including kids that are not reaching their full potential because of a learning barrier – for any reason, or they have emotional difficulties. In my current school, the classes are small, so you can have kids with learning problems and manage. I worked at a school in W. But this school also didn't employ me either. Ideally, there would be a team on board that you can discuss cases

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:45 PM

Comment [1]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:45 PM

Comment [2]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:47 PM

Comment [3]: Role of EP

33 with It is much better to be in a school than in a private practice. This year, I am
34 teaching and doing psychology. It is one thing diagnosing and another being with kids.
35 My role should be to guide the teacher and parents and child on how to manage learning
36 problems. In a school, you can immediately see what is not working so you can try
37 something else. If parents gave me permission, I would go to see the school. I would
38 have a session with all the teachers and discuss the report with them. I would tell them
39 the extent of the problem and suggest management skills. It was unsatisfying. Schools
40 are so busy so you can't go back to them regularly. It is idealistic. Initially, some were
41 very reluctant. Teachers would have a bit of an attitude. When you give feedback on a
42 report and the teacher sees, then they would feel validated and would come on board.
43 Most teachers were very willing to follow through on suggestions. If they could see I
44 understood the problem, they were very willing to help.

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:48 PM

Comment [4]: Definition of IE

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:49 PM

Comment [5]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:49 PM

Comment [6]: Relationship btw school and EP

45 M - What are the challenges you face in providing support?

46 L - Last year, I was at a practice when I wasn't so reliant on the income. I wanted to get
47 into a multicultural exposure. I wanted to do that for myself and for the school. One of
48 the problems is that the things that we as psychologists suggest isn't always practical for
49 the school to do. It is one thing to say put a child in front of the blackboard and another
50 to say make sure the child is paying attention. People should see the educational
51 psychologist as coming on board and now we are managing this problem. We are not
52 solving it by evaluating and diagnosing the problem. People see you and take the report
53 home and follow through on a bit. Unless I follow up, it often dwindles. I would like to
54 see something more sustainable. For 6 months, I want weekly feedback or I want to see
55 the child every month. I did see one or two of the kids for emotional therapy, but not
56 really. Kids go home after school with a taxi, so it was logistically difficult. I didn't want
57 to take them out of the classes.

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:50 PM

Comment [7]: Effectiveness of EP services

58 M - Can you illustrate through describing a case in which you have been involved?

59 L - There was a girl in Grade 6. I suggested she go to another school. I saw her parents
60 for guidance. She was dyslexic. A year later, the mom phoned to say she's not coping in
61 this other school. I didn't know what to do so I referred her to a colleague. We need
62 assistance. A big learning problem can't be rectified within the current set up.

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:51 PM

Comment [8]: Effectiveness of EP services

63 M - What needs to be done to improve the effectiveness of educational psychological
64 services to support inclusion?

65 L - We must talk to Grade R and 1 teachers. If there is a psychologist in the school, they
66 must know from day 1. They can identify the kids early because they are knowledgeable.
67 They must refer the kid to someone. Early identification is essential. There should be
68 intense input in the first 3 years. The SBST just referred kids to me. They had an OT
69 there. The SBST is the Skool Ondersteuning Span. The main role of the educational
70 psychologist comes in once the problem has been clearly defined. It is to find people to
71 assist and also to manage. It is to follow up and see if it is working and then try another
72 approach. If you can suggest OT, it might not be right route to go. Someone needs to look
73 at the bigger picture and guide. Where the educational psychologist can play a big role is
74 with parent guidance. Ultimately, the parent has to drive

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:51 PM

Comment [9]: Effectiveness of EP services

75 Where I am now, I am teaching. Next year, I will only take one class to stay connected
76 but I would like ideally to get teachers to come to me. I feel that I am doing more of a
77 managing the kids than doing therapy or teaching a child new skills. If the environment
78 is friendly for the kid, they will develop to the best of their capabilities. After I've done
79 an evaluation and I tell the child what the problem is, they cooperate and they think they
80 are not dumb, there's a problem. They are more motivated. Being part of the staff makes
81 a big difference. I can phone the parents and make an appointment. Parents pay if they
82 have medical aid. I am now employed as a teacher. The closest high school to where I am
83 now is H. There are kids from the coloured and black community, and also the white
84 community. We try to develop their potential as leaders. Kids that are drawn to this
85 school are the ones that needed small classes. That wasn't the original plan. The Grade
86 8's now are the ones where the school has a good name. The kids are more normal than
87 problem kids, but out of the 50 Grade 8s, there are at least 12 kids who need special
88 attention. The racial mix is half white, quarter coloured, quarter black. Fees are R900 a
89 month, which is same as the government high school. We should train teachers. If I can
90 train teachers to rather send a child that's been identified to an educational psychologist
91 than to make up their own minds about where they should go, this would go a long way
92 to helping and being useful. We are in the best position to look at the bigger picture. We
93 must focus on teacher education. I try to collaborate with other professions, but it is
94 difficult if in private practice. At W, I could do it. Now that I am in a high school, I see the

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:52 PM

Comment [10]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:53 PM

Comment [11]: Employment of EPs

Michele Berger 13/2/9 4:54 PM

Comment [12]: Collaboration

95 results of things not being done earlier. I should interview Lorraine du Toit – in
96 Constantiapark. She opened a high school for kids with educational problems. She has
97 created guidelines on what schools can do. 10 kids in a class, 20 in a grade.

1 **INTERVIEW WITH GUIDANCE HOD, 24 MAY 2012**

2

3 J – This morning was hectic. I came to school with one pink earring and one blue earring.

4 M – What do you see as the definition of inclusion?

5 J – We have to help any learning disability or learning barrier. We have to include them. At our
6 school, we just include the ADHD learners. We don't have any physical disabilities at our school. One
7 of our teachers, HOD Foundation Phase, her daughter goes to a school where they've got physically
8 disabled learners in their classrooms, they've Down Syndrome. And the teachers are really struggling
9 to cope with them. We don't have it here. We haven't included learners like that here.

10 M – Have you had any applications?

11 J – None. We only have our LSEN class, and that's learners with a mild disability.

12 M – Do they specifically apply to come here, the LSEN learners, or is it both that are in your class?

13 J – We feed the class with our learners, and we get learners from outside. The Department phones
14 us and asks if we have space and then we have to accommodate them. But most of them are from
15 here, 60% of them.

16 M – That class ranges from Grade 1 to Grade 7?

17 J – Yes, different levels.

18 M – The kids there stay in that class?

19 J – She puts them back into mainstream if they've closed the gap. Some of them have been placed
20 back, and some of them get placed into Magalies or elsewhere when they turn 13.

21 M – At what point would you refer a learner to a special school?

22 J – We do it once they've failed twice in a phase. They can't fail twice. So for instance, if a Grade 3
23 has failed in Grade 2, then he cannot fail again. Then we get them assessed, usually by our own
24 psychologist, and we get the referral forms, we complete the referral forms and then we apply for
25 LSEN numbers at the ISS unit.

26 M – So there's a child like that, you'd need to get the parents' permission first to get the
27 assessment?

28 J – We have an interview form, then our school referral form, this is what the Department has given
29 us (gives me copy). I'm having all my interviews tomorrow afternoon. This is our interview form, the
30 parents sign it, I sign it and the FP HOD signs mine. This is from the whole school. I just want to get
31 you. We have an interview and then we ask parents to have the learners tested by either a
32 psychologist or a speech therapist or whatever it may be. And then we also refer them for trauma,
33 grieving, abuse, neglect and character building.

34 M – You have to get the parents' permission for this?

Michele Berger 12/12/4 9:55 AM

Comment [1]: Interpretation/definition of inclusion

Michele Berger 12/12/4 9:56 AM

Comment [2]: Interpretation, who school caters for

Michele Berger 12/12/4 9:57 AM

Comment [3]: LSEN class

Michele Berger 13/1/11 3:59 PM

Comment [4]: LSEN class

Michele Berger 13/1/11 5:06 PM

Comment [5]: Current system and processes – referring learners

Michele Berger 13/1/11 5:08 PM

Comment [6]: Current systems and process – referring learners

35 J – K sees the parents first before he sees the kids. We have a little form that the parents have to
36 sign to say they are going to character building.

37 M – Back to inclusion – you see that as helping any child with a learning difficulty or barrier to
38 learning and you include them within the mainstream classes?

39 J – The remedial teacher takes from Grade 1 to Grade 7. We have a roster, she takes them half an
40 hour a day. They are included for specific things and then they come back to class. For literacy.
41 Those learners are usually the new learners with language barriers. We call it bridging, we bridge the
42 gap. Usually I try to do my handwriting or my lifeskills when they go. They catch up. They have to get
43 3 for Afrikaans (40%), mathematics 40%, English 50%. And they are all doing very well at their
44 mathematics, but they've got poor English abilities. You can't send them on, how are they going to
45 learn, write exams.

46 M – So those are learners who are coming from other schools where they were not learning English
47 mainly?

48 J – They've been taught English but not on the same standard. The other thing we're going to do
49 now, Mrs L the LSEN teacher, she used to take a few of our learners, but this year, we haven't had
50 any learners yet. She'll include them in her class for specific things like spelling. Our Grade 1 teachers
51 also take some of our learners with language barriers and they teach them sight words. So we go
52 between the grades but it's only for a specific time. We haven't done it this year. But we do it, we've
53 done it in the past.

54 M – What's the reaction of the class?

55 J – We try to make them – I, for instance, say, 'You're so lucky, you can go and do this now.' And
56 they are eager to go. They keep on reminding me they have to go. And the others are jealous
57 because they are not getting special attention.

58 M – Are the LSEN learners integrated into the school for other activities?

59 J – They do everything with us.

60 M – That's a multigrade class basically?

61 J – Yes. She's got a little one who repeated Grade 1. We are struggling to get a placement for him
62 because he is not doing anything in the class. She's teaching him art, teaching him basic sounds but
63 nothing is sticking. He has been assessed, XX has also assessed him. We said we will keep him till the
64 middle of the year but it's almost the middle of the year. So she will keep him, she will keep him but
65 what's he going to do after school?

66 M – So could you see a situation where learners with any difficulties, or barriers to learning, are
67 actually in the mainstream classes all the time?

68 J – We do it. That's our other means of support, that's the other support we give, we give them
69 reteaching in class. If, for instance, we are busy with mathematics and they struggle, then we will
70 give them individual attention.

Michele Berger 13/1/11 5:10 PM

Comment [7]: Definition – inclusive education

Michele Berger 13/1/11 5:15 PM

Comment [8]: Current system and processes – school learning support

Michele Berger 13/1/11 5:16 PM

Comment [9]: Current system and processes – school learning support

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:47 PM

Comment [10]: Current system and processes – school learning support

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:48 PM

Comment [11]: Current system and processes – school learning support

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:48 PM

Comment [12]: Current system and processes – school learning support

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:50 PM

Comment [13]: Current system and processes – school learning support

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:51 PM

Comment [14]: Current system and processes – school learning support

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:51 PM

Comment [15]: Current system and processes – school learning support

- 71 M – While the others are doing work?
- 72 J – Yes. For reading and mathematics. Sentence construction. I mark behind the children. I mark
73 here, but also, while they are working, I move around. So no one will feel like I'm always at this
74 child's desk because I am moving around.
- 75 M – What do you as a teacher view as the role of educational psychologists?
- 76 J – The one we have now, she assesses them – scholastic assessment. She basically tells us where the
77 barriers lie. And then what I would like for her to do is to give parents counselling, learners
78 counselling – therapy – which she is going to do now. She is going to do reading therapy with them.
79 She bought the programme, R5000 for the programme. She will charge if the parents can afford it. I
80 hope they will. We already have a few learners. It's Reading for Better Learning. There's a little ant
81 on the cover. She's going to email the information. That's her therapy, and she's also going to take
82 parents for therapy, parents who have got problems. She is going to do it in my office. So parents
83 that have problems that are affecting the learners, she is going to see them which is wonderful. One
84 little girl in my class, her mom says she will come because she has the baggage and now it is
85 influencing the child. There's another child she's going to do play therapy with. And she's assisting us
86 and she spoke to the Grade 4 teachers today and she gave feedback. She told them the problems,
87 this is how you can handle the learners and things like that.
- 88 M – This is about specific learners?
- 89 J – Mm.
- 90 M – Do you see a role for the educational psychologist to support inclusive schools?
- 91 J – Definitely. For instance, the Grade 4 teachers are desperate because we've got 8 new learners
92 from other schools in Grade 4 and they are showing no progress because they are Grade 4 and they
93 don't have a Grade 1 foundation. And that's the problem, we can't build on their learning because
94 they haven't got the basics. So they said what must we do? The children are going for bridging, they
95 are going for remedial classes in the afternoon, they are getting their reading, they are getting extra
96 work sent home. It's not working. Most of these parents also don't speak English.
- 97 M – What does the psychologist recommend?
- 98 J – A reading programme, therapy with the parents as well, counselling.
- 99 M – And what is the response of the teachers?
- 100 J – They are very receptive. We don't have problems between the teachers and the psychologist.
101 Because the learners we are teaching – I mean, what can we do, we are not psychologists. We feel
102 desperate when we can't help this child and we welcome any help we can get.
- 103 M – Are there opportunities for the teachers to approach her if they need to talk to somebody?
- 104 J – Yes, yes, yes. We also have – if teachers have problems – we have just received a memo about
105 counsellors that can counsel teachers as well. But she's open to it. And K's also open to it and he'll

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:56 PM

Comment [16]: Current system and processes – school learning support

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:57 PM

Comment [17]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:58 PM

Comment [18]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 6:59 PM

Comment [19]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:10 PM

Comment [20]: Relationship of school with EP

106 ask assistance from the church if teachers want to talk about it. But we've got the school based
107 support team. You saw how we discuss every learner?

108 M – The SBST meets every Monday at break?

109 J – Or a Wednesday.

110 M – How often do you talk about a specific grade?

111 J – Once a term. We've got a meeting every week. Learners who have been assessed, we speak
112 about more. I spoke to Grade 5 teachers today and asked if they have seen the parents and made
113 the referrals.

114 M – Do you feel that the SBST, the way it's structured now, works for the school?

115 J – I think so. Mm. The teachers come and talk all the time. It's not just in our meetings. And if we
116 really have a problem, we speak to the principal, we have the parents in, we have meetings
117 throughout the term. The meetings are just the formal administration part.

118 M – To meet GDE requirements?

119 J – Mm. Next week's Grade 2 and the week after is Grade 1. Maybe you can sit in the Grade 2 group.

120 M – What are your experiences of inclusion and working with an educational psychologist?

121 J – The only thing is, if it's private, the parents don't always pay. And like we had one group here,
122 they started off as one group and then they changed to something else and the parents owed them
123 R20000. They did therapy, they did play therapy, they did therapy on the computers, the school
124 bought them a programme (Big Boot). They got little reports, they sent reports home. They were all
125 educational psychologists, or studying to become, doing their practicals. Any assistance we get, we
126 welcome. We were supposed to get two Child Welfare, or social work students, and with K's
127 programme, they wanted to do character building as well. I said no. We haven't had him in the past.
128 I think this is his second year, and before that, we used them to do bullying counselling and
129 character building. And now we've got him. But it's only till the end of the year. It's sponsored. I
130 hope it will be renewed. It has been positive, especially with the LSEN class learners.

131 M – What does he do with them?

132 J – The same. Character building, the same programme. But they've really changed and it's like a
133 secret society and he's very secretive about it.

134 M – Does he take the whole class together?

135 J – There's about 6 or 7 of them. The teacher likes it because they can't wait to go and they are
136 discussing among themselves what they've done. It's this big secret and she's not supposed to know
137 about it and she can see this change in attitude and the way they are working. So I think it's... I like
138 it. I appreciate it.

139 M – He's also doing some individual sessions?

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:11 PM

Comment [21]: Relationship of school with EP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:12 PM

Comment [22]: Role and function of SBST

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:12 PM

Comment [23]: Role and function of SBST

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:14 PM

Comment [24]: Role and function of SBST

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:14 PM

Comment [25]: Role of function of SBST

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:17 PM

Comment [26]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:17 PM

Comment [27]: Roles of others (church counsellor)

140 J – Yes, grieving, counselling. And we have a little boy who has got long fingers. He's helping him
141 with that. He's here at school which is nice. If we have a problem and he has to debrief someone,
142 trauma counselling or something, it's wonderful to have him because he's got the experience, the
143 training, which we don't have. We don't have the training

144 M – Do you do any counselling?

145 J – No. I haven't had any training. It's not just SBST, it's detentions, the needy, applications for the
146 bursary fund. I did the prefects as well but they took that away when I had my baby. There's a lot of
147 things. It's not just SBST. SBST, I'm just the coordinator.

148 M – Have you had any negative experiences working with educational psychologists?

149 J – No. And I haven't had any complaints from other teachers.

150 M – You've been here since before the White Paper came out?

151 J – Mm.

152 M – Have you noticed any changes in the way the school operates in respect to learners with
153 barriers to learning?

154 J – Definitely. We are trying to assist more.

155 M – What did you do before?

156 J – We always had our remedial classes. We always wrote – the beginning of the year, we would
157 write a baseline assessment test in maths and English where we compile a list of learners who
158 struggle. We've always done that. And then from there, we put them on a list for remedial and they
159 went to remedial. We had an aid class for learners with ADD, ADHD, and it was basically she worked
160 with children with reversals, problems like that, she worked with them. I miss that. They took it away
161 from all the schools. There's a difference between LSEN and aid.

162 M – What's the difference between LSEN and remedial?

163 J – Remedial is basically where we reteach a concept because that's what we are trained for. We
164 reteach basic concepts.

165 M – Is that (remedial – reteaching concepts) successful?

166 J – Yes, definitely. Definitely. Um, our one Grade 2 teacher has all the NAS learners in Grade 2 in her
167 class this year. I thought she's crazy, personally, I won't do it. I like having my little stars. But she's
168 doing a wonderful job with them. She's got background, but not a specialised remedial teacher. She
169 taught Grade 1 so she knows how to lay a good foundation. I think she taught Grade 1 for 16 years
170 and now she's in Grade 2. So she took the whole bunch and now she's started from the beginning.
171 These are learners who came up from Grade 1 to Grade 2. There are more than 30 of them who
172 struggled, and she was willing to do it. It's an experiment. We're doing it for the first time. It's
173 working. After every break, they go out and they go on the field and they do a little bit of OT. Not
174 that she's specialised in it but she knows the exercises and she plays with them, and she says it's
175 making a big difference.

