

Masters of Education
at the
University of the Witwatersrand

Title:

**An investigation of Foundation Phase teachers' classroom practices to
promote student engagement as an inclusive pedagogy.**

Name: Skye Mac Arthur
Protocol Number: 2016ECE036M
Student Number: 557263
Date of Submission: 13 March 2017
Supervisor: Ms Lauren Rembach

Declaration

I, Skye Mac Arthur, declare that this research report entitled “**An investigation of Foundation Phase teachers’ classroom practice’s to promote student engagement as an inclusive pedagogy**”, is my independent work. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at this or any other university.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Skye Mac Arthur', is written above a horizontal line.

Skye Mac Arthur

Date

Acknowledgements

My sincerest thanks must go out to my Mom and Dad for affording me this incredible opportunity to do my masters and thank you for your belief in me and knowing that I could do it! Clara and Lia thank you for supporting me throughout this process – it means the world to me! I am so appreciative for all that my family has done for me, you were my rocks and support from the very beginning. I love you all!

Lauren Rembach, my most incredible supervisor who supported me from the very beginning! You have been so unbelievably patient, you have given up your time and most importantly you have given me your support and I cannot say thank you enough!

Key Words:

Student engagement; inclusive practice; inclusive education; inclusive pedagogy; foundation phase; barriers to learning

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

CHAPTER ONE	10
INTRODUCTION	10
1.1 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY	10
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT	12
1.3 RATIONALE AND MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY	12
1.4 PURPOSE STATEMENT	14
1.4.1 AIM OF THE RESEARCH	14
1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	14
1.6 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH	15
1.7 CONCLUSION	15
CHAPTER TWO	16
LITERATURE REVIEW	16
2.1 INTRODUCTION	16
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	17
2.2 DEFINING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	17
2.2.1 INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY	19
2.2.2 INCLUSIVE PRACTICE	19
2.3 HISTORY OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION; INTERNATIONAL APPROACH	20
2.3.1 MEDICAL MODEL	21
FIGURE 1	23
2.3.2 ECOSYSTEMIC THEORY	22
FIGURE 2	24
2.3.3 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION WITHIN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT	24
2.4 CHANGE IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM: TRANSFORMATION	26
2.4.1 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE CURRENT SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLING CONTEXT	27
2.5 INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY	28
FIGURE 3	30
2.6 OVERVIEW OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT	30
2.7 DEFINING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT	31
2.7.1 WIDER SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT	33
2.8. DIMENSIONS OF ENGAGEMENT	34
FIGURE 4	36
2.8.1 EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT	36
2.8.2 BEHAVIOURAL ENGAGEMENT	37
2.8.3 COGNITIVE ENGAGEMENT	37
2.8.4 PHYSICAL ENGAGEMENT	38
2.8.5 SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT	38
2.8.6 CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT	39

2.9 THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS:	39
2.9.1 TEACHER EDUCATION FOR INCLUSION	39
2.9.2 TEACHERS' ATTITUDES	40
2.9.3 CURRICULUM DIFFERENTIATION:	41
2.8.4 LESSON PLANS	43
2.9 CONCLUSION	44
CHAPTER THREE	46
METHODOLOGY	46
3.1 INTRODUCTION	46
3.2.1 OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	46
3.2.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	46
3.2.1 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH	47
3.2.2 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	47
3.3 CASE STUDY	48
3.4 SAMPLING STRATEGIES	49
3.5 SELECTION OF THE PARTICIPANTS	49
FIGURE 5	50
FIGURE 6	50
FIGURE 7	51
FIGURE 8	51
FIGURE 9	52
FIGURE 10	52
3.6. DATA COLLECTION	53
3.6.1 SURVEY	54
3.6.2 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS	56
3.6.3 LESSON OBSERVATION	57
3.6.4 OBSERVATION CHECKLIST	57
3.6.5 POST – OBSERVATION INTERVIEW	59
3.7 DATA ANALYSIS	59
3.7.1 QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS	59
3.8 DESIGN AND LIMITATIONS	60
3.9 CREDIBILITY	60
3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	60
3.10.1 INFORMED CONSENT	61
3.10.2 FREEDOM FROM HARM	61
3.10.3 PRIVACY	61
3.10.4 VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION	62
3.11 CONCLUSION	62
CHAPTER FOUR	63
DATA ANALYSIS	63
4.1. INTRODUCTION	63
4.2. BACKGROUND	63
4.3. CONTEXT OF THE STUDY	64

4.4 THEME ONE: PROMOTING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT THROUGH MOTIVATING LEARNERS	65
4.4.1 PROMOTING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN THE CLASSROOM	65
FIGURE 11	66
4.4.2 WHAT IS STUDENT ENGAGEMENT?	67
FIGURE 12	69
FIGURE 13 THE DISPOSITIONS (ADAPTED BY THE RESEARCH FOR USE IN THIS RESEARCH REPORT)	69
4.3 THEME TWO: CONSISTENCY OF CLASSROOM ROUTINES	69
4.3.1 USING PHYSICAL ENGAGEMENT	69
FIGURE 14	70
FIGURE 15	72
4.4 THEME THREE: ASSESSING LEARNERS THROUGH COGNITIVE ENGAGEMENT	72
4.4.1 USING COGNITIVE ENGAGEMENT	72
4.5 THEME FOUR: PROMOTING COOPERATIVE AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING	74
4.5.1 USING SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT	74
4.5.2 COOPERATIVE LEARNING	74
4.5.2.1 PEER TEACHING	76
4.6 THEME FIVE: STIMULATING LEARNERS INTERESTS	77
4.6.1 USING EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT	77
4.6.2 INDIVIDUAL LEARNER NEEDS	79
4.6.2.1 DIFFERENTIATION	80
4.7 THEME SIX: CONSISTENCY OF CLASSROOM ROUTINES	82
4.7.1 USING BEHAVIOURAL ENGAGEMENT	82
4.8 THEME SEVEN: USING THE CLASSROOM CONTEXT	84
4.8.1 USING INCLUSIVE STRATEGIES	84
4.8.2 CLASSROOM CONDITIONS	85
4.8.2.1 TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM	86
4.8.3 REFLECTIONS ON LEARNING FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	89
4.9 CONCLUSION	90
CHAPTER FIVE	91
DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS	91
5.1. INTRODUCTION	91
5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	91
5.3.1 WHICH INCLUSIVE PRACTICES DO TEACHERS USE TO PROMOTE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN THE CLASSROOM CONTEXT?	92
5.3.2 WHAT IS MEANT BY STUDENT ENGAGEMENT?	92
5.3.3 WHICH INCLUSIVE PRACTICES ARE IMPLEMENTED IN THE CLASSROOM TO PROMOTE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT?	93
5.3.4 HOW DO TEACHERS CONSIDER STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN LESSON PLANNING AND PRESENTATION IN THEIR CLASSROOM?	93
5.4 TABLE PRESENTING THE FINDINGS	94
5.5 CONCLUSION	97
CHAPTER SIX	98
CONCLUSION	98
6.1. INTRODUCTION	98

6.2 METHODOLOGY	98
6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS	99
6.4 STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	99
6.5 CONCLUSION	100
REFERENCE LIST	100
APPENDICES	110
APPENDIX 1: ONLINE SURVEY	110
APPENDIX 2: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE	111
APPENDIX 3: OBSERVATION CHECKLIST	112
APPENDIX A: INFORMATION SHEET FOR PRINCIPAL	117
APPENDIX B: INFORMATION SHEET FOR SGB CHAIRPERSON	121
APPENDIX C: INFORMATION SHEET FOR TEACHER	122
APPENDIX D: INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS (LEARNERS)	126
APPENDIX E: INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENTS / GUARDIAN / CAREGIVER	129
APPENDIX F: INFORMATION SHEET FOR TEACHERS TO COMPLETE ONLINE SURVEY	131
FIELD NOTES	136

Glossary

Inclusion:

Inclusion looks at all learners and not only children with disabilities (mental or physical) but rather sets out ways to respond to all learners' diverse needs (Florian, 2011, p. 13).

Inclusive Education:

There is more to inclusive practices than just integrating learners. The purpose of inclusive education is to guarantee that each learner has access to education and to achieve his/her absolute potential in school (Florian, 2011, p. 11).

Inclusive Pedagogy:

Inclusive Pedagogy is an alternative approach to the traditional approach of teaching - its focus sets out to improve the quality of education for everybody in the main-stream schooling system. This should improve the inequality in schools for learners, as teachers implement inclusive pedagogical practices which allow for all children to be taught in a safe environment and opportunities are afforded to all. It offers an approach intended to promote a culture of accommodating all, using diverse teaching strategies (Florian, 2015).

Student Engagement

Student Engagement refers to the amount of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught at school, and this extends to the level of enthusiasm and motivation to learn and progress in their schooling career (Lawson & Lawson, 2013).

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Overview of the study

The objective for South African education is for all children to have access to basic education. Statistics have shown that of all children (18 620 000 in total) aged between 7 and 17, in South Africa, only 12 883 888 attend school. This means that 573 6112 children do not attend school. It can therefore be concluded that roughly 97% of children attended school in 2013 (Department of Basic Education, 2015; Hall & Da Lannoy, 2015; Hall & Meintjies, 2015). The concept of Education for All (EFA) being incorporated in schools, globally, has resulted in accountability to provide a basic education to all children (UNESCO, 1990). EFA is strongly set out in the Inclusive Education forum, which aims to include all learners to participate in the classroom and within the education system (Florian, 2012; Ainscow, Booth, & Dyson, 2006). The South African Constitution has united with most parts of the world with introducing EFA into the policies of Basic Education. This is to make sure that social justice is delivered to all South Africans (DoE, 2011).

South Africa joined the move towards Inclusive Education when *White Paper Six: Special Needs Education* (DoE, 2001) was legislated as policy. The White Paper 6 policy document argues that teachers play a crucial role in building an inclusive culture in the classroom (DoE, 2001). Schools in South Africa in the past two decades have become diverse in terms of: gender, race, social class, religions, cultural orientations and/or ethnicity; therefore, akin to international descriptions of inclusion. This move towards more inclusive contexts relies on a commitment of the teacher to create an inclusive environment as is evident in international studies regarding inclusive education (Florian & Spratt, 2013). Inclusive education comprises of many facets; it is more than a focus on inclusive practices which talk to integrating learners with varying needs and abilities into the classroom. The purpose of inclusive education is to guarantee that each learner has access to education and achieve his/her absolute potential in school (Ainscow, Booth & Dyson, 2006). Scholarship by researchers in the field, such as Florian (2015), Black Hawkins (2011) and Lawson and Lawson (2013) have argued that teachers need to support learners in achieving their potential. Many have argued that

inclusive education is about minimising barriers to learning. Florian & Spratt (2013), Black-Hawkins (2011) and Florian, Young and Rouse (2010) have suggested, from research conducted with teachers, that attention needs to be paid to planning for inclusive pedagogies that focus on the notion of planning for all learners in the classroom, rather than focusing on some. Thus teachers apply their knowledge, expertise, skills, values and attitudes relating to how they plan for an inclusive environment to develop, which affords for learning opportunities to occur for all learners in the classroom (Florian & Spratt, 2013; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011). In the majority of South African classrooms today, there is a wide range of diversity. In order for teachers to navigate these realities in the classroom they require adequate knowledge and skills of inclusive pedagogies to use in their classrooms so as to meet the needs of all learners (Florian & Spratt, 2013).

The researcher has chosen to foreground the concept of student engagement in this research study. This study investigated whether a focus on student engagement could be used as an inclusive pedagogy to minimise barriers to learning. According to Lawson and Lawson (2013) student engagement can promote access and participation for all in the classroom. South Africa has its own set of numerous factors that hinder implementation of inclusive education, such as: large classes and lack of knowledge about inclusive education which results in teachers feeling that they are disempowered and not able to teach inclusively (Stofile, 2008). Therefore, this research hopes to create an awareness of promoting student engagement into the classroom as an inclusive strategy.

Student engagement is a way of implementing inclusive education in the classroom, as it is a way of accessing participation for learners. As the learning aspects in South Africa are diverse and learners have various learning needs, student engagement may be the necessary strategy to use in the South African context. This research therefore investigates one aspect of inclusive education, namely, student engagement. The research conducted used Lawson and Lawson's 4 ABC Dispositions (2013), to investigate whether student engagement promoted the implementation of inclusive pedagogy in classrooms.

1.2 Problem Statement

To promote inclusive pedagogy in diverse classrooms, teachers need to develop teaching strategies that are efficient in order to minimise the barriers learners encounter in the classroom. In addition, there is a need for teachers to have a sound knowledge of planning lessons and activities that promote student engagement during lessons, to promote inclusive practices that cater for most learners. Teachers, both nationally and internationally, have expressed that they feel underequipped to be pedagogically responsive to the diverse needs of learners (Florian, 2011; Forlin, 2010; Walton & Lloyd, 2012). Furthermore, many teachers have conveyed that they do not know how to support learners with diverse learning needs (Forlin, 2010). There is a need to investigate the extent to which teachers can best be equipped to employ inclusive pedagogical strategies in their classroom practices (Florian, 2011). Thus, teacher education for inclusion has been under scrutiny with questions posed about teachers' preparedness for inclusive education in the classroom.

Despite postgraduate courses being offered in inclusive education at several South African Universities there have been limited studies investigating whether the graduates of these courses could implement inclusive pedagogy and practices in their classrooms. Currently there are limited studies in South Africa with a focus on student engagement to promote student engagement as an inclusive practice. The importance of teachers' understanding of student engagement to promote inclusive practice cannot be overlooked.

1.3 Rationale and Motivation for the Study

Ainscow (2008), emphasises the "subtle forms of segregation" that can occur within an integrated system of education (Ainscow, 2008, p.8). Ainscow (1999) argues that even in inclusive environments, from the best efforts put in place by the teachers, learners who feel excluded or experience barriers in participation can be regarded as "hidden voices" (Ainscow as cited in Ainscow, 2008, p.7). The idea behind this research study was to investigate whether teachers could use student engagement as part of an inclusive practice in the diverse classroom. This study focused on how, if at all, the teachers used inclusive strategies in the classroom to promote student engagement. According to Lawson and Lawson (2013) and Reeves (2012), without the promotion of student engagement from the teachers, the learners in the classroom lack motivation to complete tasks and this makes for an unpleasant schooling

career. Learners who do not feel as they belong in the classroom may develop difficulties “such as lack of motivation, self-confidence and social relationships” (Davis & Florian, 2004, p. 18). As support is a “necessary component of successful inclusive education practices” (Florian, 2015, p. 12), it is important to understand the notion of learning support in schools that support the idea of inclusion (teachers, headmaster and/or headmistress) (Lomofsky as cited in Donohue and Bornman, 2014, p.5). If there is no or very little support behind the idea of inclusion in schools, the school will fail to cater for all learners. The focus of this study was primarily concentrated on the teachers’ use of student engagement in their inclusive classroom and how all learners were engaged in the lesson.

Data was collected from a small-scale survey, followed up by a classroom observation viewing the participant strategies by promoting student engagement and finally, a pre-and-post semi-structured interview reflecting upon how the lesson went. All the teacher participants who were selected for this research study had completed an Inclusive Education Post-Graduate Course at a University in South Africa. The researcher wanted to identify whether, according to the teacher participants, the course had helped or prepared them in any way to promote inclusive strategies such as student engagement in the classroom. Within the South African context, a roundtable discussion was planned by the *Human Sciences and Research Council and Disabled People of South Africa*, in the year of 2006, where the need for research for teacher education within the field of inclusion was recognised (Walton & Lloyd, 2012). This roundtable discussion discovered, in particular, that prior research contributions for teacher education had focused primarily on teacher’s attitudes, and how teachers are inefficiently prepared to implement inclusion into practice (Lorenzo & Schneider as cited in Walton & Lloyd, 2012). This portrays the need for research to be conducted in evaluating the delivery of programmes, to determine what teachers need to know in order to engage in inclusive practices (Florian, 2012; Walton & Lloyd, 2012) in the classroom. Recognising that there is little research known about promoting student engagement to respond and support the diversity of learners in their classes, the researcher decided that there is a need for research in South Africa to explore and describe how teachers use their understanding, experience and knowledge of student engagement to promote inclusive practices in the context of diverse classrooms.

1.4 Purpose Statement

In developing the framework outline for the study, the purpose of this research was to identify if teachers, who have a post-graduate degree with an option in inclusive education, could promote student engagement in their diverse classrooms.

1.4.1 Aim of the Research

The researcher investigated if teachers who have a postgraduate degree, with an inclusive education as an option, are in fact able to promote student engagement as an inclusive pedagogy to cater for all students in the classroom. The researcher investigated whether the teachers could promote student engagement as an inclusive practice. The researcher selected student engagement as the focus of the research study, as student engagement is a practice that calls for emphasis on creating a classroom environment where all learners are provided with access and participation. The research sought to investigate whether student engagement was promoted in the lessons observed in the teachers' lesson delivery and whether engaging students in the various activities observed promoted inclusive practices.

1.5 Research Questions

Main Question:

Which inclusive practices do teachers use to promote student engagement in the classroom context?

Sub-Questions:

1.6.1 What is meant by student engagement?

1.6.2 Which Inclusive practices are implemented in the classroom to promote student engagement?

1.6.3 How is student engagement considered in lesson planning and presentation?

1.6 Overview of the Research

Chapter One provides the introduction to the study. It comprises of the problem statement, the main research questions and sub-questions and discusses the aims of the research. Chapter Two introduces the conceptual framework of the study and the concepts relating to inclusive education and student engagement using Florian (2013) and Lawson and Lawson (2013). Furthermore, it analyses the current scholarship on inclusive education, student engagement and inclusive pedagogy. Chapter Three comprises of the methodology and research design which is a qualitative case study. It contains information regarding how the data was collected from the seven teachers that the researcher observed and interviewed, how the data was analysed - the researcher used a thematic coding approach - the limitations of the data findings and lastly, in the chapter, the researcher discussed the ethical considerations for the research design. Chapter Four investigates the data analysis of this empirical study. Chapter Five presents the findings and discussion and Chapter Six provides the conclusion and discusses the limitations and recommendations.

1.7 Conclusion

The empirical research study will set out to explore how teachers are able to promote student engagement in the classroom using inclusive practices. The following chapter will give an overview of the literature (inclusive education and student engagement).

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Most countries have adopted inclusive education in their unique contexts. Each country has its own perspective and definition of inclusive education, which is based on the country's history, economy, values and traditions. Throughout the world, inclusive education is seen increasingly as a strategy for achieving 'Education for all' (EFA) which is a global commitment to ensuring that all children are granted access to and are provided with quality education (UNESCO, 1990). Social justice and equity is promoted (Florian, Young & Rouse, 2010; Loreman, 2010) in both rich and poor countries (Forlin, 2010) to achieve EFA.

Inclusive education has been introduced into schools to allow all children (regardless of race, gender, culture, religion or language) the access to learn, promoting social justice and equity (Florian, Young & Rouse, 2010; Loreman, 2010).

The South African definition focuses on "human rights, non-discrimination and support" (Chingangwana, 2015, p. 1). In 1994, South Africa became a democratic country, with changes that were initiated with the intention of developing an equitable society (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). This entailed engaging in the process of transforming political, social, economic and educational agendas (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). Prior to 1994, during apartheid, segregation and inequalities were perpetuated, which determined learners' access to education according to race and was extended to dis/ability (DoE, 2001; Donohue & Bornman, 2014). However, through the changes that were made, the constitution of South Africa now enforces that all children have the right of admission and equal access to a basic education (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). In response to the education system prior to 1994, and the democratic principles of the South African constitution, *White Paper Six: Special Needs Education Building an Inclusive Education and Training System, Education for All*, the *Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education* (DoE, 2001; UNESCO, 1994) was published with the commitment of providing equitable learning opportunities to all. Consequently, the

policy was identified as a “post-apartheid landmark”, being used to address all individuals who were historically disadvantaged and experienced exclusion (DoE, 2001, p.4).

Conceptual Framework

2.2 Defining inclusive education

There are differently contested views of how inclusion is defined in the field of inclusive education. Historically, the first steps in the inclusive education movement, promoted the value for radical change in schooling through protesting; however, inclusion has now been used to explain and protect the status quo (Graham & Slee, 2006). “Definitions may be either descriptive (how inclusion is used in practice) or prescriptive (how we use and how we want others to use the concept”) (Ainscow, Booth & Dyson, 2006, P. 14). Inclusion is not always well defined and is often misrepresented as being about disability (Oliver, 1996). Inclusion is about education for all students. It is about removing barriers to access and participation for marginalised groups, such as learners with special needs, and any who may be at risk of exclusion or underachievement (Ainscow & Miles, 2008).

A common misperception is that inclusive education requires a child (who is being ‘included’) to change or adjust to fit within a school setting (Ainscow, Booth & Dyson, 2006). According to Cologon (2013), it has been argued that definitions of inclusion are too broad, which pave the way for the problematic ambiguity of what inclusive education actually is. She states that “narrow definitions of inclusion typically focus on inclusion of one group, while broader definitions focus on diversity and inclusion of all children” (Cologon, 2013, p.13). In narrow service- education then, it is predetermined and prefixed with what the teacher must teach and what the learner must learn. However, in the broader sense of education it is not fixed, rather flexible and the teacher looks at each learner as an individual, developing knowledge, skills and experiences for the development for the whole child (Sharma, 2013).

Inclusive education calls for all learners with diverse needs to be active participants in the classroom, as one of the purposes of practicing an inclusive classroom is to have active participation of all learners. Thus, it is the teacher’s responsibility to adapt and adjust school procedures, practices, policies and culture (Ainscow & Miles, 2008). Implementing inclusive

practice into schools requires that all diverse learners are given the required support and that resources are provided for everyone (Slee, 2011). The United Nations has promoted that countries need to “provide for the basic learning needs of all people, both children and adults, because education is a human right with intrinsic value” (Florian, 2014 P. 11). This right tries to promote equality within society to reduce poverty and raise the hope to increase success (Florian, 2014). Implementing Inclusive Pedagogy (see definition 2.6) does not diminish the need for specialist expertise (Florian, 2004). Research has shown that implementing specialised pedagogies (special schools with specially trained teachers use a particular curriculum) has marginalised and further excluded children who have experienced difficulties (Lewis & Norwich, 2005 as cited in Ainscow, 2011). Therefore, inclusive pedagogy involves current arrangements in the classroom for everyone (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011).

According to Artiles, Kozleski and Waitoller (2011) the core agenda of inclusive education is a commitment to building a more just society and a unified, more equitable education system by creating schools that are more responsive to learner diversity which provide equal education opportunities for all learners. Inclusive education also gives the opportunity for learners to learn and work together in a co-operative environment (Pantic` & Florian, 2015).

Inclusive education is an educational practice that gives all learners and stakeholders the opportunity to participate in the education system (Landsberg, 2013). It is a practice that seeks to implement equal educational opportunities and strives to achieve success for all learners. Inclusive education is a process of reducing barriers to participation and learning for all (Pantic` & Florian, 2015). Regarding learners with impairments (visual, hearing, learning disabilities), it includes access to appropriate aids and adequate support services, adequately prepared teachers, individualised programs with appropriately differentiated curriculum and assessment practices in a single education system (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2007). According to Nieuwenhuis (2007), inclusive education is committed to educate each learner to their highest appropriate level. It also involves providing support services to learners from their teachers in the education system (Ainscow, Booth & Dyson, 2006). When examining inclusion, there is a necessity for there to be a greater understanding of exclusion (Ainscow & Miles, 2008). Graham and Slee (2006) state that the focus of inclusive education should not be about transitioning a move towards inclusion, but should rather be to identify ways to eliminate exclusion, separation and oppression. Exclusion was formally referred to as focusing

on the removal of learners according to their misbehaviour (Ainscow & Miles, 2008). However, within inclusive education, exclusion refers to inequalities of social, cultural and economic relations that hinder learners from having fair or full participatory attendance, and access to schooling (Kearney, 2011; Ainscow & Miles, 2008). These social, cultural and economic relations can be notably identified as the accessibility to understanding the curriculum, social interactions amongst peers, resources, participating in extracurricular activities, or suitable learning styles (Booth as cited in Kearney, 2011).

2.2.1 Inclusive Pedagogy

In understanding inclusive pedagogy, teachers need to know, do and believe that they can teach inclusively and support all learners' needs (Rouse, 2008). Inclusive pedagogy pertains to teachers making purposeful decisions that incorporate dynamic practices and learning styles, multicultural content, and varied means of assessment, with the goal of promoting student academic success, as well as social, cultural, and physical well-being in their practices, to respond to the differences amongst the learners (Pantic & Florian, 2015). This would provide opportunities for all to participate actively and achieve their optimal capabilities (Florian & Linklater, 2013). Teacher's decisions are often guided by the assumptions of the bell curve model of thinking. This understanding identifies the normative centre of where children's intelligence, performance or abilities occur (Fendler & Muzaffar, 2008; Florian, 2013). If the child's abilities are below the expectations of the norm, additional support is provided to help aid the child in their learning (Florian & Spratt, 2013; Hart, 1998; Fendler & Muzaffar, 2008). However, inclusive pedagogy upholds the beliefs that additional support should be made available to all learners, instead of providing individualised intervention for one child. This results in attention being drawn to the child's differences and the child then being labelled according to ability. (Florian & Spratt, 2013; Florian & Linklater, 2010).

2.2.2 Inclusive Practice

Inclusive practice is an approach to teaching that recognises the diversity of students, enabling all students to access course content, fully participate in learning activities and demonstrate their knowledge and strengths at assessment. Inclusive practice values the diversity of the student body as a resource that enhances the learning experience (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011). "Although knowledge about human differences is important (a student

who is an English language learner is different from a student who has been diagnosed as having autism; a six year old is different from a 10 year old, and so on), whatever can be known about a particular category of learners will be limited in the educational purposes it can serve, because the variations between members of a group make it difficult to predict or evaluate provision for each of the individuals within a group” (Florian, 2014, p. 5). According to Florian (2014), being in an inclusive environment should consist of a pedagogical approach to teaching and learning that supports teachers, enabling them to respond to individual differences between learners, but should avoid the marginalising that can occur when some learners are treated differently” (Florian, 2014).

2.3 History of Inclusive Education; International Approach

With education being viewed as a human right, countries were urged by the global initiative of Education for All (EFA) in 1990, to ensure the provision of the educational success of all children, youth and adults (UNESCO, 1990). Following shortly thereafter, 92 governments across the world, congregated together in 1994 at a World Conference on Special Needs Education in Salamanca, Spain (UNESCO, 1994). As a by-product of the world conference, the *Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education* (UNESCO, 1994) was produced, which stipulated that an inclusive schooling environment would allow for the provision of achieving education for all (UNESCO, 1994). From the conference proceedings, a call was made for all governments to implement a policy for inclusive education (UNESCO, 1994). Acknowledging the agenda for inclusion in 2001, South Africa demonstrated commitment through the publishing of *White Paper Six: Special Needs Education Building an Inclusive Education and Training System* (DoE, 2001).

