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**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSION POLICY FOR LEARNERS WITH
SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN FORT BEAUFORT
DISTRICT: TOWARDS A RIGHTS BASED APPROACH TO EDUCATION**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL OF
FURTHER AND CONTINUING EDUCATION, FACULTY OF EDUCATION AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE**

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JUNE 2014

ABSTRACT

The implementation of inclusion policy for learners with special education needs as stipulated in the Education White Paper 2001 has been an issue of concern for South African schools. This study sheds light on the implementation of inclusion policy for learners with special education needs in the selected primary schools in the Fort Beaufort District in the Eastern Cape Province in South Africa. The aim of the study is to examine the implementation of inclusion policy for learners with special education needs. The study was placed within the post-positivism paradigm and used a mixed method research approach that integrated concurrent procedures in the collection, analysis and interpretation of the data. Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data while qualitative data were collected through interviews, and document analysis. A total number of 30 teachers completed the questionnaires. The researcher conducted interviews with ten principals and eight teachers. She also held interviews with four education district officials and one provincial official. Data were analysed by statistical and non-statistical procedures.

The study revealed that the inclusion policy is being implemented in the selected schools. However, there are challenges that are being encountered. Firstly, some teachers have not received adequate training with regards to inclusive education policy. Staff development workshops put in place to address this challenge are minimal, and there is not enough joint effort being established by the different stakeholders with regards to support and monitoring the implementation process. Despite the challenges that accompany implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs, as well as the difficult working conditions, this study reveals that there are pockets of good practice of inclusion policy in some of the selected schools in the Fort Beaufort District. For instance, it was found that teachers implement inclusion of learners with special education needs, even though the majority of them do not have qualifications in special education. It was also revealed that teachers used learner-centred teaching methods to accommodate all learners, which include group and individual teaching, group demonstration, discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and practical activities.

The use of different teaching strategies, dedication of teachers' time, extra work and coming down to learners' level are some of the methods used by teachers for curriculum adaptation to ensure inclusion of all learners. It emerged that learners assessment methods were modified based on their levels. Such methods include the use of formal assessment (oral interviews, spoken tests, written work, portfolio work, projects, class tests, group and individual assessment, a variety of formally assessable learning tasks, and tests at the end of the term). Also, learners were continuously assessed using informal assessment where, for instance, they were individually and verbally assessed during the teaching and learning process to enable them to be more actively involved in the process. It was established that teachers received the support of their principals through organisation of mini workshops at the school level, class visits, motivation, material, and human support, as well as involvement of the education district officials and parents when the need arose. Support from the district and provincial offices for the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs (SEN) were said to include the support for Institutional Level Support Team (ILST) by the District Based Support Team and provincial office, materials, information, training workshops, and placement of learners with severe SEN in special and full service schools respectively. The good practice in terms of monitoring strategies for implementing inclusion policy were found in the lesson plans, teachers' and learners' files, and class visits. It emerged that some of the schools were monitored through the management files, which contain activities and plans which the school had to follow everyday. The district officials were found to monitor the implementation of inclusion of learners by examining minutes of meetings held by ILSTs, and teachers' and learners' portfolios.

The study concluded that although inclusion of learners with special education needs has been introduced to schools and is being practiced in all the selected schools, there were a variety of critical issues over the programme implementation process. By and large the study recommended a collaborative effort among education stakeholders to ensure effective implementation of inclusion policy for learners with special education needs. In addition, based on the findings of the study and a broad literature search, the researcher has suggested an alternative model for

implementation of inclusion programmes that may result in good practice for the inclusion of all learners.

Keywords: Implementation, inclusion, policy, learners with special education needs, rights-based approach

DECLARATION

I hereby solemnly declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis entitled “The Implementation Of Inclusion Policy For Learners With Special Education Needs In Primary Schools In Fort Beaufort District: Towards A Rights Based Approach To Education” is my original work. It has not been submitted to any other institution of higher learning for the award of any degree or qualification. Where I have used information from the published or unpublished work of other scholars, I have acknowledged such sources both in the text and in the list of references.

TOYIN MARY ADEWUMI

JUNE 2014

Signed

Date.....

DECLARATION ON PLAGIARISM

I, **Toyin Mary Adewumi** student number: 201004811 hereby declare that I am fully aware of the University of Fort Hare's policy on plagiarism and I have taken every precaution to comply with the regulations.

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DECLARATION ON RESEARCH ETHICS CLEARANCE

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Signature.....

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. “So then it not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth but of God that sheweth mercy (Roman 9:16)”. Thank you Lord for the success of this work. You have helped me climbed yet another ladder in the education arena I ascribe all the glory to You, Lord!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My first and foremost appreciation goes to God Almighty, the Giver of life, the only Source of my inspiration, wisdom and strength, the Alpha and the Omega for making this dream of acquiring a Ph.D in Education come true. Lord I am indebted to You. I am grateful, thank You Lord!

I want to sincerely thank my Supervisor, Professor Symphorosa Rembe for her expertise, guidance and patience. Prof. (as we fondly call her), you are more than a supervisor to me, you are a mother! Thank you for your commitment and the time invested in this work to make it a success.

I also want to thank the Faculty of Education in particular the School of Further and Continuing Education at the University of Fort Hare, for offering me the opportunity to pursue my study.

My sincere thanks to the Provincial Education Department, Fort Beaufort Education District in the Eastern Cape Province in South Africa that authorised the study and to all the provincial officials, education district officials, principals, and teachers of the participating schools who shared information with me to make this study possible.

I wish to express my profound gratitude to the love of my life, my husband, Mr. Lawrence Adegoke Adewumi, for standing by me all the steps of the way. You deserve special thanks for your patience and understanding. You persevered through the pain of living without a wife during my absence. Thank you for believing in me and giving me encouragement when I needed it most. Without your support and love I would never have succeeded. Thank you so much my beloved!

I owe a lot to Dr. Titilawo Olayinka (omo iyami) for his tireless spiritual, academic and moral support, remain blessed sir. My colleagues, Dr. Shumba, Dr Obi, Benedicta, Magdalene, Verity, Bellita, Dr. Mwanza, Mr. Thinhara, Nomakula, Shirley. All the brethren of The Redeemed Christian Church of God in Alice and King Williams

Town, God bless you all for your support. To Dr. & Mrs. Aina, Amanda, Getrude and Doyin, Sister Olawumi and Olaitan Akolo, Sister Bimpe and Sister Toyin, I am grateful. Special thanks to my family members in Nigeria, Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Olaoye, Mr. and Mrs Alao, Mr. and Mrs. Adeoti. My baby sister, Cecilia Olaoye. My little brother and Mom in the United State of America, Anthony Olaoye, Mrs Theresa Olaoye. I appreciate all my nephews and nieces, thanks for always being there for me, you are all special and I love you all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT-----	ii
DECLARATION -----	v
DECLARATION ON PLAGIARISM-----	vi
DECLARATION ON RESEARCH ETHICS CLEARANCE -----	vii
DEDICATION-----	viii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS-----	ix
ACRONYMS-----	xvii
LIST OF TABLES -----	xx
LIST OF FIGURES-----	xxii
1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY -----	1
1.1 Introduction -----	1
1.2 International and national developments contributing to the development of inclusive education ²	
1.2.1 What is inclusive education? -----	3
1.2.2 Inclusive Education in South Africa-----	5
1.2.3 The learner with special education needs -----	7
1.2.4 Barriers to learning -----	8
1.2.5 Overcoming barriers to learning -----	11
1.2.6 The structures of implementation-----	12
1.3 Statement of the research problem -----	17
1.4 Research questions-----	18
1.4.1 Main research question-----	18
1.4.2 Sub-research questions -----	19
1.5 The purpose of the study -----	19
1.6 The objectives of the study-----	19
1.7 Assumptions of the study-----	20
1.8 Significance of the study-----	20
1.9 Delimitation of the study -----	22
1.10 Definition of key terms-----	22
1.10.1 Implementation -----	22
1.10.2 Inclusive education -----	22
1.10.3 Learner with special education needs -----	23
1.10.4 Chapter outline -----	23
2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS FOR IMPLEMENTING INCLUSION POLICY -----	24

2.1	Introduction -----	24
2.2	The rights-based approach to education -----	24
2.2.1	Availability-----	28
2.2.2	Accessibility-----	29
2.2.3	Adaptability -----	29
2.2.4	Acceptability -----	30
2.3	Rogan and Grayson’s curriculum implementation theory-----	31
2.4	The achievement-based curriculum (ABC) model-----	34
2.5	Summary -----	36
3	LITERATURE REVIEW -----	38
3.1	Introduction -----	38
3.2	Teacher capacity and skills enabling implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN----	38
3.2.1	Teacher capacity and skills in South Africa-----	46
3.3	Strategies adopted by teachers to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs	58
3.3.1	Project-based approach-----	60
3.3.2	Problem-based approach -----	61
3.3.3	Explicit instruction -----	62
3.3.4	Cooperative group teaching -----	63
3.3.5	Peer tutoring-----	63
3.4	Content, assessment and pedagogy adapted for implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs -----	68
3.4.1	Types of Assessments-----	77
3.4.1.1	Diagnostic assessment-----	77
3.4.1.2	Formative assessment -----	78
3.4.1.3	Summative assessment-----	78
3.5	Support mechanisms available for teachers to implement inclusion of learners with special educationneeds.....	79
3.6	Monitoring provided to teachers for the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs-----	85
3.7	Summary -----	87
4	METHODOLOGY -----	88
4.1	Introduction -----	88
4.2	Research paradigm -----	88
4.2.1	Positivism -----	89
4.2.2	Interpretivism-----	91
4.2.3	Post-positivism-----	93
4.2.4	Paradigm that guided the study-----	96
4.3	Research design/approach -----	97
4.3.1	Qualitative approach -----	98
4.3.2	Quantitative research approach -----	100
4.3.3	The mixed methods research approach -----	101
4.3.4	The research design that guided the study -----	102

4.4	Population, sample and sampling -----	103
4.4.1	Population-----	103
4.4.2	Sample and sampling -----	104
4.5	Data collection procedure -----	106
4.5.1	Gaining entry-----	106
4.5.3	The interviews-----	107
4.5.4	Questionnaires -----	110
4.5.5	Document analysis-----	112
4.6	Validity and reliability -----	113
4.6.1	Validity -----	113
4.6.2	Reliability -----	114
4.7	Data processing and analysis -----	115
4.7.1	Ethical considerations -----	117
4.7.2	Informed consent -----	118
4.7.3	Maintaining confidentiality and anonymity-----	118
4.7.4	Avoiding harm or damage to participants-----	119
4.8	Summary -----	119
5	DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION -----	121
5.1	Introduction -----	121
5.2	Biographic information of respondents-----	122
5.2.1	Gender of teacher and principal respondents -----	123
5.2.2	Age and experience of teachers and principals -----	124
5.2.3	Qualifications of teacher and principal respondents -----	126
5.2.4	Teachers' specialisation -----	128
5.2.5	Identification of learners with SEN -----	133
5.3	Delivery of the curriculum -----	135
5.3.1	Plans of lessons to ensure inclusion of learners with SEN -----	135
5.3.2	Reasons for planning lessons to ensure inclusion of learners with SEN -----	137
5.3.3	Teaching strategies adopted by teachers to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs.... -----	141
5.3.4	Effectiveness of teaching strategies -----	143
5.3.5	Adaptation of Curriculum -----	148
5.3.6	Assistance provided by teachers to support learners with special education needs ----	153
5.3.7	Assessment methods used by teachers for inclusion of learners with special education needs-----	157
5.3.8	Reasons for assessment methods used by teachers for inclusion of learners with SEN----	158
5.3.9	Learners with SEN assessment results and the perceived reasons for their performance	163
5.3.10	Perceived reasons for learners with SEN's assessment results -----	164
5.4	Materials used by teachers for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN ----	168
5.4.1	Sources of materials for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN-----	172
5.4.2	Availability of textbooks and other teaching materials for implementing inclusion of learners with SEN..... -----	174
5.4.3	The extent to which shortages of teaching materials affect the teaching and learning -	176
5.4.4	Suggestions on the provision of adequate teaching and learning materials-----	180
5.5	Support mechanisms available for teachers to implement inclusion of learners with SEN	182

5.5.1	Adequacy of the support provided by principals for inclusion of learners with SEN ----	187
5.5.2	Support provided by the education district officials for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN.-----	188
5.5.3	Adequacy of the support provided by district officials for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN-----	190
5.5.4	In-service training provided to improve teachers' performance in teaching learners with special education needs-----	195
5.5.5	In-service training in place for teachers to teach learners with special education needs	196
5.5.6	Reasons why the in-service training received was beneficial or not beneficial-----	197
5.5.7	Implementation of what was learnt in the in-service training -----	199
5.5.8	Reason why the implementation of what was learnt in in-service training received by teachers to implement inclusion of learners with SEN was beneficial or not beneficial.	200
5.6	Monitoring strategies used by principals for implementing inclusion of learners with SEN.....	202
5.6.1	Benefits of monitoring strategies used by principals on implementing inclusion of learners with SEN.....	203
5.6.2	Reasons why the monitoring strategies used by the principals for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN are beneficial or not beneficial-----	204
5.6.3	Monitoring mechanisms used by district officials for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN -----	210
5.6.4	Reason why the monitoring mechanism put in place by the district officials for implementing inclusive education was beneficial or not beneficial-----	212
5.6.5	Structures available at the school level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs....	218
5.6.6	Structure available at the district level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs....	223
5.6.7	Benefits of the structure available at the district level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs-----	224
5.7	Challenges teachers encounter in implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs -----	232
5.7.1	Recommendations on how inclusion of learners with SEN should be implemented.----	239
5.8	Summary -----	244
6	DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS -----	245
6.1	Introduction -----	245
6.2	Teacher capacity -----	245
6.2.1	Teacher skills-----	246
6.2.2	Age of teachers-----	247
6.2.3	Teacher qualifications-----	247
6.2.4	Experience of teachers -----	249
6.2.5	Teacher specialisation -----	251
6.3	Lesson Planning -----	252
6.3.1	Teaching strategies-----	253
6.3.2	Adapting the content and pedagogy to meet the needs of all learners -----	256
6.3.3	The approaches used to assess learners and reasons for using the approaches -----	258
6.3.4	Learners' examination results and causes of average results -----	262
6.4	Material resources used by teachers-----	263

6.5	Assistance provided by teachers to support Learners with SEN -----	266
6.6	Support mechanisms available for teachers and the adequacy of the support -----	267
6.6.1	In-service training provided for teachers -----	273
6.7	Monitoring strategies in place for implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs..... -----	276
6.8	Structure at the school level for special education needs -----	279
6.8.1	Structure at the district level for special education needs -----	280
6.9	Challenges teachers encounter in implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs..... -----	281
6.10	Summary -----	286
7	SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS -----	288
7.1	Introduction -----	288
7.2	Summary of research findings -----	288
7.3	Main findings -----	290
7.3.1	Teacher capacity -----	291
7.3.2	Qualification -----	291
7.3.3	Specialisation -----	292
7.3.4	Teaching experience -----	293
7.3.5	Delivery of curriculum -----	293
7.3.5.1	Teaching strategies -----	293
7.3.5.2	Curriculum adaptation -----	294
7.3.5.3	Assessment methods used by teachers -----	294
7.3.5.4	Performance of learners with SEN -----	295
7.3.6	Support and monitoring -----	296
7.3.6.1	In-service training provided for teachers -----	297
7.3.7	Structure at the school level for special education needs -----	298
7.3.8	Structure at the district level for special education needs -----	298
7.3.9	Materials and other resources -----	299
7.3.10	Assistance provided by teachers to support learners with SEN -----	300
7.3.11	Major challenges -----	300
7.4	Implication for theory -----	302
7.4.1	The rights-based approach -----	302
7.4.2	Rogan and Grayson's curriculum implementation theory -----	304
7.4.3	The achievement-based curriculum (ABC) model -----	306
7.5	Conclusions -----	307
7.6	Recommendations -----	309
7.7	New suggested model -----	312
7.8	Areas for future research -----	319
	REFERENCES -----	321
	APPENDICES -----	359
	Appendix A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE -----	359

Appendix B: LETTER OF PERMISSION TO THE PROVINCE OF THE EASTERN CAPE EDUCATION-----	360
Appendix C: PERMISSION FOR DATA COLLECTION-----	361
Appendix D: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO SCHOOLS-----	362
Appendix F: LETTER CONFIRMING EDITTING -----	365
Appendix G: Questionnaire for teachers-----	366
Appendix H: Interview guide for teachers -----	376
Appendix I: Interview guide for principals-----	380
Appendix J: Interview guide for Education District Officials -----	385
Appendix K: Interview guide for Provincial Officials-----	389

ACRONYMS

AACS:	Augmentative Alternative Communicate System
ABC:	Achievement-Based Curriculum
ACE:	Advanced Certificate in Education
AIDS:	Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
ANC:	African National Congress
AYP:	Adequate Yearly Progress
CAPS:	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement
CAST:	Center for Applied Special Technology
CPD:	Continuing Professional Development
CSIE:	Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education
DoE:	Department of Education
DBST:	District Based Support Team
EDOs:	Education District Officials
EMIS:	Education Management Information System
EWP:	Education White Paper
HIV:	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus
HoD:	Head of Department
IAP:	Individual Action Plan
IAS:	International Aid Services
IEP:	Individual Educational Programmes
INSET:	In-service Education and Training
ISP:	Individual Support Plan

ITT:	Initial Teacher Training
ILST:	Institutional Level Support Team
LEA:	Local Education Authority
LoLT:	Language of Learning and Teaching
IQMS:	Integrated Quality Management System
NSS:	National Service Secretariat
NCESS:	National Commission on Education Support Services
NCLB:	No Child Left Behind
NCSNET:	National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training
NCS:	National Curriculum Statement
NCUDL:	National Center on Universal Design for Learning
NDE:	National Department of Education
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCEA:	Oxford Consortium for Education Achievement
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
RtI:	Response to Intervention
SACE:	South African Council of Educators
SASA:	South African Schools Act
SACMEC:	South African Center for Missing and Exploited Children
SADTU:	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SBA:	School-Based Assessment
SIAS:	Screening Identification Assessment and Support
SEN:	Special Education Needs
SENCO:	Special Education Needs Co-ordinator
SOS:	Save Our Souls

SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TTC:	Teacher Training College
UDL:	Universal Design for Learning
UDHR:	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF:	United Nations Children's Education Fund
UNISA:	University of South Africa

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3-1: The School-Based Assessment (SBA) for inclusion of learners with special education needs	69
Table 5-1: Distribution of teacher respondents by gender	123
Table 5-2: Distribution of principal respondents by gender	124
Table 5-3: Distribution of teacher respondents by age and experience	125
Table 5-4: Age and experience of principal respondents	126
Table 5-5: Professional qualifications of teachers	127
Table 5-6: Professional qualifications of principals	128
Table 5-7: Teachers' specialization	129
Table 5-8: How teachers identified learners with SEN	134
Table 5-9: Lesson plan to ensure inclusion of learners with SEN	136
Table 5-10: Teaching methods/strategies	142
Table 5-11: Effectiveness of teaching strategies	143
Table 5-12: Adaptation of curriculum to ensure inclusion of learners	149
Table 5-13: Assistance provided by teachers to support learners with special education needs.....	153
Table 5-14: Assessment methods used by teachers for inclusion of learners with SEN	158
Table 5-15: Reasons for assessment methods used by teachers for inclusion of learners with SEN ..	159
Table 5-16: Learners examination results.....	163
Table 5-17: Perceived reasons for learners with SEN assessment results.....	164
Table 5-18: Teaching and learning materials available at schools.....	169
Table 5-19: Support provided by principals for inclusion of learners with SEN	182
Table 5-20: Adequacy of the support provided by principals for inclusion of learners with SEN	188
Table 5-21: Support provided by the education district officials for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN.....	189
Table 5-22: Adequacy of the support provided by district officials for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN.....	190
Table 5-23: How teacher respondents found the training received to teach learners with special education needs.....	197
Table 5-24: Implementation of what was learnt in the in-service training	200
Table 5-25: Monitoring strategies used by principals for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN	203
Table 5-26: Monitoring mechanisms used by district officials for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN.....	211
Table 5-27: Reasons why the monitoring mechanism put in place by the district officials for implementing inclusion of learners with SEN was beneficial/not beneficial	212
Table 5-28: Structures available at the school level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs.....	218
Table 5-29: Structure available at the district level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs.....	224

Table 5-30: Benefits of the structure available at the district level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs.....	225
Table 5-31: Recommendations on how inclusion of learners with SEN should be implemented.....	239
Table 7-1: : Alternative framework for a model of inclusion policy for learners with special education needs implementation.....	312

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2-1: The Achievement-Based Curriculum Model.....	34
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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

There has been a worldwide shift in the last two decades towards paying attention to the voices of the marginalised and the deprived. Human rights issues have been examined most vigorously internationally and within South Africa. The world has become more explicit and social relations less formal (Engelbrecht in Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker, Engelbrecht, 2003:7).

South Africa has a responsibility to the global command of implementing inclusion policy, together with her citizens. The country held its first democratic elections in 1994 and the new democratic government initiated a long-awaited democratic constitution. South Africa has been re-envisioned as an open state benefitting from the right to dignity and equality for all her citizens. At the same time a course of forces saw education transformation occurring globally (Engelbrecht in Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker, Engelbrecht, 2003:7).

The Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Education (UNESCO, 1994) announced that regular schools with an inclusive point of reference were the most effective ways of fighting discriminatory attitudes, building a welcoming society, creating inclusive communities and achieving education for all. Inclusive schools are designed to offer effective education for the majority of children and promote the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the whole education system (UNESCO, 1994).

1.2 International and national developments contributing to the development of inclusive education

The goal of Education for All has been set, and measures and programmes have been put in place by states, international and non-governmental organizations to ensure that all groups in society have access to quality education to enable them to participate effectively in the social, economic, political and cultural lives of their communities. However, it has been observed by some studies that certain groups of children have been excluded from accessing the anticipated quality education (UNESCO, 2003; Peters, 2004; Sisonke Consortium, 2006; UNESCO, 2007).

The necessity to address the needs of children who have been excluded from accessing education has been outlined in international and regional instruments (Engelbrecht in Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker, Engelbrecht, 2003; Peters, 2004; UNESCO, 2007; UNESCO, 2009). Among such documents are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), The UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (1994) and the World Education Forum Framework for Action (Dakar, 2000).

All the above instruments put emphasis on inclusive education which “seeks to address the learning needs of all children, youth and adults with specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion” (UNESCO, 2003:4). They call for the need to ensure that education for all as an inclusive concept is reflected in state policies and takes into account the needs of the poor and most disadvantaged children (UNESCO, 2003:4).

1.2.1 What is inclusive education?

Inclusive education entails addressing and responding to the diversity of the needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities and by reducing exclusion within and from education (Peters, 2004; Chisholm, 2007; UNESCO, 2009).

It puts emphasis on the fact that schools have to accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies with a common vision which includes all children of the appropriate age range. Inclusive education embodies a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children (Peters, 2004; UNESCO, 2007). It ensures the right to education of all children including those who are vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion. UNESCO (2009:8) identifies children who are vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion as abused children, child labourers, religious minorities, children with disabilities, poverty stricken children, refugees or displaced children, children of migrant workers, child domestic workers, girls, ethnic minorities, linguistic minorities, children in conflict zones, street children, indigenous people, child soldiers, children from rural areas, orphans, nomadic children and children with special education needs.

South Africa is a home to most of the groups of vulnerable children identified above (Lindsay, 2003; Peters, 2004; Chisholm, 2007). It is also a signatory to international and regional instruments and is, therefore, obliged to implement inclusive education (Department of Education, 2001; Peters, 2004; Chisholm, 2007).

In the context of South African, inclusive education is expressed as a process of addressing the diverse needs of all learners by reducing barriers to and within the learning environment (Department of Education, 2001). Inclusive education is, therefore, intended to facilitate learning access for all learners by fighting discriminatory attitudes. It is noted from the above that inclusion is not only about being in a class physically, but also about getting quality education so that learners

can succeed and contribute effectively to the regeneration of society, the economy and the country (Sisonke Consortium, 2006).

A well-known statement for the rights basis for inclusion is the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994). According to Lindsay (2003), paragraph 2 is the key statement of belief and encompasses five clauses. The first clause is a view on children's rights:

- Every child has a fundamental right to education, and has to be given the opportunity to attain and maintain an acceptable level of learning.

The second point indicates each child's distinctiveness:

- Every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs.

The third notes a belief of how the education system should function as a result of this basis:

- Education systems have to be planned and educational programmes implemented taking into consideration the wide diversity of these characteristics and needs.

The fourth part develops this line, stating a prerequisite:

- Those with special educational needs should have access to regular schools which should accommodate them within a child-centred pedagogy competent of meeting these needs.

The last clause offers a justification for regular schools:

- Regular schools with inclusive orientation are the most effective measures of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system.

Thus, the Salamanca Statement makes a clear statement concerning children's rights, referring to education and level of learning rather than a mechanism (Lindsay, 2003). The education system in South Africa is based on the notion of a rights culture. It is compulsory that the system should not only avoid learning breakdown and exclusion, but that it is also able to encourage equal opportunities for successful learning by all learners. For the system to do this, it is important that policy aimed at the

creation of education and development for all learners recognises a range of different needs among the learner population. Mainly, such policy has to be based on an analysis of those factors which make certain that the education system is not accessible to a considerable majority of learners and which keep on resulting in learning collapse (Lindsay, 2003).

1.2.2 Inclusive Education in South Africa

South Africa's shift in the direction of inclusion is as a result of the strong influence of international developments (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). These include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1989), the Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Disabled Persons (United Nations, 1993) and the World Conference on 'Education for All by the year 2000' (Education for All, 2000).

Post-apartheid South Africa is facing many challenges, one of which is that of realising the constitutional values of equality, freedom from discrimination and the right to a basic education for every learner, as well as those who experience barriers to learning. During apartheid, learners were educated separately according to race. Also a separate special education system served those learners with disabilities or impairments (Lomofsky and Lazarus, 2001; Koay, Lim, Sim & Elkins, 2006). To curb this and put educational practice in South Africa in line with the international trend of accommodating learners who experience barriers to learning in general or mainstream classes, South Africa has enacted legislation and formulated policy which establishes an inclusive education system (Lindsay, 2003; Koay *et al.*, 2006).

Inclusion is broadly referred to as the process by which learners, who in the past might have been taught in a separate special education system because of the barriers to learning they experience, are now taught in regular schools that have taken the responsibility of changing and improving to offer the support necessary to facilitate access and participation. Inclusion is a global development in education, given impetus by the United Nations' stress on disability rights and children's rights

and in initiatives that have seen these rights being realised (Frederickson & Cline, 2002; Koay *et al.*, 2006).

- The South African government's initiative to ensure inclusive education is outlined in the 1996 Constitution and a number of policies, among them the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996 and the White Paper number 6 of 2001: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (Department of Education, 2001). White Paper 6 of 2001 provides the principles of inclusive education as follows (Department of Education, 2001:16): It recognizes that all children can learn and that youth need support. It admits, accepts and respects differences in learners, whether due to age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disability or HIV status.
- It allows education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet all learners' needs.
- It changes attitudes, behaviour, teaching methodologies, curricula and environment to meet the needs of all learners.
- It empowers learners by developing their individual strengths and enabling them to participate critically in the process of learning.
- It maximizes participation and minimizes barriers.

The most important way of addressing barriers arising from the curriculum, as pointed out, is to make sure the process of learning and teaching is flexible enough to involve different learning needs and styles (Department of Education, 2001). Therefore the curriculum has to be more flexible across all bands of education for it to be accessible to all learners regardless of their learning needs. A set of regulations and implementation guidelines exist which set out the monitoring and the respective roles of those involved in ensuring inclusion of all learners (Department of Education, 2001).

Education White Paper 6 stresses the social model of disability, which states that schools have to change to accommodate and allow the participation of all learners (Frederickson & Cline, 2002). The social model of disability makes it possible for us to see children in a context, to see what systems are causing barriers that are standing in the way of their development and learning, and to recognize support that

they might require to attain their full potential. The implication of the social model is that there is a need to change the ways in which support is provided, hence necessitating us to make resources available to transform ordinary schools to cater for more diverse learners.

1.2.3 *The learner with special education needs*

White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education (Department of Education, 2001) referred to learners with special education needs as those experiencing learning difficulties as a result of socio-economic deprivation as well as those with physical, mental or neurological impairments (OECD, 2008). This means any child experiencing barriers to learning who cannot perform averagely under normal circumstances. Consequently the child requires support and the elimination of barriers if he or she is to perform on average. According to Farrell (2003) and Frederickson and Cline (2002) a child has special educational needs if he/she has a learning difficulty which requires him/her to be provided with special education. Beveridge (1999) agrees with Education White Paper 6 of 2001 in that special education needs begin from a complex interaction of personal and environmental factors and may be seen as a mismatch between emotional, social and learning demands that are made of a learner and the resources that the learner has to meet these demands.

Thus, it means that the difficulties a learner experiences cannot be understood separately from the context in which they take place. Farrell (2003:27) further describes a learning difficulty as “when a learner has a notably bigger difficulty in learning than the majority of learners of his or her age”. In several cases the learner has a disability which hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally made available for learners of his or her age in schools.

It is not impossible for a child to have a learning difficulty but not have a special education need since the only learning difficulty that constitutes a special education need is one which calls for educational provision to be arranged for it (Farrell, 2003). Also, a learner might have a disability, but it might not stop him/her from making use

of educational facilities of a kind generally made available for learners of his/her age in schools. In their words, Frederickson and Cline (2002) note that a child is not said to have a learning difficulty when the language or form of language of the home is not the same as the language in which he or she is or will be taught: instead, this factor can be said to form a learning barrier.

1.2.4 *Barriers to learning*

Education White Paper 6 of 2001, like UNESCO (1994), identifies barriers to learning which are intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic barriers are described as those within the learner, for example, cognitive (e.g. problem solving, abstract thinking), intellectual differences (e.g. gifted, specific learning disabilities), neurological (e.g. perceptual problems), medical (e.g. epilepsy, HIV/AIDS, asthma) and sensory (e.g. blindness and deafness). Extrinsic barriers are described as those within the system such as attitudes and stereotyping of differences, an inflexible curriculum, socio-economic deprivation, inappropriate languages and communication, inadequate policies and legislation, cultural differences (beliefs, values and habits), inadequately and inappropriately trained support services, and lack of capacity among school staff (Department of Education, 2001:18).

According to Lomofsky and Lazarus (2001) barriers to learning and development can arise in all areas of the system – the curriculum, the centre of learning, the educational system, and the broader social context. The report of the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Commission on Education Support Services (NCESS) (Department of Education, 1997) states that children may experience permanent or temporary barriers to learning and development. Increasing access to and being part of the transformation in education is not about trying to make 'others' fit into an existing system (Stigler & Hiebert, 2009; Florida, 2002). It is about transforming the education system so as to allow a greater and more diverse learner population within the system. The report of the NCSNET and NCESS (1997) and Education White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001:21) identify the following barriers to learning and development:

- **Language and communication:** Some learners can be left out of the teaching and learning through the medium of teaching and learning during the teaching and learning process. This is mostly the case when the language of teaching and learning is not the learner's first language. Thus, the learner is placed at a disadvantage. At times this leads to difficulties in the learning of the second language. Some educators are not conversant in the second language thereby making the situation worse, particularly for a learner with special education needs. In an English lesson some teachers explain in the learner's first language (a language other than English). This prevents the learner learning the recommended language, in this case English.
- **Attitudes:** Attitudes that get in the way of the learning process of a child will result in learning barriers. These might be attitudes on the foundation of race, class, gender, culture, disability, religion, ability, sexual preference and other characteristics. Discriminatory attitudes may well prevent learners from accessing available education.
- **Inflexible curriculum:** An inflexible curriculum refers to a curriculum which cannot be changed. Teachers cannot modify this curriculum to suit the needs of their learners. When learners like those with special education needs cannot access the curriculum, there is no learning taking place for these learners. For example, teachers might be using teaching styles which might not cater for all learners. Assessment strategies are also part of the curriculum. Often they are intended to test particular kinds of knowledge rather than the understanding of the learners. The gravity of an inflexible curriculum can be seen in the number of learners repeating grades. Some learners end up dropping out as they see themselves as failures.
- **Socio-economic barriers:** Socio-economic barriers arise from factors relating to poverty and under-development. These factors might put learners who lack access to basic services at risk. According to the NCSET report, there must be an identification bond between socio-economic conditions and education provision in any society. This relationship impacts on the process of any learning. In essence, successful learning is influenced by the availability of educational resources, and to avoid such barriers South Africa should make sure its learners are educationally well catered for. Educational policies must also be checked as these also affect society and learning.

- ***Inappropriate and inadequate provision of support services:*** Access to professional assistance is vital. Barriers to learning can result when learners do not get professional assistance or when the assistance given is not suitable. They may get professional help and support services which may be inadequate. An example is the 2012 text book issue in the Limpopo province and the shortage of teachers in the Eastern Cape, Letseka, (2013). Such issues prevent the learners from accessing the curriculum, thereby resulting in barriers to learning.
- ***Lack of enabling and protective legislation and policy:*** Policy and legislation have an impact on the teaching and learning process. Failure on the part of legislation and policy to protect learners from issues such as socio-economic conditions, societal attitudes, an inflexible curriculum, language and communication, unsuitable and insufficient provision of support services, lack of parental recognition and involvement and disability, to mention a few, can result in barriers to learning. Once this occurs, policy or legislation has directly added to the existence of or perpetuates barriers to learning. For instance, though there is a policy on inclusion, human and material provisions are unsuitable and insufficient.
- ***Disability:*** Disability turns into a barrier to learning when the environment does not allow a learner with a particular kind of handicap to access education. In other words, barriers to learning arise when the learner's learning needs are not met by the environment (classroom, school). For instance, a learner who is hard of hearing will have problems hearing the teacher while sitting at the back of the class. In the end this learner is unable to participate completely in class and in the process of learning.
- ***Lack of parental recognition and involvement:*** The importance of parents in teaching and learning cannot be overemphasised. Parents are primary care givers and as such are a central resource in the education system and the learning process of their child in particular. They should therefore be considered in the education of their child. If the importance of parents is not recognised and they are not included in the education of their child, successful learning of learners may not be achieved. Parental involvement in school bodies such as the school governing body is one of the several ways of recognising and involving them.

- ***Lack of human resource development strategies:*** Trained educators, service providers and other human resources are an asset to the education system. When government is unable to keep its work-force together, there is disorderliness in the system which may create barriers to learning. Teacher strikes such as those experienced in the Eastern Cape, for example, have had a negative impact on access to education for all learners. Conditions are even worse for a learner with special education needs. Teachers who were trained twenty years ago or more were not trained in aspects such as inclusive education. The duty of the government is to ensure all teachers receive training in this noble cause.

There is a shift away from focusing on the characteristics of the learners and onto how schools can help learners overcome barriers to learning in line with the recent trends in inclusive education. The reports of NCSNET and NCESS (Department of Education, 1997) emphasise that the education system cannot afford a breakdown in learning and exclusion, and it must create equal opportunities in learning for all. Lomofsky and Lazarus (2001) note that the report argues further that once the education system is not successful in providing for and accommodating diversity, learning breakdown occurs and learners are excluded. The report also emphasizes the need to centre attention on the nature of barriers experienced by learners.

1.2.5 Overcoming barriers to learning

It has been acknowledged by the Education White Paper 6 (2001:19) that one of the most important barriers to learning for learners in special and ordinary schools is the curriculum. Mechanisms must be structured into the system in order to break down existing barriers if the education system is to promote effective learning and prevent learning breakdown (DoE, 2001:20). The mechanisms must boost the ability of the system to defeat barriers which may occur, prevent barriers from occurring, and enhance the development of a successful learning and teaching environment.

Identification and understanding the nature of the barriers which prevent learners from accessing education is important in developing the capability of the education system with regards to overcoming barriers to learning. This needs government's commitment through learning from others and from what has happened in the past in the education system (Shepherd, 2014).

Education White Paper 6 (2001) recommends that an identification and analysis of barriers to learning in the country be created. There is also a need to look at mechanisms in existence in the system in case there is a need to develop them. According to Education White Paper 6, this will allow diversity to be accepted and made available in the education system.

These mechanisms will comprise: initiatives intended to provide for learners who have not been included in the system by both the state and non-governmental organisations; activities that advocate against discrimination and challenge attitudes; innovative practices for recognising and accommodating diversity; processes towards the involvement of learners, parents, teachers and community members in the governance of centres of learning; curriculum restructuring; organisation and development of teaching and learning environments; and training programmes which get teachers ready to handle diverse needs (Department of Education 2001).

1.2.6 *The structures of implementation*

The structures of implementation of inclusive education have been identified as the National Department of Education in collaboration with provincial education departments, district based support teams (DBST), special schools/resource centres, full-service schools and ordinary schools (Department of Education, 2001).

Special schools target learners who require high levels of intensive educational and other support, either on a full or a part-time basis. Class teachers from special schools service an expanding learner base by providing expertise and support to district teams, neighbourhood ordinary and full service schools. Functions of special schools include provision of specialised professional support in curriculum,

assessment and instruction and developing learners' strength and competencies rather than shortcomings (Department of Education, 2001a; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2005; Engelbretch & Green, 2007).

In full service schools, the target populations are learners with moderate levels of support. The class teacher receives physical and human resources in the form of district based support teams and institutional level support teams. Both teams assist teachers' development in accommodating diversity in the classroom. The full service schools are expressly prepared to support a full range of barriers to learning in an inclusive education setting. They cater for the full range of learners' needs but are biased towards certain disabilities (Department of Education, 2001; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2005; Engelbretch & Green, 2007).

Ordinary schools are to ensure that all learners are included. They are also supposed to make sure there is early identification of and intervention for learners who experience barriers to learning. Apart from the class teacher, ordinary schools have institutional level support teams (ILST), who coordinate educator and learner services. Both institutional level support teams and district based support teams (DBST) also help teachers in building greater flexibility in teaching methods and assessment of learning (Department of Education, 2001a; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2005; Engelbretch & Green, 2007).

Each school is supposed to have an ILST to implement inclusion at the school level. The ILST co-ordinates learners, teachers, curriculum and institutional developments at the school with regard to: developing strategies to meet these needs, especially managing and supporting curriculum differentiation; accessing suitable resources; building staff capacity for inclusion; and ensuring the sustainability of inclusion at the school. In order to address the needs of each learner, the school is supposed to device an individual support plan (ISP) (Department of Education, 2001). This plan is intended for learners who need extra support or expanded opportunities. The plan to support a learner is developed jointly with the parents, the teachers and the ILST. This is temporal as it has to be reviewed on a regular basis regarding its applicability and effectiveness. It is supposed to be implemented to improve learners' participation in all classroom activities, taking into consideration all issues that may

hamper his/her progress at an academic, social or emotional level (Department of Education, 2001).

At the district level there is a district based support team to coordinate the process and provide support to individual schools, such as to facilitate the admission of all learners to school; to identify appropriate resources; to monitor and offer support required as regards curriculum and institutional development; to create and develop structures like the ILST; and to play a central coordination role (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2005; Engelbretch & Green, 2007).

Some teachers were trained in a new inclusive education strategy called Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS), a document introduced in 2008 (DoE, 2008). After the workshop the teachers were expected to implement these strategies in their respective schools. All teachers, whether trained or not, are to screen the learners in their classes and are expected to be able to demonstrate the level of learners' understanding in the classroom.

The document further stipulates that teachers should be able to identify the source/s of barriers to learning. After the teacher has identified the learner/s with learning barriers in class, depending on the nature and the severity of the learning barrier, teachers are expected to assess and support the learner/s. The teacher should work out ways of helping the particular learner through his/her ISP. If the efforts made in accordance with the ISP are still unsuccessful, the teachers can refer the matter to the ILST within the school, coordinated by the teacher who attended the workshop. The ILST will review the ISP rendered by the teacher/s and if they deem the support adequate, the ILST will inform the DBST about the particular learner and complete the SIAS with biographical information and a scholastic report of the learner (DoE, 2008).

It has been made clear by the Department of Education that all schools have to ensure that all learners access education (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2005; Engelbretch & Green, 2007). In other words, all schools have to implement inclusive education and districts must ensure that they provide adequate support (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2005; Engelbrecht in Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker,

Engelbrecht, 2003:7). According to the Department of Education (2011:3), “Inclusivity should be the main focus of the organisation, planning and teaching at each school”.

However, there have been concerns by media and different stakeholders that despite implementation of inclusive education many vulnerable learners, among them learners with special education needs, remain marginalised (*City Press* 13 March 2011; *Daily Dispatch* 30 September, 2009; Sisonke Consortium, 2006). Informally, the public and the media have attributed the challenges encountered by children with special education needs in accessing basic education to teachers using the same criteria for assessment for all learners in the class, in spite of their special needs (*City Press* 13 March 2011; *Daily Dispatch* 30 September, 2009). Stakeholders have observed that, as a result of the above prevailing conditions, learners with special education needs are reported to have a high dropout rate, are often not in school at all and have poor academic performance (SOS Children Newsletter, 2012; *City Press* 13 March 2011; *Daily Dispatch* 12 June 2009; Singh, 2004; Engelbrecht and Green, 2007).

Consequently, *City Press* of 13 March 2011 reported that among many learners who did not perform well in international assessment tests were those with special education needs. This paper presented examples of poor performance by South African learners in assessments done by the Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ) II in 2003 where South Africa was located at the bottom in reading and mathematics (*Mail and Guardian* February 23 - March 3, 2011; Singh, 2004).

It also gave another example from the International Mathematics and Science Study of 1995 and 1999 where, out of the 46 countries that participated, South Africa obtained the lowest in mathematics with an average of 264 compared to an international mean of 467 (Human Sciences Research Council, 2005; Reddy, 2006). The results of the standardised national assessments for Languages and Mathematics and Literacy and Numeracy for intermediate and foundation phases were released to the public in June 2011. The assessment of more than six million learners showed that in Grade 3 the national average performance on Literacy is 35%, while the national average in Numeracy stood at 28%. In Grade 6, it was

revealed that the national average in Languages was 28% and with a national average of 30% for Mathematics (ETV News 28 June, 2011). It attributed such poor performance, particularly among learners with special education needs, to problems associated with teachers' attitudes and the way the curriculum is delivered (ETV News 28 June, 2011; *Daily Dispatch* 29 June 2011).

Consequently teachers have raised a number of concerns informally regarding inclusion of vulnerable learners, particularly those with special education needs (SOS Children Newsletter, 2012; *City Press* 13 March 2011). These concerns include teachers having difficulties to cope with learners of different diversity in their classrooms, inadequate training, difficulties adapting to an individualized curriculum, lack of funding, inadequate teacher support, lack of knowledge, lack of time, and workloads (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2005; Singh, 2004; Engelbrecht & Green, 2007). Given the concerns listed above by media and those raised informally by stakeholders, it is really not clear what is taking place at the school level in terms of the implementation of inclusive education.

Although the government has put in place policies that attempt to ensure learners with special education needs (SEN) access education, it is not clear how inclusion policy is implemented by teachers to ensure all learners access education. It has been observed by some stakeholders that despite difficult working conditions there are pockets of very good practice in inclusive education in some schools but it is not clear how these teachers implement it (SOS Children Newsletter, 2012; *City Press* 02 September 2012). Given these concerns and observations this study sought to find out how teachers are implementing inclusive education for learners with special education needs (SEN) in the Fort Beaufort District.

In the Fort Beaufort District, 1270 of the 2355 grade 9 learners did not perform well at the end of year 2010. According to records at the Department of Education provincial office, this figure constituted a 16.6% decrease from 2009 (which was 62.7%). In 2011, there was a 48.5% pass rate among grade 9 learners in all learning areas, and among many learners who did not perform well were those with special education needs (Eastern Cape Department of Education, 2012). The district has qualified remedial and general education teachers whom it is assumed can handle all types of learners. According to the Fort Beaufort District all schools are said to be

implementing inclusive education as all teachers were trained. It was also observed by some DBST members that the district has pockets of very good practices of inclusive education in some schools in both rural and urban areas (Adewumi, personal communication, September 12, 2012).

Many studies have been done on the implementation of inclusive education but hardly any study has systematically investigated the pockets of very good practice of inclusive education, especially in poor rural schools with difficult working conditions and inadequate resources (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2005; Singh, 2004; Engelbretch & Green, 2007). Hence this study attempted to fill the gap by examining how inclusive education is implemented, as well as focusing on good practices with the aim of devising different models of implementing inclusive education.

1.3 Statement of the research problem

Inclusive education is outlined in international and regional instruments and national policies (UNESCO, 2009). It entails addressing and responding to the variety of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities and reducing exclusion within and from education (Peters, 2004; UNESCO, 2009). In South Africa inclusive education is contained in the Constitution of South Africa, the South African Schools Act of 1996 and White paper 6 of 2001. Structures for implementation are in place at the national, provincial and school levels. Consequently, a set of regulations and implementation guidelines exist which set out the monitoring and the respective roles of those involved in ensuring inclusion of all learners (Department of Education, 2001). The implementation process has started and all schools are supposed to ensure that all learners access education (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2005; Engelbretch & Green, 2007).

However, media has raised concerns that many learners with special education needs are performing poorly. This is reflected in classrooms as well as in international assessment tests (*Daily Dispatch* 12 June 2009; *City Press* 13 March 2011; Human Sciences Research Council, 2005; Reddy, 2006). As a result many are excluded as they do not perform well and eventually drop out of school (*Daily Dispatch* 12 June 2009; *City Press* 13 March 2011). Exclusion has been attributed informally by some stakeholders to school environmental issues including teacher attitude and the way the curriculum is delivered (*City Press* 13 March 2011).

Teachers have also raised concerns informally regarding some issues which might affect inclusion. These include inadequate teacher support, lack of knowledge, lack of time, workloads, difficulties in coping with learners of different diversity in their classrooms, inadequate training, and difficulties adapting to an individualized curriculum (*City Press* 13 March 2011).

At the same time some stakeholders have observed that there are pockets of very good practice of inclusive education in some schools in both urban and poor rural areas but it is not clear how teachers are implementing inclusive education for learners with special education needs (SOS Children Newsletter, 2012; *City Press* 02 September 2012). Given these concerns and observations this study sought to discover how teachers are implementing inclusive education for learners with special education needs in schools in the Fort Beaufort District. It also looked at pockets of good practice in some schools in urban and rural areas.

1.4 Research questions

In this study, the researcher attempts to answer the following questions.

1.4.1 Main research question

How are teachers implementing inclusive education for learners with special education needs?

1.4.2 Sub-research questions

- What skills do teachers possess to enable them to implement inclusion of learners with special education needs?
- What strategies are actually adopted by teachers to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs?
- How is the content (including assessment) and pedagogy adapted to ensure that it meets the needs of all learners?
- What support (including training) and monitoring is provided to teachers by schools and the Department of Education to enable them to cater for all learners?

1.5 The purpose of the study

This study examined how teachers are implementing inclusive education for learners with special education needs.

1.6 The objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to examine how teachers are implementing inclusive education for learners with special education needs. Hence, this study sought to:

- Identify the skills teachers possess which enable them to implement inclusion of learners with special education needs.
- Examine the strategies that are adopted by teachers to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs.
- Examine how the content (including assessment) and pedagogy are adapted to ensure that it meets the needs of all learners.
- Verify what support (including training) and monitoring is provided to teachers by schools and the District Department of Education to enable them cater for all learners.

- Suggest models for implementing inclusive education.

1.7 Assumptions of the study

This research is based on the assumption that learners with special education needs in particular are excluded from accessing quality education in South Africa. In view of this, this researcher is making the assumptions that:

- Teachers are not adapting the curriculum to include learners with special education needs; this means that learners with special education needs are excluded from curriculum delivery.
- Support (including training) and monitoring provided to teachers by schools and the Department of Education are not adequate, which in turn affects teachers' capacity cater for all learners.
- Teachers are not adopting good strategies to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs.
- Teachers do not possess the necessary skills which make it impossible for them to implement inclusive education for learners with special education needs.

1.8 Significance of the study

The issue of children's right to education has in recent years become a major global concern. Literature is attributing this concern to the wider policy agenda of removing barriers to qualitative basic education in realising children's rights to education as well as to the view of education as a means of achieving children's rights (UNICEF, 2000).

The South African government is a signatory to many international and national instruments. The African National Congress's reconstruction and development programme (UNISA, 2006: 13-19), the 1955 Freedom Charter (ANC, 2007:3) and Section 9(1)(a) of the South African Constitution (RSA, 1996:14) express the

universality of the right to basic education. Unfortunately, some researchers have shown that being a signatory to these instruments is not enough to bring about equal access to basic education (Tomasevski, 2004; Peters, 2004; UNESCO, 2007). Some studies have also shown that the introduction of inclusive education has not achieved its intended purpose (Department of Education, 2001; Wildeman & Nomdo, 2007).

Some studies have been done but hardly any have systematically investigated the good practices that exist within schools, especially those in poor rural areas. The studies done were not able to show how teachers are implementing and coping with the curriculum delivery regarding the inclusion of learners with special education needs. Hence this study will attempt to fill these gaps and explore what is really happening in the classrooms in terms of the inclusion of this group of vulnerable children in the delivery of the school curriculum, focusing on the children with special education needs.

This study could contribute to a debate in which teachers share the difficulties they experience with inclusion of learners with special education needs in the delivery of the school curriculum. The results might assist the Department of Education to become more aware of the implementation challenges. The findings of this study might also assist the department responsible for training teachers in the quality of support services required to enable the teachers to implement the curriculum correctly. Above all, the study will seek to use the findings as a pointer to the conditions needed for the successful delivery of the school curriculum with the inclusion of learners with special education needs.

Given the fact that there are pockets of good practice, this study could help in finding appropriate models for implementing inclusive education for teachers in schools, both in urban and poor rural areas, which are the worst hit in terms of resource allocation and performance of learners. Consequently, the study will generate a database which will simply expand the literature on effective implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs for primary school teachers nationally, regionally and globally.

Hopefully, the study could ultimately benefit learners with special education needs and parents in that successful implementation of inclusive education might help this group of learners and their parents to become more aware of their rights to quality education. This study should also benefit teachers, principals, Department of Education officials and other national and provincial policy personnel, and generally the community of scholarship interested in the national policy, and particularly those interested in inclusive education.

1.9 Delimitation of the study

The study focuses on the implementation of inclusive education for children with special education needs in ten primary schools in the Fort Beaufort District in the Eastern Cape Province. Participants were teachers, principals and education officials. All these categories of people are involved in one way or another in the implementation of inclusive education in the Fort Beaufort Education District.

1.10 Definition of key terms

Terms may vary in meaning depending on the context being used. In this study the following terms will be used as defined below:

1.10.1 Implementation

Implementation means actions by the public or individuals or groups aimed at the accomplishment of the objectives put forward in prior policy decisions (Dunn, 2012). Implementation in this study will refer to the way inclusive education policy is put into action.

1.10.2 Inclusive education

Inclusive education is said to be conceptualised as a shared value, including all learners in a united system of education, giving them power to become caring, skilled and contributing citizens in an inclusive changing and diverse society. Leyden and Miller (in Visser, 2002:10) describe inclusive education to be “the best and equal education for all learners in a school system. That is learners are seen as having diverse needs, but appreciated for their shared humanity. It can also be referred to as a system where learners are educated together and where personal diversity is recognised as enriching.”

1.10.3 Learner with special education needs

A child with special education needs is the one who has barriers to learning. These barriers may be difficulties that crop up within the education system as a whole, the learning place and/or within the learner him/herself which hinder both the system and the learner from having his/her needs met (DoE, 2001).

1.10.4 Chapter outline

There are seven chapters in this study. Chapter 1 gives background information of the study, while chapter 2 discusses the theoretical framework that informs this study. Chapter 3 focuses on reviewing the relevant literature and in chapter 4, the research design and methodology are presented. The results of the analysis of the data are presented in chapter 5, while chapter 6 focuses discussion on the data collected. Finally, chapter 7 summarizes the results, draws some conclusions and presents a set of recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS FOR IMPLEMENTING INCLUSION POLICY

2.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to review literature on theoretical frameworks which informed the study on the implementation of the inclusive education policy in the Fort Beaufort District in the Eastern Cape. The theoretical frameworks include: the Rights-Based Approach to Education by Lorenscheit (2002), Curriculum Implementation Theory of Rogan and Grayson (2003) and the Achievement-based Curriculum (ABC) Model by Kelly and Melograno (2004).

2.2 The rights-based approach to education

Everyone is eligible to the human rights set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the other agreements that stand as the International Bill of Rights. These human rights include the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, clothing, housing, medical care and social services; to freedom of thought, conscience, belief, religion and the right to hold and express opinions without interference; the right to free primary education; the right to freedom of movement, residency and nationality, liberty and security of person; the right to life; the right to equality before the law; and the right to work and equal pay (Lorenscheit, 2002).

According to Lorenscheit (2002) states that have consented to the basic human rights have a legal and moral duty to make certain of and achieve these rights for everyone. These states are the legal 'duty-bearers' of these rights and should

discharge their responsibilities to the people of their countries. Similarly everyone is a 'rights holder' who is eligible to the freedom and security written in the human rights agreements. Apart from a state, there are other duty-bearers (for there are also 'moral duty bearers') which include community leaders, non-governmental organisations, institutions, private companies and teachers with responsibilities towards making sure the rights of individuals or whole communities are guaranteed.

The rights-based approach to education is a conceptual, analytical and methodological framework used to identify, plan, implement and monitor development activities according to international human rights standards. The rights-based approach attempts to combine the principles, norms, and standards of the international human rights system into the policies, plans, strategies, and the processes of development programming (Lorenscheit, 2002).

This approach is complete in its thought of the full range of indivisible, interdependent and interrelated rights: civil, cultural, economic, political and social. The norms and standards are in the internationally agreed treaties and conventions. The rights-based approach is equally important as it offers guiding principles to make certain of an acceptable development programming process. The key principles spelt out may be shortened in the simple acronym PANEL that represents: participation, accountability, non-discrimination, empowerment and linkages to human rights standards (Lorenscheit, 2002).

This approach entails a high level of involvement from the aimed recipients, among which are civil society, local communities, indigenous peoples, minorities, women and others. There should be meaningful, free, and active involvement; ordinary official sessions with recipients are not enough. The approach is devoted to issues of gaining access, which includes access to information, development processes, redress or complaint mechanisms and institutions (Glendon, 2001). This equally means positioning development projects near to partners and beneficiaries. These approaches essentially select process-based development methodologies rather than superficially made or imported models (Glendon, 2001).

A different principle of a rights-based approach puts emphasis on increasing the degree of accountability and transparency by recognising the 'rights-holders' and the corresponding 'duty-bearers'. This improves the capacities of 'duty-bearers' to meet

their obligations. In this situation, it considers both the positive obligations of duty-bearers (to provide, protect and promote) and their negative responsibilities (to abstain from violations). It takes into consideration the obligations of the full range of appropriate actors, for instance individuals, governments, local organisations and authorities, private companies, aid donors and international institutions.

While the main duty is with each state and government, the international community is also expected to give good cooperation in response to scarcity of resources and skills in developing countries. The approach also provides for the development of administrative procedures/practices, adequate laws, and mechanisms of redress and accountability that can bring entitlements and respond to denials or violations of rights. The human rights are significant to a rights-based approach; this means that specific emphasis is laid on discrimination, equality and the condition of vulnerable groups (Lohrenscheit, 2002). These groups include children with special education needs, girls and women, ethnic minorities, children with disabilities, indigenous peoples and others. A significant area of the approach is the inclusion of safeguards in developing instruments to guard against threats to the rights and well-being of marginalised groups.

Preference is given to strategies that empower more than ordinary service-delivery oriented responses in a rights-based approach. This means interventions should improve the abilities of the 'rights-holders' to claim and make use of their rights. 'Empowerment' means the act by which the abilities of people to demand and exercise their rights are improved. The focus is on beneficiaries as the rights owners and the directors of development. The rights-based approach stresses the human person as the centre of the development process. People are given the power and capabilities necessary to change their own lives, develop their communities and impact their destinies (Glendon, 2001).

According to Lorenscheit (2002), one important feature of a rights-based approach is that it is connected to human rights standards. Human rights standards are recognized worldwide approved obligations and minimum guarantees. The rights-based approach helps to pinpoint problem areas and identify what capacities and functions are necessary to deal with them. Additionally, the approach helps to outline a comprehensive but targeted scope for development, including result-based outcomes and outputs. These standards have to be respected for all. The principle of

non-retrogression means that duty-bearers should at least protect the human rights gains already made when factors beyond their control hinder these gains from growing further.

This author, Lorenscheit (2002), states that a rights-based approach to education stresses these important principles and supports the fulfilment of universally accepted human rights criteria that are related to the education sector. The right to education is recognised as being a fundamental human right, and education is seen to be both a goal in itself and a means for attaining all other human rights. It is measured to be an enabling right.

Lorenscheit (2002) also writes that a rights-based approach to education embraces the importance of quality as well as an inclusive education policy. Quality education leads to the realisation of every learner's full potential and prepares the learners for the challenges faced in life; it is thus learner-centred. This does not depend only on teaching and learning in the classroom, but includes the well-being of the learners, the significance of the quality of the teaching/learning processes and the suitability of the learning environments, the contents and outcomes; in essence, the same principles that underlie inclusive education. The Dakar Framework for Action contains both a goal and a strategy related to quality education (Lorenscheit, 2002). The question this study is concerned with is whether the implementation of inclusion policy in the Fort Beaufrot District falls in line with the principles outlined above.

This author notes that Education for All Goal number 6 spells out that activities should develop every area of the quality of education, in order for everyone to attain recognized and measurable learning outcomes. The matching plan to achieve this goal emphasizes that safe, healthy, protective, inclusive and sufficiently resourced educational environments have to be formed with visibly defined levels of accomplishment for all.

Tomasevski (2004) points out that the right to education includes four main actors: the government and its institutions as a provider of public education and as a duty bearer; the learner as the holder of the right to education whose responsibility is to obey with necessary conditions; and the parents as administrator of this learner's education, with the responsibility of keeping the learner's best interests as the guiding principle; and the teachers as rights-holders and duty-bearers. In this

context, the individual has the power with rights to question the state, and as 'rights-holders' children, parents and teachers are permitted to demand that the state meets its duties to respect, protect and fulfil the rights related to education. By endorsing the related international treaties and conventions, the state has a legal duty to protect, provide and promote the right to education of learners with special education needs.

These responsibilities derived from the right to education are grouped so as to make education available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable (Tomasevski, 2004). In this study, the researcher investigated the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN in the Fort Beaufort District with the above ideas in mind.