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:23 PM

Comment [28]: Role of others (church
counsellor)

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:25 PM

Comment [29]: Relationship of school with
EP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:30 PM

Comment [30]: Implementation of WP -
changes

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:45 PM

Comment [31]: Implementation of WP -
before

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:46 PM

Comment [32]: Definition - remedial

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:47 PM

Comment [33]: Role of teachers
(remedial)

176 M – What will happen to them next year?

177 J – They are coming through the mainstream and they are coming through as NASs and we will
178 divide them equally.

179 M – What’s NAS?

180 J – Needs additional support. It’s basically labelling but it’s not. If the child has this, then you know
181 they need additional attention. I’ve got three NASs in my class this year that came up from Grade 2
182 and they are doing so well. I took them off the SBST list because they are progressing so well. Just
183 the first term. We monitored them. But from Grade 1 to Grade 2, there was a big problem. There
184 were many, many learners. It’s because they don’t have the language, most of them, and they were
185 brought up in townships and then they come to our schools and they have to learn in English and
186 they can’t speak a word of it or understand it. And we can’t let them all repeat, that’s a third of a
187 grade. I am very surprised. She drills the whole day, drill, drill, drill. You hear her constantly drilling. I
188 take my hat off to her. That’s things that have changed, things that we are doing. When I started – I
189 think I’ve got the post for 5 years now - we really started to look at it. There was SBST but not like
190 we’ve got it now. In those days, the ISS unit would come out to the school and they tested the
191 learners before they gave LSEN numbers. Now they expect us to have the learners tested.

192 M – So what’s the process you follow?

193 J – We interview the parents, then we refer them. If they don’t get tested, they don’t have the
194 finances, then we complete the support assessment form and then refer them to the Department.
195 But we’ve never had it, they’ve never visited us with that. Usually, our LSEN learners we get tested
196 by ourselves. XX is assisting us now with parents we suspected sexual abuse. We are not sure so we
197 got the school nurse in and he’s been here twice and he’s coming tomorrow morning again and he’s
198 got an interview with the parents. So with those types of things, he is assisting us and we’ve got a
199 teacher that has problems and he is helping her. And I am sure if I ask him to come and test a
200 learner, he will definitely help us. He is eager and open to this.

201 M – But he’s on the staff of the District?

202 J – Yes. And I report to him.

203 M – So he should do it but he is servicing many schools.

204 J – Yes. We had a learner support educator. She was here last term, last year she came for 3 terms
205 then they had to go and do screening. She’s assigned to our school but they use her everywhere.
206 She’s working at one or two other schools. She just disappeared. She told me she’s going to do
207 screening in May but I haven’t heard anything since the beginning of the term, so I don’t know
208 where she is or what’s going on. I just received a memo saying they are going to reassign schools.
209 They would like to have a school-based educator at our school for 5 days a week. That’s the plan. But
210 they are also just educators in excess. They give them training, but they didn’t go and study
211 remedial. They are just educators like me.

212 M – What would their role be?

Michele Berger 13/1/31 7:50 PM

Comment [34]: Current system and processes

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:42 PM

Comment [35]: Current system and processes

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:44 PM

Comment [36]: Current system and processes

213 J – She’s been helping the Grade 3s this year with language barriers. She basically did what our
214 remedial or bridging teacher is doing. She’s supposed to work out programmes and give it to the
215 teachers, but we’ve got our remedial classes where the learners go in the afternoon, so there’s no
216 other time to do a remedial programme in class time. We do reteaching, yes. So that’s her role. Last
217 year, she did a lot of Grade 1 assessment. Those 30 sitting across the passage, they are there now
218 because the one teacher decided to take them.

219 M – But then you also do remedial after school?

220 J – Yes.

221 M – Is that just additional? Is it the same children?

222 J – Yes, it’s additional, also literacy, the same children. They go twice a week so we are really trying
223 to help them.

224 M – Can you describe a case where you felt as a teacher there was a need for some form of
225 psychological support for one of your learners? Who did you talk to, what happened, what was the
226 outcome?

227 J – I just have this one little boy, but it’s not a... The one the psychologist is going to do therapy with
228 the mother. The mother’s baggage is influencing the learner’s scholastic progress. Before I was HOD,
229 I remember there was one child they sent to a psychological hospital (Groendakkies). They had the
230 learner assessed there, but that was before my time.

231 M – This boy, did you refer him to the psychologist?

232 J – Yes, first spoke to the mom. Then I had him referred for scholastic and emotional testing and she
233 came back to me and said there are emotional problems and he’s got a problem with barriers. In my
234 class, he’s progressing because there are certain rules and he knows what he’s supposed to do and
235 at home there are none. That’s what she’s going to help them with.

236 M – You spoke to the mother, she agreed to the testing which was done by the psychologist. And
237 now they are going for therapy.

238 J – Yes, with the new psych. She is seeing the mom tomorrow. And then she’s also seeing me
239 (laughs). I have to report on his progress. We do that once a term. She is first goin to work with the
240 mom and then with the learner. It has been positive and the mommy is open to it. When I saw her
241 the first time, she sat here and she cried and she told me the whole story about what’s going on and
242 why. She’s on medication to cope but the children don’t know she’s on medication. The sister is in
243 Grade 2. It’s very positive. She gives us feedback which is nice.

244 M – You didn’t refer previously?

245 J – Yes, many.

246 M – Did you have any feedback?

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:45 PM

Comment [37]: Current system and processes

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:47 PM

Comment [38]: Current system and processes

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:48 PM

Comment [39]: Capacity of teachers

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:52 PM

Comment [40]: Capacity of teachers

247 J – Yes. I must say, Z is more – the personalities differ. She... I don't know, people do things
248 differently. She did give us feedback, she did talk to us and she talked directly to the teachers. So I
249 don't always know what's going on.

250 M – If you were to look at the approach that this psychologist is taking versus the previous one, do
251 you see a difference in their roles?

252 J – The way Z is doing it, she is giving us advice. You can take it or you can leave it. She is not
253 enforcing anything. Try this, try that, see if this works. So it's the approach.

254 M – She doesn't participate in your SBST meetings?

255 J – Not yet. Today, she said she wants to have a general meeting with the teachers and the parents
256 of the learners who struggle and explain what she does and the therapy and how it's going to work
257 and she wants to introduce the reading therapy to the parents. She wants to be a part of the ... We
258 always say we are a family, because we are. She wants to include the parents. That's a nice
259 approach, a collaborative approach. In future, she might be part of SBST meetings, but then who is
260 going to pay her? The school can't afford it, it's her time. We haven't spoken about it yet. She said
261 she has to go to Johannesburg as well so I don't know if she lives there or what.

262 M – What would you say needs to be done to improve the effectiveness of educational psychology
263 services to support an inclusive school?

264 J – The Department's or ours?

265 M – Both.

266 J – If only it could be for free! That's our biggest... If we could afford an educational psychologist, she
267 would be here every day, but we are referring to different people now. K, do this counselling, and
268 we ask the parents to take the learners for assessment but then they can't afford it and then we
269 have to beg the Department. Money is an issue. If we could pay someone, it would be wonderful.
270 Remedial is not therapy, there are also emotional problems that hamper a child's learning.

271 M – So what kind of things would this person do?

272 J – She's assessing the learners in the first place, forming a bond with the parents, working with
273 parents and teachers and learners, giving advice to teachers – advice. Therapy with the learners
274 during school time. We don't have a problem with taking learners out of the class for specific times.
275 They usually enjoy the therapy more than they enjoy the class. That's basically what we need. Also
276 emotional support for the teachers, they can knock on her door and ask questions, make an
277 appointment, ask for assistance, or just talk about a learner with someone that's got psychology. The
278 learners are going to K at this stage. But he's just a counsellor.

279 M – Do they approach him?

280 J – They are supposed to go through the system. But if a child goes and talks to a teacher... We had a
281 little girl, she went up to the intermediate phase and she just couldn't cope with the changes. In FP
282 we are like mothers to them, and when they go upstairs, they change classes every period and they
283 have got different teachers and no one is really bonding with her. She spoke to the teacher first, she

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:53 PM

Comment [41]: Relationship of school with EP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:54 PM

Comment [42]: Relationship of school with EP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:55 PM

Comment [43]: Collaboration – school and EP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:57 PM

Comment [44]: Resourcing of WP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:58 PM

Comment [45]: Role of EP

284 told the teacher lots of things. The teacher realised there's emotional problems. She filled in the
285 form and came to me and we discussed it, and we sent her to K. So it's a process. But I don't know if
286 they just go and talk to him. I asked him if he could circulate on the playground. But now he's doing
287 his character building during breaktime. He's taking the Grade 4s during school time but the rest he's
288 taking during break. He's only here twice a week. He said he's going to come on a Wednesday also
289 but he's never here.

290 M – Is there anything else you want to share with me?

291 J – It's just funds. Sometimes you feel that your hands are cut off because you want to help but
292 you're not capable of helping. You are not a psychologist. They expect teachers to be mothers, the
293 nurse, the teachers, everything. These children, because of the culture differences, they need a lot
294 of love and a lot of attention. They are very clingy. They've got self-confidence but they want
295 approval and they want praise and they thrive on things like that. I don't know why. I think white
296 children are more independent. I've just noticed it. It's different, especially the Grade 1s. They are
297 babies, they are clingy. I've got children that have been through my hands that still come and hug
298 me. You're like a mother figure to them. There's really a bond. And then they get to Grade 7 and
299 they ask if I remember them. I say I remember your face, but please don't ask me what your name
300 is! There's definitely a need for educational psychologists at schools, definitely. If every school could
301 have one, I think there'd be a lot less problems. Really. If XX could sit here every day, I would be very
302 happy. You should do community service in schools to qualify. We had H and then they changed to L.
303 H started with one woman, she studied educational psychology but pastoral psychology. And we
304 worked with someone from Unisa who supervised her. She came in, she tested, she did therapy, he
305 came in and spoke to her every week. It worked so well because there was a lot of interaction and
306 we knew what was going on. And then she qualified and took in interns under her and they started
307 working here. That's when we bought BB. And they brought in play therapy in the loft outside. Then
308 she started working at a church. She left us. But she left the interns who stayed, they qualified, there
309 was a psychometrist and two qualified as pastoral counsellors. They did so well. We thought it was
310 going very well. They took the children for therapy and we could see a change and it was wonderful.
311 Then I went on maternity leave for 6 months, and when I came back in the December to hand out
312 our reports, and they handed me a letter and said they are leaving. There was a R20000 debt. They
313 have to earn a living. Funds is definitely a problem. We are open to interns, we have done it. Last
314 year, we had a play therapist. I thought it was a spelling therapist, because she said 'spel therapy'.
315 Then I realised what it was. She walked a path with us with one of the learners that had to be placed
316 in a special school and she was so concerned about this little child. She was supposed to be here 3
317 months, but she stayed on because she got so involved and attached to the children. We are open to
318 things like that.

Michele Berger 13/1/31 8:59 PM

Comment [46]: Resourcing of WP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 9:00 PM

Comment [47]: Cultural competence

Michele Berger 13/1/31 9:02 PM

Comment [48]: Role of EP

Michele Berger 13/1/31 9:03 PM

Comment [49]: Resourcing

Interview with parent participant

[Transcript starts after introductory remarks, to maintain anonymity, and to allow parent opportunity to understand and sign consent.]

M - How you understand the term 'inclusive education'?

P14 – I don't really know that. I think that about your child getting everything at the school.

M – You have had an experience at your child's school, working with the educational psychologist. Can you share with me your experiences of working with [this person]?

P14 – I took him to the [educational psychologist] because his teacher said I must because he was not good in school, he wasn't sitting still and listening to the teacher. But the doctor said I must give him medicine. It is too expensive. I can't afford the medicine every month. So I tell him he must listen to his teacher.

M – What did the educational psychologist tell you about your child?

P14 – She said he has ADHD. About his attention. She said I must take him to a doctor to get some medicine for him to help with his attention. He is always moving around, he doesn't want to keep still, even at home. [The educational psychologist] also talked to his teacher. She told the teacher what she told me.

M – Did you meet with her more than once?

P14 – Yes. I met her after the teacher told me to make an appointment. Then she asked me lots of questions about my child and about the family and about how he is at home and how he behaves. So, um, once to talk about my son's problems – um, he was being naughty in class and wasn't listening. She said she would meet my son and then she would do some tests and she would talk to me again. She asked me to fill in some forms also about my son's behaviour. And then after [the educational psychologist] had a session with my son, then I went back to her to find out what she said. She told me what she found. I told you about that.

M – So what was your experience working with the educational psychologist?

P14 – She was nice. She wants to help us but it's just that I can't afford the medicine. I think I will take him to the clinic but that takes time. So I will try.

M - What do you view as the role of educational psychologists?

Michele Berger 13/8/28 9:56 PM

Comment [1]: Experiences of EP

Michele Berger 13/8/28 9:58 PM

Comment [2]: Perceptions

44 P14 – I think it is to help children when they had problems, and to talk to the parents
45 and the teachers. But is this right, I don't know for sure. I only spent a short time with
46 her. She said it would be good for my son to come to her again for some more times.
47 But I am not sure why I should do this. It is expensive, and I don't have the money.
48

49 M - What are your views on how educational psychology services are being provided
50 and how they could be improved?

51

52 P14 – I don't know. I think she is good. She wants to help us, to help the children. But
53 we have to pay so this makes it difficult. Maybe it could be for free. Then we could go
54 to her and see how she can help.

Michele Berger 13/8/28 9:58 PM

Comment [3]: Perceptions

1 **INTERVIEW WITH PRINCIPAL, 24 MAY 2012**

2

3 M – Thank you for giving me time. I know how busy school principals are.

4 P – No, it's fine.

5 M – I don't know if you remember when I came here about 2 months ago before I had my consent
6 from GDE and I was telling you about my research, that I am looking at the role of educational
7 psychologists in supporting inclusion, and that I wanted to use this as my case study school.

8 P – Yes, I remember. We met in Mrs P's office.

9 M – Yes! So to start, what's your understanding of inclusion?

10 P – If you... I think there are various, um, methods of inclusion and if it's not explained properly,
11 people will have the wrong conception of inclusion. Um, children that are in the ELSEN, LSEN
12 children are special needs children. Depending on what their need is, in my opinion, won't be able to
13 cope in a normal classroom situation. They've got a barrier to learning concerning whatever, if it's
14 maths or language or whatever the case is. But they might be good in a certain area, and that area,
15 they can go back to the normal mainstream. And vice versa. A child who has got a problem in a
16 language problem can be included into the ELSEN class back to the level where he or she is, or into
17 the remedial class. We've got remedial here as well. And that is my – how I understand inclusion.
18 They form part – at this school, they form part of the school, they are not separate, or they don't run
19 to a different timetable or anything, they are here, they are part of the school. The difference is that
20 each child there is on a different level concerning the maths and the English and the lifeskills and the
21 whatevers

22 M – What is your school's approach? In terms of children who need additional support, they are in
23 the classroom...

24 P – No, no, no. We've got an ELSEN class. There are 20 children in the ELSEN class that have been
25 identified as LSEN or special needs children. At this school, they are mildly intellectually disabled.
26 Um... Now there's a [pause] distinction between an LSEN child and a remedial child, and a lot of
27 teachers don't understand that concept. They think that if a child is battling with whatever he or she
28 is battling with, that child is an LSEN child, and that's not the case. A remedial child is something
29 totally different, in my opinion, than what the LSEN child is

30 M – How would you differentiate?

31 P – A remedial child is a child that has got the ability, where she came and is battling with a certain
32 concept and that concept is remediated. A child can be a very clever child but he can have a
33 language barrier. If you reach that language barrier, for instance, if he's taught to read and
34 understand the language properly, then he carries on, but where the LSEN child can't, the LSEN child
35 just hasn't got that. And that's why you have to - that's why they're also taught on different levels

36 M – So your class here, the 20 children, is that across the grades?

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:18 PM

Comment [1]: inclusive education

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:18 PM

Comment [2]: inclusive education

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:18 PM

Comment [3]: Remedial

- 37 P – Yes, across the grades. They are with this teacher all the... Depending. Sometimes, we send the
38 child across to the grade ones for reading or this or that, according to his or her age group, they go
39 to the grade 4s or 5s or whatever.
- 40 M – It's from which grade?
- 41 P – It's from 7 years old to 12, because the year in which they turn 12 they must go to the LSEN high
42 school. We don't say grades, because they are not really in a grade.
- 43 M – And the teacher in that class, what are her qualifications?
- 44 P – She's qualified in ELSEN. Not remedial, but ELSEN, special needs.
- 45 M – Is that a post that's funded by GDE?
- 46 P – Yes. We had 2 at the school, and through lack of foresight, I think, the Department took the one
47 away, and they were on the verge of taking the second one away and we have managed to stop
48 that. There's a definite need, I think, there's no doubt. So that's how the ELSEN class works.
- 49 M – Are you oversubscribed here?
- 50 P – By far. We have a waiting list. Then those that we can't help, we send to the Department and the
51 Department then has to find a place for them.
- 52 M – Do you have to take kids from the area?
- 53 P – We turn a lot away from the area. Lots, lots. And that's sad, because they live across the road
54 and they can't come to us. You must work and live in the area. For us, we are in the city centre, 10
55 zillion people work in the city centre, so they can all bring their children here although they live in
56 Garsfontein.
- 57 M – How many kids do you have in a class?
- 58 P – We have got 30.
- 59 M – Do you keep it at that?
- 60 P – We try, because more than 30 is not conducive.
- 61 M – How many classes per grade?
- 62 P – 3 per grade.
- 63 M – You start from Grade R?
- 64 P – We started Grade R this year. So we have one Grade R this year, and next year, we'll have 2.
- 65 M – Do you charge fees for Grade R?
- 66 P – Yes, we charge fees throughout the school, but the fees are more for Grade R. It's like a crèche. If
67 you want to be in Grade R, you have to pay. But Grade R just helps you with entrance into the school
68 because the inception year is now Grade R and not Grade 1.

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:47 PM

Comment [4]: inclusive education -
definition

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:48 PM

Comment [5]: Learning support/remedial

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:50 PM

Comment [6]: Resourcing

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:51 PM

Comment [7]: Resourcing

- 69 M – Are you going to add Grade R classes?
- 70 P – Yes, 2 more. Hopefully, next year, but definitely one class next year. And we will see how it goes.
- 71 Depedning on the number, we will see. If you’ve got three Grade Rs, you’ve got to feed three Grade
- 72 Rs into the school, because you can’t have the parents sitting here and paying all that money, and
- 73 then at the end of that year, you can’t say you don’t have place. You can’t do that. That’s not right. I
- 74 don’t have the space, but I’ve got 90 Grade 1s so my Grade R must be 90 in 2014 when it’s
- 75 compulsory. So that’s what we are working towards. And, um...
- 76 M – How many learners are there at this school in total?
- 77 P – 713.
- 78 M – And race groups?
- 79 P – Mostly black. There’s one or 2 Indians, coloureds, and then we’ve got one little white girl in
- 80 Grade X.
- 81 M – And the home languages?
- 82 P – That varies from English to Afrikaans to Sotho to Zulu to Xhosa, all the official languages. That
- 83 varies.
- 84 M – What about the origins of the children? Where are they coming from?
- 85 P – Most of our children – it all depends on who is in power, I think, because when President Mbeki
- 86 was in the Union Buildings, we had a lot of Xhosas coming from the Eastern Cape, lots and lots and
- 87 lots. Now President Zuma, we see more and more people from Natal. So... The parents work here,
- 88 they work for government. Lots of our parents work for government. So that’s just interesting. That’s
- 89 what we’ve picked up. Our two main groups at the school are the Xhosas and Zulus.
- 90 M – What about children from outside South Africa?
- 91 P – Yes, we have a little bit, but at our school, we have our immigrants but I wouldn’t say they are a
- 92 large group. And most of the immigrant children that we have are immigrants that were born here.
- 93 In other words, the parents are immigrants but the children are South African born, but they still
- 94 speak French at home and Portugeuse, depending on which country they’re from.
- 95 M –Are there a lot of children for whom English is their second language?
- 96 P – Look, because there’s Grade R now, it sort of seems as if it’s becoming less and less and less
- 97 because they are taught English in Grade R. But we find that children that come in what we call from
- 98 the side, in other words, he was in a vernacular school in KwaZulu-Natal and he comes in Grade 5,
- 99 and he comes into our school in Grade 5, they battle.
- 100 M – So it’s not a big problem?
- 101 P – It can be a big problem but we deal with it. That’s why we’ve got our remedial programmes or
- 102 whatever, and then we specifically try and help those children.