According to Barnes and Mercer (2013) historically, in some cultures, a child born with an impairment was seen as some form of punishment or curse on a family and the parents hid the child from the community. Oliver (1996) states that the social and medical model have conflicting definitions for terminology in inclusion. The child was not given the same opportunities as the others in the community and were excluded from schooling as they were incapable of benefiting from receiving an education; however, during the 19th Century these children started to be accommodated and accepted within the schooling system (Barnes & Mercer, 2013). Children with impairments were conceptualised in several ways, which are

referred to as discourses. The most common ones are the medical, charity and rights discourses (Engelbrecht & Green, 2001). Each of these discourses constructs impairment (degree of either physically or mentally weak) differently (Oliver, 1996).

By adapting to the policy of inclusive education, South Africa (which will be elaborated upon in 2.3.3) was also responding to one of the major international documents that affirmed the principle of inclusive education and the importance of moving towards schools for all. This document is commonly known as the Salamanca Statement. The Salamanca Statement was agreed upon in Spain by 92 states and 25 international institutions. The statement postulates that all learners must be considered in ordinary schools, despite their impairments (UNESCO, 1994).

When looking at the move towards inclusive education it is important to consider the two predominant models that shaped the way in which researchers viewed the most effective means of minimizing exclusionary barriers. The one model namely, the medical model I, viewed the child as an object needing fixing or remediation. The second, the ecosystemic or social model considered the social context as the focus to assist and support the child. These two models will now be discussed.

2.3.1 Medical Model

The medical discourse has existed since the 1950s. According to Barnes and Mercer (2013) the medical discourse conceptualises difficulties in learning as arising from deficits in the neurological make-up of the child. It regards children with impairments as 'abnormal' people, who need special attention from specialists, who can fix the abnormality (Barnes & Mercer, 2013). These specialists assess and categorise these impairments to determine the type of education learners require. Those who need special education are labelled and placed in special schools away from regular schools and society (Skidmore, 2004).

The medical model also assumes that the child's intellectual capacity can be measured and remains fixed (Engelbrecht & Green, 2007) as seen in Figure 1 (DuPree, 2011). Engelbrecht and Green (2001) assert that the medical discourse considers impairment to be an abnormal and irremediable condition that requires treatment by 'normal' experts. Impairment is thought to be a natural and not remediable characteristic of a person; thus, those with

impairments must be excluded from regular schools and referred to special schools (Chingangwana, 2015). As a critique of the medical deficit model, the social model of disability was developed. The social model's ideologies no longer focus on the deficits of the child, but rather, attention is placed on how the teacher can strategies through the collaboration of the community, parents, or learners to provide support to the child's learning. Many early conceptualizations of inclusion were based on medical model theories and ideas that spoke to segregating learners and proposed the importance of special education with specialist teachers or experts to deal with learners who were categorised and labelled (Barnes & Mercer, 2013). A prerequisite for this model is for teachers to be aware of what factors may be contributing to impeding children's learning. This requires teachers to be aware that children do not develop in isolation, but are influenced by educational and social situations that occur within their contexts (Florian & Linklater, 2010).

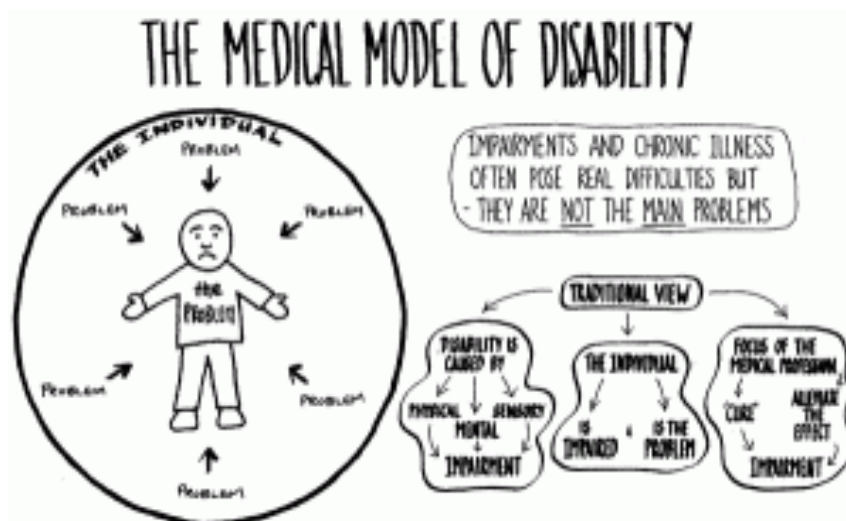


Figure 1 (DuPree, 2011, p. 1)

2.3.2 Ecosystemic Theory

According to Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic theory (1992), the development of individuals is influenced by the interrelated and interdependent systems that are interacting within the society (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2010). The ecosystemic theory comprises of five systems that can directly or indirectly influence the child, as seen in Figure 2 (Donald et al, 2010). The first system is the microsystem, which identifies the proximal interactions with which the child

engages, for example friends, family or peers. The mesosystem is a collection of microsystems, which are mutually reciprocal. The exosystem is the referral to elements that one is protected from, which may inevitably have a negative or positive effect. This is the community system, with which the child is not personally involved, but still impacts the child's well-being. The macrosystem consists of the beliefs, values and practices that influence and impact other systems. Lastly, the chronosystem entails how the lapse of time influences the individual and changes that occur within the nested systems (Donald et al, 2010). Understanding what is influencing the child can therefore allow for teachers to strategise how they can provide support to what may be impeding the child's learning. In an inclusive context, this theory proposed by Bronfenbrenner changed the way in which people thought about learners with barriers and provided a more inclusive lens with which to regard the child in his/her totality and not categorise and label according to a deficit. Here, the child's social context was also taken into account (Donald et al, 2010).

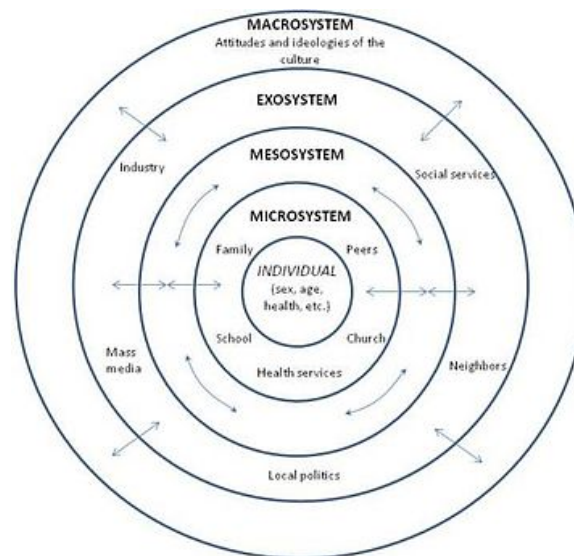


Figure 2 (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2010, p. 43)

In the charity discourse, the recipients of special education were viewed as in need of assistance and as objects of pity. They depended on others all their lives to be looked after and supported (Engelbrecht & Green, 2007). They were underachievers who needed to be institutionalised. The charity discourse encouraged the idea that the non-impaired persons were decision makers on matters affecting the impaired (Barnes & Mercer, 2013).

The rights discourse advocates inclusive education (Engelbrecht & Green, 2007). The

proponents argue that once a child is placed in a special school, the chances of moving to a regular school are slim (Chingangwana, 2015). They advocate a 'zero reject' of every learner in neighbourhood schools. They argue that children with impairments stay in inclusive communities, this implies that they need to attend inclusive schools (Engelbrecht & Green, 2007). *White Paper Six: Special Needs Education Building an Inclusive Education and Training System* (DoE, 2001) took on the commitment to provide equitable learning opportunities to all, as a reaction to the educational structure in South Africa prior to 1994.

2.3.3 Inclusive Education within the South African Context

Nieuwenhuis (2007) states that social transformation is one of the important values of the South African constitution that is central to the discourse of civil rights. After independence, South Africa adopted the principle of democracy in 1994, which paved the way for inclusive education, an appropriate practice needed to achieve social justice (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 recognised diversity and the provision of quality education for all learners within a single system of education (DoE, 2001). The Schools Act also emphasised the principle of quality education for all learners. The constitution of South Africa enforced that all children have the right of admission and equal access to a basic form of education at any school (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). The goal of the South African government was in implementing the policy of inclusion; however, inclusive education does not have significant appeal or influence within the schooling system today. According to Donohoue and Bornman (2014) they recognise that although things have changed over the years, there is still a segregated system where children with disabilities and special education needs attend separate schools. To promote inclusion in schools, we need to make changes in the school infrastructure, we need easy accessibility for children who have disabilities (Walton, Nel, Muller & Lebeloane, 2014).

In 1996, the new South African democratic government introduced an Act: The South African Schools Act No 84 of 1996 that ushered in a new era for special and general education alike. For the first time, black children with impairments were generally enjoying education with no payment in public schools and could get specialised services (Gwalla-Ogisi, Nkabinde & Rodriguez, 1998). According to the Education *White Paper Six: Special Needs Education Building an Inclusive Education and Training System* (DoE, 2001), the government was

determined to create special needs education as a non-racial and integrated component of the South African education system (DoE, 2001).

The arrival of democracy in South Africa in 1994, also witnessed an exciting and challenging process of policy development. Education was no exception, with several new policy documents being developed. These include the Education White Papers on education and policies on higher education, further education and training and inclusive education; however, we use barriers to learning not special needs; hence it functions as contextual barriers. The key transformation goals that underpinned the policy development and implementation process included increased access to education, deeper democracy in education structures and processes and greater equity to redress the numerous inequalities of the past and improve efficiency within the system (DoE, 2001; Naicker, 2005).

As in many developing countries, church and humanitarian organisations were responsible for the establishment of special schools for black people in South Africa before 1994 (Chingangwana, 2015, p. 4). Some learners simply struggled without additional help in ordinary schools. The teachers in such schools were relatively under qualified. Black children with severe impairments were taken care of in clinics and provincial hospitals. Some were staying in residential institutions (Chingangwana, 2015). There were only 35 special schools available for black children before democracy in 1994. These were mostly residential institutions and clinics, which were not sufficient (Nkabinde, 1993). South Africans did not have compulsory and free education for learners with impairments; there was no legislation in place to ensure access to special educational services (Gwalla-Ogisi, Nkabinde and Rodriguez 1998 as cited in Chingangwana, 2015).

Despite the intention of South Africa to implement the policy of inclusion, inclusive education is not prevalent within the schooling system today. Donohue and Bornman (2014) identify that there remains a segregated education system, as children with disabilities and special education needs attend separate schools. For inclusion to be encouraged within schools, changes in school infrastructure need to be made, to allow easy accessibility for children who have disabilities (Walton, Nel, Muller & Lebeloane, 2014). This can also extend to an inclusive culture being encouraged by the school leadership (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). Through the leadership of the school principal, new understandings of diversity can be promoted amongst

teachers, as teachers are encouraged to rethink their teaching practice (Ainscow & Kaplan, 2004; Swart & Pettipher, 2011). However, inclusion can also be dependent on the resources that are provided within the school, such as “time, collaboration, administrative support and ongoing [education]” (Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 22).

2.4 Change in the Education System: Transformation

Mainstreaming entailed segregating children that did not meet the expectations of the norm, placing them into ‘special schools’ (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). Children who previously went to ‘special need schools’ were only allowed to enter back into mainstream schooling if they showed sufficient progress to manage mainstream schooling demands. Adjustments were not made to accommodate learners’ needs (Thomas, Walker & Webb, 1998; Swart & Pettipher, 2011, Donohue and Bornman, 2014). There were changes that occurred within education, resulting in the implementation of integration (Naicker, 2005).

Integration identified the rights of the child to have an education, assigning learners with disabilities and non-disabilities as equal (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). Even with this new establishment of integration, the child was still required to fit into the existing provision of the schooling environment and there were no adjustments made to support the learner (Thomas, Walker & Webb, 1998). The schooling system has changed, adopting inclusion, where the focus has shifted towards providing education for *all* children, irrespective of the disability or impairment (Florian, 2013). With the focus of schooling being on inclusion, the interest taken has been placed on the valuing and acceptance of diversity within the school and in trying to create a community of belonging (Ainscow, Booth & Dyson, 2006).

According to Engelbrecht (2007, 2016) the emphasis of inclusive schools is on building a sense of community where everyone belongs, is accepted, supports and is supported by other members. For an education system to be inclusive it must be able to meet the unique needs of each learner as effectively as possible within schools. Thomas, Walker and Webb (1998) stress clearly that there are four key aspects of inclusion in practice: it is community based, it is barrier free, it promotes collaboration and it promotes equality, which is the ideal for the South African context, due to prior discrimination and segregation from the Apartheid era.

2.4.1 Inclusive Education in the current South African schooling context

Despite the intention of South Africa to implement the policy of inclusion, inclusive education is not dominant within the schooling system today. Within the South African schooling system there is still a divide between abled and disabled learners attending separate schools - mainstream and special need schools - respectively (Donohue & Bornman, 2014). Concerns that schools should become inclusive needs to be met with interventions such as appropriate infrastructure to accommodate children who have disabilities (Walton, Nel, Muller & Lebeloane, 2014), as well as a need to have an inclusive culture (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). Teachers can begin to think differently about diversity when there is implementation of being an inclusive school from the leadership by the principal, the school governing body (SGB) and/or the Department of Education (Naicker, 2005). Although there are many factors that are responsible for implementation of inclusion, *Education White Paper Six* (DoE, 2001) has identified the importance of teachers in creating an inclusive environment. Landsberg (2013) believes that with inclusive education, all learners should receive support and teachers should be fully trained and learners should not be prejudiced due to their disability. Inclusion involves paying attention to all aspects of schooling, which includes curriculum assistance, pedagogy and support. It also involves schools meeting the needs of all learners within their environment and activities (Mitchell, 2005).

Education White Paper Six (DoE, 2001) and its follow up document, the draft policy on Screening, Identification, Assessing and Support (SIAS) have been put into place to provide extra support for learners in order to enhance their participation and inclusion in school. The document has been developed to assist with the transformation of Inclusive Education in schools (DoE, 2014). The SIAS (2014) policy document states that every school should establish a school-based support team which is responsible for provision of learning support, together with the teacher(s), involved learners', teaching and learning. Teachers should be dynamic, competent and innovative in their teaching methods to accommodate the different learning styles of the learner. Learning support can be offered in a holistic way by taking all participants on board (DBE, 2014). Several issues persist that hamper the implementation of inclusive education in South Africa. These include contextual realities such as large classes with 70 plus learners, teachers who feel disempowered, teachers having knowledge of inclusive pedagogical practices, yet working in schools which continue to perpetuate

exclusionary practices (Wilde, 2011). There is a tension between policy and practice (Engelbrecht & Green, 2007). The focus of this study is not located around these contextual realities, but rather on how teachers use student engagement as an inclusive strategy to promote Inclusive Education; however, the issues outlined above may impact on the participation of all learners in the classroom.

2.5 Inclusive Pedagogy

Inclusive pedagogy sets out to replace the traditional approach for teaching, which is usually individualised. It focuses on improving the quality of mainstream education, and the role that school can play in allowing the reduction in inequality of outcomes by implementing practices which allow for all children to be taught in a safe environment where opportunities are afforded to all (Florian, 2015). However, Florian (2015) is not suggesting that individual differences are not important, but rather, suggests expanding mainstream schools to include and accommodate the diversity of learners, in the format of a “shift in thinking about individual differences between learners that focuses on learning as a shared activity” (Florian, 2015, p. 8). This allows for the teacher to support the children who would usually be thought of as different (Florian, 2015). Florian (2015) asserts that the way the teacher responds to individual differences, the pedagogical choices they make and how they utilise their specialised knowledge, is the difference between inclusive approaches as opposed to other pedagogical approaches (Florian, 2015, p. 8).

The Bell Curve image (Figure 3) demonstrates that what is ordinarily available will meet the needs of most learners. This is shown in blue. At either side of the curve, (slower learners who are failing, or the smarter learners who excel) shown in orange and yellow, are learners who may require something additional or different, such as extra worksheets, or time to complete the task (Florian, 2015). This clearly indicates a deficit type of teaching where learners are classified according to ability. The class teacher, in this model, looks at every individual in her classroom and plans a lesson that accommodates all learners to ensure that they can all participate in the lesson, by preparing different activities. But Florian (2015) states that the teacher must consider the needs of her learners, she must not predetermine the learning that is possible by assigning learners to the different options of the activity, and that she should rather allow the learners to choose their own path of learning through their choice

of activities (Florian, 2015, p. 9). By allowing the child to choose his/her activity from a vast range, the teacher will experience a shift in thinking about the way she should teach, and it prevents the teacher from having a bell curve model of thinking – the norm of where children should be intellectually: how s/he performs according to the ability s/he has (Florian, 2013). This is a strong argument for inclusive education practice where there is a move away from deterministic beliefs about the learner. If the child's abilities fall below the expectations of the norm, additional support or help is needed; however, it is advocated that this support is provided for the everyday teaching within the classroom, so that every child is accommodated in the classroom and not removed (Spratt & Florian, 2013).

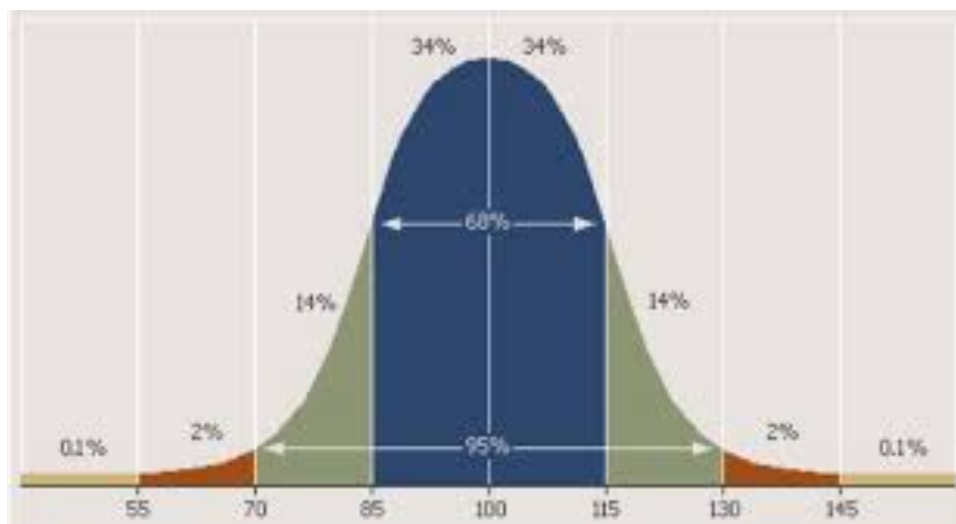


Figure 3 (Florian, 2015, p. 13)

Inclusive pedagogy allows teachers to create environments which provide opportunities for learners to do their best, and make this space accessible for all (Florian, 2010). Diversity within children is seen positively - children can help each other with use of their different experiences - as children work together they share ideas and learning from their interactions with each other (Spratt & Florian, 2013; Florian, 2015). The teacher must think of ways to include everybody in the lesson, and structure ways to enable learners to work together with the children's diverse experiences (Florian, 2015). The inclusive pedagogical approach promotes an open-ended view of each child's potential to learn (Florian, 2015). "Inclusive pedagogy rejects ability labelling, and offers an alternative framework for organising learning" (Spratt & Florian, 2013, p. 135). Strategies such as curriculum differentiation, lesson

plans, content and teaching methods all play a role in the child's learning ability. "Inclusive pedagogy rejects ability labelling, and offers an alternative framework for organising learning" (Spratt & Florian, 2013, p. 135).

2.6 Overview of Student Engagement

The focus on this study is how teachers promote student engagement in the classroom as an inclusive pedagogy and/or practice. I will now discuss student engagement so as to make connections between promoting inclusive practices in classrooms by allowing spaces for learners to engage in learning activities in order to promote participation for all. The origin of Student-Engagement theory was developed in the work of Astin (1984, 1985), Pace (1984), and Kuh and his colleagues (Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, and Associates, 1991; Kuh, Whitt, and Strange, 1989). Although these researchers used different terminology to describe their concepts of student engagement, their views are all based on how learners learn from what they do (Pike & Kuh, 2005). Student engagement is a broad term, often perceived to encompass academic and non-academic features of the learning experience, including active and co-operative learning, or feeling supported by learning communities (Coates, 2007; Hernandez, 2008). Student engagement has primarily and historically focused on the achievement, positive behaviours, and a sense of belonging in students so that they want to remain at school and do well (Taylor & Parsons, 2011) and ultimately receive a matriculation certificate. Student engagement, therefore, has become a need to enable an even the playing field for all learners, no matter their race or socio-economic background. Learners who are disadvantaged are at a higher risk of dropping out of school, hence the need for student engagement to be promoted into the classroom (Taylor & Parsons, 2011). They are disadvantaged learners due to family responsibilities such as family needs, financial income and child-headed households amongst others (Donald, Lazarus, & Lolwana, 2010). Over time, student engagement strategies were further developed and more broadly implemented to manage learners' behaviour in the classroom. Student engagement has been designed around the "hopeful goal of enhancing all students' abilities *to learn how to learn* or to become lifelong learners in a knowledge-based society" (Gilbert, 2007, p. 1) in other words, student engagement aims at creating a hard-working learner in the classroom to become a hard-working citizen in the business world.

The interaction between learners and their teachers may either produce or hinder developmental changes. Pianta, Hamre and Allen (2012) suggest these changes may be to the extent of engaging with the teacher -do they challenge the teacher and/or learner meaningfully - and the kind of support that is provided. In this sense, the relationship between teachers and students reflect a classroom's ability to promote development, and it is precisely in this way that relationships and interactions are the key to understanding engagement (Pianta, Hamre, & Allen, 2012). An important aspect of inclusive classroom practice is to create an environment for learners to enjoy the classroom (where they can relate and engage with their desires and needs – where they feel competent and willing to learn) and where they can see what the benefits are once they have completed school (Pianta, et al, 2012, p. 366).

2.7 Defining Student Engagement

Student Engagement in education refers to the amount of attention, interest, attentiveness, concern, enthusiasm, motivation, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught at school and this spreads to the level of eagerness and motivation to learn and advancement in their schooling journey (Lawson & Lawson, 2013; Reeves, 2012; Education Gloss, 2016). Student Engagement is based on the belief that learning will only improve when learners are curious, interested, motivated, inspired and enthusiastic. Learning experiences tend to suffer when learners are bored, disinterested, dispassionate, and disengaged (Trowler, 2010).

Some student engagement definitions that the researcher has come across have been useful for this research as they have a strong connection to Inclusive Education. “Student engagement is increasingly seen as an indicator of successful classroom instruction; any sustained connection a learner has towards any aspect of learning, schools or education” (Soundout, 2016). Inclusive pedagogy sets out to replace the traditional approach of teaching which is usually individualised. Including diversity allows for teachers to create their own inclusive practices to allow learners to do their best (Florian, 2015).

Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic theory fits well into the following definition of student engagement: “participation in educationally effective practices, both inside and outside the classroom, which leads to a range of measurable outcomes” (Kuh *et al*, 2007). This implies

the taking of the wider school community into consideration as well (Donald et al, 2010). Hu and Kuh (2001, p. 3) define engagement as “the quality of effort students themselves devote to educationally purposeful activities that contribute directly to desired outcomes”. Coates has a similar definition to Hu and Kuh (2001) as Coates (2007, p. 122) describes engagement as “a broad construct intended to encompass salient academic as well as certain non-academic aspects of the student experience,” which demonstrates the learner’s own desired will to engage in the classroom and in the community to do his/her best (Lawson & Lawson, 2013).

Furthermore, The Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE), defines student engagement as “students’ involvement with activities and conditions likely to generate high-quality learning” (Coates, 2009). Student engagement is defined as “the extent to which students are actively involved in a variety of educational activities that are likely to lead to high quality learning” (Coates, 2005, p.26). Student Involvement has been defined by Astin (1984, p. 518) as referring “to the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience”. These definitions all suggest that it is up to the learner to want to be successful in school and in society, regardless of the teacher. The learners need to afford themselves quality time to do their homework and other school related tasks so as to achieve their best.

The way in which Student Engagement has been researched has differed. Some researchers have used procedural and others have used substantive (Astin, Pike and Kuh, Lawson and Lawson) forms of student engagement (Munns & Woodward, 2006). Procedural engagement views learners as being on task, diligent and complying with teachers’ wishes and instructions – the ‘perfect’ learner. Substantive engagement understands that engagement is a sense of satisfaction with, and a psychological investment in the classroom. For this type of engagement the teacher must ask open-ended questions (Munns & Woodward, 2006). Engagement is defined as a multidimensional construct: the overlapping of the cognitive, the affective and the operative at high levels which has made researchers relook at the definition of student engagement. Most definitions of student engagement describe its multifaceted nature, typically thought of as cognitive, emotional or behavioural engagement, suggesting that the learners’ internal processes are important to having a holistic view of engagement (Munns & Woodward, 2006). This suggests that promoting student engagement in the

classroom is a complex task.

2.7.1 Wider School Engagement

In many contexts, *student engagement* may refer to the ways in which school leaders, educators, and other adults might “engage” students more fully to be in control of the decision-making processes in school, in the design of policy, schedules and programs, and learning opportunities, in both their community and school (Taylor & Parsons, 2011). Schools may conduct a survey, where learners can voice their grievances and any other issues they may have. The findings from this survey are then used to adapt the policies already in place which respond to learners’ views and concerns. Learners, too, are able to create their own questions, and those results are shown to the principal or the school board to promote change in the policies of the school. Other schools have another form of ‘learner governance’. There are learner committees, student representative councils, and other informal and formal ways for learners’ voices to be heard. Learners may start an extra-curricular club, volunteer programs and community-service (learners engage and learn through public services)’, learners organise events and constructive protests, presentations, meetings, events, debates and forums which all lead to engaged youth development (Ed Gloss, 2016).

In education, the term *student engagement* has grown in popularity in recent decades, resulting from an increased understanding of the role that certain intellectual, emotional, behavioural, physical, and social factors play in the learning process and social development of the learner. There has been a wide selection of research studies on learning and this has revealed connections between “non-cognitive factors” or “non-cognitive skills” (work habits, motivation, responsibility, self-regulation interest, perseverance, curiosity, determination, attitude and social skills) and “cognitive” learning results (improvement of memory, test marks, academic performance, information recall and skill acquisition). The concept of student engagement occurs when educators discuss or select appropriate teaching techniques and educational strategies that address the developmental, intellectual, emotional, behavioural, physical, and social factors that may either hamper or improve learning for learners (Ed Gloss, 2016; Pianta et al, 2012; Taylor & Parsons, 2011).