2.2.1 Availability

In order for education to be uniformly available for everybody, operational structures and institutions must be available. The arrangement and form of these institutions are dependent on the context but some basic necessities should be provided, for instance buildings, where learning can be held, with sanitary facilities and hygienic drinking water. Also there should be high quality training and support before teachers begin to teach in schools or other learning institutions. The teaching profession has to be held in high esteem and wages should be set accordingly (Tomasevski, 2004). This study concerned itself with assessing whether such structures were available to support the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN in the Fort Beaufort District.

2.2.2 Accessibility

Access to education entails several different aspects. Firstly, access to education has to be without discrimination. The right to education lays emphasis particularly on learners with special education needs who often require an opportunity to gain what they were not provided with by their families or communities in preparing for formal education (Lorenscheit, 2002). Other learners might need special attention in education as they have special education needs which must be taken into consideration. Learners with special education needs also have the right to be part of mainstream schools, along with the other learners. There must also be assurance of access economically. At the very least, basic education where learners obtain elementary skills in reading, writing and arithmetic must be free of fees (Lorenscheit, 2002).

Learning how to read and write is fundamental for effective participation in society. Unfortunately, while many first world countries provide free basic education, poorer developing nations still charge school fees and expect parents to provide uniforms. Having said that, in wealthier countries, there may also be hidden costs in education, such as the purchase of books, or payment for co-curricular activities or class trips, which many parents cannot afford (Tomasevski, 2004). In this study, the issue of access to equal education for those with special education needs in the Fort Beaufort District was also explored.

2.2.3 Adaptability

There should be adaptation in education to the needs of the learners with special education needs (Tomasevski, 2004). Education should be flexible and the curriculum adaptable as there are constant changes in the challenges and needs of societies. Diversity of learners and their needs should be the concern of all educational programmes and campaigns, and factors such as religious backgrounds,

the home language of the learners as well as the *lingua franca* of each country should be considered (Tomasevski, 2004). The researcher examined this more to see whether curriculum is being adapted to include learners with SEN as stated above in the Fort Beaufort District.

2.2.4 Acceptability

According to Tomasevski (2004), the acceptability of education entails significant standards regarding the quality of education, which should be both appropriate and of a good quality. Definite norms, intentions and objectives of education should be in accordance with the foundations of the right to education as cited above: “Education shall be aimed at the full development of the human personality and the promotion of respect for human rights and freedoms towards the aims and goals of the United Nations for understanding, friendship and tolerance between all nations” (Article 26, UDHR). This study investigated further to confirm whether implementation of the inclusive policy for learners with special education needs in the Fort Beaufort District is in line with what is discussed in this section.

This rights-based framework explained above is predominantly significant for promoting the inclusion of learners with special education needs. It states that education should be available, accessible, adaptable and of good quality to include all learners. The approach is related to this study as its own primary meaning includes strong features such as child-centred teaching which involves content (including assessment), and pedagogy adapted make sure that it meets the needs of all learners. It considers learning methods adopted by teachers to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs, learning environments and gender sensitivity. It also includes non-discriminatory curricula, that is curriculum differentiation which is a principal plan for acting in response to the needs of learners with diverse learning needs and styles. It considers learners’ backgrounds, ability levels and interests. Curriculum differentiation can be done at the stage of teaching methodologies, content, assessment and the learning environment.

The rights-based approach considers developing appropriate curriculum adaptations which will suit learners, instead of the learners fitting the curriculum (Tomasevski, 2004). The approach emphasizes how teachers can accommodate diversity and address special education needs. The framework also enhances the participation of all stakeholders such as parents, teachers and departments of education, taking into account the support (including training) and monitoring provided for teachers to enable them cater for all learners.

In some ways this framework is a double-edged sword, it works to decrease discriminatory practices and inequalities in education, however it also has the capacity to increase such practices if no precautions are put in place (Tomasevski, 2004). Moving the concentration from seeing education in terms of service delivery to seeing it in terms of human rights will have an impact on developing the needed precautions. The next section reviewed the Rogan and Grayson's curriculum implementation theory.

2.3 Rogan and Grayson's curriculum implementation theory

The curriculum implementation theory of Rogan and Grayson (2003) is centred on three key constructs which are: profile of implementation, capacity to support innovation, and support from outside agencies. The construct, 'profile of implementation', expresses and analyses the level at which the aims of the new curriculum are implemented. This profile understands that there may be several ways of implementing a curriculum. There is an assumption, however, that some wide commonalities of what constitutes excellence will surface. Also, this profile identifies that implementation may take place at various stages. Hence, the sequence the curriculum implementation follows is not easy to predict. In this study, curriculum delivery issues such as teaching methods, teaching and learning materials and assessment strategies used by teachers in the Fort Beaufort District to accommodate all learners were explored to see whether they were in line with the curriculum implementation theory of Rogan and Grayson (2003).

The construct 'capacity to support innovation' deals with factors that may enhance or obstruct the implementation of new ideas and practices in the curriculum. This construct identifies that schools vary with regard to their ability to put new ideas into practice. Likely indicators are divided into four groups which include teacher factors, student factors, physical resources, and school ethos and management. Physical resources are essential since poor conditions and inadequate resources can hinder the achievement of even the best teachers and students (Uline & Tschannen-Moran, 2008).

Though separate concepts, school ethos and management are often intertwined in the context of developing countries, thus in this study they will be considered together. Teachers' performance is important in putting new programmes into practice, and factors such as their subject matter knowledge background, commitment to teaching, training and approaches towards the anticipated curriculum implementation influence their ability and readiness to put change into practice.

Similarly, the experience of learners and the kinds of weaknesses and strengths they have are vital. A number of factors aid students' approach to learning and reactions to change. Some of these are their nutrition and health, parental commitment to education, home environments, and their skill level in the language of instruction. The influence of these four issues on the capacity of schools to support curriculum implementation is likely to change over time.

The types of activities carried out by outside organisations, such as provincial and district education offices, are defined by the construct "support from outside agencies". These outside organisations influence practices, either by sanction or support, and it is the responsibility of the Education District Officials (EDOs) to see that standards are upheld. The EDOs serve as quality assurance officers to supply schools with expertise and expert advanced courses. Outside agencies in several developing countries may also include international development agencies like World Vision and local or international NGOs, which frequently make materials available to schools, such as teaching kits or text-books for teachers and learners. The researcher investigated this further to see whether implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs in the Fort Beaufort District is in line with Rogan and Grayson (2003) curriculum implementation theory.

Rogan and Grayson (2003) share two forms of support from outside agency: material support and non-material support. The material support involves material resources such as learners' text-books, physical facilities, other equipment used in the learning process and specialist rooms. Non-material support is typically offered in the form of expert development. This may include in-service training where teachers' expertise could be upgraded. This is likely one of the most noticeable ways in which outside agencies endeavour to bring change in schools (Karsten, Voncken & Voorthuis, 2000).

Non-material support can also be considered as a sub-construct of school capacity. It is important that outside agencies monitor the process of implementation if their goal is change within the education system. This is largely the responsibility of the regional and district officers. These officials should inspect schools at least once in two years in order to provide feedback to teachers on their performance. It is their duty to see that inclusion of learners with special education needs is implemented according to policy documents. Within the Fort Beaufort District context, this study was concerned with measuring whether the support provided by officials in the area of special education needs was comparable with Rogan and Grayson's theory of material and non-material support.

Rogan and Grayson's (2003) theory of implementation was selected for its relevance to this study, since it takes into consideration the rich diversity among the learner population. There are learners from different ethnic, racial, socio-economic, language, cultural, religious, gender and sexual orientation groups. These different groups of learners come to school with different experiences. This theory of implementation also considers the strengths of many stakeholders in education such as teachers, learners and education district officials.

Other factors identified are support received from outside agencies, the capacity factor and the profile of implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs. This study sought to answer questions related to these key areas. Support received from outside agencies centres on professional development offered by education district officials for teachers, and the monitoring mechanism available for implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs. Capacity factors involve teaching strategies used by teachers as well as teacher capacity in terms of their specialisation, qualifications and experience.

The profile of implementation has to do with curriculum issues such as teaching methods, teaching and learning materials and assessment used by teachers to accommodate all learners. It refers to the relationship teachers have with learners, teachers' use of teaching and learning material, teaching methods and assessment that yields results. The teachers' ability and their teaching and learning materials will determine the quality of products. Section 2.4 below discusses the achievement-based curriculum (ABC) model.

2.4 The achievement-based curriculum (ABC) model

The achievement-based curriculum (ABC) model is a framework that centres on developing a programme that best meets the needs of learners with special education needs and achieves the intended curriculum outcomes. An ABC model presents a breakthrough that could guide the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN gradually through the process of translating curriculum theory into functional practice (Kelly and Melograno, 2004). See Fig. 1 below. Source: Kelly and Melograno (2004:67).

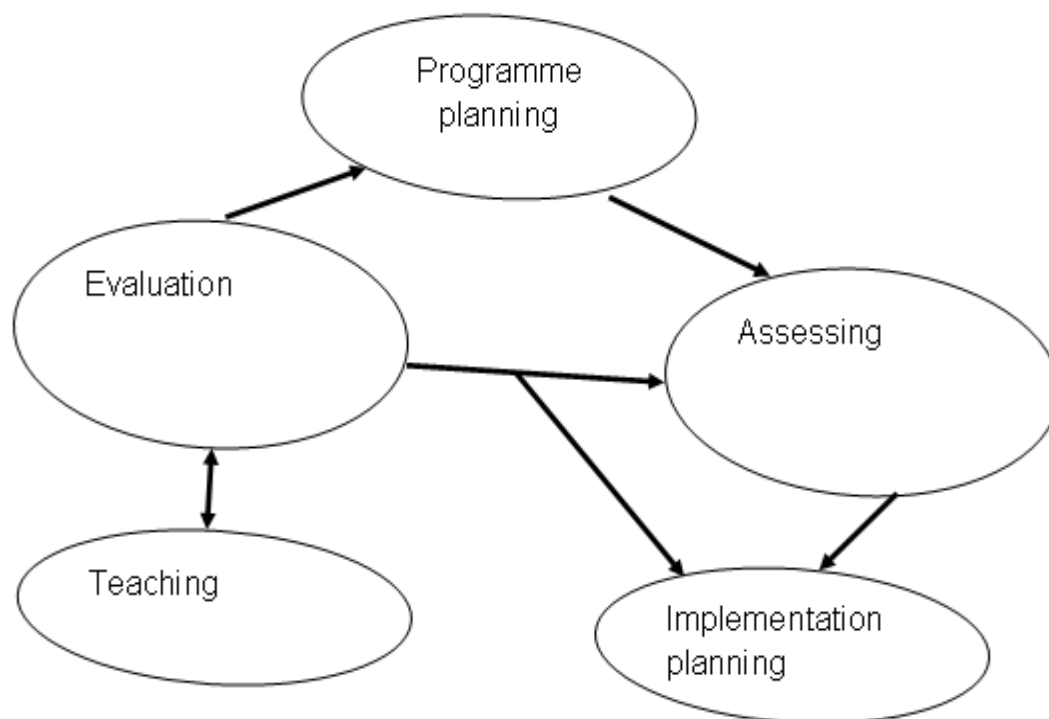


Figure 2-1: The Achievement-Based Curriculum Model

Source: Kelly and Melograno (2004:67)

Fig 2.1 shows the five components of the ABC model. The model was formed to integrate the programme planning, assessing, implementation planning, teaching and evaluation components of inclusion practice (Wessel & Kelly, 1986). The figure shows that a competent teacher has to follow a specified programme plan, continually assessing the learners with special education needs, and using assessment data to plan and implement instruction. The teacher uses the evaluation data (reassessment) to decide the learners' progress, the success of teaching and the suitability of the programme plan (Kelly & Melograno, 2004).

Additionally, the Achievement-Based Curriculum (ABC) model is not bound to one specific curriculum theory or philosophy; instead it offers educators a methodical decision-making process to assist them in coming up with a curriculum that addresses the unique and diverse needs of learners (Kelly & Melograno, 2004).

This model is comparable with the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs because it serves as a guide to help teachers to devise inclusion programmes and monitor the progress of learners with special education needs by means of assessment tasks. It also helps the teacher to determine the success of the inclusion programme and how to overcome the challenges of implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs. The researcher investigated the ABC model to see whether implementation of inclusion policy for learners with SEN in the Fort Beaufort District is in line with what is stated in the model.

If the ABC model is correctly implemented by all teachers, it would not be difficult to assess whether the objectives outlined in the policy document are met or not. With no such programmes in place, there is little to tether teachers to a programme which may result in negligence and a lack of attention to the proper implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs. This would result in poor inclusion of learners with special education needs. The ABC model could guide teachers gradually through the process of translating curriculum theory into efficient practice: assisting the teacher to pursue a stated programme plan, continually assessing the learners, and using assessment data to plan and implement instruction. The teacher can then use the evaluation data to reassess and to determine the learners'

progress, the effectiveness of teaching, and the appropriateness of the programme plan (Kelly & Melograno, 2004).

This model could also turn into a powerful force that could encourage teachers to implement quality inclusion programmes and assess their successes and challenges. It would inspire teachers to discover mechanisms to meet the challenges of implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs and strengthen their successes regarding good practices of inclusion of learners with special education needs. These are crucial issues that were pursued further in this study especially when looking at pockets of good practice.

2.5 Summary

This chapter discussed the theoretical framework which informed the study. The framework includes the rights-based approach to education, Rogan and Grayson curriculum implementation theory and the achievement-based curriculum model. According to the rights-based approach to education, education should be available, accessible, adaptable and acceptable for all children irrespective of their barriers to learning or social status. Education should be of good quality and include all learners. Education should not discriminate against any child but should include all children within mainstream schools.

Rogan and Grayson's theory of curriculum implementation centres on support given to schools by outside agencies, capacity factors and the profile of the implementation of inclusion policy. These are the major areas which the study seeks to explore.

The achievement-based curriculum (ABC) model has been designed to help teachers develop inclusion programmes and monitor the progress of learners with special education needs by means of assessment tasks. It also helps the teachers to determine the success of their inclusion programmes and, in the end, how to overcome the challenges of practically including learners with special education needs.

The study matched the different models in an attempt to critically examine the implementation of the inclusion policy in the Fort Beaufort District and subsequently develop a new model.

The following chapter discusses what others have written regarding the implementation of inclusion policy for learners with SEN. The study reviewed issues on professional development for teachers to implement inclusion of learners with special education needs. This includes the literature on teaching strategies, content (including assessment), and pedagogy adapted to ensure that it meets the needs of all learners. Also, the researcher reviews literature on support and monitoring mechanisms in primary schools in terms of implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews what others have written nationally and internationally on the implementation of inclusion policy for learners with special education needs (SEN) in primary schools. The literature review includes:

- Skills teachers possess to enable them to implement inclusion of learners with special education needs;
- Teaching strategies actually adopted by teachers to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs;
- Content (including assessment) and pedagogy adapted to ensure that it meets the needs of all learners;
- Support (including training) and monitoring provided to teachers by schools and the Department of Education to enable them to cater for all learners.

3.2 Teacher capacity and skills enabling implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN

Teachers play an indispensable role in quality education (Savolainen, 2009). Savolainen quotes McKinsey et al. (2007) who state that 'the quality of an education system depends on the quality of its teachers'. According to Reinke and Moseley (2002) and Bailleul, Bataille, Langlois, Lanoe and Mazereau (2008), no other factor - not even class composition, background or class size - contribute to learners' success as much as the quality of the teacher.

Therefore the necessity for 'high quality' teachers prepared to meet the needs of all learners is essential to offer all equal opportunities and to provide education for an inclusive society. Thomazet (2009) notes that teachers' beliefs; values and

knowledge are brought to bear on producing an operative learning environment for learners, meaning that the teacher has a major impact in education for inclusion and the development of an inclusive school. According to the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2009), teachers are the key players in getting learners ready to take their place in society and in the world of work. The Agency further states that teachers need the skills necessary to: recognise the particular needs of each individual learner, respond to them by deploying a variety of teaching strategies; and help in the development of young learners into fully independent, lifelong learners. Giving attention to initial teacher education would appear to offer the best means of developing a new generation of teachers who will ensure the successful implementation of inclusive policies and practices (Cardona, 2009).

Carroll, Forlin, and Jobling (2003) state that teachers should be confident in their capacity, skills and knowledge in inclusive education to meet the difficulties they will face in the present school climate. There are more complex demands on teachers and schools as society assumes schools should deal successfully with learners' backgrounds, different languages, gender issues, culture, as well as make use of technologies. Schools are also expected to deal successfully with disadvantaged learners and those with behavioural or learning challenges, and keep pace with rapidly developing fields of knowledge and approaches to learner assessment.

The European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2009) expects that teacher education for inclusion should prepare teachers to deal with learner diversity arising from religious background, ethnicity, culture, linguistic difference, gender difference, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status, and special educational needs or disabilities.

Concerning the education of the teacher to meet more diverse needs, the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2009) also requests member states to employ different policy procedures in order to adapt the profession to meet the new challenges of the knowledge-based economy. It states that, 'changes in education and in society put new and complex demands on the teaching profession'. There are now, more so than ever before, a diverse combination of learners from different backgrounds and with different levels of ability and disability in classrooms (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2009). These

changes require the ongoing development of teachers in order for them to acquire new knowledge and skills’.

The teacher's duty as far as learners with special educational needs (SEN) are concerned has changed intensely over the years. While in the past educators were simply expected to identify outstanding learners with the expectation of rating them on a scale for special education, they currently have to include learners with special education needs in mainstream classes, in line with the principles of normalisation, inclusion and mainstreaming (Florian, 2007).

The ability of the nation to continue to exist and flourish economically depends significantly on how well the country handles its human resources. Schools are considered as one of the prime agencies within which improvement can be brought about (Aspin, Chapman & Wilkson, 1994:40). Teachers are faced with many different duties in South African schools, duties for which the majority of them were never trained. Engelbrecht and Green (2007:57) state that most teachers do not have the relevant skills to handle the diverse needs of learners, a result of the theoretical foundation received in pre-service training, and many of these teachers are concerned about meeting the challenge of the teaching practice that comes with inclusive education. The Department of Education thus encounters many challenges in empowering teachers to implement inclusive education (Engelbrecht & Green 2007).

According to Hanushek and Rivkin (2006) teachers are essential to the philosophy that drives programme creation and implementation. Individual teacher traits and collegial factors determine implementation. In other words, teachers need to be skilled, committed and caring individuals of high quality who are capable of delivering content and making learning easy for learners. These are the main implications for teachers with the change in policy.

While they used to comply with a ‘normal’ curriculum, educating learners in a general class, placing high quality on the structured progress of classroom practice, they are now expected to make room for visible individual differences, for instance, in achievements or learning styles (Downing, 2005). Teachers are at present expected to give help to a certain degree in addition to simply identifying learners with special

education needs. Teachers are required to set individual goals and adapt learning content, teaching methods and teaching media to teach in accordance with the ability of learners in the class. In other words, they need to give individual attention to each learner. One criterion for the effective implementation of inclusive education is that teachers must be adequately equipped (Naicker, 2008).

Ekwesili (2006) notes that the quality of teachers determines learners' performance. Ibitoye (2003) finds that the quality of teachers was a more vital determinant variable for teacher performance as compared to class size. Nevertheless, upgrading of teachers and in-service training may frequently be faster and more efficient in improving teacher quality than enlarging initial teacher training capacity. In order for teachers to implement inclusive education successfully, they need to have small and manageable classes as big classes can lessen individual teacher-learner contact time (Ballard, 2003).

Teachers need a paradigm shift that will equip them for the change in mindset required to move from teaching in mainstream classes to teaching in inclusive classrooms before inclusion can be implemented (Hyam, 2004:34).

The ineffectiveness of teachers as the main curriculum implementers can be a barrier to effective learning. This has created a view, which Mannion (2004) admits, that there is lack of public confidence in teachers' professional knowledge which may lead to a crisis of confidence in teachers' professional execution of duties. To prevent this, the norms and standards of educators should emphasize the value of teacher competence.

Corbett (2001:56) notes that it is generally accepted that change is viewed as demanding and even threatening. Teachers are presently being expected to make key changes in their understanding of teaching and learning within an inclusive classroom. It has been shown by research that teachers feel that they are compelled to make most of the changes, that they have 'no input' in the changes and that changes make no significant impact on their professional development (Hay, Smit & Paulsen, 2001:215). The South African government's initiatives since 1994 on the development, for instance, of outcomes based education and the revised new

curriculum 2005, have added to the disempowerment of teachers (Hay, Smit & Paulsen, 2001:215).

Ainscow (1997:5) and Booth and Dyssegaard (2008) point out that change is not an event but a process. Teachers, therefore, have to be equipped to meet the challenges of this process. They must be ready to operate as change agents and understand that they possess the strength to recognize and respond to the challenges they are faced with. Gosavi (2006) states that the concern for the redesigning of education lies directly with teachers. He claims that teachers possess the power to either challenge or reinforce a need for change in policy and practice in education.

Naicker (2008); Golder, Norwich and Bayliss (2005) point out that unless schools and teachers come up with an understanding of the need for change, many teachers will continue to view learners with special education needs as outside of their realm of concern. The White Paper 6 (2001:24) states that the most significant conceptual change in current policy is that the development of education and training should be based on the consideration that many learners encounter barriers to learning as a result of the inability of the education system to understand and accommodate the diverse range of learning needs. The role of teachers in a changing environment is to help bring about a shift from mainstream education to inclusive education. Change will fail if those who are supposed to be the agents are in opposition or merely indifferent (Bothma, Gravett & Swart, 2000).

The value of change must be understood and teachers should be prepared to embrace this change. Teachers may be required to obtain new skills and get rid of some of their beliefs and practices. This involves taking risks and facing challenges. Teachers are required to rethink of their responsibilities, create new knowledge bases and discover new skills to prepare themselves for the change (Hyam, 2004:34).

Principals are in a significant position to facilitate the change process and contribute towards educators' awareness for inclusive education. They have a significant role to play. As instructional leaders, they communicate the school mission, uphold an instructional climate, control curriculum and instruction, supervise teaching and

monitor learners' progress (Fisher, 2003; Kavale & Forness, 2000). Principals should support inclusion through (re)deploying the staff; preparing the needed time for teachers to plan and learn new skills; including the parents of all learners in school; guaranteeing access to staff development, and giving their time to be concerned with the results of all the learners in the school (Waiter-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:30).

Inclusive education programmes are most successful when shared leadership occurs. Educators and principals need to become change agents for meaningful improvements to happen. The role of leadership and management is essential in making sure that the school goes the "route of inclusion", and is controlled and "held together" in the process. Research based on a study of 32 schools in America implementing inclusive educational changes for learners, found that between general and special educators, the level and amount of administrative support provided was the most dominant predictor of positive teacher attitudes towards full inclusion (Fisher, 2003; Kavale & Forness, 2000; Waiter-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:30).

Effective inclusion is basically dependent on the willingness of the educator to accept inclusivity. Lomofsky, Roberts and Mvambi (1999:71) state that understanding their own strengths, vulnerabilities and desires is a required step in equipping educators for inclusive education.

Rice (2003) notes that the quality of teachers is the most significant school-related factor influencing learners' performance. In support, Monk (1994) concedes that deep content-area knowledge is also a feature of teachers that appears to have a positive influence on learner performance – that is the educator understands his/her subject area well. Teachers with less content knowledge have been found to produce smaller gains in their learners compared with more seasoned teachers (Smith, 2007). Giving attention to initial teacher education would appear to offer the most effective way of developing a new generation of teachers who will guarantee the successful implementation of inclusive policies and practices (Cardona, 2009).

According to Hanushek and Rivkin (2006) and Rice (2003), teachers with teaching qualifications related to managing learners with special educational needs will manage better when confronted with these learners in the classroom. Winkler,

Modise, and Dawber (2006) noted that the role of the teacher in the classroom is the main focus of teacher training courses in South Africa - they are trained in methodology to prepare lessons and plan the work. Consequently, teachers have a broad theoretical base but little understanding regarding practical learning in the classroom (Muthukrishna, 2001 in Engelbrecht & Green, 2001). According to Obiakor and Algozzine (2010), teachers should have a common vision, language and framework and a set of instructional and technical skills to work with the needs of diverse learners through pre-service and in-service knowledge for them to work together in an inclusive school. Recently, laws and policies have been centred on teacher quality and how to help all learners to participate in learning.

In South Africa most of the teacher training programmes do not prepare pre-service teachers for an inclusive teaching and learning environment. This inadequacy is revealed in the lack of such modules in the overall teaching-training curriculum (Mdikana, Ntshangase & Mayekiso, 2007). The teacher education curriculum, for example, in most Nigerian universities, focuses on child development and pedagogy, including the learning needs of all children (Mdikana, Ntshangase & Mayekiso, 2007).

Ainscow (2005) states that staff development has a great influence on the rationale and practice of the teacher. It must, therefore, be related to school development and focus on both the context and the school. Staff development is more influential in encouraging improved teaching practices when it is fixed within the school context and deals with every day concerns of the teachers. Ainscow's (2005) study is highly applicable to this research, which aims to discover the nature and frequency and content of in-service programmes. One of the concerns this research addresses is that of inadequate teacher training for inclusive education in the Fort Beaufort District – have teachers received the qualifications and training they need?

Winkler, Modise, and Dawber (2006) note that teacher training courses in South Africa focus heavily on the duty of the teacher in the classroom – methodology, lesson preparation and planning – while the business of understanding how learning happens in a classroom setting is neglected (Muthukrishna, 2001, in Engelbrecht and Green, 2001). There is a dire need to understand how learners with SEN learn in order to help them. After several surveys on literacy development in the UK, Lewis and Wray, (2000), conceded that massive in-service training needs to continue to

strengthen and establish good practice across the whole teaching staff. It seems clear, therefore, that effective teachers need to be learners as well as teachers – keeping up to date both in their learning area and with new understandings about how learners learn.

Teachers need to obtain, through pre-service and in-service experiences, a common vision, conceptual framework and language, and a set of instructional and technical skills to work with the needs of diverse learners for them to teach in an inclusive school and collaborate with one another. Current laws and policies have concentrated on teacher quality and means of maximising the fullest potential of all learners (Obiakor & Algozzine, 2010). For instance, the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and the Curriculum Assessment and Policy Statement (CAPS) policy documents emphasises improved accountability of both learners and teachers, which is not a recent issue. The underlying assumption is that teachers must be the best they can be for learners to be the best they can be.

Inclusion stresses that learners with barriers to learning should ideally attend their neighbourhood schools and be taught with their peers in the ordinary classroom (CSIE, 2000:12; Walton, Nel, Hugo & Muller, 2009). As the inclusive ordinary classroom stands for diverse learning needs, suitable support for all learners needs to be made available. Specialist support personnel have an important part to play in the inclusive practice of schools in advanced countries. Teachers with specialist training in special needs education work together with general classroom teachers in giving help to learners either within the classroom or on a “pull-out” basis (Forlin, 2001:124; Welding, 1996:116; Schnorr, Black & Davern, 2000:13). In the UK a Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) would plan and direct a school’s overall provision of support for learners through liaison and training, and would also offer help for individual learners (Lewis & Norwich, 2004). Walton, Nel, Hugo and Muller (2009) explain the function of occupational and other therapists working in multi-disciplinary teams at schools as they share their knowledge in the quest for common educational purposes.

Further to the provision of specialist support personnel, inclusive schools in developed countries provide training and make practical arrangements to enable

general classroom teachers to meet the variety of learning needs effectively. Training is necessary for the successful implementation of inclusion (Du Toit, 2003; Hay, Smit, & Paulsen, 2001). Teachers need not only knowledge and understanding of barriers to learning but also practical training in teaching strategies that facilitate inclusion (Pivik, McComas & Laflamme, 2002:105). South African studies validate the need for teacher training for inclusive education in this country (Burden, 2000:37; Hall, 2002:36). Authors such as Ainscow, (2000:77); Booth, Ainscow and Dyson, (1998:220) and Giangreco, (1997:199) discuss the responsibility of a teacher aide who helps the teacher by working with learners who are classified as having SEN. Additional help given to teachers in inclusive schools comes in the form of small class sizes and controllable workloads (Antoniou, Polychroni & Kotroni, 2009).

These inclusive practices signify processes in which inclusive schools arrange their human resources to guarantee that they have the ability to meet diverse learning needs. Additionally, schools need to consider how their buildings and the physical environment could become a barrier to access. The findings on teacher capacity and skills in the above studies were an inspiration for this study and guided me on the capacity and skills teachers in this context possess for implementing inclusion for learners with special education needs. The next section looks at teacher capacity and skills in South Africa.

3.2.1 Teacher capacity and skills in South Africa

The year 1994 marked the beginning of major changes in the education policy of South Africa. Contrary to expectations, these changes have not always been well-received. Teachers, for instance, have been faced with the challenge to move to an outcomes-based education approach (Curriculum 2005) in a very short period of time, and pay attention to learners with special education needs in an inclusive classroom (Department of Education, 2001). These changes have offered some autonomy to teachers, and have also created greater pressure as many teachers are unable to handle such changes. Management of human resources and continuous staff development and training are vital (Early & Bubb, 2004:1; Harvey, 1999:599;

Heyns, 2000:160). The effective implementation of new policies, like inclusive education, can only be successful if teachers are adequately equipped through initial retraining and when they realise the significance of improving their practice by means of continuing professional development (Coetzer, 2001:89; Early & Bubb, 2004:3). It is of utmost importance to help teachers to renew their knowledge and skills to handle change, on the one hand, and to improve them on handling learners with special education needs on the other (Anderson, 2001:1).

Effective continuing professional development (CPD) has to first and foremost be conscious of and handle the specific needs of teachers (Bredeson, 2003:9; Muijs, Day, Harris & Lindsay, 2004:291). As soon as these initial needs are met, programmes should be planned properly to support teachers in applying the knowledge and teaching methodology creatively and confidently (Anderson, 2001:1). Collinson (2000:125) notes that the best results are attained if the programme is properly and thoroughly planned and presented with the focus on improvement of personal and professional growth by expanding knowledge, skills and positive attitudes.

Professional development should be a continuous process for it to be successful, adding to the general upgrading of education (Bredeson, 2003:14; Muijs, Day, Harris & Lindsay 2004:291). Isolated efforts which do not build on one another have little value for those attending the training. Personal development is also improved by the diversity of the teaching corps regarding training, background and needs. Professional development does not only need the informal and spontaneous learning of teachers from one another (Lessing and De Witt, 2007; Evans and Lunt, 2002; Kaagan, 2004), but also relies on the prior knowledge (Bredeson, 2003:9), wealth of potential and experience of each participant, which can be built upon and incorporated into further initiatives (Early & Bubb, 2004:17; Anderson, 2001; Greenberg, 1998:31).

CPD should also give teachers a chance to apply their recently obtained knowledge in practice. It is important that teachers be guided towards developing their own ideas and that they experiment with them in order to decide their success. Hence, assessment should be an essential part of continuous professional training and the

teacher must be given the opportunity to discuss with others what has been done. In line with this statement, Anderson (2001:11) contends that guidance, support by one's own 'peer group', and formative assessment should be incorporated into professional development.

Continuing professional development training was planned for teachers in Gauteng as a follow-up to previous workshops. The workshop centred on the support for learners with SEN in the inclusive classroom, since teachers had expressed a need for training in relation to this. Below are the training topics: the nature of learning; Curriculum 2005 and learning outcomes; the nature, causes and manifestations of learning difficulties. Support for teachers to help them cope with learners with learning difficulties in their classrooms by providing a variety of strategies to support them with problems of reading, spelling, writing and numeracy was also addressed (Lessing & de Witt, 2007).

The teachers were given a chance to think about the challenges they had experienced in the inclusive classroom at the beginning of the workshop. Teachers' need for support and to cope with learning difficulties was yet again mentioned (Lessing & de Witt, 2007). An organised programme of topics to be presented was given to the attendees and teachers were provided with the chance of sharing their personal expectations of the workshop. The aims of the training were that teachers should be prepared with knowledge, attitudes and skills to support learners with special education needs in the classroom (Lessing & de Witt, 2007).

The key aim of all the programmes was change and improvement in teaching methods and establishing an awareness of the importance of lifelong learning. A realization that there was a lack of specific knowledge of learning difficulties emerged from the initial workshops. Teaching material and techniques were then developed to orientate, train and support teachers. A wide-ranging handout on the nature of learning, C2005 and the nature, causes and manifestations of learning difficulties was offered to expand knowledge of teachers and skills on the topic. Numerous relevant activities were included in the hand-out, and there was space provided for notes and personal reflections. The theory on the topic was supported by a hands-on approach with a view to not only offering knowledge but also

indicating, practising and challenging and new ways of teaching to adapt the teaching material to their own contextual needs (Lessing & de Witt, 2007). A variety of strategies to address reading, spelling, writing and numeracy difficulties were provided. The participant teachers were provided with the chance of practising various activities and sharing their experiences and knowledge with one another.

From the reflections of the teachers it was apparent that these activities enhanced their confidence, and assisted them to obtain knowledge, new attitudes and skills. Though not measurable in the short term, these activities were organised to enhance critical thinking, reflection and self-direction, and to direct the teachers towards teaching excellence. Since some of the teachers were from poorer areas, they were provided the opportunity to reflect on the applicability of the techniques to their own contexts. Examples and practical activities on assessment criteria for C2005 outcomes were provided. The significance of peer support and learning as a continuous process was stressed. Teachers arranged themselves into working groups with the intention of meeting on a regular basis to share their teaching experiences (Lessing & de Witt, 2007).

The general improvement of the participants' teaching and the long term success of the workshop could not be determined in this study but would have to be followed up in a future project. A proposal for follow-up workshops to maintain the positive effect of this workshop was submitted to the Gauteng Department of Education. The workshop included applied competence and offered chances for teachers to relay existing knowledge and skills. The presentation was video-taped for subsequent reference (Lessing & de Witt, 2007).

Another good practice regarding professional development for teachers to enable them handle children with special needs is the introduction of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). It is a new model for scheming all aspects of the learning environment to deal with the wide-ranging differences of learner needs that are present in an inclusive educational system (Rose & Meyer, 2002).

The Center for Applied Special Technology in the United States of America, known as CAST Inc., first explained the Universal Design for Learning theory in 1998 (CAST, 2011) on the basis of brain research, and the expanded architectural concept of Universal Design (Center for Universal Design, 1997). The framework of

UDL is in accordance with these objectives, and is applicable for learners with widely varying needs, including learners with and without specific disabilities (Rose & Meyer, 2002). Therefore understanding and implementing UDL should be of huge significance to educators, administrators and education support professionals globally.

The three main principles of UDL surfaced from CAST's research work on the neurological basis of learning styles in arrangement with its practical work with learners (Garderen & Whittaker, 2006):

- **Multiple means of representation:** It offers multiple, flexible processes of presentation to assist identification learning (*the HOW of learning*). The teacher can provide, for instance, the learning materials through a diversity of media (visual, auditory or tactile), and give many instances that can be adapted in difficulty to meet a series of learning needs.
- **Multiple means of action and expression:** This offers several, flexible methods of action and expression to help planned learning (*the WHAT of learning*). The teacher may use strategies that permit the learner to practice tasks with different levels of support and to show their knowledge and skills in different ways.
- **Multiple means of engagement:** It offers numerous flexible choices for commitment to support affective learning (*the WHY of learning*). This principle has to do with building interesting learning chances that motivate and stimulate learners in line with their personal backgrounds and interests.

UDL is focused on the design of goals, methods, materials and assessments to make them attainable for all learners, including those with disabilities (NCUDL, 2012; Rose & Meyer, 2002). The impact of UDL as explained by Orkwis (1999) is the:

... plan of instructional materials and activities that permits learning goals to be practised by individuals with broad variations in their abilities to see, hear, speak, move, read, write, understand English, attend, organize, engage, and remember without having to adapt the curriculum frequently to meet special needs (Orkwis, 1999:2).

UDL is a conceptual and practical model for the community of education, offering a framework and course of action to modify the way teachers teach, the way learners learn, and the way barriers to education for all learners can be defeated. Educators and researchers continue to come up with instructional supports and strategies that will ensure successful incorporation of UDL in practice, informed integration of technology supports, and successful reduction of barriers to education for learners in the margins (CAST, 2011; Maryland State Department of Education, 2011; Meyer & Rose, 2005; Paul V. Sherlock Center, 2011; UDL-IRN 2012). These signify important resources for practitioners who wish to implement the UDL approach.

According to CAST (2011), in the UDL framework, educational planning commences with identification and expecting diversity in the classroom. By designing from the beginning instruction and curricula that identify, honour and handle the full range of learners' natural variations of style, desires, and preferences, teachers can develop, implement and adjust a varied curriculum in which barriers to learning have been reduced or, perhaps, eliminated (Dalton, Mckenzie & Kahonde, 2012). By utilizing several means of representation (as well as multi-sensory approaches), multiple means of learner expression and actions, and multiple ways of engaging and inspiring learners, UDL supports maximal learning for the widest range of learners, thereby minimising the individual accommodations required to handle precise barriers to learning arising from disability or other factors (Dalton, Mckenzie & Kahonde, 2012). The essence of the approach is expressed below:

UDL is designed from the beginning to accommodate the needs of all learners, making valued, protracted and after-the-fact changes needless. The UDL framework supports creating flexible designs from the start that have customizable options, which allow all learners to progress from where they are and not where we would have envisaged them to be (CAST, 2011:4).

This lengthens the potential for successfully accommodating all learners in the general curriculum, and lessens the impact of barriers to learning in the educational environment (Dalton, 2005). It is specifically these potentials that the strategy of curriculum differentiation is hoping to develop in South African inclusive education policy. Even with an initial understanding of the UDL framework and principles, many reasonable questions regarding UDL implementation remain: What is the meaning of

UDL for a teacher in the classroom? How should a whole school come up with a plan to implement UDL? What is the evidence of UDL benefit internationally? What are likely concerns or problems in terms of UDL implementation? How can systems work together to design reachable UDL curricula? (CAST, 2011).

A study conducted by Mabaso (2006) investigated the management of the implementation of inclusive education in public primary schools. The study was conducted in two public primary schools situated in Gauteng Province with a sample of eight educators and principals. The study found that the majority of educators understand what inclusive education is about. The findings of the study also indicated that the majority of educators were not trained in inclusive education. The teacher-learner ratio and resources were revealed by the study as one of the challenges that educators and learners experience in implementing inclusive education in public primary schools (Mabaso, 2006). The study also found that the majority of educators were in favour of inclusive education, as it addresses the imbalances of the past, and promotes tolerance of social interaction. In addition, the study found that the majority of schools have School-Based Support Teams, although most of them are only partially effective or ineffective (Mabaso, 2006). Mabaso's findings are crucial to this research, which sought to establish whether there are pockets of good practice in relation to implementation of inclusion of learners SEN in the Fort Beaufort District.

Maphula (2005) conducted a study on managing inclusion in five schools in the Johannesburg South Mega District in Soweto and found that lack of knowledge of the concept of inclusion, its management and its implementation has been detected as one of the basic challenges prevailing amongst the educators. Training as a way of acquiring knowledge, was the most discussed concept throughout the study's investigation (Maphula, 2005). The educators indicated that the very trainers who are being sent by the Department of Education lack understanding, direction and confidence about the implementation of this inclusive approach. They noted that the trainers' main focus was on the basic principles and orientation of the terminology instead of dealing with crucial issues like application of the inclusive lesson plan, assessment criteria and strategies, designing and curriculum planning (Maphula, 2005).

A major barrier to achieving inclusion is pre-service preparation of teachers. Studies show that inadequate professional training in inclusive techniques and practices for general and special education teachers are key obstacles (Martínez, 2003). The implication is that at the pre-service training level, all prospective teachers should be exposed to a compulsory component on inclusion with specific reference to special needs. All pre-service teacher preparation programmes must develop in teachers an understanding and appreciation of diversity. It should also address suitable accommodations in curriculum, instructional activities and evaluation procedures, the modification of materials and the effective identification, development and utilization of resources. Such an effort in the long run will provide favourable evidence in that many teachers will have at the very least an understanding of special needs, policy and legislation, special teaching strategies and materials (Martínez, 2003).

In their study, “Successful Inclusive Practices in Middle and Secondary Schools”, Villa, Tousand, Nevin and Liston (2005) found that one of the respondent teachers stated that general educators will clearly have the content while teachers who specialised in special education will have the knowledge on instructional strategies, accommodations and modifications. Karten (2007) states that as learners spend the majority of their time in classes, teachers must be highly qualified in special education, not only to help learners gain more understandings, but also to properly assist them.

However, the study revealed that these teachers lack adequate training and workshops in inclusive education. Marino, Sameshima and Beecher (2009) reveal that teachers with their knowledge and competencies must continue to be involved in any curricular improvement effort. It is a fact that teachers influence students’ learning. Good teachers produce good learners. From the information gathered, most of the teachers were not given in-service training and therefore lacked knowledge and competence which in turn affected the implementation of the inclusion of learners with special education needs (Marino, Sameshima & Beecher, 2009). Rogan and Grayson (2003) in their curriculum implementation theory state that such teachers have no capacity to support and interpret the implementation of inclusive education.

According to Rogan and Grayson (2003) the capacity of teachers includes variables such as one's specialization and experience. The teacher's own background, training and level of confidence and his/her commitment can affect the implementation of a programme. Variables such as specialisation and experience are included in the capacity of teachers. An essential role in policy implementation is played by teachers, thus factors such as their background, training, subject knowledge, motivation, commitment to teaching, and attitudes towards the proposed curriculum implementation influence their capacity and willingness to implement change (Rogan & Grayson, 2003).

Van Deventer and Van Niekerk (2008) note that some school teachers remain hesitant in risk-taking, since a lack of qualifications has resulted in a lack of confidence with experimenting. Putting teachers in situations where they lack expertise creates stress. It also raises questions about the value attached to inclusive education when presented by unqualified teachers (Van Deventer & Van Niekerk, 2008). A fully-qualified teacher would be the best option.

Research found that teachers may oppose inclusive practices as a result of lack of training (Subban & Sharma, 2005; Heiman, 2001; Ross, 2002; Leyser & Tappendorf, 2001). Teachers who are inadequately trained in this area view themselves as ill-prepared and under qualified for inclusive education (Sharma, Forlin & Loreman, 2008; Daane, Beirne-Smith & Latham, 2000; Kavale & Forness, 2000; Malone, Gallagher & Long, 2001). Teacher confidence may be negatively impacted if teachers are required to plan for inclusive education without adequate training (Keefe, Moore and Duff, 2004); negative attitudes toward inclusive learning are more prevalent among those educators who lack training (Van Reusen, Shoho, & Barker 2001), and increased training correlates with more positive attitudes toward the inclusion of learners with special education needs (Briggs, Johnson, Shepherd & Sedbrook, 2002; Powers, 2002; Van Reusen *et al.*, 2001). Attitudes of teachers regarding inclusion seem to improve as a result of training in the field of special education (Kuester, 2000; Powers, 2002). Initial courses offered through pre-service training may not be enough in preparing the general educator for successful inclusion (Subban & Sharma, 2005).

The attitudes of teachers towards the inclusion of learners with special education needs are multidimensional and complex. Negative attitudes result in poor

achievement and low acceptance of learners with special education needs. On the other hand, positive attitudes promote the inclusion of learners with special education needs (Subban & Sharma, 2005). Having prior experience as an inclusive teacher seems to positively help teachers implement inclusive education (Avissar, 2000; Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden, 2000; Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Hodge & Jansma, 2000; Hammond, & Ingalls 2003). Mainstream teachers seem to feel more comfortable within the inclusive classroom when they have prior experience (Avissar, 2000; Subban & Sharma, 2005). Direct experience seems to be an important factor in determining teachers' views toward inclusive settings (Avramidis *et al.*, 2000; Giangreco, Broer and Edelman, 2001; Avramidis *et al.*, 2000). Chhabra, Srivastava and Srivastava (2010) note that the kind of prior experience teachers have has to be positive as this brings about positive attitudes toward inclusive education.

Learners with special education needs in inclusive classrooms require inclusive practices which centre on issues like Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), No Child Left Behind (NCLB), individual educational programmes (IEP), and Response to Intervention (RtI) which means that sufficient yearly progress is expected for all learners, legislatively not leaving any child behind (Axelson, McGraw & McEntee, 2003; Berman, 2010).

In the past, learners with special education needs were left out. In the present, yearly progress with greater accountability for all learners must be emphasised. IEPs are written with specific goals, giving support and suitable accommodation to help learners with special education needs to achieve many inclusive successes, if the general education classroom is resolved to be the least restricted environment. Response to intervention is also implemented in classrooms to help learners obtain assistance with direct academic training with modified strategies that address the varied personalities and abilities of each learner (Karten, 2008; Axelson, McGraw & McEntee, 2003; Berman, 2010).

According to Robertson, Chamberlain and Kasari (2003), initial teacher training (ITT) courses should offer training on the psychological principles of teaching and learning as well as topics such as developing individual educational plans (IEPs), assessing academic progress, differentiating the curriculum, managing behaviour, and working collaboratively with others. Knowledge acquired will result in a critical understanding of the educational process thus enabling potential teachers to react innovatively to

the challenges of inclusion. Teachers are more effective as their efforts and skills increase as it is assumed that, if they are supported in mastering the required skills to implement an innovation such as inclusion, they become more committed (Robertson, Chamberlain & Kasari, 2003; Garner, 2000; Aniftos & McLuskie, 2003). A presumption of “efficiency” motivates this line of thinking at a deeper level of analysis. Inclusion can “take place” when teachers are more efficient, defined in terms of professional knowledge, expertise and energy. This reductionist analysis presumes “excellent teacher” status, whereby a different group of learners can be helped within an ever-increasing range of learner abilities, learning styles and motivational states to achieve barely defined standards of achievement (Mitchell & Sackney, 2011). In the present professional context in which teachers are rooted it becomes challenging that teachers can overcome the stresses of performativity while implementing inclusive types of schooling at the same time (Day, 2005; Groundwater-Smith & Sachs, 2002).

In the search for a solution, it is not difficult to dash towards suggesting important shifts in education policy as the first point of exit. Though appealing, such modifications assume a considerable if not complete desertion of present initiatives. However, in actuality it is very doubtful that governments will totally discard the standards-based reforms in which they have invested politically and financially in current years (Mitchell & Sackney, 2011).

Investigating ways of supporting teachers’ development and learning would be a more realistic way forward. The idea of “community of knowledge” formulated by Olson and Craig (2012) gives such a likelihood credence. In this framework, transforming teachers’ development and learning involves long-term opportunities for teamwork, independence and reflection.

According to Poulson and Avramidis (2003), communities of knowledge can be created by establishing continued options for teachers to make practical knowledge clear to themselves and others; to make connections between theoretical and practical knowledge; and to be involved in activities outside their own school. Knowledge communities might offer safe places where teachers could constructively share experiences and stories about practice with a significant friend, mentor or co-worker (Flower, 2002; Rice, 2001; Yaron, 2009). These knowledge communities in

turn build a rich knowledge base that can inform innovative school practices. Such communities would involve teachers, teacher educators, advisers, educational psychologists and researchers working together, allowing theory and practice to mingle and inform one another. Such an arrangement is severely dissimilar from the existing theory-practice relationship where 'experts' confront practitioners with *prêt-à-porter* answers or technical solutions to complex challenges (Flower, 2002; Rice, 2001; Yaron, 2009).

The resistance voice of the teachers in the Croll and Moses (2000) study on education professionals' views of inclusion in the UK could be credited to the participants' lack of confidence both in their own instructional skills and in the quality of support available to them. In reality another commonly cited barrier in the inclusion literature is the insufficient preparation of teachers to meet the needs of a wide range of learners with special educational needs (Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden 2000a; Ali, Mustaph & Jelas, 2006).

Ali, Mustaph and Jelas (2006) indicate that many newly skilled teachers entering the professional field see themselves as unprepared to teach the learners (Avramidis *et al.*, 2000a; Ali *et al.*, 2006). This is to a degree due to the increased school-based element in initial training which normally permits inadequate consideration of approaches to the teaching and learning of these learners. Skilled teachers have also been found wanting in necessary knowledge and teaching skills to support the inclusion of learners with special education needs while working well to raise standards for all learners (Avramidis *et al.*, 2000b; Rose, 2001). Additionally, the limited options for professional development have resulted in the continuation of negative attitudes towards learners with special educational needs and uncertainty towards the possibility of a fully inclusive education system (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002).

It appears that the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs in South Africa has its unique challenges. The key challenge is lack of training in special education. In spite of this challenge there are good practices regarding professional development for teachers to enable them to handle children with special needs. These good practices which are observed in this section include:

- the introduction of a new model, Universal Design for Learning, for implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs;
- availability of School-Based Support teams;
- follow-up on previous workshop/training organized on inclusion policy; and
- teacher support of inclusive education policy due to it addressing the imbalances of the past and promoting tolerance of social interaction

The good practice observed above guided the researcher to pursue the good practice in inclusion of learners with SEN in the Fort Beaufort District to see whether what is in place in the district is in line with other researchers' findings. Most educators in the Fort Beaufort District did not receive training in special education, yet are expected to produce better academic results from their learners with SEN.

3.3 Strategies adopted by teachers to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs

The idea of inclusive education is perceived as an exciting challenge by many mainstream teachers, and pressures related to its introduction are viewed as life-sustaining, enjoyable and beneficial (Forlin, 2001). It has been noticed, however, that the experience of being an inclusive educator is challenging enough to cause teachers to be physiologically and psychologically stressed (Subban & Sharma, 2005). According to Smith and Smith (2000) inclusion was an unfeasible hindrance for some teachers; while on the other hand, others have viewed it as an opportunity for professional and personal growth at the same time contributing positively to the dynamic field of education.

Education White Paper 6 (2001) acknowledges that the main barrier to learning in schools is the curriculum. In this case barriers to learning arise from different aspects of the curriculum such as:

- The content (what is taught)
- The language and medium of instruction

- How the classroom is organized and managed
- The methods and processes used in teaching
- The pace of teaching and the time available to complete the curriculum
- The learning materials and equipment that is used
- How learning is assessed.

The principal solution to barriers that come from the curriculum is to guarantee that the process of learning and teaching is flexible enough to involve different learning needs and styles. The curriculum therefore has to be more flexible across all bands of education in order for it to be accessible to all learners regardless of their learning needs.

Guidelines for Inclusive Learning Programmes (2005:98) is a current policy document in South Africa which offer teachers teaching strategies to turn their dreams into reality. In this policy document, it is stated that teachers should adopt teaching strategies that ensure the participation of all learners to allow them to show a degree of competence and to realize an outcome in such a way that fits their education needs. Learners arrive at school with different experiences, different ways of seeing the world, and many different learning needs. Teaching in this kind of environment may be difficult, but it can also be very rewarding if teachers understand themselves and their learners (Hargreaves, 2000).

Mitchell (2007) defines a learning style as the way in which teachers like to arrange, organize and incorporate information about the environment. Many studies have been carried out on learning styles and there may be as many theories as there are writers on the subject. Nevertheless, there are three main learning styles in their basic form (Amey, Eddy & Ozaki, 2007; Eddy, 1999). Auditory learners like better to obtain ideas and information by hearing them. These learners may be challenged with reading and writing, but do extremely well at memorizing spoken words such as song lyrics. They frequently prefer discussion-based classes and the chance to give oral presentations (Vermeulen, Denessen & Knoors, 2012; Eddy, 1999).

Visual learners like to obtain information by seeing it. In general these learners give much attention to details. They do not like to speak in class, unlike their auditory

peers, and usually use few words when they do. Outlines, graphs, maps and pictures are useful in assisting these learners learn. Kinesthetic-tactile learners learn best via movement and touch. These learners are often labeled “hyperactive” because they like to move around a lot. Since they like to move, they may take many notes and learn best when permitted to search and experience their environment (Vermeulen, Denessen & Knoors, 2012; Amey, Eddy & Ozaki, 2007; Eddy, 1999).

Teachers are also most likely identify their own dominant styles. The truth is that we learn in many different ways, which further justifies utilizing a variety of teaching approaches (Amey, Eddy & Ozaki, 2007). Regarding a class with learners with special education needs, there are several teaching styles teachers can adopt. Mitchell (2008:32) states that implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs challenges teachers to produce an extensive range of teaching styles. The researcher explored this further in this study to see whether implementation of inclusion policy for learners with special education needs in the Fort Beaufort District is in line with the above principles.

3.3.1 Project-based approach

This teaching approach refers to the teacher facilitating learning through projects. For instance, a learner may come with a seashell, and after group discussion this may give rise to a great range of “projects” – books, artwork, posters. Learners may be asked to analyse data, develop a synthesis, and present their newly gained knowledge (Francoeur-Bellavance, 2001). In the project-based approach, learners basically are responsible for obtaining knowledge, and relating with peers and the environment, while the teacher’s responsibility is to intercede between learners and the knowledge to be obtained (Arpin & Capra, 2001; Francoeur-Bellavance, 2001; Kwan, 2009).

This approach also makes learners work meaningful, and offers learners the opportunity to work on concrete issues and to experience an authentic task in a real-life context. The open nature of this learning approach gives learners the option to choose learning areas they are interested in, at their own level (Leclerc, 1998, 2000). Additionally, teachers can use open questions to provide learners in mixed-ability

groupings with the chance to work concurrently on a number of alternatives (Arpin & Capra, 2001; Francoeur-Bellavance, 2001; Kwan, 2009).

Teachers need to show that they understand the importance of what their learners learn through the process of seeing the project through to completion as much as they value the end product (Morissette, 2002; Perrenoud, 1998a), and ensure that they find at least one assignment suitable for each learner. However, the project-based approach does not assure skills development. Teachers should monitor carefully that learners are making efforts to work on tasks at the most suitable teaching level (Hmelo-Silver, 2004; Lawless & Pellegrino, 2007).

3.3.2 *Problem-based approach*

In the problem-based approach the teacher is required to present learners with a practical credible challenge that can be solved only when learners acquire new skills. Learners think of the best methods or strategies for getting the problem solved and are also encouraged to develop or question effectual measures used in other problem cases (Entwistle, 2013). Teachers can create difficult situations for very particular purposes, and let others arise in an unplanned manner. They should carefully plan what they want to work on in both situations and what cognitive challenges they wish to offer their learners.

The problem-based approach, like the project-based approach, needs learners to overcome difficulties to develop new knowledge and skills, use real and personally applicable cases, and conduct comprehensive, complex, goal-oriented and meaningful assignments (Entwistle, 2013). The key difference is that the learner does not choose the task. While learners may not be encouraged to do work they have not chosen, teachers can cover particular learning areas and make sure that learners are challenged just enough to grow in their learning. The author notes that there is no need to make every problem situation into a project. The teacher's challenge when using this approach is to make sure of differentiation of instruction. Teachers may be tempted to favour the most intelligent, lively, insightful and independent learners in problem-solving tasks (Entwistle, 2013).

3.3.3 *Explicit instruction*

A foundational goal of education is to train learners to become permanent independent learners. While some learners will need greater support, others enthusiastically work independently and will need little guidance to obtain effective learning strategies and skills (Michaelson, Knight & Fink, 2002). Additionally, learners' abilities to work independently may be different depending on the particular learning assignment at hand (for instance, completing a math problem-solving activity versus writing a persuasive essay). In essence, learners' abilities to learn independently are based on a continuum, so teachers have to provide learners with a variety of structured to unstructured learning opportunities (Michaelson, Knight & Fink, 2002).

Some learners with special education needs in particular will require instruction that makes use of overt thinking processes (for instance, using modelling and think-aloud), or what is sometimes called 'explicit instruction' (Duke & Pearson, 2002; Kamil, Mosenthal, Pearson & Barr, 2000; National Reading Panel, 2000).

This explicit instruction needs teachers to regularly model suitable learning strategies. To help learners "find out" that a strategic approach is superior to non-strategic one, teachers can:

- speak their thought processes, including the steps they take in a strategy or learning;
- process as well as the parameters connected with the use of these thought processes;
- share applicable personal learning experiences associated with the concept or strategy they are teaching;
- offer learners chances to perform using the strategy, guiding their efforts to do so until they can carry out the strategy independently (Almasi & Fullerton, 2012; Woloshyn, Elliott & Kauch, 2001).

Learning how to make use of strategies effectively entails time and motivation (Black-Hawkins, Florian, & Rouse, 2007). At first many learners will require considerable time and a lot of direction and motivation to learn how to carry out

useful learning strategies. With practice, learners can learn to carry out approaches faster and more capably. As time passes and with the regular introduction of multiple learning approaches, learners can build up lists of effective learning tools (Almasi & Fullerton, 2012; Collins & Pressley, 2002).

3.3.4 Cooperative group teaching

Cooperative group teaching means learners working in small learning groups together, assisting each other to do individual and group tasks (Mitchell, 2008:43). This teaching style understands that when learners work together or collaborate, it has a synergistic effect. In essence, learners can always attain a result that is better than the sum of their individual abilities by collaborating. In addition, cooperative learning relies on the confidence that much of our knowledge is built socially. In other words, people learn from others in their immediate environment. A large class is a key avenue for assisting learner to learn (Mitchell, 2008:43).

3.3.5 Peer tutoring

Peer tutoring involves the idea that learners learn to a great extent from each other. According to Mitchell (2008:52) it denotes the process in which one learner (the tutor) delivers learning experience for other learners (the tutees). Classroom climate involves building a psychological environment that facilitates learning by building an environment that is emotionally safe for learners to trust. Classroom climate involves supporting learners to set goals, carrying high but truthful potentials and establishing clear and crucial rules and boundaries.

Learners do not only learn from the teacher but also often learn from each other (Winkler, Modise, & Dawber 2006). Children teach each other songs and games. They copy each other when they do not understand what to do in class. Teachers

give group work to learners in their classes. As learners collaborate in groups, they teach each other.

Understanding learning styles will assist teachers in building more inclusive classrooms where every learner has a chance to make it. Learners from diverse cultures, backgrounds and educational settings learn in clearly various means (Winkler *et al.*, 2006). For instance, a learner from a culture that teaches children to pay attention quietly in a classroom (or a visual learner who is not comfortable with speaking) will not be at advantage when a percentage of the mark is based on contribution in class. Responsive teachers can agree to group work during class to create smaller, safer settings for these learners to talk and for their classroom performance to be appraised (Armstrong, 2009; Dörnyei, 2001; Tomlinson, 2001).

Ellis (2005) points out that one instructional method cannot be referred to as “best practice”. As there are many ways of handling the compound task of assisting learners with special educational needs, they acquire new knowledge, skills, strategies, attitudes and values across the curriculum (Westwood, 2007). Therefore a teacher’s choice to make use of a particular approach at a particular time must be determined by the nature of the lesson content, learning objectives and the characteristics of the students in the group. Inappropriate teaching approaches can make teachers create barriers to learning for some learners (McBer, 2001).

Farkota (2005) notes that recent evidence proposes that many challenges related with learner learning can be directly linked to the method of instruction. Learners with special educational needs like other learners need achievable targets to encourage their development and promote their self-esteem. The researcher partially disagrees with Ellis’ (2005) proposition that no single instructional method should be referred to as the best practice as there are teaching methods that allow for proper inclusion of learners with special education needs such as learner-centred teaching methods; most teacher-centred teaching methods may not be appropriate for inclusion of learners with special education needs.