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:52 PM

Comment [8]: School demographics

103 M – So what do you as a principal view as the role of educational psychologists?

104 P – Look, a lot of children have issues, have problems. And depending on what the field of the
105 psychologist is, they are here to help, um, because we as teachers are only trained up to a certain
106 point. After that, I can't help this child, I need somebody else to come and help me. And, um, in the
107 past, those systems were there. And they're not there anymore and that is a problem. I wouldn't say
108 they are not there anymore, but they're not... You get one psychologist who has to service 20 or 30
109 schools, and it's a problem.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:18 PM

Comment [9]: Role of ed psych

110 M – Is that from the District?

111 P – Yes. We phone and he says I am coming, I've just got to be at the next school, and then that
112 school's got problems, and he has to address those problems because while he's there, he must
113 address those problems and they keep him or her there, and then by the time they get to your
114 school, um, the problem might have escalated or whatever, you know. Um, yah.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:18 PM

Comment [10]: District capacity to support schools

115 M – So your main experience with educational psychologists is through the services provided by the
116 District?

117 P – Yah, and actually, guidance has arranged with you, a person like yourself, to come to the school,
118 and then they sit here and they contact the parents and then they get payment through the medical
119 aid. That's how it works for us.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:18 PM

Comment [11]: District capacity to support schools

120 M – So working parents have the services of a psychologist.

121 P – Yes, we have a private psychologist here now.

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:54 PM

Comment [12]: Placement of EPs

122 M – And what are your experiences? How long have you been principal?

123 P – XX years.

124 M – In this school?

125 P – Yes.

126 M – So you were already principal when the White Paper came out?

127 P – Yes.

128 M – Has this always been an English language school?

129 P – Yes.

130 M – So it would be interesting to hear what your experiences of inclusion have been, because you
131 were here when the policy came into effect?

132 P – I've always had an ELSEN class at my school. Inclusion, as I said to you earlier, the way that I see
133 it, has always been part of the school, where a principal who hasn't – a colleague of mine up the
134 road doesn't understand inclusion the way that I understand it. I have the ELSEN class, he doesn't.
135 And then obviously, I have to take children from neighbouring schools as well because the LSEN class
136 is here. But then they would send me a child that just needs remedial. They don't understand there's

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:55 PM

Comment [13]: Implementation of WP – accessing of services

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:56 PM

Comment [14]: Institutionalisation of WP

137 a difference between remedial and special needs. Inclusion can work, it can work if you do it
138 properly but these children have to feel safe in an inclusion environment. And they also have to feel
139 that they are getting the attention that they are getting. They are in this class, there's 20 children in
140 the class, the teacher can get to all of them, more or less. In a bigger class - at this school we are
141 fortunate we've got 30 children in a class - but in a bigger school where there are 40 children in a
142 class, an inclusion child or a special needs child, will disappear, in my opinion because the teacher
143 can't get to that child.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:19 PM

Comment [15]: Inclusive ed and remedial

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:58 PM

Comment [16]: Institutionalisation of WP

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:19 PM

Comment [17]: Resourcing of WP

144 M – What happens to the children who need remedial support?

145 P – There's a remedial programme here. We are fortunate enough to have a remedial teacher
146 fulltime. We've got a businessman in the community that sponsors the salary for a remedial teacher,
147 so she has got her class at our school and there's a programme worked out which children go to
148 remedial and they follow a timetable and they go and visit the remedial teacher and she remediates
149 concepts, whatever, and then they go back to the normal class.

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:58 PM

Comment [18]: Resourcing of WP

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:19 PM

Comment [19]: Remedial

150 M – So that's also in groups?

151 P – That's also in groups, by grade or whatever is the problem. So you can have a Grade 7 child who
152 has come in from a rural school or some other school who has got the same problem as a child in
153 Grade 4 and then they will go together. And they will then work out a programme.

154 M – So the remedial is done for as long as the child needs that support?

155 P – Yes.

156 M – The ELSEN is likely to be longer-term?

157 P – The ELSEN is – I wouldn't say it's permanent, because we've had children in the ELSEN class that
158 have developed to such an extent that we've placed them back into mainstream. But the remedial
159 children are in the mainstream.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:19 PM

Comment [20]: Special needs

160 M – So what's your view if you look at inclusion in the pure sense of the word? Would you have
161 these ELSEN classes, or would you have the learner in their home class being supported by the
162 teacher and the teaching assistant maybe?

163 P – I don't agree with that, not at all. It won't work, not at all. Um, uh, for instance, a child who has –
164 I don't know – how can I put it? – my children are all mildly intellectually disabled. If you have a
165 severely intellectually disabled child in the mainstream, you are going to demoralise the teacher, you
166 are going to demoralise the child, and you are going to have a discipline problem with the children,
167 the other children in the class, because the teacher is going to – her attention is going to be with this
168 child all the time and not with the majority of the class. So everybody is going to be – in my opinion,
169 it's not going to be a workable situation.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:17 PM

Comment [21]: Capacity and competence of teachers

170 M – And if you didn't have this ELSEN class, and the kids were in the regular classes, what would...

171 P – It would then be the same as the next school who doesn't have the class, I would apply to the
172 school that has the class, and send the child there. They get lost. It's not, in my opinion, sound
173 educational norms to have a child that is battling to be in a class where there are hundreds of

174 children, there's a noise. These children next door, if you disrupt them, they've got a set routine, the
175 teacher's worked out the routine, and they know the routine., and if that routine is disrupted by
176 anything, an announcement or I go into the class and I say to the teacher, 'Right, we are going to...'
177 For instance, fire drill, if we have a fire drill, the ELSEN class is totally, totally mixed up and to get
178 them back into their rhythm is... The rest of the day is a waste

179 M – Could you see a situation... Let's say you didn't have this class, could you see a situation – what
180 would be required to provide support to these learners in the regular classes with their home
181 teachers?

182 P – You would need an assistant. Each teacher needs – that's first world, hey? [small laugh] – a
183 teacher's assistant. I can tell you, I don't know offhand, but I am quite sure, if you go and look at the
184 more affluent schools, where they've got teachers' assistants, it helps – and they haven't got an
185 ELSEN class like we have, it helps with that child in the class while he or she is waiting for a place at
186 an ELSEN school. We can't afford that kind of thing. But we, as I said to you just now, we are lucky
187 we have a businessman who is paying for a remedial teacher for us. That is how we get around that

188 M – Could you see a role for an educational psychologist?

189 P – Yes, of course, all the time, all the time. As a support, yes.

190 M – Doing what kind of thing?

191 P – Helping the children, helping the teacher. I said to you just now, remember the teachers are only
192 trained up to a certain point. After that, we can't help this child. That is why you can't put a normal –
193 not a normal, that's not the right word – you can't put a – ja, let's call it a normally trained education
194 teacher into an ELSEN class. You've got to have somebody who specialises in that. And then an
195 educational psychologist, you need someone who specialises in that field of the education process.
196 And ja.

197 M – So if GDE were to provide you with a funded post for an educational psychologist...

198 P – It would be great.

199 M – What kind of work would you want this person to do?

200 P – She or he would help with the education process, the remedial process, the character building
201 process, um, parents – help train parents because we are all parents, and if a school calls you in and
202 says to you, 'Mr So and So, your child is an LSEN child,' 9 out of 10 times, parents say 'Not my child'
203 That parent has to be – what's the word I am looking for – it has to be explained to them that it's not
204 the end of the world. And that, an educational psychologist can do. And you need that all the time at
205 this school, all the time. Now we phone the Department, and the Department says 'Okay, I can see
206 you next Thursday.' By then, the problem has either escalated or the parents don't come back or
207 whatever.

208 M – What's your view on the teachers' perceptions of such a professional?

Michele Berger 12/11/26 3:22 PM

Comment [22]: Capacity

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:00 PM

Comment [23]: Capacity of teachers

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:59 PM

Comment [24]: Resourcing of WP

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:00 PM

Comment [25]: Role of ed psych

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:00 PM

Comment [26]: Role of ed psych

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:00 PM

Comment [27]: District capacity to support schools

209 P – Look, at this school I think they will only welcome it, because they pick up a problem much
210 quicker because of the small classes. We can identify a child more easily and then to get that help for
211 that child so that he can go out and come back again.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 4:58 PM
Comment [28]: Relationship betw
teachers and ed psych

212 M – So what is the process you follow here, if there is a child who is experiencing difficulties,
213 barriers?

214 P – First or all, in the class, yes, the teacher will. Or if it's a new child, we look at that profile. If the
215 previous school has written something in the profile, we will look and see that this child has
216 whatever problem, and then we will look out for it. And if there's a problem, the teacher will pick it
217 up in class, and then we will refer it to the support team, and then we will get the ELSEN teacher to
218 have a look at the child, perhaps test the child, interview the parents, and because she is qualified to
219 do that, we will then obviously have the child tested with the parents' consent, get the Department
220 in, and that's now all to identify the child as LSEN. To identify the child as remedial, that's totally
221 different. The teacher will see there's a problem that needs to be remediated, and that child will
222 then go to the remedial teacher.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 4:59 PM
Comment [29]: Support by ed psych

223 M – And if there are any other, let's say, social or emotional difficulties?

224 P – The same process, but then we'll get a psychologist in, or the Department's psychologist and we
225 take it from there.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 4:59 PM
Comment [30]: Support by ed psych

226 M – So you can draw on the Department's psychologists as much as you need to but you need to
227 wait?

228 P – Let's use an example of child abuse. If there's child abuse, according to the South African Schools
229 Act, we have to report it. So child X comes into the office, the teacher suspects there's abuse, um,
230 what we will do is we will get hold of the school nurse. She might be at another school somewhere.
231 We ask her, 'Listen, just come around here tomorrow morning and have a look at this child.' And
232 then we will have her medical opinion. She can't physically look at the child. She will then just ask a
233 few questions and then say, 'Listen, this is not true,' or 'Yes, I think you must take this further.' Then
234 we will contact the Department and say, 'Listen, this is what we suspect. What now?' And then they
235 will say, 'Okay, interview the parents, bring the parents in, we need to interview the parents, get the
236 parents in.' And say to them this is what we suspect, or we report to the South African Police or
237 whatever the case is. That's the route that we follow.

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:02 PM
Comment [31]: District capacity to support
schools

238 M – Can you describe a case where you felt that there was a need for some form of psychological
239 support for one of your learners? Who did you talk to, what happened, what was the outcome?

240 P – Um, if psychological support... Well, if I think of ... At our school, we've got the psychologists that
241 come, so we will ask them to have a look at the child if we think there's a problem. Then we will also
242 notify the Department through the school-based support team and they would most probably come.
243 We've got XX who comes to the school and he is quite religious about it.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:03 PM
Comment [32]: Support by ed psych

244 M – Is he an educational psychologist?

245 P – I don't think he's an educational psychologist, I think he's just a normal psychologist, in the
246 support services at the Department. He's the one that supports our school. He doesn't just support

247 our school, he's got about 20 other schools, I suppose, I'm not too sure. So when he does get here,
248 he gets here... Um, where's his card now? He's a psychologist (looks at card). He's been in education
249 all his life.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:04 PM

Comment [33]: District capacity to support schools

250 M – So you might have a child that the teacher identifies as needing support - in the first instance,
251 would you ask the parents?

252 P – A lot of children lose their parents, in accidents or whatever the case is, and that child needs
253 support. We'll get a psychologist in, from if it's the Department or if we've got the resident one that
254 comes and we'll ask him or her to have a word with the child and support in that way. Um, if it's a
255 more serious thing like rape or – not that the death of a mother or father is not serious – but then
256 we have to report it to the Department and they will then take it further. But that takes time.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:05 PM

Comment [34]: Role of ed psych

257 M – But you could ask the psychologist to...

258 P – The one who's at the school?

259 M – Yes.

260 P – But a lot of schools don't have the luxury that we have.

261 M – She's private.

262 P – She's private, yes.

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:03 PM

Comment [35]: Accessing of services

263 M – So would you first have to get the parents...

264 P – Well, I'll talk to her and say, 'Come on, I know you're private, but just have a look here.'

265 M – Get her to talk to the child first?

266 P – Yes.

267 M – Does that work?

268 P – Ja, sometimes. Sometimes the parents don't turn up. Lots of times, the parents don't. Then you
269 can't actually do anything. Then you report it to the Department and you follow that route. Because
270 somebody who is private is... You people have all got your client, your placement of privileges, of
271 confidentiality. I understand that, but through the Department, it's a bit different.

272 M – And if you've had a case where you've done this and you've followed the route and the parents
273 have cooperated and so on, what has been the outcome?

274 P – Most of the time, it's favourable. There are times that it isn't and then you start all over again.
275 But most of the time, it is.

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:08 PM

Comment [36]: Role of ed psych

276 M – If you have a child who needs an assessment, scholastic or other assessment, do you have to get
277 the parents' permission or is that also done through the Department?

278 P – It can be done by the Department, but that takes very long. So we get the parents in and we find
279 out if they've got a medical aid, and then we ask them – we suggest a person or they know

280 somebody or whatever, or on the medical aid, there's a doctor or somebody that the medical aid
281 approves and we ask them to take the child there.

282 M – If there's no medical aid?

283 P – Then we wait for the Department.

284 M – What in your opinion needs to be done to improve the effectiveness of educational
285 psychological services to support inclusion?

286 P – Money. Money, money, money, money.

287 M – How will that help you?

288 P – If there's more money, you can appoint more people. It's as simple as that. You know, um, one
289 educational psychologist can't service 50 or 60 schools. You need so many for so many schools.

290 M – How many would you need, if there was the money?

291 P – The ideal is like the Americans, they have one per school. I realise that will never happen. But I
292 would say you need one for a region, like the inner city should have at least one and then the near
293 East, the far East, the West, the far West. They should have their dedicated psychologists. That's
294 how I see it, but I know that won't happen.

295 M – In terms of your SBST, currently, it's the guidance HOD and the grade teachers, the teachers
296 who are involved with the particular children whose cases are being discussed. Do you ever bring in
297 the psychologist, either from the District or the private one?

298 P – Look, they visit the school, yes, but they can't be here at every meeting, because P has her
299 meetings, she's busy with them now. But I think, like tomorrow, we've got XX coming in for a case.
300 So we do bring them in, but they can't be here all the time.

301 M – He's coming here to meet a child?

302 P – To talk to parents.

303 M – What's your view on how your SBST functions?

304 P – My SBST?

305 M – Yes.

306 P – Very effectively. The Department comes to us to see what we are doing. And I'm not just saying
307 that. They come to ask P how she does she do this, what does she do here, and so we are running
308 very, very effectively in my opinion.

309 M – And once a week you have a meeting by grade?

310 P – Not once a week. I'm not sure. Once a week the SBST meets. And then now she's busy
311 interviewing, for instance, the Grade 1s. She has all the teachers of Grade 1s and they discuss each
312 child that needs to be discussed. And tomorrow, it'll be Grade 2s, then 3s, then 4s.

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:04 PM

Comment [37]: Accessing of services

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:09 PM

Comment [38]: Effectiveness of services

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:10 PM

Comment [39]: Resourcing of WP

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:11 PM

Comment [40]: Placement of ed psychs

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:12 PM

Comment [41]: Role of ed psych

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:13 PM

Comment [42]: SBST capacity and effectiveness

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:14 PM

Comment [43]: Role of SBST and functioning

313 M – How often does that happen?

314 P – Once a term.

315 M – So that's different to the Monday meetings?

316 P – Ja. The Monday meetings, as I understand it, when the grade teachers have their meetings and
 317 there's a problem with a child, when they will record it in their file and when the SBST meeting for
 318 Grade 1 representative will say, 'Listen, we need to remember this child.'

319 M – You wouldn't like to see any changes in the way your...

320 P – If there's something to change for the better, yes, of course.

321 M – There's nothing you want to do differently?

322 P – I don't know. This works for us. Um, as I said, maybe there's something that you can suggest.

323 M – I'm not suggesting, I'm just asking.

324 P – Maybe there's something we're not doing or not seeing. If you were at the school, you would be
 325 on that committee, and you would actually then chair it. And you would then...

326 M – What is P's specific training?

327 P – She's head of department, educational guidance. And she's got her degree in ELSEN or remedial,
 328 I think. She has specific training. I think her honours degree is in that.

329 M – She teaches also. Does she do any counselling of children?

330 P – She can but that's why we've got people from outside.

331 M – And then you've got the church worker.

332 P – The church, Doxa Deo, sends us a worker who does character building.

333 M – How is that working?

334 P – It works alright, it works fine. They look forward to seeing him. But you know, that's also a
 335 benefactor that's paying for that. It can end tomorrow, unfortunately. So we are hoping it doesn't.
 336 But an educational psychologist at a school or at two or three schools would only benefit the school,
 337 the children and the community. Because you would also then service the parents. Definitely,
 338 there's no doubt about that. But if it's going to work, it's going to happen, there's going to be money
 339 – money, money, money.