I will be using Kuh’s (2001, p. 12) definition of SE for this research project, as I think it epitomises the way in which it can be utilised to promote inclusive pedagogy in the classroom

“Student engagement is defined as students’ involvement in activities and conditions that are linked with high-quality learning. A key assumption is that learning outcomes are influenced by how an individual participates in educationally purposeful activities. While students are seen to be responsible for constructing their own knowledge, learning is also seen to depend on institutions and staff generating conditions that stimulate student involvement”.

It should be noted that educators may hold different views about student engagement, and it may be defined or interpreted differently from person to person and place to place. One school may view engagement to be behaviours such as listening alertly, attending class, participating in classroom discussions, handing work in on time, and following rules, routines and directions from the teacher. While in a different school, the idea of engagement may be understood as the learners’ internal being of interest, enthusiasm, curiosity, joy, optimism or motivation (Ed Gloss, 2016, Walker, 2008).

2.8. Dimensions of Engagement

Implementing inclusive practices into the classroom can promote dimensions of engagement, “engaging students – throughout their educational process has become the greatest challenge facing educators today” (Taylor & Parsons, 2012, p. 6). While the concept of student engagement seems straightforward, it can take complex forms in practice. The following examples of Intellectual or Cognitive Engagement; Active Engagement; Behavioural Engagement; Emotional Engagement; Physical Engagement; Social Engagement and Cultural Engagement, illustrate a few ways in which student engagement may be discussed or addressed in schools (Lawson & Lawson, 2013; Ed Gloss, 2016).

According to Lawson and Lawson (2013), who view student engagement as a “dynamic conception of a *social ecology of engagement*” (p. 441) this view of engagement is seen as a complex set of transactions and interactions with other people in their surrounding social environment. When children have experienced success in school, they aim for that same

feeling (positive reinforcement) within other school activities, tasks, or assessment, and hence, these children love coming to school. However, children who do not experience success at school from early on, may view and experience school differently and this may result in negative connotations – low self-esteem, frustration and some might drop out of school due to a lack of participation and guidance (Lawson & Lawson, 2013).

As seen in Figure 4 below, adapted from Lawson & Lawson, (2013, p. 443) it is demonstrated that the social is linked to the performance of the learners at school. The way each learner interacts with school work, including barriers to learning such as boredom, to successful learning, which moves beyond merely the emotional state of learners, towards the behavioural and cognitive engagement of their identity also (Lawson & Lawson, 2013). On the following pages, I will be expanding on this complex and diverse engagement and view the engagement process holistically for learner purposes. Figure 4 is an adaptation from Lawson and Lawson (2013) which has been developed for my research purposes, by observing if any inclusive pedagogies are being practiced in the classroom.

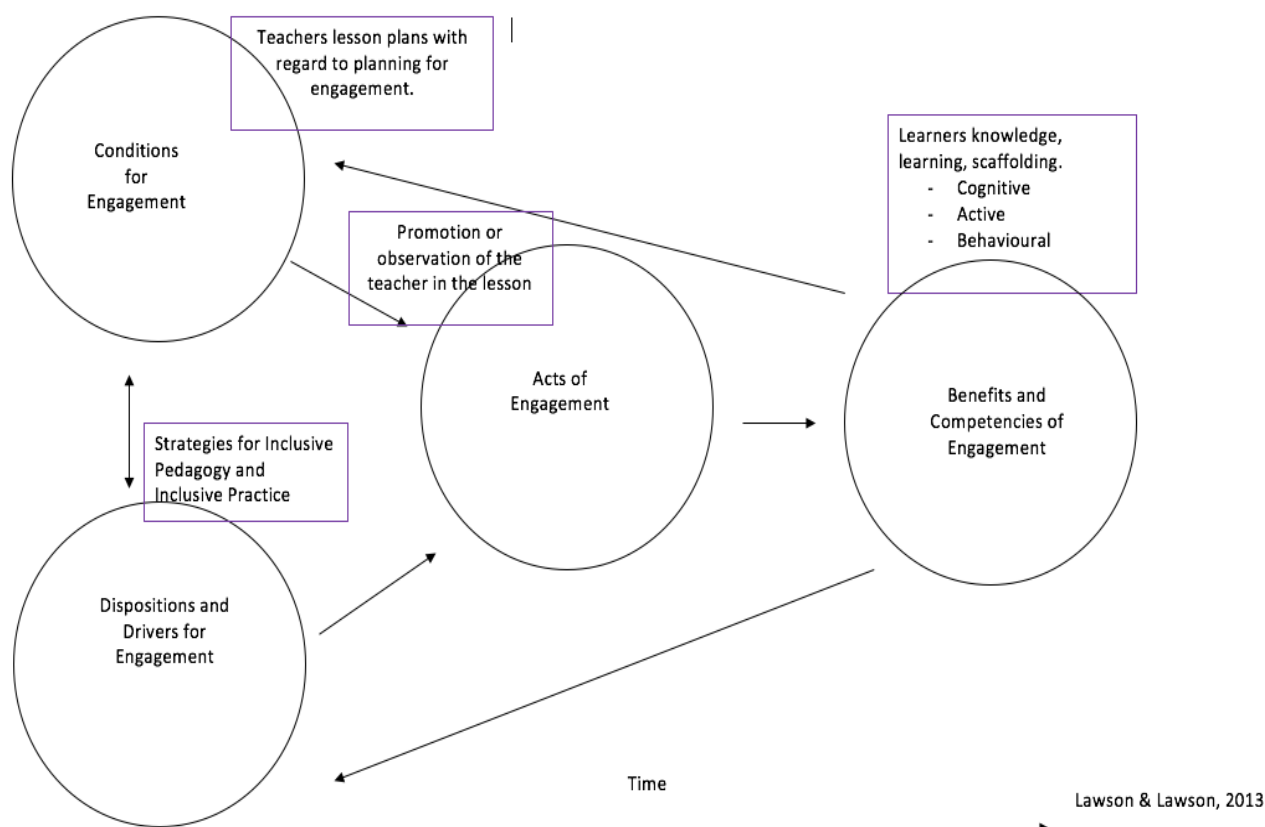


Figure 4: An adapted framework from Lawson and Lawson
(Lawson & Lawson, 2013)

2.8.1 Emotional engagement

There are various strategies through which teachers may develop positive emotions in learners, which will be beneficial in the learning process, and which should decrease negativity and/or prevent learners from dropping out (Pianta, et al, 2012). In the academic or learning environment, teachers' may ask learners 'how they are feeling' and observe their moods or the school may provide therapists, counselling and/or peer monitoring services which affords the learners opportunities to succeed academically, as well as to feel happy, positive and excited about school and learning. Hence teachers redesign the learning environment to make learning more conducive. The relationship between the learner and an advisory at school, should build a strong and genuine relationship, which is intended as an aid for learners to succeed academically. The adult should make inquiries about academic and non-academic concerns, taking an interest in the learner's personal life and the academic help he or she needs (Pianta, et al, 2012; Ed Gloss, 2016).

2.8.2 Behavioural engagement

Teachers establish rules, routines, use consistent cues or reminders, or assign learner roles that adopt short-term behaviours, which are more conducive to learning (Trowler, 2010). Each grade is different due to learners' ages and what is developmentally appropriate. Foundation phase teachers may use gestures (clapping), songs, or cues that assist younger learners to refocus on a lesson when they become side-tracked and disorderly. The teacher may clap three times or raise a hand, for example, which signals to learners that it is time to settle down, return to their seats, start a new activity or stop talking. Teachers may also establish rules and routines that support learners to stay on task and to remain engaged during the lesson (Pianta, et al, 2012). Introducing variation into the classroom routine is a good way to prevent monotony and the potential disengagement which may happen if learners stay in the same seat while doing alike tasks for a long period. Teachers may break the class up into smaller groups, or the teacher may have rotating groups for different activities, or rearrange the seating into a circle for group discussion. By introducing variation into a classroom routine, teachers can reduce the monotony and potential disengagement that may occur when students sit in the same seat, doing similar tasks, for extended periods of time. Research on brain-based learning has also provided evidence that variation, novelty, and physical activity can stimulate and improve learning (Pianta et al, 2012; Ed Gloss, 2016).

2.8.3 Cognitive Engagement

A student's cognitive engagement is based on the students' psychological asset in his or her academic tasks in the classroom, as well as the learner's willingness or want to excel in his or her homework, no matter the level of difficulty (Ed Gloss, 2016; Lawson & Lawson, 2013). Cognitive engagement may also be explained through how the learners participate in their learning tasks - they need to think about the concepts and ideas with regards to the task by using "self-regulating and metacognitive strategies" to complete the content and tasks successfully (Lawson & Lawson, 2013, p. 436). Children who succeed with ease are thought of as children who have a high level of cognitive engagement – these are the children who are self-motivated to do well and they have a desire to move beyond simply understanding their class work but also wish to achieve higher marks (Lawson & Lawson, 2013).

2.8.4 Physical engagement

To stimulate learners' interest in learning, teachers may use physical activities or routines. Some teachers use "kinaesthetic learning" which are physical motions and activities during the learning period to get learners engaged in the lesson taking place (Ed Gloss, 2016). Learners will answer questions by walking up to the chalkboard and writing down their answer, as opposed to answering questions aloud. This practice of physical engagement assumes that learners are more likely to recollect the taught information when they use several parts of their brain at the same time, such as physical activity; writing; listening; speaking and writing (Lawson & Lawson, 2013). Activities that are physical and quick exercises (such as brain-gym) are implemented by the teacher to reduce undesired behaviour such as distraction and fidgeting. Garner (2015) has stated that, in addition to brain-gym, many schools in the United States are addressing the physical needs of learners by offering all learners free breakfasts (because hunger has been linked to poor academic performance and a disengagement in learning) or some schools start at a later time (because sleep patterns and needs differ due to hormonal changes in the body of an adolescent, hence they may learn better by starting later in the morning) (Ed Gloss, 2016). Implementing this into the South African context might be useful, as research has shown that a lack of nutrition and/or hunger may lead to poor school performance (Garner, 2015).

2.8.5 Social engagement

There are a variety of strategies that teachers may use to encourage engagement through social interactions. Strategies for learners may include: pairs or groups structured to work collaboratively on activities, projects and assessments. Teachers may create a competition for the learners to compete in – e.g., a colouring in contest for art and whoever completes their picture will be in the running for the winning of the contest (Lawson & Lawson, 2013). Extra-curricular activities such as the debate team, eisteddfod, Science club or chess club may all bring learning opportunities and social interactions. In addition, strategies such as projects (Water Wise) may involve learners to give public presentations of their project and its findings to experts from the local community. These community-based learning opportunities may introduce public and social matters into learning. These learning opportunities about societal problems, present the opportunity for learners to participate actively in socially just causes

which may improve engagement (Trowler, 2010; Ed Gloss, 2016).

2.8.6 Cultural engagement

It is the school's duty to make new learners' (refugees, new to the area, immigrants) feel welcome and for the teachers' to encourage learners to make the new learners feel safe, accepted and feel valued by including them in friendship groups. The staff at the school (teachers, principal and administrators) need to provide a school orientation so these learners know where everything is. The school may provide additional language classes for the learners who come from a different country, and the school may offer translated school information booklets (Trowler, 2010). A way to engage these new learners and/or teachers who come from diverse backgrounds is for them to speak about their experiences to the class, their teachers and perhaps other staff members. Teachers may change lesson plans to incorporate the history, art, culture, nationalities and ethnicities represented in their classrooms. The activities the teacher selects may integrate dances, songs and performance of multicultural values, but the school's flag, emblem or motto may reflect a different cultural diversity, to which the school and students belong. Having one cultural belief within the school reduces the feelings of confusion, exclusion, disconnection and/or alienation that some learners and their families may experience, thus increasing their engagement in school activities and assist them to perform academically (Astin, 1984; Trowler, 2010; Ed Gloss, 2016).

2.9 The Role of the Teacher in Inclusive Classrooms:

2.9.1 Teacher Education for Inclusion

Teacher education has been acknowledged as playing an important role in the effectiveness of implementing inclusion into practice (Rouse, 2008). Learners who experience barriers to learning and development make special demands on teachers who need to find ways of meeting their special educational needs. However, this is a deficit model approach, hence researchers such as Florian (2015), Rouse (2008), Black-Hawkins (2014) and others call for a change in thinking. When teachers address these needs by providing learning support, this is interpreted as making it easier for learning to take place. This is one of the teacher's tasks (Engelbrecht, 1999; Florian & Linklater, 2010). Other tasks include assessing learning styles

and levels of academic skill, identifying social and behavioural needs and organising the multi-disciplinary team to meet both academic and non-academic needs (Engelbrecht, 1999, Florian & Spratt, 2013). Teaching is always about providing learning support. Those learners who require special material and equipment should be provided with them. This is the essence of support in inclusive education (Forlin, 2010).

An important policy has been implemented in South Africa called *Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications* (MRTEQ). This policy document focuses on professional educators and teachers for the schooling system. The role of the educator in this policy refers to “persons who educate other persons or who provide professional educational services or support to schools catering for learners from Grades R to 12” (MRTEQ, 2015, P. 7). Teaching is a complex activity that is premised upon the acquisition, integration and application of different types of knowledge practices or learning. The aim of the MRTEQ document is to address the challenges of teacher knowledge, that learners are the most important in the classroom and their needs need to be met (MRTEQ, 2015), and teachers need this knowledge (subject knowledge – knowledge that has been acquired from the content; good pedagogical understanding – being able to link the theory to the practical; disciplinary knowledge – expertise in inclusive education; practical learning – observing how teachers have used inclusive strategies in the classroom; fundamental learning – the foundation of inclusive practise and situational knowledge– knowledge that is gained from experience (Black-Hawkins, 2014). All these different aspects to becoming a teacher should be taught within different modules at university in order to produce a qualified teacher (MRTEQ, 2015).

2.9.2 Teachers’ Attitudes

There is an abundance of research on teachers’ attitudes towards Inclusive Education and many critique that this is an area of inclusive education that is over-emphasised; however, there is a need to explore the attitudes of teachers regarding actual pedagogy - and not attitudes about inclusive education - as this has shown to promote inclusive education according to both Loreman (2010) and Forlin (2010). This aspect is a gap which this research paper sets out to fill. Engelbrecht, Nel, Nel and Tlale (2015) mention that teachers’ responses to the implementation of Inclusive Pedagogy are negative owing to feelings of disempowerment and a lack of knowledge. Preparing teachers to have a positive attitude

towards teaching inclusively has been recognised as being a difficult task to achieve (Forlin, 2010). There have been many responses from teachers regarding working with learners who have diverse needs within a classroom. For some, inclusion is seen as an overwhelming and daunting task, as they feel that they do not know how to work with the diversity of learners' needs within a class (Allan, 2008). For other teachers, inclusion is viewed as an unattainable ideal model for schooling (Rose, 2003). Teachers should have a positive attitude towards teaching in an inclusive classroom; however, this may be difficult for the teacher to do as it could be an intimidating and unnerving task to tackle as the teacher may not feel comfortable dealing with the diverse needs of the learners within their class (Forlin, 2010). Beginner teachers may not feel prepared to teach in an inclusive classroom (Florian, 2012). Teachers need to complete a course on Inclusive Education according to Forlin (2010), as they should have a belief that they are able to teach inclusively, which will influence their teaching (Engelbrecht, Nel, Nel & Tlale, 2015). The concept of inclusive education does not seem to be universal but rather dependent on the context in which it takes place. As a result of this, teachers have different beliefs, views and attitudes towards Inclusive education (Makoelle, 2014).

2.9.3 Curriculum Differentiation:

Curriculum differentiation refers to the mediation of the National Curriculum at an instructional, content and material level to accommodate learner diversity (DoE, 2011). Barriers to learning arise from the different aspects of the curriculum such as the content, the language, classroom organisation, teaching methodologies, pace of teaching and time available to complete the curriculum, teaching and learning support materials and assessment (Lebona, 2013). According to Mitchell (2008), curriculum differentiation is a key strategy for responding to the needs of learners with diverse learning styles and needs. It involves processes of modifying, changing, adapting, extending, and varying teaching methodologies, teaching strategies, assessment strategies and the content of the curriculum. It also considers learners' ability levels, interests and backgrounds (Mitchell, 2008, p. 102).

Teachers are aware that children come to their classes with different abilities, skills and knowledge, socio-economic backgrounds and personalities. In order to respond to learners' diverse needs, they need to use differentiation. A way of doing this is to differentiate teaching methods and strategies (Tomlinson, et al, 2003; Tomlinson, 2005; Raveaud, 2005; Florian,

2015). Curriculum differentiation refers to the mediation of the National Curriculum at an instructional, content and material level to accommodate learner diversity (DoE, 2010). The key to differentiated teaching methods entails the flexible use of a wide range of learning materials, methods of presentation, learning activities and lesson organisations (Tomlinson, 2005; Raveaud, 2005). With regards to grading, we need to have a “multipart report system” identifying individual progress, achievement and work habits which will motivate the child to do better (Tomlinson, 2005, p. 268). According to the DoE (2010), learning should be facilitated through the planning of diverse teaching and learning activities that cater for the diverse learning support needs of all the learners in the classroom. Learning and teaching should also be structured to create access to activities that will create opportunities for everybody in the classroom.

The best way to meet learners’ different learning needs is to organise lessons in a number of different ways. It means that teachers need to differentiate the manner in which activities are planned and organised in a lesson (Raveaud, 2005; Tomlinson et al, 2003). The result within the lesson should be that all learners participate actively (Florian, 2015). Learners with a diverse array of needs will be accommodated in the number of activities planned, the strategies for facilitating teaching and learning, the resources needed and the time needed for both learners who are straddling grades and learners who have to take on additional material to meet their academic potential (Tomlinson, 2003; Raveaud, 2005).

Florian (2015) gives an example of French and British schools. The British schools used differentiation in their classrooms and grouped the learners according to their abilities – they would then give the appropriate task to each group which fit in with their ability. The French school; however, used little to no differentiation in their classrooms and if they did it would be improvised and not planned. The teachers stated that by grouping children according to abilities and giving worksheets according to different levels of difficulty, does not allow for a fair education to be received by all (Raveaud 2005). In South Africa, adaptations are made to the types of activities presented to the learners which should be based on their readiness, developmental levels, interests, background and learning profiles (DoE, 2011; Tomlinson et al, 2005). An important aspect to be differentiated in within the curriculum, is the content. This can be achieved by adapting the content of the curriculum in such a way that it is manageable to a wider range of learners. This should not be seen as a watering down of the

curriculum, but rather as a graded process where learners are taken by a different route to get to a similar finish point (Tomlinson, 2005; Tomlinson et al 2003; Raveaud, 2005). Barriers to learning arise from the different aspects of the curriculum such as the content, the language, classroom organisation, teaching methodologies, pace of teaching and time available to complete the curriculum, teaching and learning support materials and assessment (Tomlinson, 2005; Raveaud, 2005). According to Mitchell (2008) curriculum differentiation is a key strategy for responding to the needs of learners with diverse learning styles and needs. It involves processes of modifying, changing, adapting, extending, and varying teaching methodologies, teaching strategies, assessment strategies and the content of the curriculum. It also takes into account learners' ability levels, interests and backgrounds (Tomlinson, 2005).

According to the *Guidelines for Inclusive Teaching and Learning 2010*, DoE (2010, P. 19) lesson plans have to provide differentiated learning and teaching and assessment activities to ensure effective multilevel teaching. However, in addition to these forms of differentiation, teaching and assessment activities will be adapted at lesson plan level for learners who need specific additional support as a result of individual barriers to learning (Tomlinson, 2005; Tomlinson et al, 2003). Differentiation at lesson plan level will also be required for all learners in a class who need specific additional support because of individualised barriers to learning (Raveaud, 2005). Differentiation in the design of learning programmes in special schools, special schools as resource centres, and full-service schools should suit the needs, strengths and interests of learners experiencing barriers to learning and should influence the number, weighting and duration of learning programmes, as well as the decision-making criteria on progression (Byers & Rose, 2004).

A classroom that uses differentiation offers the learners a good individual quality to their learning. This should be implemented into every classroom, so that the learners can do their best within the diverse environment.

2.9.4 Lesson plans

According to the *Guidelines for Inclusive Teaching and Learning 2010*, DoE (2010, p. 19), lesson plans have to provide differentiated learning, teaching and assessment activities to ensure effective multilevel teaching. However, in addition to these forms of differentiation,

teaching and assessment activities will be adapted at lesson plan level for learners who need specific additional support as a result of individual barriers to learning (Florian, 2015). Differentiation at lesson plan level will also be required for all learners in a class who need specific additional support because of individualised barriers to learning.

2.10 Conclusion

According to Swart and Pettipher (2005, p. 17), inclusion is about all learners and not only about disability, but mainly about ways and means of responding to all learners' diverse needs. Student engagement has been used to depict students' willingness to participate in routine school activities, such as attending classes, submitting required work, and following teachers' directions in class. Inclusion is also concerned with the cultivation and creation of a school culture, which welcomes and celebrates differences and recognises individual needs (Lebona, 2013).

The researcher has given an overview of the literature (inclusive education, inclusive pedagogy and student engagement) that was used to conduct this study. The next chapter will specify the methodology for the research which was conducted.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the research design chosen to complete this study. A detailed description of the following aspects is presented, namely, the research strategy; the research method; the research approach; methods of data collection; the selection of the sample; the research process; the type of data analysis; the ethical considerations and the research limitations of the project.

3.2.1 Overview of Research Methodology

The research design chosen is a qualitative case study, underpinned by two theoretical foci; namely Florian (2013), who developed a framework to examine teachers' use of inclusive pedagogy in their classrooms through investigating their actions, reasoning through using classroom observations and interviews (Florian, 2013), and a student engagement model devised by Lawson and Lawson (2013) who proposed a number of dispositions they had identified and defined as elements of student engagement which has been adapted by the researcher and used in the classroom observations. Applying these two frameworks which were used to conduct the research, Lawson and Lawson's (2013) 4 ABC approach was adapted to use for the observation checklist (see appendix three). The researcher used the survey to provide the necessary information needed to select the invited participants. Data was collected from the participants whom the researcher had selected deliberately and who consented to participating in the research. This feedback was obtained through a pre and post semi-structured interview; lesson observation where the researcher focused on the teacher to assess whether inclusive practices were being followed and if student engagement was or was not being promoted during the lesson observation.

3.2.2 Research Methodology

In the data collection, the researcher used a sequential qualitative method, even though the researcher used a portion of quantitative method, as Niglas (2007, p. 4) states that one should

view methodology as a “qualitative-quantitative continuum” that is flexible. This demonstrates that the researcher did not use a mixed method approach but rather an aspect of quantitative research and thereafter a qualitative methodology (Niglas, 2007) approach which will be discussed in the relevant quantitative and qualitative sections following in this chapter.

3.2.1 Quantitative Research

Quantitative research has come to symbolise research approaches that are underpinned by a set of assumptions that seek to apply the natural science model of research to investigations of the educational world (Scott & Morrison, 2005, P. 185). Here, the focus is upon patterns, regularities, causes and consequences in which there is an application of the principles of positivism, which assume that the patterns of the social world have their own 'real' existence (Mc Millan & Schumacher, 2010; Scott & Morrison, 2005; Cresswell, 2003). To make observations about society, quantitative purists maintain that data should be obtained objectively (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Quantitative strategies involve complex experiments with many variables and treatments. A strategy of inquiry could be that of surveys which includes cross-sectional and longitudinal studies using questionnaires or structured interviews for data collection, with the “intent of generalising from a sample to a population” (Cresswell, 2003, P. 14). This research used a survey which is a quantitative method; however, it was used for a qualitative purpose to select the participants. In other words, a Quasi Method was used. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p. 282), in educational research studies “it is simply not possible for investigators to undertake true experiments, e.g. in random assignation of participants to control or experimental groups” it is not practical to select the participants, classroom and/or schools randomly (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

3.2.2 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research has come to signify research approaches that are underpinned by a set of assumptions about the way the social world operates. It derives many of its basic tenets from the perspective that the science of the human world is fundamentally different from that of the natural world, and therefore needs to deploy distinctive and descriptive methods (Scott & Morrison, 2005). A qualitative research methodology is best suited to the research

questions in this study as it lends itself to a study of a 'central phenomenon' (Cresswell, 2013), which is a key idea or concept. The key idea or concept investigated in this study was through an exploration of student engagement as an inclusive practice. This justifies that a qualitative design is best suited to the study. Qualitative research has a focus on seeing the world through the eyes of the participants and developing concepts and theories that are 'grounded' in multiple stages of data collection. The characteristics of design are constant comparisons of data with emerging categories and theoretical sampling of different groups to explore similarities and differences in realities (Cresswell, 2003; Mc Millan & Schumacher, 2010). Qualitative inquiry is about interpretation. According to Stake (1995), when researchers are collecting and analysing their data, the researcher will have to interpret the data. Thus suggesting that inferring and deriving conclusions is part of the process of interpretation. The data analysed by the researcher will show an interpretation of the data, as well as other researcher's views (Stake, 1995, P. 9).

3.3 Case Study

A case study approach, according to Yin (2003), is considered when the focus of the study design is to answer 'how' and 'why' questions. As the researcher, one cannot manipulate the behaviour of those involved and want to cover contextual conditions because they believe they are relevant to the phenomenon under study (Baxter & Jack, 2008). In this research 'student engagement' and 'inclusive practice' is something particular and functional in a system (the classroom context), thus these concepts can be described and interpreted under the contextual conditions of the classroom. As the focus is on student engagement and how the participants implement or do not implement student engagement in the lessons to promote inclusive education, a case study is therefore a suitable choice of research method. By using a single-case design, where events are limited to a single occurrence, it ensures that the researcher is not able to make generalisations (Zainal, 2007).

A case study sets out for the researcher to assess data from the micro-level, in order to obtain valid research. Zainal (2007), suggests that case studies are best used in the context or environment (classroom) of what is being researched. This case study data will be analysed qualitatively as the data will have illustrative descriptions of the "real-life environment" (classroom observations) (Zainal, 2007, p. 4), which the researcher needs to take into account when describing that research data (Zainal, 2007).