Sayed (2003:64) states that a key factor in the education of a learner with special education needs is motivation. However, one of the major concerns of teachers is motivating learners in order for them to work at their best given the large class sizes.

Mitchell (2008:88) points out that class size needs to be taken into account for it is a complicated matter. It is obvious that class size makes teaching and learning difficult particularly in the case of learners with special education needs.

Kauffman, Landrum, Mock, Sayeski, and Sayeski (2005) state that specialist training is necessary as there are specialist teaching approaches for learners with diverse disabilities. An involuntary effect of these views is that a lot of mainstream educators do not think that they have the expertise to do this type of work and that there is a group of 'specialists' out there to handle these learners on an individual level or in smaller more controllable groups.

However, educators are troubled about inclusion and many studies have shown that teachers' attitudes towards inclusion are negative (Ellins & Porter, 2005). Additionally, teachers express concerns about their inadequate training and lack of preparation for inclusion and for teaching all learners (Forlin, 2001). Although in cases where teachers are motivated to employ different teaching strategies, Ellins and Porter (2005) found that they knew more than they believed they knew and, for the most part, learners learn in like manner. Although some might need additional support, teachers do not differentiate between "kinds" of special needs when planning this support (Florian & Rouse, 2001). Several teachers stated that they did not know that they could teach such learners, but their self-assurance and range of teaching approaches build up over time. This implies that by 'just doing it' teachers are capable of developing knowledge and positive attitudes to inclusion (Rouse, 2007). This author suggests that building up effective inclusive practice is not just about broadening teachers' knowledge, but also about motivating them to do things another way and getting them to review their attitudes and beliefs. In other words, it is about 'knowing', 'doing', and 'believing' (Rouse, 2007).

Johnsen (2007) notes that teachers have to adapt the curriculum so as to provide for the diversity of different individual learning strategies to ensure that each learner develops and uses a set of learning strategies and methods that are appropriate for her or him. Also, individual and joint possibilities have to be created to use different preferred strategies and styles in the process of learning. To handle such a variety is a difficult task, not the least in view of the many programmes advocating that "they

represent the best solution to most educational challenges”. There is no method or programme that is complete and fits all learners and teachers. However, all teachers have the task and freedom to create and develop their own battery of different programmes, methods, skills and knowledge to select from in making and revising curricula for individual learners and classes (Johnsen, 2007).

It is imperative that individual goals and objectives are stated in all educational subjects and themes and not only in areas where the barriers are found (Pivik, McComas & Laflamme, 2002). A limited focus on the area where a child has special educational needs increases the barriers in the learner’s mind at the cost of successful learning in other areas. Lucas and Claxton (2010) thought multiple intelligences strongly support this view. These authors condemn the narrow focus on logical-mathematical and linguistic intelligence in modern education, arguing that, in addition, there is musical intelligence, spatial intelligence, bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence, personal intelligence and social intelligence.

There is need to cater for all these “intelligences” in school. Education intends to develop active and responsible, independent individuals in good societies. It does not focus on creating subject-bound skills and knowledge (Lucas & Claxton, 2010). There are general aspirations for the development of a sense of responsibility, tolerance, communication, co-operative skills, positive self-esteem, solidarity and care. Literature on individual curriculum shows a rising propensity to highlight developmental aims of this general human character. It is also the same in the more traditional literature on individual educational programmes (Bosman, 2012; Hutchinson, 2005; Nick Lee, 2005; Phelan, 2003).

Beside the use of teaching strategies that benefit all learners in an inclusive classroom, teachers have to admit that some learners will still need organised and precise interventions to address the barriers to learning that they experience. Important attention is paid to strategies that ensure individual access and participation in the curriculum in the international literature on inclusion. This access is frequently obtained through creating accommodations and adaptations to teaching, learning and assessment (Hitchcock, Meyer, Rose & Jackson, 2002). The USA employs individualised education programmes (IEPs) which have descriptions of a child’s educational performance, annual goals and objectives, a statement of

which special education or other services a child requires, and a description of instructional and assessment modifications (Johnson, 2003; Burrell & Warboys, 2000).

Lovannone, Dunlap, Huber and Kincaid (2003) hold the view that the individualised education programme is an essential component of inclusion. Assessment is an important area where changes can be made to reduce the effect of any barriers to learning. Modifications can be done in the way the learner performs a task, like reading a task to the learner, or agreeing to an oral response or, the most frequently used modification, by giving extra time that reduces test anxiety and allows for the efficient use of test strategies (Elliot & Marquart, 2004:350-351). Learners with special education needs would not be penalised in marking their performance on criteria like spelling or handwriting and other assessment criteria can be adapted. (Bradley & Calvin, 1998:27). Standardized accounts should be adapted in some way if modifications have been made to assessments as a result of individual needs (Bradley & Calvin, 1998:26-28). Learners with special education needs may need to rely on technology to facilitate access and participation in the ordinary classroom.

Technology is accessible in the form of assistive devices that offer learners liberty and the chance to achieve highly (Male, 2003:71). Learners may be at advantage from using word processors, digital personal organisers, multi-media such as film clips and assistive gadgets such as microphones and Braille translators. This account of international inclusive practice gives a helpful structure for the investigation of South African inclusive practice.

In the recent inclusive classrooms, teachers are faced with greater pressure as their roles have been broadened compared to earlier generations (Subban & Sharma, 2005; Webb, Vulliamy, Hämäläinen, Sarja, Kimonen & Nevalainen, 2004; Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden, 2000). Teachers differ in their reactions to these pressures (Westwood & Graham, 2003). Mainstream teachers are advised to be aware of the diversity of present classrooms and to be able to rise to the task by amending their teaching strategies in accordance with the diversity of learning styles they face (Subban & Sharma, 2005). Psychologically and practically teachers are to be more prepared to take on the active duty of inclusive teacher (Mullen, 2001), while being

mindful that making attitudinal changes resulting in the removal of barriers to physical and educational access is more important than making physical provision for learners with special education needs (Naicker, 2005; Subban & Sharma, 2005).

This study sought to find out strategies adopted by teachers to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs in primary schools in the Fort Beaufort District. The researcher argues that teaching styles adopted by teachers influence the inclusion of learners with SEN.

3.4 Content, assessment and pedagogy adapted for implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs

How best to implement inclusive education for learners with special educational needs is one of the most dominant and controversial issues confronting teachers around the world today. It is a complex and dynamic issue that demands careful and systematic analysis (Booth & Ainscow, 2003). In developing inclusive practices, one of the important issues to consider is that of the relative degrees of difficulty or ease with which diverse learners perform at school. Many learners find learning difficult, while others learn faster and more easily than their peers. It is, however, the responsibility of the education system to build an environment conducive to success.

According to Kelly and Melograno (2004), an effective teacher should have a specified programme plan, continually assess the learners with special education needs, and use assessment data to plan and implement instruction. He/she uses the evaluation data (re-assessment) not just for the sake of keeping records, or as an accountability measure to provide evidence of work done, but to determine the learners' progress, the effectiveness of teaching and the appropriateness of the programme plan.

The National Curriculum Statement (2008) states that teachers must make assessment part of their lessons, building towards a formal, year-long programme of assessment. Learners with SEN should be monitored throughout the year using both informal daily assessment and the formal Programme of Assessment. Assessment

means to collect, analyse and interpret information to help teachers, parents and other stakeholders in making decisions about the improvement of learners (Chen, Heritage & Lee, 2005).

Classroom assessment should give a description of the progress of a learner with SEN in the most effective and efficient manner by guaranteeing that sufficient confirmation of achievement is collected using various forms of assessment. According to NDE/NCS (2008) School-Based Assessment (SBA) is a required part of the promotion marks in all the different school phases:

The School-Based Assessment (SBA) component in different school bases is shown in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3-1: The School-Based Assessment (SBA) for inclusion of learners with special education needs

Phase	SBA component %	End-of-year examination %
Foundation Phase	100	0
Intermediate Phase	75	25
Senior Phase	40	60

Source: South African Department of Basic Education (2008).

Learners may have special education needs because of impairments, particular life experiences or various psycho-social factors (Swain, French, Barnes & Thomas, 2013; Shakespeare, 2006). Hence, there is the need to ask these questions: What kind of pedagogy will make certain that all learners have the same chances to learn, while still dealing with individuality and individual needs in the best interests of the learners? How will learners become creative and imaginative? How are they prepared for a mainstream social, economic and political life? Are classrooms thinking spaces that generate possibilities for all learners and teachers to build their potential?

The new pedagogical thinking stresses that learning has to be dynamic (Swain *et al.*, 2013). Many methods of active learning are presently being implemented within

classrooms around the world to encourage learners' learning. The objectives of active learning practices are to promote a more favourable learning setting for the learners with special education needs so that the learner has an active role in his or her learning process (Derouin, Fritzsche & Salas, 2005; Felder & Brent, 2001). The assumptions which are provided when using the active learning approach are that the methods used will increase the learner's learning of a given learning area, and will allow the learner to more easily gain understanding and skills required for communication (Baldwin & Sabry, 2003). An active learning-driven classroom does not employ the typical teacher-centred method of listing various points to be taught or by explaining rules and procedures (Willard, 2009; Prince & Felder, 2006).

There is a focus on critical thinking, reasoning, reflection and action. Knowledge is integrated in that it is applicable and related to real-life situations. The educator is a catalyst of learning – and that learning goes beyond memorising. Learning programmes are seen as guiding principles that educators use in planning inspired and approachable activities for every learner to achieve to his/her potential (Lombardi, 2007). Outcomes count - it matters what the learner becomes and understands. Flexible time frames permit learners to work at their own speed. Comments and inputs from the community are required and encouraged (Vayrynen, 2004; Department of Education, 2002).

Booth & Ainscow (2003) state that learning experience is not only about 'designed' activities. There are several learning experiences which are hard to design but which can be dealt with by educators, schools and the education system in a wider sense. These are experiences such as interactions between learners and their educators, both in and out of school, or chances in the community, in the course of hobbies, social gatherings and other events. This is referred to as 'informal curriculum'.

Every learner goes to school with a rich experience from his/her day-to-day life. The curriculum describes this as 'prior knowledge' (Booth & Ainscow, 2003). For diversity to be truly catered for in the classroom, conscious efforts have to be made by educators to bring these experiences in the learning process. This is significant in relation to building knowledge – learners have to connect new information to what

they know already, or else knowledge turns into a collection of fractions of information (Davis & Krajcik, 2005; Booth & Ainscow, 2003).

‘The hidden curriculum’ is another aspect of the curriculum. In the picture of the curriculum layers, ‘hidden curriculum’ is not immediately obvious, since it is concerned with practices, principles and values which learners grasp intuitively (Davis & Krajcik, 2005; Booth & Ainscow, 2003). This hidden curriculum relates to the importance of attitudes and beliefs that educators attach to learning and teaching, and the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders in education (Booth & Ainscow, 2003). In implementing inclusive practices in classrooms, educators should realise that two learners are not alike. Consequently, teaching and learning is made different by default. Learners have to be the focus of the planning for teaching and learning (Davis & Krajcik, 2005; Booth & Ainscow, 2003).

In the context of inclusive education, emphasis is placed on identifying barriers to learning. It is critical to find out whether a learner’s barrier is something which is within the learner (such as an impairment) or is external to the learner, such as factors in the learner’s environment: language difficulties, impact of poverty, inappropriate teaching methods, lack of assistive devices, and so on (Reid, 2005). Discovering barriers and handling them in education are essential so as to provide appropriate support for learners to minimise or eliminate the barriers. This support is most effectively provided when it is built on the foundation of learners’ strengths and different abilities, following the principle that “all learners are talented, show their gifts differently and learn at different paces” (Maluma, 2009; Booth & Ainscow, 2003).

Egwunyenga (2009:112) points to the fact that there are a number of problems associated with record keeping in schools, including negative attitudes of some staff, badly implemented record management systems, insecurity of records, lack of training, and inadequate computer terminals and resources, as well as the lack of a school assessment policy.

According to Kleinert and Thurlow (2001), in order to determine whether the learner with special education needs has mastered the skills, assessment should be continuous throughout the learning. Learned skills should also be applied in different

contexts in the classroom and in daily living. For instance, if learners who struggle with 'substitutions' master their calculations after a few learning sessions, examples of 'substitutions' in everyday life should be used to assess the learners' newly attained competencies. These authors further state that curriculum-based tests could be applied after the outcomes set for the learning support have been met to ensure transfer of skills and knowledge to other contexts.

Assessment should provide the best possible account of what a learner with SEN knows, can do or has experienced. Mitchell (2008:31) states that an inclusive assessment should:

- Take into consideration the nature of particular disability for learners with special education needs
- Present feedback to learners and parents
- Be criterion referenced in nature
- Assist the teacher in curriculum adaptation and teaching methods, that is, an inclusive assessment should allow the teacher to detect where learners show no mastery of a particular task, the reason that occurred and then re-design learning opportunities.
- Consequently have individual education plans.

This is what an institutional plan is supposed to achieve at a school level Education White Paper 6 (2001).

Assessments are assets in the effective implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs. They provide descriptions of learners' progress in the most effective and efficient manner by ensuring that sufficient evidence of achievement is collected using various forms of assessment. Hence this study was guided by the research question of the study on content, assessment and pedagogy adapted for implementing the inclusion of learners with special education needs.

The following assessment strategies are recognised by Ysseldyke (2001:301):

- Norm-referenced versus criterion-referenced assessment (questioning)
- Early identification
- Sources of information
- Participants to involve

Norm-referenced tests are used to make comparisons between an individual learner's performance and that of a norm group of the same age or grade level (Ysseldyke, 2001). Notably, these tests do not unavoidably represent the vital criteria contributing to a specific level of skill or knowledge. The results may, therefore, actually prove unhelpful beyond confirming that the learner does not have a problem in comparison with others of like age or grade, and may give nearly no direction to learning support.

Criterion-referenced tests target specific outcomes in a level-suitable way and the learner's competence is examined in more detail. In criterion-referenced tests a learner's score is not compared to a norming population; instead it is compared to a predetermined criterion. These tests are likely to give more direction as to the learning support desired, grouping for instruction and assessing individual progress by assessing learner mastery of a specific goal (Ysseldyke, 2001).

Schools could interact with the community to prevent barriers from developing or increasing with reference to early identification. Continuous assessment could also assist tremendously with the timeous recognition of learners in need of support. Using multiple sources of information during assessment, such as learner's school work, assessment results and interviews, is in line with the principles of the achievement-based curriculum model, which is also one of the theoretical frameworks guiding the research. In addition, the question of who to involve in the assessment must be decided, for example, the learner with SEN, teacher, district based support team, peers, parents, siblings and members of the extended family (Kleinert & Thurlow, 2001:13). Ysseldyke (2001:306) recommends that, "We should work to have all assessment practices make a difference in learners' with SEN lives rather than be a prediction about their lives".

Meijer (2003) notes that the goal of inclusive assessment is for all assessment policies and procedures to support and improve the successful inclusion and participation of all learners including those with special education needs. In order for this goal to be accomplished several factors within inclusive assessment have to be made clear:

- All assessment measures should be used to inform and promote learning for all learners,
- All learners should be entitled to be part of all assessment procedures,
- The needs of learners with special education needs should be taken into consideration and accounted for within all general as well as special education needs specific assessment policies,
- All assessment measures should be complementary and inform each other,
- All assessment procedures should aim to 'celebrate' diversity by identifying and valuing all learners' individual learning progress and achievements (Gibbs & Simpson, 2004; Meijer, 2003).

According to Peacey (2006) inclusive assessment undoubtedly seeks to prevent segregation by steering clear of, as far as possible, forms of labelling and by focusing on learning and teaching practice that promote inclusion in a mainstream setting. The purpose of inclusive assessment should be to improve learning for all learners in mainstream settings. All assessment procedures, methods and tools are supposed to inform teaching and learning and support teachers in their work. Inclusive assessment may include a range of assessment procedures that fulfil other purposes in addition to informing teaching and learning (Peacey, 2006). These purposes may be related to summative assessment, initial identification of special education needs, or monitoring of educational standards. All these procedures should seek to inform learning, but the procedures should also be 'fit for purpose'. In other words, the techniques and procedures should only be used for the reason they were designed and not used for other purposes (Peacey, 2006).

Inclusive assessment involves a variety of possible methods and strategies to assess learners. The significance of all these possible methods is that they work together to provide clear proof about learners' learning. Inclusive assessment methods report on the product or outcomes of learning, and also offer teachers information on how to improve upon the process of learning for an individual learner or groups of learners in the future. Decision making based upon inclusive assessment draws upon a range of sources that are action-based and present proof of learning collected over a period of time and not a one-off snapshot of assessment information (Salvia, Ysseldyke & Bolt, 2009; UNESCO, 1994).

According to UNESCO (1994) a wide variety of assessment methods are required in inclusive assessment to ensure there is wide coverage of areas, non-academic as well as academic subjects, assessed. Assessment methods should seek to offer 'value-added information' on learners' learning progress and development, not just snapshot information. Any assessment information should be contextualised and the educational environment as well as any home-based or environmental factors that influence a learner's learning should be taken into consideration.

According to Leahy, Lyon, Thompson and William (2005) for the teacher who makes use of assessment to support learning, the divide between instruction and assessment is not clear. All that learners do, for instance conversing in groups, carrying out class work, asking and answering questions, working on projects, handing in homework assignments, even sitting silently and looking confused, is a prospective source of information about how much learners comprehend. The teacher who deliberately uses assessment to support learning takes in this information, analyzes it, and makes instructional decisions that address the understandings and misapprehension that these assessments reveal (Leahy *et al.*, 2005).

Rose and Meyer (2002) point out that precise knowledge of a learner with SEN's progress is needed in teaching. Assessment consistent with Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is adequately flexible to give specific, continuing information that helps teachers amend instruction and maximize learning. A test given in a single medium inevitably tests mastery of that medium. If a learner is provided with accommodations in instruction, he or she regularly receives the same types of accommodations in assessment.

The theory following differentiated instruction comes from the views of Vygotsky (1980). According to Vygotsky, social context and the interactions of the learner with SEN within that social context plays an essential role in the acquisition of knowledge. Learners with SEN in their "zone of proximal development" can, with help, resolve a problem that they could not have resolved alone and move on to another level of knowledge. Teachers can develop and accelerate learners' cognitive ability through supporting learners in resolving challenges by questioning their conceptions, and by

asking them to justify their positions (Vienneau, 2005). They can also offer specific interventions, known in this context as “scaffolding” (Lafortune & Deaudelin, 2001). Differentiated instruction permits teachers to deal with specific skills and difficulties while Universal Design for Learning offers the teacher wide principles for planning (Gargiulo & Metcalf, 2011).

Differentiated instruction requires that teachers reorientate their practices away from a programme-based pedagogy toward a learner-based pedagogy. Teachers make efforts to adapt pedagogical interventions to the needs of each learner, accepting that learners vary in interests, learning profile, and level of functioning. Differentiated instruction aids high levels of both learner engagement and curricular achievement (Caron, 2003; Tomlinson, 2004).

Curriculum informs teachers *what* to teach, while differentiated instruction informs teachers *how* to teach it to a variety of learners by employing a different set of teaching approaches. Learners with SEN can build up their potential if they are offered suitable activities in an environment that is planned and organized to meet the needs of all learners. The teacher can differentiate one or a number of the following elements in any classroom learning situation (Tomlinson, 2004):

- The content (what the learners are going to learn)
- The processes (the activities)
- The products (the accomplishment following a learning period).

Differentiating instruction may also involve flexible grouping strategies with all learners working on the same activity (individually, in small groups, or as a whole group) and assigning different tasks in different situations (Gregory & Chapman, 2012; Gargiulo & Metcalf, 2011). Teachers use diverse methods that allow the learners to gain knowledge and skills. Teachers can build alternative ways for learners to demonstrate knowledge and skills, such as using drawings or other visual means to organize or generate ideas. Teachers can explore ways to infuse logical accommodations that can benefit all learners. For example, teachers can emphasize important words in text or get learners to record their answers on a tape recorder (Gregory & Chapman, 2012; Gargiulo & Metcalf, 2011). Within this study, the researcher was interested in finding out whether learners with special education

needs in the Fort Beaufort District were experiencing any level of curriculum differentiation within their educational context.

3.4.1 Types of Assessments

3.4.1.1 Diagnostic assessment

Diagnostic assessment provides teachers with analytical information and helps the teacher understand what a learner with SEN brings to the classroom or to a particular learning area (Gargiulo & Metcalf, 2011; Salvia, Ysseldyke & Bolt, 2007, 2009). In the process of gathering information on learners with SEN from previous teachers, parents, and formal sources, teachers develop a baseline of information upon which further assessment will take place as is necessary to create a *profile* of the class and of individual learners' needs. If the teacher observes that individual learners and groups of learners with SEN in the classroom have significant ability deficits or a lack of advanced skills, and these informal reports do not give sufficient information to offer effective learning opportunities, then the teacher needs to consult with the in-school resource team (Gargiulo & Metcalf, 2011; Salvia, Ysseldyke & Bolt, 2007, 2009).

One outcome of a meeting with an in-school resource team could be consideration of a diagnostic assessment. For example, a student within a junior division classroom who exhibits significant deficits in sight vocabulary, and whose previous report cards indicate that he or she reads at an early primary level, might need a diagnostic assessment (Gargiulo & Metcalf, 2011; Salvia, Ysseldyke & Bolt, 2007, 2009). The goal of the diagnostic assessment would be to offer more specific diagnostic information, such as whether the reading difficulties are related to, for example, phonemic awareness deficits, so that the teacher could offer targeted, more valuable instruction (Gargiulo & Metcalf, 2011; Salvia, Ysseldyke & Bolt, 2007, 2009).

3.4.1.2 Formative assessment

Formative assessment offers yardsticks for individual learners and groups of learners with SEN to confirm instructional practices or particular interventions made by the teacher (Gargiulo & Metcalf, 2011; Salvia, Ysseldyke & Bolt, 2007, 2009). Teachers can do the following based on these benchmarks:

- Perform a *gap analysis*, such as determining from running records that 12 of 22 students in a grade 3 classroom lack prediction strategies when reading aloud;
- Reflect on past practice; and
- Start to make decisions based on sound pedagogy for future instructional planning.

An important element of formative assessment is the provision for immediate and accurate feedback to learners and their parents. It also helps teachers to collaborate when possible with learners with SEN to maximize their potential to achieve successful outcomes (Gargiulo & Metcalf, 2011; Salvia, Ysseldyke & Bolt, 2007, 2009).

3.4.1.3 Summative assessment

Summative assessment usually takes place at the end of a teaching section, course, unit or term and offers a fair and correct reflection of what has been taught (Gargiulo & Metcalf, 2011; Salvia, Ysseldyke & Bolt, 2009). When planning or developing a summative assessment, it is very important that teachers study the curricular elements that they have taught and assess only these elements. Teachers must also ensure a level playing field for all their learners with SEN. They may, for example, allow additional time for tasks, provide diverse formats for assessing, ensure that the language level of the assessment is similar to that used during the teaching, or give “quiet space” for learners to work (Gargiulo & Metcalf, 2011; Salvia, Ysseldyke & Bolt, (2007, 2009).

Summative assessments provide teachers with baseline data for planning subsequent teaching sections (Gargiulo & Metcalf, 2011; Salvia, Ysseldyke & Bolt, 2007, 2009). The feedback of summative assessments must be given clearly to learners, parents, and other professionals (Salvia, Ysseldyke & Bolt, 2009). Reports on results should describe differences, not simply explain them. These explanations will assist the teacher in future grouping of learners with SEN within classroom activities, and will also support particular interventions where needed (Gargiulo & Metcalf, 2011; Salvia, Ysseldyke & Bolt, 2007, 2009).

This study investigated further to confirm whether implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs in the Fort Beaufort District is in line with what is stipulated above.

3.5 Support mechanisms available for teachers to implement inclusion of learners with special education needs

Support can be defined as every school activity which enhances its capacity to respond to diversity (DoE, 2008). Support is shown in many ways. One of the ways of making learning contexts and lessons accessible to all learners is providing support to individuals. Support also takes place when schools reassess their culture, policies and practices in terms of the extent to which they meet individual educator, parent and learner needs (Spillane & Louis, 2002; Chris Day, 2002).

Support is provided when educators plan lessons in a way that includes all learners. Support, then, must centre on the learning and teaching process by discovering and dealing with learners with SEN, educator and institutional needs (Spillane & Lewis, 2002; Chris Day, 2002). Though a limited number of people may shoulder the key responsibility of coordinating support, all staff are concerned with support services.

Engelbrecht and Green (2001:17) citing the Salamanca “Framework for Action” declare that inclusive schools must be familiar with and respond to the diverse needs of their learners. This recognition and response will be done through inclusion of all

learners, irrespective of their difficulties or differences. The duty of the state is to provide a continuum of support services to support the development of inclusive schools. It is very important to think about diverse ways to support teachers in coping with the challenges of an inclusive classroom in South Africa.

It is evident that the lack of relevant training, resources and materials is a major obstacle to the implementation of successful inclusion of learners with special education needs (Eleweke and Rodda, 2010:116). Anumonye (1991, in Eleweke and Rodda, 2010) explored the challenges of inclusion in Nigeria. The data showed that necessary educational materials were not provided for or were insufficient in regular schools where learners with special education needs were being included.

According to Landsberg, Kruger, and, Nel (2005:19), “support is the keystone of successful inclusive education”. In relation to this, Swart and Pettipher (2005:85), arguing issues of support, state that, “One of the methods for developing an inclusive school is the whole school development approach”. This approach focuses on organizational development and systems theory and is intended to enhance all aspects of the school as an organization in which there is an interactive and interdependent relationship between the various systems and subsystems of the school.

With regards to the question on support given to teachers to ensure inclusion of all learners, the researcher finds the whole school development approach relevant to the study, in the sense that support is not just about the school and the district or Department of Education. There is collaboration even within the wider community. Collaboration is an important strategy of support for implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs and according to Sands, Kozleski and French (2000:120), “it is at the centre of the inclusive school community”. Friend and Cook (2003:5) define collaboration as “a style of direct interaction between at least two co-equal parties voluntarily engaged in shared decision making as they work towards achieving a common goal”.

Muthukrishna (2001) notes that in South Africa having access to resources and support in the community is an important action of inclusive schools. As relationships

are developed between the school and the wider community, a wide range of likely resources for teachers and learners can be discovered. Schools can also draw on neighbouring schools.

Education White Paper 6 of 2001 offers provision for support by way of a systems method and collaboration between systems of support. The systems of support include: National Department of Education in collaboration with provincial education, district based support teams (DBST), special schools/resource centres, full-service schools and ordinary schools. At a national level, the function of the national Department of Education entails policy formulation, which is prepared in collaboration with all the stakeholders who are involved in education. At a provincial level, the role of the departments of education of the nine provinces is policy implementation acknowledged by the National Department of Education (DoE, 2001). It understands that the provinces differ in level in terms of implementation of the policy of inclusion as resources and manpower differ in the various provinces.

The provinces are in charge of resource development such as human and technical, building of schools, distribution of finances and resource material, employment of educators, and admission of learners with special education needs. Every province is divided into numerous districts, each of which has a team which runs inclusive education in the district. This team is called the district based support team “to provide a coordinated professional support service that draws on expertise in further and higher education and local communities, marking special schools and specialized settings, designated full-service and other primary schools and educational institutions” (DoE, 2001:8).

Further, each district is in charge of the schools in that district. Education White Paper 6 (DoE 2001:10) plainly states that support will be provided according to the level of needs of learners with special education needs and not according to the impairment of those learners. Learners who are in need of high intensity support will be educated in special schools; those in need of medium intensity support would be educated in full-service schools and those in need of low intensity support in ordinary schools.

The draft guidelines (DoE 2002:25-33) specify that the special schools as resource centres:

- Act as an integrated and co-ordinated part of the district-based support team, and
- Offer specialized professional support in the curriculum, assessment and instruction to neighbouring schools.

Additionally, the draft guidelines (DoE 2002:44-46) require that full-service schools should:

- Offer support in the school to learners and teachers in terms of competent and experienced support educators,
- Support neighbouring schools with knowledge, information and assistive devices as regards barriers to learning, and
- Collaborate with the district-based support teams to coordinate support.

Learners who are in need of low intensity support are catered for by ordinary schools. Teachers are supported by the district-based support team which organizes support and receives its resources from other types of schools (Engelbrecht & Green, 2007). Learners in need of more support can also be taken to any of the other schools for a short time to receive specialized education until they are able to cope in the ordinary school, or support can be given in the school by experts from the district-based support team.

According to Engelbrecht and Green (2001:17), current and emerging education legislation and policy in South Africa shows the commitment of the South African government to handle the diversity in the learner population and offer such a continuum of support. Management at school is, therefore, required to create conditions of learning and teaching in their learning institutions for all learners to be fully accommodated. Learners can, in turn, flourish and contribute to the regeneration of society, the economy and the country (Department of Education, 1999:3). Among other things, management is about looking after the people in the school and this includes educators and learners with special educational needs. Engelbrecht and Green (2007) write that the principal has been cited as the most influential individual in providing positive conditions in schools.

According to Simpson, de Boer-Ott and Smith-Myles (2003), administrative support is an important factor in determining teacher attitudes toward inclusion policy, as the teacher will be motivated if the school principal fosters a positive learning environment for both learners and teachers. The support of the principal and other school leaders is significant in order for teachers to implement inclusive practices (Daane, Beirne-Smith, & Latham 2000; Hammond & Ingalls, 2003). Subban and Sharma (2005) refer to a “visionary” principal as one who will take up the challenge to build an inclusive environment for all learners. A sense of support for inclusive placement should be modeled by principals so as to encourage similar attitudes among other school staff (Simpson, de Boer-Ott & Smith-Myles (2003).

Unfortunately, research has found that administrators' attitudes toward learners with special education needs are less than positive, thereby affecting the implementation of inclusion practices in schools (Daane *et al.*, 2000). Clayton pointed out that members of the administrative staff do not have adequate understanding and skill regarding the delivery of services to learners with special education needs (Clayton, 1996). Research further stated that since mainstream teachers are closer than administrators to the real experiences offered by inclusion of learners with special education needs, they report a more positive view of inclusion (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002).

Elmore (2000) note that principals and district officials, as the custodians of education policy, have to support its implementation. At the school level, the principal is the head instructional supervisor. He/she provides the means for curriculum implementation through timetabling, classroom allocation, textbook allocation, syllabus and all instructional materials, as well as creating a conducive atmosphere for effective teaching and learning (*ibid.*). Ornstein and Hunkins (2004) also argue that principals and heads of department should provide guidance and make sure that teachers have the necessary skills, and use the correct teaching methods.

In a South African study by Van der Walt and De Klerk (2006) on teacher training, it was found that new teachers required more advice, encouragement and support from their heads for the successful execution of their duties. Therefore, if new

teachers are not assisted in these ways, it will jeopardise the implementation of inclusive education policy by such teachers.

According to Rogan and Grayson (2003), the construct “support from outside agencies” describes the kinds of action undertaken by outside organisations, such as provincial and district education offices, to influence practices, either by support or sanction, and the role of the Education District Officers (EDOs) to see that standards are maintained. They are there as quality assurance officers to provide schools with expertise and professional development courses. In many developing countries outside agencies may also involve international development agencies such as World Vision and local or international NGOs, which often provide teachers and learners with materials like teaching kits or textbooks.

Non-material support is mostly provided in the form of professional development. These involve in-service training where teachers’ skills can be upgraded. This is probably one of the most visible and obvious ways in which outside agencies attempt to bring change in schools (Karsten, Voncken & Voorthuis, 2000). Therefore, non-material support can also be regarded as a sub-construct of school capacity. To bring about change, there is also a need for outside agencies to monitor the implementation process. This is mainly the duty of the district officers. They are obligated to inspect schools at least once in two years so as to give feedback to teachers on their performance. It is their duty to see that the policy is implemented according to policy documents.

Educators need on-going support as they learn new techniques such as those related to the new curriculum (Eleweke & Rodda, 2010). This study is concerned with the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs. It is believed that with the provision of necessary support, successful implementation can be achieved which in turn increases the number of learners with special education needs receiving educational and other services, specifically in Fort Beaufort and in South Africa generally.

3.6 Monitoring provided to teachers for the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs

According to Scheerens, Glas, Thomas, and Thomas (2003), monitoring refers to the gathering of information to ascertain if goals set out have been accomplished. Monitoring can include a range of timescales depending on its purpose, focus and method. It is the direct responsibility of principals and district officials to ensure that all learners are accommodated and to ensure teaching and learning take place in schools (South African School Act, 1996; Prinsloo, 2007; Christiaans, 2006). According to the South Africa School Act (1996), the Department of Education officials and school principals are supposed to visit schools and classes to monitor how inclusive education is being implemented.

The principal has a responsibility to monitor all the school's systems, from distribution of resources and their use, to monitoring itself (Fitz-Gibbon, 1996). Panday (2007) accepts that implementation of inclusive education has to be monitored and supported, that is, it has to be supervised by principals and district officials or inspectors. She acknowledges that the word "supervision" is closely related to curriculum implementation. According to Panday (2007), it is not only the manner of teaching which needs to be monitored, but the content itself which needs to be supervised.

Hellinger (2002:472) shares the same view as Nkomo (1995) when he postulates that monitoring involves principals looking at teachers' weekly plans and learning objectives, and the plans teachers are working towards. These include examining samples of learners' work, visiting classrooms, observing the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs, learning and curricula policies, reviewing learners' assessment information and evaluating learners, class and school levels of performance and progress. Zepeda (2006:103) affirms, "Teaching learners with special education needs is the primary work of teachers, and should be the basis for in-class assessment of teaching and learning for both teachers and learners". This is important for schools if the inclusive education policy is to be implemented according to its objectives.

Perhaps it is instructive to see this lack of monitoring in a more global light. In most Sub-Saharan countries, educational policies suffer from a lack of qualified personnel to monitor them, as well as a shortage of management personnel qualified in inclusive education (Tiendrebeogo, Meijer & Engleberg, 2003).

In Maslow's theory of motivation, it is not difficult to supervise individuals or teachers who are inherently motivated (Everard, Morris & Wilson, 2004). However, these teachers need professional support to keep them up to speed with new developments. Feiman-Nemser (2003) shares the same view as he stresses the need for instructional supervisors such as the Education District Officers (EDOs), principals and heads of department to maintain the standard of education expected by the government. The quality of these educational authorities and their monitoring determines the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs policy process. Adewumi and Adendorff (2014) recommend that curriculum developers should incorporate a more effective mechanism for measuring the impact of teaching on the learners.

It has to be noted, however, that informal monitoring procedures do not produce better results, as revealed by Fullan (1992). Fullan posited that all research on effective schools shows that paying constant attention to learners with special education needs' academic, personal and social development is essential for success. This is validated by the findings of the U.S Department of Education (2004:11) that successful principals "analyse instruction and learners with SEN's learning through regular classroom observation, and provide detailed feedback to teachers that supports instructional improvement".

In order to increase the success of learners with SEN, administrators advocate support through the propagation of school wide programmes for improving literacy for learners with SEN in inclusive classrooms (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004). While this report from the Carnegie Corporation centres on literacy in schools, the proposals are suitable for all learning areas and will not be effective without administrative support. They include direct and detailed instruction in literacy that is rooted in content areas and offering teachers the required instruction to implement those programmes. Self-directed learning, strategic tutoring, motivation, teacher teams, collaborative peer interactions, increased technology, ongoing assessments to determine the effectiveness of the programmes, and full support for the necessary

professional development are the strategies recommended. All of these elements need the solid support of principals and administration to champion higher academic skills for learners in all content areas with accompanying suitable staff guidance, backing, and professional nourishment. An administrator's final goal is to give learners with SEN the necessary functional skills to succeed and to provide teachers with suitable tools to make that goal a reality.

3.7 Summary

In this chapter, studies of the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs have been reviewed – studies of the professional training needed or provided, and of teaching strategies adopted by teachers. Literature on assessment and pedagogy adapted by teachers, as well as monitoring and support mechanisms for implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs has also been reviewed.

Teachers are not finding it easy to deal with the increasing number of learners with special education needs in mainstream classrooms. Their lack of required knowledge, skills and expertise to understand and support these learners causes frustration, demotivation and a sense of insufficiency which interrupts successful implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs. The researcher believes that teachers need to be provided with good continuous professional development to enable them to effectively and successfully support learners with special education needs.

The next chapter discusses the methodology adopted by the study to find answers to the research questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research paradigm, research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, instruments of data collection, data collection procedures, data analysis, issues of validity and reliability, measures to ensure trustworthiness, ethical considerations and limitation of the study.

4.2 Research paradigm

De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2005:40) express the importance of scientific research being conducted within a paradigm or way of viewing one's research material. A paradigm is a set of suppositions or principles regarding basic features of actuality that give rise to a specific world view (Maree, 2007). According to Maree (2007), paradigms are the lens or main beliefs by which reality is understood. Paradigms are concerned with knowledge claims. According to Creswell (2003), paradigms are encircling systems of interconnected practices and philosophy that define for the researcher the nature of his/her inquest along three dimensions namely; ontology, epistemology and methodology. Three different knowledge claims or paradigms have emerged which are interpretivism, positivism and post-positivism. Each of these paradigms is briefly discussed below:

4.2.1 Positivism

The positivist paradigm explores the French philosopher August Comte's observations and reasons as to the means of understanding human behaviour (Dash, 2005). Comte notes that true knowledge is based on experience of the senses and can be obtained by observation and experiment. Thus, positivistic thinkers take up his scientific method as a means of knowledge generation. In this manner, positivism is understood within the framework of the beliefs and supposition of science. According to Gephart (1999) the beliefs he puts forward state that positivism presumes an objective world which scientific methods can more or less readily stand for and gauge, and it searches to predict and describe causal relations among key variables. In line with Gephart (1999), Kim (2003) states that positivism asserts that knowledge and truth are questions of correspondence in that they relate to an external referent reality. This correspondence theory of truth specifies that the basis of truth is in reality; thus, a statement is confirmed to be true if it matches with an independently existing reality and is false if it does not match.

Positivism holds a position that the goal of knowledge is to explain the phenomena that we experience and the reason of science is attached to what can be observed and measured. Thus knowledge which is outside of this realm will be held impossible by a positivist (Trochim, 2000). According to this author positivists believe in empiricism, that is, the idea that observation and measurement are the core of the scientific endeavour. The main approach of the scientific method is the experiment, that is, the attempt to discern natural laws through direct manoeuvring and observation. According to Ryan (2006:15) knowledge has been treated as follows within positivism:

- The methodology, the means by which knowledge is achieved, is what counts,. The means must be objective, empirical and scientific.
- Specific topics only are worthy of investigation, that is those that are in the public world.
- The bond between the self and knowledge has been basically denied – knowledge is seen as different from the person who constructs it. The political is separate from the personal.

- Maths, science and technical knowledge are given high status, as they are seen as objective, different from the person and the private world.
- Knowledge is interpreted as being something discovered not formed by human beings.

It is worth mentioning the fact that, in the positivist view of the world, science is viewed as the way to get at truth, to comprehend the world well so that we might predict and influence it. Hence, positivism stresses the objectivist approach to studying social phenomena and attaches importance to research methods focusing on quantitative analysis, surveys, experiments and the like (Dash, 2005). This lens of seeing the world and the nature of its epistemologies is largely criticised for its insistence on divisions between objectivity and subjectivity, or public and private knowledge, or scientific and emotional knowledge. Anti-positivists argue that knowledge cannot be separated from ontology (being) and personal experience. Thus this view is inadequate when it comes to learning about the way people live, the way they view the world, the way they cope with it, and the way they change it (Ryan, 2006).

Gephart (1999), Kim (2003), and Nieuwenhuis (2007) argue that positivism has been criticized in relation to its technicist element that seeks to control and envisage relationships within and between variables and in its opinion that knowledge is complete. Educational researchers are interested in many of the phenomena which are not directly observable but are still significant to research; these include values, attitudes, interests, intentions, feelings and cognitions of individual persons (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh and Sorensen, 2006; Van Rensburg, 2001; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). It is argued by teachers and others working in social contexts that many aspects of social life that cannot be gauged such as experiences, expectations, feelings and opinions are still vital to research. They further argue that, while there might be law-like generalizations in social life, it is imperative to closely study individuals or small groups to learn more about social realities in specific contexts.

According to Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2002) there is no such thing as value-free observation particularly in social sciences. As an alternative, post-positivistic philosophers admit that observations are always 'theory-laden' and 'value-laden' and that it is unlikely to obtain information about phenomena not directly visible by the

senses. Instead of measuring, which is common in the physical sciences, in social contexts the researcher has to relate with the phenomenon under study (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2002). Criticisms have been raised against researchers working within this paradigm for their single view of reality that is measurable through 'objective' and 'value-free' scientific qualitative methods. The argument is that adopting such a method is to lose the individuality and worth of diverse life experiences and the understanding of those cases on their own merit (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Babbie & Mouton, 2005).

4.2.2 Interpretivism

This paradigm is characterised by a concern with the understanding and experiences of individuals, and with meaning. The central endeavour in the interpretive paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experience. In addition, there is a need to make an effort to get 'inside the person's head' and to understand issues from within (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). Miles and Huberman (1994) reveal that researchers in the interpretive tradition came to realise that the social realm is different from that of the natural sciences and cannot be investigated in the same way. They also state that this paradigm is concerned with human actions rather than human behaviour. Van Rensburg (2001:110) argues that interpretivists reflect an interest in meaning-making within this or that specific context rather than in arriving at law-like generalisations.

The interpretivist paradigm sees the world as constructed, interpreted and experienced by people in their interaction with each other and with social systems (Ullin, Robinson and Tolley, 2005:17). Within this paradigm, social reality may be understood as the result of meanings and contexts that are jointly created in social interaction. These are interpreted by the participants in concrete situations within the framework of their subjective horizons of relevance (Flick, Spielwoy, Guaderrama Kalishnikova, Zhu, Chang, Witternberg 2003). The advantage of this paradigm is that it can be used as a lens when investigating individuals or small groups in naturalistic settings (Van Rensburg, 2001:16).

Interpretivism stresses that social reality is seen and construed by the individual according to the ideological points the individual possesses. Thus, knowledge is personally experienced rather than obtained or imposed from outside (Dash, 2005). It is the belief of the interpretivists that reality is multifaceted and complicated (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000) and a lone phenomenon has multiple interpretations. The interpretivist stresses that the confirmation of a phenomenon is taken on when the level of understanding of a phenomenon is such that the concern is to probe into the various unexplored dimensions of the phenomenon rather than establishing specific relationships among the components, as happens in the case of positivism. According to Dash (2005) interpretive researchers have frequently favoured meaning- (opposed to measurement) oriented methods. They suppose that knowledge and meaning are products of interpretation; therefore, objective knowledge is dependent of thinking or human reasoning. Additionally, Orlikowski and Baroudi (1991) in Dobson (2002) note that interpretivism declares that reality, and knowledge thereof, are social products and are, thus, not capable of being interpreted without the social actors (as well as the researchers) that create and make sense of that reality.

The positivist represents objectivity, measurability, predictability, controllability and constructs laws and rules of human behaviour, while the interpretivist stresses understanding and interpretation of phenomena and bringing understanding out of this process. According to Dash (2005), interpretivism emphasizes the subjectivist method to studying social phenomena, laying emphasis on a range of research techniques focusing on qualitative analysis. These include personal interviews, participant observations, accounts of individuals, personal constructs and so on. Similarly, Gephart (1999) notes that in the interpretivist approach, data collection and representation have been achieved with informant interviewing, ethnography, or the thick description of cultures based on intimate knowledge and participation. Occasionally the approach uses ethnographically-linked textual analyses which use transcripts or verbal protocols of meetings as data. Gephart (1999) further states that such oral or conversational data are gathered to stand for interactions in significant physically occurring social settings.

Interpretive research is different from positivist theory in relation to assessment. Positivists search for rigour using statistical criteria and conceptions of reliability and

validity to evaluate the quality of quantitative findings (Gephart, 1999). Common methods bias, sampling error and sample size are familiar apprehensions. On the contrary, meaning-focused research in the interpretive tradition is measured in terms of trustworthiness criteria including credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability, as well as authenticity criteria including fairness and ontological, catalytic and tactical authenticity (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Interpretivism has its greatest strength in the richness and depth of explorations and the descriptions it yields through its qualitative approach to research. Nevertheless, it is criticized for its bias and the failure of the approach to generalize its findings beyond the situation studied (Maree, 2007). This is connected to concerns about working without a prior theory (Rensburg, 2001). Interpretivism is also criticised for the nature of the researcher's accounts which are seen as challenging as there are no set standards against which to judge subjectively constructed interpretations and meanings, and all information could be measured uniformly good or bad (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

An additional limitation found in interpretivism is the fact that researchers within this paradigm are unable to assess critically their own accounts since the researchers are unable to detach themselves from the people and the social contexts within which they conduct their research. Moreover there is a possibility that the 'authoritative stance' of researchers could silence respondents' voices, while constructing and interpreting the meaning of their actions (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Maree, 2007). Finally, there is a strain between researchers' claims that 'knowledge' is built in the individual's mind and 'knowledge' that can be shared in public (Cohen *et al.*, 2000).

4.2.3 Post-positivism

Post-positivism is an alteration to positivism. Trochim (2006) actually refers to it as a wholesale eradication of the central tenets of positivism in the same way Creswell (2003:7) calls it "the thinking after positivism". Post-positivism is a knowledge claim that disputes the complete truth and identifies that we cannot be "positive" about claims of knowledge when studying the behaviours and actions of humans as we are

all partial and all of our observations are affected (Ryan, 2006). According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008), in post-positivism the knower and the known cannot be divorced as is the case in positivism; and that, while human beings cannot flawlessly understand reality, researchers can come to it with rigorous data collection and analysis.

The post-positivistic approach to research thus gives room for multiple methods and diverse worldviews and for different forms of data collection and analysis in order to offer and validate that rigour in the process of carrying out the research. In the same vein, Trochim (2006) agreed that the post-positivist stresses the importance of multiple methods and observations, each of which may have diverse types of error, and necessitate the use of triangulation across these multiple errorful sources. Researchers are therefore encouraged to use both quantitative and qualitative means of data collection in the same study.

Maree (2007) notes that positivists express their criticisms towards the interactive and participatory nature of quantitative and qualitative methods used in post-positivism. It is argued that post-positivists employ measures that are merely an assembly of anecdotes and personal impressions which are highly suspicious in terms of research subjectivity and researcher bias. However, the bias is compensated for in the use of multiple methods in the data collection process.

Related to post-positivist beliefs are the views related to the realism and pragmatism knowledge claims. Realism is concerned with multiple perceptions about a single, mind-independent reality (Healy & Perry, 2000). Instead of being supposedly value-free, as in positive research, or value-laden as in interpretive research, realism is, rather, value cognisant; conscious of the values of human systems and of researchers (Krauss, 2005). Realism identifies that perceptions have certain plasticity and that there are dissimilarities between reality and people's perceptions of reality (Bisman, 2002). Dobson (2002) argues that the critical realist has the same opinion that our knowledge of reality is a result of social conditioning and, therefore, cannot be understood separately from the social actors involved in the knowledge derivation process. Therefore, both qualitative and quantitative methodologies are seen as suitable for researching the underlying mechanisms that drive actions and events within a critical realism framework (Healy & Perry, 2000).

Pragmatism, concerned with “what works”, is best for understanding a specific research problem. Instead of “methods” being significant as is the case in the positivism knowledge claims, the pragmatist sees the “problem” as the most vital part; therefore, researchers should make use of all approaches to understand the problem (Creswell, 2003). This means that what works is what is useful and should be used in spite of any philosophical assumptions, or any other type of assumptions (Johnson & Turner, 2003). Patton (2002) in Mwanza (2008) states that a pragmatic position entails the choice of a process that takes into consideration what works best in a given situation to meet specific issues faced in an inquiry to thereby answer the research question. In other words, the methods are dictated by the research question and not the paradigm or method. Thus, data collection and analysis methods are chosen as they are most likely to offer insights into the problem with no philosophical loyalty to any alternative paradigm (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Flick, Von Kardorff and Steinke (2004) admit that pragmatism, like realism and post-positivism, gives room to multiple diverse worldviews and different assumptions and to diverse types of data collection and analysis methods.

Guba & Lincoln (1994) point out that it may appear difficult to split the philosophies within post-positivism, realism and pragmatism. This may make clear why some researchers write that realism can also be called post-positivism. Some maintain that realism is a branch of post-positivism (Maree, 2007); the weaknesses linked with post-positivism may therefore be applicable to realism and pragmatism.

Conclusively, every school of thought or knowledge claims considered above has its own weaknesses and strengths. Several of the criticisms made of one knowledge claim may be applicable to another. For realistic research purposes, there is not an automatic preference for one method over another. The determinants of the most suitable method are the purpose of the study and the research question.

4.2.4 *Paradigm that guided the study*

This study is located in the post-positivism paradigm. The post-positivism paradigm was the rational foundation which supported the design of the research in this study as it is flexible in the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches to research.

The reason behind the selection of a paradigm to guide this study was influenced by the nature of the problem being investigated. The main objective of the study was to examine how teachers are implementing inclusive education for learners with special education needs in primary schools in the Fort Beaufort Education District. As a researcher I was interested in some aspects of positivism involving quantification, and I also wanted to include interpretivist concerns around subjectivity and meaning, combining qualitative and quantitative methods. Thus, post-positivism is a useful paradigm for this study as it adequately supports both positivistic and interpretivistic ideas and it has flexibility in the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches to research (Maree, 2007). The post-positivism paradigm fitted well with the study because, as noted above, the paradigm opens the door to multiple methods and different worldviews as well as to different forms of data collection and analysis.

The focus of the study is to examine how teachers are implementing inclusive education for learners with special education needs in primary schools in the Fort Beaufort Education District. In order to understand the issues in greater depth, it is the researcher is required to make use of different approaches. Trockim (2006) supported this by saying that the post-positivist stresses the importance of multiple measures and observations, each of which may possess different types of error. The use of triangulation across multiple sources is recommended in order to arrive at a more accurate interpretation of the research carried out. It is admitted by post-positivists that people are all biased and all of their observations are affected (theory-laden); thus, triangulation is their best hope for achieving objectivity across multiple fallible perspectives (Trockim, 2006).

4.3 Research design/approach

Polit and Hungler (1999:155) explain research design as a blueprint for carrying out the study in such a way that utmost control will be exercised over factors that could get in the way with the validity of the research results. The research design is the overall plan of the researcher for obtaining answers to the research questions that guide the study. Burns and Grove (2001:223) note that designing a study assists researchers to plan and implement the study in such a way that will help them attain the anticipated results, thus increasing the chances of achieving information that could be related to the real situation.

Trochim (2006) refers to research design as the *structure* of research. In other words it is the "glue" that holds all of the elements in a research project together. Research design can be qualitative, quantitative or a mixed method approach based on questions which include: the approaches of investigation, knowledge claims made by the researcher (as well as theoretical perspective), means of data collection and analysis that will be used (Creswell, 2003).

The approaches of investigation or traditions of inquiry give specific bearing for procedures in a research design. The approaches can be experiments, quasi experiments or surveys in the case of quantitative studies; or they can be ethnographies, case studies or phenomenological research, if it is a qualitative study (Creswell, 2003). A mixed method approach entails strategies from both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The knowledge claims, as discussed previously in this section on research paradigms, include positivism, interpretivism and post-positivism as well as realism and pragmatism, among others. The methods of data collection refer to the instruments employed in the data collection process and may consist of questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions, documents analysis, observations and others, depending on the type of study, whether qualitative, quantitative or mixed method study.

The three approaches to research study are discussed below.

4.3.1 Qualitative approach

The best way of conducting research when dealing with social phenomenon is to use qualitative methodology. Babbie and Mouton (2002) state that the qualitative methodology is appropriate to conditions in which the emphasis is on the participants' perspectives (expressing their opinions). This statement is supported by Yin's argument (Butler, 2002) that the qualitative method is most effective when the perspectives or contexts cannot be divorced from the phenomena involved. The study of the implementation of inclusion policy for learners with special education needs in Fort Beaufort primary schools is a process of understanding a social or human problem, based on constructing a complex, holistic picture of the natural setting in which the phenomenon cannot be separated from its context.

Qualitative methodology/approach is a field of investigation in its own right which is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. Qualitative researchers are interested in meaning, how people make sense of their lives, experiences and the structure of their world. The researcher attempts to observe, describe and interpret settings as they are (Henning, van Resburg, & Smit (2004)

According to Hancock (2002) the qualitative methodology/approach involves developing a description of social phenomena. It means to help us realize the world in which we exist and reason things are the way they are. It involves the social aspects of our world and looks for answers to questions which start with: why, how and in what way? Qualitative methodology involves views, experiences and feelings of individuals producing subjective data.

Henning, van Resburg, and Smit (2004) contends that qualitative methodology is concerned with the studied use and gathering of a diversity of empirical materials - interviews, observations, case studies, personal experiences, historical, interactional and visual texts – that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives. Consequently, qualitative researchers set up a variety of interrelated strategies, hoping constantly to get a better fix on the subject matter at

hand. A researcher is motivated by human interests in qualitative research, centering on meanings and trying to comprehend a central phenomenon, which is the idea or procedure discovered in a qualitative research study. Qualitative researchers have come to embrace their involvement and role within the research. Golafshani (2003) agrees with the notion of the researchers' participation and immersion into the research by observing that the real world is subject to change and thus a qualitative researcher should be there at the time of the changes to record an occurrence before and after the change occurs.

The main aim of the researcher in this study is an in-depth description of actions and events. According to Babbie and Mouton (2005) the primary concern of qualitative methodology is to understand social action in terms of its particular context instead of attempting to take a broad view of some theoretical population. Human experience is created in specific situations and cannot be made clear if taken from those situations. The researcher, therefore, endeavours to be as naturalistic as possible; in other words situations must not be constructed or adapted. Research should be conducted in the normal, everyday environment of the researched (Creswell, 2007).

According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) the qualitative approach is sensitive to situation and process, to lived experience and to local groundedness, and the researcher endeavours to get closer to what is being studied. It aims for in-depth and holistic understanding, so as to do justice to the complexity of social life. Samples are more often than not small, and its sampling is guided by theoretical instead of probabilistic considerations. Prestructuring of design and data is not common, and its strategies are less formalized than those in the quantitative approach. They are also more multidimensional, more diverse and less replicable. They, therefore, have greater flexibility.

There are important strengths in the qualitative approach. Qualitative methods are flexible, more so than quantitative methods. Thus they can be used in different situations and for a wider range of purposes and research questions. They can also be more easily modified as a study progresses. Because of their great flexibility, they are well suited for studying naturally occurring real-life situations. Moreover, they accommodate the local groundedness of the things they study - specific cases embedded in their context (Creswell, 2008). Qualitative methods are the best way we have of getting the insider's perspective, the actor's definition of the situation, the

meanings people attach to things and events. This means they can be used to study the lived experience of people, including people's meanings and purposes. Qualitative data exhibit a holism and richness, and are well able to deal with the complexity of social phenomena (Dahlberg & McCaig, 2010).

Qualitative research approaches have their own critics. Dahlberg and McCaig (2010) state that large-scale qualitative research is very time consuming and expensive. Thus, qualitative research nearly at all times has fewer participants. The process of selecting study participants is as important and rigorous in qualitative research as in quantitative research, but because of the smaller sample size qualitative researchers cannot be sure that the sample is representative of the larger population. Consequently, the potential for generalization is limited in qualitative research.

4.3.2 *Quantitative research approach*

Quantitative research is a process that is systematic and objective in its methods of using numerical data from only a chosen sub-group of a universe (or population) to generalize the findings to the universe that is being studied (Maree, 2007). As can be inferred from the definition, the three main elements of quantitative research are: objectivity, numerical data and generalisability. This author states that in quantitative research, researchers tend to remain objectively unconnected to the subject matter as quantitative research is objective in approach and it only seeks precise measurements and analysis of target concepts to answer the investigation.

According to Ryan (2006), quantitative research endeavours to connect variables (characteristics that are different from person to person), it endeavours to test theories or hypotheses, it makes efforts to predict, isolate and define groups before research begins and then to establish the relationships between them. The quantitative data gathered through this type of research can show generalisable information for a large category of people. Quantitative research is, however, limited by its inability to look at individual cases in any detail. Also its highly structured nature prevents the researcher from following up unexpected outcomes or information (Ryan, 2006). Additionally, quantitative data do not succeed in offering explanations, examples, specific answers or reasons.

There is a single reality that can be defined by careful measurement in the qualitative research approach. It is usually concise. It describes and examines relationships, and determines causality among variables, where possible. Statistical analysis is conducted to reduce and organise data, determine significant relationships and identify differences and/or similarities within and between different categories of data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014; Hopkins, 2008). The sample should be representative of a large population. Reliability and validity of the instruments are crucial. Comprehensive data collected by employing different methods and/or instruments should result in a complete description of the variable or the population studied. It provides an accurate account of characteristics of particular individuals, situations, or groups (McMillan, & Schumacher, 2014; Hopkins, 2008).

4.3.3 The mixed methods research approach

Johnson (2003) notes that mixed methods research is built on both the quantitative and qualitative approaches and makes use of them both in a single study. Both approaches have strengths and weaknesses and when used together, these methods can be complementary and consent to a more complete analysis of the research context (Tashokkori & Teddie, 1998). In other words, the data collection process in the mixed methods approach entails collecting both numerical information and text information so that the final database represents both quantitative and qualitative information (Creswell, 2003). The post-positivistic approach as well as the pragmatic and realism ideals support the mixed methods approach in the sense that they make use of multiple measures and observations, each of which may possess diverse types of error, and thus necessitate triangulation to obtain reality (Trochim, 2006).

The data collection in a mixed method approach can be obtained in two ways - either sequentially or concurrently. According to Maree (2007), sequential design means that the researcher gathers both the quantitative and qualitative data in phases (sequentially); on the other hand concurrent design implies that the researcher gathers both quantitative and qualitative data at the same time (concurrently). When

gathering the data in phases, either the qualitative or quantitative data can come first; this is based on the intention of researcher. Concurrent procedures, however, are less time-consuming than sequential procedures. Integration of the two types of data can take place at some stage in the process of research; that is, the data collection (combining open-ended questions in a survey with closed-ended questions); the data analysis and interpretation (transforming qualitative themes or codes into quantitative numbers and comparing that information with quantitative results); or some combination of stages (both during data collection and analysis).

Creswell (2003) points out that it is important that researchers involved in the use of the mixed methods approach are mindful that the approach involves extensive data collection. Additionally, it is time-intensive in that it entails analysis of both text and numerical data, and it requires that the researcher to be familiar with both quantitative and qualitative forms of research.