340 M – Let's say you have all the money you need, what would be your priorities here.

341 P – First of all, I would appoint a psychologist fulltime. I would do that. Um, and then she or he
 342 would then be in charge of, um, the psychology of the school, the discipline of the school, the
 343 children that are battling with the academics, the LSEN children, um, the traumatised learners,
 344 traumatised staff. You must remember that a staff member also becomes traumatised if a child is
 345 not coping, the teacher becomes – because she's not getting the work done. I would, I would fully

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:05 PM

Comment [44]: Role of SBST and functioning

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:07 PM

Comment [45]: Role of SBST and functioning

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:16 PM

Comment [46]: Role of ed psych

Michele Berger 12/11/26 5:17 PM

Comment [47]: Effectiveness of ed psych services

Michele Berger 12/11/26 7:41 PM

Comment [48]: Role of ed psych

- 346 incorporate something like that at this school, definitely. But then again, that would be the ideal
347 situation.
- 348 M – Did you say you at one stage had a psychologist?
- 349 P – Yah, but they were private.
- 350 M – So since the new dispensation, it hasn't changed?
- 351 P – What I said was, in the past, we had 2 ELSEN classes, I had a remedial class, a full time remedial
352 teacher paid by the Department, I had an aid class and I had an immigrant class.
- 353 M – What's the aid class?
- 354 P – A-i-d. That's the class where children with... It's actually just a remedial class, but it's called an
355 aid class, small class, 10 children, they battled with a concept. My son was in an aid class, and then
356 he'd go back to the mainstream. He would be there for a year or 2 years and then he'd go back.
357 Similar to remedial. We had all that, and it was all government-paid, and then they took it away.
- 358 M – How have the demographics of the school changed?
- 359 P – Totally, totally. Mostly white Portuguese in the past, white English-speaking children and white
360 Afrikaans speaking children who wanted to be taught in English. And then it changed, obviously.
- 361 M – Is this a former Model C school?
- 362 P – Yes.
- 363 M - What are the fees that you charge?
- 364 P – R370 a month. Grade R is more. There's no exemptions and no subsidy. So we have to pay the
365 teacher and buy the equipment.
- 366 M – Are there extra costs for books?
- 367 P – No, it includes everything. They must buy a stationery pack but that's a once-off, and then the
368 uniform. They don't pay to play sport or to get on the bus, that's all included. And then we have
369 parents coming to ask for exemptions. It's the community we live in, and it's part of it.
- 370 M – You've got some business people around who do sponsor you.
- 371 P – I've got one businessman. The others are not interested. I don't know why. We've tried. I've got
372 another one who came to see me yesterday. The owner of Debonairs Pizza wants to donate pizza to
373 the needy children once every term, once every 3 months. Only for 20 children or something. It's not
374 fair. So now I get all these pizzas. I have got to be very careful, because now I'm saying you can come
375 because you are needy. Father hears this and says, 'My child is not needy.' Although he might be
376 needy, the pride of the parent says no. I've got parents who pay the fees and don't ask for an
377 exemption because of the pride, even though they are destitute.
- 378 M – How many exemptions do you give?

379 P – Not many. For this year, it's about 50. I've got parents that are street vendors. They sit with a
380 table at the corner and they sell oranges, and they pay. Some employers could be paying. We always
381 used to get a Rotary bursary, but that has now stopped. I suppose they can't afford it anymore.
382 Things have changed, things have really changed over the years. I don't want to say for the worst or
383 the better, but there are things we had that we don't have anymore, and things that we have that
384 we didn't have. So you have to balance it. Being here so long, I know where we were and I know
385 where we are now. And also, you've got to have a very supportive governing body. If you don't have
386 a supportive governing body, then you're doomed. We have an active, supportive, open-minded, for
387 the benefit of all the children at the school. It is good to have that, because if you don't have that,
388 then there's a problem. It's not hunky dory all the time, because you do butt heads, but at the end of
389 the day, you walk out of a meeting and you agree on what must be done.

390 M – Do you fund any of your teaching posts from your fees?

391 P – Yes, about 8 or 9. To keep the class sizes down. The biggest portion of our budget goes to the
392 payment of SGB teachers. That's why we can have 3 classes per grade. If we didn't have this, we
393 would have 48 children in a class. All the old buildings around here have been turned into flats, and
394 nobody is thinking about where the kids are going to go to school. It's just this school in the city
395 centre area. The other one is down that way, and over there and whatever.

396 M – Which high schools do these kids go on to?

397 P – It all depends. There's one behind us and one just around the corner. They all try for Girls' High
398 and Boys' High, and Sutherland. What can I say? That's how it works. Unfortunately... And also, he
399 has to take my children because I am his feeder school but so is the next school and the next school,
400 and he's got place for so many children. And if all my children go there, he is almost full. Then he
401 can't accommodate the next school. At least it's not my problem! My problem starts in Grade R.
402 From next year, that problem will become less and less and less, because the Grade 1, we will be fed
403 by the Grade Rs. But then the problems will start earlier. That's why we must be paid more. I am not
404 a school with 5 grades, I am a school with 8 grades. A primary school is bigger than a high school.
405 The children in a high school are between the ages of 14 and 18. In primary school, they start at 5
406 and leave at 14. That is why our classes should be smaller, and not the high school. Their ratio is less
407 than ours. Where do you measure the education system? You measure it in matric, not what we do
408 here. If the matric results are fine, then it's... It doesn't matter what's happening down here. The
409 high schools complain and say the children are coming to high school and they can't read and write.
410 It's possible because there are 48 children in a class. You can't listen to 48 children reading, you can't
411 teach 48 kids to read. And that's where you come in. You can assist with that. But there are no posts.
412 The government needs to realise. There are a lot of good things in the education system, don't get
413 me wrong. There are a lot of things that will make the education system workable and more
414 productive if it is just managed properly. There are a lot of good things.

415

Michele Berger 13/2/9 1:09 PM

Comment [49]: Role of EP

TEACHER FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPT

[Commenced recording after introductory remarks and consent obtained.]

M - What do you view as the role of educational psychologists in supporting inclusion?

P5 – Teachers don't have power – they are not empowered – to do things. We know what we can do but we don't have the power. I am speaking from an ELSEN side. In ELSEN education, we have to make adaptations, but nothing is written in black and white. We have to do what we think. We don't have the power and we are not given the ability to make the decisions.

P6 – We don't have the authority to do it. She is able to do it but we do not have the authority.

P4 – We have to go through the Department before a child can go to a special school. X has the knowledge and skills and can identify a child but the Department won't let us go ahead. They don't give us permission – it takes a long time.

P7 – We should have one person appointed in that capacity in a school to do it.

M - What is the role of an educational psychologist?

P4 – It's assessment of the learners, therapy of the learners, and then assistance with the Department, with Departmental processes and collaborating and communicating with them.

P7 – We work with the children so we see where the problems lie and what we have to do. We need back up.

M - What is our – the educational psychologists' - role in inclusive education?

P7 - Inclusion to mainstream and then back to ELSEN – this works both ways.

Michele Berger 12/11/21 10:46 AM

Comment [1]: Role and authority of teachers

Michele Berger 12/11/21 10:46 AM

Comment [2]: Authority of teachers - lack

Michele Berger 12/11/21 10:45 AM

Comment [3]: Current system and processes

Michele Berger 12/11/21 10:47 AM

Comment [4]: Future direction – what schools would like

Michele Berger 12/11/21 10:50 AM

Comment [5]: Role of ed psych

Michele Berger 12/11/21 10:52 AM

Comment [6]: Role of teachers

Michele Berger 12/11/21 10:52 AM

Comment [7]: Support to teachers (by ed psych)

Michele Berger 12/11/21 10:53 AM

Comment [8]: Role of ed psych

34 M - If you identify a child with a specific barrier to learning, what is the process that
35 you follow to get that child assessed by an educational psychologist?

36
37 P7 – Usually, the teachers in the grade sit together and discuss the child. They sit
38 and agree on the problem of the child and then they go to the support team which is
39 E. Then they discuss it with her. Then we decide which will be the best way to
40 support the child. Parents need to be involved first and interviewed so we have their
41 consent and they need to know their child has a problem. Depending on if parents
42 have medical aid, and if we can get the Department here to assist us which usually
43 doesn't happen, the parents need to take it further. That doesn't always happen.
44 They send the children to me to assess the child but we all have classes and we
45 don't always have time to assess another child from another class we don't know.
46 But we need someone with a different perspective to see a child differently.
47 Sometimes, you keep on looking at the same problem and you don't look beyond.

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:47 PM

Comment [9]: Current system and processes - assessment

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:48 PM

Comment [10]: Role of ed psych - teachers' perspective

48
49 P6 - You talk to your other grade teachers, then you take it to the SBST and then you
50 say 'Cindy' has this problem and this is what we are going to recommend.

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:48 PM

Comment [11]: Role of SBST

51
52 P7 – Yes.

53
54 M - You have those meetings once a term for each grade?

55
56 P7 – But we deal with cases in between also. After the meeting, the parents are
57 informed and then E will say we have to report back and what happened. Depending
58 on the case, the principal and E will sit in.

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:49 PM

Comment [12]: Current system and processes

59
60 M - Do you as teachers interact with the Department or the psychologist?

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:50 PM

Comment [13]: Role of SBST and collaboration

61
62 P6 – Only the SBST do it.

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:51 PM

Comment [14]: Collaboration (with other schools)

63
64 P4 – People at different schools can assess and I ask them to help us. Working
65 through the Department takes a long time. At [another school], there are
66 psychologists and they help us. They know the Department and they know it's a
67 lengthy process and they help us. It's as if they (Department) have been so long out

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:52 PM

Comment [15]: District capacity to support schools

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:53 PM

Comment [16]: Collaboration (with other schools)

68 of teaching and education that they have lost touch with reality. They don't know
69 what's going on. They don't know what the standards of the different grades and
70 levels are.

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:53 PM

Comment [17]: District capacity to support schools

71
72 P5 – It's another thing seeing stuff on paper than seeing the child. They are not
73 robots. We are dealing with the child as a whole, in total. We see the total problem.
74 The Department doesn't and they don't know what's going on.

Michele Berger 12/11/21 12:54 PM

Comment [18]: District capacity to support schools

75
76 M - Have you had experiences working with educational psychologists?

77
78 P5 – Yes. A few.

79
80 P4 – If parents just paid them it would have been positive. They are very helpful.
81 Some of them even did therapy on the computers. The one we have now would like
82 to do reading, remedial. We had an educational psychologist here but she left to go
83 to a school in another province. She wanted to work in a school, and here she was
84 independent. She was coming in but parents didn't pay and so it was a problem.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 10:56 AM

Comment [19]: School-ed psych relationship

Michele Berger 12/11/22 10:57 AM

Comment [20]: Role of ed psych – what did in school

85
86 P7 – But they are quite expensive. The parents can't always pay, and the district
87 can't always send someone when we need it.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 10:58 AM

Comment [21]: Resourcing – cost of services

88
89 P4 – The Department has educational psychologists but I think they are too busy with
90 the schools that are not performing.

91
92 P7 – We had a good thing going but the parents didn't pay. The parents perhaps
93 should be trained as well or informed, better educated in a sense so that they realise
94 the value of the assistance that they are getting for their kids. I would want everything
95 for my child regardless of the cost. If they don't see the value, they won't pay.

96
97 P6 – It's a cultural thing. They feel the teacher knows everything and that she will
98 make sure her child will pass the different grades. You have to have a mindshift with
99 these parents, you have to change their perception.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 12:00 PM

Comment [22]: Cultural differences and understandings

100

101 P4 – Parents abuse the system. We had LL and they owed them R20000 after 2
102 years. And those people had good hearts, they wanted to help them. They even got
103 reports that went home.

104

105 M – Can you describe a case where you felt as a teacher that there was a need for
106 some form of psychological support or intervention for one of your learners? Who did
107 you talk to, what happened?

108

109 P6 – If we feel a child needs to be referred to a psychologist, we would first take this
110 to the SBST or to [our guidance HOD]. Then we will decide what we think we should
111 do. The [guidance HOD] will take the case forward. So we will recommend it but we
112 don't really have anything to do with the psychologist. Also, like we were saying,
113 parents don't always want to pay or they can't pay. They don't always want to listen
114 when we say that their child should go to a psychologist.

115

116 M - What have your experiences been of inclusion?

117

118 P6 – I do adaptations, that's inclusion. I don't think in mainstream it's possible. It's
119 still very difficult. There are too many difficulties to work with and we don't have time
120 and there are too many children.

121

122 P4 – You won't be able to work with Down Syndrome or physically impaired or blind.
123 It's too difficult. We won't be able to work with them.

124

125 P7 – There's too much pressure on the teachers in mainstream to perform and to do
126 all the assessments. The policy expects us to.

127

128 P4 – So far, we've been lucky.

129

130 P8 – I think it's because most of the special high schools are so full, they put their
131 kids in a mainstream school.

132

133 P4 – They are building all inclusive schools – full service schools. They are doing that
134 now but it will take a few years.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 9:39 PM
Comment [23]: Role of SBST

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:18 PM
Comment [24]: What is inclusion?

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:18 PM
Comment [25]: Experiences of inclusion

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:18 PM
Comment [26]: Experiences of inclusion

135

136 P8 – Inclusion is so broad. You just have to deal with it. If a child is in your class, you
137 deal with it.

138

139 M - What is your view on what needs to be done to improve the effectiveness of
140 educational psychology services to support inclusion?

141

142 [Laugh].

143

144 P8 – The thing is, if we identify a child, then me personally as their teacher, I want
145 them to act. They must immediately deal with that child. But they are not involved.

146

147 P4 – They look for all kinds of excuses – try this, try that – but we know that it's not
148 going to work.

149

150 M – When you say 'they', are you referring to the district or private educational
151 psychologists?

152

153 P4 - This is the staff from the district office.

154

155 P6 – A few years ago, they had a clinic service that did something. But now, you sit
156 with a child and they don't tell you anything.

157

158 P8 – We can't even draw up an assessment plan.

159

160 P6 – They don't know the child. They come here in the morning for a half an hour or
161 so and they want to solve the problem. We know the child. But we need their support
162 and we can't get it in an hour.

163

164 P7 – The child won't open up to a stranger.

165

166 P4 – But we also need therapy, remediation, we need assistance with the child.

167

168 P8 – They must be developed on their own level.

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:17 PM

Comment [27]: Role of district and capacity to support schools

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:19 PM

Comment [28]: Role of district and capacity to support schools

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:20 PM

Comment [29]: Collaboration – school with district

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:22 PM

Comment [30]: Resourcing – lack of – and capability to support inclusion

169

170 P4 – We've got the teacher doing bridging and remedial in the afternoons. We're
171 trying everything we can but it's not enough. We need a psychologist at the school.

172

173 P8 – Or they must visit the school at least every week.

174

175 M – The district?

176

177 P8 – Yah.

178

179 P7 – Every psychologist in the district should have 3 or 4 schools. They must be part
180 of the staff. The children must see this person as part of the staff.

181

182 P4 – XX doesn't even have a vehicle. He drives with his own car. It's dangerous! It is.

183

184 M – What role do you think the educational psychologists in the district should be
185 playing?

186

187 P6 – Well, it's not just an educational psychologist but also speech and other
188 specialisations, because there are lots of problems. They mustn't just specialise in
189 something.

190

191 P5 – We need an all-rounder. They need additional staff.

192

193 P6 – The parents first need to be educated on the service that the psychologist can
194 give their children and the importance of the service that the psychologist can give
195 their children. They must first be educated and then...

196

197 M - What would you as teachers like to see – if I were here, what would you like me
198 to do? What would my role be?

199

200 P4 – Personally, I would love to have someone here. It's like an open door policy, I
201 can just walk in and say do this, what can I do? This is the problem, do you agree
202 and what can I do about it?

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:23 PM

Comment [31]: Resourcing – lack of –
and capability to support inclusion

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:23 PM

Comment [32]: Role of district

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:24 PM

Comment [33]: Resourcing and role of
district

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:25 PM

Comment [34]: Resourcing and role of
district

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:25 PM

Comment [35]: Collaboration – school
and ed psych

203

204 P6 - I've tried everything, what can I do?

205

206 P4 – Z [the private psychologist providing services to the school] has spoken to the
207 teachers of the learners she has assessed so far, but she can't go in and give them
208 all the detail because the parents have to give consent before she can do anything.
209 She can't tell us everything but she just confirms our suspicion – yes, this child
210 should fail or she needs remedial or OT. She has to ask the parents for consent. She
211 includes recommendations for the teachers.

212

213 P6 – The parents usually give consent.

214

215 P4 – She's into computer programmes. But it's R200 a month, for individual sessions.

216

217 M - How do you feel about the recommendations you get?

218

219 P5 – Usually, the recommendations are very vague.

220

221 P4 – It's actually things we know.

222

223 P5 – It's not pinpointing anything. We would like her to help us in class. We need
224 detailed programmes.

225

226 P4 – Yes, we need programmes but we don't always have time for that. I work on a
227 different level. I've got three children that came from other schools and they are on a
228 Grade 1 level [she teaches Grade 3]. So I am giving them different attention but I am
229 a foundation phase educator. It is different when they are upstairs [Intermediate
230 Phase] where they have different teachers every half an hour.

231

232 P5 – In Intersen, when I take someone to my desk and work with her, the others stop
233 their work and want to know what you are doing with that child. They haven't got that
234 mindset that you can spend time with individuals. They either snigger, pass a
235 comment or start making a noise. I am quite strict in the class and it still happens. I

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:26 PM

Comment [36]: Role of ed psych

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:27 PM

Comment [37]: Role of ed psych

236 teach English and I notice that. If a person is struggling, the others won't give that
237 child an opportunity. Their values change as they grow bigger.

238

239 P6 – We need someone who is outside the class so the others won't see them.

240

241 M - If an educational psychologist writes a report, what would be helpful for you?

242

243 P4 – We need help, we want help. We want to improve.

244

245 M – What is your view, given that we have this White Paper, on what is needed to
246 make inclusion work, and what role can educational psychologists play to support
247 that?

248

249 P6 – In a perfect world, you would have a closed circuit TV where you can observe
250 the child in a classroom without them knowing you are watching. If you as an outsider
251 come into the class, they will either be impossible or as good as gold. So you need to
252 observe them from a distance, and then sit with the teacher and discuss. Then
253 nobody is going to take umbrage and say this or that. You can come to an agreement
254 about what the child needs and what you will do. It will have to be a situation where
255 you work closely with the teacher, in a perfect world.

256

257 P5 – There are different styles and teaching methods, and even the teachers need to
258 be educated on all this. We don't know it all. The mainstream teachers tend to teach
259 a certain way because they are mainstream teachers. You should show them how
260 and which method would help which children. You always have that percent of
261 children that cannot learn the way that mainstream teacher is teaching. You need
262 flexibility. We as educators need flexibility.

263

264 P6 – It is the type of children we are getting in and it is just going to get worse and
265 worse and worse. The demographics are changing and this plays a big role. Culture
266 plays a big role. We don't know the cultures of the children. I don't even want to think
267 about it because one child must first go home and be washed before you can teach
268 him. So it's a cultural thing.

269

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:28 PM

Comment [38]: Sharing of expertise, and collaboration

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:29 PM

Comment [39]: Collaboration – teachers and ed psych

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:31 PM

Comment [40]: Role of ed psych in supporting teachers

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:31 PM

Comment [41]: Culture – lack of understanding

270 P5 – It is getting worse. You are so fortunate in the Foundation Phase because you
271 have the children in hand. We do subject teaching, and it's very hard. Sometimes you
272 see the children for half an hour. They listen but they don't take in anything you said.
273 Then you need to take those children out who have that problem and explain it
274 another way.

275

276 P6 – It's auditory and visual – if they don't see it, they don't hear it.

277

278 P5 – There are quite a few like that in Grade 5 and 6 that I've seen. I had Grade 1
279 and 2's before and I had two Israelis in my class who didn't speak English and a
280 hyperactive child. And I could keep the hyperactive child busy and teach those two to
281 speak English. But you had a different type of child. Society is changing.