3.4 Sampling Strategies

Data was collected following the ethical clearance to conduct research by the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) and clearance from the Ethics Committee at Wits School of Education; the principals from the six schools were all contacted telephonically and via email to explain the purpose of the research. All six principals signed the permission letter for this research to be conducted in their schools with the Foundation Phase teachers. The participants were thus purposefully selected from the online survey to which they responded. Purposeful sampling can be described as ‘concept/theory based’, where the researcher selects “information-rich persons or situations known to experience the concept or be attempting to implement the concept/theory” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 327). The sample size for this research project comprised of seven foundation phase teachers. All participants are in-service teachers, currently teaching in the Foundation phase at their respective schools.

3.5 Selection of the Participants

The teachers were invited to participate in the research if they met the criteria of having completed the Honours degree with the option in the Honours Course: Learning Support 1 and 2. The participants were notified via email with a covering letter attached, explaining what the research entailed and including the researcher’s contact details. The teachers who were willing to participate in the study for the research project, were then sent a further email which asked them to complete the consent form and email it back to the researcher. An email was then sent to the participants with the web link for the researcher’s online survey. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) they assert that “surveys gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions” (p. 205). The purpose of the survey the researcher conducted was used to ascertain whether the teachers were applying inclusive pedagogies in teaching practices to promote student engagement (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007) see Figures 5, 6 and 7. From the survey, the researcher made further purposeful selection for the research participants based on their answers namely: If they had completed the Honours course (see Figure 8) and if they were currently teaching in the Foundation Phase (see Figure 9). From the collected information,

the researcher could contact the selected participants via email, and invite them to participate in the research study. All the schools approached, are ordinary schools that are obliged to implement an inclusive education policy in their schools (WP6, DoE, 2001 and MRTEQ, 2015). Selecting these participants provided the researcher with the most relevant information to collect data for the research report. Based on the selection process, the researcher used seven teachers, six different located full-service schools, five independent schools and one government school to complete the data collection process.

Table of Participants in this study

School and Area	Participants
School A	Grade 1
Independent School – Johannesburg East	Participant A
School B	Grade 2
Independent School – Johannesburg North	Participant B
School C	Grade 2
Independent School – Johannesburg North	Participant C
School D	Grade 2
Independent School – Johannesburg East	Participant D
School E	Grade 3
Independent School – Johannesburg North	Participant E
	Grade 3
	Participant F
School F	Grade 1

Government School – Johannesburg North East	Participant G
--	---------------

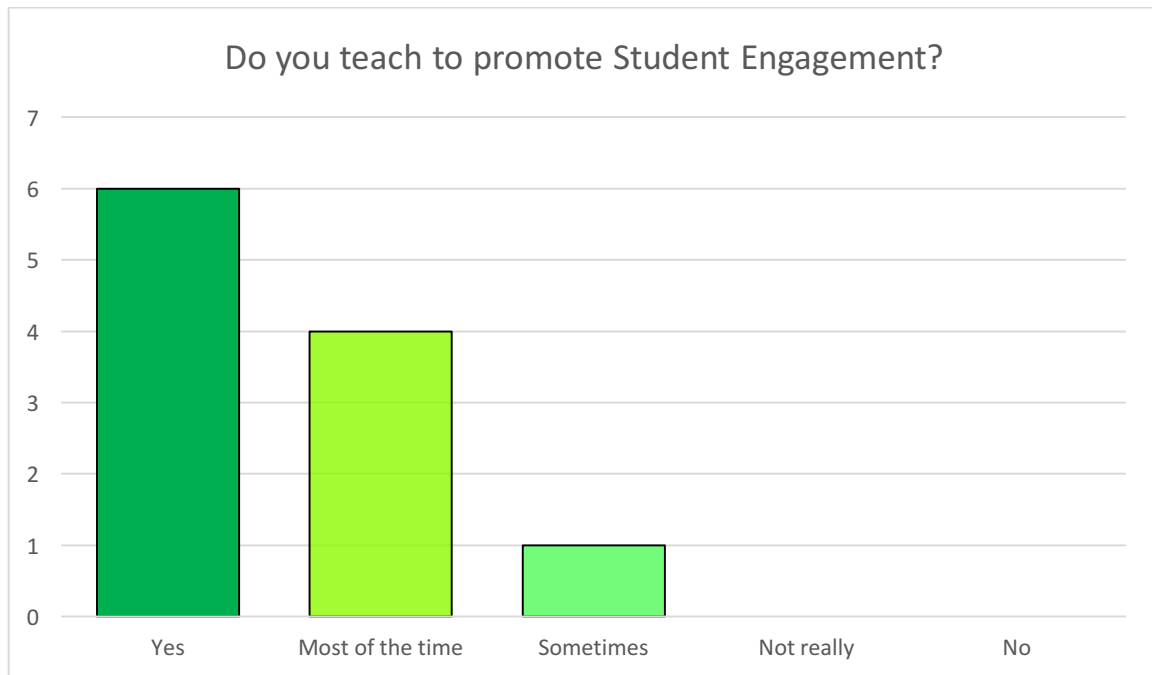


Figure 5

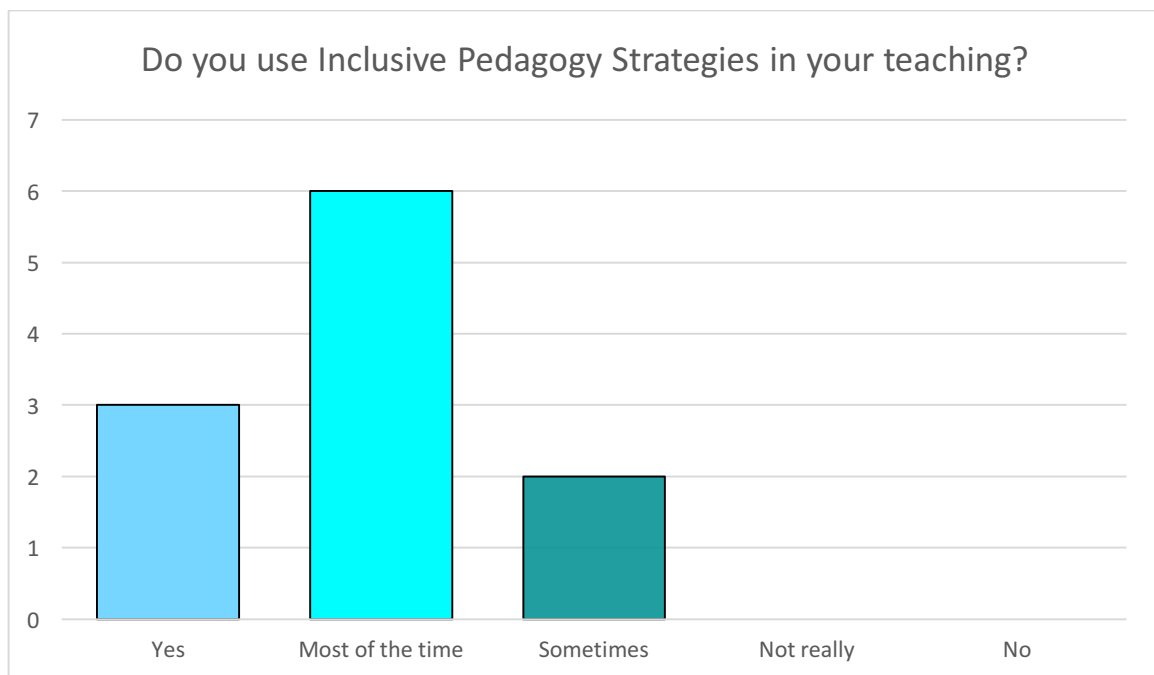


Figure 6

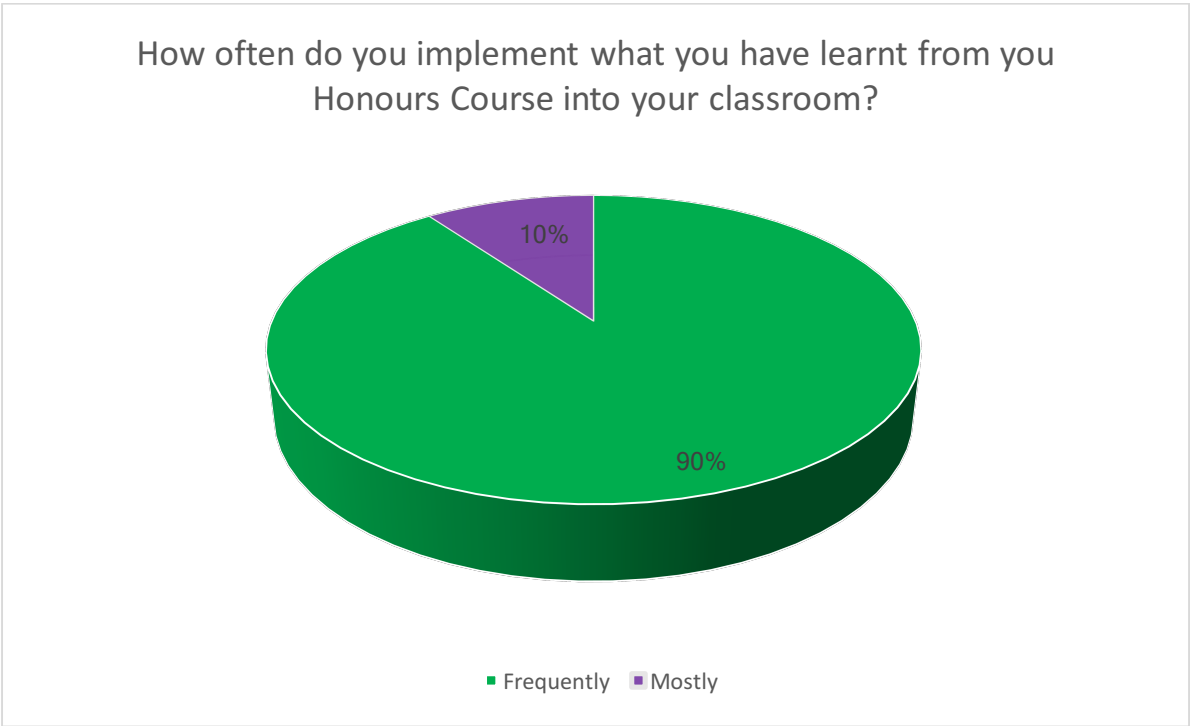


Figure 7

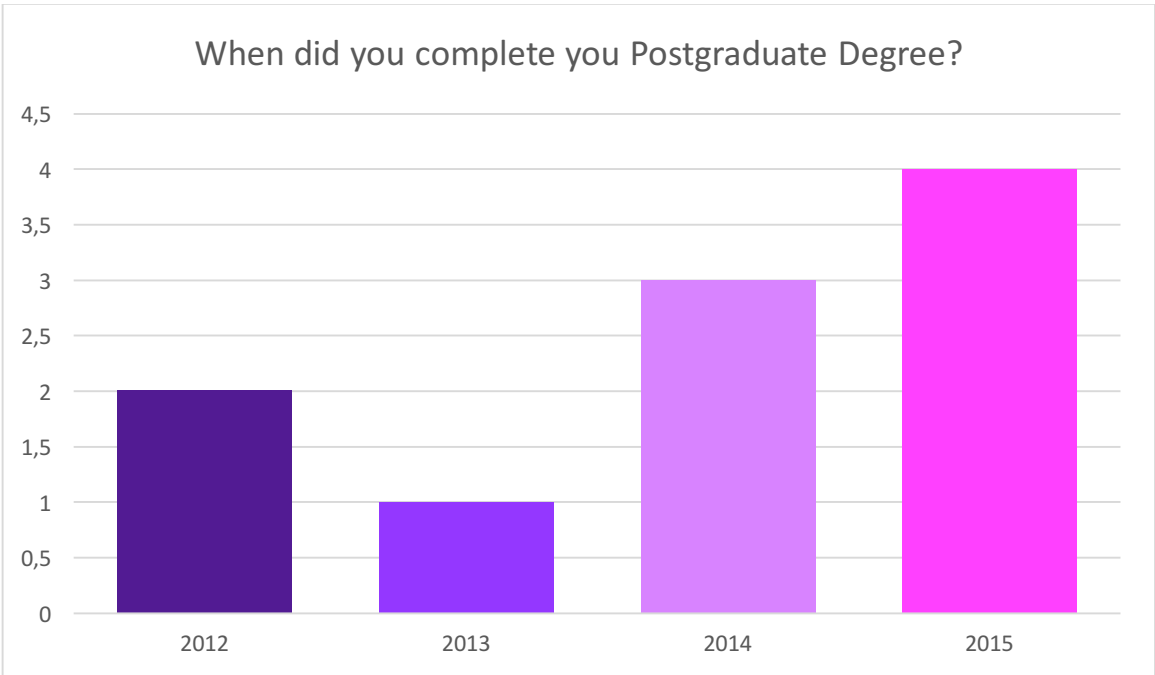


Figure 8

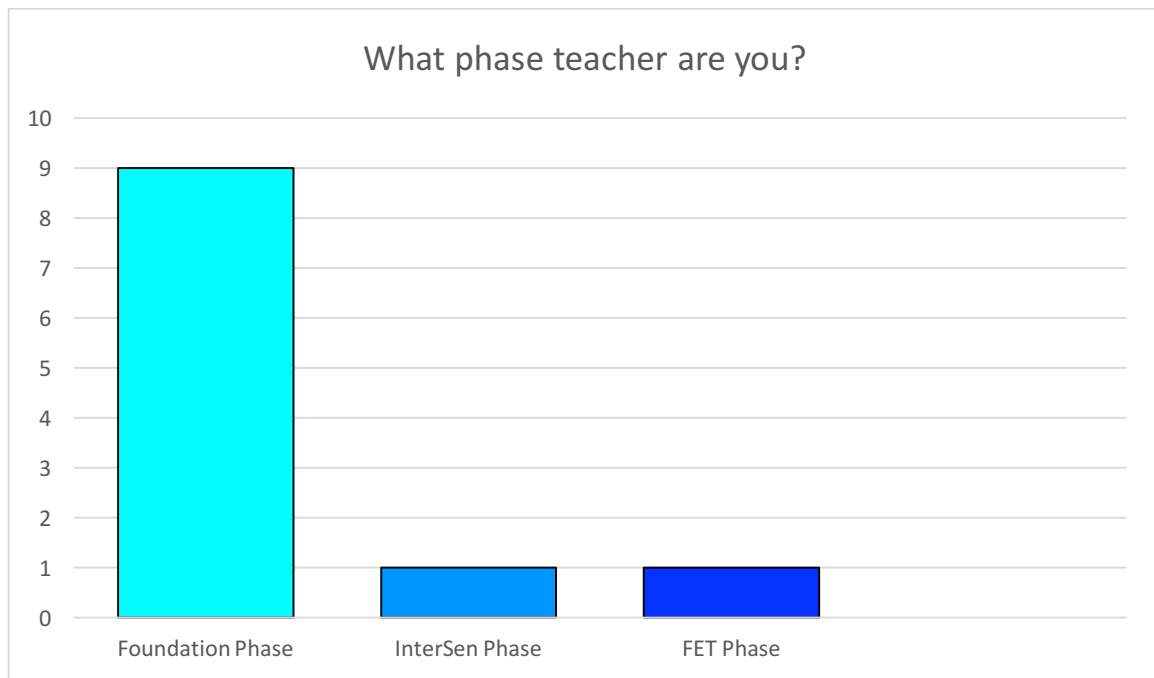


Figure 9

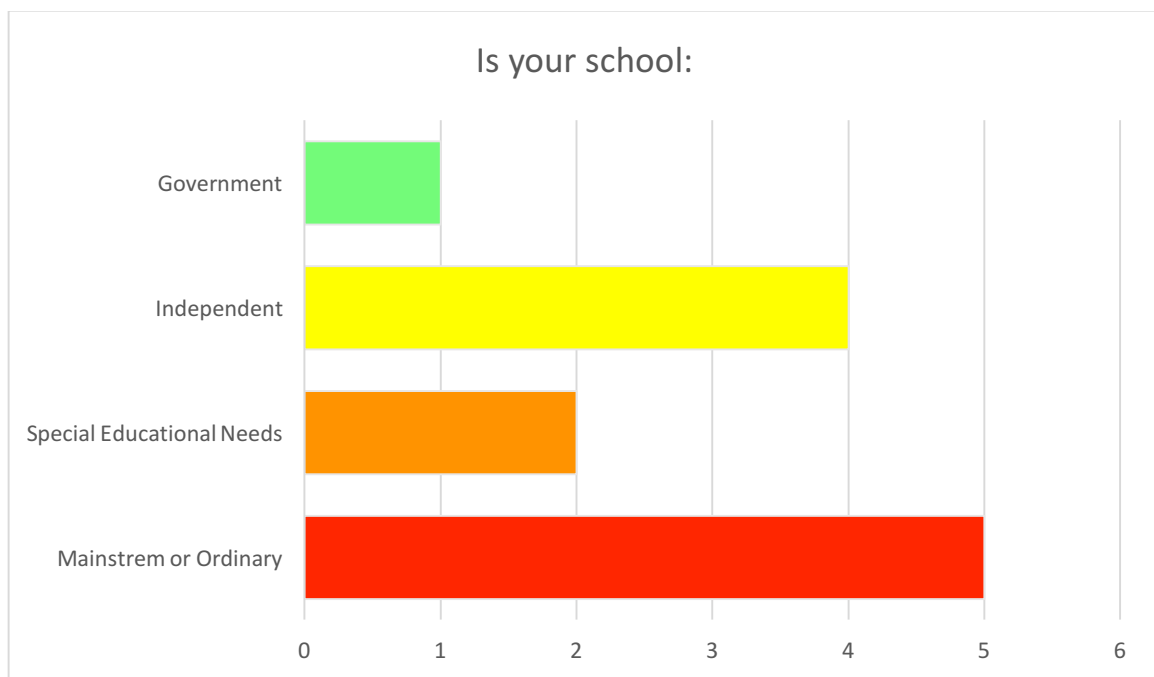


Figure 10

3.6. Data Collection

The data collection process occurred at different stages of the research process. The researcher first collected sets of data from an online survey; pre-interviews were then conducted, followed by the classroom observation – which included the checklist and field-notes (see appendix 3 and 4). Finally, after the researcher had observed the lesson and looked at the field-notes, a post-interview was conducted. The data set will now be discussed.

An online survey was developed purposefully in order for the researcher to have selected the participants by reviewing their responses about Inclusive Pedagogy and/or Inclusive Practices (this is an approach to teaching that recognises the diversity of students, by enabling all learners to have access to the content knowledge and by participating in the lessons), in the classroom (MRTEQ, 2015). The participants were all invited to complete the online survey, which was emailed to them alongside a letter of consent. The email addresses were obtained from a class list provided to the researcher by the supervisor. Participants who responded to the survey were then selected to participate in the study and were invited to participate. The protocols that the researcher has chosen to use for this research project to collect the data, have included a survey, semi-structured pre-and-post interview and the observation checklist.

3.6.1 Survey

Kraemer (1991), identified three distinguishing characteristics of survey research. First, survey research is used to describe specific aspects of a given population quantitatively. These aspects often involve examining the relationships among variables. Second, the data required for survey research is collected from people and is, therefore, subjective. Finally, survey research uses a selected portion of the population from which the findings can later be generalised back to the general population (Glasow, 2005). Collie and Rine (2009) state that purposeful sampling relates to members who have been selected according to availability, which was the case with this particular research project, as the researcher only wanted Foundation Phase teachers who had completed an Honours degree with an inclusive education option.

The participants were selected from past students who had completed the option in the Honours Course: Learning Support 1 and 2; hence this study used purposeful sampling. The

participants were notified via email with a letter and consent form of what their participation in the research entailed. If the teachers were willing to participate in the research project, they were asked to complete the consent form and email it back to the researcher. The researcher then sent an email with the web link for the online survey. This survey was used to determine whether the teachers were applying inclusive pedagogies in their teaching practices to promote student engagement. From the online survey, the researcher made a further purposeful selection for the research participants based on their answers namely: If they had completed the Honours course and if they were currently teaching in the Foundation Phase. The researcher was then able to contact the selected participants via email, from Monkey Survey, to invite them to participate in the research.

The survey was completed anonymously, although an option was provided for the participant to indicate whether they would be prepared to participate in the research study. Participants were then contacted if they fitted the criteria (a Foundation Phase teacher and completed a Post-graduate degree in Inclusive Education). The researcher told the participants that an email would be sent, with a letter stipulating what their participation in the research study would entail. The researcher conducted a pre-and-post interview with the invited participants. Permission was granted that allowed the researcher to audio-tape the interviews. A convenient time was arranged with the participants for an half an hour lesson which could be observed and was audio-recorded. Thereafter, the participants were involved with a semi-structured post-interview which was also audio-recorded. During the interview, the participants were asked to discuss the rationale of their lesson, and the inclusive pedagogical practices with reference to the observed lesson. Working with each participant took approximately two hours and this was completed at a mutually agreed, convenient time that was most suited to their busy schedule.

The participants were assured of the researcher's commitment to their voluntary participation, and confidentiality in the research and research reporting process, through the use of pseudonyms. The participants were encouraged to contact the researcher if they had any questions or queries about the research study. The researcher approached the principal and School Governing Body of the schools that the participants were teaching at, and as the participants were willing to participate, the principles were asked to complete the consent form which was emailed to them.

3.6.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

The researcher designed a semi-structured interview schedule that was used to solicit information from the participants as to how student engagement was promoted in the classroom context. The rationale behind conducting interviews with these participants was that they were in a better position to provide a more complete picture of how they have considered student engagement as a strategy to promote inclusive education.

This schedule was mainly in the form of open-ended questions that served as a guide in the interview process, and these questions enabled the participants to state their views freely in their own words.

In semi-structured interviewing, a guide was used, with questions and topics to which the researcher wanted participants to respond, that needed to be covered. The researcher had some discretion about the order in which questions were asked, but the questions were standardised, and prompts were used to ensure that the researcher covered the correct material. This type of interview collects detailed information in a style that is somewhat conversational (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Semi-structured interviews are often used when the researcher wants to delve deeply into a topic and to understand, thoroughly, the answers provided (Harrell & Bradley, 2009). Semi-structured interviewing, according to Rabionet (2011) and Bernard (1988) is best used when the researcher will not get more than one chance to interview someone. Semi-structured interviews are often preceded by observation, informal and unstructured interviewing, in order to allow the researchers to develop a keen understanding of the topic of interest necessary for developing relevant and meaningful semi-structured questions (Cohen, 2006).

An audiotape was used to record the semi-structured interviews; this was so the researcher could engage with the participants. Audio-recording the interviews was a way to have the semi-structured interviews completed without the participant or researcher being distracted from the researcher taking notes. This was also to ensure accurate capturing of the participants' own words. According to Cohen (2006), audio-taping will allow the participants to check their written, transcribed transcripts for validity and accuracy. Since semi-structured interviews often contain open-ended questions and discussions may diverge from the

interview guide, it is generally best to tape-record interviews and later transcribe these tapes for analysis (Cohen, 2006).

3.6.3 Lesson Observation

“Research using observational methods has yielded important information that has practical implications for the improvement of teaching practices” (Good & Brophy, 2000). According to Lawson and Lawson (2013), research has revealed that the way teachers behave in the classroom and the instructional methods they use impact the degree to which learners learn. Using classroom observations, researchers are capable of providing feedback that may improve teaching practices (Hopkins, 2002).

The half an hour lesson observed, took place in the month of September during the third term. It was important to guard against preconceived ideas and bias as potential problems and to place what was observed within its organisational and/or curricular context (Bell, 2005). Prior to the commencement of classroom observations, letters requesting permission for the researcher to observe and audio record in the classroom, from the learners and their parents, were emailed to the schools and distributed to the learners. The signed consent forms were then collected and stored. The terms relating to anonymity and confidentiality, stated in the letter to the learners and their parents, were upheld. A schedule to observe lessons was arranged with the educators beforehand and there were no interruptions with regard to the delivery of the lessons and curriculum coverage. Qualitative, field notes were written during lesson observations, to supplement the checklist, discussed below.

3.6.4 Observation Checklist

Observation, as a method of collecting research data, involves observing behaviour and systematically recording the results of those observations. Observations are guided by the research questions. Therefore, the observations are conscious and planned. They differ from casual, everyday observations of behaviour which are often casual, selective, and inaccurate. Observations are recorded systematically, often using an observation check list (Cohen, 2006).

Whilst observing classroom interactions, researchers can also uncover factors that may be important for a thorough understanding of the research problem, but that were unknown

when the study was designed (Cohen, 2006). Classroom observations, therefore, offer an advantage for the researcher to see if interview responses of participants correlate or not with the observed classroom context by the researcher, although researchers may get truthful answers to the research questions posed, researchers may not always ask the right questions (DeWalt, DeWalt & Wayland, 1998). Through observations of the classroom practices, the researcher may be exposed to other actions that may not have been focused on in the interview process. The main disadvantage of participant observation is that it is time-consuming. A second disadvantage of participant observation is the difficulty of documenting the data – it is difficult to write down everything that is important while the researcher is in the act of participating and observing. As the researcher, you must therefore rely on your memory and on your own personal discipline to write down and expand your observations as soon and as completely as possible (DeWalt, DeWalt & Wayland, 1998). A checklist would assist with this.

A checklist based on Lawson and Lawson (2013) (see appendix 3) of 10 specific observable teacher interactions that may reflect a classroom that promotes student engagement through active; cognitive and behavioural dimensions for developing inclusive teaching practice was used while the researcher observed the lesson. During each lesson observation, the researcher recorded the behaviours, which were observed and made comments. The recordings marked on the observation checklist and the handwritten field notes (see appendix 5) were then typed and stored electronically, as summaries of each lesson observed. The field notes and checklist results of 7 lessons were summarized and were used alongside the post-interview questions.

Upon completion of the classroom observations, post-observation interviews were conducted. This was to corroborate the pre-interviews and reflect on the lesson delivery to assess if and/or how the participants promoted or did not promote student engagement. Feedback was given by the participants; therefore, the interview was not about an 'expert' researcher giving a critical evaluation but rather, the aim was to consult with the participants with regard to describing accurately and reflecting on the action that was observed, in an objective, unbiased manner (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

3.6.5 Post – Observation Interview

The post-observation interviews (Appendix 5) were audiotaped and were about 10 – 15 minutes in duration. The interview consisted of six questions which served as points of discussion within the context of descriptive feedback relevant to the research sub- questions stated in Chapter One. Therefore, the participants were encouraged to reflect upon their lessons within the context of how student engagement was incorporated into planning the lessons and the teaching of the lesson, as well as inclusive strategies employed to respond to the needs of the learners. In the post-interview, teachers acknowledged that some learners were not engaged in the lesson and they needed to implement an inclusive pedagogical strategy in their classroom to promote student engagement. Furthermore, the seven participants were required to reflect upon how they differentiated the lesson to accommodate learners being engaged and re-engaged during their lesson. The importance of post-interviews, according to Blomberg, Giacomi, Mosher and Swenton-Wall (1993, p. 131) emphasises that “what people say they do and what they do is not the same” thus, a post-interview is of importance in order to ask questions and then compare if what they did is the same as what they said they did, thus the participants demonstrate a manifested versus ideal behaviour.