4.3.4 The research design that guided the study

In order to obtain data that offers useful information about the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs in primary schools in the Fort Beaufort District, the researcher engaged a triangulation mixed method design. The strategy used was the concurrent triangulation strategy which makes use of both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods concurrently so as to best understand the phenomenon of interest (Creswell, 2003). Concurrent procedures involve collecting both quantitative and qualitative data side by side during the study and then combining the information in the interpretation of the overall results (Creswell, 2003). The researcher in this study used both quantitative and qualitative methods in order to confirm, cross validate or corroborate the findings.

The quantitative approach allowed the researcher to produce a large amount of data within a short space of time, thus enabling the study to be completed within the time limits of the study programme. In addition, this approach offered opportunities to selected teachers in the Fort Beaufort Education District to give their views on the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs in primary schools in the district, thereby increasing the reliability and generalisability of the

results. Furthermore, the quantitative approach guaranteed a shorter time for data analysis as the researcher employed SPSS to aid the statistical analysis process.

The different data collection methods produced both qualitative and quantitative data. In some cases the quantitative data was used to triangulate the qualitative data while in other cases it was the reverse. In this way, the data sets supplemented each other during the collection, analysis and interpretation process to give a good picture of how inclusion of learners with special education needs is implemented in the Fort Beaufort Education District. Dick and Swepson (1997) support this method by noting that a mixed method approach is suitable as it offers a good foundation for data triangulation and so helps the overall reliability of the process of research.

The mixed method approach fitted well with this study as the main purpose of the study was to get a deeper understanding of how inclusion of learners with special education is implemented in the Fort Beaufort Education District. The integration of both qualitative and quantitative methods in the data collection process and the use of multiple sources of information allowed the researcher to seek enough views from different data sources that gave adequate insights into the issues of implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs in the Fort Beaufort Education District. In addition, the mixed method approach guaranteed that biases that might be inherent in any single method lessen the effect or cancel the biases of other methods (Creswell, 2003). Tashakorri and Teddlie (2003) concur with this notion when they say that the mixed methods approach offers strengths that counterbalance the weaknesses in the use of either the quantitative or qualitative approach alone. The concurrent mixed methods approach also lessens the time for data collection (Creswell, 2003) and thus allowed the researcher to complete the study within the given period of time.

4.4 Population, sample and sampling

4.4.1 Population

Polit and Hungler (1999:43, 232) define a population as the totality of all subjects that conform to a set of specifications, comprising the entire group of persons that is

of interest to the researcher and to whom the research results can be generalised. According to the 2009 Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), there are 220 primary schools and 16 primary school clusters in the Fort Beaufort District where this study took place. In this study the population included teachers, principals, education district officials and provincial officials.

4.4.2 *Sample and sampling*

Kemper, Stringfield, and Teddlie, (2003), describe a sample as a portion or a sub-set of the research population selected to participate in a study, representing the research population.

O'Leary (2004) points out that irrespective of any quest for representativeness, the process of sampling entails stating your population, determining sample size and using a suitable sampling strategy. The consequences of having diverse samples and different sample sizes when integrating quantitative and qualitative data-sets have to be taken into consideration (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). These authors state that it is preferable to have the same individuals participate in both samples in order to make the data and results more comparable when choosing samples in a concurrent design. Purposive sampling techniques were used to select the samples for this study. Purposive sampling entails handpicking the cases to be included on the basis of their judgment of their typicality (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2013). Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) recognize the significance of purposive sampling in research where a researcher purposely selects certain groups of people or individuals for their relevance to the issue being studied.

A sample of forty teachers, ten principals, four education district officials, and one provincial official out of the population indicated above were chosen. The Fort Beaufort District was chosen purposely because of the diversity of its schools from among urban and rural areas. The researcher also chose this district because the schools in this area are easily accessible, especially those in the rural areas. Ten primary schools were purposely selected from the 220 primary schools. They were selected because they were easily accessible, and are implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs. At the same time, they show pockets of very

good practices of inclusive education. Selection of the schools is, therefore, justified in this study because there was a set of criteria that was followed in the selection. In summary, the schools which qualified for the study had to:

- i. Implement inclusion of learners with special education needs and at the same time have pockets of very good practice of inclusive education.
- ii. Have teachers who attended workshops on inclusion of learners with special education needs with pockets of very good practice of inclusion of learners with special education needs.
- iii. Some rural schools are very inaccessible. Purposive sampling helped the researcher to target schools that can be reached relatively easily.

Samples for both quantitative and qualitative data were selected. In the case of quantitative data, forty teachers (four from each school) were purposely selected as respondents from the 10 schools because of their involvement in the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs. They are responsible for coordinating the ILST in schools and were therefore conversant with issues raised regarding the research question. It must be noted that out of the forty teachers selected, only thirty teachers completed and returned the questionnaires at the end of the data collection process.

The sample for the qualitative data was eight teachers who were purposively selected out of the thirty teachers from the quantitative samples. Teachers with greater experience in the teaching field and those who showed good practice in implementing inclusive education were selected. It was assumed that these teachers already possessed first-hand information on the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs and that they were already exhibiting good practice of inclusion of learners with special education needs. The principals of the ten selected primary schools were also interviewed. Four education district officials and one provincial official were purposely sampled for in-depth interviews because of their support and monitoring role, and their key position as far as the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs in the district and province is concerned. The purposive sampling helped to include both urban and rural schools, five from each areas

4.5 Data collection procedure

4.5.1 *Gaining entry*

Dahlberg and McCaig (2010) note that entering into a 'field' can be a difficult task especially when trying to secure respondents for a particular research project. The researcher therefore visited a number of schools, explaining the study and determining if the proposed study would be permitted and researchers' presence tolerated. The researcher acquired an ethical clearance certificate after completing relevant forms provided by the University of Fort Hare introducing her as a researcher to the Department of Education. The letter was taken to the Fort Beaufort District Director to seek permission to carry out the study in the Eastern Cape Department of Education. Furthermore, the researcher sought permission from the principals of each school selected, and also requested authorization from the individual teachers, education district officials and the provincial official to take part in the research and to arrange the dates for conducting the interviews. The respondents were informed about what was involved and what was required of them in writing and verbally, trying to ensure that potential respondents had a clear understanding of the purpose of the study. Questionnaires were issued to teacher respondents from those who were interviewed. Questionnaires were delivered in closed envelopes to the district office at which point school principals collected them and passed them on to respondent teachers. The respondents were given two weeks to fill in the questionnaires, after which the researcher returned to collect them personally, some from the district office and others from the schools.

The researcher, although not a South African, did not find it difficult to interact with the respondents. The use of English as the language of learning and teaching in schools meant that local languages did not present a problem for the researcher.

4.5.2 *Data collection instruments*

The embracing of the post-positivist paradigm and mixed methods research approach required selecting data collection techniques relevant to the philosophy of both the research methodology and the design. The nature of the research problem under study, the research objectives, the size and geographical location of the study elements, availability of finances, human resources and time, were also taken into account. Hence data were obtained in this study by means of interviews, questionnaires and documents analysis. Below is a brief description of the research methods that were used.

4.5.3 *The interviews*

Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000) state that interviewing is a way of revealing and exploring the meanings that strengthen people's lives, routines, behaviours and feelings. The researcher used face-to-face interviews because they offer the possibility of modifying one's line of enquiry, following up interesting responses and investigating underlying motives in a way that postal and other self-administered questionnaires cannot (Maree, 2007).

The researcher used interviews because they provided her with a chance to ask clarifying questions on any of the respondents' statements which were difficult to understand. The researcher was able to ask for explanation or redefinition if a response on implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs appeared to be incomplete or ambiguous. More information was solicited through personal contact with the researcher, reducing the vulnerability of the questionnaires arising from their impersonal nature. Information was obtained from one provincial official, four education district officials, ten principals and eight teachers on their views on the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs in primary schools particularly regarding the capacity of teachers, teaching methods and assessment used, and support and monitoring mechanisms. The interviews

were recorded and later transcribed, and at the same time notes were taken as backup to ensure accurate data capturing (Leedy & Ormroid, 2001).

Interviews afford the respondents the opportunity to express what is meaningful or important to him or her using his or her own words instead of being restricted to predetermined categories; hence respondents may have felt more comfortable with the interview process. Sewell (2006:4) states that interviews provide high credibility and face validity, and make intuitive sense to lay audiences. The researcher endeavoured to probe for more details in the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs and ensure that respondents were interpreting questions correctly.

According to Maree (2007) interviews are classified into three groups which are: open ended interviews; semi-structured interviews; and structured interviews. Open ended interviews focus on the participant's views of an event or phenomenon being studied. To avoid bias in the data collected, it is best to carry out the interviews with more than just one respondent.

Jones, (2013) states that the semi-structured interview is a respondent interview in which interviewers have their "shopping list" of topics to be addressed but they are free to arrange the questions in their choice of wording, as well as in the amount of time and attention given to different topics. The semi-structured interview procedure first allowed the researcher to ask a series of structured questions before going deeper by using open-ended questions in order to obtain more data and allow respondents to express themselves more fully (Borg & Gall, 1996).

As a data gathering technique, the semi-structured interviews flexibility and adaptability permitted the researcher to probe for deeper responses, follow up leads, elaborate on original responses, obtain additional and more detailed data, and clarify answers (Borg & Gall, 1996; Creswell, 2007). In structured interviews, the questions are thorough and are developed in advance as they are in survey research (Maree, 2007). Probing is not used much in structured interviews since the questions are very structured. This type of interview is used often when dealing with large sample groups or in case studies to make sure there is consistency.

Open-ended Interviews were used in this study to generate data that offered useful insights into the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs. The interviews were conducted with the respondents concerned with the implementation of the inclusion of learners with special education needs. Open-ended interviews were chosen over other forms of interviews in this study because they offered a platform for conversation. The researcher's intention was to explore with the respondent his or her views, ideas, beliefs and attitudes concerning the implementation of the inclusion programme. The researcher was able to see the world through the eyes of the participants.

Although interviews are an important instrument for obtaining first hand information in research, various weaknesses have also been revealed. Data collection is determined by the willingness of the respondents to be interviewed (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2013). Interviews may be more reactive to personalities, moods, and interpersonal dynamics between the interviewer and the interviewee than methods such as surveys. Additionally, in some cases, the use of a recorder is disconcerting for respondents - they become nervous at the knowledge that their words will be preserved (Seale, 2004). This can easily occur when the interviewer addresses sensitive topics which respondents feel somewhat insecure about. When such instances occur, the researcher may employ manual recordings in order to obtain the trust of the respondents. Fortunately, the researcher did not encounter these particular limitations due to the relationship that was developed with respondents prior to the interviews.

Another problem with interviews is bias. Qualitative interviews are more subjective than quantitative interviews because the researcher decides which quotes or specific examples to report. Sometimes the respondent gives responses intended to impress the interviewer (Hofisi, Hofisi, & Mago, 2014). In such cases the researcher made an effort to approach the same issue from a different angle so as to cross-check responses. The use of interviews requires considerable skill and experience, especially when interviewees feel threatened in response to sensitive issues. Although interviewing is time consuming, it has the possibility of providing rich and highly helpful information.

4.5.4 Questionnaires

Polit and Hungler (1997:466) define a questionnaire as “a process of obtaining information from respondents about attitudes, knowledge, beliefs and feelings”. Gathering data through questionnaires is one of the most widely used methods of obtaining information from respondents. Questionnaires can be used to gather both quantitative and qualitative data from large samples of people in survey designs. Maree (2007) classified methods of collecting data from respondents through questionnaires into four most commonly used methods. These are group administration of questionnaires; postal survey; telephone survey; and face-to-face survey.

In group administration, the researcher is present while a whole group of respondents complete questionnaires. The advantage of this method is having many respondents complete the questionnaire within a short period of time and getting across to respondents at long distances. The researcher is also able to clarify issues which are not clear to the respondents. This method, however, has the disadvantage of getting different responses if different administrators issue the questionnaires. Additionally, the main researcher is restricted in controlling what happens in the field.

The postal survey method entails mailing questionnaires to respondents who follow instructions and answer the questions. The advantage of a postal survey is that it is relatively cheap and easy to do. In addition, the respondents complete the questionnaire in a more comfortable atmosphere as there is no interviewer to influence their responses (Maree 2007). The respondents are able to check their records, if need be, to respond accurately to the questions. This method is limited, however, in that the response rate may be low, and the conditions for completing the questionnaire are not controlled (Maree, 2007).

In telephone surveys, respondents are asked questions telephonically by interviewers who record the answers. Telephone surveys are relatively quick and the response rate is frequently high. However, the cost is relatively high and the questionnaire has to be short. Interviewer bias is very high in telephone surveys as the interviewer may influence responses during the phone conversation (Maree, 2007).

In a face-to-face survey, trained interviewers meet the respondents, ask the questions and record the answers. This method has the maximum response rate and, like the group administration, the interviewer can help with questions that are unclear to the respondent. As useful as this method is, it also has limitations in that it is costly, the interviewers have to be well trained and interview bias is a high (Maree, 2007).

In this study the postal survey method of administering the questionnaire was used. This method was chosen as it made it possible to reach out to a large group of people. Questionnaires for each school were sealed in an envelope and left at the district office, specifically in the hands of the education district officials. School principals then collected the envelopes from the district office and distributed them to teachers at their schools. After the teachers had responded to the questionnaires, the principals then took them back to the district office. Thereafter the researcher collected the completed questionnaires from a designated person at the district office. All the forty teachers from the ten schools of Fort Beaufort Education District were issued a questionnaire to respond to. Only 30 completed the questionnaires and these reached the researcher within the time frame for the data collection exercise for the study. Still, this was a good number to warrant quantitative analysis.

Questionnaires have the advantage of eliciting many teachers' views on the inclusive programme. This enabled the researcher to get a wider view on the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs. Among other things, the questionnaire collected information on the teachers' personal interest in special education, level of and desire for more knowledge about special needs education, assessment of learners with special education needs, adaptations in teaching strategies, and beliefs about the effectiveness of strategies in meeting the needs of learners with special education needs.

The large numbers also contributed to the reliability of the results. The researcher followed up with the education district officials as well as the principals to ensure that the questionnaires were returned. This, to some extent, overcame the problem that typically arises with the use of questionnaires, which is that a large number of respondents tend not to return the questionnaires (Maree, 2007).

It is worth mentioning that the questionnaires were pilot-tested before they were fully administered in the schools. The researcher decided on the sample size as well as the schools used for piloting. This ensured that the language of the questionnaire was understandable and that the categories used were not confusing to the respondents. Questions that seemed to elicit the same answers were removed. The feedback from the pilot study led to some modifications to the questionnaire.

The piloting process led the researcher to a sense of greater certainty in administering the final questionnaires for the study. Davies (2007) notes the fact that by the time the researcher completes the pilot stage, he/she will be assured that the language and phraseology used in the instrument will be understood by the respondents. My own experience confirmed this.

4.5.5 Document analysis

Document analysis is non-reactive, and can yield vast amounts of data concerning the values and beliefs of participants in their natural settings (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Analysis of documents in this study complemented the interviews and questionnaires in the data collection process. Document analysis helped to answer questions that the interviews and questionnaires could not address.

In this research, documents were analysed, partly in order to fill gaps that were left by the interviews and questionnaires. Document analysis also provided the researcher with an opportunity to verify some identified issues with the respondents during later interviews, and thus minimised the risk of imposing personal inferential interpretations upon what was found in the documents (Chisaka & Vakalisa, 2000).

The study reviewed documents relevant to the study, which included lesson plans, learners' and teachers' profiles, minutes of meetings, assessment instruments and assessment records, school records and education department records (archives) on support provision. Information from these documents provided data that supplemented the data gained through interviews and questionnaires. These documents were randomly selected and approached with a critical mind.

According to Creswell (2003), several criticisms against document analysis methods have been raised. Due to its social context and identity, the researcher may render a selective and biased understanding of a document and may even deliberately select particular documents. Authors of documents may decide to record or leave out information on the basis of the social, political and economic environment of which they are part. The researcher of this study was conscious of these points. Therefore, as a basis for comparing the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs against the benchmark set out in the Education White Paper 6, the lesson plans and teacher's and learners' files were analysed using the White Paper 6 guidelines for implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs.

Other documents which were analysed were learners' notebooks to get information on the frequency of written work and the amount of work allocated by teachers to learners with special education needs, as well as the regularity of such assigned work. Data was also sought on the consistency of the teachers' marking of work.

4.6 Validity and reliability

4.6.1 Validity

Validity is the degree to which an empirical measure sufficiently shows the real meaning of the concept under consideration (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:122). Some of the ways in which one can check if a measure effectively shows the real meaning of the concept under study are face validity, criterion-related validity, construct validity and content validity. Many sources of evidence were used in this study in order to improve the validity including the credibility of the findings. In addition to interviews and questionnaires, documentary analysis was conducted. The researcher put into consideration the length of questionnaires and the level of respondents where the instruments would be issued. The questionnaires were interpreted for understanding and expression of views in areas where explanation was required. In order to give respondents confidence in responding honestly, they were advised not to write their names on the questionnaires. Besides the interview schedules the questionnaires were also pilot tested.

4.6.2 Reliability

According to Maree (2007) reliability refers to the consistency or repeatability of a measure or instrument. High reliability is obtained when the measure or instrument has the same results if the research is repeated on the same sample. Kumar (2005) states that an instrument issued under the same conditions to the same people having similar results is 'reliable'. The more similar the results, the greater the reliability. Many factors can influence the reliability of a research instrument, for instance ambiguous questions, respondents' moods, a change in the physical setting for data collection and the nature of the interaction between interviewer and interviewee (Babbie & Mouton, 2005). All of social life, as well as social research, functions on agreements about the conditions we use and the terms they symbolize. Babbie and Mouton (2005) do not agree that social researchers have to look both to their colleagues and to their subjects as sources of agreement for most helpful meanings and measurements of the concepts they study. At times one source will be more helpful, at times the other. Nevertheless neither should be discarded.

According to Babbie and Mouton (2005) reliability implies the possibility that a given measurement method will produce a similar description of a given phenomenon if that measurement is repeated. Reliability does not guarantee accuracy any more than precision does. When qualitative researchers refer to research "validity and reliability", it appears they are by and large referring to research that is credible and trustworthy. According to Kumar (2005) another way of guaranteeing accuracy is to transcribe the interviews and send them back to their respective respondents for confirmation and approval. This author states that validation of the information by a respondent is a significant aspect of collecting data through unstructured interviews. It guarantees accuracy of content and assists in removing ambiguities in meanings and inferences drawn by you as a researcher.

Dependability is analogous to reliability. Confirmability is a technique used as a means of showing that clean data was collected so as to overcome method boundedness (Cohen & Manion, 1994) and by which the results could be confirmed or corroborated by others, thus enhancing their dependability.

According to Lincoln and Guba in Maree (2010), both dependability and confirmability can be determined by way of a properly managed inquiry audit in which reviewers examine both the research process and the product of the research for consistency. Dependability and confirmability can both be achieved by clearly stating research procedures and providing evidence of raw data (Henning, 1995). To ensure the dependability and confirmability of this study, the researcher has quoted liberally from the data, and has systematically stored the audio cassettes containing the raw individual interviews, the typed transcripts, and the final draft of the research project for verification by any interested individual.

Furthermore, the issues of trustworthiness, validity and reliability were handled by the researcher using methodological triangulation by employing multiple techniques (interviews, questionnaires and document analysis) to create more than one form of data so as to measure a more holistic image of discursive practice. In general it is accepted that engaging multiple methods of data collection leads to trustworthiness. The instruments were edited by the supervisor as well as some friends, including PhD students, for maximum reliability.

4.7 Data processing and analysis

Data analysis in a research project entails summarizing the mass of data gathered and presenting the results in way that shows the most important features. The raw qualitative and quantitative data that were gathered in this study had to be processed for analysis. This method arranged the data so that it answered the research problem or topic under investigation. Maree (2010) states that data processing means editing, coding, classification and tabulation of collected data. The raw data were checked using a variety of different interpretations in order to find connections between the research object and the outcomes with reference to the original research questions. The researcher remained open to new opportunities and insights throughout the analysis and evaluation process.

Researchers should make every effort to create an analysis of the maximum quality (Yin, 2003). Furthermore the author states that the researcher should show that the analysis depended on all the relevant evidence, that all rival interpretations have

been included in the analysis and that the researcher has used his or her prior expert knowledge to further the analysis.

Qualitative data were coded systematically according to specific concepts and themes. The themes were then analysed to address the main question which seeks to investigate the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs in primary schools in the Fort Beaufort District. The researcher compared the information from the interviews with the information from the document analysis.

Analysing data in qualitative research involves the following steps (Leedy & Ormrod (2005):

- i) Organising all data into small units of information like sentences, individual words or stories,
- ii) Getting the sense of what the small units of information are saying and identifying categories and themes,
- iii) Interpretation of single instances,
- iv) Identification of patterns, and
- v) Synthesis and generalisation (ibid).

According to Nieuwenhuis (2007:99), qualitative data analysis tends to be an ongoing and interactive (non-linear) process, implying that data collection, processing, analysing and reporting are intertwined, not merely a number of separate, successive steps.

This study began the process of data analysis by transcribing *verbatim* the audio-taped interviews. The results were cross-checked with the respondents. The raw data from the interview were coded so as to come up with data sets. Responses were treated according to research questions to which the respondents were responding. The researcher also referred to the transcriptions, and arranged the data listed under each research question. By so doing the researcher was able to compile data sets for each research question. The study also came up with inductive themes related to each question. The same process was used to analyse data obtained through the document analysis.

The quantitative data collected were processed by creating a data file or data template. The data file creation involved entering the coded quantitative data into a computer programme known as the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). Tables were constructed from the SPSS data file to facilitate further analysis of the data. The quantitative data collected via the questionnaires were coded and entered under SPSS. The researcher then applied a few analytical techniques to sum up the indicators. The analysis took the form of a univariate analysis including frequency counts, percentages, and the calculation of appropriate indicators. Where appropriate, cross tabs were applied. Both quantitative and qualitative data were interpreted together through triangulation. Once all data had been collected and captured, the results were compressed.

4.7.1 *Ethical considerations*

Any research which includes other people in some way has ethical implications (Water- Adams, 2006). Education is a social action; obtaining data and analysis within this study, therefore, unavoidably impacted on the lives of other people included in the study. Considering this fact, it was only proper that this study consider abiding by the interviewees' right to privacy. The researcher ensured that all the respondents participated voluntarily, no one was forced to participate and each participant was given a guarantee that all information would be treated with confidentiality.

The study sought the approval of respondents from all relevant bodies, including the Provincial Department of Education, the district office, school principals and teachers prior to the commencement of data collection. Consent was obtained from all the respondents taking part in the study by informing them about the purpose and methods of the research study in a way that was likely to be clear and understandable to them (Miller, & Bell, 2002). All respondents signed a consent form. Respondents were given the option to withdraw from the study at any time since their participation was voluntary. Privacy, confidentiality and the use of participants' time were at all times respected. Care was also taken to ensure that respondents' interests were not jeopardised in any way. The entire study was

conducted according to the Research Code of Ethics as provided by the University of Fort Hare Ethics Committee.

4.7.2 *Informed consent*

Kumar (2005:212) states that it is not ethical to gather information without the approval, readiness and informed consent of respondents. Informed consent means that participants are made satisfactorily conscious of the type of information you want to gather, the reason for the information, what purpose it will be used for, the way they are expected to contribute to the study, and how it directly or indirectly affects them. Importantly, the consent also has to also be voluntary and without any kind of pressure (Kumar, 2005:212).

In this study, permission was sought from the District Director of the Fort Beaufort District to conduct the research in the district. Permission was sought from the education district officials, from the principals and teachers of the selected schools to interview teachers and principals. After obtaining permission, appointments were then made with the education district officials, principals and teachers of the selected schools that were sampled for interviews. Brief meetings were held with the teachers in each school to explain to them the reason for the study, purposes and benefits of their participation and their right to participate or not. The respondents were told about the aims and objectives of this study, the length of time of involvement, likely risks, and the advantages and necessary procedures to be followed before their acceptance to participate in the research study.

The researcher explained to the participants the need for the interviews to be recorded and their consent for tape recording was sought. The researcher placed a high value on the participants' right to withdraw from the process at any time.

4.7.3 *Maintaining confidentiality and anonymity*

Other than for research purposes, it is not ethical to share information about a respondent with other people (Kumar, 2005:214). The information offered by

respondents remained anonymous with the researcher, as it is not ethical to name an individual respondent. After the data collection, the researcher ensured that all the respondents could not be traced by changing specific details to protect identities (Flick, 2006:50). The researcher saved the data, including recordings and transcripts, in a safe location to prevent anyone gaining access to it.

4.7.4 *Avoiding harm or damage to participants*

According to O’Leary (2005:73) respondents are not to be hurt or injured by the research in any way. If care is not taken in the research process, it is possible to harm the respondents through exposure of data, using information pertaining to the respondents for purposes other than research, or by using their real names in a publication. This study took into consideration ways in which data collection methods and presentation might implicate respondents in terms of legal liabilities, ostracism, political repercussion or stress. The researcher adhered to the issues of confidentiality as stated above.

4.8 Summary

This chapter discussed the methodology adopted in this study. The different research paradigms that exist were looked at and located this study in the post-positivism paradigm due to its use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches to research. The chapter in addition scrutinized the different research designs in an effort to place the study into its appropriate context. After a careful assessment of the designs, the study was fitted into the mixed method design that uses concurrent procedures in the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. The chapter further examined the population, sample and sampling techniques that were adopted in the study. This explains the population from which respondents were obtained. The real sample was then defined and the methods that were followed to get the sample. Subsequently, data collection instruments were chosen, including questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis. Issues of validity, reliability,

trustworthiness, data analysis, and ethical considerations were all also discussed in the chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data gathered by the methods outlined in chapter 4 with respect to five major themes: skills teachers possess to enable them to implement inclusion of learners with special education needs, strategies adopted by teachers to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs, the content (including assessment), the pedagogy adapted to ensure that it meets the needs of all learners and their support (including training) and the monitoring provided to teachers by schools and the Department of Education to enable them to cater for all learners.

This study endeavoured to respond to the main research question, which sought to investigate how teachers are implementing inclusive education for learners with special education needs. The data presented in this chapter was gathered through semi-structured questionnaires, open ended individual interviews, and analysis of documents such as the lesson plans, assessment instruments and assessment records, school records and education department records (archives) on support provision and teachers' and learners' files.

The respondents were: thirty teachers for questionnaires and eight teachers for interviews, ten school principals, four education district officials and one provincial official in ten purposively selected primary schools in the Fort Beaufort District.

The participants are identified as follows: Teachers (T1-T8), the school principals (P1-P10), the education district officials (EDO 1-EDO 4), provincial official (PO) and the primary schools (S1-S10). The coding of the participants is school-matched. For instance, T1 and P1 are all from School 1 (S1); T2 and P2 are from S2, and so on.

5.2 Biographic information of respondents

The biographical data of the respondents assists in providing significant information on implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs in primary schools. Capacity of teacher and principal respondents comprises the knowledge and skills in inclusive programmes and pedagogical content that are required for teachers and principals to teach and manage in the classroom. Biographical data discloses the gender, age, academic and professional qualifications, specialization and experiences of the respondents. Their qualifications, specializations and experiences may show their level of understanding and how they implement inclusive programmes to include learners with special education needs.

Outlining the profile of respondents is required as some of the duties they perform entail levels of expertise, skill or capacity that are essential for them to function effectively to achieve the principles of inclusive policy. Respondents' profiles provide a picture of the level in which they are likely to understand the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs as their views of education policy implementation are influenced by their educational backgrounds. Examination of teaching experience also assisted in determining whether the views of the respondents were congruent with their knowledge of the job at hand as well as the art of implementing policy. Scholars tend to think that perceptions are also influenced by gender and age, thus the need to profile the respondents with respect to their gender and age. It is assumed that a fuller understanding of these respondents' attributes will make it easier to understand why certain practices prevail in the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs in primary schools. The racial background of respondents in this study include, whites, blacks, Indians and coloureds

5.2.1 *Gender of teacher and principal respondents*

The study sought information on gender of teacher and principal respondents. This is important as the study wanted to find whether the views expressed were a true reflection of both sexes in the selected schools.

Table 5-1: Distribution of teacher respondents by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	3	10.0
Female	27	90.0
Total	30	100.0

Table 5.1 above shows that most teacher respondents - 27 (90%) were females while three (10%) were male. The data indicates that within the study population of this research, that is, in the selected schools in the Fort Beau fort District, there were more female teachers. This could be attributed to the fact that more female teachers were trained to teach in primary schools. Also, it can be partly attributed to the fact that there are more female teachers than male in most of the selected schools.

Table 5-2: Distribution of principal respondents by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	3	30
Female	7	70
Total	10	100

Table 5.2 above shows that three principal respondents were males and seven were females. This means selected primary schools in Fort Beaufort had more females in leadership positions.

5.2.2: Age and experience of teachers and principals

The ages of teacher and principal respondents were also mapped, since it is believed that young educators are not as experienced in dealing with ‘challenged learners’ as older educators are (Dewey, 2007). Further, it is assumed that older teachers are more mature and more experienced. Experience of teachers in implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs is useful because having more experience means being able to give more information and discuss the challenges which are confronted in the classroom.

An indicator of readiness for the teaching profession is age. The South African education system states that entry age for primary schooling is 6 years, followed by seven years of primary schooling and then five years of secondary schooling. In the process of becoming a school teacher, it used to be mandatory to complete a minimum of two years of training as a teacher at a Teacher Training College (TTC). Recently, the requirement has been increased to at least three years, meaning that the youngest age at which someone can qualify as a primary school teacher in South Africa is 20 years.

Experienced principals can support teachers in building teaching skills and knowledge on supervisory practices. Such issues are rather more difficult for a

novice principal to dictate. The tables below show the distribution of teacher and principal respondents by age and experience.

Table 5-3: Distribution of teacher respondents by age and experience

Age	Experience years	Frequency	Percentage
20-29	>5	3	10.0
30-39	6-10	5	16.7
40-49	11-15	17	56.6
Above 50	16-20	5	16.7
Total		30	100

Table 5.3 reveals that there were three (10.0%) teacher respondents with less than five years' teaching experience. These teachers were also the youngest among the respondents as they were between 20 and 29 years. The majority of teacher respondents, 17 (56.6%) had above 11-15 years' experience and were between 40 and 49 years. Five had 6 to 10 years' experience and were between 30 to 39 years. There were five (16.7%) respondents who were over 50 years and had between 16 to 20 years' experience.

The table above shows that there is link between age and experience as most of the older teachers had more years of experience and young teachers had less years of experience as indicated by the solicited information. Though the information above indicates that there are experienced teachers in the teaching profession, they might not be as experienced in implementing inclusion of learners with SEN which became apparent when these teachers complained about inadequate training for implementing the programme.

Table 5-4: Age and experience of principal respondents

Age	Experience years	Frequency	Percentage
20-29	>1	-	-
30-39	1-5	1	10
40-49	6-10	6	60
Above 50	<11	3	30
Total		10	100

Information solicited from principals reveals that the majority of them, six (60.0%) had 6 to 10 years' management experience and were between 40 and 49 years of age. one (10%) had experience of 1 to 5 years and was between 30 and 39 years of age. Three principals (30.0%) who were above 50 years had more than eleven years' management experience.

5.2.3 Qualifications of teacher and principal respondents

According to the requirements of the South African Council of Educators (SACE), and the Norms and Standards for Educators (DoE, 2000), one should either possess an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) or a Diploma in Education (Dip.Ed) to be considered a professionally qualified teacher in South Africa. A Bachelor of Education Degree (B.Ed) has been identified as the minimum entry requirement for someone who qualifies as a teacher as from January 2011. This professional qualification is attained after three (full time) to four years (part time) of training.

The researcher sought to ascertain the professional qualifications of teachers and principals in order to establish whether they were properly qualified in their various positions. The professional qualifications and specialisation of teachers are shown in Tables 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7.

Table 5-5: Professional qualifications of teachers

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Certificate in Education	2	6.7
Diploma in Education	14	46.7
Bachelor of Education	11	36.7
Honours Degree	2	6.7
Masters in Education	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

The table shows that the majority of teacher respondents, 14 (46.7 %) had a Diploma in Education (DE). 11 (36.7%) respondents held Bachelor of Education degrees. Two (6.7%) respondents held an Honours Degree while the same number of teachers had a Certificate in Education. There was one (3.3%) respondent who held a Masters in Education. All the above qualifications are recognized as legitimate qualifications in the teaching profession in South Africa.

Table 5-6: Professional qualifications of principals

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Diploma in Education	1	10.0
Higher Diploma in Education	1	10.0
Advanced Certificate in Education	2	20.0
Bachelor of Arts	1	10.0
Bachelor of Education	2	20.0
Bachelor of Education (Hons)	2	20.0
Masters of Education	1	10.0
Total	10	100.0

The study sought to establish the highest professional qualifications of the respondent principals, and it was revealed that one of the principals had Bachelor of Education (Honours) degrees. Another two had Bachelor of Education degrees, one principal had a Bachelor of Arts degree, and one had a Diploma in Education. One other principal respondent had a Higher Diploma in Education. The table also indicates that one of the respondent principals had a Masters Degree in Education. The other two principals had Advanced Certificates in Education.

5.2.4 Teachers' specialisation

The investigation of the teacher specialization in special educational needs showed that majority of the teachers had no training in the area. Therefore they are not suitably qualified to implement inclusion of learners with SEN. Professional qualifications enable teachers to teach learners without special education needs in the context of mainstream schools. Statistics of teachers' specialisation in the district

revealed that the district had an inadequate number of teachers who had training in special education.

Teachers' specialisation had a direct bearing on the implementation of the inclusion policy, thus this study sought to establish the specialisation of teachers. The researcher sought to establish whether the teachers in the selected schools had qualifications in special education. The table below presents the specialisation of teachers with respect to special needs education.

Table 5-7: Teachers' specialization

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
B.Ed (SNE)	1	3.3
ACE (SNE)	1	3.3
None	28	93.3
Total	30	100

This table indicates that a B.Ed in Special Education was the highest qualification obtained for 3.3% (1). One teacher had an ACE in SEN. The majority of teachers who participated in the study did not have a specialization in SEN.

All the teachers in the schools had a professional qualification. They either had a Diploma in Education, a Higher Diploma in Education, an ACE, a Bachelor of Education, a Bachelor of Arts or a Masters degree. They had not received training in special education, leaving them unqualified on a professional level deal with learners with special education needs. Though professionally qualified, many of these teachers lacked the pedagogic skills required in the field of special needs education.

The implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs is supposed to be done by any teacher in spite of specialisation and length of service in the profession. Ordinarily, one would expect that the more experience teachers have in the service, the better informed they should be about inclusive policy.

As the managers of schools the responses of principals, district officials and provincial official were sought on the qualifications teachers are expected to hold for them to implement inclusion of learners with SEN. They were further asked if their teachers have qualifications to implement inclusion of learners with SEN. The following are some of their responses.

P2 commented:

Teachers should have methods, teachers should go to the colleges and not the universities for them to get the method. For teachers to implement inclusive education they must have remedial in education but in my school teachers don't have. What they do in my district is to organize workshops and in service training for teachers although it is poor, we have been in this trend for so long, you are also going to use your experience as a teacher. Most of the teachers have diploma in education. They do have the methods and skills, on how to handle those kids with different barriers because of the colleges we are basically learning the skills on how to deal with learners.

P3 stated:

Teachers must have higher education and you must further your studies to get a Degree. You must also have remedial to implement inclusion for learners with SEN because you must make remedies for those learners. Teachers in this school do not have remedial. One of the teachers has management and another is just a practitioner. They have only attended workshops on inclusive education.

P4 pointed out:

Teachers must have remedial to be able to implement inclusive education for learners with special education

needs. No, most of the teachers in my school are not qualified. Only one teacher has ACE in special education.

P5 disclosed:

The lowest qualification to qualify as a teacher is 3 years the minimum. In the old dispensation, you would have to do special course to specialise in Special Education before you can teach learners with barriers. All the teachers in my school are qualified to implement inclusion of learners with SEN because they are qualified professional teachers as all of them have got the minimum 3 years degree. In other words there is no special qualification to implement inclusion of learners with SEN education.

P6 said:

I'm not sure. But I think as long as you are a professional you are able to implement it.

P7 noted:

I think teachers are supposed to have remedial to be able to help learners with barriers to learning. The teachers in my school are not qualified; the only thing that is helping us is the workshops organized by the district office.

P10 stated:

Teachers should specialize in special needs. One teacher has specialisation in Special Education out of 12 teachers; others do not have qualifications in special needs.

EDO1 and EDO3 stated that teachers do not need any specialised qualifications to implement inclusive education.

EDO1 noted:

As long you are a teacher at school, by virtue of being a teacher, we don't look at qualification you don't need remedial to implement inclusive education, once you know the policy. You just need workshop to unpack the policy so that you can understand what is expected. To implement inclusion of learners with SEN is not dependent on qualifications but anyone who practices as a teacher. As long as you are a teacher, you are expected to teach or implement inclusive education

EDO3 said:

It's teacher's diploma. There is no specific special qualification for them if they are qualified as teachers, they can implement inclusion of learners with SEN.

EDO 2 and PO had contrary responses to the issue.

EDO2 commented:

Diploma in special education from there teachers can get Honours or Masters. It is a challenge most teachers are not having the qualification most teachers see Inclusive Education as extra work. Teachers need to be trained, they must be made aware. I can say 60% of the teachers don't have the qualifications to teach Inclusive Education. They are all qualified as teachers but don't have qualifications in special needs.

PO pointed out:

You need to have specialization in learning support. We need educators with remedial education, Psychologists, Educators with – Augmentative alternative communicate system (AACCS) to help learners who could not communicate. These are the teams we are using in inclusive education so that we cover a large ground in terms of learning barriers. Yes they have the qualifications, a number of them at special schools have these qualifications.

It emerged that some respondents stated that teachers do not need special qualifications to implement inclusive education while many others argued that teachers should hold qualifications in special education needs, learning support and remedial for them to implement inclusion of learners with special education needs.

5.2.5 Identification of learners with SEN

Identification of learners as having special education needs is a significant factor in the implementation of the inclusion of learners with SEN, as learners with the relevant aptitude and ability should be chosen. The National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (2008) states that there is a procedure of identifying, assessing and providing programmes for all learners requiring additional support so as to improve participation and inclusion. An unsuitable intervention programme could be given to learners and this could hamper the successful implementation of the inclusive education policy if this process is not followed. The study sought to establish how learners were identified and selected as having special education needs. This information was considered to be important, as it makes it possible for implementers of the policy to assess the level and extent of support needed to maximize learners' participation in the learning process.

The study investigated how learners were identified as having special education needs in the selected schools. This was important as the study wanted to find out whether schools stick to policy-strategies. The responses are shown in table 5.1 below.

Table 5-8: How teachers identified learners with SEN

Learners' identification	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of concentration	13	43.3
No response	2	6.7
Daily observation/poor performance	15	50.0
Total	30	100.0

As indicated in the table above the majority of teachers, 15 (50.0%) identified learners with SEN by daily observation and by the learners' poor performance while 13 (43.3%) identified these learners by their lack of concentration in the classrooms. Two teachers (6.7%) did not respond to the question of how they identify learners with SEN.

In their interview on the same issue, teacher respondents stated that they observe learners on a daily basis in all that they do. Teachers also said they identified learners with SEN by their poor performance. The following are some of their comments in this regard:

T2 disclosed:

Learners with SEN are identified by their performance which is below average in class tests and examination results. Learners who perform below expectation are first identified as learners with SEN.

T5 remarked:

We identified learners with SEN by daily close observation in everything that they do. We observe closely their written work, reading, and understanding. Any child that is found wanting in these areas is identified as having SEN.

Document analysis confirmed the views of the teachers that learners were identified through their performance in class tests and examination results. There was written evidence to that effect; the researcher was presented with academic performance record sheets where it was found that learners whose performances were below average were automatically listed as learners with SEN. There is evidence of good practice in this section as teachers were able to identify learners with SEN through learners' performance, lack of concentration and close observation.

5.3 Delivery of the curriculum

In this section the researcher sought information on how teachers plan their lessons, teaching methods, curriculum adaptation, assistance provided by teachers to support learners with special education needs, and assessment of learners with special education needs. Below are the findings of each category.

5.3.1 Plans of lessons to ensure inclusion of learners with SEN

An effective and relevant foundation in inclusive education can be created and maintained among learners through effective practices that give teachers the opportunity to plan and deliver lessons that meet the needs of all learners and result in positive learning outcomes (Dettmer, Dyck & Thurston, 2005). Teachers who are qualified, well-trained and experienced use appropriate methods to plan the lessons. This study investigated methods that teachers use to plan their lessons, and the results are presented in the following sections.

Table 5-9: Lesson plan to ensure inclusion of learners with SEN

Lesson plan	Frequency	Percentage
Planning according to phases	6	20.0
Planning according to learners' abilities	16	53.3
Planning according to grades	3	10.0
Weekly and daily plan	2	6.7
Planning to include steps like introduction, content, conclusion and assessment	3	10.0
Total	30	100.0

From table 5.9 above the majority of the teachers, 16 (53.3%) planned according to learners' abilities. Some teachers, six (20.0%) planned according to different phases, for instance, the foundation phase teachers planned together, the same with intermediate and senior phases. Three (10.0%) teachers planned their lessons according to learners' grades; the same numbers of teachers, three (10.0%) planned by including some steps like introduction, content, conclusion and assessment in their planning. Two teachers (6.7%) used daily and weekly lesson plans.

5.3.2 Reasons for planning lessons to ensure inclusion of learners with SEN

Teachers were asked about reasons for planning lessons to ensure inclusion of learners with SEN. The majority of teachers, 18 (60.0%) planned their lessons to accommodate all learners. Six of the teachers (20.0%) planned their lessons because that was the easiest way to plan with teachers' full schedules. Five teachers (16.7%) planned for learners' benefits. Only one (3.3%) teacher planned following government policy.

Respondent teachers and school principals were interviewed in order to gain an understanding of how teachers plan their lessons. Some of the respondents planned their lessons using textbooks because they were not sure how to plan to accommodate learners with SEN. Some planned their lessons considering the strengths and interests of learners and according to the NCS templates and requirements in order for learners with SEN to understand, while others planned their lessons outside the curriculum guidelines so as to be ready for their lessons. The following are the teachers' comments in relation to this question:

T1 said:

I always refer to textbooks. I plan my lessons like this because I do not know how to plan lesson to include learners with SEN. I need workshops and training to be able to do better in planning and teaching generally.

T5's experience of uncertainty because of insufficient training was similar to T1's:

I collect the information from other books. I do not know the best way to prepare the lesson plan because I was not really trained to implement inclusive education. I plan this way because I want to increase my own knowledge to be aware of the points that the learners will understand and to accommodate them all.

Both T2 and T3 based their planning on the NCS: *I use the National Curriculum Statement 2008 because it is better this way, and I am using the specified syllabus which talks about learner-centred so as include all learners.*

T3 said:

I plan my lessons according to the NCS 2008 templates and requirements. The reason is so that it can be easily understood by all learners and other people who can have access to the lesson.

Like T5, T4 emphasised taking her preparation well beyond the curriculum guidelines. She was also of the opinion that ready-made lesson plans make teachers lazy and less creative because everything has been laid out for them. Therefore, in her case, she went beyond the NCS templates to explore other options that might best achieve the objectives of each lesson or topic:

T5 stated:

I make it a point that I have enough information about the topic I want to teach. And on top of that I do extra research on the topics. The reason is that I know the learners always have something to ask, so I have to prepare myself very well before the class.

In her response, T6 emphasised taking the learners' specific strengths and interests into account in her lesson preparation:

T6 commented:

Well, there are lessons that I do extract directly from the textbooks. I check them out first, evaluate them and present them the following day or later. Some of them are spontaneous, for my learners are very artistic, therefore I allow them to exercise such talents... My reason for planning this way is because it gives me time to understand the lesson first so that I can incorporate my style of teaching and later implement excellently.

In the interviews held with school principals, the majority, perhaps unsurprisingly, laid some emphasis on the teachers using the NCS as the guide for their lesson plans. The following are some of their comments in this regard:

P1 revealed:

Lesson plans are designed and provided by the Department through the subject advisers. It is a new system by the Department, maybe with the target of getting teachers to study and prepare better prior to teaching.

P3 said:

The Department of Education has a common lesson plan given to teachers. However, the lesson plan must fit the learners' backgrounds and life situation. This is because the lesson is learner-centred.

For three principals (P2, P6 and P5), compliance to the national curriculum was clearly uppermost in their minds:

P2 noted:

Teachers follow the (learner-centred) NCS plans in planning lessons. They use lesson programmes which are according to the National Curriculum Statement because it is NCS-compliant.

P6 commented:

The Subject Adviser provides templates for lesson plans through workshops.

P5 stated:

Teachers... plan in accordance with the framework and schedule of the NCS ... because the lesson is outcome-based and learner-centred.

From the district official interviews they pointed out that there are common lesson plans given to teachers. Below are their comments in this regard:

EDO1 pointed out:

Teachers are given common lesson plans at the beginning of the year so that they can adapt from that common lesson plan, doing their own breakdown.

EDO2 said:

Teachers plan by adapting the curriculum to accommodate all learners, it is a way of accommodating every learner in a lesson for instance if you have a child with difficulties in hearing in a class then the sitting (seating) arrangement will have to be changed to accommodate the learner. The learner must sit in front so that he or she may speech read as you will be teaching. That is one of the strategies for curriculum adaptation.

On the other hand, the provincial official stated that lesson plans in the mainstream schools vary from special schools. Lesson plans in any type of school have to consider learners' diversity. It is not straightforward planning because there are some learners who will not cope now that there is curriculum differentiation.

It was evident that some teachers relied on the NCS templates and requirements as a guide for their lesson plans, in part because of the security these gave them, and because it made their jobs easier and less time-consuming. Others drew attention to the fact that they explored more widely in their lesson planning, in at least one case even planning with the specific nature of their learners in mind.

From most of the respondents' statements there are good practices in terms of inclusion of learners with special education needs as some of them planned their lessons taking into consideration the strengths and interests of learners. It was also found that some of the teachers plan according to the NCS which is learner-centred.

The analysis of teachers' teaching documents like the teacher's portfolio, lesson plans and learners' portfolio showed that all the teachers were to a greater degree

guided by the framework schedule and the lesson templates contained in NCS. This is a good practice as the NCS stresses the use of learner-centred methods to include all learners in the curriculum delivery. According to the teachers' portfolios, lessons are planned over a period of a month divided into weeks, with each week dedicated to addressing different aspects of the subjects in the curriculum.

5.3.3 Teaching strategies adopted by teachers to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs.

The qualifications and training of a teacher may be the determinants of his/her teaching strategies or methods. These can also be determined by the ability of learners as well as the learning area the teacher teaches. In some situations the choice, however, may depend on the teacher's experience and the aim of the lesson. The duty of the teacher is to identify the particular technique which he/she considers suitable to the instructional situation and which will best contribute to the attainment of educational goals. The researcher sought to establish teachers' strategies and teaching methods, since they are an important component of the implementation of inclusive education. It is these methods which determine learners' successful interaction with the taught curriculum. Table 5.10 shows teaching strategies used by teachers in delivering their lessons in inclusive classes.

Table 5-10: Teaching methods/strategies

Teaching method	Frequency	Percentage
Group work/remedial teaching	12	40.0
Discussion	13	43.3
Question and answer sessions	2	6.7
Practical activities	1	3.3
Note-taking and explanatory	1	3.3
No response	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

In table 5.10 above, 12 (40%) teachers applied group/remedial teaching to learners with SEN. 13 (43.3%) used the discussion method. Two teachers used questions and answers. One (3.3%) teacher used practical activities while the same number used note-taking and explanatory sessions. Only one teacher did not respond to the question of teaching strategies used by teachers in delivering their lessons.

5.3.4 Effectiveness of teaching strategies

The researcher sought to establish effectiveness of the teaching strategies used by teachers in delivering their lessons in inclusive classes. The results are shown in table 5.11 below.

Table 5-11: Effectiveness of teaching strategies

Effectiveness	Frequency	Percentage
Learners do better in group work	8	26.7
Better results	3	10.0
Getting learners more involved	17	56.7
No response	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0

Table 5.11 shows the effectiveness of the teaching methods teachers used as described in table 5.10 above. The majority of the teachers, 17 (56.7%) stated that the teaching strategies they employed help in getting learners more involved in their teaching. Some teachers, eight (26.7%) felt that learners perform better when they used group work. Three teachers (10.0%) admitted that teaching strategies help them to get better results while two teachers (6.7%) did not respond to the question regarding the effectiveness of their teaching strategies.

An investigation of the teachers' teaching methods was also carried out through interviews to find out some of the common methods they used in delivering lessons to include learners with special education needs. The choice of methods may depend on the experience of the teacher and what he/she wants to achieve. In interviews, several respondent teachers mentioned using more learner-centred

methods such as group and individual teaching, group demonstration, group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and practical activities. However, some teachers seemed to prefer more teacher-centred approaches, including note-taking, using textbooks and explanatory sessions:

T1 stated:

I use question-and-answer, remedial method, explanatory and note-taking. I use these methods because these methods have made all learners to be accommodated in my lessons and to evaluate learners and to ensure that the stated objectives of the lessons have been achieved.

T4 commented:

Textbooks and information that I have regarding these issues that I am teaching. I use these methods because they have made learners to understand the lessons.

T2, T3, T5 and T6 responded respectively that they also used learner-centred methods in delivering their lessons:

T2 revealed:

(I use the) textbook method, learner-centered, remedial method, practical activities, demonstrations, group discussion, and case studies. My instructional materials also help learners with SEN to understand the lessons better. The reason why I use these methods is because these methods have given the learners time to express themselves so that everyone of them is accommodated.

T3 said:

I use learner-centered methods. This method is very effective in that learners enjoy and are able to understand the content well. This method allows for learners' participation as specified in the NCS.

T5 commented:

Group work, mostly research. I use these methods because there is a change that I found amongst the learners because those who are not talkative are also involved and there is also improvement of language.

Some teachers stated that the topics determine the teaching methods. To deliver lessons, some teachers explain that they first introduce the topic, then after a brief explanation some learners are randomly selected for role-play, or a practical demonstration of key aspects of the lesson. For instance, in dealing with a topic like "First Aid Treatment", a teacher explained that she gets her learners to demonstrate the steps in helping an accident victim. After this, learners are divided into groups so that they can demonstrate the steps and work as groups.

The following comments were made by respondent principals during the interviews regarding the methods used by teachers in their teaching:

P6 said:

They use NCS-compliant methods which include learner-centred activities. It is outcome-based learning, especially in assessment; teachers combine this with older approaches which are teacher-centred.

P3 stated:

Computers, television, telling method, question-and-answer, and remedial method. Teaching has changed, so we cannot teach learners in the old ways – the presence of technology has made learners cleverer, so that is why we use these technology methods.

P4 revealed:

Group work and individual researching. They use these methods because these methods have helped the teacher a lot, because now the learners are able to learn differently. Their confidence has been boosted.

In the interviews with the district officials, they had the following to say about teaching methods used by teachers.

EDO1 said:

Methods of simplifying the work – breaking down are the expected methods where teachers will be able to simplify the content, time the depth of the content. Teaching method is what we call curriculum adaptation. Teachers adapt the curriculum so as to accommodate all learners.

EDO2 pointed out:

We are not directly involved in teaching and learning but I know that teachers use demonstration methods to accommodate all learners. They also apply individualized methods in order to include all learners.

EDO4 commented:

Teachers complain of not having enough time to do individual teaching even when you explain to them how to help these learners. I think they are using discussion, lecturing method, and group method because they said there is no time for individual teaching.

The provincial official in his interview disclosed:

I am aware of the teaching methods because of the availability of the curriculum differentiation and learners diversity make teachers to be able to use different suitable methods like individual and group methods for teaching learners with special education needs so as to include all learners in the curriculum. Educators at special and full service schools are aware of different teaching methods to accommodate all these learners but the challenges now are in the mainstream schools because they have not been trained.

Teachers' lesson plans analysed in this study showed that learner-centred approaches are often planned for lessons. This was revealed in the lesson plans that were drawn up by some teachers. It helps the shy learners in particular to gain greater levels of self-confidence. Also, the use of instructional materials was mentioned in the interviews, and the majority of the lesson plans analysed did have teaching aids. The researcher also observed that in some cases the evaluation that was mentioned during the interviews to test if the stated objectives of the lesson had been met or not were in some of the teachers' lesson plans.

Documents analysed in all the selected schools revealed that some of the concerned teachers used more learner-centred methods. Some of them employed a combination of different methods: teacher- and learner-centred. Many of the teachers claimed to use class discussion, group work and role-play for different tasks in the course of their teaching. There is evidence of good practice of inclusion of learners with SEN here in the sense that the majority of the teachers used learner-centred teaching methods - remedial, discussion, role-play, and so on to accommodate all learners.

5.3.5 Adaptation of Curriculum

Teachers were asked about how they adapt the curriculum to ensure inclusion of learners with SEN. The results are given in table 5.12 below.

Table 5-12: Adaptation of curriculum to ensure inclusion of learners

Adaptation of curriculum	Frequency	Percentage
Giving such learners thorough attention	3	10.0
Assisting them by making them sit in front	2	6.7
Using different teaching strategies	7	23.3
Developing a model for inclusion	3	10.0
Giving work according to their levels	15	50.0
Total	30	100.0

The table shows that the majority of the teachers, 15 (50%) gave learners work according to their levels. Some of the teachers, seven (23.3%) used different teaching methods. Three (10.0%) gave learners thorough attention; the same number of teachers developed models for inclusion while two (6.7%) assisted learners by making them sit at the front of the classrooms. This was also confirmed by the interviewed participants. The following are responses from teachers indicating the various methods that they used in adapting the curriculum to ensure inclusion of all learners, which also shows that there are pockets of very good examples of inclusive education practice in some schools.

T1 remarked:

I scale it down a bit lower, so they can grasp the meaning and it can be easier for them to understand the meaning. If I see that they don't understand Afrikaans, I have to translate the word to English for them so that at least, they have the understanding of what we are working on. I rewrite the story, (for example) put fill in the blank spaces in the gaps in words in Afrikaans and English. They talk to me, I talk to them; it is indeed a very long process.

T4 commented:

If I am doing Mathematics I give the other learners difficult ones and give the slow ones the simple ones, the aim is to make sure they all understand the content. I teach all of them but if I see that they don't understand or they are frustrated, I give them remedy, I change the methods, skills in order for them to understand the content and for me to achieve my objectives. I give them homework also in my class I have three groups. The first ones are the gifted learners, the second ones are the hard workers, these ones understand and the last group are my slow learners who always need my help.

T5 stated:

I give them extra work, attend to them individually after school, group them with other learners so that they can learn from their peers this has really been helpful to learners.

Most of the principals echoed the various methods used by teachers in adapting the curriculum to ensure inclusion of all learners. The use of different teaching strategies, dedication of their time, group work and lowering the bar to accommodate all learners are some of the methods used. Only P5 seemed not to be really familiar with what is going on in his school. The following is his comment:

It is sometimes difficult. The staff is basically divided into two groups; we have the experienced teachers and younger ones. Especially, the younger ones struggle to marry ideas and that is because of experience. The elderly feel more comfortable with the learners. It is difficult for me to say exactly how they adapt the curriculum. I'm not hands on in the class.

For their part, the education district officials in their various interviews expressed contrary opinions. The following are comments made in this regard:

EDO1 disclosed:

Teachers adapt by using what is called curriculum adaptation but unfortunately, teachers do not do that. They come with excuses that this is extra work because curriculum adaptation is about simplifying work and giving work to learners according to their abilities. If curriculum adaptation is done in schools, learners will be fully supported in schools.

EDO 3 said:

Teachers are saying it's difficult to implement, it is difficult for them to adapt the curriculum so that it meets the needs of the learners and with full numbers of learners in the classroom. They are having learners up to forty five in the class, it makes it really difficult. Coming from the class myself, so it makes it difficult, I don't think teachers are doing it the way it should be done because at the back of their minds, they have to rush, knowing that there is a learner who is lagging behind, what about the other 44 learners, that is what they are saying.

EDO 4 remarked:

Teachers have been taught how to adapt the curriculum, we have demonstrated to them but if you get to the schools, practicing what they have been taught is a problem. Most teachers do not adapt the curriculum. They are supposed to plan and accommodate those learners in their planning to prepare for their lessons. Teachers become impatient to start from scratch with learners. There are lots of learners who cannot read and

write, we do not know where the problem is, is it with the system or the teachers?

The only provincial official interviewed in this study established that the province is starting to train ordinary public school teachers with the necessary skills in identifying, assessing, adapting, differentiating curriculum, and diversity in the classroom through workshops.

There is an indication that the various stakeholder groups consulted were thus largely in disagreement about the adaptation of curriculum to ensure inclusion of learners. In most of the cited comments above, it is clear from the teachers and principals' responses that various methods are used in adapting the curriculum to ensure inclusion of all learners which have helped learners with SEN to improve. The education district officials did not share this view; they were of the opinions that in spite of the workshops organised to train teachers on curriculum adaptation, they are still found wanting in their duties. The opinion that teachers are being trained was shared by the provincial official, who stated clearly that the province is beginning to train teachers at ordinary public schools.

In spite of the disagreement in this section, it is evident through document analysis that some of the teachers in the selected schools are actually adapting the curriculum to accommodate all learners in their classrooms. The researcher found this to be true in teachers' lesson plans where different teaching strategies were indicated to be used in the classrooms. Evidence of good practice of inclusive education policy was found in learners' profiles as some of these learners were given remedial work from lower classes and extra work to take home to ensure continuity. There is also evidence of good practice in the fact that teacher respondents knew well what curriculum adaptation is and how it is supposed to be carried out.

5.3.6 Assistance provided by teachers to support learners with special education needs

The researcher sought to establish the level of assistance provided by teachers to support learners with special education needs. Table 5.13 presents the assistance available for learners with special education needs

Table 5-13: Assistance provided by teachers to support learners with special education needs

Assistance by teachers	Frequency	Percentage
Inform parents of barriers	4	13.3
Use of teaching aids	3	10.0
Group work	7	23.3
Giving work according to their levels	14	46.7
Individual attention	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0

Table 5.13 above shows the assistance provided to learners with SEN. The majority of teachers, 14 (46.7) gave learners work according to their levels. Some of the teachers, seven (23.3%) assisted learners with SEN with group work. Four (13.3%) of the teachers helped learners by reporting to the parents of the learners with SEN. The use of teaching aids to assist learners was practiced by three (10.0%) of the teachers while only two teachers (6.7%) engaged the use of individual attention.

Besides responses from questionnaires teachers were also asked in the interviews about how they have been supporting learners with SEN. The following are responses from teachers indicating the various types of assistance provided to learners with SEN.

T2 revealed:

I give them (learners) extra exercises and time like at half past one to two I stay and concentrate on them and give other learners exercise to keep them busy while I am working with learners with SEN.

T6 said:

I give special attention to them during break times or after school hours. I give them homework, so that they may go and be assisted by their parents.