282

283 P4 – They were willing to learn.

284

285 P5 – People are dynamic. Society has changed a lot in the last 30 years or less.

286

287 P4 - They don't have that willingness. There's no pride.

288

289 P5 – It can happen. I am sorry for these young people because they never
290 experience that. They give up. Isn't it because we are in such a materialistic society
291 that we expect reward for everything?

292

293 P4 – There are some of them who have never even held a pencil when they come to
294 Grade 1.

295

296 P6 – I don't even want to talk about emotions. There are children who don't even get
297 a hug and so you must also deal with that.

298

299 P5 – You have more than one family sometimes living in one flat. I've stayed over at
300 the Y Hotel and I've looked out. And they are not visiting inside but they are sitting on
301 the pavement outside. The children are sitting on concrete. It's hard to understand
302 how they cope. Their playground is the pavement and there's a noise all night long.

303

Michele Berger 12/11/22 4:33 PM

Comment [42]: Culture – lack of understanding

304 P7 – So if they are tired in class, you are not surprised because the noise never
305 stops.

306

307 P6 – How long from here? How long is it going to take? I know it comes from such a
308 long time now. Give us a bit...

309

310 P4 – We can't hire an educational psychologist because we would have to budget for
311 it and increase the school fees. Some really do try but their hands are cut off and
312 they can't do anything.

313

314 P7 – How many of you are there? There are 14 in my class which is the remedial
315 class.

316

317 P8 – It should be more like 40, not 14.

318

319 P4 - Have you read Animal Farm? It's like that. The pigs are getting fatter and fatter
320 and they are not looking after their own.

321

322 M – Thank you all so much for your time.

323

SAMPLE OF THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Participant	Transcript	Line	Theme
P1	But their main role is with the screening – we are finalising the screening tool which every teacher, every school will have to use. It is going to be rolled out and institutionalised. So far, we have only piloted it. Their role is to be part of an interdisciplinary team that goes to schools from a district level to provide all forms of support, of course, in their areas of specialisation. That's how I am hoping we can bring in educational psychologists and have them working.	273-278	1.1
F1	But we need someone with a different perspective to see a child differently. Sometimes, you keep on looking at the same problem and you don't look beyond.	45-47	1.1
F1	Inclusion to mainstream and then back to ELSEN – this works both ways.	32	1.1
F1	We work with the children so we see where the problems lie and what we have to do.	27-28	1.1
F1	We would like her to help us in class. We need detailed programmes.	223-224	1.1
P1	When they work in private practice, I think that's where you will find some of the problems, in terms of the role they should play.	64-65	1.1
P1	And how we have as a system been using remedial teachers. Remedial teachers need to be itinerant. They can't be fixed in one class and wait for those special needs learners to come to them and they keep them there and they progress in that kind of setting throughout their schooling. That's totally against inclusion. It's actually integration or mainstreaming.	186-190	1.2
P1	With educational psychologists, it's much different, it's better off in terms of the role they play. What I was referring to was in the case of clinicians, clinical psychologists. That's where you will find a problem.	48-50	1.2
P1	With educational psychologists, they should understand both the psychological makeup of an individual within an education space.	50-52	1.2
P1	I don't think as a Department we have done enough to advocate the intentions of White Paper 6. What we need to do is to put together a very strong, powerful and unambiguous advocacy programme. So that the messages we send across the system, within the department at different levels, the message is the same.	205-209	1.3
P1	I don't think the blockage is intentional, I think	204-205	1.3

	It's in terms of understanding the intentions of White Paper 6 and the policy on inclusivity.		
P1	It is difficult to tell. Maybe what we should do is to fast-track the mediation of these guidelines and make sure we bring on board all districts in terms of what is in the guidelines.	152-154	1.3
P1	It is doable. (inclusive education)	218	1.3
P1	We cannot debate whether or not we need to implement White Paper 6 because in the end, it talks to key things. It talks to right to basic education which any child may not be deprived of. Secondly, it talks to the quality of education that individual children are given, making sure that every learner benefits from attending school, that there are no learners that are neglected and therefore are not excluded from attending school.	219-224	1.3
P1	We developed guidelines for districts to follow to convert schools. They are spelling out added roles and responsibilities of a full service school. It can't be business as usual as when they were just an ordinary school. What we haven't done is mediated those guidelines so we take district officials through the guidelines so that the practice is approached in the same light across provinces. Support and capacity should follow the same trend. For now, it's only those progressive provinces that are doing some kind of serious work.	134-140	1.3
P1	We have been making very few strides with developing full service schools. We have 553 mainstream schools that have been designated as full service schools across the country. But in provinces such as Northern Cape, Limpopo, Free State they have made very slow progress. In Northern Cape, you only have about 10 mainstream schools that have been designated as full service. And there is only one that has been upgraded to give access to physically disabled learners. So that is a serious backlog. To look at the target we have met to date of 553 schools, I think we have far exceeded the target from White Paper 6 – it was looking at designating 500 in a period of 20 years. So in 11 years, we have already reached the target.	121-130	1.3
P1	White Paper 6 talks about development of an inclusive system that has every learner's interests at heart. And that's how a system should be. A system should be inclusive.	230-232	1.3
P1	after changing the mindset, we need to look at how we resource the development of an	229-230	1.4

	Inclusive system.		
F1	But we also need therapy, remediation, we need assistance with the child.	165	1.4
P1	I can even dare to say that White Paper 6 is not funded as a programme but what government is funding in the main, in every province, year in and year out, you only get an allocation that goes to special schools. Yet special schools are only a sub-programme, not the main programme. So the budget is skewed because it is recognised as a sub-programme only.	94-99	1.4
P1	In terms of resourcing, at the moment we have gaps. As a department, we don't have funding norms for an inclusive system. We have never developed them. Provincial departments allocate resources as per their capacity in terms of resourcing but there are serious disparities. Partly, this is because of the lack of support from the top, but again, I think the other thing – some people argue, some administrators argue and say the status of the inclusive education policy is a worrying factor because it is only a white paper, so it's not a fully fledged policy therefore we cannot enforce implementation and resource it. That is why even the development of norms for resourcing, either in terms of how do you provide educational psychs, how many you need per district, we have not done the norming because there are still questions about the status of White Paper 6.	232-243	1.4
P1	We need to make submissions to NT for a review of the budget structure. It's only then that we are going to get the policy properly resourced.	249-251	1.4
F1	We've got the teacher doing bridging and remedial in the afternoons. We're trying everything we can but it's not enough. We need a psychologist at the school.	169-170	1.4
P1	come from a different discipline and you also have teachers who come from a discipline of pedagogy so it is in understanding the barrier to learning together that we can plan an intervention or support plan for an individual learner.	35-38	1.5
P1	there must be a decision taken on what would be an appropriate intervention to reduce or eliminate barriers.	28-29	1.5
F1	I do adaptations, that's inclusion. I don't think in mainstream it's possible. It's still very difficult. There are too many difficulties to work with and we don't have time and there are too many children.	117-119	1.6

F1	There's too much pressure on the teachers in mainstream to perform and to do all the assessments. The policy expects us to	124-125	1.6
F1	You won't be able to work with Down Syndrome or physically impaired or blind. It's too difficult. We won't be able to work with them.	121-122	1.6
F1	Teachers don't have power – they are not empowered – to do things. We know what we can do but we don't have the power. I am speaking from an ELSEN side. In ELSEN education, we have to make adaptations, but nothing is written in black and white. We have to do what we think. We don't have the power and we are not given the ability to make the decisions.	6-10	1.7
F1	We don't have the authority to do it. She is able to do it but we do not have the authority.	12-13	1.7
F1	But we deal with cases in between also. After the meeting, the parents are informed and then E will say we have to report back and what happened. Depending on the case, the principal and E will sit in.	56-58	2.1
F1	Usually, the teachers in the grade sit together and discuss the child. They sit and agree on the problem of the child and then they go to the support team which is E. Then they discuss it with her. Then we decide which will be the best way to support the child. Parents need to be involved first and interviewed so we have their consent and they need to know their child has a problem. Depending on if parents have medical aid, and if we can get the Department here to assist us which usually doesn't happen, the parents need to take it further. That doesn't always happen. They send the children to me to assess the child but we all have classes and we don't always have time to assess another child from another class we don't know.	37-45	2.1
F1	We have to go through the Department before a child can go to a special school. X has the knowledge and skills and can identify a child but the Department won't let us go ahead. They don't give us permission – it takes a long time.	15-17	2.1
P1	What is happening is that parents or schools refer learners to educational psychologists and they will do the assessment, make their findings and then prescribe to schools or parents what should happen to the child or learner. That's not the way it should work.	32-35	2.1
P1	What's happening is you get these professionals prescribing. They will tell a	38-41	2.1

	school – if a child goes to a mainstream school – they will tell the school, the child needs to go to a mainstream school. Based on what? They won't have this aspect of pedagogy, this educational aspect.		
P1	As a country, we are only providing access to psychologists to 1700 schools across the country when we have between 25000 and 27000 schools. The majority of these are special schools and a few full service schools.	118-121	2.10
P1	parents have to pay. And then you wonder, because those professionals are paid a salary by the school – usually, they are brought in through SGB posts – but parents still have to pay. To me, it's an injustice. We are not serving the public the way we should.	317-320	2.10
P1	What I am trying to run away from is the current practice whereby parents have to pay separately for such services for starters.	314-315	2.10
F1	Every psychologist in the district should have 3 or 4 schools. They must be part of the staff.	178-179	2.2
F1	It's assessment of the learners, therapy of the learners, and then assistance with the Department, with Departmental processes and collaborating and communicating with them.	23-25	2.2
P1	My response is based on the assumption that educational psychologists will be employed in the education system. If that is a true assumption, then it will be different.	60-62	2.2
F1	Or they must visit the school at least every week.	172	2.2
P1	We are not there yet to clarify the roles of these experts. But slowly we are moving in that direction.	41-43	2.2
F1	We should have one person appointed in that capacity in a school to do it.	19	2.2
P1	What should be taken away is for any expert or specialist to be prescriptive. Teachers should not be prescriptive and neither should any expert.	53-55	2.2
P1	There are quite a few factors that are standing in the way of DBE having access to these specialists.	91-92	2.3
P1	So we need to look at how is the service provided, what is the frequency. And that can also come from yourself, to say the way I see my role is if I have an intervention to make, there are learners I need to see on a daily basis, or I need to see a learner once a month or once in 3 months. That could provide ideas in terms of how we could norm the provision of services, what kind of services you provide, what is the frequency,	302-309	2.4

	do you find yourself having to work with an individual learner on a day to day basis, or only occasionally?		
F1	But they are quite expensive. The parents can't always pay.	86	2.5
F1	If parents just paid them it would have been positive. They are very helpful.	80	2.5
P1	I would like to see more and more educational psychologists coming at a district level.	258-259	2.6
P1	the priority is district level – you bring these professionals to the district level or circuit level, but we cannot as a country afford to give individual schools these professionals. We will deprive millions of learners of these services if we do that. That is why we are advocating the creation of posts for professionals at district level. When we produce more of them, we can take them to circuit level. And maybe in 50 years, we can consider placing them at schools.	112-118	2.6
P1	We also need them here, by the way, because their role is actually with early identification of barriers to learning and the packaging of support for learners experiencing barriers to learning. That's their critical role. I am not in favour of an approach whereby educational psychologists will be employed for individual schools because it limits the access. I would like to see them going out to schools wherever there is a need – they support all schools in the district. In which case, one educational psychologist cannot manage to do. That's the situation that we have, that you do find at least one educational psychologist at a district level, but it's very few districts that have them. You are frustrating those people because they can't cope.	261-269	2.6
P1	Whereas the need is actually more at a school level, the need is more at a school level to have access to these professionals but because of their scarcity, our approach is to place them at district level so they can provide their services across the schools from the district so you don't give certain schools a monopoly of having access to their services.	102-106	2.6
P1	Would a full service school have educational psychologists on the staff? S – No. You'd have them at the district. M – Are they servicing the full service school?	142-148	2.6

	S – No.		
F1	A few years ago, they had a clinic service that did something. But now, you sit with a child and they don't tell you anything.	154-155	2.7
P1	And strengthening the capacity of the districts so they are able to provide support to all schools. It doesn't help to have the status of a full service school and there's no support forthcoming from the district. If the district is unable to provide adequate and appropriate support, you are just setting up those schools for failure. It will be like they are not complying with the vision and principles of inclusivity whereas what we haven't done is to put all systems in place and make sure support is available to the schools whenever they need them.	154-160	2.7
F1	It's as if they (Department) have been so long out of teaching and education that they have lost touch with reality. They don't know what's going on. They don't know what the standards of the different grades and levels are.	67-70	2.7
F1	The thing is, if we identify a child, then me personally as their teacher, I want them to act. They must immediately deal with that child. But they are not involved.	143-144	2.7
F1	We need an all-rounder.	191	2.7
F1	We see the total problem. The Department doesn't and they don't know what's going on.	73-74	2.7
F1	Working through the Department takes a long time.	64-65	2.7
P1	This is what is in our plan for 2012/13 – we have this thing of mediating training for officials for guidelines for full service and special schools.	160-162	2.8
P1	There is also an urban-rural divide. That goes for teachers as well. Even with health professionals, in the main you will find them in urban areas. They don't want to go to rural settings. It's a challenge across the professions.	99-102	3.1
F1	It is the type of children we are getting in and it is just going to get worse and worse and worse. The demographics are changing and this plays a big role. Culture plays a big role. We don't know the cultures of the children. I don't even want to think about it because one child must first go home and be washed before you can teach him. So it's a cultural thing.	264-268	3.3
F1	It's a cultural thing. They feel the teacher knows everything and that she will make sure her child will pass the different grades. You	96-98	3.3

	have to have a mindshift with these parents, you have to change their perception.		
F1	There are quite a few like that in Grade 5 and 6 that I've seen. I had Grade 1 and 2's before and I had two Israelis in my class who didn't speak English and a hyperactive child. And I could keep the hyperactive child busy and teach those two to speak English. But you had a different type of child. Society is changing.	278-281	3.3
P1	coordination framework developed by government which forces departments to provide the services that are needed by other departments, for instance, the education department. So that at local level, district level, the education district could be working with a health district or a health institution that would have such professionals so that we could share such scarce resources.	320-325	4.1
P1	So it is through a coordination framework that government could put in place that we could access the services of health professionals.	86-87	4.1
P1	the proposal we are making increasingly is that we need to collaborate or cooperate with DoH and DSD in terms of providing learners with access to these specialised services. That includes assistive devices because learners with disabilities do require in the main to be provided with these, and access to such specialist services like psychologists, therapists, etc. But I haven't found that government has in place a coordination framework that will coordinate access to these specialist services so that as government we can share these scarce resources. If you look at procurement of devices, devices are different – there are 2 categories – those that are education-specific which have to be provided by DBE and then there are those that are health-related which must be provided by DoH, but we as DBE have to buy hearing aids, wheelchairs, which do not fall under our ambit but we cannot at programme level go to DoH and demand they provide so many learners with these kinds of devices.	70-82	4.1
F1	At P, there are psychologists and they help us. They know the Department and they know it's a lengthy process and they help us.	65-67	4.2
P1	I think from an educational psychologist's perspective, you would understand how certain developmental delays, behaviours and all that play themselves out as a barrier to learning. You will be able to break it down	280-289	4.2

	for a teacher, and then the teacher, on being aware of what is happening in the mind of the child, the emotions and all of it, then you can agree in terms of what kind of support does the child need. Even the teacher will expect to have support from you as an educational psychologist. You can inform how the support programme can be dealt with, what components it needs to be effective, from the perspective of your discipline. That is why I am arguing against having educational psychologists employed at individual schools.		
F1	In a perfect world, you would have a closed circuit TV where you can observe the child in a classroom without them knowing you are watching. If you as an outsider come into the class, they will either be impossible or as good as gold. So you need to observe them from a distance, and then sit with the teacher and discuss. Then nobody is going to take umbrage and say this or that. You can come to an agreement about what the child needs and what you will do. It will have to be a situation where you work closely with the teacher, in a perfect world.	249-255	4.2
F1	People at different schools can assess and I ask them to help us.	64	4.2
F1	Personally, I would love to have someone here. It's like an open door policy, I can just walk in and say do this, what can I do? This is the problem, do you agree and what can I do about it?	200-202	4.2
F1	They don't know the child. They come here in the morning for a half an hour or so and they want to solve the problem. We know the child. But we need their support and we can't get it in an hour.	159-161	4.2
F1	Z [the private psychologist providing services to the school] has spoken to the teachers of the learners she has assessed so far, but she can't go in and give them all the detail because the parents have to give consent before she can do anything. She can't tell us everything but she just confirms our suspicion – yes, this child should fail or she needs remedial or OT. She has to ask the parents for consent. She includes recommendations for the teachers.	206-211	4.2
P1	From that perspective, one would expect that you would have experts from different disciplines coming together and getting to understand a barrier to learning that a learner or group of learners experience,	25-27	4.3
P1	pedagogical voice should also be heard.	29-30	4.3