3.7 Data Analysis

3.7.1 Qualitative Data Analysis

From the transcribed audio-recorded interviews and the lessons that were observed, the researcher engaged in the process of organising the data to be coded. Coding entailed focusing on all the data collected, which required determining what was taking place within the information (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Once the categories were obtained, a thematic content analysis was performed in order to ascertain both prominent and sub-themes; “a theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82) within the data collected from the seven participants. This was with the intent to construct an overview of the experiences and perspectives held by teachers around the phenomenon of how teachers use inclusive strategies to promote student engagement (Pillay, 2012; Lawson & Lawson, 2013).

3.8 Design and Limitations

The limitations of the design for the researcher's study were that the participants were from one higher education institution, as well as the fact that the participants were only foundation phase in-service teachers. This meant that the findings could not be generalised for all higher education institutions who offer post graduate courses with inclusive education options. Another limitation was the survey component of the research study. Minaar and Heystek (2013), suggest that the online survey may have a low response, as the researcher did not know any of the participants. This was accurate as the researcher sent out 25 in-service teachers the link to complete the survey and only 11 responded. Classroom observations were limited, as the researcher only audio-recorded the lesson and probably missed some student engagement which occurred in the classrooms; however the researcher did take notes during the lesson observed. Having discussed the framework of the research methods conducted, a discussion will be provided in developing an understanding of the ethical considerations for the study.

3.9 Credibility

The researcher aimed to understand the phenomena from the participant's perspectives. The participants who contributed to the study were provided with the opportunity to read through their transcripts for accuracy in order to judge legitimately, the credibility of the results of the interviews conducted.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

In order to conduct the research, the researcher submitted an ethics application to the Human Research Ethics Committee at the Wits School of Education and the Department of Education. The application focused on the non-medical involvement of the participants for the researcher's study. Once the researcher was granted ethical clearance, as represented in appendix six, the researcher began the research journey. This process entailed gaining consent from the foundation phase in-service teachers who completed the online survey, as represented in appendix 1. Of the seven participants who were selected for the second stage of the study, permission was requested from the School Principal and School Governing Body

for the research to be completed at the six schools. The letters are shown in appendices 7 and 8. Once approval was granted from school management, written consent was required from the teachers, parents/guardians/caregivers of learners and the learners themselves (See appendices 9, 10 and 11). As the learners were all minors, they agreed and all their parents gave their consent for the researcher to make observations in the classroom. To gain permission from the learners, the researcher arranged with the School Principal and teachers for a day for the researcher to deliver the information letters and consent forms to the learners, where the researcher explained the aim of the research study to the classes. In gaining informed permission from all the individuals involved in the study, the following ethical considerations were considered: gaining informed consent; freedom from harm; privacy and voluntary participation (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

3.10.1 Informed Consent

To gain informed consent, the researcher required obtaining permission from the participants to conduct the study. In this process, the participants were assured that confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained in the collection of the data (Scott & Morrison, 2005). The informed consent emphasised that the data obtained may be used for this report and may be disseminated in journal articles and publications.

3.10.2 Freedom from Harm

The second ethical consideration is freedom from harm. This ethical consideration was emphasised to the participants that throughout the research process, no harm would be inflicted upon them (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007) should they either decline to participate at the onset, or during the procedures of conducting the research. The participants were assured that participating in this study should benefit them indirectly in their participation, while they reflected on their teaching practices.

3.10.3 Privacy

The third ethical consideration is privacy. Privacy was maintained throughout the process by assuring the participants that their identities would remain confidential. No school logos or school names to identify participants as employees, will be used. Interviews were conducted

in a private area away from anyone. This research is credible and trustworthy, as I constantly checked the validity of the findings with my supervisor.

3.10.4 Voluntary Participation

The last ethical consideration was voluntary participation. It entailed the participants being notified that they were not be obligated to take part in the study if they did not wish to do so. They were given the freedom to participate voluntarily and resign from participation if they no longer wanted to take part in the study.

3.11 Conclusion

The chapter described the framework for the research methodology. Qualitative research methodologies, with regard to the research approach, research design, type of research, sample and sampling method were discussed in detail. The chapter discussed the ethical considerations that were upheld, such as reliability, credibility and validity of the research study.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Analysis

4.1. Introduction

The following chapter represents the researcher's findings for the study which investigated how teachers use student engagement to promote inclusive practices in the classroom. The researcher used the online survey, pre-and post-semi-structured interviews and lesson observations to collect the data.

The data was used collectively, where possible, from all the sources. In this manner, the data gathered was used to find patterns and themes from the pre-and post-semi-structured interviews and lesson observations using qualitative data (qualitative-quantitative continuum).

Through the transcripts, the data was coded to identify recurring patterns and/or themes. The findings emerging from the pre-and post-semi-structured interviews were transcribed from the audio-taped sessions and field notes from the lesson observations and checklists were analysed per the following themes:

1. Promoting student engagement through motivating learners
2. Stimulating learner's interests
3. Encouraging learners in tasks
4. Assessing learners through cognitive engagement
5. Promoting cooperative and collaborative learning
6. Consistency of classroom routines
7. Using the classroom context

4.2. Background

Following years with steadily increasing numbers of diverse learner populations in segregated settings in South African schools and the realization that many learners were being excluded from classroom participation, the South African White Paper 6 Department of Education (2001) sketched a transformative approach to remedy the exclusionary practices under the apartheid system of government in the South African schooling system. This transformative

approach was the desire that Inclusive Education would create a more united society as Donohue (2014, p. 2) puts it, “an integrated and caring society”. This aims to create an integrated system with an adjustable curriculum which would benefit both teachers and learners (Donohue, 2014). Previously, learners were segregated into schools according to the different racial groups within the South African population.

Inclusion is a multi-faceted educational approach to providing access and participation for all learners with a need to incorporate all learners (disabilities based and learning difficulty based) within one schooling environment. That being said, this is a difficult approach to achieve, not only for teachers but for the Department of Education and the school governing bodies. Florian and Spratt (2013) assert that inclusive pedagogy is a method in teaching and learning where the teacher is able to respond to individual learner’s needs and their differences without marginalising the learners by treating them differently. The concept of the transformative approach interweaves with inclusive education, as it develops an understanding of the concept.

4.3. Context of the Study

The researcher observed and interviewed seven teacher participants, all of whom were Foundation Phase teachers at six different schools located in the Johannesburg area. Five schools in this research project, were independent schools (two schools were all-boys, one was an all-girl school and two were co-ed) and one was a government all boys school. All the schools varied in context with an incomparable cultural capital and dissimilar beliefs and financial stability. Four of the six schools were religious-based schools, each practising different religions, and two schools were non-denominational. Cultures of both the teachers and learners in the school varied, along with the financial areas. All the schools had the resources (ramps for disabled learners, on-sight therapists – reading therapist, speech and occupational therapists) to accommodate learners with a diverse range of needs, identifying the significance of undertaking individual learning and support needs within the teaching and learning environment of an inclusive school (defined by the school’s own ethos and mission statements). This includes the use of various teaching and learning strategies applied by the teacher in the classroom.

4.4 Theme One: Promoting Student Engagement through Motivating Learners

4.4.1 Promoting Student Engagement in the Classroom

Student engagement through learning activities is specifically measured in education through the integration of the academic achievement of students (Lawson & Lawson, 2013). Participant G *“I find one easy way to see whether or not children in my class are engaged, is by marking their work. I can easily see who gets the concept, based on the learners’ marks one can determine who enjoys certain subjects”*. Research shows that student engagement has a significant relationship to the variables of educational attainment, learning and motivation (Lawson & Lawson, 2013). Participant C suggested that to promote student engagement a positive classroom atmosphere was a starting point. She felt that *“in my class I really try and be positive, I think it’s important for you as the teacher to start off the motivation for your kids by saying ‘Come on, you can do it! What a clever idea’. By giving them motivation to do the work, I find that the children will often start to motivate themselves to do well”*. To promote student engagement in the classroom, motivation is important to implement. This is because it encourages learners to complete their work, have fun while doing their class work which should result in an achievement, according to Osman, Jumaludin and Mokhtar (2014).

Six of the seven participants, as seen in Figure 11 below, stated that motivation in the classroom is important for student engagement to take place. One participant did not mention motivation at all. In describing motivation, Participant D alluded to the importance of motivation when stating that *“I think motivation is important in any aspect of one’s life. However, I think sometimes children are motivated in different ways”*. Similarly, Participant E suggested that *“the children in my class are motivated when I say ‘if you get full marks for three spelling tests I will give you a sweet’ then all the children want to learn and succeed in their spelling tests”*. Participant F used a variety of different strategies to motivate learners, recognizing that all learners are not the same *“I have found that different things motivate different learners, sometimes the children will tell me that if they don’t do well on a test then they won’t be able to go to the zoo on Saturday for example”*. Participant B mentioned the importance of recognizing that there are intrinsic and extrinsic motivators necessary to consider when stating that *“some children are eager to learn and succeed and do well, while others are not”*. The participants D, E, F and B, suggested that the learners’ personality,

environment and influence of instructors are factors that either hinder or inspire motivation in the classroom setting.

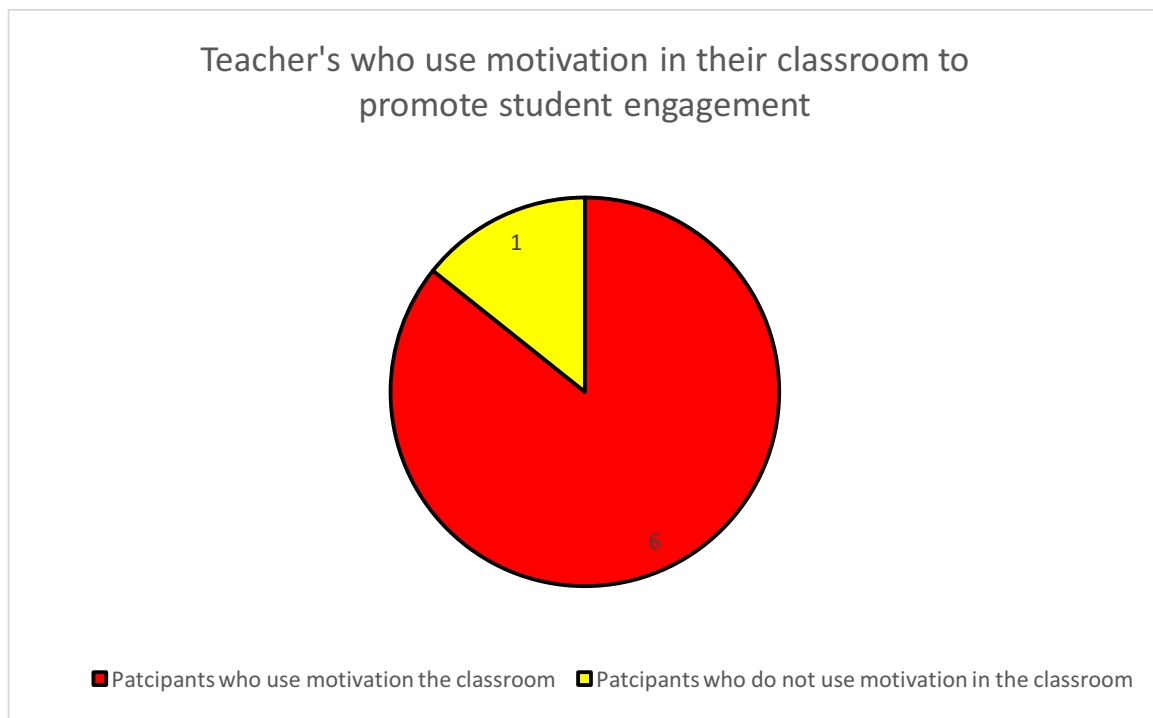


Figure 11

The development of an inclusive school environment is reliant upon the beliefs that are entrenched within the system of the school (Ainscow & Kaplan, 2004). As Participant B said, *“if you don’t have the support from your grade head, head of phase or principal it really isn’t useful to implement inclusive education in your classroom”*. Through the mutual commitment by administration and staff members, an inclusive culture can be developed (Swart & Pettipher, 2011; Ainscow & Kaplan, 2004). Participant A spoke about the importance of whole-school collaboration, stating that *“this is my second year teaching here, and I am really lucky and fortunate to say that my principal was eager for change and she was willing to listen to new ideas and concepts that could be implemented into the school. The school is now an inclusive school, the kind we learnt about at varsity”*. Implementing changes into the school system, for participant A, was a great success in creating an inclusive culture within the school, based on how the school perceives being an inclusive school. As the research has shown, inclusion is a process that changes continuously (Slee, 2011; Ainscow, 2011). The school principal and staff members can challenge the thinking of their colleagues, thus,

allowing for an inclusive environment to be developed (Ainscow & Kaplan, 2004; Swart & Pettipher, 2011). As Participant F asserts *“I like to engage and ask questions with my colleagues and principal - it creates a space where we can share ideas of what works in the classroom for particular learners”*. Participant G agrees by stating that *“I always go and ask colleagues for advice, this is because of the space created within our school - an inclusive space has been formed. I also think sometimes the therapists who see the children in my class have nice suggestions to use in the classroom setting”*. The responses from the participants demonstrates that without the support from everybody in the school, inclusive education cannot be implemented correctly. The evidence, above, confirms Ainscow and Kaplan’s (2004) research that emphasises the role of the school leadership in building a positive, inclusive school environment and is vital when considering whether a school is inclusive or not.

In order to create student engagement in the classroom, learners need to be physically engaged, cognitively engaged, socially engaged, emotionally engaged and behaviourally engaged (Lawson & Lawson, 2013; Pike & Kuh, 2005; Rangrid, 2016). Thus, if learners are engaged in all five aspects mentioned above, the learner would likely reap the full benefit of access and participation in the classroom.

4.4.2 What is Student Engagement?

Student engagement, if introduced as an inclusive practice in the classroom, covers a number of important aspects, namely; the amount of attention, interest, attentiveness, concern, enthusiasm, motivation, and passion. These aspects highlight a sense of engagement and research has shown that this spreads to the level of eagerness and motivation to learn and advancement in the schooling journey of most students (Lawson & Lawson, 2013; Education Gloss, 2016). Four of the seven participants described student engagement as *“the motivation to learn new concepts”* Participant G suggested that *“if learners are motivated in the classroom, they want to do well, not only for the teacher or parent, but for themselves”*. Participant G’s idea of what student engagement is resonates with Trowler (2010) who argues that positive student engagement is based on the belief that learning will only improve when learners are curious, interested, motivated, inspired and enthusiastic. Unconstructive learning would result in learners being bored, disinterested, dispassionate and disengaged

(Trowler, 2010). Five of the participants agreed with Trowler's (2010) point of view that children show engagement if they are interested in the topic being taught. Participant E states that *"I guess it's like with anyone though, if you not interested in learning something then one would put in minimal effort and hope for a pass. I am able to pick out who is interested and who is not, but I do try and bring in content that will be of interest to everyone"*. The connection between the learners and teacher in the promotion of student engagement is a crucial one; however only two participants mentioned this aspect. If there is no connection, neither the teacher nor the learner will feel motivated to go the extra mile. As Participant F says *"if the interaction between the learner and teacher is lacking, the learner will not want to work for the teacher and therefore, his work will not be up to standard. I always try and form a bond with each learner, whether it is asking how there day was or asking about their pet – this for me, helps to encourage motivation and interaction in the class"*. In the graph below, Figure 12, this demonstrates that all seven participants stated that student engagement is the "active involvement of learners during the lesson". Participant A described it as *"I look to see who is being actively engaged in the lesson and then I know that when I ask questions those learners will be able to answer them"*. Participant D defined student engagement as *"I look to see how enthralled the learners are in their class activity. I know when children are focused and those who are day-dreaming – they are not engaged! I need to 'bring them back' to the work we are doing."* Six of the seven participants described these pedagogical actions as definitions of student engagement.

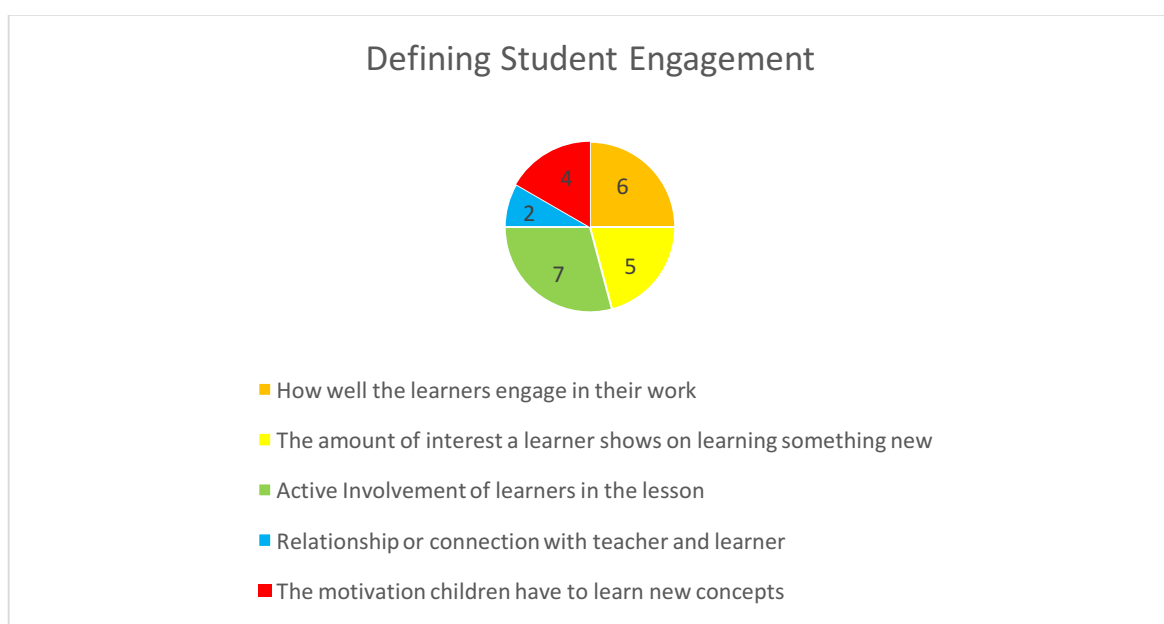


Figure 12

Figure 13 below, adapted by the researcher from Lawson & Lawson, (2013, P. 443) demonstrates that the dimensions of student engagement entail that the social is linked to the performance of the learners at school. The way each learner interacts with school work, experiencing boredom, or enjoying the learning experience moves beyond simply the emotional state of learners, but moves towards the behavioural and cognitive engagement of their identity as well (Lawson & Lawson, 2013).

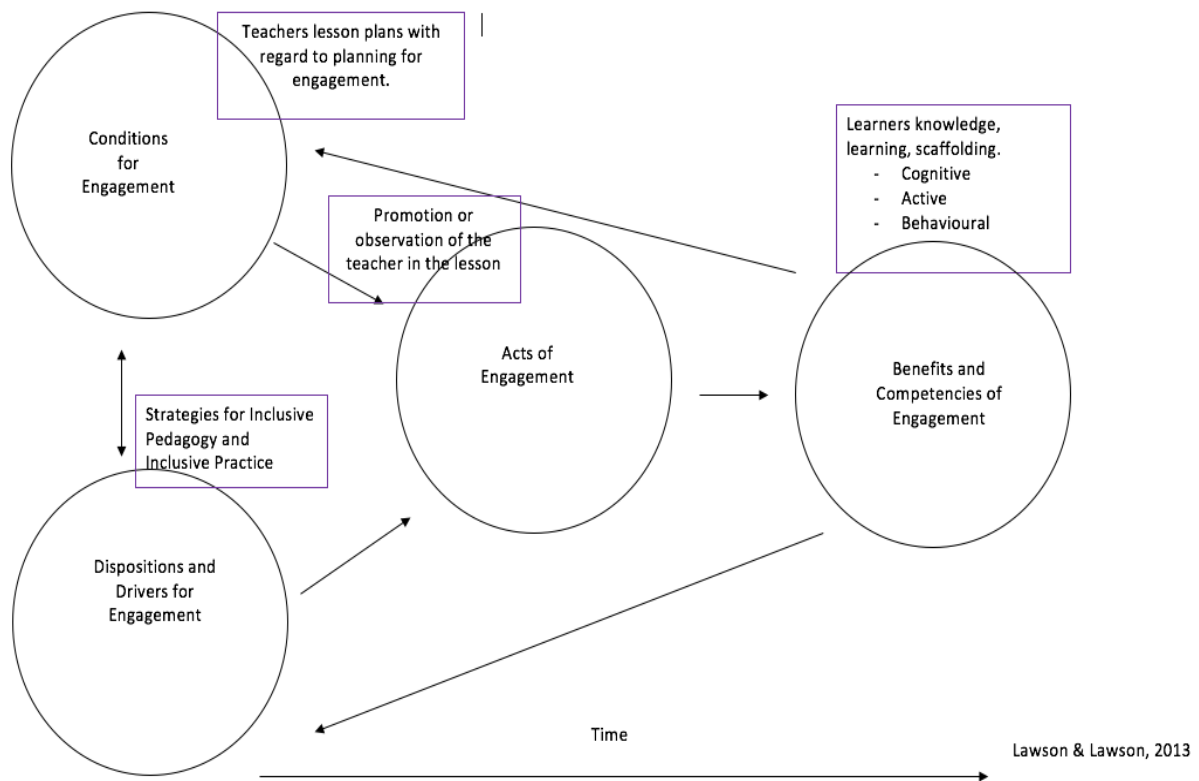


Figure 13

The Dispositions (adapted by the research for use in this research report)

4.3 Theme Two: Consistency of Classroom Routines

4.3.1 Using Physical Engagement

To stimulate learners' interest in learning, teachers may use physical activities or routines. Participant A noted the importance of physical engagement by indicating that she used this

exercise to settle her learners after break: *“before my boys come into the classroom after break, I take them to the field and we run around for 3 minutes. I find it’s just a way to let their amazing energy out in a productive way – they love it, and then they come inside and it is ‘wee and wash’ time. I love routines”*. Participant D stated that for her, the way of establishing physical routines was to do this: *“before we eat out lunch we come together on the carpet, sit in a ring and say a brocha.¹ It is routine and part of our religious, cultural belief”*. Participant F stated: *“my girls’ routine is, every morning during a lesson at 9:10 I take my girls out for a little snack break. I do believe that we need fuel to make our brains work”*. Three out of the seven participants the researcher observed, used such routines in their classroom - see Figure 14. The routines teachers use in their classrooms promote order. Every learner needs to participate in the routine, thus creating student engagement in the classroom. From the classroom observations, the researcher was able to see how the participants provided opportunities for learners to use their visual, auditory and kinaesthetic modalities.

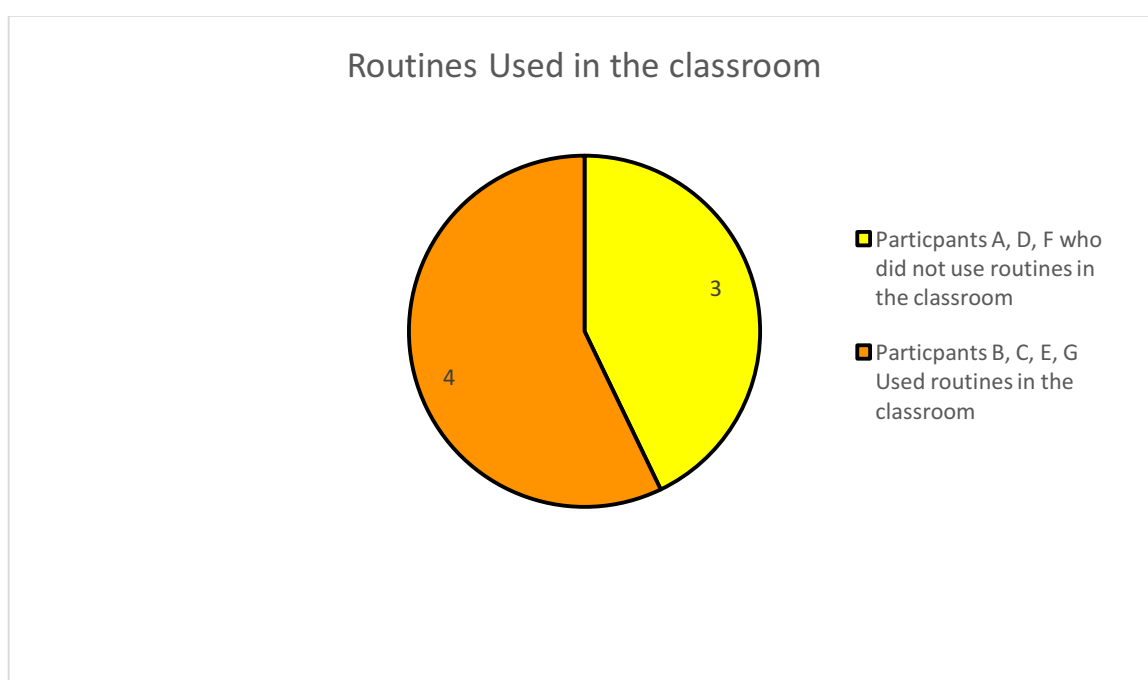


Figure 14

Some participants used “kinaesthetic learning”, which is defined as physical motions and activities during the learning period to get learners engaged in the lesson taking place (Ed

¹ Brocha – Prayer

Gloss, 2016). Participants B, C, F and G all used some form of physical engagement. Participant B called *“on your tummy boys, and up – let’s do ten push-ups”*. Participant C, akin to Participant B, mentioned the importance of physical exercise as a way to settle the learners before beginning a task: *“if I can do 25 jumping jacks then so can you, hurry up Grandpa’s!”* Participant G: *“I would like all of you boys to come outside, I am counting out loud and I want to see you do these burpees, properly”*. The participants B, C and G all use physical engagement to refocus their learners in the classroom, while Participant F states, *“I use a lot of rhythm in my classroom, clapping to the beat. This does two things; the first it focuses the brain and the second thing it does is allows the learners to make a noise in a productive manner.”* Both these strategies, according to the Educational Glossary (2016), work well within the classroom context. Teachers are using a strategy that is beneficial and productive for the learners’ concentration ability. Learners will answer questions by walking up to the chalkboard and writing down their answer, as opposed to answering questions aloud. Participant A: *“I like it that the boys sit in a ring and if they want to, they are able to stand up and talk. I don’t mind movement in the classroom - they are getting involved in the lesson”*. This practice of physical engagement assumes that learners are more likely to connect with the lesson content when they are using several parts of their brain at the same time, such as physical activity; writing; listening and speaking (Lawson & Lawson, 2013). Activities that are physical, such as quick exercises e.g. brain-gym, exercises and toilet breaks are implemented by five of the seven participants (A, B, C, F and G). As seen in Figure 15 below, the physical routines are put into place to reduce undesired behaviour such as distraction and fidgeting.