T8 commented:

I assist them. For instance, I have got a learner with SEN in grade 7, sometimes; I have him work from grade 5 book. I give him work from the grades below his grade.

On the whole, the interviewed principals supported the views of the teachers:

P3 remarked:

Teachers give these learners special time they call them separately after the class to attend to them. Teachers group the learners with SEN with other learners so they can learn from the strong learners. These learners also get information by researching.

P5 disclosed:

Well, the entire school tries to support these learners in many ways by providing relevant services. Children with eyes and ears challenges, we call in the district, they help us to support these learners. For instance, this learner (the principal pointed to a picture on the wall of a boy) with hearing aids got it with the support of the district. Three other learners got glasses (spectacles). We support where we can.

This principal went further to give another instance of a learner who was assisted.

The other day one of our learners had hearing problem and was operated. The parents were not interested until we picked up the story but at least with the help and support of the district we could help the child.

P2 stated:

Each teacher has to identify learners with SEN in his/her class not just to identify learners with barriers but to send the names to the district if these learners cannot be helped by the school. We write to the district officials so that they can come and assess these learners to confirm what teachers have identified. Sometimes they come, sometimes they don't come.

The issue around support and assistance for learners with SEN seem complex, and vary from one school to another, as the following comment from one of the interviewed principals indicated:

P1 said:

It is an impossible task. We have parents that are not involved in the education of their children. We are overwhelmed. We really cannot cope with that in our school because our classes are 31 plus. It is already a challenge to cope.

P1 further argues:

Another problem is that we as white people, we don't really understand everything about the learners we are working with. There are cultural differences and a lot of misunderstanding. And that makes it difficult to do the right thing, to have the right approach, right discipline and good relationship. We really can't cope with that. So we cannot cope with inclusive education.

This means that inclusive education policy is probably not being implemented fully in some schools, as even one of the principals who commented that they support learners with SEN nevertheless agreed that sometimes they do not get full support from the district to assist these learners.

In the interviews with education district officials, they were asked to shed more light on the assistance provided by teachers to support learners with special education needs. The majority of the education district officials concurred that they support teachers to assist learners with SEN. The following are their comments:

EDO1 disclosed:

We train teachers on how to identify learners with SEN. We also train them on how to handle and differentiate between those that are within their limits as well as those that need extra support. When they are able to identify learners who need extra support, we give directions on how to refer them – whether the learner needs the support in the ordinary school or outside the ordinary school. Then we place those with severe barriers in special schools forms they must complete so that the referral process can take place. When they refer those learners, we screen them, assess and look at them.

EDO3 remarked:

We go to schools where the teachers have identified these learners to see the need, for example if a learner especially in this poor area needs spectacles, you will find out that learner cannot get spectacles, a simple thing like that, in those cases we take the learners with our own cars to hospital, to psychologists or the appropriate places.

The opinion of the provincial official was also sought on how teachers support learners with SEN. He agreed that teachers support learners with SEN through the structures available at the school levels.

PO affirmed:

At the school level we have the ILST. Their role is to identify learners experiencing barriers to learning. After the learners have been identified by teachers they are taken to the learning support team. They will draw their programme to help but if they cannot help the learner, the coordinator will refer the learner to the district based support team. The district based support team will assess the child and develop their own programme and if all is not working they will refer the child to relevant institution whether a special or full service school depending on the kind of support the child needs.

Document analysis also confirmed that district officials supported teachers to help learners with SEN. Institutional level support teams were given forms and other materials which were completed on behalf of these learners. Minutes of meetings showed that the institution level support team (ILST) met to discuss and develop intervention programmes for learners with SEN. Teacher and learner portfolios available at some of the selected schools also indicated some sort of support received by learners with SEN in the sense that tasks were given to these learners from lower grades. Indications are that teachers assist learners with SEN in spite of the difficult working conditions, especially in poor rural schools. The good practices found in this section include: the use of teaching aids, group work, giving of remedial work, allocating work according to learners' levels, paying individual attention to learners, identification and giving appropriate intervention programmes, giving extra work and informing parents of children's challenges.

5.3.7 Assessment methods used by teachers for inclusion of learners with special education needs

Assessment for learning is the process of measuring learners' understanding of main learning knowledge outcomes in order to amend teaching strategies, content and

teaching aids. This also includes determining where learners need to go and how best to get there. Assessment for learning is an important aspect in successful implementation of inclusive education policy, especially for learners with SEN.

This study investigated the approaches teachers used to assess learners with SEN to find out which methods were frequently used. This information was sought in the questionnaires with teachers and in the interviews with the respondent teachers, principals, district officials and provincial official. Learner assessment is an important factor in the implementation of the inclusive education policy. Table 5.14 below shows the results.

Table 5-14: Assessment methods used by teachers for inclusion of learners with SEN

Assessment methods	Frequency	Percentage
Group and individual	5	16.7
Continuous assessment	18	60.0
Questioning	7	23.3
Total	30	100.0

The majority of teachers, 18 (60.0%) in table 5.32 above assessed learners by continuous assessments. Some of the teachers, 7 (23.3%) assessed learners by questioning. Five (16.7%) teachers used group and individual work for learners' assessment.

5.3.8 Reasons for assessment methods used by teachers for inclusion of learners with SEN

The researcher sought further to establish reasons for assessment approaches used by teachers to ensure inclusion of learners with SEN. The results are given in table 5.15 below.

Table 5-15: Reasons for assessment methods used by teachers for inclusion of learners with SEN

Reason for assessment methods used	Frequency	Percentage
To know learners' understanding of what was taught	18	60.0
Diagnosis for referral of severe cases to district	4	13.3
For learners to learn to work independently	6	20.0
Informed way of evaluating learners	1	3.3
Government policy	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

In table 5.15 above, most of the teachers, 18 (60%) assessed learners to know their understanding of what was taught in classrooms. Some teachers, six (20.0%) assessed learners to ensure they learn to work independently. Four (13.3%) assessed learners for diagnosis for referral of severe cases to the district while one teacher (3.3%) assessed learners because it is an informed way of evaluating learners. The other teacher (3.3%), assessed learners according to government (directives) policy.

Assessment methods used by teachers for inclusion of learners with SEN were sought in the interviews with the respondent teachers, school principals, education officials and provincial official. The majority of the teachers revealed that they used oral questions, discussions, peer assessment (debates) and educator assessment (class work and tests). In order to see if learners were progressing or not, the

teachers had to assess to what extent the desired learning outcomes had been reached. The following comments reveal a variety of reasons for using these methods. Interestingly, and encouragingly, they emphasized the more intrinsic benefits of assessment (inclusion of all learners, motivation for learning for learners with SEN, feedback to teachers and learners, diagnosis of difficulties), rather than the more extrinsic aims (reporting to parents, accountability to superiors). Some of the teacher respondents stated that methods and approaches of assessment for other learners who do not have special education needs can be used with learners with SEN, provided that they are modified to meet the needs of these learners – the teachers' reasons as identified by the researcher are given in brackets:

T8 said:

The approaches are not different from learners without SEN but they are modified to the cognitive level, social abilities (more or less concrete, little steps) of the learners. (Inclusion reasoning and for motivation of learners with SEN).

T2 commented:

I assess learners with SEN continuously with individual oral questions and written in remedial with few tasks. The methods of assessment help learners to understand and encourage learners to be more serious with their work. (Motivation for learning for learners with SEN)

T1 disclosed:

I impose questions on them to answer, and give group work to do so that learners with SEN can learn from their mates. I use these methods because it is working for me and it ensures inclusion of all learners.” (Inclusion and pragmatic reasoning – because it “works”!)

T6 said:

I always (continuously) plan a rubric, in terms of understanding application and projection skills. That way, things are easier to assess and learners get motivated during the whole process. I as a teacher and them as learners are satisfied. If I encounter a problem with them, we work it out together harmoniously. The relationship between you and your learners is based on basics like these, and when you assess a learner with SEN, you have to motivate (them) to do more, or if there is any criticism you make sure it is constructive criticism. That way problem is limited; everyone is happy. (Motivation for learning; diagnosis of difficulties in learning).

T3, T4 and T5 all gave reasons relating to feedback on learners' progress, competence or understanding:

T3 revealed:

I use test writing, oral, discussions, class work and debates to assess learners continuously in order to see if learners are progressing or not so that I can be sure of them, that they have the knowledge and that the outcomes have been reached.

T5 commented:

Continuous peer assessment (debates), educator assessment (class work, test, examination). I use these methods of assessment because nowadays, they are the best way to know the development and to include all learners.

T4 said:

Learners are assessed continuously through class-work and tests. I assess learners with these methods so that I can know if they are getting what they are being taught or not.

The researcher found pockets of best practices in this section from most of the interviewed teacher respondents which included learners' continuous assessment during the teaching and learning process. This is very important for learners with SEN as it encourages them to be actively involved in the teaching and learning process. An assessment approach such as written work (portfolio) is a good reflective method for all learners. Learners can see their progression and take pride in their work. A portfolio enhances creative, self-reflective competencies on the part of the learner. Remedial work is the process of assessing learners from a lower grade. Individual assessment helps the teacher give individual attention to learners with SEN and modification of tasks enables all learners to be assessed according to their levels with the same assessment tools with learners without SEN.

The principals, again with an eye on compliance with the NCS requirements and accountability, highlighted that teachers were using both formal and informal assessment, and following guidelines provided by district officials. P1 and P6 gave examples of such comments:

P1 pointed out:

Learners with SEN are assessed through continuous written tests, projects with assigned marks, assignments and observation. They are assessed in all subjects. The teachers are also guided by subject advisors' guidelines. The assessment systems are general. Some of them are used to engage learners before examinations. Tests at the end of term to assess what they have learnt.

P6 said:

Learners are assessed through the NCS systems like class work, written tests and examinations at the end of the term. This is the requirement of the NCS.

Interviews with the principals also revealed best practice in the approaches teachers used in assessing learners with SEN which are NCS methods. These include continuous observation, written tests, projects with assigned marks, class work and so on, all which are learner-centred methods specified by the NCS for inclusion of learners with SEN.

The majority of the district officials and the provincial official were not clear on the methods of assessment used by teachers to include learners with SEN. It is concerning that those who ought to be facilitating the inclusive programme lack basic knowledge with regards to how to support learners through assessment.

The document analysis carried out on teachers and learners' portfolios revealed that in some of the schools where this analysis was conducted the learners' portfolios revealed class work and feedback. Records in some of the schools also revealed marked assignments and class tests. Also, the document analysis showed that apart from lesson plans, the important information in the teachers' files were the records of assessment to be done and scant learners' past assessment in teachers and learners' portfolios. This may mean that these teachers' record keeping was inadequate.

5.3.9 Learners with SEN assessment results and the perceived reasons for their performance

The educators were asked about their views on the learners with special education needs' assessment results. This information was gathered from the teachers, school principals, district officials and the provincial official and was not intended as an objective analysis of the results. Table 5.16 presents the learners with SEN examination result.

Table 5-16: Learners examination results

Result grade	Frequency	Percentage
Good	7	23.3
Average	5	16.7
Poor	18	60.0
Total	30	100.0

From table 5.16 above, the majority of the teachers, 18 (60.0%) indicated poor results in their schools. Some teachers, seven (23.3%) had good results while five (16.7%) had results that were average.

5.3.10 Perceived reasons for learners with SEN's assessment results

Teachers were asked about their perceived reasons for learners with SEN's assessment result and the results are presented in table 5.17 below.

Table 5-17: Perceived reasons for learners with SEN assessment results

Perceived reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Learners are not sound enough	10	33.3
Poverty, parent carelessness, language	7	23.3
Learners' cooperation	7	23.3
Learners do not write exams in the language of instruction	1	3.3
No response	5	16.7
Total	30	100.0

In table 5.17 above, teachers revealed their perceived reasons for learners with SEN's assessment results. Ten (33.3%) showed learners are not sound enough. Seven teachers (23.3%) indicated poverty and parent carelessness. The same number of teachers (23.3%) showed that learners' cooperation made them perform

well. One teacher (3.3%) reported that learners do not write examinations in the language of instruction, and five (16.7%) teachers did not respond to the question of perceived reasons for learners with SEN's assessment results.

The educators were asked about their views on the learners' performance. This information was gathered from the respondent teachers, school principals, district officials and the provincial official and was not intended as an objective analysis of the results. Some of the teachers stated that the learners with SEN performance were average because of lack of teaching and learning materials, poor school attendance and lack of training. The following were some teachers' comments in this regard:

T1 commented:

Learners' results are average. Shortages of teaching and learning and bad school attendance are the reasons behind it.

T4 said:

The performance is on the average side, as teachers are really trying to include learners with SEN. We are adapting the curriculum and assessment approaches to accommodate these learners, this is working in favour of these learners and their performance is improving.

In addition, one teacher, T6, revealed that the learners with SEN results were average. By "average" she seemed to mean "somewhat fair": The following is her comment T6 disclosed:

Because of the background, learners with SEN are not exposed to many things so I can say their performance is averagely okay. This is because of their background history the parents are not exposed, they are mostly farmers.

There was evidence of good inclusive practice found in some of the selected schools from some of the documents analysed. It was observed in the document analysis

that there were records of learners' performance properly documented in both teachers and learners with SEN files. Some of the teachers in the selected schools presented a perfect report of work done by learners with SEN and it was adequately marked by the teachers and here the performance was not bad. It was also discovered in some of the selected schools that home projects formed the greater part of the overall assessment. This may serve as a confirmation of continuous assessment of learners with SEN which is also a good practice of inclusion of learners with SEN.

In the interviews with the school principals, the responses of most correlated with the majority of their teacher colleagues.

P7 said:

The results are fair (average). The cause is the language of instruction, English is used at school when learners get home they use their home language.

Notably however, two principals responded more critically, alluding to aspects of assessment, discipline, the issue of multi-grades and shortages of personnel.

P3 stated:

The results are fair because of shortage of teachers and in this school we have multi-grade classes' one teacher is teaching three classes (grades 1-3) at the same time. The other teacher teaches four classes at the same time. That is why the results are fair. Maybe learners are not receiving the actual content of the lesson.

P4 referred to the negative effect (anxiety) in the presence of examinations:

Examination results are bad. Learners mostly perform better in their class work than examination may be they are scared of the word exam. We suspect that one of the causes is that parents in this place like to drink. Secondly, it might be the case of learners not being punished (indiscipline). Learners don't do their assignments because they know nothing will be done to them if they don't do their assignment (they will not

be punished). May be they perform better in class because they copy each other.

On the other hand, one principal pointed out that the results of learners with SEN are fine. She gave reasons based on teachers' dedication.

P2 commented:

Since 2010, they are doing fine. Out of 100% a few of them fail at the end of the year. For example out of 100% the pass rate will be 60% and above. This is because of the dedication of the teachers and teacher's handwork.

In the interviews with the district officials, there were different views. Some of the district officials were of the view that learners with SEN's assessment performance was poor because there is something missing whether with the teachers, parents or the school. Some of the district officials stated that there were no comparison records between performance of learners with SEN and learners without SEN. The following are their precise comments in this regards.

EDO1 pointed out:

Learners with SEN are not performing because they are not supported and as a result some of them are dropping out. We try to support but at the end of the day we are not going to be sitting down in schools as teachers. The results are horrible. There is always a missing link. When the teachers are willing to support, sometimes parents will not support, it may be the school is neglecting the child. We don't have many success stories.

EDO 2 commented:

We don't have the statistics of learners' examination results because the teachers do not give true reflection of what is taking place in the

classroom, so it is going to be difficult to say that the results are good or poor.

EDO 3 stated:

I don't think we tabulate the examination results in that form, as to know how they are performing, it will be easier for districts that have special schools. They will be able to compare the results from special schools with the ordinary schools. We don't even have a full service school in Fort Beaufort. We only have mainstream schools and we have not come to the point of saying those with disabilities in this school performed this way, no. So we cannot compare really.

It emerged in this section that in spite of the difficult working conditions, shortages of teachers, multi-grade classes and inadequate resources that resulted in average results of learners with SEN performance, there are good practices like curriculum adaptation, assessment tools and commitment of some dedicated teachers in some of the selected schools which led to better performance of learners with SEN.

5.4 Materials used by teachers for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN

The study sought to investigate the materials used by teachers in the schools selected, since resources, and the availability of material resources are likely to affect the full implementation of the inclusive education programmes. However, it was discovered that learners with SEN are treated as naturally as possible. In other words, learners with SEN in mainstream schools do not use special learning materials as they do not have severe cases. Only learners with severe SEN in special schools make use of special learning materials. Table 5.18 below shows the teaching and learning materials available at the selected schools.

Table 5-18: Teaching and learning materials available at schools

Schools	Teaching/learning materials available at schools
S1	Textbooks, charts, and concrete objects
S2	Tape, CDs, textbooks, flash cards, charts, upper cuts, counting blocks and bottle tops
S3	Textbooks, bottle tops, flash cards, charts and upper cuts
S4	Bottle tops, counters, textbooks, charts and concrete objects
S5	Textbooks, cards and flash cards
S6	Textbooks
S7	Textbooks, cards and counters
S8	Textbooks, charts, bottle tops and newspapers
S9	Textbooks, newspapers and magazines
S10	Posters and textbooks

Table 5.18 reveals textbooks as the most frequently reported teaching and learning material in schools. However, other materials and equipment such as concrete objects, tapes, CDs, upper cuts, posters, counting blocks, charts, flash cards, posters, bottle tops, cards, counters, magazines and newspapers were also available in small quantities at some schools. The following are some of the respondent responses in this regard:

T2 said:

I use tape, CDs and textbooks. I also make my materials depending on the lesson I want to teach. I draw pictures.

T3 commented:

We don't have materials for learners with SEN. We are using materials for ordinary learners like textbooks, bottle tops and flash cards; we don't have material for learners with SEN.

T4 said:

Posters, bottle tops, counters, text books. We don't have textbooks to cater for learners with SEN. We have textbooks for the whole class. So as a teacher you must make your own materials because we don't have special books for them.

T5 disclosed:

We don't have special materials for learners with special education needs. I use my own teaching aids. Like my cards and my flash cards. Special materials are not in the mainstream schools; therefore we use the available materials to teach all learners in the classroom.

Respondent principals agreed largely with their teachers that there were no special learning materials for learners with SEN. The following are some of their responses in relation to the teaching and learning material available at their schools.

P2 said:

Flash cards, charts, upper cuts, counting blocks, bottle tops. Chart, counting, upper-cut, bottle tops and so on

P4 said:

Textbooks, we make photocopies because we don't have enough. Teaching aids concrete, those ones done in charts. And at times we improvise.

P7 commented:

Teachers use materials provided by themselves, the school also provides materials. We buy text books, cards, and counters. There are no special materials for learners with special education needs. All learners use the same materials. Teachers make use of these materials to accommodate all learners.

From their interviews the district officials made the following comments:

EDO1 pointed out:

We don't have special materials for learners with SEN. They used the general ones and teachers adapt them to suit learners' purpose. You get special materials in special schools not in ordinary schools. Those materials include textbooks, flash cards, posters and so on.

EDO2 stated:

There are books for learners, general materials provided by the district to support teachers and learners with SEN. We do not have special materials. They use the same materials. However, materials are enough, in fact more than enough.

EDO3 revealed:

There are no special teaching materials. Learners with SEN use general learning materials. The textbooks are available because they cut across all schools. For the quality of the textbook, the sizes of the textbooks are the same even for learners who are visually challenged and are in the mainstream schools. When the school requests for textbooks, there is nothing that will say how many will use a particular size of textbook so that we can bring. It's just general textbooks.

The provincial official noted that there are textbooks and other materials in schools which are used by all learners but they are not sufficient/enough in all schools. Government supplies all the teaching and learning materials.

There were almost unanimous indications from all four groups (teachers, principals, district officials and the provincial official) that there were no special teaching and learning materials for learners with SEN. All the learners use the same materials. However, the good practice indicated here that teachers adapted these general teaching and learning materials to suit the need of learners with SEN, as it emerged that special materials are only found in special schools.

5.4.1 Sources of materials for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN

The study sought to find out more about the sources of teaching and learning materials available for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN. Respondents disclosed that the Department of Education is the main source of teaching and learning materials. However, it was stated that teachers also source their own teaching and learning materials. Below are their comments in this regard.

T1 affirmed:

Government provides the materials through the Department of Education.

T2 and T3 said much the same.

T2 said:

The teacher provides materials. The school also buys textbooks.

T4 agreed:

Textbooks are provided by the school. I also source for relevant materials for teaching; magazines and newspapers.

The principals concurred that the Department of Education has been assisting in the area of the provision of teaching and learning materials.

P1 stated:

The school, through the Department, provides textbooks for teaching.

P2 reported:

We are involved in a project called "keep up" so the department is supplying us with materials. Some of these materials are provided by the government, NGOS some we do on our own so that it can suit a particular lesson plan.

P5 disclosed:

Our school is a section 21 school, meaning that we get money from the department of education and we try to do the basis when it comes to learning materials depending on the barrier but we try to treat them as natural as possible. We don't have special materials for learners with SEN; they use the materials other learners use because we don't have severe cases here.

Some of the principals commented that the teachers also provided materials for teaching:

P3 said:

Some of these materials are provided by the teachers from waste materials.

P5 commented:

The teacher provides materials. The school also buys textbooks.

P6 pointed out:

These [textbooks] are provided by the school. Teachers source for extra materials.

In their interviews the district and provincial officials also agreed that the Department of Education supplied teaching and learning materials to support the inclusion of learners with SEN.

It was established that teachers improvised to complement the materials they are supplied by the Department of Education. They make their own materials by drawing pictures, and making use of newspapers and magazines. This is evidence of good practice by teachers, in spite of the fact that there are no special materials for learners with special education in mainstream schools; these teachers are going the extra mile to provide materials to suit their lessons and to accommodate all learners.

5.4.2 Availability of textbooks and other teaching materials for implementing inclusion of learners with SEN

The study sought to find out about the availability of textbooks and other teaching materials used in implementing inclusion of learners with SEN. In most of the schools visited, respondent teachers and principals pointed out that there was an inadequate supply of textbooks. For this reason, learners in some of the schools shared textbooks. The challenges around teaching and learning materials were expressed during the interviews with teachers in the selected schools.

T1 pointed out:

We do not have enough materials like text books arrive late, for example, I got one text book two weeks ago and schools are closing this Friday.

T5 confirmed:

We have shortages of textbooks, reading books we do not get textbooks on time when we apply for them.

However, because of inadequate materials, some teachers have opted to use local materials to improvise for teaching materials. The following are comments from T1 and T4 in this regard:

There are no special materials for learners SEN. The general materials are not adequate, sometimes I buy with my own money and improvised using newspapers and magazines

T4 stated:

We improvised because of the inadequacy of materials. Though there are no special materials for learners with SEN.

However, some teachers and principals stated that, on the contrary, they found that there were at least adequate *teaching* materials.

As T8 pointed out:

Learners use the general books. The general books are adequate for all learners.

P9 said:

We have enough learning and teaching materials.

P10 said:

We have enough teaching and learning materials. Those learners who could not cope in their grade, teachers always find something to give them from textbooks of lower grades.

The lack of adequate materials was also noted by principals. This was evident in some of their interviews. The following responses were recorded:

P1 disclosed:

Shortages make us not be able to cater adequately for the needs of these learners.

P2 stated:

The department has ordered materials for 2013 but my school has not got material for Mathematics for the intermediate phase and Xhosa. The materials are not enough, sometimes as a teacher you borrow from other schools and photocopy which is expensive and we have large classes.

P6 said:

The materials are not adequate that is why we improvise.

The interviews revealed that some teachers were improvising and had become resourceful in implementing the inclusion of learners with SEN. Teachers made use of waste materials like old newspaper and magazines. This shows one of the good practices of teachers in implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs.

The majority of the district officials felt that teaching and learning materials are adequate in all their schools. The following are some of the comments:

EDO1 disclosed:

Schools have adequate resources, because they ask and get whatever teaching materials they need.

EDO2 stated:

Materials are enough, in fact more than enough.

EDO3 commented:

The textbooks are available because they cut across all schools.

PO noted:

They are not sufficient/enough in all schools. The abnormality of the past is still affecting our schools. If you can go to the Ex-Model C schools there is gap, they are better equipped than the old rural schools. Though we are trying to close that gap but it is not going to be easy.

It emerged from the interviews with the district officials that schools have adequate teaching and learning materials while most of the teacher and principals established that material resources are in short supply which required that made some of the teachers improvise to cater for the inadequacy.

5.4.3 The extent to which shortages of teaching materials affect the teaching and learning

Data was sought on the extent to which shortages of teaching materials affect teaching and learning, as this is bound to have a bearing on the implementation of the inclusion of learners with SEN.

Some of the teacher and principal respondents pointed out that shortages of teaching and learning materials affect teaching and learning in the sense that it affects the pace of teaching and learning as learners have to share resources. It was

indicated that shortages of materials make it difficult for teachers to give homework to learners. This section also revealed that teachers make photocopies of textbooks but this is expensive and time consuming efforts. The following are T1, T2, P2 and P9's comments in this regard:

T1 said:

Shortages of teaching materials affect us because it slows us down. You cannot give home-work to learners because they have to share textbooks and this is difficult because learners do not live together.

T2 revealed:

Learners have to share, when you give homework, it is difficult even for learners with SEN because the learners with the text book will run away with it. So the following day other learners will come to complain that we did not do our homework because we didn't have text book.

P2 commented:

Teaching and learning do not go smoothly because of shortages of materials. You have to photocopy which is expensive. Sometimes learners have to share.

P9 said:

Shortages of textbooks make us make photocopy which is expensive. We don't have problems with quality because we have a variety of textbooks, if one is not good, we grab another one. We do have shortages of teaching and learning materials for instance, what we have here cannot be compared to those in former model C schools, they have more. We still need more, I can say enough textbooks but textbooks alone are not educational materials.

T5, T6 and P6 also complained about the time-consuming effects of a lack of textbooks:

T5 revealed:

The shortages of textbooks affect our work because each learner is supposed to have his or her own textbook but now they share and it consumes time. Sometimes we have to write note and learners have to copy from the chalk board. This wastes a lot of time.

T6 disclosed:

Shortages of teaching and learning materials make my teaching not to be effective because we share textbooks and this waste a lot of times as learners are very slow in copying from the chalkboard.

P6 said:

Inadequate materials slow down teaching and learning process because learners have to share. This makes learners to be distracted.

On the other hand, some of the respondent teachers and principals interviewed stated that shortages of teaching and learning materials did *not* adversely affect their teaching. T8, P4 and P5 respectively had this to say:

T8 commented:

We do not have shortages of textbooks. Textbooks are adequate.

P4 revealed:

The teaching materials are enough (textbooks). We use CAPS, so the textbooks are ok, they are of good standard they are making it more easier if you look at the textbooks all the work for the term is there. All the topics are the same. There is advice of what to do with those topics.

P5 said:

The materials are adequate, the quality is okay, I'm satisfied, depending with the publishers. We are very selective when it comes to publishers because they have different content as the publishers differ. You ask for samples of these books before you order just to check if it caters for such learners with SEN as well.

In the interviews with district officials, the majority asserted strongly that shortages of textbooks do not affect the teaching and learning in schools:

EDO1 stated:

Schools have access to their funds so I don't think they have problems with teaching and learning resources. There is a section in the department that is looking after teaching and learning materials. I think the materials are good because it is natural; they use the same material nationwide. The problem may be how to use the resources. They have enough material.

EDO2 commented:

The materials are of good quality and there are no shortages of both teaching and learning materials.

EDO3 said:

The textbooks are available because they cut across all schools. For the quality of the textbook, the sizes of the textbooks are the same even for learners who are visually challenged and are in the mainstream schools. When the school requests for textbooks, there is nothing that will say how many will use this size of textbook so that we can bring. It's just general textbooks.

Nevertheless, the provincial official confirmed that inadequate textbooks did affect teaching and learning. He pointed out:

It will definitely affect because effective teaching and learning depend on the availability of these materials. Shortages can result into negative performance of both the educators and the learners.

It was established that there are shortages of teaching and learning materials which affect the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN by slowing down the pace at which teachers and learners work, and requiring that teachers make expensive photocopies. However, it emerged that some respondents were not affected by shortages of teaching and learning materials. Teachers who took advantage of the situation to improvise were not affected by the shortages of materials which is a

good practice of implementing inclusion of learners with SEN. Besides, some of the respondents noted that there were no shortages of materials in their schools. Some respondents talked of adapting materials and also looking for alternative or additional simplified resources or improvising to enable learners with SEN to learn. It emerged in this section that despite the difficult working conditions in this context, there are good practices in inclusion of learners with SEN.

5.4.4 Suggestions on the provision of adequate teaching and learning materials

Suggestions were offered by the respondents on the provision of adequate teaching and learning materials which could assist in implementing the inclusive education programmes. Most of the suggestions revolved around provisioning and training. T1, T3 and T5 respectively made the following suggestions:

T1 said:

We don't even know what to buy and to use because you are not experienced. Government should give us training so that we will be able to handle these learners and materials.

T3 commented:

My suggestions are that, first of all, they must train us and teach us how to use the teaching and learning materials for learners with SEN. Then the department should provide those materials so that we will be able to help those learners.

T5 stated

There should be extra budget for schools to cater for children who need special materials in the classroom.

On the other hand T2 and P5's suggestions were based on timely arrival of the materials. They respectively suggested that:

T2 said:

Government must focus on inclusive education because it is more important, they should look after each school. The government must make orders for text books in November for the following year so that the text books can come early in the following year.

P5 commented:

I don't think we have problems of materials only that these materials should be supplied on time because sometimes you find out that materials arrived late.

Respondent principals shared the views of their teachers focusing on the issues of training and provisioning.

P3 stated:

The department should train teachers to be able to use materials for inclusive education.

P4 commented:

Government should make adequate provision of learning and teaching materials.

P6 said:

The government should provide more teaching and learning materials for schools so that we can implement inclusive education as we should.

One principal (P10) pointed out:

There should be computer labs in all schools so that those learners who have got no barriers can be fully occupied by doing their work. By the time these learners are busy in the computer lab, the teachers will have time with learners with SEN. If each and every classroom can have a projector the teacher will be able to move up and down to learners in the class room.

5.5 Support mechanisms available for teachers to implement inclusion of learners with SEN

The study sought to find out the nature and the adequacy of the support provided by the education department officials and school principals for teachers implementing the inclusion policy for learners with SEN. Table 5.19 below shows comments from the respondent teachers regarding the support available for teachers to implement inclusion of learners with special education needs.

Table 5-19: Support provided by principals for inclusion of learners with SEN

Support provided by principals	Frequency	Percentage
Ensure that committee members attend workshops; refer learners to the district office; and conduct class visits	11	36.7
Assisting by participating in the screening process of learners.	1	3.3
Encourage teachers to help learners with SEN; and contact parents.	8	26.7
Teachers have little or no support from principals	5	16.7
There is all round support	5	16.7
Total	30	100.0

Table 5.19 shows that 11 teachers (36.7%) stated that their principals supported them by ensuring that committee members attended workshops; referring learners to the district and through class visits. Eight teachers (26.7%) received support from their principals in the form of encouragement to help learners with SEN and contacting parents. One teacher (3.3%) was supported by her principal's participation in the screening process of learners with SEN. Five (16.7%) teachers received all round support from their principals. The same number of teachers (16.7%) stated that they had little or no support.

This question was confirmed by the interviewed respondents. The majority of the teachers commented that their principals supported them by organising workshops to encourage teachers to accommodate learners with SEN. Principals visited classrooms to teach, they called the district office and parents when the need arose and gave moral support. The following are comments as indicated by some of the teachers.

T2 pointed out:

The principal is supportive. She organises workshop for us. She can look at your lesson and advice you to do this and that. She goes to the class to help. She calls the department to come when we have problems with learners so that we can have solutions. I want more support from the principal. She is trying though; only if she can get more support from the department then she will be able to support us better.

T5 remarked:

He makes sure that when we need the department, he calls them to make sure they are here on a regular basis. He wants to know what we do on cases identified. So we keep him up to date on these cases. Also he takes these children to the department or the social workers. I will be lying if I say he is not supportive. I think also that the principal can still do more, like the referral of severe cases to the special needs school. Some of our learners are placed on the waiting list for three years which is too long because they are wasting time. They will still be here while waiting. It should be done immediately. There is no special school in this area they

should open one special school in this area, this area is quite too big and there is need for special school.

T6 stated:

The principal is supportive, he is always encouraging us to give more time and attention to learners with SEN and other learners too to make sure other learners are accommodated. We are having problem, for instance last year I identified learners with barriers and took the list to the district office but up to now they have not done anything concerning the list, they have not helped us. The principal support is okay because he cannot do more if the district is not supporting, the principal should be supported from above so that he can support his teachers but if he is not getting that support, there is a little he can do even if he wants to help.

T8 commented:

She is supporting me because when I call for a meeting, she comes, we sit together, she cooperates. She informs me about workshops and meetings at the district that I am not aware of. She calls to tell and encourages me to attend. The support is adequate because there is no other way she can support because we don't have any other knowledge. She also helps in calling and informing parents about their children.

Some of the respondent principals in the interviews stated the support they give their teachers came in the form of workshops, motivation/encouragement, advice and teaching. P2, P5, and P10 had the following to say:

P2 said:

As the manager of the school, I organize mini workshops especially at the beginning of each term or sometimes on Mondays because teachers have to write down what they do not understand and we will get help from others, if we could not help each other in the school. We get help from outside from the neighbouring schools or from the district office. We get help from workshops and myself as the principal what I normally do is to have the school improvement plan. This starts with teachers who have to do the subject improvement plan. The teacher has to come up with what she doesn't understand about the work, what she wants to be done, how she wants it done, she has to suggest so that we can compile what is called the school improvement plan. The plan should state the date when we need the help maybe before the end of the term or at the beginning of the term. I won't say that the support is enough but they are getting assistance from outside also.

P5 said:

I try all times to motivate teachers to build up good relationships with parents, motivate them by assisting learners when they are sick, I take them home from time to time parents phone me to help them take their children to hospital, if I have time and can, If there is no ambulance, it can be dangerous for a mother and child early in the morning in the winter to go to the hospital so I try to get up early to take them to the hospital.

P5 went further to say:

I support in these ways where possible. I think I can still do more in giving support for the implementation of the inclusive education. Currently, as the principal, we are short of staff, the administrative staff, I have busy schedule but I still support especially in taking the learners to hospital because of their barriers they go to the hospital now and again.

P10 stated:

I am always saying to teachers that if they have got learners with barriers, maybe reading, writing or physical challenge. They should come so that I can assist in calling the parents or the district to help us. I also always go and teach. I do practical teaching, reading. I even call the learners to come here (my office) to have a class here. I am not trained. I am not sure if the support I give is enough but I am doing for the sake of these children. I need to be trained.

However, some the district officials stated that principals do not support the implementation of inclusive education. Below is EDO4's comment in this regard:

EDO4:

The principals' support is not adequate; they are also invited to workshops. In my mind, inclusive education has not reached where it should; I have dreams for inclusive education. The reality of big classes, teachers are not adequate. The system is not conducive for the real thing to happen. The principals are not enthusiastic. They are not here at the workshop but nothing is done about it. They don't give teachers support in the area of implementing inclusive education.

EDO3 in her comment stated that principals have been supporting the implementation of the inclusion policy but they are not really aware of the programme.

EDO3 said:

They do that first by being part of the ILST secondly they invite us to their schools for their parents meetings so that we can explain this to the parents. Even that is an indication that even principals do not understand inclusive education.

The interviewed provincial official was in agreement with the district official (EDO3) on the fact that principals did support inclusion of learners with SEN by providing in-house workshops and encouraging curriculum differentiation, apart from those who are new in the position.

Principals are the heads of their schools - the principals are equipped to monitor and support inclusive education. They do support, except those who are still new in the system, they may have problem with curriculum differentiation and not in administration. Principals give in-house training to teachers.

The comment about the “*in-house training*” is in line with the point made by one of the respondent principals about organising mini workshops in her school to support teachers in the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN.

P2 disclosed:

As the manager of the school, I organize mini workshops especially at the beginning of each term.

The good practices that emerged are that the majority of the interviewed respondents testified to the support provided by the principals regarding the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN which included visiting classrooms to teach, and providing words of encouragement and motivation to the teachers. Principals were also said to support teachers by organising mini workshops at the school level. They also involved the district office and parents where necessary. The majority of the teachers remarked that the support of their principals was adequate while still appealing for more support. The principals on the other hand were not sure of the adequacy of their support toward teachers regarding the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs.

5.5.1 Adequacy of the support provided by principals for inclusion of learners with SEN

Teachers were asked about the adequacy of the support given to them by their principals to implement inclusion of learners with SEN. Table 5.20 below presents the findings.

Table 5-20: Adequacy of the support provided by principals for inclusion of learners with SEN

Adequacy of the support	Frequency	Percentage
Adequate	18	60.0
Not Adequate	10	33.3
No response	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0

From the above table, the majority of teachers, 18 (60.0%) found the support received from their principals to be adequate while 10 (33.3%) found that their principals' support was not adequate. Only two (6.7%) did not response to the question on the adequacy of their principals' support for implementing the inclusion of learners with SEN.

5.5.2 Support provided by the education district officials for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN.

Information on how the education district officials supported the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN and the adequacy of the support was solicited. Table 5.21 presents the summary.

Table 5-21: Support provided by the education district officials for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN

Support provided by DOs	Frequency	Percentage
No response	3	10.0
Organisation of workshops; school visits; referral; placement of learners with severe SEN in Special Schools	20	66.7
Distribution of manuals, materials, aids and other necessities	2	6.7
Little support because the officials are few	5	16.7
Total	30	100.0

Table 5.21 above indicates the support from the departmental district office. The majority of the teachers, 20 (66.7%) said that the district officials organised workshops on inclusion of learners with SEN. They visited schools to support learners with SEN and those referred to the district and they assisted in the placement of learners with severe cases in Special Schools. Two (6.7%) teachers stated they received support via the distribution of manuals, materials, aids and other necessities. Five (16.7%) said they had little support because the officials are few. Three teachers (10.0%) did not respond to the question about the support provided by the district officials for implementing inclusion of learners with SEN.

5.5.3 Adequacy of the support provided by district officials for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN

The researcher was interested in establishing the adequacy of the support provided for teachers by the district officials in the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN. Table 5.22 shows the results.

Table 5-22: Adequacy of the support provided by district officials for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN

Adequacy of the support	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	9	30.0
No	18	60.0
No response	3	10.0
Total	30	100.0

Table 5.22 above shows the adequacy of support from the district office for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN. The majority of the teachers, 18 (60.0%) stated that they did not have enough support from the district while some of them, nine (30.0%) felt they had enough support from the district. Three (10.0%) of the teachers did not respond to the question regarding the adequacy of support from the district office for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN.

Information on the support that is received from the district office in the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN and its adequacy were also sought from the respondent teachers, principals, district officials and the provincial official by interviews. Respondents confirmed that they received support from the Department of Education in the form of funds, advice, materials, information, training workshops, moderation and so on. However, the majority stated that the support from the Department was not adequate. As T4 commented:

We get support in forms of workshops, in-service training, and materials. The support is not enough. You will see that the workshop is supposed to be like a week but they squeeze it to a day or two and this is not helpful.

T5 said:

They come to do a lot of intervention in reading and writing ability. They also check the learners to see if their cases are severe, to know how to support like in the case of a learner who could not hear at all, they get funding for the hearing aid. They also give advice and organize workshops but I think they should organize more workshops.

T7 commented:

District officials support us by taking learners with SEN out to social workers. They counsel learners. Support from district officials is adequate but they can do more. Though the officials are not enough compared with the number of schools under their catchment areas, the district can also help by sending more teachers to schools.

From the interviews with the principals some of them disclosed that schools receive support from the district for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN but this support was not adequate. Some of the principals claimed the support was adequate while others lamented that there were no forms of support from the Department for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN. The following are some of their comments in this regard:

P1 said:

The officials are trying, they do come to the school to test the children but I think they are overloaded. Their support is not adequate because they can start a process of identifying learners but don't complete the process it gets stuck in the middle. It doesn't run through so that you get at the end what to do with the child, how to do it.

P5 stated:

We can depend on the department of education for their support in many spheres that if a child has a barrier irrespective of the barrier, you just pick up your phone and call them or pop in there and explain your problems, They visit schools, they are ready to help. Personal visits to family

houses, they do that from time to time. Provision of materials, we are work- shopped fairly on a regular basis.

P5 added:

Last year I attended a week long workshop on inclusive education in Port Elizabeth where many district officials were in attendance, at one stage during the workshop, I think it was the second day, they called me unprepared, I had to brief the house on what we do at our school, what the cooperation is between the school and the department. I was asked to do it and I was proud to do it. Afterwards schools were coming to ask about this whole thing of inclusion of learners with SEN. The district can still do more but I understand that there are a lot more schools; in fact we are fortunate to get the support we are always getting from the district.

P8 said:

We get first aid kit, books, uniforms, workshops for teachers and the workshops are fruitful because we gain more information from them on how to help these learners. However, the district can do more, they should give more books on special needs, workshops, they should come to school to see our challenges as individual schools because schools don't have the same problems.

P6 stated:

No support, we have not been going for workshops.

The majority of the respondent principals in this section confirmed the support their schools received from the district; however, they pointed out that this support was not adequate.

The district officials in their own interviews on the support provided by district officials for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN and the adequacy of the support disclosed that they supported the implementation of inclusion of learners

with SEN by providing guidance and monitoring on the inclusion policy. They organised training/workshops for teachers on how to accommodate all learners in their classrooms. It was also stated that the district officials conducted onsite visits to schools. The district officials gave their opinions of the issue as follow:

EDO1 disclosed:

Guidance and monitor the support is not adequate. There are many schools but the people that are to monitor are few and are doing other things. There is no one employed solely to implement white paper 6. You implement white paper 6 and do other things

EDO2 said:

We conduct workshops not only for the ILST but for the school. We do onsite visits. We conduct workshops according to circuits and then we follow up by visiting each and every school. We conduct workshops for teachers in the schools, we do monitoring. There is a lot to be done, I cannot say that the support is enough because the teachers are not buying this, they take it as an extra work to implement inclusive education but we are trying to convince and support them so that they can understand that it is part of what they are supposed to be doing.

EDO3 commented:

One thing is workshops, advocacy, another thing is when they really invite us we are there. If they refer their learners to us, help is given. The support is not adequate because even us as officials we are few and how many schools 258, can you give something adequate? It's a drop in an ocean.

EDO4 said:

Our workshops are on a regular basis. We do a lot of activities, workshop in different areas. We monitor, we go round the schools and whatever they ask for, we give support. We can always do better from our side too.

The provincial official pointed out that the districts provide workshops directly at schools and provides materials for learners with special education needs. He explained that it is the duty of the district to work directly with their schools on the programmes that are coming from the province directorate. He also mentioned that the district help in learners' placement in special schools and full service schools.

The provincial official was also asked about the support available at the provincial office to support the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN. The provincial official confirmed that the province supported schools by organising different types of training and workshops which schools access through their districts. However, he stated that the support from the province was not adequate. He gave the following comment:

PO: ...Organising various workshops. We support schools in the province through the districts. We organize workshops on curriculum differentiation, AAC, sign language and interpretation and so on, but schools have access to these workshops through their districts. The support is not adequate but we are trying our best to help and support learners with SEN.

It emerged that there are some forms of support from the district and provincial offices for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN. The support includes school visits, advice, materials, information, training workshops, and placement of learners with severe SEN in special and full service schools. However, the majority of the respondents lamented that the support for implementing inclusion of learners with SEN is not adequate. Respondents gave detailed information on one of the most essential types of support which is in-service training of teachers. This is discussed in the following section.

5.5.4 In-service training provided to improve teachers' performance in teaching learners with special education needs

In-service Education and Training (INSET) is generally used to refer to planned activities practised both within and outside schools with the aim of developing knowledge, skills, attitudes and performance of professional staff in schools (Blandford, 2012; Craft, 2002).

In-service and training programmes are significant features of school development programmes as they help in building capacity of the organization's personnel. They are primarily meant to augment the level of competence for teachers in syllabus interpretation, instructional delivery and classroom presentation. Inadequate provision of in-service training can negatively affect the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN, especially where teachers lack the teacher training background on special educational needs learners and their management.

In-service training can be conducted internally or externally, either by the school or by outside school agencies. In schools, they are conducted by the SMT with the institutional level support team. Outside of schools, agencies like district education officials and other interested stakeholders such as NGOs conduct training. The training is meant to improve teachers' instructional competence. The external INSET programmes are under the jurisdiction of the district based support team. The study sought to establish which INSET programmes are in place in schools to build teacher capacity and for professional development.

The study also sought to establish which training programmes are provided to improve teachers' performance in implementing inclusive education for learners with special education needs. The majority of the teacher respondents stated that the Department of Education organised workshops on inclusive education in order for teachers to be able to support learners with special education needs. The following are some of their comments in this regard.

T2 said:

We get workshops from the department. The workshops are interesting and we are asked to come and apply the knowledge to the learners. The programmes are relevant to implementing inclusion of learners with SEN.

T3 commented:

Professional training in form of workshops. The workshop was helpful. It helped us to identify a learner in this school with hearing problem and the learner eventually got hearing aids from the department.

T6 disclosed:

I attended workshops organised by the department of education on inclusive education. Besides, I have just completed my BED last year, which had a course called inclusive education, that course has helped me a lot, we were taught about white paper six. We were taught to love children, to have a heart, to accept children irrespective of their challenges/barriers.

T8 said:

We do not have any other programme yet apart from the workshops.

5.5.5 In-service training in place for teachers to teach learners with special education needs

Teacher respondents were asked how they found the in-service training they received in inclusive education particularly teaching learners with special education needs, and the responses are shown in the table below.

Table 5-23: How teacher respondents found the training received to teach learners with special education needs

Assessment of the training	Frequency	Percentage
Not helpful	10	33.3
Slightly helpful	4	13.3
Helpful	14	46.7
Very helpful	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0

The table 5.23 shows that 46.7% of teachers confirmed that the in-service training they have received was helpful for teaching learners with special education needs. Two (6.7%) confirmed that the in-service training was very helpful, while 13.3% and 33.3% showed that the in-service training was slightly helpful and not helpful respectively.

5.5.6 Reasons why the in-service training received was beneficial or not beneficial

The study investigated the responses of teachers as to the reasons why the in-service training in place for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN was beneficial or not beneficial. Most of the teachers, 12 (40%) responded that the in-service training they received had helped them not to see learners with SEN as problem cases. The same percentage of respondents stated that at the time of this study they had not had any training on inclusion of learners with SEN. Some respondents, four (13.3%) showed that there was no follow-up when teachers gave reports of learners who needed help, while some respondents (6.7%) felt that there should be specialists in schools to assist learners with SEN.

In the interview with the principals, education district officials and the provincial official some of them agreed with their teachers by stating that the workshop organised in the form of in-service training was helpful and served as an eye-opener

as it helped them to support learners with SEN. The following are some of their comments when they were interviewed about training.

P3 commented that:

The workshops are very good to us, they help us. By the time I attended the workshop I saw that we have a child in the school in my class who has special needs. I was able to discover this girl because we were taught how to identify learners with SEN. It was laid in my spirit to call the aunty because this child is an orphan. The parts of her body are not normal, even her ears. When I called, the aunty told me the child was born deaf I also got her clinic card that stated that something is coming out of the left ear and it has a small opened hole that's why the child could not hear and also the child is so thin. I was bold when I attended the inclusive workshop. I saw in the clinic card that her parents died in 2005 and since that year she had not gone to the clinic for her medications. I told the aunty to take her to the clinic. At the clinic it was discovered that the child has a big hole in her heart that is why the learner has a tiny body. At the end of it all the girl got a hearing aid which enables her to hear now.

P5 stated that:

From time to time, we have workshops regarding this especially when we have learners with special education needs. We have a close relationship with the district and we learn and gain a lot from them obviously.

EDO3 said:

From our side there is no other training than those workshops we organise for inclusive education and these workshops are really helpful unless the teacher takes for his or herself a course with other institutions otherwise it's not from the department.

PO had this to say:

There are no other special trainings than the workshops we organise through the districts.

However, some of these principal respondents argued, along with the teachers, that they were not trained for inclusive education therefore they have not had any form of in-service training.

P1 commented:

We do not get any type of in service training.

P9 disagreed:

There are no in service trainings for inclusive education. It is only the programmes coming from the department of education like the 1, 2 or 3 day workshops which cannot be regarded as training because of the duration, other than that it depends on teachers to find ways of equipping themselves by enrolling at schools.

5.5.7 Implementation of what was learnt in the in-service training

The researcher solicited information on the implementation of what was learnt in the in-service training to implement inclusion of learners with SEN. Responses are presented in table 5.24 below.

Table 5-24: Implementation of what was learnt in the in-service training

Implementation of the in-service training	Frequency	Percentage
Very difficult	6	20.0
Difficult	11	36.7
Easy	9	30.0
No response	4	13.3
Total	30	100.0

The table shows that the majority of respondent teachers, 11 (36.7%) found the implementation of what they learnt in in-service training difficult while some, six (20.0%) found implementation very difficult. Nine (30.0%) showed that the implementation was easy. Only four (13.3%) did not respond to the question regarding of the implementation of what was learnt in-service training received by teachers to implement the inclusion of learners with SEN.

5.5.8 Reason why the implementation of what was learnt in in-service training received by teachers to implement inclusion of learners with SEN was beneficial or not beneficial.

Teachers were asked about the reasons why the implementation of what was learnt in in-service training received by teachers to implement inclusion of learners with SEN was beneficial or not beneficial.

The majority of the teachers, 12 (40%) had no training while eight (26.7%) have had training and through this learners catch up with their studies. Four (13.3%) teachers complained that they were not specialists and that inclusion of learners with SEN was time consuming. Only three (10.0%) gave no guidance on implementation as

their reason and the same number, three (10.0%) stated that smaller classes and cooperation from parents should be encouraged.

From the interviews, the majority of the teachers were of the view that the implementation of what was learnt in the in-service training sharpened their teaching skills with regard to the inclusion of learners with SEN. The following are some of their comments in this regard.

T3 said:

The implementation of what I learnt from the organized workshop by the department was much easier because I gained skills for handling learners with SEN. The workshop was actually an eye-opener.

T7 stated:

Before I attended the workshop on the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN I was confused on how to help these learners but after the workshop, I am clear and the implementation was not too difficult.

T5 revealed:

I enjoy all the workshops I have attended as they are adding to my knowledge because I am familiar with special needs education so the implementation was easy for me.

However, some of the teacher respondents commented that there were no follow-up visits after the workshops and that the workshops were organised by non-specialists, which made them difficult to follow; therefore, it was not easy for them to implement what they learnt. One of such comments was given by T1 below.

T1 complained:

The implementation of what I learnt during the workshop was not easy for me to do because the workshop was conducted by non-specialist, people who do not understand what you are experiencing in the classroom. Another issue about it is that district officials did not make follow-up visits to assist teachers in the implementation.

It was established that the majority of the interviewed respondents agreed that the implementation of the organised workshops was not difficult because of the understanding of the programme and this has helped boost their competence and has empowered them to help learners with SEN. However, some of these respondents criticised the training as they found the implementation difficult because there was no proper follow-up to assist teachers in the implementation process.

5.6 Monitoring strategies used by principals for implementing inclusion of learners with SEN

Monitoring is the process of ensuring that plans and policies are being implemented. It is also the process of examining and ensuring the progress or quality of plans and policies over a period of time. School principals and district education officers have the responsibility to monitor the implementation of the curriculum in schools and give relevant support to teachers. “It is the direct responsibility of the principals and the District Officials that teaching and learning take place in schools” (Elmore, 2000). Information on monitoring strategies was sought from respondent teachers as shown in table 5.25 below.

Table 5-25: Monitoring strategies used by principals for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN

Monitoring strategies	Frequency	Percentage
No response	3	10.0
By going through learners' work, teachers' files; hospital reports; class visits	19	63.3
Regular meetings among stakeholders	8	26.7
Total	30	100.0

Table 5.25 shows that the majority of the teachers, 19 (63.3%) claimed that their principals monitor the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN by going through learners' work, teachers' files, hospital reports and class visits. Some of the teachers, eight (26.7%) said that their principals monitor the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN by having regular meetings with stakeholders. The other teachers, three (10.0%) did not respond to the question.

5.6.1 Benefits of monitoring strategies used by principals on implementing inclusion of learners with SEN

The researcher was interested in whether the monitoring strategies used by principals for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN was beneficial or not beneficial.

The majority of the teachers, 16 (53.3%) agreed that the monitoring strategies used by their principals were beneficial while 11 (36.7%) with this view. The other three

teachers (10.0%) did not respond to the question regarding the benefits of monitoring strategies used by their principals.

5.6.2 Reasons why the monitoring strategies used by the principals for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN are beneficial or not beneficial

The study further asked questions regarding the reason why the monitoring strategies used by the principals for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN were beneficial or not beneficial. The majority of the teachers, 15 (50.0%) were of the opinion that the monitoring strategies helped to assess the implementation process for general improvement. Seven (23.3%) of the teachers stated that experts are needed in schools as teachers were not adequately trained for the programme, and also felt that the programme was time consuming. The same number of teachers, seven (23.3%) did not respond to the question regarding the reason why the monitoring strategies used by the principals for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN were beneficial or not beneficial. Only one (3.3%) teacher indicated that they keep records which prove that teachers are working.

Information on monitoring strategies and their benefits was also sought from all interviewed respondents. T1, T3 and T8 respectively revealed that inclusive education was *not* monitored in their schools. The following are their comments:

T1 said:

He conducts class visits but not specifically, for identification of learners with special needs. I don't think this is beneficial because the mechanism is not basically for inclusive education. T3 commented:

The principal doesn't monitor the implementations of inclusion of learners with SEN because she does not have the time, she is the principal, she is also the clerk, she has to do administrative work. So there is no time for her to monitor.

T8 pointed out:

This thing is new to our school so it is only me that attend the workshop the principal does not have that much knowledge about inclusive education. Though she is interested in inclusive education but because of lack of knowledge she could not really give me much support, therefore, she does not monitor.

On the other hand, T5 disclosed that:

Sometimes the principal monitor and sometimes he doesn't because he knows that the district officials come on a regular basis like every Tuesday. This monitoring mechanism is not beneficial because it is not regular.

In some of the other selected primary schools, however, there were different ways in which the principals monitored the inclusion of learners with SEN. T2, T4 and T6 respectively commented on this:

T2 said:

The principal starts the monitoring from our lesson plans, she looks at the lesson plans and advise and even goes to the class to assists when you are teaching the learners and listen to you and after the lesson, she calls and advise that you should have done this like this and this and like that. She calls the parents and asks about the progress of the learners at home. This is beneficial as it makes teachers to struggle to finish their work.

T4 pointed out:

Principal monitors by class visit, checking of learner's books, teachers' lesson plans, and teachers portfolios. The monitoring mechanism is effective because it makes all teachers work harder to make sure their work is up to date.

T6 commented:

It is in our meeting that we discuss about learners barriers. The principal comes to the class to see what we are doing, he checks my files, it is beneficial because it makes us to work harder.

One of the participant principals (P1) confirmed what teachers T3 and T8 stated above, perhaps from a surprising point of view. He commented that:

Monitoring is done by the ILST and not the principal. I don't really know how but I know they hold meetings and discuss issues relating to learners with barriers. Most of the time I am busy with administrative work, I don't have time to attend their meetings.

Some of the principals concurred largely with the responses of T2, T4 and T6 above that the methods they used in monitoring the implementation of inclusive education policy varied. They made the following comments:

P2 said:

In my school, I have got the management file which I have compiled at the end of last year for 2013. Inside that file, I have got things that will follow each and every day, everyday plan which we have to follow. If something happens and makes us not to work according to that plan, I would comment on how we are going to do it again. So I have got the plan, the monitoring tools which I am using which teachers must fill every day. They must fill in the date, time, subject, grade and topic at the end of the week, they are submitting so that I analyse them. Each and every educator is going to account for what she/he has done or haven't done, and how he/she will pay back the time lost. This strategy makes everyone work harder to complete their work.

P7 disclosed:

We do class visits, you go to a class to listen to a teacher teaching, and from there you identify learners with barriers. Sometimes when they write test, we call for their books to see how learners are doing and do moderation, through this you find out that some learners have low marks (school based moderation). The strategy is beneficial partly but not much because of time management and number of learners.

P8 revealed:

I go to their classes to see what teachers are doing, sometimes the coordinator and I go to the classes and come back to compile what we have found from those classes and write minutes and we work on what we find. The method is beneficial as sometimes teachers are not able to identify learners who are challenged in their classes but as I stand I will see and help to identify such learners. Such learners are taken to the coordinator to see if what I have noticed is right, from there we come to the office to discuss the type of intervention to give such learners.

P5 said:

On a regular basis I call them (teachers) in, asking for the files, do follow up to see what improvement can be done, what assistance they need. I try where I can to assist.

However, this principal (P5) responded more critically, alluding to aspects of class visits:

...The monitoring mechanism keeps them on their toes. Initially they thought I was doing inspection like the olden days, the teachers' body [SADTU] does not allow this from the Department because of the previous experiences from the apartheid time but this is very informal, you carry on with your lesson, I will just go in there at the back of the door to see what they are doing but it is very informal but I do check on them.

P4 and P9 respectively also confirmed the responses of T3 and T8 that inclusion of learners with SEN is *not* monitored in their schools. The following are their comments:

P4 stated:

We don't really monitor because most of the time we are busy in our classes. We only monitor when we do our class visits once a month (On monthly basis.) Once a month, we go to classes to look at learners books so it is then we are able to see the problems and able to advice teachers. We advice teachers of works she can give to learners to have special books for learners with SEN where they will write all the subjects instead of using many books, those learners must have one book so that if the officials come, they will be given that book and see the different subject the child is doing this way.

P9 commented:

It is difficult to monitor because as heads we are not trained. Our monitoring is shallow. You cannot monitor something you don't know but we look at some minor things like ensuring that no learner is chased out of classroom but with the deep underlying issues we are not conversant.

Most of the district officials also stated that school principals do not monitor the inclusion of learners with SEN. Below are their comments:

EDO1 said:

Principals don't monitor. Like I told you, there are gaps so the implementation needs a review and restructuring from the grassroots because all that was designed did not yield the expected results. Principals are not monitoring inclusive education; they don't think they have any role to play there.

EDO3 commented:

I don't think they are aware that they should monitor the implementation of inclusive education. They don't monitor because there is no directives from the department for them to do so.

EDO4 said:

I don't think we have enough from the principals because if you talk to the principals, they will immediately refer you to the ILST coordinator. We wanted the principals to be coordinators but they said they can't take any more responsibilities.

There are conflicting responses in this case by most EDOs. While some teacher and principal respondents show that there is good practice in monitoring as a whole and inclusion of SEN, on the other hand, one of the district officials (EDO2) was of the view that school principals did monitor the implementation of inclusive education.