P1	psychologists should be part of a multidisciplinary team in identifying barriers to learning and what kind of support needs to be packaged together.	21-23	4.3
P1	So they will come from a behaviour perspective, from a psychological perspective, whatever their specialisation suggests.	23-24	4.3
F1	We need help, we want help. We want to improve.	243	4.3
P1	When we plan support we play interventions, we plan as a multidisciplinary team because each discipline has a role to play in inclusion.	350-352	4.3
P1	consider looking at each health profession and try to look at the role that they can play when they are part of a DBST.	340-341	4.4
P1	guidelines in terms of what a DBST should be doing, how must it be constituted – it must be constituted across disciplines, of course. You need people from curriculum, infrastructure, school governance and management	342-344	4.4
F1	Do you as teachers interact with the Department or the psychologist? B – Only the SBST do it.	60-62	4.5
F1	If we feel a child needs to be referred to a psychologist, we would first take this to the SBST or to [our guidance HOD]. Then we will decide what we think we should do. The [guidance HOD] will take the case forward. So we will recommend it but we don't really have anything to do with the psychologist.	108-111	4.5
F1	You talk to your other grade teachers, then you take it to the SBST and then you say Cindy has this problem and this is what we are going to recommend.	49-50	4.5
F1	Some of them even did therapy on the computers. The one we have now would like to do reading, remedial.	81-82	4.6
F1	There are different styles and teaching methods, and even the teachers need to be educated on all this. We don't know it all. The mainstream teachers tend to teach a certain way because they are mainstream teachers. You should show them how and which method would help which children. You always have that percent of children that cannot learn the way that mainstream teacher is teaching. You need flexibility.	257-262	4.6
F1	We need back up.	28	4.6
P1	we've had discussions on the role of therapists, but the initiative was done by the GDE where therapists came together and they sort of looked at the role of therapists in	333-340	4.6

	providing support to schools from the district. They even came up with some kind of a generic job description and even a report template that when you've been out to school, how do you write a report that will be meaningful and would make sense to everybody who has to read that report. Otherwise, therapists have been writing reports in different ways, using different templates or frameworks so it is difficult to consolidate from a therapeutic point of view what we are doing or what therapists are doing.		
P1	, we can only get it right as a country, when we can begin not to use inclusivity and special needs interchangeably. For as long as we have that misconceptualisation of inclusion and we think it deals with disabilities, when you pay attention to disabilities, then you are doing inclusion. If you focus on this, you won't get it right	225-229	5.1
P1	defines inclusion as a response to learner diversity in the classroom in particular	167-168	5.1
P1	For instance, you have a number of teachers who do not have appropriate qualifications to teach or who use methodologies that are not appropriate.	178-179	5.1
P1	says nothing about disabilities, because inclusion is not just about disability, it's about a wide range of barriers to learning – some barriers to learning emanating from the system itself and some emanating from pedagogical issues.	175-178	5.1
P1	So it's a response that seeks to maximise learner participation in their own learning and development and to reduce exclusion within education and from education – within education, there is exclusion. There are learners who access education, who are in school, but they are not benefiting they are excluded. So in fact their time is wasted. That happens in the main in mainstream schools. And then of course you have out of school children and youth who are excluded because they are not accessing it at all. That to me is the definition of inclusion.	168-175	5.1
P1	Then coming to this set up that you find in most former Model C schools, you have special units or classes – remedial classes – the serious problem that I have with those is the permanency factor, where a learner is pulled out of the regular classroom and put in a special class or remedial class and the learner will have to stay in that class for the	179-186	5.1

	duration of his or her years of attending school at that particular school. It's labelling, stigmatisation, all of that. I criticise the concept of special classes or remedial classes.		
P1	Is 'remedial' still a term that is used? S - They are called different things in different provinces. For me, those are what we refer to as learning support educators who we believe should be placed at a district level and provide itinerant support and move around to schools.	372-376	5.2
P4	We have to help any learning disability or learning barrier. We have to include them. At our school, we just include the ADHD learners. We don't have any physical disabilities at our school. One of our teachers, HOD Foundation Phase, her daughter goes to a school where they've got physically disabled learners in their classrooms, they've got Down Syndrome. And the teachers are really struggling to cope with them. We don't have it here. We haven't included learners like that here.	5-9	5.1
P4	We only have our LSEN class, and that's learners with a mild disability.	11	5.2
P4	We feed the class with our learners, and we get learners from outside. The Department phones us and asks if we have space and then we have to accommodate them. But most of them are from here, 60% of them.	13-20	5.2
P4	M – That class ranges from Grade 1 to Grade 7? J – Yes, different levels. M – The kids there stay in that class? J – She puts them back into mainstream if they've closed the gap. Some of them have been placed back, and some of them get placed into Magalies or elsewhere when they turn 13.	13-20	5.2
P4	At what point would you refer a learner to a special school? J – We do it once they've failed twice in a phase. They can't fail twice. So for instance, if a Grade 3 has failed in Grade 2, then he cannot fail again. Then we get them assessed, usually by our own psychologist, and we get the referral forms, we complete the referral forms and then we apply for LSEN numbers at the ISS unit.	21-25	2.1.1
P4	We have an interview form, then our school referral form, this is what the Department has given us (gives me copy). I'm having all my	28-33	2.1.1

Michele Berger 13/2/9 9:46 AM

Comment [1]: Interpretation/definition of inclusion

Michele Berger 13/2/9 9:51 AM

Comment [2]: Interpretation, who school caters for

Michele Berger 13/2/9 9:53 AM

Comment [3]: LSEN class

Michele Berger 13/2/10 11:24 AM

Comment [4]: LSEN class

Michele Berger 13/2/9 9:55 AM

Comment [5]: Current system and processes – referring learners

	interviews tomorrow afternoon. This is our interview form, the parents sign it, I sign it and the FP HOD signs mine. This is from the whole school. I just want to get you. We have an interview and then we ask parents to have the learners tested by either a psychologist or a speech therapist or whatever it may be. And then we also refer them for trauma, grieving, abuse, neglect and character building.			
P4	Back to inclusion – you see that as helping any child with a learning difficulty or barrier to learning and you include them within the mainstream classes?	37-38	5.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 9:56 AM Comment [6]: Current systems and process – referring learners
P4	The remedial teacher takes from Grade 1 to Grade 7. We have a roster, she takes them half an hour a day. They are included for specific things and then they come back to class. For literacy. Those learners are usually the new learners with language barriers. We call it bridging, we bridge the gap. Usually I try to do my handwriting or my lifeskills when they go. They catch up. They have to get 3 for Afrikaans (40%), mathematics 40%, English 50%. And they are all doing very well at their mathematics, but they've got poor English abilities. You can't send them on, how are they going to learn, write exams.	39-57	2.1.2	Michele Berger 13/2/9 9:56 AM Comment [7]: Definition – inclusive education
	M – So those are learners who are coming from other schools where they were not learning English mainly? J – They've been taught English but not on the same standard. The other thing we're going to do now, Mrs L the LSEN teacher, she used to take a few of our learners, but this year, we haven't had any learners yet. She'll include them in her class for specific things like spelling. Our Grade 1 teachers also take some of our learners with language barriers and they teach them sight words. So we go between the grades but it's only for a specific time. We haven't done it this year. But we do it, we've done it in the past.	39-57???	2.1.2	Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:07 AM Comment [8]: Current system and processes – school learning support
	M – What's the reaction of the class? J – We try to make them – I, for instance, say, 'You're so lucky, you can go and do this now.' And they are eager to go. They keep on reminding me they have to go. And the others are jealous because they are not getting special attention.	39-57???	2.1.2	Michele Berger 13/2/10 11:36 AM Comment [9]: Current system and processes – school learning support
P4	Are the LSEN learners integrated into the school for other activities? J – They do everything with us.	58-59	2.1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/10 11:37 AM Comment [10]: Current system and processes – school learning support Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:09 AM Comment [11]: Current system and processes – school learning support

P4	That's a multigrade class basically? J – Yes. She's got a little one who repeated Grade 1. We are struggling to get a placement for him because he is not doing anything in the class. She's teaching him art, teaching him basic sounds but nothing is sticking. He has been assessed, XX has also assessed him. We said we will keep him till the middle of the year but it's almost the middle of the year. So she will keep him, she will keep him but what's he going to do after school?	60-65	2.1.2	Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:10 AM Comment [12]: Current system and processes – school learning support
P4	So could you see a situation where learners with any difficulties, or barriers to learning, are actually in the mainstream classes all the time? J – We do it. That's our other means of support, that's the other support we give, we give them reteaching in class. If, for instance, we are busy with mathematics and they struggle, then we will give them individual attention. M – While the others are doing work? J – Yes. For reading and mathematics. Sentence construction. I mark behind the children. I mark here, but also, while they are working, I move around. So no one will feel like I'm always at this child's desk because I am moving around.	66-74	2.1.2	Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:10 AM Comment [13]: Current system and processes – school learning support Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:20 AM Comment [14]: Current system and processes – school learning support Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:20 AM Comment [15]: Current system and processes – school learning support
P4	The one we have now, she assesses them – scholastic assessment. She basically tells us where the barriers lie. And then what I would like for her to do is to give parents counselling, learners counselling – therapy – which she is going to do now. She is going to do reading therapy with them. She bought the programme, R5000 for the programme. She will charge if the parents can afford it. I hope they will. We already have a few learners. It's Reading for Better Learning. There's a little ant on the cover. She's going to email the information. That's her therapy, and she's also going to take parents for therapy, parents who have got problems. She is going to do it in my office. So parents that have problems that are affecting the learners, she is going to see them which is wonderful. One little girl in my class, her mom says she will come because she has the baggage and now it is influencing the child. There's another child she's going to do play therapy with. And she's assisting us and she spoke to the Grade 4 teachers today and she gave feedback. She told them the problems, this is how you can handle the learners and things	76-87	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:20 AM Comment [16]: Current system and processes – school learning support

P4	like that Do you see a role for the educational psychologist to support inclusive schools? J – Definitely. For instance, the Grade 4 teachers are desperate because we've got 8 new learners from other schools in Grade 4 and they are showing no progress because they are Grade 4 and they don't have a Grade 1 foundation. And that's the problem, we can't build on their learning because they haven't got the basics. So they said what must we do? The children are going for bridging, they are going for remedial classes in the afternoon, they are getting their reading, they are getting extra work sent home. It's not working. Most of these parents also don't speak English.	90-96	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:20 AM Comment [17]: Role of EP
P4	What does the psychologist recommend? J – A reading programme, therapy with the parents as well, counselling	97-98	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:22 AM Comment [18]: Role of EP
P4	And what is the response of the teachers? J – They are very receptive. We don't have problems between the teachers and the psychologist. Because the learners we are teaching – I mean, what can we do, we are not psychologists. We feel desperate when we can't help this child and we welcome any help we can get.	99-102	4.6	Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:33 AM Comment [19]: Role of EP
P4	Are there opportunities for the teachers to approach her if they need to talk to somebody? J – Yes, yes, yes. We also have – if teachers have problems – we have just received a memo about counsellors that can counsel teachers as well. But she's open to it. And K's also open to it and he'll ask assistance from the church if teachers want to talk about it. But we've got the school based support team. You saw how we discuss every learner?	103-107	4.6	Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:34 AM Comment [20]: Relationship of school with EP
P4	The SBST meets every Monday at break? J – Or a Wednesday. M – How often do you talk about a specific grade? J – Once a term. We've got a meeting every week. Learners who have been assessed, we speak about more. I spoke to Grade 5 teachers today and asked if they have seen the parents and made the referrals.	108-113	4.5	Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:55 AM Comment [21]: Relationship of school with EP Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:55 AM Comment [22]: Role and function of SBST
P4	Do you feel that the SBST, the way it's structured now, works for the school? J – I think so. Mm. The teachers come and talk all the time. It's not just in our meetings. And if we really have a problem, we speak to the principal, we have the parents in, we have	114-119	4.5	Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:55 AM Comment [23]: Role and function of SBST

	meetings throughout the term. The meetings are just the formal administration part. M – To meet GDE requirements? J – Mm.			Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:56 AM Comment [24]: Role and function of SBST
P4	What are your experiences of inclusion and working with an educational psychologist? J – The only thing is, if it's private, the parents don't always pay. And like we had one group here, they started off as one group and then they changed to something else and the parents owed them R20000. They did therapy, they did play therapy, they did therapy on the computers, the school bought them a programme (Big Boot). They got little reports, they sent reports home. They were all educational psychologists, or studying to become, doing their practicals. Any assistance we get, we welcome. We were supposed to get two Child Welfare, or social work students, and with K's programme, they wanted to do character building as well. I said no. We haven't had him in the past. I think this is his second year, and before that, we used them to do bullying counselling and character building. And now we've got him. But it's only till the end of the year. It's sponsored. I hope it will be renewed. It has been positive, especially with the LSEN class learners.	120-130	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:56 AM Comment [25]: Role of function of SBST
P4	What does he do with them? J – The same. Character building, the same programme. But they've really changed and it's like a secret society and he's very secretive about it.	131-133	1.2	Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:57 AM Comment [26]: Role of EP
P4	He's also doing some individual sessions? J – Yes, grieving, counselling. And we have a little boy who has got long fingers. He's helping him with that. He's here at school which is nice. If we have a problem and he has to debrief someone, trauma counselling or something, it's wonderful to have him because he's got the experience, the training, which we don't have. We don't have the training.	139-143	1.2	Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:57 AM Comment [27]: Roles of others (church counsellor)
P4	Have you had any negative experiences working with educational psychologists? J – No. And I haven't had any complaints from other teachers.	148-149	4.6	Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:58 AM Comment [28]: Role of others (church counsellor)
P4	You've been here since before the White Paper came out? J – Mm. M – Have you noticed any changes in the way the school operates in respect to learners with barriers to learning?	150-154	2.9.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:58 AM Comment [29]: Relationship of school with EP

P4	J – Definitely. We are trying to assist more. What did you do before? J – We always had our remedial classes. We always wrote – the beginning of the year, we would write a baseline assessment test in maths and English where we compile a list of learners who struggle. We've always done that. And then from there, we put them on a list for remedial and they went to remedial. We had an aid class for learners with ADD, ADHD, and it was basically she worked with children with reversals, problems like that, she worked with them. I miss that. They took it away from all the schools. There's a difference between LSEN and aid.	155-161	2.9.2	Michele Berger 13/2/9 10:59 AM Comment [30]: Implementation of WP - changes
P4	Remedial is basically where we reteach a concept because that's what we are trained for. We reteach basic concepts.	163-164	5.2	Michele Berger 13/2/9 11:38 AM Comment [31]: Implementation of WP - before
P4	M – Is that (remedial – reteaching concepts) successful? J – Yes, definitely. Definitely. Um, our one Grade 2 teacher has all the NAS learners in Grade 2 in her class this year. I thought she's crazy, personally, I won't do it. I like having my little stars. But she's doing a wonderful job with them. She's got background, but not a specialised remedial teacher. She taught Grade 1 so she knows how to lay a good foundation. I think she taught Grade 1 for 16 years and now she's in Grade 2. So she took the whole bunch and now she's started from the beginning. These are learners who came up from Grade 1 to Grade 2. There are more than 30 of them who struggled, and she was willing to do it. It's an experiment. We're doing it for the first time. It's working. After every break, they go out and they go on the field and they do a little bit of OT. Not that she's specialised in it but she knows the exercises and she plays with them, and she says it's making a big difference.	165-175	1.6	Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:32 PM Comment [32]: Definition - remedial
P4	What's NAS? J – Needs additional support. It's basically labelling but it's not. If the child has this, then you know they need additional attention. I've got three NASs in my class this year that came up from Grade 2 and they are doing so well. I took them off the SBST list because they are progressing so well. Just the first term. We monitored them. But from Grade 1 to Grade 2, there was a big problem. There were many, many learners. It's because they don't have the language, most of them, and they were brought up in townships and then	179-191	2.1.2	Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:32 PM Comment [33]: Role of teachers (remedial)

	they come to our schools and they have to learn in English and they can't speak a word of it or understand it. And we can't let them all repeat, that's a third of a grade. I am very surprised. She drills the whole day, drill, drill, drill. You hear her constantly drilling. I take my hat off to her. That's things that have changed, things that we are doing. When I started – I think I've got the post for 5 years now - we really started to look at it. There was SBST but not like we've got it now. In those days, the ISS unit would come out to the school and they tested the learners before they gave LSEN numbers. Now they expect us to have the learners tested.			
P4	So what's the process you follow? J – We interview the parents, then we refer them. If they don't get tested, they don't have the finances, then we complete the support assessment form and then refer them to the Department. But we've never had it, they've never visited us with that. Usually, our LSEN learners we get tested by ourselves. XX (from the district) is assisting us now with parents we suspected sexual abuse. We are not sure so we got the school nurse in and he's been here twice and he's coming tomorrow morning again and he's got an interview with the parents. So with those types of things, he is assisting us and we've got a teacher that has problems and he is helping her. And I am sure if I ask him to come and test a learner, he will definitely help us. He is eager and open to this.	192-200	2.1.2	Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:34 PM Comment [34]: Current system and processes
P4	Yes. We had a learner support educator. She was here last term, last year she came for 3 terms then they had to go and do screening. She's assigned to our school but they use her everywhere. She's working at one or two other schools. She just disappeared. She told me she's going to do screening in May but I haven't heard anything since the beginning of the term, so I don't know where she is or what's going on. I just received a memo saying they are going to reassign schools. They would like to have a school-based educator at our school for 5 days a week. That's the plan. But they are also just educators in excess. They give them training, but they didn't go and study remedial. They are just educators like me.	204-211	2.1.2	Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:34 PM Comment [35]: Current system and processes
P4	She's been helping the Grade 3s this year with language barriers. She basically did what our remedial or bridging teacher is doing.	213-218	2.1.2	Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:36 PM Comment [36]: Current system and processes

	She's supposed to work out programmes and give it to the teachers, but we've got our remedial classes where the learners go in the afternoon, so there's no other time to do a remedial programme in class time. We do reteaching, yes. So that's her role. Last year, she did a lot of Grade 1 assessment. Those 30 sitting across the passage, they are there now because the one teacher decided to take them.			
P4	But then you also do remedial after school? J – Yes.	219-220	2.1.2	
P4	– I just have this one little boy, but it's not a... The one the psychologist is going to do therapy with the mother. The mother's baggage is influencing the learner's scholastic progress. Before I was HOD, I remember there was one child they sent to a psychological hospital (Groendakkies). They had the learner assessed there, but that was before my time. M – This boy, did you refer him to the psychologist? J – Yes, first spoke to the mom. Then I had him referred for scholastic and emotional testing and she came back to me and said there are emotional problems and he's got a problem with barriers. In my class, he's progressing because there are certain rules and he knows what he's supposed to do and at home there are none. That's what she's going to help them with. M – You spoke to the mother, she agreed to the testing which was done by the psychologist. And now they are going for therapy. J – Yes, with the new psych. She is seeing the mom tomorrow. And then she's also seeing me (laughs). I have to report on his progress. We do that once a term. She is first going to work with the mom and then with the learner. It has been positive and the mommy is open to it. When I saw her the first time, she sat here and she cried and she told me the whole story about what's going on and why. She's on medication to cope but the children don't know she's on medication. The sister is in Grade 2. It's very positive. She gives us feedback which is nice.	227-243	3.4	
P4	Yes. I must say, Z is more – the personalities differ. She... I don't know, people do things differently. She did give us feedback, she did talk to us and she talked directly to the teachers. So I don't always know what's	247-249	4.6	

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:36 PM

Comment [37]: Current system and processes

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:37 PM

Comment [38]: Current system and processes

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:38 PM

Comment [39]: Capacity of teachers

Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:38 PM

Comment [40]: Capacity of teachers

P4	going on. The way Z is doing it, she is giving us advice. You can take it or you can leave it. She is not enforcing anything. Try this, try that, see if this works. So it's the approach.	252-253	4.6	Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:38 PM Comment [41]: Relationship of school with EP
P4	She doesn't participate in your SBST meetings? J – Not yet. Today, she said she wants to have a general meeting with the teachers and the parents of the learners who struggle and explain what she does and the therapy and how it's going to work and she wants to introduce the reading therapy to the parents. She wants to be a part of the ... We always say we are a family, because we are. She wants to include the parents. That's a nice approach, a collaborative approach. In future, she might be part of SBST meetings, but then who is going to pay her? The school can't afford it, it's her time. We haven't spoken about it yet. She said she has to go to Johannesburg as well so I don't know if she lives there or what.	254-261	4.2	Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:38 PM Comment [42]: Relationship of school with EP
P4	– If only it could be for free! That's our biggest... If we could afford an educational psychologist, she would be here every day, but we are referring to different people now. K, do this counselling, and we ask the parents to take the learners for assessment but then they can't afford it and then we have to beg the Department. Money is an issue. If we could pay someone, it would be wonderful. Remedial is not therapy, there are also emotional problems that hamper a child's learning.	266-270	1.4	Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:39 PM Comment [43]: Collaboration – school and EP
P4	She's assessing the learners in the first place, forming a bond with the parents, working with parents and teachers and learners, giving advice to teachers – advice. Therapy with the learners during school time. We don't have a problem with taking learners out of the class for specific times. They usually enjoy the therapy more than they enjoy the class. That's basically what we need. Also emotional support for the teachers, they can knock on her door and ask questions, make an appointment, ask for assistance, or just talk about a learner with someone that's got psychology. The learners are going to K at this stage. But he's just a counsellor.	272-278	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:39 PM Comment [44]: Resourcing of WP
P4	It's just funds. Sometimes you feel that your hands are cut off because you want to help but you're not capable of helping. You are not a psychologist. They expect teachers to be	291-293	1.4	Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:40 PM Comment [45]: Role of EP