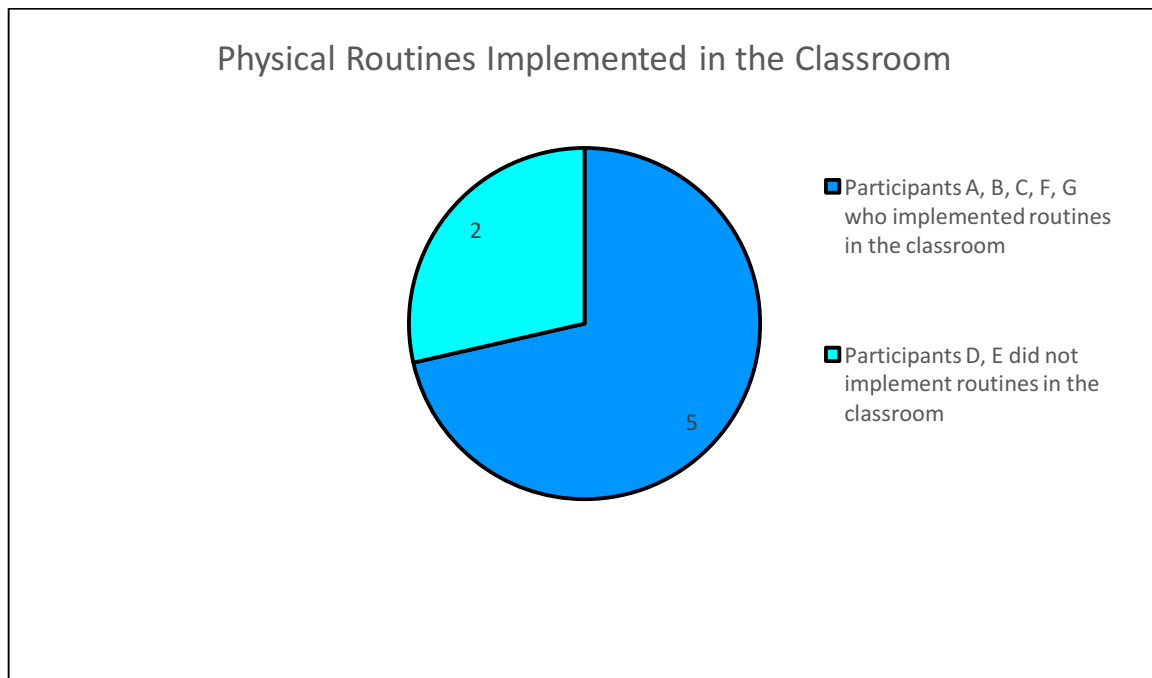


Figure 15

4.4 Theme Three: Assessing Learners through Cognitive Engagement

4.4.1 Using Cognitive Engagement

Learner's cognitive engagement is a psychological asset used by the person to perform academic tasks. Participant B mentioned this aspect when saying that, *"some children in my class just understand the concepts so quickly and easily, while others take a bit longer"* during the lesson. This aspect, as well as the learners' willingness or want to excel in his or her homework, no matter the level of difficulty, leads to active engagement (Ed Gloss, 2016; Lawson & Lawson, 2013). Similarly, Participant D mentioned that, *"in my class I know who is competitive, but competitive with themselves and their parents tell me, my child only went to bed at 22:00 pm trying to get an 'A' for this assessment. Those are the kinds of children who show an eagerness to excel even when the work is challenging"*.

Cognitive engagement may also be explained through how the learners participate in their learning tasks. They need to think about the concepts and ideas with regards to the task, by using "self-regulating and metacognitive strategies" in order to complete the content and tasks successfully (Lawson & Lawson, 2013, p. 436). For learners to succeed academically, they need to feel a sense of belief in themselves (Florian, 2013; Lawson & Lawson, 2013).

Cognitive engagement, in a nutshell, is about the process of observation, thinking, memory and problem-solving in learning and academic tasks by both the teacher and the learners. Children who succeed with ease are thought of as children who have a high level of cognitive engagement – these are the children who are self-motivated to do well and they have a desire to move beyond simply understanding their class work but also wish to achieve higher marks (Trowler, 2010; Lawson & Lawson, 2013).

In relating how learners are engaged in her classroom, Participant F mentioned that in her experience, learners often took self-motivation to another level that was negative: *“so for example, my one learner does not like it when she gets less than 89%. This pressure I don’t think is healthy, but she engages fully in the classroom and at home when homework is given. She practises her maths sums daily until she understands the concept well enough that she doesn’t make a mistake”*. This motivation, as Lawson and Lawson (2013) would describe, shows the learner as self-motivated and wanting to do well in her academic career. Such a student needs to be mediated carefully by a teacher as in the participants’ example, self-motivation, as stated, was not healthy. Her parents, wanting only the best for their child, place too much pressure on her and in this case, may have driven the learner to extremes.

For learners to be engaged in classroom activities, they need support from the teacher who encourages participation during lessons. According to (Florian, 2015; Ainscow, 2011), teacher support for learners promotes motivation for student engagement, be it at school or home. In addition, preparation for the lesson is important, specifically with a focus on student engagement to promote participation. Unpreparedness by the teacher may result in lack of focus and engagement by the learners (Lawson & Lawson, 2013; Osman, Jamaludin, Mokhtar, 2014).

An excerpt from a lesson, where participation was encouraged:

Participant A

“What is this (holding up a picture of a round challah²)? Learners I know, I know! I know it, it’s a challah and tastes yummy! Teacher: that’s right! Now who can tell me why we have round challah? Learner answers: because it’s going to be Rosh Hashanah, it’s a new year. Teacher: that is very good! ... Teacher: let’s use our magnifying glasses and see what

² Challa – Hebrew for Bread

yeast looks like when it's enlarged ... now what happens when we want the yeast to grow? ... let's add some water to it, maybe it will expand? Learner: it will expand if we put it in the sun also. Teacher: what a good idea, let's go outside and wait and see what happens".

In sum, participant A was encouraging student engagement by encouraging learners' participation in the lesson, creating a safe learning space for learners to be motivated and engaged in their work.

4.5 Theme Four: Promoting cooperative and collaborative learning

4.5.1 Using Social Engagement

There are a variety of strategies that teachers may use to encourage engagement through social interactions. Three out of the seven participants used social engagement in their lesson and spoke about the way in which they use social engagement in their classroom. Strategies for learners may include: paired or grouped work in order to work collaboratively on activities, projects and assessments. Participant E described social engagement in this manner: *"when we were on the carpet and the children were sitting in their ability groups I think they were listening and trying to assist each other if they got the concept confused"*. Using group work as a social engagement strategy encourages learners to help each other and in turn, solidifies their own idea of the concept taught. Participant F found that using the classroom tables as a whiteboard (she placed a large, clear plastic sheet over the table to create a space for learners to write on using whiteboard markers) created an environment where learners were socialising through the discussion of multiplication and grouping: *"writing on their desks as a group, because they were all very engaged having one learner teach them and then the rest of the learners"*. The teachers were aware that sometimes children can get off topic when discussing class work concepts, as Participant G pointed out: *"when the children work in groups I know I have to separate two boys because they just talk and talk and talk. Often, they will just walk around to speak to each other, so as you saw, I tried a new strategy which I think actually worked. I seated them next to each other and I observed them, and kept using positive reinforcements to encourage class work discussion"*.

4.5.2 Cooperative Learning

Johnson and Johnson (1999) asserted that "cooperation is working together to accomplish

shared goals". Within cooperative situations, individuals seek outcomes that benefit themselves and are beneficial to all other learners in the classroom. Participant A stated that she liked to *"have class discussions and then because they sit in groups which are random and the boys' ability levels range, I often ask them to have discussions in their groups. They come from different backgrounds and have different experiences, which I think we can all learn from, and it helps learners come to a conclusion from different perspectives"*. Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that learners are able to work together to amplify their own and each other's learning (Johnson, 2003). Participant D mentioned that she uses cooperative learning to promote social engagement in this manner: *"When sitting on the carpet, I asked them to speak in groups to try and help their friend get to the right answer. I think this helped them as they don't have the need to feel intimidated by telling me how to work out the answer, actually it helps the learners feel safe and answer the questions"*.

The researcher found that the majority, six of the seven participants, promoted student engagement by using cooperative learning in their classroom. Five participants related this to their Honours course, saying that this was a component of the course that was beneficial, as it provided an avenue to explore using inclusive practices in their classrooms to minimise learning barriers. Having a knowledge of the theory of co-operative learning, therefore, facilitated their practices. Learners' learning goals may be structured to promote cooperative, competitive, or individualistic efforts. Participant B promoted cooperative learning by stating that *"... talking to them about everything that we do involves relating to them on some level, it's never just giving the work. It's never just giving them the information. It's all about them getting to talk and to comprehend what has been taught"*. In the ideal classroom, all learners would learn how to work cooperatively with others, compete for fun and enjoyment, and work freely on their own.

After observing and having both pre-and-post interviews with the teachers, the researcher has come to the conclusion that the teacher's use of cooperative learning is an important strategy that can be employed in the classroom to promote the active and intellectual engagement of learners. This is done by having focused discussions before and after the lesson, and maintaining pair discussions throughout the lesson. Participant F highlighted the need for thorough preparation, stating that, *"in order to use cooperative learning in your classroom successfully, the teacher needs to be well prepared for the lesson; she needs to*

make the task and instructions clear, precise and explicit and to be able to pair learners for each to succeed in the lesson". This demonstrates that the teacher needs to know her learners well to promote all learners being actively involved with the activity and lesson (Lawson & Lawson, 2013).

4.5.2.1 Peer Teaching

A number of participants mentioned the following strategies as helpful in promoting student engagement in lessons such as, 'think-pair-share': After posing a question (particularly a difficult one), the researcher observed that teachers gave the learners an opportunity first, to think about the answer before answering it which was usually done in pairs. The teachers would allow the learners to speak about the topic and to write down some notes on what they would be discussing in front of the class. Participants B and F both teaching Math lessons, gave an overview of the lesson, asked learners questions, gave the learners an opportunity to first think about it, then they discussed it in their groups; after which the learners came back to a class discussion and answered the question. Similarly, Participant F uses a strategy called "Fair Share Sticks" and states that, *"it won't always be the strongest child with the weakest child. 'Fair share sticks' is basically it is just their names on sucker sticks and we choose very, very randomly, whoever's name is on the stick is the 'teacher' for their group"*.

This strategy is helpful in engaging learners in a more meaningful way. Think-pair-share provides time to think about the answer to a question or problem and time to discuss it with a group. Regardless of whether the result ends up being shared in the larger class discussion, the process often leads to more thorough, deeper thinking on the part of each learner (Usman, 2015).

Other reciprocal peer tutoring that was noted during the lesson observations by the researcher resonate with the following research conducted by Dioso-Henson, (2012), that states: give learners time in class to pair up in an in-class tutor/tutee relationship, taking turns between being the tutor and the tutee. They will benefit in two ways: 1) from explaining their own personal understanding of the material to another and, 2) from hearing the other explain, from their understanding or viewpoint, the same material (Dioso-Henson, 2012). The majority of the participants namely: G, B, C, D and F, used these strategies in in their lessons as observed by the researcher. In one of the observations in participant G's lesson, the

researcher observed one learner who was unsure of how to draw a dinosaur. Another learner assisted this learner to do so, thus cooperative learning was observed. This was also observed in participant B's classroom where peer-teaching was a constant and the learners were able to teach their partners to try to consolidate the concept of 2D and 3D shapes. Furthermore, the researcher observed participant C using peer-teaching in Maths where the learners shared their answers to the problem sums and had to share their reasons for coming to the solutions they had. Participant D used student engagement when she allowed the children to talk and discuss the concept of expanded notation in pairs which gave the learners an opportunity to discuss the concept with each other in a relaxed, informal manner without the pressure of being singled-out if they were not on track. An idea generated from participant F was to use what she called a Fair-Share-Stick method, which allowed learners the opportunity to take on specific roles within the group in which they were working and promote positive interdependence within the group. Each individual in the group was accountable for their responses and participation in the group. This allowed the group members to engage with one another whilst completing a task.

4.6 Theme Five: Stimulating Learners Interests

4.6.1 Using Emotional Engagement

There are various strategies participants used to develop positive emotions in learners, thus promoting successful student engagement in the process which should decrease negativity and/or prevent learners from dropping out (Pianta, et al, 2012). Participant F alluded to the notion of Pianta, et al (2012), that promotion of positive emotion in learners is significant when stating: *"I have always believed that the teachers make children's' learning experience either a good or bad one. As a foundation phase teacher, we are literally the stepping stones for learners to enjoy their schooling career, and I think we should make it a positive one. If children are not happy, and they do not want to come to school, I then feel like I have failed them. Research has shown that when learners are unhappy in the classroom, they have a higher drop-out possibility rate, so I do try and be kind everyday"*. A strategy which promotes a decreased dropout rate by promoting student engagement would be: to be kind, friendly, warm and welcoming. Also, by making your classroom policy open-door, your learners can speak to you about anything (Lawson & Lawson, 2013; Florian & Spratt, 2013). In the academic or learning environment teachers may ask learners 'how they are feeling' and

observing their moods, or the school may provide therapists, counselling and/or peer monitoring services which affords the learners greater opportunities to succeed academically, feel happy, positive and excited about school and learning. Participant A suggested that by *“noticing that something is wrong, and taking them outside to find out what is wrong. We will have a little chat to find out what is wrong and exactly what is going on, and then after that they feel a little bit better. And they come back in and are far more engaged. Because there is generally a reason why he is not engaged and in my experience, it is usually emotional, so if you can find out what is going on, they do feel better and more supported and then more willing to participate in the lesson”*. By creating a safe environment where the learner feels comfortable to discuss what is going on, shows the trust that has been built up between the teacher and learner, as Participant D says, *“I really just try to talk to them a lot, develop relationships with them”*. Similarly, participant E pointed out: *“These children are little still; I try to speak to them and see how they are feeling and often will try not put too much pressure on them but just push them enough to be extended during the lesson.”*

Hence, it is evident that teachers create the learning environment to make learning more conducive. The relationship between the learner and teacher at school, should build a strong and genuine relationship, which is intended to assist learners to succeed academically. Participant C mentioned experience as an important factor in promoting emotional engagement stating that, *“being in the teaching profession for eight years, I think I can read children quite well. I know when something is bothering them. There is no focus and that is when I step in and ask questions such as ‘what’s going on? Sometimes the child just needs time and sometimes he will speak, it just depends on the person”*. The adult should make inquiries about academic and non-academic concerns, taking an interest in the learners’ personal life and the academic help he or she needs (Pianta, et al, 2012; Ed Gloss, 2016). Participant B noted that it is a daily practice and mentions that she, *“for the first five minutes each morning, I always have a quick discussion with the boys, to see what their plans are for the day – showing an interest in them. I think creates an atmosphere of trust”*. Creating a safe space where learners feel that someone has taken an interest in their life, builds trust and the environment is shaped to promote learning and engagement.

All the participants agreed that when a learner is not emotionally focused on their learning, it can interfere with their concentration and will affect their marks. The participants were all

in agreement that teachers play an important role in the emotional development of learners and emphasized that teachers need to know their learners. Most suggested that by building trusting relationships to encourage open communication was an important factor to consider, when promoting student engagement. An example from the data from Participant G alludes to this idea when she states that, *“because I know my children and their backgrounds, I am able to ask questions and see if I can help them with the problem and then carry on with positive reinforcement and see him doing well in class. The boys usually just need some attention and this helps them do good work”*. The participants in this study were able to get to know their learners well, owing to the fact that their learners were with them for the majority of their school day in the Foundation phase. The participants were all class teachers, therefore they taught all the learning areas, with the exception, in some cases, of music and life skills (physical education) being taught by a subject specialist.

4.6.2 Individual Learner Needs

Taking individual learner needs into account, Graham and Slee (2006) and Florian and Spratt (2013), suggest that through teachers assigning labels to different children, the label becomes a signifier of which children need to be included during the lessons. This was particularly evident in Participant B’s interview, as she acknowledged that she was aware of the weaker learners who require additional support. An example was provided as to how she tried to make sure the weaker learners always understood what they were doing. Participant B reported on how she quietly approached a learner who was struggling and guided him to identify and rectify his mistakes in the task he was completing. Participant B mentioned how she uses heterogeneous grouping and had established a buddy-system in her context: *“I have placed my three weakest learners in one group. This is because I also have 3 other strong boys in that specific group, and if they need help, everybody can assist. When I see ‘Johnny’ struggling, I’m not sure if you saw, but I went up to him and tried to explain it in a different way. For me I think it is a better way of helping the learner grasp the concept rather than making him feel like he’s stupid in front of the whole class”*. Participant B, on the other hand, stated that the student engagement taking place is not in group a setting but, rather, it is on an individual level; the participant could draw out what the learner knew by using an individualized inclusive strategy. Although Participant B was discreet in how she supported the learner in her class, the learner’s difference of struggling with the concept was made

known, therefore resulting in “othering” the child (Graham & Slee, 2006). The Participant in this manner is pointing to the learners’ differences, making their differences known, therefore causing the exclusion and marginalisation of the learner. As argued by Florian & Black-Hawkins (2011), teachers should not isolate learners because of their individual differences, but should rather make support available to the whole class.

All seven participants were aware of the learners in their class who had individual learning needs as Participant C states that, *“of course all learners are different, they are individuals not robots! In inclusive education, I know you are meant to cater for every learner, but I don’t think it is doable. I have a small class; I can’t even imagine what a teacher would do with 60 learners in a class to cater for all individual needs. I am unable to cater to every single learners’ likes and dislikes, but I do try and provide support, within the curriculum content that would be of interest to them. I have found that over the years if you don’t do an activity that is of interest to the learners, then they become chatty, bored and don’t want to do the work”*. Even though Participant C has tried to be inclusive, Graham & Slee (2006), have argued that for teachers to include, does not mean that they are inclusive. As Lawson and Lawson (2013), Florian and Black-Hawkins (2011) and Reeves (2012) argue, for learners to be engaged in an inclusive environment they need to have an interest within the subject they are learning about, be motivated to learn and have a teacher who promotes inclusive pedagogical strategies so that learning may be afforded to everyone in the classroom.

Every participant stated that *“it is important to know your learners in the classroom”*. In a learning classroom environment, the learners’ behaviour and attitude can change very quickly, losing interest in what they are doing, becoming fidgety, lacking focus or concentration. Thus, the teacher needs to be able to adjust the lesson quickly and accordingly and make inclusive pedagogical decisions that would be of benefit to all of the learners (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Florian & Linklater, 2010; Florian & Spratt, 2013).

4.6.2.1 Differentiation

In any classroom in South Africa and the world, there are usually considerable differences amongst the learners; namely, gender, language, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, their socio-economic background and their ability, which produces different experiences and different everyday knowledge (DoBE, 2011). Participant G mentioned that differentiation, which she had learnt about in the Honours course, was a useful way to promote student engagement.

She stated that: *"in my classroom, even though it is only an all boy school, we have different nationalities, races, religions and culture. It is really lovely; the different knowledges and backgrounds are wonderful to have in the classroom setting"*. Differentiation is a theory that tries to deal with the diversity in the classroom. Differentiation is a philosophy for effective teaching principles to assist learners to learn effectively in terms of their readiness, interest and their learning profile or style preference. Participant A mentioned that differentiation was a way in which to cater for diverse abilities in her classroom saying that: *"In my lesson I try to use various activities that promote all learners taking part. Even if one learner doesn't really like discussing the topic, I try and encourage him to say one sentence. I like it when all the learners do all the activities. This, I believe, encourages them to do their best and stay engaged"*. The key idea for differentiation instruction is to boost the learning potential for each individual learner (Tomlinson, 2005). Differentiation in schools is needed to cater for all children to be able to receive the best possible education, so that all learners can achieve their best (Tomlinson, Brighton, Herberg, Callahan, Moon, Brimijoin, Conover & Reynold, 2003). South Africa's White Paper Six (DoE, 2001), supports the need for teachers to implement differentiation into classroom practice as a successful way to promote inclusive practices.

The participants were aware that children come to their classes with different abilities, skills and knowledge, socio-economic backgrounds and personalities. When discussing the learners in her class, Participant E stated: *"my classroom has a variety of learners, some are rich and some are poor, some of my learners come from tough backgrounds, abuse, divorce, anxiety. The personalities in my class are very different, some are outgoing, others are shy. I have a wide range of weak and strong learners academically too"*. To respond to learners' diverse needs, teachers need to use differentiation. One way of doing this is to differentiate teaching methods and strategies (Tomlinson, et al, 2003; Tomlinson, 2005; Raveaud, 2005; Florian, 2015).

The key to differentiated teaching methods entails the flexible use of a wide range of learning materials, methods of presentation, learning activities and lesson organisations (Tomlinson, 2005; Raveaud, 2005). Participant B defined differentiation as: *"if you do not prepare for your lesson, it is a problem! You need to be able to have prepared at least three different ways of explaining a concept to the learners, they learn differently. When I was teaching about 2D and*

3D shapes we discussed it, we drew it and in groups, they described what the similarities and differences were". Participant B suggested that creating a space for learning which was facilitated through the planning of diverse teaching and learning activities that catered for the diverse learning support needs of all the learners in the classroom is pivotal. This mirrors the call by the National Department of Education in South Africa to implement inclusive education in schools and the mention of differentiated instruction as one such way (DoE, 2010). Learning and teaching should also be structured to create access to activities that will create opportunities for everybody in the classroom, as per Lawson and Lawson (2013), who suggest that promoting student engagement in the classroom is an important teaching pedagogy to consider. Participant F considered the type of pedagogy to use when she stated that, *"in my lesson of grouping or multiplication, I first started off with revision because not all my girls understand the concept yet. I then told the girls to go back to their table and on their whiteboard tables and practise the sums. They then came back to the carpet and as a class we did it again. This reinforces and solidifies what the learners have been taught"*. During the observed lesson given by this participant, it was evident that she taught the concept followed by an activity that allowed for all learners to be actively involved in their learning by discussing with their partner or group members. The aim of differentiated instruction is to focus not so much on varying the 'what', but rather on "varying how students get access to specified content to address students' needs" (Santangelo & Tomlinson, 2009, p. 308).

4.7 Theme Six: Consistency of classroom routines

4.7.1 Using Behavioural Engagement

Teachers establish rules, routines, use consistent cues or reminders, or assign learner roles that adopt short-term behaviours, which are more conducive to learning (Trowler, 2010). Evidence that participants thought about a structural dimension to each lesson was highlighted through the following responses from their interviews: Participant C stated: *"I often try to remind my boys that they need to be focused, get out their right stationery before starting the activity – this reduces concentration issues and the activity can begin quickly"*. Creating routines for children is a way for them to remember to stay on task and for the desired behaviour to be produced. Participant B stressed the importance of behavioural engagement by stating that, *"I remind the children in my class, before we start the day, to get their glue, scissors, ruler, pen and pencil, Khokis and coloured pencils out; this way there is less*

distraction, and everything is at their table”.

Each grade is different due to their age and what is developmentally appropriate. Foundation phase teachers may use gestures (clapping), songs, or cues that assist younger learners to refocus on a lesson when they become side-tracked and disorderly. Participant A promoted behavioural engagement by using a song to settle her class *“roly poly roly poly clap, clap, clap. Roly poly, roly poly, hands in your lap.”* This song settled the children quickly and they went back to their seats. The teacher may clap three times or raise a hand, for example, which signals to learners that it’s time to settle down, return to their seats, start a new activity or stop talking. Participant F used the physical action of clapping to promote behavioural engagement: *“so the clapping activity was really just to get their whole body engaged and ready for learning”.*

Teachers may also establish rules and routines that support learners to stay on task and to remain engaged during the lesson (Pianta, et al, 2012). Participant D mentioned the importance of routines to promote behavioural engagement, for example, *“I’m quite strict about hands up and that sort of thing. So, I do choose the child with their hand up, but I also try to get the children who aren’t participating to participate by asking them, calling their attention back – that type of thing”.*

By introducing variation into a classroom routine, teachers can reduce the dreariness and potential disengagement that may occur when students sit in the same seat, doing similar tasks, for extended periods of time, where the repetition becomes quite boring. Participant E said: *“I like to teach new concepts to small groups one at a time, and I sometimes take the children outside or like today we sat on the carpet. This, for me, is to make sure the children are focused and not distracted by playing with a shoe lace”.* Teachers may break the class up into smaller groups, or the teacher may have rotating groups for different activities, or rearrange the seating into a circle for group discussion. Participant G mentioned the importance of flexibility within grouping to promote behavioural engagement and differentiation. describing how she created groups in her context: *“in my classroom even though I have already seated the boys in groups, I like to change who the boys work with, it’s a way I can see how the boys interact with different people and it is a chance for them to make new friends”.* Research on brain-based learning has also provided evidence that variation, novelty, and physical activity can stimulate and improve learning (Pianta et al, 2012; Ed Gloss, 2016).

For a classroom to be conducive behaviourally, there is a need for boundaries, rules, reminders and routine which are necessary for behavioural engagement to take place.