EDO2 commented:

The principals are monitoring the programmes of inclusive education they are part of the ILST. We also monitor the ILST in order to check the progress or the challenge and give support to the principals we make sure they are part of the ILST. This term we are busy monitoring and supporting the ILST. So when we monitor, we call the principals. We are not only checking the progress but supporting so our monitoring is more of supporting than checking. It is done by the ILST coordinators not by the principals and they hold meetings once a week and keep minutes which we check when we visit their schools. In this meeting, they plan and discuss the challenges that they are facing. It is beneficial because they also submit their reports to us and we look at them and make follow ups on the reports.

The provincial official was of the opinion that principals with the help of their district officials do monitor the implementation of inclusive education policy except those without the necessary knowledge of the job. He pointed out that mainstream schools principals are not really doing the monitoring because they are not aware of how to do it but special schools heads know the policy and how to implement inclusive education.

It was clear from the information gathered that in some cases principals do not monitor the inclusion of learners with SEN. However, as it was confirmed in table

5.25 above, the principals had been supportive in implementing inclusion programmes.

It was established from the information gathered that there were different ways in which some of the principals monitored the implementation of inclusive programmes, including: through class visits and checking of learner and teacher files. Monitoring was also done through the school management file and the holding of meetings to discuss issues related to inclusion policy. This is confirmation that some selected schools have good practices of implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN. However, in some of the selected schools, monitoring was done once a term. Although this would constitute frequent intervals in terms of the official requirements of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), this is a relatively long interval considering the fact that some of these teachers are not trained and may need consistent monitoring and support. Additionally, it was found from the information gathered that some of the selected schools lack adequate monitoring, since some schools do not monitor the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN programmes at all. This section revealed pockets of good practice but also conflicting responses from some education district officials.

5.6.3 Monitoring mechanisms used by district officials for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN

The provincial departments of education are responsible for most of the schools in South Africa. Therefore, it is not out of place to seek information from the respondents on how the local Department officials monitor, and the benefits of the monitoring mechanisms in the implementation of inclusive programmes. Table 5.26 below gives teachers' responses in this regard.

Table 5-26: Monitoring mechanisms used by district officials for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN

Monitoring mechanisms	Frequency	Percentage
No response	3	10.0
Checking of minutes, and finance books and learners'10 status, moderation		33.3
School visits	7	23.3
There is no regular monitoring	10	33.3
Total	30	100.0

Table 5.26 above shows the monitoring mechanisms by the district officials for the implementation of inclusion for learners with SEN. Ten (33.3%) of the teachers said that at the district level the monitoring mechanisms included checking of minutes, finance books, learners' status and moderation. The same number of teachers (33.3%) claimed that the monitoring mechanism by the district was not regular. Seven of the teachers (23.3%) stated that they got school visits from the district officials. Only three teachers did not respond to the question regarding monitoring mechanisms used by district officials for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN.

5.6.4 Reason why the monitoring mechanism put in place by the district officials for implementing inclusive education was beneficial or not beneficial

The study was invested in discovering the reason why the monitoring mechanism put in place by the district officials for implementing inclusion of learners with SEN was beneficial or not beneficial. Teachers' responses are presented in table 5.27 below.

Table 5-27: Reasons why the monitoring mechanism put in place by the district officials for implementing inclusion of learners with SEN was beneficial/not beneficial

Reasons for choosing the monitoring mechanism	Frequency	Percentage
No response	5	16.7
It aids placement of learners with severe SEN into special schools	3	10.0
Makes possible the availability of updates and reports on the implementation of the programme in schools	4	13.3
No regular school visits; learners with severe special education needs are kept without referrals	15	50.0
General improvement	3	10.0
Total	30	100.0

Table 5.27 above shows teachers' justification of their responses/choices in table 5.26 above. The majority of the teachers, 15 (50.0%) justified their responses by stating that there were no regular school visits and that learners with SEN were kept without referrals to special schools. Four (13.3%) said that the monitoring mechanisms make possible the availability of updates and reports on the implementation of the programme in schools. Three teachers (10.0%) stated that it aids placement of learners with severe SEN into special schools. The same number

of teachers (10.0%) disclosed that there was general improvement. Meanwhile, five teachers (16.7%) did not respond to the question.

Views of all interviewed respondents were solicited in this regard. The following are some of their responses. T3 and T4 revealed that teachers are not adequately monitored by district officials and as a result of this the monitoring mechanism was not beneficial.

T1 stated:

They don't come to our classes, we call to tell them about our challenges, when they arrive stay in the staff room and talk about the problems. They don't visit the class to see what we are doing and to tell us how and what we should do because they also don't know. So it is not beneficial.

T3 pointed out:

The officials don't monitor, what they do is to come, they check the work of children with SEN, they don't really monitor, when they came they stay in the office without coming to the classrooms to see how teachers are including all learners within our classroom. It is not beneficial because it is not properly done.

This was also confirmed by some of the respondent principals interviewed as indicated by their comments below.

P1 said:

It is difficult. We don't get the result quickly and they don't follow-up because the work is too much, they can't keep track of everything. The monitoring mechanism is not beneficial. I didn't say there is no monitoring but it's not really beneficial.

P6 disclosed:

They don't monitor because they don't come here, if they come at the beginning of the year, we will not see them again until the next year. And we try to go to them but they tell us about the problem they are having too.

On the other hand, T5, T6 and T8 pointed out that district officials monitor inclusive education in their schools by giving advice, going through the minutes of their meetings and files and commenting on what has already been done as well as what is yet to be done. The following are their comments.

T5 said:

They check the inclusive file and make comments that “I did this and that and didn’t do this and that”. The principal does this only once in a while but the district officials do this all the time. They go through the file on a regular basis. It is beneficial because it gives us direction on what and how to help learners with SEN.

T6 commented:

The officials come to listen to our problems they check the minutes of our meetings, teacher’s files, they give advice on what to do. The monitoring mechanism is beneficial because it helps to know what to do and even work harder.

T8 said:

We have a file and minute book when we have a meeting we document it so that when the officials come they check the file. We also have report where we write learners with barrier and the intervention given. Sometimes I don’t know how to write this report they gave me some forms and showed me how to fill it and how to give intervention so with all these I think the monitoring mechanism is beneficial because it makes us know what to do to help learners with SEN.

The above statements show that some EDOs are doing the required monitoring, as well as providing some support which is an evidence of good practice in inclusion policy. Two principals (P5 and P8) agreed largely with T5, T6 and T8 that the district officials monitor the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN and the mechanism was beneficial. Their comments are stated below:

P5 revealed:

I think they monitor it by their visit. The way I do it, it is almost the same; they come to check the learners support agent. They don't go to the class but they check the minutes of meetings, teacher's files and for the files to be brought to workshop to be shown to other teachers how to do it. District officials don't go to class to see teachers because the union doesn't approve of it. So they stay in the office and send for teachers and learners for whatever information they need. The monitoring mechanism is beneficial in the sense that it keeps you on your toes, to see if things are moving or not.

P8 stated:

They observe teachers when they teach in the class and write their reports. They also come and ask questions about these children. They check the minutes' book. The monitoring mechanism is good because it make the officials discover the problems in schools and work to help solve the problems.

T7 confirmed:

District officials move around to see how teachers are implementing inclusive education. They give advice on how to improve. They even enter into our classes to see how we are implementing inclusive education. I think it will be beneficial if monitoring is done on quarterly basis.

Below are the comments of district officials on how they monitor inclusion of learners with SEN in schools. The district officials stated that they monitor inclusive programmes by giving intervention to learners identified by ILST and checking the minutes of their meetings. They were of the view that the monitoring mechanisms were beneficial.

EDO1 disclosed:

We visit schools after we establish the ILST and there are tools that we leave with them. For example, for any ILST to be functional there should be regular meetings so that we can have the minutes of the meeting. We leave them with these tools so that whenever they meet for a special case, it should be documented. By the time you are going around for

monitoring, you won't find minutes in many schools or they will tell you they have never met for A, B, C reasons, they give excuses.

EDO1 further commented:

Some schools don't keep minutes but they manage to identify learners with barriers and they have come to us for support but they want short cut, they don't want the procedures. They don't want to follow rules and regulations; they want to do it their own way. They understand that when you have identified a learner, you must refer. They will refer even if they leave the form behind. They want a short cut. When one monitors the ILST, we check what their problems are and try to intervene and help them. They are beneficial to us because we know what is going on. We don't pretend that the white paper 6 is implemented. It is not implemented through monitoring.

EDO3 stated:

With the ILST, we asked them to keep a file specifically for those learners who have barriers and we encourage them to keep minutes of their meetings. So that when we go to the schools, we are given the materials, they do have the materials. We even make the materials from the head office simpler by taking some pages and compiling a book that will say this is your kit, keep this close to you so that you know when you want to refer a learner to us, it's easier. So when we go to the schools we ask for the minutes, we read through the minutes and help them there and then.

EDO 3 added:

This is beneficial because we do have the templates here with us. We look at the items; it starts with the minutes, if they don't hold their meeting (i.e. the committee) immediately that tells us that there is nothing going on here. We encourage them to please sit as a committee and address the issues.

The provincial official in his interview noted that district officials work directly with schools to monitor the implementation of inclusive education. He stated that they identify learners' barriers and find solutions to the barriers. They give in-house training to schools and supervise. They assess reports from hospitals, psychologists and so on to know where to refer learners (special or full service schools). The districts supervise and assess what the educators do.

The study sought to find out what monitoring mechanism has been put in place by the provincial education department officials for teachers implementing inclusive education. The following is the comment from the respondent provincial official:

PO remarked:

We have our monitoring team in place; we look at curriculum issues and administrative issues. We look at learners' transportation for those that are not staying in the hostels. There are devices that help physically challenged learners on bus and out of the bus. We look at the waiting list of schools to make sure that learners are placed on time so that they are not older than they can be admitted in the schools, so that they do not drop out of school. If one school cannot admit them we look at other schools. They are beneficial as I have explained above.

From the comments and discussion with respondent teachers, principals, district and provincial officials there are indications that the monitoring strategies currently used are to some extent beneficial to the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN because they help learners with SEN with interventions from ILST, DBST. The monitoring strategies also help in the placement of learners with severe cases in special or full service schools. This is an indication of good practice of implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN. However, several of the respondent educators felt that this form of monitoring should be supplemented with class visits by department officials. Additionally, there are contradictory views from some departmental officials, for instance one of the district officials stated that schools are not implementing the White Paper 6. Some EDOs also complained of keeping records for referrals only and not for them to find ways of assisting teachers properly to include learners with SEN.

5.6.5 Structures available at the school level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs

The researcher sought to establish the structures available at the school level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs as this is very important for the successful implementation of inclusive education policy. Table 5.28 presents the structure available at the school level with respect to special education needs.

Table 5-28: Structures available at the school level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs

Structures at the school level	Frequency	Percentage
No response	2	6.7
Institutional level support team	26	86.7
No structure available	2	6.7
Total	30	100.0

Table 5.28 shows the structure at school level for SEN. 26 teachers (86.7%) had an institutional level support team (ILST) while two teachers (6.7%) had no structure in place. The same number of teachers did not respond to the question about structure available at the school level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs.

Interviews with teacher respondents support the above information as it was found that the majority of the teachers have the institutional level support team at their schools. The following is some of what was said in this regard:

T5 stated:

We have the ILST, I'm the coordinator the team goes out a lot to help learners with SEN. This week we are interviewing parents and starting with the foundation phase. We meet as a team teachers come to us to give us names of learners with severe barriers, we have some teachers

responsible for the intermediate phase and others for the senior phase. As a team we sit and sort out learners needs. We check and see how severe the cases are, sometimes the cases are not so severe, sometimes a case may be extremely severe then intervention has to be taken immediately. So we are doing it on a regular basis. Sometimes the severe cases are referred to social development, we phone them to get them involved sometimes we phone the education department, and sometimes the police have also to be involved like when we have rape or abuse cases and sometimes like the hospital cases we do it there at the education department, we make the booking there the district office. The structure is very beneficial because of all I have just said.

T6 pointed out:

The structure at the school level is the institutional level support team (ILST). We are just three teachers in this school. We have meetings so that each teacher may come with the problems he/she is experiencing in his/her class, we come up and discuss if we can solve the problem, we solve it. If we cannot solve the problem, we go to the district and ask for assistance there. The structure is beneficial because, it is supportive when a problem is identified we try and solve the problem.

T8 remarked:

We have the structure called institutional level support team (ILST). It comprises of the principal, coordinator and two teachers. If a teacher is complaining about a child, the committee sits down, hold a meeting, check the book of a learner then we will call him/her to investigate or test and ask him/her some questions. For instance a grade four teacher came to me and complained about a learner and she said she doesn't know how to handle him, the learner was given a comprehension and he did not start to even answer the question because he doesn't even know how to write the first word. I called the child and I gave him a book and a pen to write the letters of the alphabet just for me to test if it is a special need or does the child not have the foundation.

T8 stated further:

Sometimes learners don't have special need it is the foundation that he/she doesn't have like spelling. Other learners have hereditary problem, the learner is 100% right but he/she is having hereditary problem, so this type of learner I wonder if I should refer to the district or to the district based support team (DBST) or should I leave her. This structure is beneficial because through it our learners are receiving help.

On the other hand, teacher 3 (T3) stated that there was no structure put in place for inclusive education in her school while in teacher 4's school the structure is in place but it was not functioning. These teachers gave their reasons as workload, time constraints and large classes. Below are their comments in this regard.

T3 disclosed:

No, we don't have any structure in place in this school for inclusive education because we have just two teachers and the principal making three. We are very busy, we are multi-grade teachers. There is no time for that.

T4 explained:

We have Institutional Level Support Team (ILST). But we do not always meet because of the high number of learners. It is the same teachers who are very busy that are still members of this team. This is really a problem.

In their interviews, most of the principal respondents concurred that they have ILST in place in their schools to support learners with SEN. Some of their comments include the following.

P4 disclosed:

There is institutional level support team (ILST). When a teacher discovers that a learner has a problem and he/she cannot help, he/she is supposed to refer the learner to the ILST. They will try to find out what the problem is and help, if they cannot help that learner, they refer him/her to the district.

P5 and P7 confirmed:

P5 said:

Yes. We have the ILST. We discuss problems, we discuss admissions. Like last year, we had an 8 year old learner who is on a wheel chair. I called the committee, we looked into the situation and decided that the child could not be admitted here because all our classes at the foundation phase have staircases, so we told the parents that they were welcome to enrol this child if they have someone who can push him around, up the stairs. The mother wanted the child here because of our involvement in inclusive education but because of the structure of the school, we couldn't admit the child.

P5 further commented:

Fortunately, that last year we were given an institutional support agent, she means a lot to us. She understands what is going on; we get practical support from her. You cannot expect the teachers say for instance if a child is wet, you cannot expect the teacher to wash the child .If a child is sick she goes to the parents to explain, she is the only support staff we

have here. The structure is beneficial in the sense that, it gives support to the school and parents involved.

P7 revealed:

The structure institutional level support team (ILST) comprises of 4 people, the coordinator, principal and two other teachers. When a teacher notices that a learner has barriers, he/she refers the child to the committee so that the committee can sit down and test the child or refer the child to the district. So we invite somebody from the office to come and test the child. Partly the structure is beneficial because the teachers don't have the knowhow of inclusive education, you have to remind them as a principal because sometimes they do it, and sometimes they don't.

P3 and P9 were of contrary opinions. They stated that they did not have formal structures put in place for inclusive education yet they managed to support learners with SEN. Below are their comments in this regard.

P3 commented:

No. We don't have any structure because we have a small number of teachers. We are only three. When we identify a problem in a learner we call the parents and refer the learner to the district for further assistance.

P9 said:

We don't have a formal structure we only have a school management team which is a general team which deals with a variety of things not necessarily inclusive education. This committee helps with identifying learners and forward names to the office. It is beneficial but the question is to what extent? I don't know because the mere fact that we can identify them, submit their names into relevant sections of the district office is not all. What they do with those names we do not know. We do our part, if you ask me what happened after that, I do not know. It is beneficial in the area of identifying learners, we have recommended learners but no action was taken by the department to help these learners.

It emerged that the majority of the respondents stated that the structure at the school level was the institutional level support team (ILST). The respondents gave the function of the team as identifying learners with special education needs, developing intervention programmes to help the learners and, if the programmes fail, the learners are referred to the social development, hospital, police or district office for further assistance. Having an institutional level support team (ILST) in most of the selected schools is good practice of inclusive education policy as it was stated by the majority of the respondents that the structure was beneficial in terms of supporting learners with SEN. However, many of the respondents identified the purpose of ILST as identifying learners with SEN for referral purposes and not fulfilling the purposes of inclusive education that have been identified in White Paper 6.

The minutes of the meetings analysed in most of the selected schools showed evidence of regular meetings of the members of institutional level support teams (ILST). The meetings lasted between one and two hours. The researcher noticed that records had names of learners, grades, types of barriers and the suggested intervention programmes. There were also copies of completed, new forms and documents from the district office for referring learners with SEN. Despite the difficult working conditions most of the selected schools have pockets of very good practices of inclusive education policy in putting in place functional and beneficial ILST measures for the support of learners with special education needs.

5.6.6 Structure available at the district level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs

The study sought to establish the structure available at the district level to ensure inclusive education for learners with special education needs as this is very important for the successful implementation of inclusive policy. Table 5.29 presents the structure available at the district level with respect to special needs education.

Table 5-29: Structure available at the district level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs

Structure available at the district level	Frequency	Percentage
No response	5	16.7
District based support team	25	83.3
Total	30	100.0

Table 5.29 above shows that 25 (83.3%) teachers, the majority, indicated that there is a district based support team (DBST) at the district level while the other five teachers (16.7%) did not respond to the question of the structure available at the district level to ensure inclusion of learners with SEN.

5.6.7 Benefits of the structure available at the district level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs

Teachers were asked about the benefits of the structure available at the school level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs. Table 5.30 presents the results.

Table 5-30: Benefits of the structure available at the district level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs

Benefits	Frequency	Percentage
Beneficial	20	66.7
Not beneficial	7	23.3
No response	3	10.0
Total	30	100.0

It is shown in the table above that majority of teachers, 20 (66.7%) agreed that the structure at the district level is beneficial while seven (23.3%) disagreed. Three (10.0%) did not respond to the question.

5.6.8 Reasons why the structure available at the district level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs is beneficial or not beneficial

Teachers were asked about their reasons for stating that the structure available at the district level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs is beneficial or not beneficial. Below are teachers' responses from the questionnaires. The majority of teachers, 13 (43.3%) gave the reason for their choice as referral of learners with severe SEN to the district. Two (6.7%) gave the reason for their choice as cooperation among team members. Six of the teachers (20.0%) responded that the few members in the DBST are not well trained and have a big workload. Only one teacher (3.3%) said that DBST does not refer learners with SEN after testing. Eight (26.7%) teachers did not respond to the question.

The interview respondents were also asked about the structure available at the district and its benefits. In their responses, respondent teachers pointed out that the structure available at the district level is the district support team. This team supports

teachers to help learners with SEN by referring learners with severe barriers to special schools, and organising workshops/training programmes for teachers on inclusive education. They advise on how to assess, develop intervention programmes, teach learners with SEN in classrooms, and provide materials on inclusive education to teachers. Most of the respondent teachers were of the opinion that the DBST was beneficial. Following are some of their responses.

T2 said:

There is DBST. They visit the school quarterly, they were here last month (May) to see how learners are performing, to check if they are still at school, and what problems are teachers encountering. They organise workshops to unpack the white paper 6 that says learners with SEN must be part of the mainstream schools, and that we must teach them here. Yes, the structure is beneficial, they come quarterly to give us advise and if we have problem, we will tell them and they will come up with solution.

T3 revealed:

Yes, there is a structure at the district level, the District Based Support Team (DBST). They are working with us they visit the schools. DBST organises workshops on inclusion of learners with SEN in our classrooms, curriculum adaptation and so on. They gave us some files and forms to fill and ask that we call them when we have learners with severe SEN. These kids have been helped because of this team like I said, one has hearing aid and the other is going to a special school next year as a result of their efforts. Yes, we are benefitting from them like I told you about those two learners who have been helped. Those are the kinds of benefits we get from them.

T6 commented:

DBST, they come to school if we ask for assistance, they come to help and teach us how to assess and develop intervention programmes for learners with SEN. For instance we have a child on a wheel chair that we could not help, we call them and they came to assess the child, he was in grade R, so they assessed the child and found that the child is alright,

there is no problem mentally with the child, he is having problems with the lower limbs. The child can write, he is able to do everything but he is only challenged with his legs. After the assessment, they placed the child in grade one and that child is now grade 3. We get teaching and learning materials from the district officials. It can be said that the structure at the district is beneficial because it is supportive.

T8 disclosed:

District based support team they have workshops, give us some of the resources that we can use and when we refer our learners to them, they take our learners to places of concern for investigation and intervention. The structure is beneficial as I have said before, I referred one of my learners to them and they took him to East London.

However, one of the teachers said the DBST was not beneficial because of the long process of attending to learners with special education needs. The following is her comment:

T1 explained:

The structure of the district is not functioning well. The structure is DBST. It is not functioning well because they have a big workload. If I have a child who has got a problem is referred to them, they will add his/her name to a waiting list and the child will have to wait for his/her turn. It is a good process but if it can be done privately it will be faster that is if one can afford the cost. The structure is not beneficial because there are many schools but only few district officials, the workload is too much for the district officials.

Some of the principals were not really familiar with the structure at the district; they only knew part of their functions and the individual district officials who have been assigned to their schools. Below are some of their comments.

P2 stated:

I do not know the structure but I know the person who comes to my school from the district, she speaks to teachers, learners and parents. They

provide teaching resources for us. They organise workshops for teachers so that they can help learners with SEN in the classroom. They teach us how to test and assess learners with SEN and develop intervention programmes to support these learners and to refer learners with severe barriers to the district office. We sometimes benefit. If they come to your school and assess learners, they do the follow up now and again.

P5 said:

I'm not familiar with the structure at the district, but I know most of the people involved. I know there is a structure but I don't know the name, even this morning, one of them was here, she spent almost two hours at our school. The district officials organise workshops to equip teachers on how to accommodate all the learners in their classrooms, they teach our educators how to diversify by adapting the curriculum. Our ILST knows how to assess, develop intervention programmes for learners with mild barriers and refer learners with severe barriers to the district officials. The officials also supply us with teaching and learning materials.

P7 said:

There is DBST at the district. What I know is that they organise workshops on how to include learners with SEN in the classrooms. Whenever the school has a problem that we cannot solve we refer the learner to the structure and they send an official to our school to look and examine the child, they develop intervention programme to help the child. If they feel that the child needs to go to special school they refer the child. They do everything until the child is taken to special school; they come and take the child to that special school. The structure is beneficial especially if the schools are doing it right, sometimes it is us who do not take the problem to them but they are ready to help with problems of schools.

One of the respondent principals (P10) was not happy with how the DBST handles issues that concern learners with SEN. She lamented that the DBST has not been efficient in their responsibilities. She, however, acknowledged the support of the DBST in severe cases. Below is her comment in this regard.

P10 commented:

DBST is there but they will always tell you go to their superior and when you phone he/she will say I forgot. There was a case of a learner who was good at drawing but could not write and read. He was referred and the parent would come and I kept calling till the end of the year and even in January I called and the district official who said they were working and said I forgot to put the child's name on the list of learners who need help. They only help severe cases. There was a learner who could not write, speak and walk properly. He was helped and now the learner is in King Williams Town. It is partially beneficial because we don't get adequate support.

District officials acknowledged the support of other departments in supporting learners with SEN. The following are some their comments in their interviews on the question.

EDO1 disclosed:

District Based Support Team is the only structure that we have and we incorporate other sister departments like the social work or police department, we work together when there are cases that need their intervention. DBST organises workshops to unpack white paper 6 for teachers to include all learners in their classroom. We organise workshops on curriculum adaptation. We explain how teachers can assess learners and develop intervention programmes to support learners with mild SEN. Schools have files and documents with which they refer learners with severe SEN to us. They invite us to speak to parents on inclusive education policy. The structure is very beneficial through the collaboration of all its members.

EDO2 explained:

At the district level, we do have the DBST (District Based Support Team). DBST supports the ILST, placement of learners with severe barriers identified by the ILST to special schools. We also support these learners because we do onsite visits in order to directly support the learners not

through the teachers. We are doing it in the other way because we are supposed to empower teachers to support learners. Now that we don't have special schools, we are supposed to be responsible for the placement of these learners to special schools. We invite other departments to assist us for example department of health, social development, and justice. This is because we find that other cases needed the expertise for instance the department of justice, police and so on. Therefore we are working as a team. The structure is beneficial because we have been supportive to schools as we have the support of these other departments and they have been assisting whenever we called them.

EDO3 said:

DBST see to it that schools are working. To make sure that other departments are working together with schools. For example the social department, if there is too much poverty and learners are not getting grants, or there is a particular problem with schools, then the social department workers will be involved. The structure is beneficial because we organise workshops for teachers on inclusion of learners with SEN in the classroom. The ILST can assess and support learners in the school, they only refer severe cases. DBST is also beneficial because we have the support of the other departments and they have been assisting whenever we called them.

EDO4 revealed:

District Based Support Team (DBST). We have a lot of problems because it is only the people in our section that are involved. The other sections think that they are not part of inclusive education. For instance, if the curriculum section can give us names of schools and learners who are struggling, things will be easier. We invite our sister departments like Social Development, Health, and the Police. They also support us when we go out for outreach, they speak to the parents. I'm so glad that other stakeholders join in our inclusive education. The Health department helps us to take learners to hospitals, so we follow each other like that. It is beneficial for the reasons I have given.

The respondent provincial official largely concurred with the district officials.

PO stated:

The DBST has to do their assessment of the child with the presentation that comes from the ILST. After the presentation, to see what the actual barrier is they can now develop a programme of their own to know the school has tried this or if a child needs psychological attention, a social worker - all these are sister departments to education. So after they have done all they could they can now refer the child to the relevant institution according to the barrier of the child. It is beneficial as it gives support to ILST and ensures the placement of learners with SEN in special schools and the full service schools.

The provincial official was asked about the structure available at the provincial level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs. The following is his response:

There is a provincial-based support team as well that comprises of all the directorates with the key director which is the curriculum that we are supporting. It relays information to the national level. We support the schools through the district. We organize workshops for schools through the district. In fact all our support to the schools are given through the districts. Of course it is because of all the reasons I have stated earlier.

There is an indication in this section that there are structures at the district and provincial levels. The district based support team and the provincial based support team are in place to support the institutional level support teams (ILST) in order for the ILST to implement inclusive education which includes supporting learners with SEN. These structures are beneficial as confirmed by the respondent teachers, principals, district officials and provincial official.

The pockets of good practices that emerged in this section include: the support the DBST gives the ILST in organising workshops to assist teachers to accommodate all learners in the mainstream schools; school visits; and teaching ILST how to assess and develop intervention programmes to help learners with mild SEN. The DBST also provides ILST with materials to refer learners with severe cases to the district office. They speak to parents on behalf of the ILST about inclusion of learners with SEN and work together with other departments. In spite of the workload of the district officials, difficult working conditions and shortages of personnel, these are indicators of the good practice of inclusion of learners with SEN.

The researcher had the chance to analyse some learners' profile forms for intervention programmes for learners with SEN at the district office. This is to confirm the support in place for learners with SEN by the DBST. These forms were completed by the class teachers with support from the ILST and in consultation with parents or caregivers, the DBST and health professionals. This proves that the structure at the district level is functioning and beneficial in the implementation process.

5.7 Challenges teachers encounter in implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs

The researcher investigated the challenges teachers experienced in implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs. Responses were sought from teachers, principals, district officials and the provincial official. The following opinions were noted in the course of interviewing the respondent teachers.

T2 and T5 pointed out their frustrations as they claimed parents were not helping matters. They claimed negligence on the part of parents, citing a lack of care for the

learners. Some learners were reported to be maltreated because they are orphans. Below are their comments in this regard.

T2 revealed:

Some of these learners are not cared for at home so teachers are the parents here at school. Some of these learners are abused, we have to comfort them. Some of them will not write in class, you must find out what went wrong. It is difficult because at home they are denied that. Reason being that some of these learners have not been cared for, their parents get drunk every day. Some are left alone, some of them their parents are dead.

T5 affirmed

Parents are not cooperative, when you call them to tell them about their children, they will tell you, there is nothing wrong with the child and also lack of information like these parents do not know anything about inclusive education, even about their children. When they were pregnant, they don't go for anti-natal classes and even post-natal and you find out that at birth the weight of the child is not what it should be or maybe something has gone wrong with the child because of the carelessness of the parents. So when you are calling them to tell them what you have noticed in the children, they just give you that "I don't care" attitude.

T6 and T8 revealed the major challenges they encountered in inclusion of learners with SEN as inadequate resources, and inadequate training/skills on how to help learners. Time management in the classroom was also raised as a concern, with the teachers having to complete their workload as well as having to attend to learners with SEN individually. This is especially difficult in schools which use a multi-grade model.

T6 pointed out:

First and foremost we are not trained. There is no time because of the work load is much because of the type of school we have (multi-grades) and we are just few teachers. If we can have skilled teachers in this area, it would have been better. This is a rural area; we are not able to help these learners after school hours because we don't stay in this area.

T8 reported:

One of the challenges is lack of knowledge to deal with those learners. Learners have different needs so I don't know how to handle those different needs. It is challenging because we don't know how to cope with them. Sometimes let me be honest, I ignore them because I don't know how to handle those learners. Another challenge is we don't have the resources but I just try to support. We don't have parents support when you call them they say "no I'm busy; he is like this even at home." So we don't get support from parents. When you tell parents to allow their children to repeat a class they say no 'No he can't repeat.

The following responses from the principals indicate that they themselves were acutely aware of a range of challenges faced by their teachers.

P1 disclosed:

In our school, our parents don't know what this is all about. In this community, most parents are working in other places. They dump their children with grandmothers; grandmothers who are old and tired. There is no backup with the homework. The mothers don't even come here. So I think it's a big challenge that parents do not know what this is all about.

P2 lamented:

The programme is time consuming, another thing is that we are few but we have to work as if we are in a normal school. We are teaching the multi-grade classes but we have to see to it that learners understand. We must carry all the learners along. Shortages of classroom, furniture, and teachers are not trained in inclusive education.

P2 complained further:

We are educators at the same time we have to be social workers and we have to be the manager because each and every educator is a manager of his/her class. So you have to manage your class very well and how are you going to manage this when you have got 3 classes with 42 learners in each class? Is that possible? Is that normal? Those are the challenges, we are experiencing it is not easy at all.

P5 said:

Teachers are challenged on a daily basis having those children in the class everyday and they are faced with the challenge of seeing those children every day. These learners are in all the classes, teachers go to all the classes and meet these learners. Sometimes teachers are in a rush to finish the work but because you have slow learners in your class, it takes longer time than the teacher has scheduled.

He further commented:

We have special classes for learners with SEN (after school hours). We have big classes also, it ranges, in the foundation have we have average of 56 learners in the class, in the intermediate, we have an average of 40 learners and when it comes to the senior, we have 40-60 learners. It is very much difficult to handle especially when at the intermediate phase (learners between 13- 15 years old), it becomes rowdy and undisciplined. Overcrowding is a problem.

P7 revealed:

Mostly, it is the number in the classroom. Teachers have more than 42 learners in the classroom, so it is very difficult for teachers to do individual teaching or to concentrate on that learner who has barriers. In this area we have many learners who cannot read or write. Secondly, teachers have no qualifications to implement inclusive education. If they all have remedial teaching it would have been better but because they have not remedial teaching it becomes very difficult.

P7 cited more challenges encountered in her school:

Social background, parents who are illiterate, for example, we have a child who is severely disabled and whose parents did not give us permission to take to special school because they did not want to part with the child although the child is totally deaf and he's using hearing aids in both ears.

P8 said:

Our learners face abuses at home, parents don't really care for them. A learner will come to school without taking breakfast or doing the home work maybe because the parents were fighting. There is no motherly and fatherly love for the children, the parents are drinking too much and involved in drugs. A learner will not sleep at night because of the fight between the father and the mother. The learner has not done home work because there is no money to buy paraffin.

Education district officials pointed out the challenges experienced by teachers as class size which makes it difficult for teachers to support learners individually. Some of the selected schools are multi-grades where teachers teach more than one grade. Some teachers don't see inclusion of learners with SEN as their responsibility. They want these learners to be referred to special schools. Teachers do not attach much importance to the training conducted by the Department of Education. Systemic challenges include the lack of adequate district personnel to support inclusion of learners with SEN. The following are some of their comments:

EDO1 commented:

The first problem is the number in the classroom. Most of our classrooms are larger than normal and it makes it difficult even if a teacher is to use curriculum adaptation, it will be difficult to do this in a very large classroom. So I think those are the challenges. The attitude of teachers is another challenge that they don't see it as their duty; they don't see the training as anything, they undermine the training;

EDO 1 stated further:

Teachers think maybe they need a qualification so even those who have got qualification in inclusive education don't practice it when you check their schools. You really don't know what can really be a solution but attitude is the greatest barrier in the implementation of inclusive education. Another barrier is the systemic barrier; the problem in the system itself is inadequate support from the district. There are fewer personnel. Those are the barriers I think teachers face in our district.

EDO3 said:

The challenge is that they are not trained. When I talk about training I do not mean a two day workshop and the department will say implement this with a two day workshop? The number two challenge is the number of learners in the classroom. The other challenge is the multi-grade. You see these ladies (referring to two teachers who came with her); they teach from grade one to grade seven. They are from two different schools.

She added:

Another challenge is poverty because learners do not go to school if there is no nutrition. Overload of work from the department, as I was saying, making examples of those two ladies, being a principal, teacher and clerk at the same time. The department will not stop to say "please bring this". I told you, I have travelled 250 km today, the department calls these ladies now and again "come to the district office for this", and so there is no school over there when they are here. "Come for a workshop for a week", so there will be no school over there. I think these are the challenges teachers face.

EDO4 commented:

Teachers are not interested to accommodate all these learners. We have only a few success stories. Teachers do not have knowledge on how to implement inclusive education. "There is no time", that is what they complain about. They are not prepared to sit after teaching hours. There is something in the system that is not right. Big classes make teachers not to accommodate all learners; they only teach a few who follow them. The multi-grade is another challenge where teachers teach many grades. There is advantage in Multi-grade if Grade 1, 2 and 3 are combined. As the teacher teaches, those slow learners in Grade 3 can pick up from the lesson the teacher teaches grade 1 or 2.

PO disclosed:

Many of the educators in public ordinary schools don't have the skills and expertise in dealing with learners that are experiencing barriers. They don't have the qualification to do that, they have problem of identification – to identify those with barriers. There are inadequate resources/equipment.

There was some degree of consensus in that all the respondents concurred that teachers encountered challenges in the implementation of the inclusive policy. Some of these challenges include: lack of adequate training for teachers, systemic barriers, lack of support, overcrowding, lack of adequate materials. Other challenges are - shortages of teachers, workload, multi-grades, parents' nonchalant attitudes, and poverty-related challenges, attitudes of teachers and other learners. In spite of these challenges there seem to be pockets of good practice; for instance, there are advantages in multi-grade classes as learners gain from the lessons of other grades as the teacher teaches. There are special classes for learners with SEN after school hours to assist these learners. Teachers also play the role of a social worker and manager to support learners with SEN.

5.7.1 Recommendations on how inclusion of learners with SEN should be implemented.

Teachers were asked to suggest how inclusion of learners with SEN can be properly implemented. Suggestions were offered by respondents on how teachers should implement inclusion of learners with SEN and it is presented in table 5.3.1 below.

Table 5-31: Recommendations on how inclusion of learners with SEN should be implemented

Recommendations	Frequency	Percentage
Training; special attention.	12	40.0
Referral of severe cases to special schools	10	33.3
Teachers should be positive and get parents' help	7	23.3
Small numbers of learners	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

As shown in table 5.31 above, 12 (40.0%) teachers suggested that SEN learners should be given special attention and adequate training for teachers should be made available. Ten of the teachers, (33.3%) stated that learners with severe SEN should be referred to special schools. Seven (23.3%) recommended referral of severe cases to special schools. Seven (23.3%) teachers advised that teachers should be positive and get parents' help. Only one (3.3%) teacher suggested smaller numbers of learners in the classrooms. The following suggestions were made by some of the teachers who were interviewed.

Most of the suggestions revolved around training. T2 made the following suggestion:

Teachers need the course or programme that will enable them to implement inclusive education. The department can train one teacher per

school or two teachers per cluster so that those teachers can come back and train other teachers.

T3 disclosed:

Teachers need to be trained to be able to implement inclusive education. So I will recommend that the department should organize in service training for all teachers for them to be able to implement inclusive education.

T8 said:

There should be more workshops because they organize only one workshop in a year, if they can organize more workshops and come to our school maybe quarterly to check those learners sometimes maybe I misjudge a learner that he/she has got a problem when maybe there is no problem. They can just come maybe after writing a report not that I should take the learner to them but they should come and see the learner first and investigate you know we are working in different community, if I call the parents they will not come because they are used to me but if the parents know that it is the district official that send for them they will come and cooperate.

T1 wondered about specialists' visits to schools:

There should be remedial teachers, psychologists, occupational therapists; speech therapists, these people should help by visiting schools on a regular basis to give us guidelines.

T5 felt that teachers could shoulder some responsibility by dedicating some of their time to help learners with SEN:

Teachers need to spend a little bit of their time to know these children like the situation of reading and writing; some of the learners in grade 8 and 9 cannot write or read. Teachers should support these learners by giving them remedial work, give them more attention and they will see that these learners will excel.

The majority of the principals echoed the call to the Department of Education for more training for teachers, or support to implement inclusion of learners with special education needs.

Only P5 commented more broadly:

Schools (principals and teachers) must implement inclusive education. In my school, I give my full support to the programme. I take learners with SEN and their parents in my car to hospitals, social work and other places when the need arises. We have been supporting three schools who have not been implementing inclusive education as such. They came to me and said “we hear that you are doing this. We also want to do it. Can you as the principal or the coordinator of the ILST come to our school and community to speak about SEN and stay for a day or two to guide us?” so on two occasions we have gone out to help them, to explain what inclusive education is all about. We told them it’s more work but at the end of the day, it is to the benefit of all learners.

On this issue, P2 had this to say:

The office should hear/listen to teacher recommendations through what you are going to write at the end of this study. They should listen to what teachers want in their schools. They just sit there and they do not give any assistance whatsoever.

In the interviews with district officials, their suggestions revolved around inclusion of every section of the department in the implementation of inclusive education in order for the programme to be successful, the need for the policy to be re-rolled to set out better ways of implementing it, care and passion for learners with SEN, class size and training and support for teachers. The following are their comments.

EDO1 commented:

Maybe with more support, and the other problem is the Department must include every section in inclusive education. Inclusive education is about the content, when the policy was introduced, little was done for the curriculum people to change their mind set. So, conversion must be for everybody working for the department not for only the inclusive section because it is content based. I think the training that is needed is for everyone to change their attitude and all of us must be converted to inclusive education Then when we go to school, all of us will support inclusive education I think from the beginning, it was not unpacked and rolled properly that is why we have these challenges. Even if you understand and you want to make impact on the masses, when you get to school every other person there does not understand.

EDO1 went further to say:

I think they missed it when the programme was being rolled out leaving other sections of the department and focusing on special education section. Inclusive education is everybody's' business, it does not come when a child is having a disability but it comes when a child is having barriers. They see every disability as a barrier a disability is one out of all the barriers to learning. This policy needs to be overhauled right from the beginning setting out better ways of rolling the policy and touching everyone who is supposed to be touched. I think that is where the loopholes are.

EDO2 advised:

Teachers must love these children; they must have passion for them because it will make it easier for them to implement inclusive education. Secondly they must study and they must apply to universities or higher education institutions so that they can get the required qualifications because they cannot implement it without knowledge about it.

EDO3 stated:

I think because it is a new policy, you may say no, but it is new. It is new in the sense that the kind of teachers that are at the school now, inclusive education was not there when they were trained as teachers. So, now the crash workshops are not bringing any help for those teachers. What I was thinking when this policy was introduced was that maybe the teachers will be taken because when you talk about inclusive education, I mean we are talking about souls, so I was thinking maybe they will be taken out in phases for a year and be trained about this.

She commented further:

Let us take for an example; a learner who does not have limbs, everything else is okay but the learner inside, how does the learner really feel? In some cases, he may feel that I am being discriminated here, I am not being accepted, and so, emotionally the learner is not okay. And the teacher is not trained on how to deal with learners who have emotional problems, who have behavioural problems. Remember I said those teachers were trained in those years when we have to take the stick but now this learner has got behavioural problems staying in the school and the teacher does not know how to deal with this.

EDO4 pointed out:

There should be small numbers of learners in classes. Teachers should group learners and give individual attention where possible. Teachers should give easy and less complex sentences with concrete materials that learners can really understand. Teachers should not just give learners work to do but to do it with them; for example, don't just say close the door, you must take learners to the door and close the door but some teachers are not just doing this.

5.8 Summary

The data presentation has hopefully provided a clearer understanding of the phenomena under study. The qualifications and experience of teachers in selected primary schools in the Fort Beaufort District were presented. It was revealed that most of the teachers in the selected primary schools did not have qualifications in special needs education. Two teachers had B.Ed (SNE) and ACE (SNE) qualifications respectively, which qualified them to implement inclusion of learners with special education needs. The other teachers are professionally qualified teachers who had only general teaching qualifications. Some of the other challenges teachers encountered in the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN include lack of training, inadequate materials and support. It also emerged in this chapter that some teachers use the teacher-centred teaching methods and some of the teachers did not know how to plan lessons to include learners with SEN. The call for consistent and appropriate in-service training (not just two- or three-day workshops) and classroom support was virtually unanimous among the respondents.

In spite of the challenges of implementing inclusion of learners with SEN, there are pockets of good practice found in some selected schools even in the midst of difficult working conditions especially in the rural context of this study. These good practices include curriculum adaption to accommodate all learners and modifications in content. Effective teaching methods, that is, the use of different teaching methods to include all learners in the classrooms were also found, as were assessment strategies – assessing learners particularly those with SEN with different methods according to their abilities. There is also improvisation to make up for inadequacy of material resources. The findings also showed there are functional and beneficial ILST, DBST and provincial based support teams in place both at the schools the district and at the provincial level to support the inclusion of learners with SEN. Monitoring strategies are also in place to make teachers work harder and faster to finish their work schedule for successful implementation of inclusion for learners with SEN.

The next chapter discusses the main findings.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

Having presented the data in chapter 5, this chapter provides a discussion of the information. The discussion is based on five broad themes which are: teacher skills (teacher capacity), teaching strategies (delivery of the curriculum), content (including assessment) and pedagogy adaptation, support mechanism available for teachers, and monitoring strategies in place for implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs (SEN). A discussion on each of the five thematic areas is presented below.

6.2 Teacher capacity

One of the major barriers to achieve inclusion is pre service preparation of teachers. Studies reveal that lack of professional training in inclusive techniques and practices for general and special education teachers are the main barriers (Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007; Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden 2000). Thus, the implication is that at pre service training level, all the prospective teachers should be exposed to a compulsory component on inclusive education with specific reference to vulnerable learners like those with SEN (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007). A special needs element should be introduced in initial teacher training to broaden teaching viewpoints to teach learners with special needs. It emerged in this study that the majority of the teachers in the selected schools were not specialists in special education. Mbele (2005) points out that all pre service teacher preparation programmes must provide teachers with an understanding and appreciation of diversity. It should also address suitable accommodations in curriculum, instructional activities and evaluation procedures, the modification of materials and the effective

identification, development and utilization of resources. Such an effort in the long run will provide teachers with at least an introduction to special needs, policy and legislation, special teaching strategies and materials. According to Rogan and Grayson (2003), capacity of teachers includes variables such as one's specialization and experience. The teacher's own background, training and level of confidence as well as his/her commitment can affect the implementation of a programme. Variables such as specialisation and experience are included in capacity of teachers. Level of commitment, confidence, background and training of the teacher affects the implementation of a programme (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007).

6.2.1 Teacher skills

Teachers play a crucial role in quality education (Savolainen, 2009). He cites McKinsey *et al.* (2007), who state that 'the quality of an education system depends on the quality of its teachers'. According to Sanders and Horn (1998) and Bailleul, Bataille, Langlois, Lanoe, and Mazereau, (2008), no other factor, not even class composition, background or class size, contributes to learners' success as much as the quality of the teacher. Teachers are able to inspire higher learning gains in their learners.

The study revealed that most of the respondent teachers were aware of the learning material and prepared to teach it well. These teachers made efforts to adapt and modify the curriculum to make it accessible to all learners. It was found also that the majority of the teachers accommodated learners with SEN by giving them tasks from the lower grades and by making use of different teaching strategies.

This finding is in line with Landsberg, Kruger and Nel (2005:458), who state that a well organised teacher will keep the lesson flowing with good communication skills and he/she will bring about great change in the education of a learner with SEN by modifying the curriculum to accommodate these learners. Carroll, Forlin and Jobling (2003) state that teachers should be confident in their capacity, skills and knowledge in inclusive education to meet the difficulties they will face in the present school climate as there are more complex demands on teachers.

The European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2009) expects that teacher education for inclusion should prepare teachers to deal with learner diversity arising from religious background, ethnicity, culture, linguistic difference, gender, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status, special educational needs or disability. Teachers' performances are important in putting new programmes into practice, and factors such as their subject matter knowledge, background, commitment to teaching, training and approaches towards the anticipated curriculum implementation influence their ability and readiness to put change into practice (Rogan & Grayson, 2003).

6.2.2 *Age of teachers*

Chetty (2004:110) states that most of the teachers in South Africa are middle-aged; this means that South Africa has mature educators which lines up with the findings of this study. Table 5.3 confirms this statement in showing that the majority of the teachers in selected schools were between 40 and 49 years of age. According to Reay and Denninson (1990:42), most primary school educators are mature. A mature female educator in primary school is more acceptable to little children as being *in loco parentis* as she symbolizes a motherly figure. Studies show that mature teachers demonstrate more understanding with learners with special education needs (Billingsley, 2004; Brodin, 1997:139).

6.2.3 *Teacher qualifications*

Studies have shown that the qualifications and experience of teachers have become a major concern for education practitioners and policy makers all over the world (Florian & Rouse, 2009:596; Savolainen, 2009:16). The effect of qualifications on the quality of teaching and learning in schools has affected the success of curriculum implementation (Rooth, 2005; Christians, 2006; Van der Walt & De Klerk, 2006; Van Deventer & Van Niekerk, 2008).

The academic qualifications of teachers are important factors in determining the quality of education (Chung, 2005). The South African government's policy of providing "more teachers" and "better teachers" is based on the belief that teachers are essential drivers of good quality education (DoE, 2006), a notion supported by Robinson and Latchem (2003a:10) and Perraton, Creed, & Robinson (2002:7).

According to the findings of this study, all the respondent teachers were professionally qualified. It was revealed in this study that by virtue of being a teacher in South Africa one can implement inclusive education policy for learners with special education needs. It was stated that there is no special qualification required to implement inclusive education. All that is required is for the teacher to understand the policy, attend workshops which unpack the policy and explain their roles in the classroom and the roles of other stakeholders. This study showed that all the respondent teachers had one professional qualification or another; these included Certificate in Education, Diploma in Education, Bachelor in Education, Honours Degree and Masters in Education.

This study, on the other hand, pointed out that teachers are required to specialise in inclusive education and remedial for them to be able to implement inclusive education for learners with special education needs. This is in line with the words of Karten (2007) who states that as learners spend the majority of their time in classes, teachers must be highly qualified in inclusive education not only to help learners gain more understanding, but also to assist them properly. In their study, "Successful Inclusive Practices in Middle and Secondary Schools" Villa, Thousand, Nevin and Liston (2005) found that one of the respondent teachers stated, "General educators will certainly be familiar with the content while inclusive education specialist teachers will be knowledgeable on modifications, instructional strategies, and accommodations."

It was found that the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN experienced lack of specialised teachers in most of the selected schools. It was established that the selected schools had professionally qualified teachers, the majority of whom were not specialists in inclusive education. The quality of teachers will determine the achievement of the programme (Darling-Hammond, 2010). This author notes that

you can barely have success without the co-operation and support of competent and committed staff, no matter how efficient and well intentioned you are as a school administrator.

This challenge of inadequate specialists was also encountered in studies carried out in Mozambique (World Bank, 2004). Mukuria, and Korir, (2006); Charema, (2007) had the same outcome in their studies on inclusive education in Kenya. This study found that the majority of teachers in the selected schools were the same teachers who were trained professionally for general education. This finding is in line with Zimba (1999) in Engelbrecht and Green (2007:46) who found that teachers who implemented inclusive education in Namibian schools were the same professionals trained for general education. It was indicated that learners with special education needs were being taught by a majority of teachers who were not trained in inclusive education. This means that most of these teachers were not trained in their pre service training years to support learners with special education needs. Therefore, it is not easy for such teachers to handle these learners. According to Elmore (2000) poor teaching generates misunderstanding that has socio-emotional effects on the learner. The learner becomes infuriated and may drop out of school. Teachers should be well trained in inclusive education to deal with learners in such circumstances.

It was established from the findings that despite the fact that the majority of the teachers are not specialists in inclusive education, they are implementing inclusive programmes in a way that all learners are accommodated in the selected primary schools, which is a good practice of inclusion policy.

6.2.4 *Experience of teachers*

Having prior experience as an inclusive teacher seems to positively influence teachers toward inclusive education (Avissar, 2000; Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2000; Hodge & Jansma, 2000; Jobe, & Rust, 1996). It would seem that prior experience in this field allows mainstream teachers to feel more comfortable within the inclusive classroom (Avissar, 2000; Hodge & Jansma, 2000). Direct experiences

of including learners with special education needs into mainstream settings seemed to be an essential factor in shaping teachers' views toward inclusive settings (Avramidis *et al.*, 2000; Giangreco, Dennis, Cloninger, Edelman & Schattman, 1993; Villa, Thousand, Meyers & Nevin, 1996). Nevertheless, Briggs, Johnson, Shepherd, and Sedbrook, (2002) note that the kind of prior contact should be positive as it is this that offers positive attitudes toward inclusive education.

It emerged from this study that the experience of teachers had an influence on the implementation of inclusive education policy for learners with SEN. An experienced and mature teacher has higher skill levels to deal with learners with special education needs (Hanushek & Rivkin, 2006). The findings of this study established that the majority of teachers had more than five years' teaching experience. Teachers in this stage have the know-how to deal with the challenges of the classroom. The teacher symbolises a representative and a resource that devises the curriculum in committees, implements it in the classroom and assesses it as a teaching team. It is thus paramount for the teacher to have experience to successfully carry out his/her tasks (Hanushek & Rivkin, 2006).

Ornstein and Hunkins (2004) argue that an experienced teacher is able to use the relevant teaching methods in class, identify learning needs, know the interests of the learners and the content, as well as use the appropriate teaching materials. This study revealed that the majority of teachers in the study were highly experienced general education teachers. It emerged from the study that these teachers had been employed at the primary school level all their teaching years.

As much as there have been a number of studies showing the negative perception of educators towards inclusive schooling, positive findings have also been reported. For instance, a study conducted by Villa, Thousand, Nevin, and Malgeri (1996) provided results that favoured the inclusion of children with SEN in mainstream schools. The researchers noted that teacher commitment often emerges at the end of the implementation cycle, after the teachers have gained mastery of the professional expertise needed to implement inclusive programmes. Similar findings were reported by LeRoy and Simpson (1996), who studied the impact of inclusion over a 3-year period in the state of Michigan. Their study showed that as teachers' experience with children with SEN increased, their confidence to teach these children also increased.

The evidence seems to indicate that teachers' negative or neutral attitudes at the beginning of an innovation such as inclusive policy may change over time as a function of experience and the expertise that develops through the process of implementation. The result is in line with one of the findings of this study, in that teachers with more than five years' teaching experience were positive about the implementation of inclusive education.

6.2.5 Teacher specialisation

Forlin (2001) suggests that one of the greatest obstacles to the development of inclusion is that most teachers do not have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to carry out the work. Smith (2007) points out that those teachers with less content knowledge were found to make smaller gains in their learners compared to more seasoned educators.

The data obtained on teacher specialization in special education needs in this study revealed that the majority of the teachers in the selected schools had no training in the area of special education needs. This confirmed the information at the district office that there was a shortage of specialised teachers in the district of Fort Beaufort and that the majority of the teachers were trained as general educators. Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff, and Pettipher (2001) found that schools with specialised teachers will find it easy to implement the designed programme. The training teachers received had prepared them to teach in the ordinary class without considering learners with special education needs. According to Engelbrecht and Green (2007) some of the teachers who are implementing inclusive education in schools in South Africa are professionally trained for general education, which is line with the finding of this study. This study further established that learners were taught by teachers with diplomas and degrees that were not relevant to the subject content when it came to issues of special education needs.

The findings of this study further confirmed those of Swart *et al.* (2001) who also found out that schools which practised inclusive education in South Africa experienced a shortage of specialised teachers in inclusive education. These circumstances are a source of anxiety for policy makers. If implementation of

inclusive education policy is to thrive, policy makers need to tackle those concerns. This study confirms findings by Swart *et al.* (2001) which revealed that many South African teachers did not have professional training with regards to learners with special education needs. The research findings indicated that inclusive education policy was challenged by a shortage of adequately specialised teachers. The majority of the interviewed teachers were those who only had an ordinary teacher qualification such as the Advanced Certificate in Education and/or a Bachelor's degree in Education. Kansanen (2003:89) concurs with Swart *et al.* (2001) that the level of teachers' confidence and teachers' training can influence the implementation of any programme. Rice (2003) notes that the quality of teachers is the most important school-related factor influencing learners' performance.

Cook (2004) argues that non-specialist teachers have no capacity to support the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN. Nevertheless, this study revealed the belief of some of the respondents that there was no need to consider the specialist qualifications of the teachers – as long as a teacher had a general teaching qualification and was experienced in life, he/she was able to implement inclusive policies. This finding is in line with the findings of Christiaans (2006) whose concern was that some school principals' attitudes are not conducive to implementing education policy successfully. For instance, any teacher is expected to implement inclusive programmes, which may not be well-known to the teacher.

The challenge of non-specialist teachers is not limited to South Africa. Swart *et al.* (2001) admit that lack of content matter knowledge by teachers is found in other parts of the world like Ghana and Swaziland. One criterion for the effective implementation of inclusive education is that teachers must be adequately equipped (Naicker, 2008).

As mentioned above, although teachers in this study did not specialise in inclusive education, the majority of those teachers are implementing inclusion policy for learners with SEN by adapting the curriculum to include or accommodate all learners in their classes. This indicates good practice of inclusion policy.

6.3 Lesson Planning

An effective and relevant foundation in education can be created and maintained among learners through effective practices that give teachers the opportunity to plan and deliver lessons that meet the needs of all learners and result in positive learning outcomes (Theron and Dalzell, 2006:399).

It emerged in this study that the Department of Education provides a common lesson plan to all teachers. Therefore, teachers are uniformly guided by the framework, schedule and lesson templates contained in the NCS. This study indicated the awareness among teachers of the NCS planning methods because they were provided with them by the Department of Education through district officials. The issue of common lesson plans is a controversial one, and may be seen, on the one hand, as de-professionalisation or over-control of teachers or, on the other, as a necessary (and possibly voluntary) option in a country where so many teachers are under-trained and non specialists.

Middle (2005) is in support of the development of uniform lesson plans. He states that it is a task that should be shared by all teachers in the school as it limits the quantity of lesson planning required and increases the quality. It encourages teachers to brainstorm ways that they can embed their teaching expectations in their regular curriculum. Common lesson plans, if well-designed, give security and quality to lessons (Middle, 2005). It emerged that some teachers are more adventurous their lesson planning, and plan explicit lessons with the specific nature of individual learners in mind.

This study revealed that some of the teachers complained of not knowing how to plan their lessons to include learners with special education needs because there was no support and guidance on how to do so – a somewhat contradictory position. This is contrary to the rights- based approach that points out that there should be high quality training and support before teachers start teaching in schools or other learning institutions. Van Deventer and Van Niekerk (2008:135) also found that teachers seem often to be placed in situations where they lack expertise or find themselves “out of their league”, which creates stressful situations for them.

6.3.1 Teaching strategies

According to Peters (2004), and UNESCO (2007), inclusive policy demands that schools accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children (Peters, 2004; UNESCO, 2007). The impact of the teacher and the teaching that goes on in the classroom has been identified by numerous studies as the crucial variable for improving learning (Rogan & Grayson, 2003).

This study established the use of learner-centred teaching methods which included group and individual teaching, group demonstrations, group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, remedial, role-play and practical activities. The use of teacher-centred teaching methods such as note-taking, use of textbooks and explanatory sessions were also found in this study. It was revealed that teachers used learner-centred teaching methods as far as possible in order to include all learners, especially those with SEN. This is in accordance with what is stipulated by the Department of Education (2008) - that teaching should be learner-centred, allowing space for learners to be active participants in their own learning, and sometimes even in the design of what is to be learnt. Sall, Ndiaye, Diarra and Seck (2009:54) emphasised that the teacher's method of teaching is critical in any reform designed to improve educational quality.

The successful implementation of education policies in primary schools in South Africa likewise depends on the teaching strategies used by the teachers. Lorenscheit (2002) writes that a rights-based approach to education embraces the importance of quality and inclusive education policy. Quality education is one that is learner-centred, leads to the realisation of every learner's full potential and prepares the learners for the challenges faced in life.

Huba and Freed (2000) note that in the teacher-centred approach knowledge is conveyed from teacher to learners. Only learners are seen as learners, and they are treated as passive. The authors view learner-centred approaches as those in which learners construct knowledge through gathering and synthesizing information and integrating it using the general skills of inquiry, communication, critical thinking,

problem-solving, and so on. Teachers and learners learn together, and learners are actively involved.

Learner-centred teaching methods tend to ensure learners' participation (thus counteracting the tendency of some learners not to take lessons seriously). They also help shy learners in particular to become more self-confident. Susan, Rastegar and Malekan (2007) argue that methods suitable for interactive learning provide opportunities for the learners to be active producers of knowledge, and allow them to reflect on their own learning experiences. Therefore, they are able to understand the contradictions between their existing understandings and new experiences, and to consider alternative understandings. It is not surprising that some teachers in the selected schools used learner-centred methods because they wanted to accommodate all the learners. This is also in line with the words of Jansen (2009:174) who stresses that "teaching has to remain learner-centred as a matter of policy".

This study also found that some of the teachers employed a combination of different methods: both teacher-and learner-centred. It was revealed that some of the teachers make use of class discussion, group work and role-play for different tasks in the course of their teaching.