P4	mothers, the nurse, the teachers, everything These children, because of the culture differences, they need a lot of love and a lot of attention. They are very clingy. They've got self-confidence but they want approval and they want praise and they thrive on things like that. I don't know why. I think white children are more independent. I've just noticed it.	293-296	3.3	Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:40 PM Comment [46]: Resourcing of WP
P4	There's definitely a need for educational psychologists at schools, definitely. If every school could have one, I think there'd be a lot less problems. Really. If XX (from the district) could sit here every day, I would be very happy. You should do community service in schools to qualify. We had H and then they changed to LL. H started with one woman, she studied educational psychology but pastoral psychology. And we worked with someone from Unisa who supervised her. She came in, she tested, she did therapy, he came in and spoke to her every week. It worked so well because there was a lot of interaction and we knew what was going on. And then she qualified and took in interns under her and they started working here. That's when we bought Big Boot. And they brought in play therapy in the loft outside. Then she started working at a church. She left us. But she left the interns who stayed, they qualified, there was a psychometrist and two qualified as pastoral counsellors. They did so well. We thought it was going very well. They took the children for therapy and we could see a change and it was wonderful.	300-311	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:41 PM Comment [47]: Cultural competence
P4	Then I went on maternity leave, and when I came back ..., and they handed me a letter and said they are leaving. There was a R20000 debt. They have to earn a living. Funds is definitely a problem.	311-313	1.4	Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:41 PM Comment [48]: Role of EP
P3	children that are in the ELSEN, LSEN children are special needs children. Depending on what their need is, in my opinion, won't be able to cope in a normal classroom situation. They've got a barrier to learning concerning whatever, if it's maths or language or whatever the case is. But they might be good in a certain area, and that area, they can go back to the normal mainstream. And vice versa. A child who has got a problem in a language problem can be included into the ELSEN class back to the level where he or she is, or into the remedial class. We've got remedial here as well. And that is my – how I understand inclusion. They	11-21	5.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 12:42 PM Comment [49]: Resourcing

	form part – at this school, they form part of the school, they are not separate, or they don't run to a different timetable or anything, they are here, they are part of the school. The difference is that each child there is on a different level concerning the maths and the English and the lifeskills and the whatever.			
P3	We've got an ELSEN class. There are 20 children in the ELSEN class that have been identified as LSEN or special needs children. At this school, they are mildly intellectually disabled. Um... Now there's a [pause] distinction between an LSEN child and a remedial child, and a lot of teachers don't understand that concept. They think that if a child is battling with whatever he or she is battling with, that child is an LSEN child, and that's not the case. A remedial child is something totally different, in my opinion, than what the LSEN child is.	24-29	5.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:16 PM Comment [50]: Inclusive education
P3	A remedial child is a child that has got the ability, where she came and is battling with a certain concept and that concept is remediated. A child can be a very clever child but he can have a language barrier. If you reach that language barrier, for instance, if he's taught to read and understand the language properly, then he carries on, but where the LSEN child can't, the LSEN child just hasn't got that. And that's why you have to - that's why they're also taught on different levels.	31-35	5.2	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:34 PM Comment [51]: Inclusive education
P3	Yes, across the grades. They are with this teacher all the... Depending. Sometimes, we send the child across to the grade ones for reading or this or that, according to his or her age group, they go to the grade 4s or 5s or whatever.	37-39	5.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:35 PM Comment [52]: Remedial
P3	It's from which grade? P – It's from 7 years old to 12, because the year in which they turn 12 they must go to the LSEN high school. We don't say grades, because they are not really in a grade. M – And the teacher in that class, what are her qualifications? P – She's qualified in ELSEN. Not remedial, but ELSEN, special needs.	40-44	5.2	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:35 PM Comment [53]: Inclusive education - definition
P3	Is that (LSEN) a post that's funded by GDE? P – Yes. We had 2 at the school, and through lack of foresight, I think, the Department took the one away, and they were on the verge of taking the second one away and we have managed to stop that. There's a definite need, I think, there's no doubt. So that's how	45-48	1.4	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:36 PM Comment [54]: Learning support/remedial

P3	the ELSEN class works We turn a lot away from the area. Lots, lots. And that's sad, because they live across the road and they can't come to us. You must work and live in the area. For us, we are in the city centre, 10 zillion people work in the city centre, so they can all bring their children here although they live in G.	53-56	1.4
P3	How many learners are there at this school in total? P – 713. M – And race groups? P – Mostly black. There's one or 2 Indians, coloureds, and then we've got one little white girl in Grade R. M – And the home languages? P – That varies from English to Afrikaans to Sotho to Zulu to Xhosa, all the official languages. That varies. M – What about the origins of the children? Where are they coming from? P – Most of our children – it all depends on who is in power, I think, because when President Mbeki was in the Union Buildings, we had a lot of Xhosas coming from the Eastern Cape, lots and lots and lots. Now President Zuma, we see more and more people from Natal. So... The parents work here, they work for government. Lots of our parents work for government. So that's just interesting. That's what we've picked up. Our two main groups at the school are the Xhosas and Zulus. M – What about children from outside South Africa? P – Yes, we have a little bit, but at [our school], we have our immigrants but I wouldn't say they are a large group. And most of the immigrant children that we have are immigrants that were born here. In other words, the parents are immigrants but the children are South African born, but they still speak French at home and Portuguese, depending on which country they're from. M – Are there a lot of children for whom English is their second language? P – Look, because there's Grade R now, it sort of seems as if it's becoming less and less and less because they are taught English in Grade R. But we find that children that come in what we call from the side, in other words, he was in a vernacular school in KwaZulu-Natal and he comes in Grade 5, and he comes into our school in Grade 5, they battle. M – So it's not a big problem?	76-102	5.3

Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:36 PM

Comment [55]: Resourcing

	P – It can be a big problem but we deal with it. That's why we've got our remedial programmes or whatever, and then we specifically try and help those children.			
P3	Look, a lot of children have issues, have problems. And depending on what the field of the psychologist is, they are here to help, um, because we as teachers are only trained up to a certain point. After that, I can't help this child, I need somebody else to come and help me.	104-106	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:37 PM Comment [56]: School demographics
P3	And, um, in the past, those systems were there. And they're not there anymore and that is a problem. I wouldn't say they are not there anymore, but they're not... You get one psychologist who has to service 20 or 30 schools, and it's a problem.	106-109	2.7	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:40 PM Comment [57]: Role of ed psych
P3	We phone and he says I am coming, I've just got to be at the next school, and then that school's got problems, and he has to address those problems because while he's there, he must address those problems and they keep him or her there, and then by the time they get to your school, um, the problem might have escalated or whatever, you know. Um, yah.	111-114	2.7	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:40 PM Comment [58]: District capacity to support schools
P3	Yah, and actually, guidance has arranged with you, a person like yourself, to come to the school, and then they sit here and they contact the parents and then they get payment through the medical aid. That's how it works for us.	117-119	2.6	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:42 PM Comment [59]: District capacity to support schools
P3	So working parents have the services of a psychologist. P – Yes, we have a private psychologist here now.	120-121	2.10	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:43 PM Comment [60]: Placement of EPs
P3	I've always had an ELSEN class at my school. Inclusion, as I said to you earlier, the way that I see it, has always been part of the school.	132-133	1.3	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:43 PM Comment [61]: Implementation of WP – accessing of services
P3	a colleague of mine up the road doesn't understand inclusion the way that I understand it. I have the ELSEN class, he doesn't. And then obviously, I have to take children from neighbouring schools as well because the LSEN class is here. But then they would send me a child that just needs remedial. They don't understand there's a difference between remedial and special needs.	133-137	5.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:44 PM Comment [62]: Institutionalisation of WP
P3	Inclusion can work, it can work if you do it properly but these children have to feel safe in an inclusion environment. And they also have to feel that they are getting the attention	137-141	1.3	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:45 PM Comment [63]: Inclusive ed and remedial

	that they are getting. They are in this class, there's 20 children in the class, the teacher can get to all of them, more or less. In a bigger class - at this school we are fortunate we've got 30 children in a class			
P3	In a bigger school where there are 40 children in a class, an inclusion child or a special needs child, will disappear, in my opinion because the teacher can't get to that child.	141-143	1.4	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:45 PM Comment [64]: Institutionalisation of WP
P3	There's a remedial programme here. We are fortunate enough to have a remedial teacher fulltime. We've got a businessman in the community that sponsors the salary for a remedial teacher, so she has got her class at our school.	145-147	1.3	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:45 PM Comment [65]: Resourcing of WP
P3	there's a programme worked out which children go to remedial and they follow a timetable and they go and visit the remedial teacher and she remediates concepts, whatever, and then they go back to the normal class.	147-149	5.2	
P3	The ELSEN is – I wouldn't say it's permanent, because we've had children in the ELSEN class that have developed to such an extent that we've placed them back into mainstream. But the remedial children are in the mainstream.	157-159	5.2	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:46 PM Comment [66]: Remedial
P3	I don't agree with that, not at all. It won't work, not at all. Um, uh, for instance, a child who has – I don't know – how can I put it? – my children are all mildly intellectually disabled. If you have a severely intellectually disabled child in the mainstream, you are going to demoralise the teacher, you are going to demoralise the child, and you are going to have a discipline problem with the children, the other children in the class, because the teacher is going to – her attention is going to be with this child all the time and not with the majority of the class. So everybody is going to be – in my opinion, it's not going to be a workable situation.	163-169	3.4	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:47 PM Comment [67]: Special needs
PR	It would then be the same as the next school who doesn't have the class, I would apply to the school that has the class, and send the child there. They get lost. It's not, in my opinion, sound educational norms to have a child that is battling to be in a class where there are hundreds of children, there's a noise. These children next door, if you disrupt them, they've got a set routine, the teacher's worked out the routine, and they know the routine, and if that routine is disrupted by anything, an announcement or I go into the	171-178	3.4	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:48 PM Comment [68]: Capacity and competence of teachers

	class and I say to the teacher, 'Right, we are going to...' For instance, fire drill, if we have a fire drill, the ELSEN class is totally, totally mixed up and to get them back into their rhythm is... The rest of the day is a waste			
P3	You would need an assistant. Each teacher needs – that's first world, hey? [small laugh] – a teacher's assistant	182-183	3.4	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:48 PM Comment [69]: Capacity
P3	I can tell you, I don't know offhand, but I am quite sure, if you go and look at the more affluent schools, where they've got teachers assistants, it helps – and they haven't got an ELSEN class like we have, it helps with that child in the class while he or she is waiting for a place at an ELSEN school. We can't afford that kind of thing. But we, as I said to you just now, we are lucky we have a businessman who is paying for a remedial teacher for us. That is how we get around that	183-187	1.4	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:49 PM Comment [70]: Capacity of teachers
P3	Helping the children, helping the teacher. I said to you just now, remember the teachers are only trained up to a certain point. After that, we can't help this child. That is why you can't put a normal – not a normal, that's not the right word – you can't put a – ja, let's call it a normally trained education teacher into an ELSEN class. You've got to have somebody who specialises in that	191-194	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:49 PM Comment [71]: Resourcing of WP
P3	She or he would help with the education process, the remedial process, the character building process, um, parents – help train parents because we are all parents, and if a school calls you in and says to you, 'Mr So and So, your child is an LSEN child,' 9 out of 10 times, parents say 'Not my child'. That parent has to be – what's the word I am looking for – it has to be explained to them that it's not the end of the world. And that, an educational psychologist can do. And you need that all the time at this school, all the time	200-205	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:51 PM Comment [72]: Role of ed psych
P3	Now we phone the Department, and the Department says 'Okay, I can see you next Thursday.' By then, the problem has either escalated or the parents don't come back or whatever	205-207	2.7	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:52 PM Comment [73]: Role of ed psych
P3	Look, at this school I think they will only welcome it, because they pick up a problem much quicker because of the small classes. We can identify a child more easily and then to get that help for that child so that he can go out and come back again	209-211	4.6	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:52 PM Comment [74]: District capacity to support schools
P3	First or all, in the class, yes, the teacher will. Or if it's a new child, we look at that profile. If	214-222	4.6	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:53 PM Comment [75]: Relationship between teachers and ed psych

	the previous school has written something in the profile, we will look and see that this child has whatever problem, and then we will look out for it. And if there's a problem, the teacher will pick it up in class, and then we will refer it to the support team, and then we will get the ELSEN teacher to have a look at the child, perhaps test the child, interview the parents, and because she is qualified to do that, we will then obviously have the child tested with the parents' consent, get the Department in, and that's now all to identify the child as LSEN. To identify the child as remedial, that's totally different. The teacher will see there's a problem that needs to be remediated, and that child will then go to the remedial teacher.			
P3	And if there are any other, let's say, social or emotional difficulties? P – The same process, but then we'll get a psychologist in, or the Department's psychologist and we take it from there.	223-225	4.6	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:54 PM Comment [76]: Support by ed psych
P3	Let's use an example of child abuse. If there's child abuse, according to the South African Schools Act, we have to report it. So child X comes into the office, the teacher suspects there's abuse, um, what we will do is we will get hold of the school nurse. She might be at another school somewhere. We ask her, 'Listen, just come around here tomorrow morning and have a look at this child.' And then we will have her medical opinion. She can't physically look at the child. She will then just ask a few questions and then say, 'Listen, this is not true,' or 'Yes, I think you must take this further.' Then we will contact the Department and say, 'Listen, this is what we suspect. What now?' And then they will say, 'Okay, interview the parents, bring the parents in, we need to interview the parents, get the parents in.' And say to them this is what we suspect, or we report to the South African Police or whatever the case is. That's the route that we follow.	228-237	2.7	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:54 PM Comment [77]: Support by ed psych
P3	At our school, we've got the psychologists that come, so we will ask them to have a look at the child if we think there's a problem. Then we will also notify the Department through the school-based support team and they would most probably come. We've got XX who comes to the school and he is quite religious about it.	240-243	4.6	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:55 PM Comment [78]: District capacity to support schools
P3	He doesn't just support our school, he's got about 20 other schools, I suppose, I'm not too sure. So when he does get here, he gets	246-248	2.7	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:55 PM Comment [79]: Support by ed psych

P3	here... A lot of children lose their parents, in accidents or whatever the case is, and that child needs support. We'll get a psychologist in, from if it's the Department or if we've got the resident one that comes and we'll ask him or her to have a word with the child and support in that way.	252-254	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:56 PM Comment [80]: District capacity to support schools
P3	She's private, yes.	262	2.10	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:56 PM Comment [81]: Role of ed psych
P3	And if you've had a case where you've done this and you've followed the route and the parents have cooperated and so on, what has been the outcome? P – Most of the time, it's favourable. There are times that it isn't and then you start all over again. But most of the time, it is.	272-275	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:57 PM Comment [82]: Accessing of services
P3	If there's no medical aid? P – Then we wait for the Department.	282-283	2.10	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:57 PM Comment [83]: Role of ed psych
P3	What in your opinion needs to be done to improve the effectiveness of educational psychological services to support inclusion? P – Money. Money, money, money, money.	284-286	2.11	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:57 PM Comment [84]: Accessing of services
P3	If there's more money, you can appoint more people. It's as simple as that. You know, um, one educational psychologist can't service 50 or 60 schools. You need so many for so many schools.	288-289	1.4	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:58 PM Comment [85]: Effectiveness of services
P3	The ideal is like the Americans, they have one per school. I realise that will never happen. But I would say you need one for a region, like the inner city should have at least one and then the near East, the far East, the West, the far West. They should have their dedicated psychologists. That's how I see it, but I know that won't happen.	291-294	2.6	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:59 PM Comment [86]: Resourcing of WP
P3	Look, they visit the school, yes, but they can't be here at every meeting, because P has her meetings, she's busy with them now. But I think, like tomorrow, we've got XX coming in for a case. So we do bring them in, but they can't be here all the time.	298-300	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 2:59 PM Comment [87]: Placement of ed psychs
P3	Very effectively. The Department comes to us to see what we are doing. And I'm not just saying that. They come to ask P how she does she do this, what does she do here, and so we are running very, very effectively in my opinion.	306-308	4.5	Michele Berger 13/2/9 3:00 PM Comment [88]: Role of ed psych
P3	And once a week you have a meeting by grade? P – Not once a week. I'm not sure. Once a week the SBST meets. And then now she's busy interviewing, for instance, the Grade 1s. She has all the teachers of Grade 1s and they discuss each child that needs to be	309-312	4.5	Michele Berger 13/2/9 3:00 PM Comment [89]: SBST capacity and effectiveness

	discussed. And tomorrow, it'll be Grade 2s, then 3s, then 4s.			
P3	Once a term. M – So that's different to the Monday meetings? P – Ja. The Monday meetings, as I understand it, when the grade teachers have their meetings and there's a problem with a child, when they will record it in their file and when the SBST meeting for Grade 1 representative will say, 'Listen, we need to remember this child.'	314-318	4.5	Michele Berger 13/2/9 3:00 PM Comment [90]: Role of SBST and functioning
P3	This works for us.	322	4.5	Michele Berger 13/2/9 3:01 PM Comment [91]: Role of SBST and functioning
P3	If you were at the school, you would be on that committee, and you would actually then chair it.	324-325	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 3:02 PM Comment [92]: Role of SBST and functioning
P3	But an educational psychologist at a school or at two or three schools would only benefit the school, the children and the community. Because you would also then service the parents. Definitely, there's no doubt about that. But if it's going to work, it's going to happen, there's going to be money – money, money, money.	336-339	2.11	Michele Berger 13/2/9 3:02 PM Comment [93]: Role of ed psych
P3	I would appoint a psychologist fulltime. I would do that. Um, and then she or he would then be in charge of, um, the psychology of the school, the discipline of the school, the children that are battling with the academics, the LSEN children, um, the traumatised learners, traumatised staff. You must remember that a staff member also becomes traumatised if a child is not coping, the teacher becomes – because she's not getting the work done.	341-345	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 3:02 PM Comment [94]: Effectiveness of ed psych services
P3	The high schools complain and say the children are coming to high school and they can't read and write. It's possible because there are 48 children in a class. You can't listen to 48 children reading, you can't teach 48 kids to read. And that's where you come in. You can assist with that. But there are no posts. The government needs to realise. There are a lot of good things in the education system, don't get me wrong. There are a lot of things that will make the education system workable and more productive if it is just managed properly. There are a lot of good things.	408-414	2.9	Michele Berger 13/2/9 3:03 PM Comment [95]: Role of ed psych
LR	From experience, the most important role would be to identify and diagnose the kids with the problems that haven't been diagnosed before. And then to make the teacher aware of a specific child's needs. I	7-11	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/9 3:03 PM Comment [96]: Role of EP