4.8 Theme Seven: Using the Classroom Context

4.8.1 Using inclusive strategies

Inclusive teaching strategies refer to any number of teaching approaches that address the needs of students with a variety of backgrounds, learning styles, and abilities. Participant F mentioned that she considers the strategies she will use in the classroom, mentioning the importance of tapping into the learners' interests. She states: *"I like to use strategies which work for the girls I teach; I often use anticipation and excitement to draw them into what we will be learning about. Today I brought baking ingredients, I saw the girls were curious they went up to my bag and then to their friends and started asking questions, 'I wonder what we will be doing or learning from those ingredients'. I use this strategy to engage the girls even before the lesson has begun"*. In this regard, these strategies contribute to an overall inclusive learning environment, in which students feel valued and engaged (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011). Often, when children answer a question and get it wrong, they feel despondent. This is due to the way the teacher reacts to the answer. Participant D spoke about being pedagogically sensitive to the learners, stating that: *"you answer in a way that is not putting the learner down. I never make my children feel like they are stupid. I always reassure them that they will get the answer the next time"*. When learners see their work in the classroom, they feel proud of it, as Participant C shared: *"learning takes place, then we will discuss the topic, and then they will put up the poster that they have created themselves. I think whatever is up in the classroom mustn't just be there for decoration which I think it can be. I think if it represents their learning, then they are proud of that"*. Participant A shared the same sentiment as Participants F and C when stating that she felt that it was necessary for learners work to be displayed in the classroom. *"I have a wall where all the children's artwork is on display and the boys always feel great when they see a new piece of artwork go up. The artwork that is put up is always theme based"*. All learners can reach their potential if inclusive strategies are used by their teachers. Participant G stated: *"I try to implement inclusive strategies into the classroom by walking around the classroom to ensure the learners are*

doing their work, and not just playing on their whiteboard". Participants B, F and C use a strategy to get the learners attention by *"calling out their name"* if the learners are distracted. Participant B: *"as soon as I see a learner become distracted, I immediately call out his name and ask a question. If he can't answer, I repeat the question and will come back to him in two minutes' time for him to answer the question. It is so important that children remain engaged during the lesson"*. Using inclusive strategies in the classroom helps the learners feel confident to answer the questions asked and feel involved in the lesson.

4.8.2 Classroom Conditions

The participants that the researcher interviewed suggested that it is important to know the learners in the classroom and all participants strove to create optimal classroom conditions conducive to developing a classroom climate that promoted participation for all. Participant A: *"the truth is, if you don't know your learners in the classroom, it becomes very difficult to teach"*. The participants said that by knowing the children they could decipher why a particular child in their class was acting up. Participant F mentioned that sometimes learners feel anxious or uncomfortable if they perceive the classroom conditions in a negative manner *"often my one little girl says she has a sore tummy and this will usually be in the Maths lesson. She doesn't feel confident in the subject, which is why she puts on a show"*. Qualities that a teacher should possess, as per the responses of the participants are: the teacher should be warm, kind, caring and welcoming and at the same time have boundaries and discipline. To make a classroom space feel warm and inviting as described by Rush and Balamoutsou, (2006), the classroom needs to be colourful; children's artwork or posters created by the children that connect to the theme should be put up in the class and this should create a space for engagement to take place. Participant C mentioned the importance of promoting accountability in her learners by promoting engagement where they published their own work to display in the classroom. *"I have stopped making posters for my classroom. I now ask the boys in the class to make the posters. This way they are involved and part of making the class an environment where learning takes place. The boys love creating the work. They are engaged in the topic being discussed and learn more by creating posters and books for the class"*.

The participants all agreed that the teacher should remain patient with learners and provide positive feedback to create optimal conditions for learning that focus on the inclusive

philosophy of minimizing barriers and promoting participation for all. Participant A mentioned the promotion of a positive classroom climate as encouraging engagement through communication with her learners in a reciprocal manner. She said that: *“I don’t want my boys to be afraid of me, I would like them to be able to ask questions, and that is what I try and do in my classroom. I am very patient with the boys and answer all their questions, I try not get irritated if they don’t understand something”*. These behaviours encourage learner participation and lower levels of classroom anxiety. In this regard, Trowler (2010) argues that the stress in the classroom created by some strict and demanding teachers distracts learners from learning. The teacher needs to be flexible in the classroom, and needs to be able to make decisions quickly because learners have different ways of learning and thinking (Trowler, 2010). As alluded to by Participant B: *“if I can see the children are not understanding, I quickly have to think of a way to re-explain the concept. This is frustrating for everyone, for me and the children who don’t understand what to do”*. During the classroom observation of Participant F, the researcher noticed that the participant did not move on to teach three times tables as the two times table concept had not been solidified by all the learners. In the post-interview Participant F explained: *“I couldn’t move on, I needed to make sure everyone understood the basic understanding of grouping in two’s before we could move on”*. Too much teaching, rather than activities and interaction with learners could be problematic, as Participant G, after reflecting on the lesson observed, added that: *“as this is my first year of teaching, I thought that the more I spoke, the more learners learnt. This is not the case, and I quickly learnt to change my teaching strategy.”* This evidenced that Participant G was thinking about the action of teaching and was able to be flexible when planning future lessons that would focus on how to gain the optimum interaction with the learners. Most participants agreed that if conditions in the classroom are not optimal then it may be difficult to get learners to interact with the tasks at hand. Participant E emphasized this idea by stating: *“I try to create a space where the children want to learn, and that they are not scared of me. However, I do have boundaries and the children know not to overstep them”*.

4.8.2.1 Technology in the classroom

With the implementation of inclusive practices in classroom, there are many factors that can either enable or constrain the learners’ participation in class. It was noted during the pre- and post-interviews that the participants discussed the involvement of school management

in the attempts to develop an inclusive education philosophy at most of the schools. All the participants mentioned that the school principals and Grade Heads encouraged the staff members to see how they could include all the learners in their teaching and learning practices in the schools observed, specifically with the use of technology. It was interesting to note that Participant F mentioned that the head of school was conversant with the theory of inclusive education and promoted that staff implement inclusion in this particular school. *"I'm very lucky at the school I work in, the principal is so clued up on inclusive education and wants it to be used throughout the day. She sends us on courses to help give us strategies and to make us more knowledgeable about inclusion"*. This shows how school leadership plays an important role in getting teachers to re-evaluate and think about how they can promote inclusion. Although school leadership can play a pivotal role in allowing for inclusion, resources can either constrain or enable inclusive pedagogy. This was observed in a lesson where Participant B used smart boards and technology in the classroom.

Through the provision of resources such as smart boards and technology, these devices can be identified as a limitation for encouraging inclusive pedagogy. Speaking about limitations regarding the use of technology, Participant F stated that, *"we often work on the smartboard, but I think it is important to also not to use it and for the girls to engage with whiteboards and be able to create their own work without technology."* Three participants identified difficulties with using technological devices, due to some learners coming from different financial contexts. Participant C was pedagogically sensitive to the issue of socio-economic constraints when she stated that, *"even though this is a private school, not everyone is in the same socio-economic bracket. Some of my boys do not know how to use an iPad. We do, however, teach them computer and tablet skills"*. In the interviews, some participants mentioned that a lack of technology could be a factor hindering learning. This utterance from Participant G highlighted this: *"If we had the resources of iPads, perhaps then it would have been more accurate for me to see if they actually understood it, and not just got from when they heard the little boy say "Stegosaurus dinosaur" and he shouted the answer out. I could've been more aware of where they were currently at if I had those resources"*. Similarly, Participant D mentioned that *"my school is very little, as you can see we don't have any technological resources in the classroom. When I bring in the T.V. the learners get so excited to watch, it's what they know, it's what they have grown up with"*. One participant, Participant G, stated how she was aware of the learner's interactions with their environment and social contexts,

and how this influences a learner's development, yet she was concerned that by not utilising technology she was compounding exclusion, but on the other hand, suggested that if there was technology in the classroom, it would be beneficial for all. Participant F defined an inclusive practice that could enable learning through the use smart boards and whiteboards, but maintained that there needs to be a balance between the two. Her argument was that smart boards are ideal for whole class teaching, as all the children are encouraged to participate and interact during the lesson. Another interesting factor mentioned by Participant D was the notion of the 21st century child - stating that children of this era are accustomed to technology, it is part of their lives. She implied indirectly that schools should follow suit with regards to implementing technology into the classroom. An argument was raised that technology is not the central focus of all lessons and that it should not be, as was stated by Participant E when describing having to change track due to the malfunctioning of technology. *"My Smartboard has been broken for the past couple of weeks, it has actually been really nice for me to think about creating a way for the learners to be excited to learn without using YouTube or the internet. We sang, wrote on the whiteboard, made resources – this made me actively involved in creating resources and activities that the learners would enjoy"*. This participant promoted student engagement in a different form other than the usual Smartboard resource, and the learners enjoyed the variation in the lessons. Variation with the way the teachers give lessons helps to promote student engagement in the classroom (Lawson & Lawson, 2013).

4.8.3 Reflections on learning for Inclusive Education

A feature of many studies that have been conducted about inclusive education reveal that many teachers feel that teacher education for inclusion has not prepared them adequately to teach inclusively (Forlin, 2010; Florian, 2012; Engelbrecht, Nel, Nel & Tlale, 2015). All seven participants expressed the same thought - that studying a post-graduate degree in an inclusion Honours course would be of benefit for them in the classroom; however, the participants said that the theoretical aspect of the course was great, but all emphasised that they required, and would have benefited from, more practical knowledge of how to implement strategies to minimise learners' barriers to learning. Figure 13 demonstrates how many participants implement what they learnt during the Honours Course of Inclusive Education. Participant C stated: *"doing this Honours course in Inclusive Education, I thought*

that it would make me a better teacher in terms of being inclusive. However, I feel that it is more theory based than practical skills based”.

Similarly, Participant C felt that the content provided in their teacher education for inclusion was very theoretically inclined and did not provide them with the practical skills of how to implement the theory into practice.

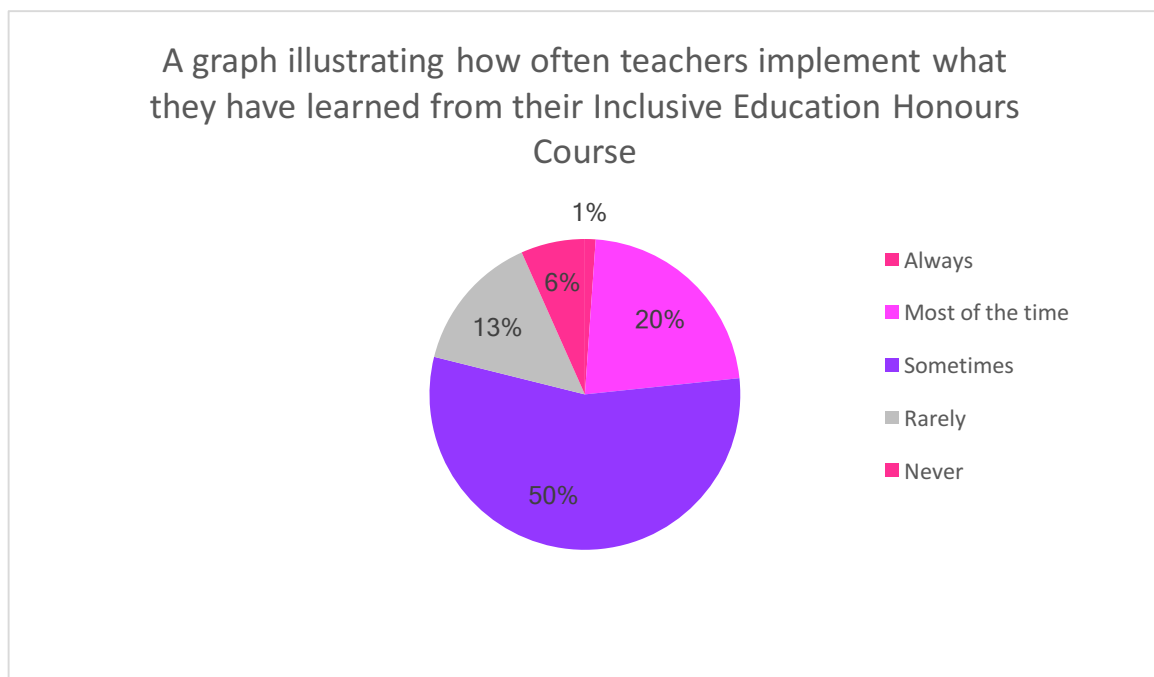


Figure 13

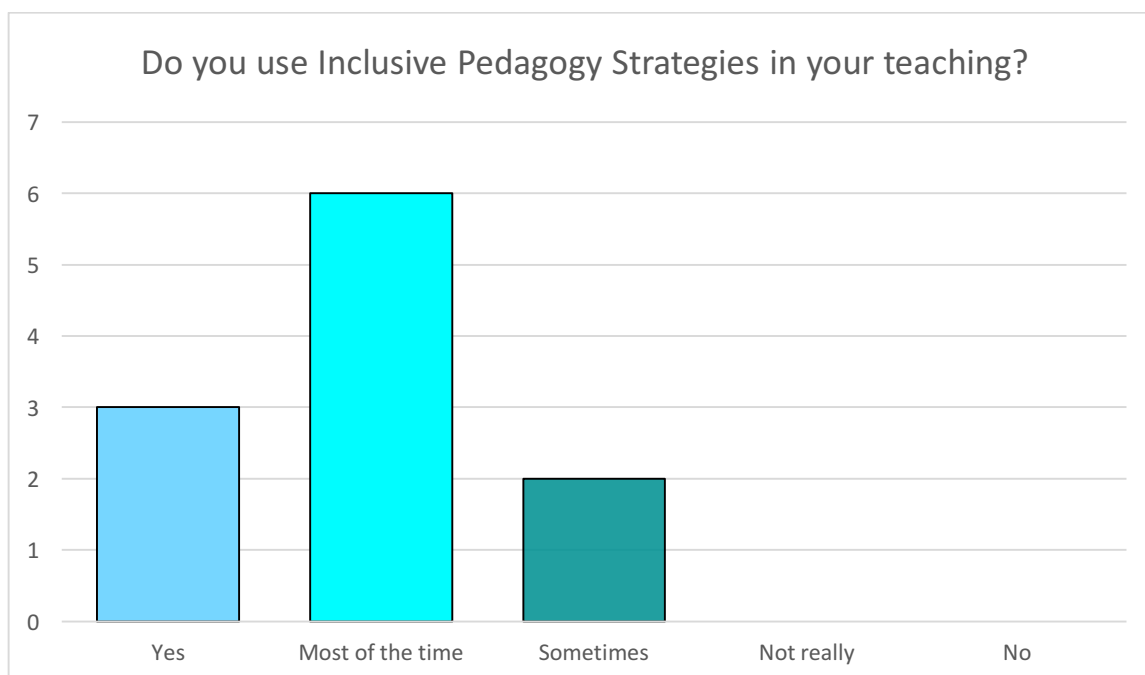


Figure 14

Participant A stated: *“to be honest, I am quite disappointed that we never really got many practical examples of how to implement inclusive education into the classroom. I just felt it was too theoretical based”*. This leaves a gap between theory-based knowledge and practise-based reality. This gap needs to be closed.

4.9 Conclusion

When interpreting the results of the data collected, the researcher found that many of the participants faced constraints when thinking about how to minimise barriers to learning. The themes that were generated from the data collection in this chapter showed that in some areas, using Lawson and Lawson (2013) and Florian (2013), it was recognised that the participants were thinking about how to implement strategies for inclusive practice. The lesson observations suggested that there was an attempt to promote student engagement on some levels by using strategies such as ‘physical engagement’; cooperative learning (peer teaching and think-pair-share); motivation to encourage learners to do well; self-reflection was a strategy some participants used after teaching a lesson as the more one self-reflects the more improvement one can implement; and guidance from the rest of the school to implement inclusive strategies.

Having offered a comprehensive discussion of the research findings using Florian's (2013) framework to examine teachers' use of inclusive pedagogy in their classrooms and Lawson and Lawson's (2013), student engagement model, chapter five will contain the conclusion for the research study.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Findings

5.1. Introduction

This chapter will provide a discussion of the research findings in relation to the aims which motivated the study. The results of this research study are discussed within the context of the literature that has been used throughout this report, which has been relevant to addressing the research questions based on inclusive education and student engagement.

5.2 Summary of Findings

From the data that was gathered from the survey, observation of classroom lessons being audiotaped and reflective semi-structured post interviews, the researcher was able to identify that the participants have used some theory which was learnt during their Honours year, but mostly, they drew on aspects from their experience being in the classroom and knowing their learners to promote engagement as they effectively apply some inclusive pedagogy. The

participants exercised their conceptual tools for inclusive pedagogy. This was understood by the teachers reflecting on how they applied their understanding of the concepts of engagement and inclusion into their teaching of the lesson. The outcomes from the findings will be highlighted in relation to answering the research questions.

5.3.1 Which inclusive practices do teachers use to promote student engagement in the classroom context?

The participants described how they made informative decisions in their planning and preparation, with the intention of allowing for meaningful participation of all the learners during their lessons. The participants described responding to the learners' differing needs through the selection of content to be taught. However, it was identified that the participants' understandings of bell curve thinking (Florian, 2012; Fendler & Muzzaffar, 2008), influenced the decisions they made, some labelling children according to their abilities (Hart, 1998). The participants also recognised that learners are all different. This was evident in the participants purposefully selecting everyday learning materials to teach their lessons to accommodate the different learners' backgrounds. These findings are corroborated from the study completed by Westbrook and Croft (2014), which similarly identifies teachers as being responsive to different learning needs. Conversely, the participants also reflected on how they were non-inclusive during their teaching practices. This was conveyed as the participants highlighted that they did not provide sufficient examples to illustrate learning content during the lessons, as well as that the manner in which the lesson was structured may not have met every child's learning needs.

5.3.2 What is meant by student engagement?

The teachers all had an understanding of what student engagement meant; however their definitions all differed. This correlates to the work of Pike and Kuh (2005), Astin (1984), Coates (2009), Taylor and Parson's (2011) who used different terminology to describe their concepts of student engagement. Their views were based on how learners learn from what they do. The participants used different strategies to promote student engagement in the classroom. Some teachers used prior knowledge, asking lots of questions, making the lesson exciting and creating anticipation, while other strategies used were: releasing excess energy by doing star-

jumps, push-ups and planks (Lawson & Lawson, 2013). The participants have understood and tried to implement student engagement into their classroom.

5.3.3 Which Inclusive practices are implemented in the classroom to promote student engagement?

The participants further identified that when implementing the planning for their lessons, they made observational judgments about their learners' needs. Their inclusive pedagogical strategies were applied during their whole class teaching, as the participants accounted for responding to the individual learner needs, through helping children who were battling with their work. Their pedagogical awareness was extended to identifying the characteristics of the whole class. This was recognised in adaptations being made to the lesson plans, for example, when the learners did not grasp a concept that was taught, or if the lesson needed to be shortened due to the learners no longer concentrating, the educator made an adaptation. The participants also elaborated on using classroom discourse to encourage acceptance and respect amongst the learners in their classes. Through teacher education for inclusion, the participants were prepared to identify how they could respond to the learners during the lesson with the intentions of ensuring that each learner was learning effectively (Florian, 2013). Lastly, the participants used behavioural, emotional, social, physical and cognitive engagement to promote the learners being involved in the lesson and activities. Lawson and Lawson (2013) suggest that when teachers are able to promote student engagement into their classroom the learners enjoy coming to school, learning and engaging with their work and this therefore influences their view on school and boosts their self-confidence.

5.3.4 How do teachers consider student engagement in lesson planning and presentation in their classroom?

From the overall findings, the participants expressed having a positive attitude towards teaching inclusively and trying to promote active engagement from the learners. This positive attitude was reported by the teachers showing a willingness of accepting and tolerating the diversity of learners, and cultivating a culture in their classroom that allowed for the learners to accept one another's differences. Furthermore, the teachers indicated how they were willing to continue their professional development in order to be responsive to the learners' needs. This shows that teacher education for inclusion had a positive effect on the teacher's

role. The participants showed a clear understanding of how important it is to support the learners, as well as further their education, in order to have greater understanding of being pedagogically receptive in their inclusive practices of having an engaged classroom.

5.4 Table Presenting the Findings

Themes	Summary of Findings
Promoting student engagement through motivating learners	The participants stated that if there is no motivation, the teaching and learning process becomes very difficult and unpleasant for the learner and teacher to be in the classroom environment (Reeve, 2012; Lawson & Lawson, 2013). Motivation for learners becomes evident in the learners' marks received. The higher the learner's score, the more motivated they will be to keep doing well. However, when a learner fails an assessment, test or activity they feel demotivated and unwilling to want to succeed, or put in the effort to do well in class.
Consistency of classroom routines	The participants claimed that placing routines into the classroom environment enforces student engagement for all. The routines that teachers use in their classroom promotes a sense of order and every learner needs to participate in the routine, thus creating student engagement in the classroom (Lawson & Lawson, 2013; Florian, 2013). By introducing variation into a classroom routine, teachers can reduce the dreariness

	and potential disengagement that may occur when students sit in the same seat, doing similar tasks, for extended periods of time.
Assessing learners through cognitive engagement	Learners' succeeding in their schoolwork have a high cognitive engagement, due to their motivation to do well in academic work. For learners to be engaged in the classroom, they need to be surrounded by a teacher who encourages participation during lessons (Lawson & Lawson, 2013). The participants stated that teachers need to have an in-depth knowledge about what needs to be taught, and they need to challenge the learner's thinking.
Promoting cooperative and collaborative learning	In most classrooms, the researcher observed the participants using some form of cooperative and collaborative learning strategy. Using this socially engaged strategy in the classroom encourages learners to help each other understand the concept and in-turn, solidifies their own idea of the concept taught. The participants voiced that the teacher's role for using cooperative learning is to keep learners more actively engaged intellectually in the lesson. This is done by having focused discussions before and after the lesson, and maintaining pair discussions throughout the lessons (Florian, 2013; Lawson & Lawson,

	2013). This strategy is helpful in engaging learners in a more meaningful way.
Stimulating learner's interests	All participants had the same view that teachers need to be flexible in the classroom space. They may need to redesign the lesson there and then to make learning more conducive, using inclusive pedagogical decisions that would be of benefit to the learners (Florian, 2013). The relationship between the learner and the teacher at school needs to be honest, which assists to create trust for both parties, thus encouraging learners to succeed academically (Lawson & Lawson, 2013; Reeve, 2012). All the participants agree that when a learner is not emotionally focused on their learning, it can interfere with their concentration and will affect their results.
Using the classroom context	Placing learners' own work in the classroom promotes learners to want to do well in class (Florian, 2013). When learners see their work in the classroom they feel proud and excited to be in their class, that they helped design and create. The researcher found that learners are capable of reaching their potential if inclusive strategies are used by the teachers. Knowing the children provided an inside view into the learners' way of thinking and educators can answer

	questions as to why learners are acting up in the classroom. For learners to feel comfortable and feel safe in the classroom environment, the researcher found that the qualities teachers should possess include being: warm, kind, caring and welcoming and at the same time have boundaries and discipline. While analysing the research, the researcher found that technology can be seen as both a positive and negative in the classroom. Some participants felt that technology was a wonderful resource to use in the classroom. While another participant felt there are other ways to use and make resources that do not rely on technology, as some learners do not have access to technology at home.
--	--

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter suggests that the participants have tried their best to implement inclusive educational practices and strategies into their classrooms by promoting student engagement, using both theoretical based knowledge from their Honours Course in Inclusive Education, but also through their experience as teachers. Allowing the participants to reflect on their lesson from the post-interview, they should be increasingly confident in their ability to change their classroom environment and meet the needs of all their learners in terms of being engaged in the classroom using student engagement as an inclusive strategy. In the following chapter, the researcher will be concluding the research report.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

6.1. Introduction

Teachers have been identified as playing an important role in attaining inclusion (Florian, 2012). Despite many plans that have been implemented to prepare teachers to be responsive to learner diversity (Florian, 2012), teachers have stated that practicing inclusive pedagogy is very difficult (Florian, 2012; Rouse, 2008; Loreman, 2010). This has resulted in questions being asked to determine the extent to which post-graduate in-service teacher education is able to promote student engagement in order to enact inclusive pedagogical reasoning, actions and attitudes in classroom practices (Lawson & Lawson, 2013).

Post-graduate teacher education for inclusion is recognised in its ability to prepare teachers to respond and accommodate learners (DoE, 2001); however, there is little “systematic research for teacher education” in determining the impact in practices (Florian, 2012, p.217). Identifying the silence in research, this study has focused on recognising the extent to which teachers, who have done inclusive education post-graduate coursework, use inclusive pedagogical practices to promote student engagement in their classrooms. The aim of this chapter will be to provide a conclusion, by reviewing the components that have comprised the research study.

6.2 Methodology

The study reported on in-service teachers’ classroom practices, in inclusive education, to promote student engagement practices in their Foundation Phase classrooms. The research study reports on a small-scale quantitative survey. The survey was compiled to select the sample of participants for my research. The link for the online survey was emailed to post-graduate students who had completed an Honours Course in Inclusive Education. The survey was completed anonymously; however, if the respondents were willing to be contacted for further participation in the research, an option was provided for them to specify their contact

details on the survey. From the respondents who were willing, the researcher made a purposeful selection of only Foundation Phase teachers and only those who had completed the Honours Inclusive Education Course, whom the researcher identified to be employing the most inclusive practice. Of the seven participants that were selected, all were asked to teach one half hour lessons that were audio-recorded. They were also asked to participate in a pre-and-post semi-structured interview to reflect on the lessons that they taught.

6.3 Recommendations

From the findings, the Foundation Phase teachers reflected on their in-service teacher education for inclusion. They identified there to be an insufficient integration of practical examples of applying inclusion into practice. This has been a shared view amongst many studies, identifying there to be a “theory-practice gap” in teacher education for inclusion (Forlin, 2010). These insights can offer guidance for adjustments that can be made to pre-service teacher education for inclusion, by providing all teachers with more practical examples of how to teach inclusively. A recommendation could be suggested for schools’ practices, such as a supportive school leadership system that encourages teachers to think about the diversity of learners and how they can provide support for all the learners. This the researcher believes, would enhance and promote student engagement and learning for all.

6.4 Strengths and Limitations of the Study

Upon reflecting on the process of the study, the limitations of execution were that the researcher had a small sample of respondents who participated in the online survey. In conceptualising the data that has been obtained, this needs to be considered in order to understand that the conclusions are not a representation of all in-service teachers, as well being confined to a single phase - Foundation. A positive outcome for the research can be identified in that the interviews were a reflective process for the teachers, allowing for them to become more aware of their inclusive pedagogy. However, to strengthen this attribute, it is crucial to interview the teachers soon after the lesson is taught. This would enable the teachers to have an enriched discussion and recall the specific moments during their lessons. Furthermore, the study only focused on working with teachers who had a post-graduate degree in Inclusive Education and their reflections on applying inclusive pedagogy into their

practices in the classroom to promote student engagement. This aspect could be further researched to support the research findings.

6.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the effective implementation of inclusion into practice for promoting student engagement is not solely reliant on equipping teachers with the knowledge from the Honours Degree. Rouse (2008), expresses that teachers need to apply inclusion into practice and believes that all individuals can learn. The difference of effective inclusive practices is reliant on teachers' attitudes (Florian, 2013). If teachers' beliefs for inclusion are positive, they will effectively identify how to alleviate the marginalisation and exclusion of learners and promote an actively engaged learning experience for all learners. However, it is imperative to note that the implications for teachers to provide a supportive context, can either constrain or enable inclusive pedagogy being employed.