Johnsen (1998) points out that teaching methods and not only content have to be considered in planning for classroom activities involving the plurality of individual learners. Teaching methods are also considered as mediating tools in the teaching-learning process, adapting the pupil's apprenticeship within the region of proximal development. Nevertheless these considerations need to be based on knowledge about the learners' preferred learning strategies. Learners learn through different methods, activities, media and strategies. Some learners need to write things down to remember, others learn faster by concentrating on listening. Some prefer to study for themselves while others prefer studying in a group. Some learn by generalisations through literature, while others learn the same thing more effectively from observing and experimenting. Some need to use paper and pencil in order to "think in relations", some remember well what they see, while touch is of great help to others. The aged master, Taba (1962:307), notes that different individuals need different learning techniques for their self-development. There is evidence of good practice in inclusive policy found in this section which includes the use of learner-

centred teaching methods such as group and individual teaching, group demonstration, group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, remedial, role-play and practical activities. It emerged that teachers are implementing inclusion policy for learners with SEN especially in schools in rural contexts with limited resources.

6.3.2 *Adapting the content and pedagogy to meet the needs of all learners*

Johnsen (2007) notes that teachers have to adapt the curriculum so as to provide for the diversity of different individual learning strategies to ensure that each learner develops and uses a set of learning strategies and methods that are appropriate for her or him. Also, individual and joint possibilities have to be created to use different preferred strategies and styles in the process of learning. To handle such a variety of strategies is a difficult task, not least in view of the many programmes advocating that “they represent the best solution to most educational challenges”. There is no method or programme that is complete and fits all learners and teachers and teachers have the freedom to develop their own battery of different programmes, methods, skills and knowledge to select from in making and revising curricula for individual learners and classes (Johnsen, 2007).

The finding of this study concurred with Johnsen (2007) as it revealed the various methods used by teachers in adapting the curriculum to ensure inclusion of all learners. The use of different teaching strategies, dedication of their time, individual work, group work, extra work and coming down to learners’ level to accommodate all learners were some of the methods used. These findings are evidence of good practices of inclusion of learners with special education needs, particularly in the context of this study, which is within a rural, poorly resourced sector.

These findings are also in accordance with the rights-based approach that argues that the curriculum should be adapted to meet the needs of all learners. Education must be flexible and adaptable as there are constant changes in the challenges and needs of societies. All education systems and educational programmes and

campaigns must take the diversity of learners and their needs into consideration (Lohrenscheit, 2002).

This study also found that some of the teachers were not adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of all learners because of the size of the classes as well as a lack of training. This finding is contrary to the rights-based approach which states that there should be adaptation in curriculum to meet the needs of the learners with special education needs (Tomasevski, 2004). Curriculum should be flexible and adaptable as there are constant changes in the challenges and needs of societies. The rights-based approach considers developing appropriate curriculum adaptations to go well with learners instead of the learners fitting into the curriculum (Tomasevski, 2004). The approach places emphasis on how teachers can accommodate diversity and address special education needs.

In the international literature on inclusion, emphasis is placed on strategies that ensure individual access and participation. This access is frequently obtained through creating accommodations and adaptations to teaching, learning and assessment (Hitchcock, Meyer, Rose & Jackson, 2002). The USA employs individualised education programmes (IEPs) which have descriptions of a child's educational performance, annual goals and objectives, a statement of which special education or other services a child requires, and a description of instructional and assessment modifications (Johnson, 2003; Burrell, & Warboys, 2000). Lovannone, Dunlap, Huber and Kincaid (2003) maintain that the individualised education programme is an essential component of inclusion. Differentiated instruction needs teachers to change their practices from a programme-based pedagogy to a learner-based pedagogy. Teachers endeavour to adapt pedagogical interventions to the needs of each learner, admitting that each learner varies in interests, learning profile, and level of functioning. Differentiated instruction may facilitate high levels of both learner engagement and curricular achievement (Caron, 2003; Tomlinson, 2004). The use of different teaching strategies, dedication of their time, individual work, group work, extra work and coming down to learners' level to accommodate all learners are some of the methods used, all of which are evidence of good practices in inclusion of learners with special education needs, particularly in the context of this study with limited resources.

6.3.3 The approaches used to assess learners and reasons for using the approaches

Assessment is the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting information to help teachers, parents and other stakeholders in making decisions about the improvement of learners (Department of Education, 2008).

Peacey (2006) notes that inclusive assessment clearly aims to prevent segregation by avoiding - as far as possible - forms of labeling and by focusing on learning and teaching practice that promote inclusion in a mainstream setting. The purpose of inclusive assessment should be to improve learning for all learners in mainstream settings; all assessment procedures, methods and tools should inform teaching and learning and support teachers in their work. Inclusive assessment may include a range of assessment procedures that fulfil other purposes in addition to informing teaching and learning.

The ABC model by Kelly and Melograno (2004) describes how an effective teacher should follow a specified programme plan, continually assess the learners, and use assessment data to plan and implement instruction. He/she uses the evaluation data (reassessment) not just for the sake of keeping records, or as an accountability measure to provide evidence of work done, but to determine the learners' progress, the effectiveness of teaching and the appropriateness of the programme plan.

Assessment is an important area where changes can be made to reduce the effect of any barriers to learning. Modifications may be made in the way the learner performs a task, such as having a task read to the learner, or allowing oral response, or, the most frequently used modification, by providing additional time that reduces test anxiety and allows for the efficient use of test strategies (Elliot & Marquart, 2004:350-351). In grading or marking learner performance, learners with special education needs would not be penalised on criteria like spelling or handwriting, and other assessment criteria may be modified (Bradley & Calvin, 1998:27). If modifications have been made to assessments in the light of individual needs, standardised reports would then have to be modified in some way (Bradley & Calvin,

1998:26-28). Learners with special education needs may need to rely on technology to facilitate access and participation in the ordinary classroom.

This study found that learners were assessed on the basis of accommodating all learners through assessment. The methods employed by teachers included the use of formal assessment (oral interviews, spoken tests, written work, portfolio, projects, class tests, group, individual, continuous assessment, a variety of formally assessable learning tasks, and a test at the end of the term). Learners were assessed using informal methods such as being questioned about their surroundings, or by being asked to debate certain topics. This finding is confirmed by Kleinert and Thurlow (2001) who note that in order to determine whether the learner with special education needs has mastered the skills, assessment should be continuous throughout the learning. Learned skills should also be applied in different contexts in the classroom and in daily living. For instance, if learners who struggle with 'substitutions' master their calculation after a few learning sessions, examples of 'substitutions' in everyday life should be used to assess the learners' newly attained competencies. These authors further state that curriculum-based tests may be applied after the outcomes set for the learning support have been met to ensure transfer of skills and knowledge to other contexts.

This finding is also in line with the declaration of UNESCO (1994) that inclusive assessment involves a variety of possible methods and strategies to assess learners. All of these possible methods work together to obtain clear proof regarding the learners' learning. Inclusive assessment methods report on the product or outcomes of learning, but also provide teachers with information on how to develop and improve the process of learning for an individual learner or groups of learners in the future. Decision-making based upon inclusive assessment draws upon a range of sources that are action-based and present evidence of learning collected over a period of time.

UNESCO (1994) states that a variety of assessment methods are required in inclusive assessment in order to make sure that a wide range of areas (non-academic as well as academic subjects) are assessed. Assessment methods should aim to provide 'value added information' on the learner's progress and any assessment information should be contextualised and the educational environment

as well as any home-based or environmental factors that influence a learner's learning should be taken into consideration.

This study found a variety of assessment activities, and reasons for using these methods. Interestingly, and encouragingly, they emphasized the more intrinsic benefits of assessment (inclusion of all learners, motivation for learning of learners with SEN, feedback to teachers and learners, diagnosis of difficulties), rather than the more extrinsic aims (reporting to parents, accountability to superiors). Some of the teacher respondents stated that methods and approaches of assessment for other learners who do not have special education needs can be used with learners with SEN, provided that they are modified and adjusted to meet the needs of these learners. This is in line with the specification of the Department of Education (2008), which states that teachers must make assessment part of their lessons and must develop a formal, year-long programme of assessment. Learners should be monitored throughout the year using both informal daily assessment and the formal programme of assessment.

Assessment should provide the best possible account of what a learner with SEN knows, can do or has experienced. Mitchell (2008:31) states that inclusive assessment should:

- i. Put into consideration the nature of particular disability for learners with special education needs;
- ii. Present feedback to learners and parents;
- iii. Be criterion referenced in nature;
- iv. Assist the teacher in curriculum adaptation and teaching methods, that is, an inclusive assessment should allow the teacher to detect where learners show no mastery of a particular task and the reason that occurred and then re-design learning opportunities; and
- v. Consequently have individual education plans.

The best way to implement inclusive education for learners with special educational needs is one of the most controversial issues confronting teachers around the world today. It is a complex and dynamic issue that demands careful and systematic analysis (Booth & Ainscow, 2003). In developing inclusive practices, one of the

important issues to consider is that of the relative degrees of difficulty or ease with which different learners perform at school. A number of learners experience difficulties with learning, while others learn more quickly and easily than their peers. However, it is the responsibility of the education system to create the conditions for success (Booth & Ainscow, 2003).

It emerged in this study that teachers used the above-mentioned approaches to assess learners with special education needs for a range of reasons which included:

- Inclusion of SEN learners for pragmatic reasons – because it “works in accommodating all learners” (the teacher posed questions for the learners to answer, and gave a group work activity to do – because it works in practice and achieves its purpose);
- Motivation for learning for learners with SEN (assessing learners with oral and written questions which encourage learners to be more serious with their work);
- Motivation for learning; diagnosis of difficulties in learning;
- Feedback on learners’ progress, competence and understanding.

In this section of the study, pockets of good practice were found amongst most of the interviewed teacher respondents with regard to learners’ continuous assessment during the teaching and learning process. This is crucial for learners with SEN as it actively involves them in the teaching and learning process. An assessment approach such as written work (portfolio) is a good reflective method for all learners, as learners can see their progress and take pride in their work. A portfolio enhances creative self-reflective competencies on the part of the learner. Remedial work is the means of assessing learners from a lower grade. Individual assessment helps the teacher give individual attention to learners with SEN while modification of tasks provides learners with SEN with an opportunity to be assessed according to principles as learners without SEN.

The study also revealed best practice among teachers in the context of rural schools with limited resources in the approaches teachers used in assessing learners with SEN. These include continuous observation, written tests, projects with assigned

marks, class work and so on, all which are learner-centred methods for inclusion of learners with SEN.

6.3.4 *Learners' examination results and causes of average results*

This study indicated that the results of learners with special education needs were average due to: learners' background (many of the parents were illiterate); inadequacy of teaching and learning materials; poor school attendance; language of instruction; lack of skills on the part of teachers on how to handle these learners; and shortages of teachers in schools where there are multi-grade classes. The findings revealed that learners in multi-grade classes learners were not being taught the curriculum content. It was revealed that these learners performed better in their class work than in examinations as they were nervous of examinations. Further possible reasons for poor results included parents' habits and lack of discipline in schools. According to Onyije and Ojedapo (2010) some factors that cause indiscipline among learners include parental factors, teachers' attitude and government's nonchalant attitudes to education. One explanation for the discrepancy between examination results and class performance is that learners copy from others in class and homework, while during examinations they are unable to do so due to the strict invigilation procedure.

It was established, however, that the assessment results of learners with special education needs in some schools were good. It was revealed that these learners scored 60% and above. The reason behind this good performance was stated to be teachers' commitment and dedication. Teachers' commitment and dedication to the course of learners with SEN is a good practice of inclusion policy.

It was found in this section that, in spite of the context of this study (rural) where teachers are working in difficult conditions such as inadequate material resources, shortages of teachers, and multi-grade classes which resulted in average results of learners with SEN performance, there are good practices like differentiating assessment, assessment tools and commitment of some dedicated teachers in

some of the selected schools which led to better performance of learners with SEN in this rural context

6.4 Material resources used by teachers

Uline & Tschannen-Moran, (2008) state that physical resources are essential, since bad conditions and inadequate resources can hinder the achievement of even the best teachers and students.

It was revealed through this study that textbooks are the most widely available material used in implementing inclusion of learners with SEN in the selected schools. It was indicated that mainstream schools deal with mild cases while special materials are found in special schools because they deal with severe cases. However, other materials such as posters, charts, magazines, pictures, newspapers and CDs were also available in small quantities at some of the selected primary schools in the Fort Beaufort District. This is in line with the theory of curriculum implementation of Rogan and Grayson (2003) which states that the material support involves infrastructure like material resources such as learners' text-books, facilities and other equipment used in the learning process and specialist rooms.

According to Male (2003:71) technology is accessible in the form of assistive devices that offer learners independence and the opportunity to enjoy maximum success. Learners may benefit from using word processors, digital personal organisers, multi-media such as film clips and assistive devices such as microphones and Braille translators. The findings of this study indicated that the selected schools did not have these special materials for learners with special education needs mentioned by Male (2003:71); it emerged that all the learners used the same learning materials.

It was also found that the Department of Education provides the money to state schools for textbooks and for a very limited number of other teaching and learning materials; the study found that parents are not involved in buying teaching and learning materials because most of the schools in the Fort Beaufort District are under Zone 21 (the schools in communities below the poverty index). Only in the more affluent former "Model C" and private schools are parents required to pay the sort of fees that enable such schools to purchase significant quantities of teaching and

learning resources. By contrast, Tempest (2006:175) confirms that the Eastern Cape has the highest percentage of impoverished people in South Africa.

The above finding is contrary to the study by Chivore (1995:29) who found that parents should provide the school with financial and material as well as human resources. They should supplement books and help learners with their homework by way of supervision at home. Rambiyana and Kok (2002:11) state that parents' participation in education is allowed by the South African Schools Act, mainly through representation in School Governing Bodies. Parents are required to be involved in their children's home learning as well as tackling learning problems with educators.

Despite the state funding of textbooks, this study showed that the funds provided are not adequate to purchase sufficient textbooks, let alone other teaching and learning materials, and that many schools do not have enough of these materials and facilities. A study by Legotlo, Maaga, and Sebego (2002), on the perceptions of stakeholders on the causes of poor performance in Grade 12 in South Africa, revealed that one of the reasons behind learners' failure is a shortage of textbooks, amongst other things. This was confirmed by parents, school governing bodies, principals, teachers and learners (Legotlo *et al.*, 2002). Textbooks seem to contribute immensely towards the development of knowledge, as they are a key source of information, especially in Africa's schools, which are often starved of alternative teaching resources and other sources of relevant information. Fullan's model of change (1991:68) also confirms that textbooks are an important factor in curriculum implementation. Several South African researchers like Taylor, Muller and Vinjevold (2003) regard reading materials as particularly significant resources for children's literacy and writing development.

In most of the selected schools it was revealed that there was an inadequacy of textbooks, and for this reason learners shared textbooks. It was also revealed that when a learner in possession of a textbook is absent, teaching and learning becomes difficult for both the teacher and the other learners. Rogan and Grayson (2003) found that a shortage of materials is an important factor in the implementation of a programme, and that the capacity of teachers can be affected by this factor. Kelly and Melograno (2004) confirm that adequate provision of facilities and equipment in schools would make it possible to implement an ABC model that could

guide teachers step-by-step through the process of translating educational policy into functional practice.

This study established that teachers have been improvising and have become resourceful in implementing inclusion policy by sourcing materials such as newspapers and magazines. This shows one of the good practices of teachers in implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs, especially in schools in rural contexts with limited resources. Some respondents were not affected by shortages of teaching and learning materials, while in other selected schools teachers photocopied textbooks for learners to make up for shortages of textbooks. This was, however, expensive, time-consuming and increased teachers' workload. Kwaira (2007) and Entwistle, Skinner, Entwistle, and Orr (2000) found that teachers had been taught to improvise wherever possible. In other words, after attending workshops, teachers became more resourceful.

This study revealed that the majority of the selected schools were challenged by shortages of textbooks, and there were clear indications that shortages of textbooks and other teaching materials affected both the learners and teachers, which could result in the provision of an unbalanced curriculum. Fullan (1991) and Rogan and Grayson (2003) agree that the effectiveness of curriculum implementation may be determined by school facilities. Adequate instructional resource materials, which include quality textbooks, teaching aids and stationery, need to be supplied on time in large quantities. Educationalists generally agree with this. Learners seem to perform well with adequate resources in respect of classrooms, libraries, textbooks, finances and relevant curriculum (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2004). Rogan and Grayson (2003) further state that inadequacy of resources and poor conditions can limit the performance of even the best of teachers and weaken learners' efforts to focus on learning.

Findings on suggestions revealed that the Department of Education should provide enough funds to purchase more learning materials. Teaching and learning materials should be ordered in time to arrive ahead of the new calendar year. Internet facilities should be installed, and libraries should be made available to provide access to up-to-date information. According to Fredriksson, Fumador and Nyoagbe (1999:15) teaching and learning must take place in a favourable environment, and should include the technology and resources necessary for teaching. Teaching must be

offered to learners with SEN in adequately equipped school buildings where the students, among other things, have access to a school library and on-line services. Bot (2005:7) found that most poor Eastern Cape homes have little beyond a bible for children to read. Community libraries are rare in rural areas, and over three-quarters of schools nationally have no library. This combination of circumstances means that learners are almost completely dependent on their schools to provide them with books to develop grade-appropriate literacy levels.

6.5 Assistance provided by teachers to support Learners with SEN

Learners with SEN in inclusive classrooms have need of inclusive practices that are able to centre on issues like adequate yearly progress (AYP), No Child Left Behind (NCLB), individual educational programmes (IEP), and Response to Intervention (RtI) which means that sufficient yearly progress is expected for all learners, legislatively not leaving any child behind (Axelson, McGraw & McEntee, 2003; Berman, 2010).

In the past, learners with special education needs were left out, but in the present yearly progress with more accountability is a priority for all learners. Individualized education programmes (IEPs) are written with specific goals, giving support and suitable accommodations to help learners with special education needs to achieve many inclusive successes, if the general education classroom is resolved to be the least restricted environment (Karten, 2008; Axelson, McGraw & McEntee, 2003; Berman, 2010). Response to intervention is also implemented in classrooms to help learners obtain assistance with direct academic training with modified strategies that address the varied personalities and abilities of each learner (Karten, 2008; Axelson, McGraw & McEntee, 2003; Berman, 2010).

This study revealed the findings on the assistance provided by teachers to support learners with SEN. It emerged that teachers assisted learners by reporting their barriers to parents, the use of teaching aids to include learners with SEN, assigning work according to learners' levels and individual attention. It was established that teachers gave learners with SEN extra work, homework, remedial work and allocated special time to complete the work. Teachers assisted learners with SEN by

grouping them with learners without SEN, paying special attention to learners with SEN at break time or after class to attend to them. The findings of this study are in line with what is stated by (Karten, (2008); Axelson, McGraw and McEntee, (2003); Berman, (2010) who found that teachers support learners with SEN. This study also revealed that learners with SEN with physical challenges are taken to the hospital for treatment. These are good practices in inclusion found among some teachers, especially in schools in rural context with limited resources.

However, it was discovered that some teachers could not cope alone with learners with SEN as some parents were seen to be uncooperative and misunderstandings regarding cultural differences between the white teachers and black parents were revealed.

6.6 Support mechanisms available for teachers and the adequacy of the support

Landsberg, Kruger, and Nel, (2005:19) point out that “support is the keystone of successful inclusive education”. In relation to this, Swart and Pettipher (2005:85), arguing issues of support, state that, “One of the methods for developing an inclusive school is the whole school development approach.” This approach focuses on organizational development and systems theory and is intended to enhance all aspects of the school as an organization in which there is an interactive and interdependent relationship between the various systems and subsystems of the school.

Engelbrecht and Green (2001:17) citing the Salamanca “Framework for Action” declare that inclusive schools must be familiar with and respond to the diverse needs of their learners. This recognition and response will be done through inclusion of all learners, irrespective of their difficulties or differences. The duty of the state is to provide a continuum of support services for the development of inclusive schools.

This study found that the majority of the respondent teachers stated that there were some forms of support available: support by principals in the form of class visits,

words of encouragement and motivation, financial support, material support and human support. Principals were said to support teachers by organising mini workshops at the school level and also by involving the district office and parents when the need arose. In terms of the adequacy of the support provided, teachers were of the opinion that the support they received from their principals was adequate. However, the majority of the principals were less sure about the adequacy of the support provided by them for the implementation of inclusive education.

This finding is in line with Elmore, (2000) and Nkomo (1995:36) who noted that principals and district officials, as the custodians of education policy, had to support its implementation. At the school level, the principal is the head instructional supervisor. He/she provides the means for curriculum implementation through timetabling, classroom allocation, textbook allocation, syllabus and all instructional materials, as well as creating a conducive atmosphere for effective teaching and learning (*ibid.*). Ornstein and Hunkins (2004) also argue that principals and heads of department should provide guidance and make sure that teachers have the necessary skills, and use the correct teaching methods.

The South African study by Van der Walt and De Klerk (2006) found that new teachers required more advice, encouragement and support from their heads for the successful execution of their duties. Therefore, if young teachers are not assisted, the inclusive education policy will not be effectively implemented by such teachers. This study found that the majority of the teachers in the selected the Fort Beaufort District were not specialists in special education. This means that these teachers had not been trained to implement inclusive education, thus they had relatively little experience in this area. Therefore, there is a particular need for consistent support of inexperienced teachers for them to be able to fully implement the policy. A concern was raised by the respondent principals and teachers that district officials did not come to visit schools (or could not because of resistance on the part of the leading teacher union), and had ignored inclusive policy despite the fact that most of these teachers had not been trained in inclusive education.

Regarding the question on support given to teachers to ensure inclusion of all learners, the researcher finds the whole school development approach relevant to the study, in the sense that support is not just about the school and Department of

Education. There is collaboration even with the wider community. Collaboration is an important strategy of support for implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs and according to Sands, Kozleski and French (2000: 120), "it is at the centre of the inclusive school community". Friend and Cook (2003:5) define collaboration as "a style of direct interaction between at least two co-equal parties voluntarily engaged in shared decision making as they work towards achieving a common goal".

According to Idol (2006) and Florian, (2008), administrative support is an important factor in determining teacher attitudes toward inclusion policy, as the teacher will be motivated if the school principal fosters a positive learning environment for both learners and teachers. The support of the principal and other school leaders is significant in order for teachers to implement inclusive practices (Daane, Beirne-Smith, & Latham 2000; Hammond and Ingalls, 2003). Gameros (1995) refers to a "visionary" principal as the one who will take up the challenge to build an inclusive environment for all learners. Nevertheless, research proposes that administrators' attitudes toward learners with special education needs are not positive, thereby affecting the implementation of inclusion practices in schools (Daane *et al.*, 2000). Clayton pointed out that administrative staff members do not have adequate understanding and skill regarding the delivery of services to learners with special education needs (Clayton, 1996). Research further stated that in terms of real experiences the mainstream teachers, who may have positive views of inclusion, are closer to this issue than the administrators (Idol, 2006; Florian, 2008).

Muthukrishna (2001) notes that having access to resources and support in the community in South Africa is an important action of inclusive schools. Therefore, as relationships are developed between the school and the wider community, a wide range of likely resources for teachers and learners can be found. Schools can also draw on neighbouring schools.

The good practices that emerged are that the majority of the interviewed respondents testified to the support provided by the principals regarding the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN. These include visiting classrooms to teach, words of encouragement, motivation of the teachers, and financial, material and human support. Principals were said to also support teachers by organising mini

workshops at the school level in and other ways stated earlier. They also involved the district office and parents when it is necessary. The majority of the teachers remarked that the support of their principals was adequate while they were still soliciting for more support. The principals on the other hand were not sure of the adequacy of their support to teachers regarding the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs.

It was established that the support mechanisms provided by the Department of Education were in the form of training/workshops, funds, advice and materials, as well as information and the placement of learners with severe SEN in special schools. However, the findings revealed that the support from the Department of Education was not adequate. There was a concern that some of the teachers had not received any support from the Department of Education in the form of workshop/training and advice. At the time of the study, there seemed to be shortages of teaching and learning materials used by teachers. The Department of Education (2008) declares that support is all activities in a school which enhance its capacity to respond to diversity.

According to Rogan and Grayson (2003), the construct “support from outside agencies” describes the kinds of action undertaken by outside organisations, such as provincial and district education offices, to influence practices, either by support or sanction, and the role of the education district officers (EDOs) is to see that standards are maintained. They are there as quality assurance officers to provide schools with expertise and professional development courses. In many developing countries, outside agencies may also involve international development agencies such as World Vision and local or international NGOs, which often provide teachers and learners with materials like teaching kits or textbooks. Eleweke and Rodda (2010:116) note that it is evident that the lack of relevant training, resources and materials is a major obstacle to the implementation of successful inclusion of learners with special education needs. Anumonye (1991) in Eleweke and Rodda (2010), for instance, explored the challenges of inclusion in Nigeria. The data showed that the needed educational materials were not provided or were insufficient in regular schools where learners with special education needs were being included.

Education White Paper 6 of 2001 offers provision for support by way of a systems methods and collaboration between systems of support. The systems of support include: National Department of Education in collaboration with provincial education, district based support teams (DBST), special schools/resource centres, full-service schools and ordinary schools. At national level, the function of the national Department of Education entails policy formulation, which is prepared in collaboration with all the stakeholders who are involved in education. At provincial level, the role of the departments of education of the nine provinces is policy implementation acknowledged by the national Department of Education (DoE, 2001). It understands that the provinces differ in level in terms of implementation of the policy of inclusion as resources and manpower are not the same in the provinces.

The provinces are in charge of resource development such as human and technical, building of schools, distribution of finances and resource material, employment of educators, and admission of learners with special education needs. Every province is divided into numerous districts, each of which has a team which runs inclusive education in the district. This team is called the district based support team “to provide a coordinated professional support service that draws on expertise in further and higher education and local communities, marking special schools and specialized settings, designated full-service and other primary schools and educational institutions” (DoE, 2001:8).

Further, each district is in charge of the schools in that district. Education White Paper 6 (DoE 2001:10) plainly states that support would be provided according to the level of needs of learners with special education needs to learning and not according to the impairment of those learners. Learners who are in need of high intensity support would be educated in special schools as resource centres; those in need of medium intensity support would be educated in full-service schools and those in need of low intensity support in ordinary schools.

The draft guidelines (DoE 2002:25-33) specify that the special schools as resource centres:

- Act as an integrated and co-ordinated part of the district-based support team.

- Offer specialized professional support in the curriculum, assessment and instruction to neighbouring schools.

Additionally, the draft guidelines (DoE 2002:44-46) point out those full-service schools should:

- Offer support in the school to learners and teachers in terms of competent and experienced support educators.
- Support neighbouring schools with knowledge, information and assistive devices as regards barriers to learning.
- Collaborate with the district-based support team to coordinate support.

Learners who are in need of low intensity support are catered for by ordinary schools. Teachers are supported by the district-based support team which organizes support and receives its resources from other types of schools. Learners in need of more support can also be taken to any of the other schools for a short time to receive specialized education until they are able to cope in the ordinary school, or support can be given in the school by experts from the district-based support team (DoE 2001:10).

Non-material support is mostly provided in the form of professional development. These involve in-service training where teachers' skills can be upgraded. This is probably one of the most visible and obvious ways in which outside agencies attempt to bring change in schools (Karsten, Voncken & Voorthuis, 2000). Therefore, non-material support can also be regarded as a sub-construct of school capacity. To bring about change, there is also a need for outside agencies to monitor the implementation process. This is mainly the duty of the district officers. They have to inspect schools at least once in two years so as to give feedback to teachers on their performance. It is their duty to see that the policy is implemented according to policy documents.

It emerged that there are some forms of support from the district and provincial offices for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN. The support includes school visits, advice, materials, information, training workshops, and placement of learners with severe SEN in special and full service schools respectively. This is evidence of good practices of inclusion of learners with special education needs in

the district and the province. However, the majority of the respondents lamented that this support for implementing inclusion of learners with SEN is not adequate.

Research has suggested that, although teachers' attitudes can be affected by several interacting factors, one of the most important is the level and nature of support that they receive. Based on this assumption, Lindsay, (2007) and Clough and Lindsay (1991), referring to the UK context, have argued that there might be variations in teachers' attitudes within the UK, reflecting the levels and history of support in each Local Education Authority (LEA). Indeed, LEAs vary in the provision they make to schools either directly through staffing and capitation, or through support services (such as special needs support teachers and educational psychologists) and this is likely to affect teachers' attitudes. Moreover, some authorities have promoted inclusive education (Bannister, Fyfe, & Kearns 1998; Lindsay, Lewis, Jessop, & Quayle 1990), while in others the pace of change has been slow. Despite the disparity among research results and the overwhelming number of variables associated with establishing success with inclusion, the call for full inclusion of all students into general education schools and for most students into general education classrooms continues (National Association of State Boards of Education, 1992)

6.6.1 *In-service training provided for teachers*

Non-material support is typically offered in the form of expert development. These may include in-service training where teachers' expertise could be upgraded. This is most likely one of the most noticeable and apparent ways in which outside agencies endeavor to bring change in schools (Karsten, Voncken & Voorthuis, 2000). An essential role in policy implementation is played by teachers, thus factors such as their background, training, subject knowledge, motivation, commitment to teaching, and attitudes towards the proposed curriculum implementation influence their capacity and willingness to implement change (Rogan & Grayson, 2003).

This study established a concern of a lack of personnel development opportunities raised by teachers as a need for training on how to handle learner needs effectively.

It was also found that learning support in the classroom is not adequate in spite of the Department of Education's ideas in this area.

Lewis and Wray (2000) point out that the most effective in-service training would be continuing and centred on improving classroom practice. School-based in-service training involves members of staff who go back to the rest of staff with the report of what has been done. New ideas are shared, some of which are helpful to learners with special educational needs. In a situation where there was no in-service training, the implementation of the inclusion policy has the possibility of being affected.

It emerged from the study that the in-service training teachers received in preparation for implementation of inclusive education policy was too brief, mainly conducted in two or three days. The in-service training of teachers should be on-going education and an essential component of basic education. The findings of this study are that the in-service training workshops conducted in schools with regard to learners facing barriers in learning were not beneficial as it was too brief to be effective. Despite the fact that it is a requirement that teachers meet the needs of all learners, this was tricky for these teachers.

The data on in-service training provided for teachers revealed that though the Department of Education provided in-service training (workshops) there were no follow-ups after the training to support teachers. It emerged that the workshops were developed by non-specialists. It was also established that some teachers in the selected schools have not received any form of in-service training in spite of the fact that all schools have been mandated to implement inclusive education and districts have to ensure that they provide adequate support (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2005; Engelbretch & Green, 2007).

However, the study also revealed that the in-service training/workshops were helpful in that they helped teachers to identify and support these learners, which is evidence of good practice of in-service training provided for teachers. Van Deventer and Van Niekerk (2008) state the importance of in-service training as an essential component in the delivery of quality education, so that teachers can receive continued training in teaching methodology in order to upgrade their skills and knowledge. Van Deventer and Van Niekerk (2008) state that specialist teachers are the norm internationally. They are capable of teaching a wide variety of skills and of using a range of teaching

methods and strategies, so that every learner will be encouraged to participate enthusiastically in teaching activities. There is a need to have specialists who will assist schools in implementing the policy and achieve its intended objectives.

The need for beneficial and longer training/workshops in implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs was evident in the finding of this study. Christiaans (2006) concurs with the Department of Education that teachers should be trained to become specialists in teaching.

It also emerged from the study that the in-service training had been helpful as it served as an eye-opener in implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs. This is in line with the findings of Rouse (2007) who notes that there was extensive agreement that teachers are implementing inclusive education for learners with special education needs.

Kauffman, Landrum, Mock, Sayeski, and Sayeski (2005) state that there are specialist teaching approaches for learners with diverse disabilities and that specialist training is necessary. An unintentional effect of these opinions is that most mainstream teachers do not think that they have the skills and knowledge to do this kind of work but rather think that there is an army of 'specialists' out there to deal with these learners on a one-to-one basis or in little more manageable groups. In situations where teachers are motivated to try out a range of teaching strategies, they reported that they knew more than they believed they knew and, for the most part, learners learn in similar ways. Although some might need additional support, teachers do not differentiate between "kinds" of special needs when planning this support (Florian & Rouse, 2001).

Several teachers stated that they did not think that they could teach such learners, but their self-assurance and repertoire of teaching strategies developed over time. This would suggest that by 'just doing it' teachers are capable of developing knowledge and positive attitudes to inclusion (Rouse, 2007). This author suggests that developing effective inclusive practice is not only about broadening teachers' knowledge, but it is also about motivating and supporting them to do things differently and getting them to reconsider their attitudes and beliefs. In other words, it has to be about 'knowing', 'doing', and 'believing'.

6.7 Monitoring strategies in place for implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs

According to Scheerens, Glas, Thomas, and Thomas (2003), monitoring means gathering information so as to know if what is set out has been done. It can take a range of timescales depending on its purpose, focus and method. This study found that there is no established monitoring system in some of the selected schools in the Fort Beaufort District. The teachers in these schools stated that there is no monitoring, as their principals were not familiar with the policy because it is “new”. More so, the principals and their deputies were overloaded with work and there was no time to monitor the implementation of inclusive policy. To a certain extent, the inclusive programme is being marginalised by the very people who are given the responsibility of making sure that this policy is fully implemented. It is the direct responsibility of the principals, deputy principals and the district officials that all learners are accommodated and to ensure teaching and learning takes place in schools (South African School Act, 1996; Prinsloo, 2007; Christiaans, 2006).

However, in the other schools in this study, it was found that some kind of monitoring strategies were indeed put in place for the implementation of the inclusive policy. It was stated that monitoring is done in inclusive education through the lesson plans, teachers’ and learners’ files, class visits and advice. This study revealed the use of school management files for monitoring. The management files contained things that would be done each and every day, every day plans which the school had to follow. Teachers filled in the date, time, subject, grade and topic at the end of the week. They submitted these plans for analysis. Each educator accounted for what she/he had done or hadn’t done, and how he/she would ‘pay’ back the time lost.

It was revealed in other schools that activities were monitored once a month. The ILST coordinator and the principal visited classes, collected learners’ files and conducted school based moderation to understand learners’ performance. Through these methods some learners with special needs were discovered who were then referred to the ILST for intervention when the ISP has not been able to help.

Non-material support can also be considered as a sub-construct of school capacity. It is important that the outside agencies monitor the process of implementation if

change is desired. This is largely the responsibility of the regional and district officers. These officials should inspect schools at least once in two years in order to provide feedback to teachers on their performance. It is their duty to see that inclusion of learners with special education needs is implemented according to policy documents.

The Department of Education officials and school principals are supposed to visit schools and classes to monitor how inclusive education is being implemented (South Africa School Act, 1996). In some of the selected schools in the Fort Beaufort District, this appears *not* to be the case. The principal has a great task to monitor all the school's systems, from distribution of resources and their use, to monitoring itself (Fitz-Gibbon, 1996). Panday (2007) accepts that implementation of inclusive education has to be monitored and supported; that is, it has to be supervised by principals and district officials or inspectors. She acknowledges that the word "supervision" is closely related to curriculum implementation. According to Panday (2007), it is not only the manner of teaching which needs to be monitored, but also the content that is actually being addressed which has to be supervised as well.

Hellinger (2002:472) shares the same view as Nkomo (1995) when he postulates that monitoring involves principals looking at teachers' weekly plans and learning objectives, and at the plans teachers are working towards. These include examining samples of learners' work, visiting classrooms, observing the implementation of teaching, learning and curricula policies, reviewing learners' assessment information and evaluating learners, class and school levels of performance and progress. Zepeda (2006:103) affirms, "Teaching is the primary work of teachers, and should be the basis for in-class assessment of teaching and learning for both teachers and learners." This is important for schools if the policy is to be implemented according to its objectives.

The findings on how the Department of Education goes about monitoring the implementation of inclusive policy were found to be in the form of school visits, examining minutes of meetings held by ILST, and examining teachers' and learners' portfolios. It emerged that the monitoring mechanism was beneficial because it helped teachers to work harder and faster to finish their work schedule so that they were not left behind by other teachers in their clusters.

Nevertheless, it also emerged that these monitoring mechanisms were not beneficial as the district officials did not visit schools often, since the SADTU did not allow class visits. This is regrettable. Some of the teachers stated that there had not been any monitoring from the Department of Education during the years that they had been teaching; in that time the district officials had never visited them.

Perhaps it is instructive to see this lack of monitoring in a more global light. In most Sub-Saharan countries, educational policies suffer from a lack of qualified personnel to monitor them, as well as a shortage of management personnel qualified in inclusive education (Tiendrebeogo, Meijer & Engleberg, 2003).

Maslow's theory of motivation shows that it is not difficult to supervise individuals or teachers who are inherently motivated (Everard, Morris & Wilson 2004). However, these teachers need professional support to keep them up to date with new developments. Nkomo (1995) shares the same view as he stresses the need for instructional supervisors such as the education district officers (EDOs), principals and heads of department to maintain the standard of education expected by the government. The quality of these educational authorities and their monitoring is expected to determine the policy implementation process.

Above all, the principal as an instructional leader has to monitor the actions of teachers and what is happening in the schools, and to report on this to the district officials. However, it has to be noted that informal monitoring procedures do not produce better results, as revealed by Fullan (1992). This author posited that all research on effective schools shows that paying constant attention to learners' academic, personal, and social development is essential for success. This is in line with the findings of the U.S Department of Education (2004:11) that successful principals "analyse instruction and learner learning through regular classroom observation, and provide detailed feedback to teachers that supports instructional improvement."

It could also be established from the information gathered that there were different ways as mentioned above which showed good practice in inclusion in some of the schools in this context by which some of the principals monitored the implementation of inclusive programmes. This is a confirmation that some selected primary schools have good practices of implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN. It was

revealed that monitoring is done in inclusive education, through the lesson plans, teachers' and learners' files, class visits, advice and the use of school management files for monitoring. However, in some of the selected schools, monitoring is done once a term. Although this would constitute frequent intervals in terms of the official requirements of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS), this is a relatively long interval considering the fact that some of these teachers are not trained and may need consistent monitoring and support.

6.8 Structure at the school level for special education needs

According to the *Education White Paper 6*, all schools are expected to have functional institutional level support teams (ILST). The ILST should include school management, educators, parents/caregivers, community members and learners (where appropriate) (Department of Education, 2005). Schools could align the ILST structure with the roles and responsibilities of the SMT, whose main responsibility is to ensure an enabling environment for teaching and learning. This structure must ensure that care and support programmes address learner support, teacher support and the entire school development.

The ILST must be chaired by the principal and the SMT members should chair the various task teams. The principal has the mandate to ensure that the ILST draws on community resources and expertise to strengthen the implementation of the inclusive Programme (Department of Education, 2005). The finding of this study is in line with what is stipulated here by the Department of Education (2005). It emerged from this study that most of the selected schools have institutional level support teams (ILSTs) for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN.

Having institutional level support teams (ILST) in most of the selected schools is a good practice of inclusive education policy. It was indicated that the structure is beneficial in terms of supporting learners with SEN. Despite the difficult working conditions most of the selected schools have pockets of very good practices of inclusive education policy. This finding partly confirmed the study of Mabaso (2006)

who found that the majority of schools have school-based support teams, although most of them are only partially effective or ineffective.

6.8.1 *Structure at the district level for special education needs*

It has been made clear by the Department of Education that all schools have to ensure that all learners access education (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2005; Engelbretch and Green, 2007). In other words, all schools have to implement inclusive education and districts have to ensure that they provide adequate support (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2005; Engelbretch & Green, 2007). According to the Department of Education (2011:3), “inclusivity should become central part of the organisation, planning and teaching at each school”.

It emerged from this study that there is structure at the district level for special education needs. It was established that the structure available at the district level is the district based support team (DBST) which assists teachers to support learners with special education needs. The DBST also supports the ILST by referring learners with severe barriers to special schools, organising workshops/training programmes for teachers on inclusive education, and provision of materials on inclusive education to teachers. DBST supports the ILST. It was revealed that the district officials go out for outreach, to speak to the parents with the help of the sister departments like Social Development, Health, and the Police. This study revealed that DBST is beneficial.

The pockets of good practices that emerged in this section include DBST support for ILST in organising workshops to assist teacher to accommodate all learners in the mainstream schools, school visits, and teaching ILST how to assess and develop intervention programmes to help learners with mild SEN. The DBST also provides ILST with materials to refer learners with severe cases to the district office. They speak to parents on behalf of the ILST about the inclusion of learners with SEN and get the intervention and support of other departments. This is an indicator of good practice of inclusion of learners with SEN in Fort Beaufort Education District in spite

of the workload of the district officials, difficult working conditions and shortages of personnel.

According to the Department of Education (2005:19) the key purpose and functions of the district-based support are stated clearly in the White Paper 6 (2001) which includes:

“To support teachers, all learners and the entire system to ensure that the full variety of learning needs can be achieved. The focus will be on teaching and learning factors, and stress will be placed on the development of good teaching approaches that will be of advantage to all learners; on overcoming barriers in the system that prevent it from meeting the full choice of learning needs; and on adaptation of support systems available in the classroom (DoE 2005:19).”

6.9 Challenges teachers encounter in implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs.

Prinsloo (2001:345) found that inclusion will only be successful if teachers receive additional training and such training should be ongoing, identify inadequacies in teacher participation, be planned and organized by teachers themselves to ensure that it meets the needs of the school community.

Findings on the challenges teachers encountered in implementing inclusion of learners with special education revealed that teachers did not have skills as they have not been really trained to implement inclusive policies. This made it difficult for them as they are not specialists in this area. This is in line with the words of Sebba and Ainscow (1996:11) who state that teachers should be further empowered. A great level of teamwork should exist and be the standard in a general education setting. Collegial relationships are valuable in the training and support of teachers who are involved in inclusive settings. Teachers should have the opportunity to share concerns. Time needs to be set aside for planning and collaboration (Sebba & Ainscow, 1996).

It was discovered that parents were not helping matters as many of them did not care for their children, they were not cooperative with teachers, and many were not aware of inclusive education. It emerged that inclusive education is demanding, dealing with many emotional issues of learners. It was a burden to combine the duties of parent (for those who were also parents) and teachers at the same time. Rogan and Grayson (2003) found that learners' backgrounds, and the kind of strengths and constraints they might bring with them to school, are crucial. A range of issues influence learners' attitude to learning and responses to change. These include their home environment, parental commitment to education, health and nutrition, and their proficiency level in the language of instruction.

It emerged that teachers play the role of social workers. It was established that teachers often had to leave their schools to visit the Department of Education, the Social Welfare offices, the police station and learners' homes to solve learners' problems of stress, sexual abuse and so on. Panday (2007:19) found that teachers seem to take on pastoral roles when implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs. They have to assume pastoral roles and create opportunities for relatively intimate discussions because learners feel safe and are able to open up about their problems when teachers are approachable.

It was discovered that assuming a pastoral role is a demanding task; however, it was found that teachers are committed to doing so because they feel that the programme requires a special kind of teacher, teachers "with hearts" who are role models, who see teaching as a calling (Panday, 2007:19). Prinsloo (2007:168) concurs, stating that "the character of the teacher is of the utmost importance, and that the person of the teacher determines the degree of success with which all aspects of life, survival and communication skills are conveyed to and internalised by learners".

It was indicated that the implementation of inclusive education policy is time consuming and has increased teachers' workload as the majority of the selected schools are multi-grade schools with few teachers. The study also revealed the challenge of large classes which made curriculum adaptation difficult for some teachers. Another issue that was found is the issue of teachers' attitudes. This study indicated that some teachers did not see inclusion of learners with special education

as their duty; they saw it as an extra burden. Thus teachers undermined the training organised for them to support learners with special education needs.

Bothma, Gravett, and Swart, (2000:201) found that teachers who have a negative attitude toward inclusive education may lack confidence in their ability to teach learners with barriers to learning, fear failure and become more concerned about the needs of regular learners in their classes (Bothma, Gravett, & Swart, 2000: 201). Engelbrecht and Green (2001:256) and Forlin (2001:236) point out that the need to cope with change is seen as a major cause of stress. The result of task demands that teachers encountered in the performance of their responsibility causes occupational stress. Inclusive education makes extra demands on teachers and teachers' sense of efficacy in including learners with disabilities in mainstream classes plays a defining role in the successful implementation of an inclusive educational policy.

Systemic barrier is another challenge revealed by this study in the implementation of inclusive education which is found in the system itself. This included inadequate support from the district as there are few personnel. The Department of Education has made it clear that all schools have to ensure that all learners access education (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2005; Engelbrecht & Green, 2007). In other words, all schools have to implement inclusive education and districts have to ensure that they provide adequate support (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2005; Engelbrecht & Green, 2007). According to the Department of Education (2011:3), "inclusivity should become central part of the organisation, planning and teaching at each school". Bothma, Gravett, and Swart (2000: 201), note that the availability and provision of adequate support and resources determine the teachers' attitude. Where support and resources are insufficient or have been reduced, the teachers' attitudes will become more negative.

It was also indicated that including learners with special education needs in the mainstream class was helpful in curbing SEN learner drop out rates. These rates were generally seen to be a result of their barriers to learning and a resulting lack of benefit from the class experience. In contrast with this, employing inclusion of learners meant that teachers were now able to identify barriers, and were equipped

to effectively deal with the barriers. Despite these strides forward, there are still some learners who do not have access to the curriculum even though the department states that "all learners can learn given the necessary support". However, it emerged that inclusion of learners with barriers is not practicable in large classes where there is insufficient support in place.

Inclusion is advantageous for developing the competencies and skills of both learners and teachers. However, implementation of an inclusion programme also puts teachers under great pressure brought about by the necessary environmental restructuring. Reports that teachers were unable to create enough time for the implementation of inclusive education were repeatedly found in several studies (Avramidis, & Norwich; 2002; Boardman, Argüelles, Vaughn, Hughes, & Klingner, 2005).

According to Dyson (2001) teachers encounter frequent dilemmas which include learning styles, pace, individual attention and seating arrangements. Handling a variety of needs in a class was not easy for some teachers. Successful integration could be prevented by poor coordination between resources and classroom teaching or by over dependence on an untrained teacher assistant in a situation where adequate resource staff were on the ground (Jenkinson, 1997:23).

Teacher perceptions of full inclusion have been studied with different results. Avramidis and Norwich (2002) found that teachers understood that "full time placement of learners with mild disabilities will not have positive social benefits for these learners." In their study Mazurek, and Winzer (2011), discovered that teachers underwent a transformation from initial negative reactions to the placement of learners in their classrooms to a more positive viewpoint. Teacher interviews included numerous reports of benefits to learners with disabilities, their classmates, as well as teachers themselves.

In previous studies, research that focused on the attitudes of educators on inclusion has been reported. Previous American studies related to full inclusion have concluded that several educators were not supportive of placing special learners in mainstream schools. For instance, in a study conducted by Berry (2006), general

education teachers neither exhibit any negative views towards pulling out of programmes nor did they extend any support on the full inclusion system. Avramidis and Norwich, (2002) showed the same research findings; the researchers concluded that the participating educators were not supportive of placing special students in mainstream schools.

In research carried out by Vaughn, Schumm, Jallad, Slusher, and Saumell, (1996) the researchers focused on the perception of both mainstream and special educators towards inclusion by means of focus group interviews. The study concluded that the majority of the respondents who were not involved in any inclusive programmes had strong negative feelings toward inclusion. Besides, the respondents stated that such a system was impractical for decision makers to implement as it is not appropriate for classroom realities. The teachers identified several factors that would affect the success of inclusion, including inadequate resources, the extent to which all learners would benefit from inclusion and lack of adequate teacher preparation and class size.

The findings of this study also indicated that some of the respondents felt positive about the inclusion of learners with special education needs in schools. They stated that they are coping well and are enjoying teaching these learners as they love children. It was also revealed that all that is required by teachers is to be open minded and to have a welcoming attitude towards these learners. In their study, Villa, Thousand, Nevin, and Malgeri (1996:10) showed that generally teachers tend to be negative, but the implementation of inclusive policies resulted in their attitudes becoming positive at the end of the implementation cycle, once they gained the professional expertise required to implement the inclusive values.

These findings were confirmed by a study undertaken by Avramidis, Bayliss and Burden (2000a:207) which revealed that teaching learners with special needs in inclusive settings resulted in positive changes in teacher attitudes. Although a high level of experienced teaching in inclusive classrooms is connected with greater concern to include learners with special needs, it is not an assurance of positive attitudes as teachers with a high level of negative inclusive experience may be less likely to be concerned about their included learners (Cook, Tankersley, Cook, &

Landrum 2000:20). However, it seems that the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs often changes teachers' attitudes positively.

This study revealed that there are challenges in the implementation of inclusive policy. Some of these challenges include: lack of adequate training for teachers, systemic barriers, lack of support, huge classes, lack of adequate materials, shortages of teachers, workload, multi-grades, parents' nonchalant attitudes and poverty. In spite of these challenges, however, there seems to be pockets of good practices, for instance there are advantages in multi-grade classes as learners gain from the lessons of other grades as the teacher teaches. There are special classes organised for learners with SEN after school hours to assist these learners. Teachers also play the role of social workers and managers to support learners with SEN.

6.10 Summary

The major findings in this chapter show that schools lack the capacity to support implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN as set up by EWP 6 of 2001. The implementation of inclusion for learners with SEN in primary schools is burdened with many challenges, which include inadequate specialists (human capacity) in the area of inclusive education. However, this has not negatively affected the curriculum for learners with special education needs and skills production as there are good practices in inclusion of learners with SEN found among teachers in the selected schools which include curriculum adaption, modifications in content, approaches, structures, effective teaching and assessment strategies, improvising for inadequate material resources, and so on.

The findings showed there are functional and beneficial institutional level support teams and district based support teams in place both at schools and district to support the inclusion of learners with SEN. Monitoring strategies are also in place to encourage teachers to work harder and faster to finish their work schedule for successful implementation of inclusion for learners with SEN. These findings provide valuable preliminary information about the good practices of inclusion of learners with special education needs within ordinary school classrooms in the Fort Beaufort

District. The next chapter provides a summary of the study, the major conclusions that were drawn from the study and recommendations. The chapter also suggested some suggested models for the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs that could be adopted by policy makers in an effort to address the challenges facing the implementation of the inclusion of learners with special education needs policy in primary schools in the Fort Beaufort District.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the study and provides a conclusion of the findings, research questions, and discussion on models and methodology. Finally, it makes some recommendations and proposes an alternative model of implementation of inclusion policy for learners with SEN.

7.2 Summary of research findings

The purpose of the study was to examine how teachers were implementing inclusion policy for learners with special education needs in selected primary schools in the Fort Beaufort District. Inclusive education “seeks to address the learning needs of all children, youth and adults with specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion” (UNESCO, 2003:4). It calls for the need to ensure that education for all as an inclusive concept is reflected in state policies and it takes into account the needs of the poor and most disadvantaged children.

The summary of the findings organized under the research themes taken from the research questions enabled direct focus and connectedness of insights and inferences observed. In this section the curriculum implementation models are discussed. The methodology used in the study is also touched on briefly to confirm its suitability before conclusions and final recommendations of the study are made. The chapter then presents a summary of contributions that add to new knowledge.

Just as the government has put in place policies that attempt to include learners with special education needs, structures for implementation are equally in place at the

national, provincial, district and school levels. The implementation process has started and all schools are on track to ensure that all learners access education.

However, some of these learners were not accommodated in the classrooms. Exclusion has been attributed to school environmental issues including teacher attitude in curriculum delivery, inadequate teacher support, lack of knowledge, lack of time, workloads, challenges in coping with learners of different diversity in the classrooms, inadequate training, and difficulties adapting to an individualized curriculum.

It was observed that despite difficult working conditions as well as a lack of specialist training, some teachers in schools in poor rural areas were implementing inclusion policy for learners with special education needs and that evidence of good practice was found among teachers. The majority of respondent teachers emphasised that they used learner-centred teaching methods which included group and individual teaching, group demonstration, group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and practical activities. This study found that teachers used learner-centred teaching methods because they are suitable for those learners with SEN. This study revealed the various methods used by teachers in adapting the curriculum to ensure inclusion of all learners. The use of different teaching strategies, dedication of time, individual work, group work, extra work and coming down to learners' level to accommodate all learners are some of the methods used.

This study found that learners were assessed on the basis of NCS-approved systems, such as the use of formal assessment (oral interviews, spoken tests, written work, portfolio, projects, class tests, group, individual, continuous assessment, a variety of formally assessable learning tasks, and a test at the end of the term). Also, learners were assessed using informal assessment where, for instance, learners were individually and verbally assessed about their surroundings, or were encouraged to debate certain topics. Learners were also continuously assessed during the teaching and learning process. This is crucial for learners with SEN as it involve actively them in the teaching and learning process – a sign of good practice.

The good practices that emerged in terms of support available for teachers from the principals for implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN were evidenced

through the testimonies of respondents. These include visiting classrooms to teach, words of encouragement, motivation to the teachers, financial, material and human support. Principals were said to also support teachers by organising mini workshops at the school level. They also involved the district office and parents when necessary. Support from the district and provincial offices for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN included school visits, advice, materials, information, training workshops, placement of learners with severe SEN in special and full service schools respectively.

Regarding the monitoring strategies in place for implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs, it was found that monitoring was done in inclusive education, as in all learning areas through the lesson plans, teachers' and learners' files, class visits and advice. It was found that some of the schools kept management files, which contained daily plans for the school to follow. The district officials were found to monitor the implementation of inclusion of learners by examining minutes of meetings held by teachers, teachers' and learners' portfolios. Some of the respondent teachers and principals stated that the monitoring mechanism was beneficial because it helped teachers to work harder and faster to finish their work schedule so that they were not left behind by other teachers in their clusters.

In other words there are pockets of very good practice of inclusive education policy in some of the selected primary schools in spite of the challenges that come with the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN.

7.3 Main findings

The main findings of the study can be summarized as follows: Teacher skills (teacher capacity), teaching strategies (delivery of the curriculum), content (including assessment) and pedagogy adaptation, support mechanism and monitoring strategies in place for implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs and implementation of inclusion policy for learners with special education needs.

7.3.1 Teacher capacity

The teacher factor is the most important factor in the growth and development of education in general and special education in particular. Teachers are referred to as builders who determine the destiny of a nation. Teachers can make or mar society. Thus, no society can afford to neglect the education and training of teachers because the quality and standard of education principally depends on the quality of teachers. Since the role of the teacher is a pivotal element in the process of teaching and learning, proper education and training of the teacher is crucial to the success of the teaching and learning process.

The findings of this study showed that all the respondent teachers were professionally trained as they had one of the following qualifications: Certificate in Education, Diploma in Education, Bachelor in Education, Honours Degree or Masters in Education. However, these teachers lacked adequate training through further study as well as workshops in inclusive education. From the information gathered, it was clear that some of the teachers were not provided with in-service training, and therefore lacked knowledge and competence which in turn affects the implementation of inclusive education. Teachers must continue to be involved in any curricular improvement effort. .

Despite the fact that most teachers involved in this study did not specialize in special education studies, it was shown that they nevertheless were committed to implementing inclusive education for learners with special education needs.

7.3.2 Qualification

It emerged that teachers in most of the selected schools had inadequate and non-specialist teacher qualifications, although all were professionally qualified. Qualities of teachers will determine the achievement of the programme. The teacher is one major determinant of quality education. Uttermost consideration should be given in the design of training programmes to the level of a teacher's knowledge of relevant subject areas and teaching experience. When programmes fail to take the teacher's

level of knowledge into consideration, the implementation of the modification will be obstructed.

It was indicated that learners with special education needs were being taught by the majority of teachers who were not trained in inclusive education. This means that most of these teachers were not trained in their pre-service training years to support learners with special education needs. The study found that the majority of teachers in the selected schools were trained professionally for general education.

Nevertheless, some of these teachers were accommodating learners with special education needs by adapting the curriculum, inclusion of learners with SEN through the use of inclusive assessment, learner-centred teaching strategies and so on to accommodate all learners. These are pockets of good practice of inclusion policy found among teachers in the selected primary schools in the Fort Beaufort District.

7.3.3 Specialisation

This study found that teachers who are implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs in the selected primary schools are professionally trained for general education. Inclusive education is challenged by a shortage of adequately qualified teachers. The majority of the interviewed teachers were those who only had an ordinary teacher qualification such as the Advanced Certificate in Education and/or a Bachelor's Degree in Education. The training they had prepared them to teach in the ordinary class without learners with special education needs. Cook (2004) notes that such teachers have no capacity to support the implementation of inclusive education.

In spite of these observations, there was strong evidence that pockets of very good practice of inclusive education in some schools in both rural and urban areas existed as some of these teachers adapted the curriculum to accommodate all the learners in their classrooms. Most of the teachers were able to manage and support learners with special education needs.

7.3.4 Teaching experience

It emerged from the study that the teachers' experience had an effect on the implementation of inclusion policy for learners with special education needs. The majority of the teachers in the selected schools had been educators at primary schools all their years of teaching, thus they were highly experienced general education teachers. The teachers involved in the study were familiar with several teaching methods which enabled them to support and manage learners with special education needs. Writers like Hunkins and Ornstein (2004) and Rogan and Grayson (2003) argue that experienced teachers ensure the use of relevant teaching strategies, recognize the interests and learning needs of the learners, as well as the content and the use of the relevant teaching materials.

7.3.5 Delivery of curriculum

7.3.5.1 Teaching strategies

The findings revealed that the teachers used learner-centred teaching methods as far as possible as it allows accommodation of all learners, particularly those with SEN. This reveals one of the best practices of inclusive education among some teachers in spite of the difficult working conditions and inadequate resources in both urban and poor rural schools. It also emerged that some of the teachers combined learner-centred with teacher-centred approaches. The Department of Education (2008) states that teaching should be learner-centred, allowing space for learners to be active participants in their own learning and sometimes even in the design of what is to be learned. The teacher's method of teaching is critical in any reform designed to improve educational quality. The successful implementation of inclusive policies in primary schools in South Africa likewise depends on the teaching strategies used by the teachers. Methods suitable for interactive learning provide opportunities for the learners to be active producers of knowledge, and allow them to reflect on their own learning experiences, helping them to understand the contradictions between their existing understandings and new experiences, and to consider alternative understandings.

7.3.5.2 Curriculum adaptation

This study revealed the various methods used by teachers in adapting the curriculum to ensure inclusion of all learners. The use of different teaching strategies, dedication of their time, individual work, group work, extra work and coming down to the learners' level to accommodate all learners were some of the methods used. These findings are evidence of good practices of inclusion of learners with special education needs particularly in the context of this study. However, this study also found that some of the teachers were not adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of all learners due of large classes and lack of training.

7.3.5.3 Assessment methods used by teachers

Findings indicated that learners were assessed on the basis of NCS-approved systems, such as the use of formal assessment (oral interviews, spoken tests, written work, portfolio, projects, class tests, continuous assessment, a variety of formally assessable learning tasks, and a test at the end of the term). Also, learners were assessed using informal assessment where, for instance, learners are individually and verbally assessed about their surroundings, or debate certain topics. These methods are evidence of good practices of inclusion of learners with SEN implemented by some of the teachers in the selected primary schools in the Fort Beaufort District.