	worked at [the school] last year. I would go there once or twice a week. I only did 8 or 9 cases in the year. The teachers told the parents but only a very few followed up.			
LR	It was more backup for special needs than ordinary. If you are at the school, you get more problems	13-14	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/10 8:50 AM Comment [97]: Role of EP
LR	It worked well but half the cases were charity cases. Teachers brought a child to you and asked for an assessment. But there was no money. But I made up for this through working with parents that had medical aid. These were also black parents but some of them had medical aid and so they could pay for my services. But many of the parents could not. The teachers identified the kids that they thought needed to be assessed or needed support and then they contacted the parents. I prefer not to get an historical background before seeing a child. I evaluate first, and then speak to the parents. They filled in a questionnaire. I had guidelines. And then I also got the teachers' input. But I called in the parents before I spoke to teachers. Parents had to give consent. Report went to parents first. I had to judge	16-25	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/10 8:50 AM Comment [98]: Role of EP
LR	There are not enough institutions that they can go to so they have to go to mainstream schools. Inclusion is about including kids that are not reaching their full potential because of a learning barrier – for any reason, or they have emotional difficulties. In my current school, the classes are small, so you can have kids with learning problems and manage. I worked at a school in W. But this school also didn't employ me either. Ideally, there would be a team on board that you can discuss cases with	27-33	5.1	Michele Berger 13/2/10 8:51 AM Comment [99]: Role of EP
LR	My role should be to guide the teacher and parents and child on how to manage learning problems. In a school, you can immediately see what is not working so you can try something else. If parents gave me permission, I would go to see the school. I would have a session with all the teachers and discuss the report with them. I would tell them the extent of the problem and suggest management skills	35-39	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/10 8:51 AM Comment [100]: Definition of IE
LR	It was unsatisfying. Schools are so busy so you can't go back to them regularly. It is idealistic. Initially, some were very reluctant. Teachers would have a bit of an attitude. When you give feedback on a report and the teacher sees, then they would feel validated	39-44	4.6	Michele Berger 13/2/10 8:52 AM Comment [101]: Role of EP

	and would come on board. Most teachers were very willing to follow through on suggestions. If they could see I understood the problem, they were very willing to help.			
LR	One of the problems is that the things that we as psychologists suggest isn't always practical for the school to do. It is one thing to say put a child in front of the blackboard and another to say make sure the child is paying attention. People should see the educational psychologist as coming on board and now we are managing this problem. We are not solving it by evaluating and diagnosing the problem. People see you and take the report home and follow through on a bit. Unless I follow up, it often dwindles. I would like to see something more sustainable. For 6 months, I want weekly feedback or I want to see the child every month. I did see one or two of the kids for emotional therapy, but not really. Kids go home after school with a taxi, so it was logistically difficult. I didn't want to take them out of the classes.	47-57	2.11	Michele Berger 13/2/10 8:52 AM Comment [102]: Relationship betw school and EP
LR	We need assistance. A big learning problem can't be rectified within the current set up.	61-62	2.11	Michele Berger 13/2/10 8:52 AM Comment [103]: Effectiveness of EP services
LR	We must talk to Grade R and 1 teachers. If there is a psychologist in the school, they must know from day 1. They can identify the kids early because they are knowledgeable. They must refer the kid to someone. Early identification is essential. There should be intense input in the first 3 years.	65-68	2.11	Michele Berger 13/2/10 8:53 AM Comment [104]: Effectiveness of EP services
LR	The main role of the educational psychologist comes in once the problem has been clearly defined. It is to find people to assist and also to manage. It is to follow up and see if it is working and then try another approach. If you can suggest OT, it might not be right route to go. Someone needs to look at the bigger picture and guide. Where the educational psychologist can play a big role is with parent guidance. Ultimately, the parent has to drive.	69-74	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/10 8:53 AM Comment [105]: Effectiveness of EP services
LR	Being part of the staff makes a big difference. I can phone the parents and make an appointment.	80-81	2.4.1	Michele Berger 13/2/10 8:53 AM Comment [106]: Role of EP
LR	If I can train teachers to rather send a child that's been identified to an educational psychologist than to make up their own minds about where they should go, this would go a long way to helping and being useful. We are in the best position to look at the bigger picture. We must focus on teacher education. I try to collaborate with other professions, but	90-94	4.2	Michele Berger 13/2/10 8:54 AM Comment [107]: Employment of EPs

P2	it is difficult if in private practice. I found the traditional models, you know, according to which the helping professions work highly unsuitable for developing contexts. The over-reliance on expert opinion and expert assistance which is sent out – the message is sent out to parents and teachers – disempower people, you know, to use their own commonsense, to try things and to come up with commonsense solutions to some problems. And therefore it builds up a whole industry of dependency which is negative for community work, you know. And also in communities, children with problems easily get labelled and marginalised while people wait for the so-called experts to come, of which there are few in the developing context. So it puts children on hold until someone is coming, and it is actually negative. But it is the whole society, the bigger society's over-reliance on the helping professions.	2-11	1.3	Michele Berger 13/2/10 8:54 AM Comment [108]: Collaboration
P2	We said it is not an issue of client or professional relationships that need to be transformed, we must be honest to say that actually the clients are the raw material of their industry! [laughs] That's a very radical look into the work that they do, unless they have a totally radically transformed approach to their work. And the people I have been working with over the years, like AA, BB, CC, they all were educational psychologists who actually came out of that profession completely transformed, with a whole new idea of what their role should entail.	12-18	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:41 AM Comment [109]: Institutionalisation of WP
P2	They all just felt the need to work differently. Their work radically departed from a kind of individual interventionist approach to a whole school change. I think from what I've heard often is that it is not that you lose your clinical knowledge or don't use your clinical background, it is how you use it to guide people to find their own solutions. You fulfil a kind of a mentoring role and empower people to take ownership of issues. In a nutshell, that is what it was about.	20-25	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:41 AM Comment [110]: Role of EP
P2	Well, I have quite a broad definition of it. I think one should – for me, it's to maximise the participation of children and reducing the exclusion of children, mainly those who are minority groups, marginalised children. And, um, and children who are vulnerable to dropping out of the system, by reducing the barriers to learning that they experience. For me, the barriers could be within the cultures	49-57	5.1	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:41 AM Comment [111]: Role of EP

	of the school, within the ethos of the school, within the policies of the school, as well as within the practice of the school. So I think inclusive education has to target all those areas. From the ethos to the classroom practice. There's no one section that you could leave out. It goes broader than the school. It involves the community.			
P2	I have a permanent inclination to be negative about the rate of change. I personally feel responsible also for the fact that we haven't been able to do more, to move further, but when I do engage with schools and I come in a context where the role of teachers is present, and provincial people are present, then I am actually to some extent surprised by how wide the knowledge and awareness of inclusion is.	59-63	1.3	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:42 AM Comment [112]: Definition - IE
P2	I think we've already transcended the first stage of getting people to understand the basics of it. What we are now hitting is the lack of practical skills and knowledge to do that. But where I do think we are failing most is that key political decision makers and key decisions makers within departments, especially newer people coming into posts that don't know where we are coming from, they might not understand really what we mean with inclusion, and you often find people falling back on a narrow special needs vision of inclusion, placing the deficit within the learner, and thinking you need one on one remedial kind of support which is what we've been really trying to get away from.	63-71	1.3	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:43 AM Comment [113]: Institutionalisation of WP
P2	Well, what we've – we could never in South Africa have the kind of – we could never go the road that say more well resourced countries went. They would have had a child coming with a package of support already available and you find that in many of the countries, you have people actually replicating a special school in the mainstream which I don't think is necessarily the best thing. I don't think you must come with the assumption that a child who experiences complex barriers needs to have his own little personal support team. What I think is needed is, firstly, a principal who is understanding of what I am saying – all children belong.	76-83	1.3	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:43 AM Comment [114]: Institutionalisation of WP
P2	I think a school shouldn't be selective in its intake and should acknowledge there's diversity in the school of various kinds which need to be part of the planning in the way the	83-96	1.3	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:43 AM Comment [115]: Institutionalisation of WP

	school structures its whole system. The second level is there must be support in the school, there must be ownership in the school of support for all learners. And it mustn't be seen as the task of outsiders to provide the support. So for me, the whole notion of school-based support team is absolutely critical. And the school-based support team, for me, is a kind of problem-solving team, relying on the commonsense and experience of the teachers there, you know, to find contextual solutions. I think this is critical. Then at the third level, I think that the teacher in the classroom needs to be very skilled with managing diversity in teaching and learning and to differentiate the curriculum. And I think that's where we are actually lacking at the moment. Because I think teachers sort of teach for the middle, they ignore those who are having difficulties or those who are gifted. I think that all, you know, outside support people should be geared at enhancing the skills of the teachers to differentiate			
P2	Then I do want to not be, you know, too much of my head in the clouds, and I do acknowledge that sometimes if it's something like Aspergers or ADHD, any kind of condition of which the teacher has no experience, I do think there needs to be a bit of an intervention in terms of training or mentoring or knowledge sharing. And I think that is probably what most people say we are waiting to be trained before we can do it. I differ from that position because we will never train people in a vacuum. People will only feel the need to be trained once they are confronted with those kinds of issues. And I feel the training they would get would enhance their teaching skills in general. And I think we need to also get schools to take ownership of that training process by inviting people to come and so on. We have put in a lot of energy in the way that we have restructured the national strategy on screening, identification, assessment and support, to capture all these steps of school change, classroom change, equipping the teachers. And we also want to convert our whole funding system into one that acknowledges those kinds of needs.	97-109	3.4	
P2	Look, you see, the first point is... I try and not speak of children with barriers. I find a lot of people talk about children with barriers and I think that is becoming a new word for children with special needs. It is as if, here you have a whole class of normal kids and then you have	112-124	3.4	

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:44 AM
 Comment [116]: Institutionalisation of WP

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:44 AM
 Comment [117]: Capacity of teachers

	a few with special needs and they are the tip-over factor, whereas I think that the main barrier in that classroom is the class size, and the inability of the teacher to teach a big class, and the lack of space so that she can't do effective group work and so on. So I feel the knowledge and skills that you bring in are not for her primarily to deal with those learners with so called special needs, but it's to manage that complex class with all the barriers that are there and are more effective. I have always believed that class size shouldn't really be the big reason why inclusive education should be deferred. I think it's a way for us to get the, to address big class size, and prevent barriers from arising. Without sounding too idealistic about it, I do think that the skills of inclusion are the skills to help teachers with these complex schools that they're dealing with.			
P2	I'm not against it. I've seen in the Finnish system, for instance, it works very well. There's constant in and out, with children needing support getting it and going back. I've read widely about it. I don't believe in a permanent special class or permanent withdrawal and I think international best practice shows it shouldn't be more than 25% of the week they are withdrawn, so that they never lose their identity as a member of that class and their sense of belonging to the class. My big motto is that you shouldn't think that you should segregate children to support them. I think there are several ways, flexible ways.	128-134	2.9	
P2	very often – at the moment, you know, remedial teachers are in short supply, and a school like that they are far and few between. So the model that we proposed is rather that the few people that we have that are knowledgeable in the remedial – if you want to call it that, or learning support skills – that they actually act as advisors and mentors to ordinary teachers and to SBSTs. It would be the best use of their expertise.	135-139	4.5	
P2	No, not necessarily. We have made proposals and provinces have started introducing these itinerant learning support teachers. So they have a group of schools, a cluster of schools, falling under them. They visit the schools and advise the teachers on how to assess and adapt. So even if they are not fulltime at the school, they are there on call and they can deal with problems. Slowly	141-146	2.8	

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:44 AM

Comment [118]: Capacity of teachers

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:45 AM

Comment [119]: Implementation of WP

Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:45 AM

Comment [120]: Role and function of SBST

	but surely, they mobilise and capacitate the teachers to take ownership for that support.			
P2	Otherwise, that's what we're finding in some of the Model C schools where they do appoint these outside people on a permanent basis, you have a reluctance on the part of the teachers themselves to take ownership of the support and to go the extra mile with planning and so on. Worst case scenario is they say it will take away the time that other children need and that it's infringing the rights of other children. I think this is the worst possible thing you could ever say.	146-151	3.4	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:45 AM Comment [121]: Building capacity in districts
P2	I have a lot of issues with the full service schools. I am extremely nervous about the notion of a full service school. The way that the White Paper and all our guidelines and all our documents positioned the full service school is that they are flagships and models of best practice and that they should never become a place to which children are sent as a sort of school for moderately... children with moderate needs. That's my biggest fear. And that's the misinterpretation of the notion that we're seeing everywhere, because it's very problematic. We can't wait for enough schools to become full service schools before we can start with inclusion. And you do find malevolent people who say that we haven't got a full service school so we can't admit you, or you are a child who should be going to a full service school – the people who are antagonistic towards inclusion. So people tend to fall back on preconceived ideas. For me, the full service school would make sense in a case where you have to have ramps and a child really needs the ramps. But for children with learning difficulties and other issues where the curriculum differentiation is the key support mechanism, I really don't think the child should be going to a full service school.	153-166	1.3	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:46 AM Comment [122]: Capacity of teachers
P2	And therefore we would also like to provide an idea of a full service school also acting as a resource centre in the cluster where it is so that it would just be a recipient of your, or a focus of your, training of the first core groups who would then start mentoring other groups of teachers in the surrounding schools.	166-170	3.4	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:46 AM Comment [123]: Institutionalisation of WP
P2	And it's happened very successfully in countries like Brazil and India. So very fast, you can have a whole network of inclusive schools and examples of best practice. That's also the Unesco approach, to create as many	170-176	1.3	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:46 AM Comment [124]: Capacity of teachers

	as possible examples of best practice. But right at the start, this whole conceptual lack of clarity of what inclusion is – many people attach a kind of a special needs tag to the full service schools and then the professionals and managers would say we've got that school, let the disabled child go there.			
P2	Well, you know, we've had that long debate of mainstreaming versus inclusion. For me, mainstreaming would be close to integration which I think has a negative connotation because it expects the child to change. There's also this whole latent thing of if he's a low needs child, then he's allowed to be in the mainstream. If ability becomes moderate, then he can't. Then that would be counter-productive for our inclusion. For me, even a severe child should have the right to be in the mainstream. I don't believe at all in this low, moderate and high kind of placement model.	178-184	5.2	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:47 AM Comment [125]: Institutionalisation of WP
P2	Full inclusion. It's our obligation in terms of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. How fast we'll get there, and how and when is the issue, but that we should go there we can't deny. We have an obligation. The rural areas, deep rural areas, the choice for a child is not whether he goes to a full service or special school, it's whether he goes to school or not. And I find the only way in which we'll change societal attitudes towards difference would be to get more children into mainstream schools.	186-191	1.3	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:48 AM Comment [126]: Definition - mainstream vs inclusion
P2	I heard a paper by Lena Sale who was then the head of inclusive education at Unesco. She organised the Salamanca conference. And that sentence has stuck with me, that one shouldn't over-emphasise the special skills that you need to work with a child with a disability or a learning difficulty because those are skills that can actually be transferred.	194-197	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:48 AM Comment [127]: Institutionalisation of WP
P2	Parents and community workers, if they learn how to do it, teachers can learn to do it. And I feel that the professionals – highly skilled professionals, of which educational psychologists are probably the most important or one of the most important groups, they need to be managers and coordinators of support in an inclusive system, because in developing countries, of their short supply. And now I think that the problem is and that is where the conflict arises, is that many people who go into the profession are people who would like to work	198-210	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:49 AM Comment [128]: Role of EP

	individually with children. It's in their nature. At the times when I've lectured, and asking the students, I find that many of them haven't even taught, that they go straight into educational psychology as a professional area. So I know that it's hard to find people in the profession to fulfil this role. They've not necessarily been trained for it, to fulfil such a management and monitoring role or mentoring role. But I do think that even if you want to work on individual learners, you most effectively work if you see your role as debriefing teachers. I read a wonderful book of Gerda Hanko.			
P2	But it's so important, the skills transfer component, because the child is with the teacher much more than she is with the professional. The professional is not going to come back to where the child is learning and advising how things can change within that context. Not much can change for that child. You have to change the context. I do think that you need to – all this training – it's like a doctor being able to diagnose a condition. Those are the tools of your trade but it shouldn't stop there. It's how you apply to change the context of your child that I think is absolutely right. An educational psychologist at the lowest levels would fulfil the role in that way, and then from there, have her career path where through her experience and knowledge of classrooms and contexts would go to a point where they could mentor and monitor bigger teams and groups of people. They are the kind of people who should be advising these itinerant learning support teachers on a constant basis, giving them more skills.	213-224	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:50 AM Comment [129]: Role of EP
P2	Yes, but I do acknowledge that some schools will have to have full psychologists to deal with complex issues. If it's a very big school or say a school for the blind with more than 300 children, I can't say that it wouldn't be good for that school to have some psychologist.	226-228	2.6	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:50 AM Comment [130]: Role of EP
P2	And I feel that some special schools don't have to have one full time. It would be best if the person could be appointed at the district. I don't out-rule that that person can actually spend 4 days of the week at the school, but what I do find a big problem in our system is that people are under-utilised at the schools. So they would sit at a school and they would be doing admissions and all kinds of	228-234	2.6	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:50 AM Comment [131]: Placement of EPs

	unnecessary tests and have their private practices in the afternoons. I think they should be at the district where they belong to the district.			
P2	You know, when I was with a district, I found it lamentable that we had 12 schools within the district where I worked and some of them had more than one psychologist appointed on their staff. And then we would have within the same district schools where half the children came from broken homes, there were child headed households, there were parents who were prostitutes, children who were being abused, and there was just no service for them. Because we were just tying them up and attaching them to children with disabilities.	234-240	2.6	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:51 AM Comment [132]: Placement of EPs
P2	I think their expertise can be much more effectively utilised in the district.	240-241	2.6	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:52 AM Comment [133]: Placement of EPs
P2	So for me it would be that if there are individual cases, they can advise the teacher but their main role would be to train and mentor the teachers. And my colleagues who are educational psychologists in the district felt even more fulfilled in their work when we introduced this model. They also weren't happy to run, they couldn't reach all the children you have a pile up of files, and in the end, it's just not beneficial for anyone.	241-246	1.1	Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:52 AM Comment [134]: Placement of EPs
				Michele Berger 13/2/10 9:53 AM Comment [135]: Role of EP