Kelly and Melograno, (2004) found that an effective teacher should follow a specified programme plan, continually assess the learners, and use assessment data to plan and implement instruction. He/she uses the evaluation data (reassessment) not just for the sake of keeping records, or as an accountability measure to provide evidence of work done, but to include all learners and determine the learners' progress, the effectiveness of teaching and the appropriateness of the programme plan. A variety of assessment activities, and reasons for using these methods was found in this study. These include inclusion of all learners, motivation for learning for learners with SEN, feedback to teachers and learners, diagnosis of difficulties, rather than the more extrinsic aims of reporting to parents and accountability to superiors.

It was also indicated that methods and approaches of assessment for other learners who do not have special education needs can be used with learners with SEN, provided they are modified and adjusted to meet the needs of these learners. This finding established a good practice of inclusive education among teachers. The finding is also in line with the specification of the National Curriculum Statement (2008), which states that teachers should make assessment part of their lessons as well as using formal, year-long programmes of assessment.

7.3.5.4 *Performance of learners with SEN*

Regarding the performance of learners with SEN, this study indicated that the results of learners with special education were average because of learners' background as many of their parents were illiterate. The study also showed that inadequate teaching and learning materials, poor school attendance on the part of the learners with SEN, language of instruction, lack of skills on the part of teachers on how to handle these learners, as well as shortages of teachers in schools where there are multi-grade classes negatively affected the performance of learners with SEN.

The findings revealed that learners were not receiving the actual content in instances where one teacher is responsible for three to four classes at the same time. It was revealed that these learners performed better in their class work than in examinations as they were afraid of examinations. Further possible reasons were revealed which included parents' habits and lack of discipline in schools.

It was also established, however, by other respondents in this study, that the assessment results of learners with special education needs in some schools were good. It was revealed that these learners scored 60% and above. The reason behind this performance was stated to be teachers' commitment and dedication. Teachers' commitment and dedication to the course of learners with SEN is a good practice of inclusion policy.

This study revealed that the district does not keep separate assessment results of learners with SEN as it was stated that teachers did not give the true reflection of learners' assessment results.

7.3.6 Support and monitoring

According to Panday (2007) implementation of inclusive education has to be monitored and supported; that is, it has to be supervised by principals and district officials or inspectors. She acknowledges that it is not only the manner of teaching which needs to be monitored, but also the content which has to be supervised as well.

It was revealed that there were some forms of support in place for the implementation of inclusion for learners with special education needs. At the school level there were institutional level support teams and at the district level, the district based support team. Other forms of support in place for the implementation of inclusive education included financial, material, human, support funds, advice, materials, information, placement of learners with severe cases in special schools, workshops and in-house training. Support was also provided by other sister departments such as health, social work and police. This support, however, was reported to be inadequate. According to the study, a majority of the respondents felt that there was not enough training to begin the implementation process, and that the training organised by the Department was not effective.

Nkomo (1995) emphasizes the need for instructional supervisors such as the education district officers (EDOs), principals and heads of department to maintain the standard of education expected by the government. The quality of these educational authorities and their monitoring is expected to determine the policy implementation process.

This study revealed that there was no standard monitoring system in some of the selected schools in the Fort Beaufort District as some principals were unfamiliar with inclusive policy. At other schools, however, good practices of inclusion policy in

terms of the monitoring strategies put in place were highlighted, for instance, monitoring strategies were in place for implementing inclusion of learners with SEN.

It emerged that some of the schools kept management files, which contained daily plans for the school to follow. Monitoring was also done through lesson plans, teachers' and learners' files, class visits, school based moderation and through regular meetings among the stakeholders.

The Department of Education monitored the implementation of inclusion through school visits, moderation, examining minutes of meetings held by the ILST, reports, going through teachers' and learners' portfolios and providing feedback on the ILSTs monitoring process. The district officials did not visit schools and classrooms often, as it was claimed that South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) does not support class visits as a result of the past experience during the old dispensation in South Africa.

It emerged from this study that most of the selected schools had institutional level support teams (ILST) for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN.

7.3.6.1 *In-service training provided for teachers*

It emerged from the study that the in-service training teachers received, conducted over two or three days in preparation for implementation of inclusive education policy, was too brief. The in-service training of teachers as an essential component of basic education should be on-going. The findings of this study are that the in-service training workshops conducted in schools with regard to learners facing barriers to learning were not beneficial as it was too brief to be effective.

The data on in-service training provided for teachers revealed that although the Department of Education provided in-service training (workshops), there was no follow-up to support teachers after the training. It emerged that the workshops were developed by non-specialists. It was also established that some teachers in the selected schools had not received any form of in-service training despite the fact that

all schools have been mandated to implement inclusive education and districts have to ensure that they provide adequate support.

However, the study also revealed that the in-service training/workshops were relevant in that they have helped teachers to identify and support learners with SEN which is evidence of good practice of in-service training provided for teachers.

7.3.7 Structure at the school level for special education needs

Having institutional level support teams (ILST) in most of the selected schools is evidence of good practice of inclusive education policy. It was indicated that the structure is beneficial in terms of supporting learners with SEN. Despite the difficult working conditions most of the selected schools have pockets of very good practices of inclusive education policy. This finding partly confirmed the study of Mabaso (2006) who found that the majority of schools have school-based support teams, although most of them are only partially effective or ineffective.

7.3.8 Structure at the district level for special education needs

It emerged from this study that the structure available at the district level was the district based support team (DBST) which assisted teachers in supporting learners with special education needs. The DBST also supported the ILST by referring learners with severe barriers to special schools, organising workshops/training programmes for teachers on inclusive education, and providing materials on inclusive education to teachers. The DBST supported the ILST. It was revealed that the district officials communicated with parents regarding learners' needs with the help of the sister departments like Social Development, Health, and the Police.

The pockets of good practice that emerged in this section included DBST support for ILST in organising workshops to assist teachers in accommodating all learners in the mainstream schools, school visits, and teaching ILST how to assess and develop intervention programmes to help learners with mild SEN. The DBST also provided ILST with materials and referred learners with severe cases to the district office.

They spoke to parents on behalf of the ILST about inclusion of learners with SEN and sought support of other departments. These are indicators of good practice of inclusion of learners with SEN in Fort Beaufort Education District in spite of the workload of the district officials, difficult working conditions and shortages of personnel.

7.3.9 *Materials and other resources*

Inadequate provision of teaching and learning materials is a problem affecting the delivery of quality inclusive programmes in the selected primary schools in the Fort Beaufort District. Rogan and Grayson (2003) found that a shortage of materials is an important factor negatively affecting teachers in the implementation of a programme. The most available and commonly used, teaching materials in all the primary schools studied were textbooks. Materials such as posters, charts, magazines, pictures, newspapers tapes and CDs were also available in small quantities at some but not all selected schools in the District. It emerged that special education materials were only available in special schools since severe cases are only handled there.

Kelly and Melograno (2004) confirm that adequate provision of facilities and equipment in schools would make it possible to implement an ABC model that could guide teachers step-by-step through the process of translating curriculum theory into functional practice.

The Department of Education supports the schools by providing funds for the provision of textbooks and other resources. This is usually the only source of such funding and provision. However, the funds are usually not enough to provide adequate teaching and learning materials for all the learners. The scarcity of textbooks affects both the learners and teachers – learners have to share textbooks amongst themselves, and teachers have to make up for the lack of textbooks by looking for alternatives in media like magazines and newspapers. This also suggests a good practice of inclusive education policy. It also emerged that in some of the selected schools, teachers photocopied textbooks for learners in order to make up

for shortages of textbooks. This practice is expensive, time-consuming, and increases teachers' workload.

One reason for the textbook shortage that was provided by more than one interviewee was the delay by the suppliers in delivering ordered textbooks.

Some of the teachers in the selected primary schools indicated their willingness to implement inclusion of learners with special education needs but stated that they should be equipped with appropriate materials and equipment to offer a comprehensive, well-balanced programme.

7.3.10 Assistance provided by teachers to support learners with SEN

The findings of this study revealed the following ways in which assistance was provided by teachers to support learners with SEN: reporting the barriers to parents, making use of teaching aids to include learners with SEN, and assigning work according to learners' levels and individual attention. It was also established in this study that teachers gave learners with SEN extra work, homework, remedial work and allocated special time to complete the work. Teachers were also found to assist learners with SEN by grouping them with learners without SEN, by paying special attention to learners with SEN at break time or after class to attend to them. This study revealed that learners with SEN with physical challenges were also taken to the hospital for treatment.

It was also discovered, however, that some teachers felt unable to cope with learners with SEN due to the lack of cooperation on the part of parents. This was interpreted by teachers to be due to misunderstandings regarding cultural differences between the white teachers and black parents.

7.3.11 Major challenges

It emerged that the majority of teachers had mixed experiences in implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs because of the challenges they

encountered and the extra burden that came with implementing the programme including particular tasks, often of a pastoral nature, which are not usually encountered general education. Teachers revealed that the challenges and personal problems of learners often required that they take on the role of social worker in the classroom. Although these observations indicate a level of discomfort among the teachers interviewed, they also show examples of good practices of inclusion policy.

The study showed that the majority of teachers found it difficult to implement inclusive programmes, and blamed this on inadequate training. Prinsloo (2001:345) states that inclusion will only be successful if teachers receive additional training which is ongoing, which identifies inadequacies in teacher participation, and which is planned and organized by teachers themselves to ensure that it meets the needs of the school community.

It was established that parents were not familiar with inclusive education. Many of them seemed not to care about their children and were not supportive.

Findings indicated that some of the teachers perceived the implementation of inclusive education as a time consuming burden which has increased teachers' workloads because the majority of the selected primary schools are multi-grade schools with few teachers. The challenge of large classes also made curriculum adaptation difficult for some teachers.

Data obtained also established systemic barriers as another challenge encountered in the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs. This is a challenge in the system itself, which included inadequate support from the district which is understaffed.

7.4 Implication for theory

7.4.1 *The rights-based approach*

The study revealed that the implementation of inclusion policy for learners with special education needs is in line with the rights-based approach as it revealed that the four main responsibilities derived from the right to education need to be considered if the implementation of any education policy is to succeed. Availability is the first responsibility derived from the right to education and it revealed that if there were structures, facilities, equipment, high quality training and support for teachers for the implementation of inclusive education, all learners could have access to education.

The conditions of the studied area were partially favourable to successful implementation as proposed by the rights-based approach since there were some selected schools with inadequate, inexperienced and demotivated teachers who lacked specialization. The implementation of inclusive education was hindered by the lack of full benefit on the part of some the structures (institutional level support team, district based support team and the provincial based support team) and support from the Department of Education.

However, there are good practices of inclusion policy revealed in the selected area in spite of the unfavourable conditions and lack of specialisation. Some of the good practices are that teachers accommodated all learners by giving individual attention and time to them. They adapted the curriculum to include all learners by giving remedial work, individual work, group work, extra work and coming down to learners' level so as to accommodate them. Teachers also used different teaching strategies which included group and individual teaching, group demonstrations, group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and practical activities.

The second responsibility derived from the rights-based approach to education is accessibility which describes access to education as free from discrimination if all learners are to access quality education. It emphasizes the right to education of vulnerable groups of learners who should be treated equally in the context of mainstream schools, rather than being placed in special schools. This matched

partly with the situation in this study, in which some of the selected schools were mainstream schools accommodating learners with special education needs. In these schools, some of the teachers had positive attitudes toward the inclusion of learners with special education needs. These are some of the good practices of inclusion policy that emerged.

It was also revealed that teachers used learner-centred teaching methods which included group and individual teaching, group demonstrations, group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and practical activities. The use of different teaching strategies, dedication of teachers' time, individual work, group work, extra work and coming down to learners' level to accommodate them are some of the methods used by teachers for curriculum adaptation to ensure inclusion of all learners. It emerged that learners' assessment methods were modified based on their levels; such methods included the use of formal assessment (oral interviews, spoken tests, written work, portfolio, projects, class tests, group, individual, continuous assessment, a variety of formally assessable learning tasks, and a test at the end of the term).

Another responsibility derived from the right to education is adaptability. This is concerned with adaptation in education to the needs of learners with special education needs. It stresses that education must be flexible and adaptable as there are constant changes in the challenges and needs of societies. All education systems, educational programmes and campaigns must take the diversity of learners and their needs into consideration if education policy is to succeed. Inclusive education policy has been found to have pockets of best practice among some of the teachers in the studied area. This includes adaptation of the curriculum to suit the needs of all the learners. It was revealed that the teachers use curriculum adaptation to accommodate all learners which includes giving individual work, group work, extra work and coming down to learners' levels to accommodate all learners.

Teachers also make use of different teaching strategies such as practical work, group demonstration, and individual attention. Teachers use differentiating assessment to include all learners in their classrooms. The methods employed by teachers include the use of formal assessment (oral interviews, spoken tests, written work, portfolio, projects, class tests, group, individual, continuous assessment, a variety of formally assessable learning tasks, and a test at the end of the term). Also,

learners are assessed using informal assessment where, for instance, learners are individually and verbally assessed about their surroundings, or debate certain topics. Teachers improvised materials to make up for inadequacy of material resources.

The last responsibility derived from the right to education is acceptability. For effective implementation of inclusive education policy to take place, there should be relevant, suitable and high quality levels of education. This study found that teachers used the learner-centred approach; this is appropriate, and it enhanced active participation of learners. The learner-centred approach includes group and individual teaching, group demonstration, group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and practical activities.

Teachers also employed curriculum adaptation which is a principal strategy for responding to the needs of learners with diverse learning needs and styles by coming down to learners' levels to accommodate all learners, by giving remedial work, extra work and by giving individual attention to learners. These are all good practices of inclusion policy found among teachers in the selected rural primary schools in the Fort Beaufort District.

7.4.2 Rogan and Grayson's curriculum implementation theory

Findings indicated the implementation of inclusive education in the selected primary schools is in line with the Rogan and Grayson's (2003) implementation theory as it emerged that for the implementation of any education policy to succeed due consideration must be given to the three main constructs of the theory. Profile of implementation proffers a direction for the inclusive programme and several likely means that could be taken in the implementation process (Rogan & Grayson, 2003).

It showed that if teachers were competent and had the required support and used the appropriate teaching strategies, learners with SEN could acquire the required quality education; this is in line with the findings of this study. It was found in this study that there were some teachers using appropriate strategies such as group and individual teaching, group demonstration, group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and practical activities. Some of the teachers were also found using curriculum adaptation - the use of different teaching strategies, dedication of

teachers' time, individual work, group work, extra work and coming down to learners' level so as to accommodate them. These are some of the methods used by teachers for curriculum adaptation to ensure inclusion of all learners.

Nonetheless, the condition in the selected schools was partially conducive to effective implementation as anticipated by the Rogan and Grayson implementation theory since a few of the teachers were specialists. In spite of lack of adequate capacity to support innovation in the selected schools in the areas such as material resources and monitoring by the Education District Officials, teachers were seen improvising to ease the challenge of shortages of teaching and learning materials which is good practice of inclusion policy.

Through the Rogan and Grayson (2003) curriculum implementation theory the researcher understands the significance of the capacity to support innovation, particularly the role of monitoring the curriculum by the Department of Education and the school principals though it emerged that in some of the schools selected there were no organized strategies of monitoring the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN. However, in many of the selected schools, there were organized methods of monitoring inclusion policy through the lesson plans, teachers' and learners' files, class visits, moderation and advice.

It was found that some of the schools kept management files, which everyday plans which the school had to follow. The district officials were found to monitor the implementation of inclusion of learners by school visits, moderation, advice, examining minutes of meetings held by ILST, as well as examining teachers' and learners' portfolios. The monitoring mechanism was found to be beneficial because it helped teachers to work harder and faster to meet their deadlines.

The foundation of curriculum implementation was provided by the theory that the three constructs are clearly connected in that the profile of implementation is how the inclusion of learners with SEN is implemented. Capacity of implementation refers to the willingness of selected schools in the implementation of inclusive policy. Support from outside agencies is in the form of the contributions of the education district officials and other stakeholders in making sure that inclusion policy is successfully implemented according to the stated policy objectives.

7.4.3 *The achievement-based curriculum (ABC) model*

The results of the study established the implementation of inclusive policy in the selected primary schools is partly in line with the ABC model as most of the teachers have good practices in inclusive education. The study revealed that some teachers are unable to implement inclusive programmes that meet the needs of learners. There was no step by step guidance, thus implementation remains a challenge.

The ABC model suggests that an effective teacher should follow a specified programme plan, continually assess the learners, and use assessment data to plan and implement instruction. He/she uses the evaluation data (reassessment) to determine: the learners' progress, the effectiveness of teaching and the appropriateness of the programme plan (Kelly & Melograno, 2004). The model provides educators with a systematic decision-making procedure to help them develop a curriculum that addresses unique and diverse needs of learners.

The findings of the study revealed that some of the teachers in the selected schools were guided and supported to develop their programmes and monitor the progress of their learners by means of assessment tasks. It also indicated that some of the teachers were supported to determine the effectiveness of the inclusion programme, and eventually how to overcome the challenges. The role of structures such as ILST and DBST which guide and support teachers on how they should assist learners with SEN was also revealed in this study.

If the ABC model would be properly implemented by all teachers, it would be easier to assess whether the principles outlined in the White Paper 6 are met or not.

7.5 Conclusions

The findings of the study revealed that although inclusion of learners with special education needs have been introduced to schools and is being practiced in all the selected schools, they were critical of a variety of issues over the programme implementation process. The challenges are shortages of teaching and learning materials, shortages of qualified teachers, inadequacy of in-service training, a range of implementation challenges and inadequate support and monitoring from the Department of Education and school principals.

At the time of the research, most of the selected primary schools in the Fort Beaufort District lacked the necessary teaching and learning materials to implement inclusion policy for learners with special education needs; in most cases, teachers were left to look for alternatives. The most commonly used teaching/learning material found in all the schools studied was textbooks. The above-mentioned shortage made it very difficult to implement the programme and achieve the stipulated principles.

This study revealed that there were non-specialist teachers in most of the selected primary schools. It was found that some of these teachers had not received any form of training from the Department of Education, which led to them finding the implementation of inclusive education difficult.

The results of the study also found that there was inadequate support and monitoring to enable teachers, qualified or not, to implement the inclusive programmes, especially from the Department of Education. Some principals, however, provided a fair degree of both to the extent that they were able.

However, there are pockets of very good practice of inclusive education policy in some schools despite all the challenges that came with the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs. These include teachers implementing the inclusion policy without appropriate qualifications, curriculum adaptation, differentiating teaching strategies, differentiating assessment, lowering the bar to accommodate all learners and improvising for shortages of material resources.

Inclusive education policy stresses the fact that schools have to accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures, and strategies with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children (Peters, 2004; UNESCO, 2007). Therefore, without the adequate provision of teaching and learning materials, qualified teachers and support, the principles outlined in the White Paper 6 may not be achieved.

The researcher concluded that despite the challenges such as shortages of teaching and learning materials, shortages of specialist teachers, inadequacy of in-service training, a range of implementation challenges and inadequate support and monitoring from the Department of Education and school principals that came with the implementation of inclusion policy some of the teachers in the selected schools are implementing inclusion of learners with SEN. There are good practices in inclusive education policy among these teachers despite the difficult working conditions particularly in the poor rural context.

These good practices include the fact that the majority of the teachers as non-specialists are implementing the inclusive education policy especially for learners with special education needs. They are implementing inclusive programmes in that all learners are accommodated in the selected primary schools, which is a good practice of inclusion policy.

The use of learner-centred teaching methods, which included group and individual teaching, group demonstration, group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and practical activities were found. This study revealed the various methods used by teachers in adapting the curriculum to ensure inclusion of all learners. The use of different teaching strategies, dedication of time, individual work, group work, extra work and coming down to learners' level to accommodate all learners are some of the methods used.

This study found that learners were assessed using methods such as formal assessment (oral interviews, spoken tests, written work, portfolio, projects, class tests, group, individual, continuous assessment, a variety of formally assessable learning tasks, and a test at the end of the term). Also, learners were assessed using

informal assessment where, for instance, learners were individually and verbally assessed. Regarding support, the following were revealed on the part of the principals - visiting classrooms to teach, words of encouragement, motivation to the teachers, financial, material and human support. Principals were said to also support teachers by organising mini workshops at the school level. They also involved the district office and parents when necessary.

Support from the district and provincial offices for the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN included school visits, advice, materials, information, training workshops, and placement of learners with severe SEN in special and full service schools respectively. It was stated that monitoring is done in inclusive education, as in all learning areas, through the lesson plans, teachers' and learners' files, class visits and advice. It was found that some of the schools kept management files, which contained things that would be done each and every day, as well as daily plans which the school had to follow.

The district officials were found to monitor the implementation of inclusion of learners by examining minutes of meetings held by teachers, and by examining teachers' and learners' portfolios. Some of the respondent teachers and principals stated that the monitoring mechanism was beneficial because it helped teachers to work harder and faster to finish their work schedule so that they were not left behind by other teachers in their clusters.

7.6 Recommendations

Based on the research findings above, the study makes the following recommendations:

- Universities in South Africa should train more specialised teachers in Special Education. The Advanced Certificate in Education (Special Education), or an equivalent qualification, needs to be made available to a greater number of primary school teachers.

- Incentives should be provided to encourage teachers or would-be teachers to become qualified Special Education teachers.
- The practice of appointing any teacher of the staff to take care of the implementation of the inclusion of learners with SEN needs to be actively discouraged. Potential Special Education teachers should be identified by schools to be retrained and acquire further skills as specialised teachers.
- In view of the number of teachers who have not been trained in special education, and the fact that implementation of inclusion for learners with SEN is compulsory in schools, there is good reason to conduct a needs assessment for effective in-service training programmes so that training can be provided to meet the urgent needs of teachers in the primary schools.
- More work needs to be done with officials at the middle-management levels (province and district officials and principals), and with representatives of the governing bodies of schools.
- There is a need to recruit a cohort of specialised teachers who are trained in practicing inclusive education with high pay, so that they can influence the in-service teachers to practice inclusive programmes and change their attitudes towards learners with special education needs. Teachers should be given in-service training to help them reorient their thinking about inclusion policy.
- There should be adequate training for teachers on lesson plans, teaching strategies, assessment modification and adaptation of the curriculum by adapting teaching and learning activities and lowering the expectations towards the learners who are experiencing barriers to learning so as accommodate these learners.
- The Department of Education should appoint special teachers to be responsible for assisting teachers in their schools. These special teachers will be responsible for meeting parents, visiting social work offices, hospitals,

clinics and police stations in response to the personal problems of the learners. There should be adequate provision of resources, including funding, to enable these special teachers to do their work.

- Teaching and learning materials are essential for the implementation of policies and inclusion policy for learners with SEN. The Department of Education should provide adequate teaching and learning materials in all rural and urban primary schools as a matter of urgency. This would help teachers to implement the programme and provide the most needed opportunity for all learners to be accommodated.
- The Department of Education, who is responsible for making requisitions for the purchasing of learning materials and equipment, should be pressured to expedite this process, so that teachers would receive an adequate supply in good time.
- Encourage strong partnerships or collaborations among learners, teachers, parents and Department of Education by organising programmes/workshops to enlighten all the stakeholders on implementation of inclusion policy for learners with SEN.
- Learners particularly those with SEN should be encouraged to contribute, or have input into, inclusive programmes. Their opinions could sometimes be asked on what they would like to do and achieve in the lessons. Peer education should be encouraged, and an opportunity for a more negotiated curriculum should be created in classes.
- The implementation of an inclusion policy for learners with SEN should be coupled with provision of sufficient support in terms of financial, emotional and matters pertaining to the implementation of policy. There is a great need for adequate support and monitoring mechanisms.

- The support and monitoring system should be reviewed urgently. Class visits should be encouraged to allow the support and monitoring that is needed by teachers.
- Visits to schools should be regular, as this alone would help with monitoring and supporting the implementation of the inclusive programmes.
- Teachers should be given written feedback to help them reflect on their areas of weakness.

7.7 *New suggested model*

This study examined the implementation of inclusion policy for learners with special education needs in selected primary schools in the Fort Beaufort District. Possible factors influencing successful implementation of inclusion policy for learners with SEN in the district were identified by the researcher. Although structures are in place at all levels for the implementation of inclusion policy, there is little significant improvement in the implementation of this policy.

The researcher proposes an alternative framework for a model of implementing inclusion policy for learners with special education needs for teachers in the Fort Beaufort District after an analysis of the findings of the study with a review of literature on inclusion policy implementation. Table 7.1 below shows the new suggested model.

Table 7-1: Alternative framework for a model of inclusion policy for learners with special education needs implementation

Aspect of inclusion policy implementation (<i>identified from literature</i>)	Aspects of inclusion policy implementation (<i>as used in Fort Beaufort Education District</i>)	Aspects of alternative model of inclusion policy implementation (<i>as good practices suggested by the</i>
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		researcher)
Capacity of Teachers	Most teachers were not specialists in special education but they still have a way of identifying learners with special education needs in their schools and classes. They implement inclusion policy for learners with SEN despite existing limitation.	Innovativeness of teachers is essential when implementing inclusion apart from specialist knowledge in inclusive education, especially in contexts with limited resources.
Teaching strategies to enhance inclusion		
Curriculum adaptation	In spite of the multi-grade classes and also large classes in some of the schools, teachers were able to differentiate their teaching methods to ensure that learners with special needs are catered for, therefore one can conclude that inclusion policy was being implemented in spite of the challenges encountered in the process especially in schools in context with limited resources.	Adaptation of curriculum by differentiating teaching methods, dedication of time, individual work, group work, extra work and coming down to learners' level to accommodate learners with SEN especially in schools in rural context with limited resources.
Assessment	Teachers were differentiating assessment by using formal assessment (oral interviews, spoken tests, written work, portfolio, projects, class tests, group, individual, continuous	Assessment could be modified by using methods such as formal assessment (portfolio, oral interviews, spoken and tests), informal assessment where, for

	assessment, a variety of formally assessable learning tasks, and a test at the end of the term). Also, learners are assessed using informal assessment where, for instance, learners are individually and verbally assessed. Teachers also used continuous assessment during teaching and learning process to ensure active involvement of learners with SEN especially in schools in rural context with limited resources.	instance, learners are individually and verbally assessed and continuous assessment to suit the need of learners with SEN even if there are no experts to assist especially in schools in rural context with limited resources.
Material resources	Teachers adapted materials to teach learners with SEN by improvising and developing simplified materials which are easy to understand as there were no special materials at the mainstream schools to cater for learners with SEN.	Adaptation of material resources by coming up with materials which are easy to understand to accommodate learners with SEN especially in schools in rural context with limited resources.
Support for implementing inclusion policy		
In-service training/workshops	In-service training/workshops were organised for teachers by the district office to enable	Teachers could be trained in rural context with limited resources to identify and

	them implement inclusion of learners with SEN which has helped some of the teachers to support learners with SEN especially in schools in rural context with limited resources. Also, some of the teachers were able to identify and support learners with SEN after attending the workshops.	support learners with SEN.
Assistance provided by teachers to support learners with SEN.	Some of the principals support the implementation of inclusion policy for learners with SEN by visiting classrooms to observe and for teaching purpose. Feedbacks were given to teachers on how to improve on inclusion of learners with SEN. Some principals organised mini workshops on inclusion policy implementation to support teachers in the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN and hold meetings with parents concerning challenges encountered by their children and to enlighten parents about inclusion especially in schools in rural context with limited resources.	Different methods such as remedial, the use of teaching aids, assigning work according to learners' levels, individual attention extra work, and allocation of special time to complete work could be employed by teachers to assist learners with SEN especially in schools in rural context with limited resources.

Other forms of support by principals	Some of the principals support the implementation of inclusion policy for learners with SEN by visiting classrooms to observe and for teaching purpose. Feedbacks were given to teachers on how to improve on inclusion of learners with SEN. Some principals organised mini workshops on inclusion policy implementation to support teachers in the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN and hold meetings with parents concerning challenges encountered by their children and to enlighten parents about inclusion especially in schools in rural context with limited resources.	Support could be provided to teachers for the implementation of inclusion policy for learners with SEN in form of classroom visit and feedback on improvement of implementation of inclusion for learners with SEN. Mini workshops could also be organised to support teachers to accommodate learners with SEN, especially in schools in rural context with limited resources.
Monitoring strategy for implementing inclusion policy		
Monitoring	Monitoring was done in some schools especially in schools in rural context with limited resources through school management files, containing activities that would be done each and every day, everyday plans which schools have.	There could be monitoring by principals for the implementation of inclusion policy for learners with SEN, through management files, having every day plan to be carried out especially in schools in rural context with limited resources.

Models of inclusion policy		
Models of inclusion policy	Stakeholders were not fully involved in the implementation of inclusion policy for learners with SEN. Some teachers were targeting placing all learners with special education needs in special schools. Inadequate training for the implementation of inclusion policy for learners with SEN	All stakeholders should be fully involved in the implementation of inclusion policy for learners with SEN. Learners with mild cases should be supported at mainstream schools while those with severe cases only should be referred to special schools. Teachers should be specially and adequately trained and re-orientated for the implementation of inclusion policy for learners with SEN especially in schools in rural context with limited resources. Training should be in support of education policy implementation. It should be specific and deep. It should offer necessary support to teachers by being specific. Specialists from Special Schools and from Universities should be contacted to conduct workshops/training in specified areas by teachers because if they do not know

		what the teachers' concerns are, the training will not meet teachers' needs. The department of education should organise CPD in schools at least three times per term and at least three times a year out of school and be specific for instance how to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of all learners; CPD should be relevant and meet the needs of teachers, otherwise it will not be beneficial. There should be two-way communications between teachers and the DoE. Duration for conducting workshops/CPDs could be one day, perhaps a weekend for on-school site based CPDs and a minimum of 5 days for off-school site based CPDs conducted during the school holidays. There is need for class visits to assist teachers to improve on the implementation of inclusion for learners with SEN especially in schools in rural context with limited
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		resources. Written feedback should be provided to teachers to help them reflect on their areas of weakness. Every programme for teachers should have a monitoring and support component, especially in schools in rural context with limited resources. Although class visit is not allowed by SADTU, modern supervisory approaches such as clinical supervision when carrying out lesson observations could be employed.
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7.8 Areas for future research

From the findings of this study, some areas of potential further study in the area of implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN have emerged which the researcher would like to propose.

- This study is on the implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN focusing on the good practices of the inclusion policy in selected primary school in the Fort Beaufort District only. The results are conclusively generalizable to implementation of inclusion for learners with SEN in primary schools in the Fort Beaufort District. There is a need for a study that will cover the Eastern

Cape Province and a national study that will target good practices of implementation of inclusion for learners with SEN in all the education districts in South Africa. The study would give a more holistic picture of good practice of inclusive policy which could influence policy in the area of implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN.

- There should be another study using similar methodology as the one used in this study in secondary schools in South Africa. The study would help complete the picture for implementation of inclusion of learners with SEN in South Africa.
- There should be a study carried out on the investigation into the in-service training in place for the implementation of inclusion policy for learners with SEN. The study will reveal how the training is carried out and what it entails.

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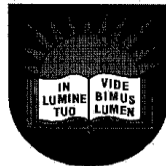
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE REC-270710-028-RA Level 01

Certificate Reference Number: REM031SADE01

Project title: **The implementation of inclusion policy for learners with special education needs in primary schools in Fort Beaufort District: Towards rights based approach to education**

Nature of Project: PHD

Principal Researcher: Toyin Mary Adewumi

Supervisor: Prof S Rembe

Co-supervisor:

On behalf of the University of Fort Hare's Research Ethics Committee (UREC) I hereby give ethical approval in respect of the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project and research instrument(s). Should any other instruments be used, these require separate authorization. The Researcher may therefore commence with the research as from the date of this certificate, using the reference number indicated above.

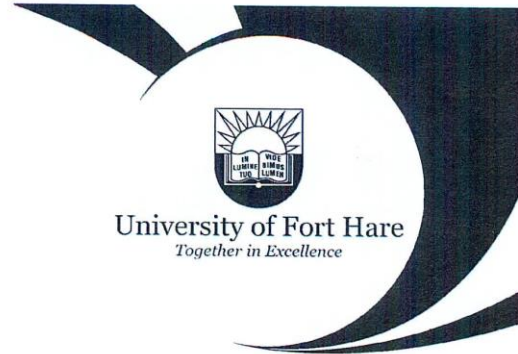
Please note that the UREC must be informed immediately of

- Any material change in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the document
- Any material breaches of ethical undertakings or events that impact upon the ethical conduct of the research

APPENDIX B: LETTER OF PERMISSION TO THE PROVINCE OF THE EASTERN CAPE EDUCATION

Faculty of Education
School of Further and Continuing
Education
Stewart Hall, Alice

Phone: Alice: 040602412
| Email: nmayiya@ufh.ac.za |



06 June 2013

District Director
Fort Beaufort District

Dear Sir,

Re: Permission to Collect Data: Mrs. T. M. Adewumi (Student Number 201004811)

This is to confirm that Mrs Adewumi is pursuing PhD degree at the University of Fort Hare. Her research title is “**Implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs in primary schools in Fort Beaufort district**”. She is supposed to collect data from the district office and schools. Kindly grant her permission. I would also be grateful if you could kindly provide her with documents that may assist with information regarding the area of her study.

I would like to assure you that any information that will be collected will remain confidential and no name of a person will be disclosed. The student will ensure that she does not disrupt ongoing activities during the period she will be collecting data.

Sincerely



Prof. S. Rembe

Coordinator of MEd and PhD Programmes, Alice Campus

Appendix C: PERMISSION FOR DATA COLLECTION



Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
EDUCATION

FORT BEAUFORT DISTRICT – OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

CAPE COLLEGE BUILDING * Meadow Road * Fort Beaufort * Private Bag X2541 * FORT BEAUFORT * 5726 * REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA * Tel: +27 46 646 7852 Fax: +0857 704105 * Website: thembele.sazandwa@edu.ecppr.gov.za * Date: 22 May 2014

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Madam

This serves to inform you that the bearer of this letter **Mrs Adewumi T.M.** (Student Number 201004811) had been given permission to use our institutions of learning as sites for her research.

She is currently studying with the University of Fort Hare towards a PhD in Education degree. It is hoped that she will favour us with her finding as soon as she had concluded her studies.

Your cooperation regarding the matter will at all times be highly appreciated.

Yours in Service

S.N. STOFIE
DISTRICT DIRECTOR: FORT BEAUFORT

building blocks for growth



Isizwe elizaqondileyo!

Appendix D: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO SCHOOLS

**Faculty of Education
School of Further and Continuing
Education**
Stewart Hall, Alice

Phone: Alice: 040602442
| Email: mnayijya@ufh.ac.za



06 June 2013

The Principal

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Permission to Collect Data: Mrs. T. M. Adewumi (Student Number 201004811)

This is to confirm that Mrs Adewumi is pursuing PhD degree at the University of Fort Hare. Her research title is **"Implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs in primary schools in Fort Beaufort district"**. She is supposed to collect data during the months of June and July 2013. Kindly grant her permission. I would also be grateful if you could kindly provide her with documents that may assist with information regarding the area of her study.

I would like to assure you that any information that will be collected will remain confidential and no name of a person will be disclosed. The student will ensure that she does not disrupt ongoing activities during the period she will be collecting data.

Sincerely



Prof. S. Rembe

Coordinator, MEd and PhD Programmes, Alice Campus

Appendix E: INFORMED CONSENT AGREEMENT FORM

NAME OF APPLICANT

Ethics Human 2011

<<

>>

OFFICE USE ONLY

Ref

Date

I hereby declare that I am **aware** of potential conflicts of interest which should be considered by the UREC:

Signature: _____ Date: _____



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

Ethics Research Confidentiality and Informed Consent Form

Please note:

This form is to be completed by the researcher(s) as well as by the interviewee before the commencement of the research. Copies of the signed form must be filed and kept on record

(To be adapted for individual circumstances/needs)

Our University of Fort Hare / Department is asking people from your community / sample / group to answer some questions, which we hope will benefit your community and possibly other communities in the future.

The University of Fort Hare / Department/ organization is conducting research regarding We are interested in finding out more about We are carrying out this research to help (adapt for individual projects)

Please understand that you are not being forced to take part in this study and the choice whether to participate or not is yours alone. However, we would really appreciate it if you do share your thoughts with us. If you choose not take part in answering these questions, you will not be affected in any way. If you agree to participate, you may stop me at any time and tell me that you don't want to go on with the interview. If you do this there will also be no penalties and you will NOT be prejudiced in ANY way. Confidentiality will be observed professionally.

I will not be recording your name anywhere on the questionnaire and no one will be able to link you to the answers you give. Only the researchers will have access to the unlinked

Document approved by UREC: 11 August 2011, V01

NAME OF APPLICANT

Ethics Human 2011

<<

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OFFICE USE ONLY

Ref	Date
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information. The information will remain confidential and there will be no "come-backs" from the answers you give.

The interview will last around (X?) minutes (*this is to be tested through a pilot*). I will be asking you a questions and ask that you are as open and honest as possible in answering these questions. Some questions may be of a personal and/or sensitive nature. I will be asking some questions that you may not have thought about before, and which also involve thinking about the past or the future. We know that you cannot be absolutely certain about the answers to these questions but we ask that you try to think about these questions. When it comes to answering questions there are no right and wrong answers. When we ask questions about the future we are not interested in what you think the best thing would be to do, but what you think would actually happen. (*adapt for individual circumstances*)

If possible, our organisation would like to come back to this area once we have completed our study to inform you and your community of what the results are and discuss our findings and proposals around the research and what this means for people in this area.

INFORMED CONSENT

I hereby agree to participate in research regarding I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can stop this interview at any point should I not want to continue and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively.

I understand that this is a research project whose purpose is not necessarily to benefit me personally.

I have received the telephone number of a person to contact should I need to speak about any issues which may arise in this interview.

I understand that this consent form will not be linked to the questionnaire, and that my answers will remain confidential.

I understand that if at all possible, feedback will be given to my community on the results of the completed research.

.....
Signature of participant

Date:.....

I hereby agree to the tape recording of my participation in the study

.....
Signature of participant

Date:.....

Document approved by UREC: 11 August 2011, V01

Appendix F: LETTER CONFIRMING EDITTING

P/Bag X1314

Alice, 5700

September 20, 2014

CONFIRMATION OF EDITING

This is to confirm that I, Cynthia Formson, have edited for language use, the thesis entitled, The implementation of an inclusion policy for learner's with special education needs in primary schools in the Fort Beaufort District: Towards a rights based approach to Education, which was submitted by Mrs T M Adewumi, student number 201004811. This editing involved issues such as spelling, punctuation, sentence and paragraph structure and language usage.

I hold a masters degree in Linguistics as well as one in Teaching English as a second Language. I work as a lecturer in English Linguistics and Academic Literacy. I have vast experience in editing and have edited about 70 Honours, Masters and PhD theses and dissertations. I have also done rapporteuring and written workshop reports on several Water Research Commission Workshops.



C.K. Formson (Mrs)

Appendix G: Questionnaire for teachers

SECTION A: Personal and professional characteristics of respondents

1. Gender: Male ☐
Female ☐
2. Age: Below 20 years ☐
20- 29 ☐
30- 39 ☐
40- 49 ☐
50- 59 ☐
60- 69 ☐
Above 70 years ☐

SECTION B: Relevant teachers' training

1. What level of professional training did you attain that enables you to implement inclusive education for learners with special education needs?

Certificate in Education ☐, Diploma in Education ☐, Bachelor of Education ☐, Honors degree ☐, Masters in Education ☐. Any other specify.....

What is your area of specialization?

.....
.....

2. Please specify the extent to which the In-service trainings you have attended have been beneficial to your classroom practice and overall learner performance

- (a) Not helpful
- (b) Slightly helpful
- (c) Helpful
- (d) Very helpful

3. Please give reason for your choice

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4. Please indicated how easy it was for you to implement what you learnt from the in-service training programmes in your classrooms?

- (a) Very difficult
- (b) Difficult
- (c) Easy
- (d) Very easy

5. Please give reason for your choice

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6. Which other training programmes are provided to improve your performance of implementing inclusive education? How do you find such programmes?

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7. Do you think you have been equipped enough to implement the inclusion policy for learners with special education needs? Choose a score from 0 to 5, where 0 represents “not skilled” and 5 represents “very skilled”.

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8. How many years have you been a teacher?

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9. How long have you been implementing inclusive education for learners with special education needs?
 Less than a 1 year [], 1-5 years [], 6-10 years [] 11-15 years [], 20 years & above []

10. What is the total number of learners in your class?

10- 20 [] 21- 30 [] 31- 40 [] 41+ []

11. How many learners are experiencing barriers to learning in your class
 0 – 5 [] 6 – 10 [] 11+ []

SECTION C: Implementation of inclusive education

1. Could you please tell me the type of barrier(s) learner (s) are experiencing?

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2. Please tell me how you have been able to assist these learners in your class

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3. How do you identify learners who are experiencing barriers to leaning?

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4. How do you feel about having learners with special education needs in your classroom?

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5. Please explain how you have been adapting the curriculum to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs.

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6. Please explain how learners with special education needs have benefited from the lessons you teach

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7. Do you think it is a good thing that inclusion of learners with special education needs is included in schools? Yes [] No []

8. Why? Why not?

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9. Are you satisfied with the way inclusion of learners with special education needs is implemented, in general? Yes [] No []

10. Please explain why you are satisfied/not satisfied.

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11. How would you advise that the teacher(s) should implement it?

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12. What would you recommend that teacher(s) should do differently?

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SECTION D: Teaching strategies and their effectiveness

1. What are the teaching methods or strategies you use in your lessons to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs?

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2. Could you please explain how these methods have enriched your lessons?

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3. Could you please describe how you plan your lessons to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs?

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4. Why do you plan in this way?

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Please tell me the approach you use to assess learners to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs?

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Why do you use this approach?

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5. Please describe learners' examination results? Good [] average [] poor []

6. What do you think are the causes of such results?

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SECTION E: Structures for implementation

1. Does your school have a policy in place to cater for special needs in line with White Paper 6? Yes [] No []

2. Please explain

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3. Could you please describe the structure available at the school level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs?

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4. Do you think the structure is beneficial? Yes [] No []

5. Please explain

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6. Could you please describe the structure available at the district level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs?

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7. Do you think the structure is beneficial? Yes [] No []

8. Please explain

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SECTION F: Support mechanisms available for inclusion of learners with special education needs

1. Could you please explain how the school head or the deputy is supporting the inclusion of learners with special education needs?

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2. Do you think the support they give is adequate? Yes [] No []

3. Please explain

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4. What support does your school get from the departmental district officials in the inclusion of learners with special education needs?

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5. Is the support adequate? Yes [] []

6. Please explain further

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7. What kind of support would you expect as a teacher from the school or department?

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SECTION G: Monitoring strategies for inclusion of learners with special education needs

1. How does the school head or the deputy monitor the inclusion of learners with special education needs in your school?

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2. Are the monitoring strategies beneficial? Yes [] No []

3. Please explain further

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4. Please explain how the district officials monitor the inclusion of learners with special education needs in your school?

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5. Are the monitoring strategies beneficial? Yes [] No []

6. Please explain how

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Appendix H: Interview guide for teachers

Study of implementation of inclusion policy for learners with special education needs in primary schools in Fort Beaufort, 2013

Your voluntary participation in this study is highly appreciated. The purpose of this study is to investigate the implementation of the inclusive education for learners with special education needs in primary schools in Fort Beaufort.

Kindly answer all questions as honestly as you can.

Section A: Personal Information

1.1 Gender: female ☐ male ☐

1.2 Age range

20 - 29 years	☐	30 – 39 years	☐
40 – 49 years	☐	50 – 59 years	☐
60+ years	☐		

1.3 Highest professional qualification

Bachelor of Arts + Grad CE..... ☐

Certificate/Diploma in Education + Bachelor of education..... ☐

Masters in Education..... ☐

Any other, specify.....

1.4 Length of service teaching at a primary school?

1 -5 yrs ☐ 6 -10 yrs ☐ 11 + yrs ☐

1.5 What post of responsibility do you hold in the teaching hierarchy?

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TOPIC: IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSION POLICY FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE FORT BEAUFORT EDUCATION DISTRICT.

Section B: The relevant training for teachers

- What level of professional training did you attain that enables you to implement inclusive education for learners with special education needs?
- How related is the course content to what you are now implementing? Please explain further.
- Which other training programs are provided to improve your performance in implementing inclusive education for learners with special education needs. How do you find such programmes? Are the programmes relevant? Please explain.
- What did you learn on the teaching of learners with special education needs during teacher training?

Section C: Implementation of inclusive education

- What do you understand by the term “barriers to learning”
- How do you feel about having learners with special education needs in your classroom?
- How have you supported learners with barriers to learning in your class? How have you been adapting the content and pedagogy to ensure it meets the needs of all learners?
- Please explain how learners have benefited from the lessons you teach.
- In your experience, what are the challenges you encounter in implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs?
- Could you explain why you experience these challenges?
- What are parents’ perceptions of/attitudes toward inclusive education for learners with special education needs?
- How do they show that?

- What are the potential benefits of inclusion of learners with special education needs? Please explain if you think the learners in your school are enjoying these benefits?
- Do you think it is a good thing that inclusion of learners with special education needs is included as part of the school curriculum? Why? Why not?
- Are you satisfied with the way inclusion of learners with special education needs is implemented, in general? Please explain why you are satisfied/not satisfied.
- How would you advise that the teacher(s) should implement it? What would you recommend that teacher(s) should do differently?

SECTION D: Structures for implementation

- Does your school have a policy in place to cater for special needs in line with White Paper 6? Please explain
- Could you please describe the structure available at the school level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs?
- Do you think the structure is beneficial? Please explain.
- Could you please describe the structure available at the district level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs?
- Do you think the structure is beneficial? Please explain.

Section E: Materials used by teachers

- What type of teaching materials do you use when implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs? Who provides these materials?
- How would you describe the availability of textbooks and other teaching materials for implementing inclusive education for learners with special education needs?
- Are the materials adequate for the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs? Please explain further.
- To what extent do shortages of teaching materials affect the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs?

- What is the contribution of parents in terms of buying learning materials for the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs?
- What are your suggestions on provision of adequate teaching and learning materials which could assist in implementing inclusive education for learners with special education needs?

Section E: Support mechanisms available for teachers

- Could you please explain how the school head or the deputy is supporting the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs in your school? Do you think the support they give is adequate? Please explain.
- What support does your school get from the district officials in the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs? Is the support adequate? Please explain further.

Section F: Monitoring strategies for implementing inclusion

- How does the school head or the deputy monitor the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs in your school? Please explain further.
- Please explain how the district officials monitor the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs in your school? Are the monitoring strategies beneficial? Please explain how.

Appendix I: Interview guide for principals

Study of implementation of inclusion policy for learners with special education needs in primary schools in Fort Beaufort, 2013

Your voluntary participation in this study is highly appreciated. The purpose of this study is to investigate the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs in primary schools in Fort Beaufort.

Kindly answer all questions as honestly as you can.

Section A : Personal Information

1.1 Gender: female ☐ male ☐

1.2 Age range 30 – 39 yrs ☐ 40 – 49 yrs ☐
50 – 59 yrs ☐ 60+yrs ☐

1.3. Marital status Single ☐ Married ☐ Widow ☐

1.4 Highest professional qualification

Bachelor of Arts + Post-Graduate Certificate in Education ☐

Certificate/Diploma in Education + Bachelor of Education..... ☐

Masters in Education..... ☐

Any other; please specify.....

1.5 Length of service as a teacher:

1 -5 years ☐ 6 -10 years ☐ 11 + years ☐

1.6 Length of service in the principal position:

1-5 years ☐ 6-10 years ☐ 11 + years ☐

TOPIC: IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIONN POLICY FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE FORT BEAUFORT EDUCATION DISTRICT.

Section B: The relevant training for teachers

What qualification is required for teachers to implement inclusive education for learners with special education needs? Do teachers in your school have these qualifications? If not, to what extent do their qualifications vary from what is officially required?

- What level of professional training did teachers in your school receive that enables them to implement inclusive education?
- How related is the course content to what teachers are now implementing? Please explain further.
- Which other training programmes are provided to improve your performance of implementing inclusive education? How do you find such programmes?

Section C:Materials used by teachers

- What type of teaching materials do the teachers in your school use to ensure the inclusion of learners with special education needs? Who provides these teaching materials?
- How would you describe the availability of textbooks and other teaching materials for implementing inclusive education? Are the materials adequate for the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs? Please explain further.
- How would you describe the quality of textbooks for implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs?
- To what extent do shortages of teaching materials affect the teaching and learning in inclusive classrooms?
- What is the contribution of parents in terms of buying learning materials for their children?
- What are your suggestions on provision of adequate teaching and learning materials which could assist in implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs?

Section D: Implementation of inclusive education

- What do you understand by the term “barriers to learning”?
- How do you feel about having learners with special education needs in your school?
- How have you been supporting learners with barriers to learning in your school?
- How have teachers in your school been adapting the content and pedagogy to ensure it meets the needs of all learners?
- Please explain how learners have benefited from the lessons teachers teach?
- In your experience, what challenges do teachers encounter in implementing inclusion for learners with special education needs? Could you explain why they experience these difficulties?
- What other challenges are you aware of that teacher’s experience?
- What are the potential benefits of inclusion of learners with special education needs? Please explain if you think the learners in your school are enjoying these benefits?
- What are parents’ perceptions of/attitudes towards inclusion of learners with special education needs? How do they show this?
- Do you think it is a good thing that inclusion of learners with special education needs is included as part of the school curriculum? Why? Why not?
- Are you satisfied with the way inclusion of learners with special education needs is implemented, in general? Please explain why you are satisfied/not satisfied.
- How would you advise that the teacher(s) should implement it? What would you recommend that teacher(s) should do differently?

SECTION D: Structures for implementation

- Does your school have a policy in place to cater for special needs in line with White Paper 6? Please explain.
- Could you please describe the structure available at the school level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs?
- Do you think the structure is beneficial? Please explain.
- Could you please describe the structure available at the district level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs?
- Do you think the structure is beneficial? Please explain.

Section E: Teaching strategies and their effectiveness

- Which are the teaching methods teachers use in their lessons to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs? Could you please explain why they use them?
- Could you please describe how teachers plan their lessons at your school? Why do they approach planning in this way?
- Please tell me what kinds of approach teachers use to assess learners? Why do they use this approach?
- Please describe learners' examination results in your school?

Section F: Support mechanisms available for teachers

- Could you please explain how you are supporting the Implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs in your school? Do you think the support you give is adequate? Please explain.
- What support does your school get from the departmental district officials in the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs? Is the support adequate? Please explain further.

Section G: Monitoring strategies for implementing inclusion

- How do you monitor the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs in your school?
- Please explain how the district officials monitor the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs in your school? Are the monitoring mechanisms beneficial? In what ways?

Appendix J: Interview guide for Education District Officials

Study of implementation of inclusion policy for learners with special education needs in primary schools in Fort Beaufort, 2013

Your voluntary participation in this study is highly appreciated. The purpose of this study is to investigate the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs in primary schools in Fort Beaufort.

Kindly answer all questions as honestly as you can.

SECTION A: Personal Information

1.1 Gender: female male

1.2 Age range 30 – 39 yrs 40 – 49 yrs
 50 – 59 yrs 60+yrs

1.3. Marital status Single Married Widow

1.4 Highest professional qualification

Bachelor of Arts + Post-Graduate Certificate in Education

Certificate/Diploma in Education + Bachelor of Education.....

Masters in Education.....

Any other? Please specify.....

1.5 Length of service as an education official:

1 -5 years 6 -10 years 11 + years

TOPIC: IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSION POLICY FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE FORT BEAUFORT EDUCATION DISTRICT.

SECTION B: The relevant training for teachers

- What qualification is required for teachers to implement inclusive education for learners with special education needs? Do teachers in your district have these qualifications? If not, to what extent do their qualifications vary from what is officially required?
- What level of professional training did teachers in your district receive that enables them to implement inclusion of learners with special education needs?
- How related is the course content to what teachers are now implementing? Please explain further.
- Which other training programmes are provided to improve your performance of implementing inclusive education? How do you find such programmes?

SECTION C:

Section D: Implementation of inclusive education

- What do you understand by the term “barriers to learning”?
- How do you feel about having learners with special education needs in schools?
- How have you been supporting learners with barriers to learning in schools?
- How have teachers in your schools been adapting the content and pedagogy to ensure it meets the needs of all learners?
- Please explain how learners have benefited from the lessons teachers teach
- Do you think it is a good thing that inclusion of learners with special education needs is included as part of the school curriculum? Why? Why not?
- What are the potential benefits of inclusion of learners with special education needs? Please explain if you think the learners in district are enjoying these benefits?

- In your experience, what challenges do teachers encounter in implementing inclusion for learners with special education needs? Could you explain why they experience these difficulties?
- What other challenges are you aware of that teachers' experience?
- Are you satisfied with the way inclusion of learners with special education needs is implemented, in general? Please explain why you are satisfied/not satisfied.
- How would you advise that the teacher(s) should implement it? What would you recommend that teacher(s) should do differently?
- What are parents' perceptions of/attitudes towards inclusion of learners with special education needs? How do they show this?

SECTION E: Structures for implementation

- Do your schools have a policy in place to cater for special needs in line with White Paper 6? Please explain.
- Could you please describe the structure available at the school level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs?
- Do you think the structure is beneficial? Please explain.
- Could you please describe the structure available at the district level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs?
- Do you think the structure is beneficial? Please explain.

SECTION F: Teaching strategies and their effectiveness

- Which are the teaching methods teachers use in their lessons to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs? Could you please explain why they use them?
- Could you please describe how teachers in your district plan their lessons? Why do they approach planning in this way?
- Please tell me what kinds of approach teachers use to assess learners? Why do they use this approach?
- Please describe learners' examination results in your district?

Materials used by teachers

- What type of teaching materials do the teachers in your district use to ensure the inclusion of learners with special education needs? Who provides these teaching materials?
- How would you describe the availability of textbooks and other teaching materials for implementing inclusive education? Are the materials adequate for the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs? Please explain further.
- How would you describe the quality of textbooks for implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs?
- To what extent do shortages of teaching materials affect the teaching and learning in inclusive classrooms?
- What is the contribution of parents in terms of buying learning materials for their children?
- What are your suggestions on provision of adequate teaching and learning materials which could assist in implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs?

SECTION G: Support mechanisms available for teachers

- Could you please explain how school heads or the deputy is supporting the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs in schools? Do you think the support they give is adequate? Please explain?
- What support do schools get from the departmental district officials in the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs? Is the support adequate? Please explain further.

SECTION H: Monitoring strategies for implementing inclusion

- How do you monitor the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs in schools?
- Please explain how you as a district official monitor the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs in your district? Are the monitoring mechanisms beneficial? In what ways?

Study of implementation of inclusion policy for learners with special education needs in primary schools in Fort Beaufort, 2013

Kindly answer all questions as honestly as you can.

1.1 Gender: female male

1.3. Single Married Widow

1.4 Highest professional qualification

Any other? Please specify.....

1 -5 years 6 -10 years 11 + years

TOPIC: IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSION POLICY FOR LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE FORT BEAUFORT EDUCATION DISTRICT.

SECTION B: The relevant training for teachers

- What qualification is required for teachers to implement inclusive education for learners with special education needs? Do teachers in your province have these qualifications? If not, to what extent do their qualifications vary from what is officially required?
- What level of professional training did teachers in your province receive that enables them to implement inclusion of learners with special education needs?
- How related is the course content to what teachers are now implementing? Please explain further.
- Which other training programmes are provided to improve your performance of implementing inclusive education? How do you find such programmes?

SECTION C: Implementation of inclusive education

- What do you understand by the term “barriers to learning”?
- How do you feel about having learners with special education needs in schools?
- How have you been supporting learners with barriers to learning in schools?
- How have teachers in your schools been adapting the content and pedagogy to ensure it meets the needs of all learners?
- Please explain how learners have benefited from the lessons teachers teach
- Do you think it is a good thing that inclusion of learners with special education needs is included as part of the school curriculum? Why? Why not?
- What are the potential benefits of inclusion of learners with special education needs? Please explain if you think the learners in province are enjoying these benefits?

- In your experience, what challenges do teachers encounter in implementing inclusion for learners with special education needs? Could you explain why they experience these difficulties?
- What other challenges are you aware of that teachers' experience?
- Are you satisfied with the way inclusion of learners with special education needs is implemented, in general? Please explain why you are satisfied/not satisfied.
- How would you advise that the teacher(s) should implement it? What would you recommend that teacher(s) should do differently?
- What are parents' perceptions of/ attitudes towards inclusion of learners with special education needs? How do they show this?

SECTION D: Structures for implementation

- Do your schools have a policy in place to cater for special needs in line with education white paper 6? Please explain.
- Could you please describe the structure available at the school level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs?
- Do you think the structure is beneficial? Please explain.
- Could you please describe the structure available at the district level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs?
- Do you think the structure is beneficial? Please explain.
- Could you please describe the structure available at the province level to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs? Do you think the structure is beneficial? Please explain.

SECTION E: Teaching strategies and their effectiveness

- Which are the teaching methods teachers use in their lessons to ensure inclusion of learners with special education needs? Could you please explain why they use them?
- Could you please describe how teachers in your province plan their lessons? Why do they approach planning in this way?
- Please tell me what kinds of approach teachers use to assess learners? Why do they use this approach?

- Please describe learners' examination results in your province?

SECTION F: Materials used by teachers

- What type of teaching materials do the teachers in your district use to ensure the inclusion of learners with special education needs? Who provides these teaching materials?
- How would you describe the availability of textbooks and other teaching materials for implementing inclusive education? Are the materials adequate for the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs? Please explain further.
- How would you describe the quality of textbooks for implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs?
- To what extent do shortages of teaching materials affect the teaching and learning in inclusive classrooms?
- What is the contribution of parents in terms of buying learning materials for their children?
- What are your suggestions on provision of adequate teaching and learning materials which could assist in implementing inclusion of learners with special education needs?

SECTION G: Support mechanisms available for teachers

- Could you please explain how school heads or the deputy is supporting the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs in schools? Do you think the support they give is adequate? Please explain?
- What support do schools get from the departmental district officials in the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs? Is the support adequate? Please explain further.
- What support do schools get from the provincial education officials in the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs? Is the support adequate? Please explain further.

SECTION H: Monitoring strategies for implementing inclusion

- Could you please explain how school heads or the deputy monitors the implementation of inclusive education for learners with special education needs in schools? Are the monitoring mechanisms beneficial? Please explain
- Please explain how you as the district officials monitor the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs in your district? Are the monitoring mechanisms beneficial? In what ways?
- How do you monitor the implementation of inclusion of learners with special education needs in schools? Are the monitoring mechanisms beneficial? Please explain.