Reference List

- Ainscow, M., (2011). *Some Lessons from International Efforts to Foster Inclusive Education*. *INNOVACIÓN EDUCATIVA*, n.o 21, pp. 55-74
- Ainscow, M., & Miles, S. (2008). *Making Education for All inclusive: where next?* Prospects, 37(1), 15 – 34.
- Ainscow, M., Booth, T., & Dyson, A. (2006). *Improving Schools, Developing Inclusion*. London: Routledge.
- Artiles, A.J., Kozleski, E. B. & Waitoller, F.R. (2011). *Inclusive Education: Examining equity on five continents*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Astin, A.W (1984) Student Involvement: A Developmental Theory for Higher Education *Journal of College Student Development* 25, pp 518-529

Barnes, C. & Mercer, G. (2013). *Exploring Disability. (2nd Edition)*. Cambridge: Polity Press. (Chapters 1, 2 and 4).

Baxter, P & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4), 544-559.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.

Blomberg, J., J. Giacomini, A. Mosher and P. Swenton-Wall (1993): Ethnographic Field Methods and Their Relation to Design. In D. Schuler and A. Namioka (eds.): *Participatory Design: Principles and Practices*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, pp. 123–156.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3: 77-101.

Byers, R and Rose, R. (2004). *Planning the Curriculum for Learners with Special Educational Needs: A Practical Guide*. London: Fulton Publishers.

Chingangwana, M. (2015). Exploring the Nature of Support for Reception Year Teachers of Learners who are Severely Intellectually Impaired., M.A. (Unpublished) *University of Johannesburg*. Retrieved from: <https://ujdigispace.uj.ac.za>

Coates, H. (2007) A Model of Online and General Campus-Based Student Engagement *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education* 32 (2), pp 121–141

Coates, H. (2009) *Engaging Students for Success - 2008 Australasian Survey of Student Engagement*. Victoria, Australia: Australian Council for Educational Research.

Cohen D, Crabtree B. "Qualitative Research Guidelines Project." July 2006. <http://www.qualres.org/HomeSemi-3629.html>

Cologne, K. (2013). *Inclusion in education towards equality for students with disability*. Australia: Macquarie University.

Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed method approaches*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE

Davis, P. and Florian, L. (2004). *Teaching Strategies and Approaches for Pupils with Special Educational Needs: A Scoping Study*. London: David Fulton Publishers.

Department of Education (DoE). (2001). *White Paper Six: Special Needs Education-Building an Inclusive Education and Training System*. Pretoria: Department of Education.

Department of Education. (2010). *Guidelines for Inclusive Teaching and Learning*. Pretoria: Department of Education.

Department of Education. (2011). *Guidelines for Responding to Learner Diversity in the Classroom Through Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements*. Pretoria: Department of Education.

Department of Basic Education. (2014). *Draft Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Dictionarycom. (2016). *Dictionarycom*. Retrieved from <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/impairment>

Donald, D. R., Lazarus, S., & Lolwana, P. (2010). *Educational Psychology in Social Context: Educational Psychology in Social Context: Ecosystemic Applications in Southern Africa: Ecosystemic Applications in Southern* (4th ed.). Cape Town: Oxford University Press Southern Africa.

Donohue, D., & Bornman, J. (2014). The challenges of realising inclusive education in South Africa. *South African Journal of Education*, 34(2), 1–14.

Dupree, N. (2011). The Social vs Medical Model of Disability, *Communities Will Be Forced To Choose*. [Weblog]. Retrieved from <http://www.nickscrusade.org/the-social-vs-medical-model-communities-have-to-choose/>

Ed Gloss (2016). The glossary of education reform. Retrieved from <http://edglossary.org/hidden-curriculum>

Engelbrecht, P. (1999). A theoretical framework for inclusive education. In Engelbrecht, P., Green, L, Naicker, S. & Engelbrecht, L (Eds), *Inclusive education in action in South Africa*. Pretoria: Van Schaik, 3-11.

Engelbrecht, P & Green, L (Eds). 2001. *Promoting learner development: preventing and working with barriers to learning*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Engelbrecht, P. & Green, L. (Eds). (2007). *Responding to the challenges of inclusive education in Southern Africa*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Engelbrecht, P., Nel, M., Nel, N. & Tlale, D. (2015). *Enacting understanding of inclusion in complex contexts: classroom practices of South African teachers*. South African Journal of Education, 35(3), 1-10.

Florian, L., Young, K. & Rouse, M. (2010) 'Preparing teachers for inclusive and diverse educational environments: studying curricular reform in initial teacher education course', *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 14(7), pp. 709–722.

Florian, L. (2013). Reimagining Special Education: Why New Approaches are Needed, In *The Sage Handbook of Special Education*. (pp. 9-22). London: Sage Publications.

Florian, L. (2015). What counts as evidence of inclusive education? *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 29(3), 286 – 294.

Florian, L., & Black-Hawkins, K. (2011). Exploring inclusive pedagogy. *British Educational Research Journal*, 37(5), 813–828.

Florian, L., & Linklater, H. (2010). Preparing teachers for inclusive education: using inclusive pedagogy to enhance teaching and learning for all. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 40(4), 369 - 386.

Florian, L., & Spratt, J. (2013). Enacting inclusion: a framework for interrogating inclusive

practice. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 28(2), 119–135.

Forlin, C. (2010). Teacher Education for inclusion, In Rose, R. (ed.) *Confronting Obstacles to Inclusion: International Responses to Developing inclusive education*. (pp. 155-170). Oxon: Routledge.

Garner, R. (2015). *Breakfast for children 'means good marks*. Retrieved from <http://www.iol.co.za/lifestyle/family/kids/breakfast-for-children-means-good-marks-1946425>

Gilbert, J. (2007). Catching the Knowledge Wave: Redefining knowledge for the post-industrial age. *Education Canada*, 47(3), 4-8. Canadian Education Association. www.cea-ace.ca

Googlecoza. (2016). *Googlecoza*. Retrieved from [https://www.google.co.za/search?q=observation checklist template for inclusive teaching](https://www.google.co.za/search?q=observation+checklist+template+for+inclusive+teaching)

Graham, L., & Slee, R. (2006). Inclusion? In *Proceedings Disability Studies in Education Special Interest Group*. San Francisco: American Educational Research Association (AERA) 2006 Annual Conference.

Gwalla-Ogisi, N., Nkabinde, Z. & Rodriguez, L. (1998). The social context of the special education debate in South Africa. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*. Routledge, Vol. 13 (1): pp. 72-85.

Hall, K., & De Lannoy, A. (2015). Education - School attendance. *Statistics on children in South Africa*. Retrieved from www.childrencount.cl.org.za/indicator.php?id=6&indicator=15.

Hall, K., & Meintjies, H. (2015). Demography – Children in South Africa. *Statistics on children in South Africa*. Retrieved from <http://www.childrencount.org.za/indicator.php?id=1&indicator=1>

Hernández, R. (2008). Student Engagement in Assessment for Learning retrieved from <http://icep.ie/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/Hernandez.pdf>

Hidden curriculum (2014). In S. Abbott (Ed.). The glossary of education reform. Retrieved from <http://edglossary.org/hidden-curriculum>

Hu, S and Kuh, G D (2003) Diversity Experiences and College Student Learning and Development. *Journal of College Student Development* 44 (3), pp 320–334

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. (1999). Learning together and alone: Cooperative, competitive, and individualistic learning (5th Ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Johnson, R., & Onwuegbuzie, A. (2004). Mixed Methods Research: A Research Paradigm Whose Time Has Come. *Educational Researcher*, 33(7), 14–26.

Kearney, A. (2011). *Exclusion from and Within School: Issues and Solutions*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Kershner, R. (2008). Learning in inclusive classrooms. In P. Hick & R. Kershner (Eds.), *Psychology for Inclusive Education: New Directions in theory and practice* (pp. 52 –65). Oxon: Routledge.

Kuh, G D, Whitt, E J and Strange, C (1989). The Contributions of Institutional Agents to High Quality Out-of-Class experiences for College Students *Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association* San Francisco, CA, 27–31

Landsberg, E, I. (2013). *Program in Grade- R Teaching Young Learners Who Experience Barriers to Learning and Development*. Centre for community Training and development. UNISA.

Lawson, M.A & Lawson, H.A. (2013). New Conceptual Frameworks for Student Engagement Research, Policy, and Practice. *Review of Educational Research*, 83(3), 432-479.

Lebona, T., (2013). The implementation of inclusive education in primary schools in the

Lejweleputswa education district.

Lewis A. and Norwich, B. (EDS.) (2005). *Special teaching for special children: a pedagogy for inclusion?* Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Lomofsky, L., & Lazarus, S. (2001). South Africa: first steps in the development of an inclusive education system. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 31(3), 303 – 317.

Loreman, T. (2010). A content-infused approach to pre-service teacher preparation for inclusive education. In C. Forlin (Ed.), *Teacher Education for Inclusion: Changing paradigms and innovative approaches* (pp. 56 –64). London & New York: Routledge.

McMillan, J. H. & Schumacher, S. (2010). *Research in Education: Evidence-Based Inquiry* (7th ed.). Boston: Prentice Hall.

Makoelle, TM. (2014). Pedagogy of Inclusion: A Quest for Inclusive Teaching and Learning. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* Vol 5 No 20 MCSER Publishing, Rome-Italy

Mitchell, D. (Ed.). (2005). *Contextualizing inclusive education: Evaluating old and new international paradigms*. Routledge.

Mitchell, D. (2008). *What really works in Special Needs and Inclusive Education*. Routledge, London.

MRTEQ (2015). The Purpose and Scope of this Policy Document: The Government Gazette

Munns, G & Woodward, H. (2006). *Student Engagement and Student Self-assessment: The REAL Framework*. Australia

Naicker, S.M. (2005). Inclusive education in South Africa. In D. Mitchell (Ed), *Contextualising inclusive education* (pp. 230-251). London: Routledge. National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) (1998). *Report on special needs and support services*. Pretoria

Niewenhuis, J. (2007). *Growing Human Rights and Values in Education*. Pretoria: Van Schaik

Publishers.

Niglas, K. (2007). INTRODUCING THE QUANTITATIVE-QUALITATIVE CONTINUUM: AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW ON TEACHING RESEARCH METHODS COURSES. *Learning and Teaching of Research Methods at University*, 30(7), 1-12.

Nkabinde, Z. P. (1993). The role of special education in a changing South Africa. *Journal of Special Education*, Vol. 27 (1): pp. 107-108.

Pantić, N. & Florian, L. (2015). Developing teachers as agents of inclusion and social justice. *Education Inquiry*, 6 (3), 333-351. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3402/edui.v6.27311>

Pianta, R.C Harme, B.K & Allen, J.P. (2012). *Teacher-Student Relationships and Engagement: Conceptualizing, Measuring, and Improving the Capacity of Classroom Interactions*. USA: Handbook of Research on Student Engagement

Perold, M., Louw, C., & Kleynhans, S. (2010). Primary school teachers' knowledge and misperceptions of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) *South African Journal of Education EASA* Vol 30:457-473.

Pike, G.R and Kuh, G.D (2005) A Typology of Student Engagement for American Colleges and Universities *Research in Higher Education*. 46 (2), pp 185–209

Reeve, J. (2012). A Self-determination Theory. In Christenson, S.L (Ed), *Handbook of Research on Student Engagement* (pp. 149-172). Springer Science+Business Media.

Scott, D & Morrison, M. (2006). *Key Ideas in Educational Research*. England: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Sharma.A. (2016). *Preservearticlescom*. Retrieved 8 June, 2016, from <http://www.preservearticles.com/201102244181/complete-information-on-the-broader-and-narrower-meaning-of-education.html>

Skidmore, D. (2004). *Inclusion: Dynamic of school development*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Slee, R. (2011). *The Irregular School: Exclusion, Schooling and Inclusive Education* (1st ed.). London & New York: Routledge.

Soundout. (2015). *Defining Student Engagement: A Literature Review of Student Engagement*. Retrieved 2016, from <https://soundout.org/defining-student-engagement-a-literature-review>.

Swart, E., & Pettipher, R. (2011). A framework for understanding inclusion. In E. Landsberg, K. D., & E. Swart (Eds.), *Addressing Barriers to Learning: A South African Perspective* (pp. 3–26). Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Taylor, L. & Parsons, J. (2011). Improving Student Engagement. *Current Issues in Education*, 14(1).

Thomas, G., Walker, D., & Webb, J. (1998). *The Making of the Inclusive School*. New York: Routledge Falmer.

Trowler, V. (2010). *Student engagement literature review*. Lancaster University: Department of Educational Research.

UNESCO. (1990). *World Declaration on Education for All*. Online. Retrieved from: http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/ed_for_all/background/jomtien_declaration.shtml.

UNESCO. (1994). *Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education*.

Usman, A, H. (2015). Using the Think-Pair-Share Strategy to Improve Students' Speaking Ability at Stain Ternate. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(10), 37 - 45.

Walker, L. (2008). *Learners Engagement: A review of learner voice initiatives across the UK's education sectors*.

Walton, E., & Lloyd, G. (2012). From clinic to classroom: A model of teacher education for inclusion. *Perspectives in Education*, 30(2), 62–70.

Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
in Baxter, P & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4), 544-559.

Zainal, Z. (2007). Case study as a research method. *Journal Kemanusiaan*, 2(9), 1-6.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Online Survey

1. How long have you taught for? ☐ 1-3 Years ☐ 4-6 Years ☐ 7-10 Years ☐ 10 or More
2. When did you complete your Post Graduate Degree? ☐ 2012 ☐ 2013 ☐ 2014 ☐ 2015
3. Is your school: ☐ Ordinary ☐ Special School ☐ FSS ☐ Other
4. What are you teaching responsibilities? ☐ Classroom Teacher ☐ Subject Teacher ☐ Head of Department
5. What phase teacher are you? ☐ Foundation ☐ InterSen ☐ FET
6. What Grade are you currently teaching? ☐ Grade 1 ☐ Grade 2 ☐ Grade 3 ☐ Grade 4 ☐ Grade 5 ☐ Grade 6 ☐ Grade 7
7. How many learners are in your class? ☐ 5-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 21-25 ☐ 26-33 ☐ 34 or more
8. Do you teach to promote student engagement? ☐ Yes ☐ Most of the time ☐ Sometimes ☐ Not really ☐ No
9. Do you use inclusive pedagogy strategies in your classroom? ☐ Yes ☐ Most of the time ☐ Sometimes ☐ Not really ☐ No
10. How often do you implement what you have learnt from you Honours Course into your classroom? ☐ Frequently ☐ Mostly ☐ Never

Appendix 2: Semi-Structured Interview Schedule

Questions to be asked will be adjusted to make specific reference to the audiotaped and observed lesson:

Pre-Interview

1. What is your understanding of student engagement?
2. Can you give an example of how you promote student engagement in your lessons?
3. What learner differences inform how you teach your lessons to promote student engagement?
4. What strategies do you use that underpin student engagement?
5. How would you suggest teachers promote student engagement to address learning barriers?
6. In your experience, what are the benefits of engaged learners in a lesson?
7. In What way can a teacher use student engagement effectively in a diverse classroom context?
8. What classroom conditions are conducive to promote student engagement in the classroom?
9. What challenges have you faced when presenting lessons when learners are not engaged?
10. How do you promote student engagement in your classroom?

Post-Interview

Questions to be asked will be adjusted to make specific reference to the observed audiotaped lesson:

1. Discuss the manner in which you presented the lesson to engage all the learners?
2. Discuss the extent to which your instruction engaged the learners during your lesson.
3. Do you feel that the content and learning material used during the lesson engage all the learners? Please discuss.
4. Which part of the lesson did you feel promoted student engagement?
5. How do you as a teacher develop learner's dispositions for engagement in the classroom?
6. Describe the classroom conditions that were conducive to student engagement in the lesson taught today?

Appendix 3: Observation Checklist

Lesson Observation Checklist

This checklist has been adapted and re-designed based on Lawson and Lawson's dimensions of student engagement namely; cognitive, active and behavioural engagement (2013).

(Adapted from datemplate.com)

Lesson Observation Checklist			
A checklist of 10 specific observable teacher interactions that may reflect a classroom, that promotes student engagement through active; cognitive and behavioural dimensions for developing inclusive teaching practice.			
Name:	Grade:	Subject:	Date/Time:

Criteria of engagement	Observed	Not Observed
Arrange the classroom to accommodate discussion/engagement (Behavioural Engagement) <i>Seating arrangement is planned to facilitate student-student discussion and student-teacher discussions; which leads to student engagement.</i>		
Uses a variety of visual aids and props to support student learning (Cognitive Engagement) <i>Uses multi-representational sources to assist the learners with concepts and content.</i>		

Uses co-operative learning strategies (Cognitive Engagement) <i>The teacher structures the lesson around the opportunities for learners to engage with their peers (Think-Pair-Share; Teammate consult; Jigsaw; Pair Checks; Last word etc.)</i>		
Structures heterogeneous and cooperative groups for learning (Cognitive and Behavioural Engagement) <i>Uses random grouping methods to form small groups. Explicitly teaches collaborative learning skills to learners. Provides opportunities for cooperative groups to process/reflect on how well/badly they accomplished the task.</i>		
Uses multiple approaches to consistently monitor learners understanding of instruction, direction, procedures, processes, questions and content (Cognitive Engagement) <i>Uses a variety of approaches to monitor learners understanding of the topic throughout instruction</i>		
Identifies the learners' current knowledge before the topic is taught (Cognitive Engagement) <i>Uses a variety of methods to assess learners' knowledge before instruction – monitors levels of engagement by allowing learners to respond and ask questions</i>		
Use learners' real-life experiences to connect school learning to learners' lives (Active and Cognitive Engagement) <i>Uses examples that are reflective of learners' lives to support learning, ensures that conditions for motivation with topics that are interesting and connected to something they already know</i>		
Provides learners with the instructions and procedures for successful task completion (Cognitive Engagement)		

<i>Makes effective use of instruction time, to reduce disruption that distracts learners from the process of learning</i>		
Uses oral prompts to improve listening skills (Behavioural Engagement) <i>Learners need basic skills, for example to understand directions and resources used in the lesson. There is evidence of skills required to listen to the teacher in the lesson as well as other learners in group discussions thus promoting engagement.</i>		
Promotes positive learning relationships (Active Engagement) <i>Teacher takes an interest in the learners during the lesson, facilitates engagement by focusing on building relationships essential to contribute to engagement. Takes an interest in students as individuals, responds to questions they ask during the lesson.</i>		

LESSON PLAN CHECKLIST to be used in conjunction with Appendix 3

Criteria	Comments
Does lesson plan contain indicators for active engagement? (see Cognitive engagement Classroom Observation Appendix 3)	
Body of the lesson Has the teacher planned for student input of engagement during the lesson?	
Is student participation required and does it connect to the lesson content?	
What types of student engagement have been planned for the lesson?	
Which dispositions if any are foregrounded in the lesson planning to promote student engagement?	

Appendix A: INFORMATION SHEET FOR PRINCIPAL

Wits School of Education



27 St Andrews Road, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193 • Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa

Tel: +27 11 717-3007 • Fax: +27 11 717-3009 • E-mail: enquiries@educ.wits.ac.za •
Website: www.wits.ac.za

Request to conduct research at King David Primary School Victory Park

22 August 2016

Dear **Rabbi Seeff**

My name is Skye Mac Arthur and I am a student registered at the University of Witwatersrand for my Masters of Education Degree. I am interested in discovering the ways in which in-service teachers, who have a postgraduate degree in Inclusive Education, are able to engage learners in their classroom. I would like to request your permission to conduct research at your school, I will be using a total of four teachers from four schools. I have selected your school because the participants have completed an Honours Degree in Inclusive Education and will therefore provide me with rich data.

To understand more about the extent which in-service teachers feel that the Inclusive Education courses provided have impacted how they respond to learners needs in their classrooms, I would like to invite a teacher in the Foundation Phase to participate in this research. Participation entails the teacher conducting one lesson which will be observed and audio-taped, and participating in two semi-structured interviews (one before and one after the observed lesson) the post interview will look at the observed lesson taught, and inquire about their experiences of how Inclusive Education has influenced their teaching practices. The process would take approximately an hour and a half and would be held at the school on a day and time convenient to the teacher. With permission, I would like to audio-tape the lesson taught and record the interview to accurately capture the teachers' response and hence to allow for validity in the research.

The participants for my research will include teachers and as a result the learners will be indirect participants, thus I will need to get learner assent and their parents/guardians consent. Participation is entirely voluntary and teachers', learners and their parent's choice whether to participate will not advantage or disadvantage them in any way. There are no negative consequences for non-participation. If they do choose to participate, I will respect all participants' right to privacy and confidentiality. Pseudonyms will be given to all participants and schools. Any detail that might identify a participant or the school will be omitted in any published and written data. If teachers choose to participate, they have the right to withdraw from participation at any time during the research process, with no negative consequences or penalty. They also have the right to decline to answer any of the questions asked in the interview. Similarly, the learners and their parents have the right to withdraw from their participation in the audiotaping process at any time with no negative consequences attached. The audio-taped lesson would still go ahead with the learner present but when these learners speak, I will pause the audio-recording. All learners will be given a coloured sticker – green stickers are for the learners who have given consent and orange stickers are for the learners who do not want to be involved in the research. There are no foreseeable risks in participating and participants will not be paid for the study.

All data collected will be kept securely in a locked cupboard and will be destroyed after three to five years after completion of the study. The results of the research will be used for academic purposes only for my masters research and publications in academic journals and conference presentations. The research project has been cleared by the Human Research Ethics Committee (University of the Witwatersrand and the Gauteng Department of Education with the reference number 2016ECE036M).

If you are willing to give permission for research to be conducted at the school, please would you sign at the bottom of this form and return it to me as soon as possible. If you have any concerns or queries regarding our research, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Skye Mac Arthur

557263

skyemacarthur@gmail.com

072 617 6772

Supervisor

Lauren Rembach

Lauren.Rembach@wits.ac.za

[\(011\) 717-3155](tel:(011)717-3155)

Principal permission for research granted:

_____	_____	_____
Principal signature	Principal name	Date

Consent form for the principal

Wits School of Education



27 St Andrews Road, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193 • Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa

Tel: +27 11 717-3007 • Fax: +27 11 717-3009 • E-mail: enquiries@educ.wits.ac.za • Website:

www.wits.ac.za

Research Project: An investigation of Foundation Phase teachers' classroom practices to promote student engagement as an inclusive pedagogy.

Informed Consent Form

I _____ (participant's full name)

am willing / am not willing*

Circle one option

Permission to conduct research in your school

Yes/No

Please also indicate:

- ☐ I understand that my participation is voluntary and that there are no negative consequences for choosing not to participate in this research: Yes/ No*
- ☐ I know that the researcher, project leader and supervisor will keep my information confidential: Yes/ No*

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B: Information sheet for SGB chairperson

Wits School of Education



27 St Andrews Road, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193 • Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa

Tel: +27 11 717-3007 • Fax: +27 11 717-3009 • E-mail: enquiries@educ.wits.ac.za •
Website: www.wits.ac.za

Request to conduct research at King David Primary School Victory Park

22 August 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Skye Mac Arthur and I am a student registered at the University of Witwatersrand for my Masters of Education Degree. I am interested in discovering the ways in which in-service teachers, who have a postgraduate degree in Inclusive Education, are able to engage learners in their classroom. I would like to request your permission to conduct research at your school, I will be using a total of four teachers from four schools. I have selected your school because the participants have completed an Honours Degree in Inclusive Education and will therefore provide me with rich data. The participants will be purposively selected from an online survey they have completed.

To understand more about the extent which in-service teachers feel that the Inclusive Education courses provided have impacted how they respond to learners needs in their classrooms, I would like to invite a teacher in the Foundation Phase to participate in this research. Participation entails the teacher conducting one lesson which will be observed and audio-taped, and participating in two semi-structured interviews (one before and one after the observed lesson) the post interview will look at the observed lesson taught, and inquire about their experiences of how Inclusive Education has influenced their teaching practices. The process would take approximately an hour and a half and would be held at the school on a day and time convenient to the teacher. With permission, I would like to audio-tape the lesson taught and record the interview to accurately capture the teachers' response and hence to allow for validity in the research.

The participants for my research will include teachers and as a result the learners will be indirect participants, thus I will need to get learner ascent and their parents/guardians consent. Participation is entirely voluntary and teachers'. Learners and their parent's choice whether to participate will not advantage or disadvantage them in any way. There are no negative consequences for non-participation. If they do choose to participate, I will respect all participants' right to privacy and confidentiality. Pseudonyms will be given to all participants and

schools. Any detail that might identify a participant or the school will be omitted in any published and written data. If teachers choose to participate, they have the right to withdraw from participation at any time during the research process, with no negative consequences or penalty. They also have the right to decline to answer any of the questions asked in the interview. Similarly, the learners and their parents have the right to withdraw from their participation in the audiotaping process at any time with no negative consequences attached. The audio-taped lesson would still go ahead with the learner present but when these learners speak, I will pause the audio-recording. All learners will be given a coloured sticker – green stickers are for the learners who have given consent and orange stickers are for the learners who do not want to be involved in the research. There are no foreseeable risks in participating and participants will not be paid for the study.

All data collected will be kept securely in a locked cupboard and will be destroyed after three to five years after completion of the study. The results of the research will be used for academic purposes only for my masters research and publications in academic journals and conference presentations. The research project has been cleared by the Human Research Ethics Committee (University of the Witwatersrand and the Gauteng Department of Education with the reference number 2016ECE036M).

If you are willing to give permission for research to be conducted at the school, please would you sign at the bottom of this form and return it to me as soon as possible. If you have any concerns or queries regarding our research, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Skye Mac Arthur

557263

skyemacarthur@gmail.com

072 617 6772

Supervisor

Lauren Rembach

Lauren.Rembach@wits.ac.za

SGB chairperson's permission for research granted:

SGB Principal signature

Principal name

Date

Wits School of Education



27 St Andrews Road, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193 • Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa

Tel: +27 11 717-3007 • Fax: +27 11 717-3009 • E-mail: enquiries@educ.wits.ac.za •
Website: www.wits.ac.za

Invitation to participate in research and participant information letter

22 August 2016

Dear **Mrs Jolee Horwitz**

My name is Skye Mac Arthur and I am a student registered at the University of Witwatersrand for my Masters in Education Degree. I am interested in discovering the ways in which in-service teachers, who have a postgraduate degree in Inclusive Education are able to engage learners in their classroom. I am interested in discovering more about your experience and understanding about the impact of their knowledge gained from your Inclusive Education course on your classroom practices. As a practicing teacher, you are ideally positioned to comment on this and how you respond to diverse learners needs. I would like to invite you to participate in this research. Participation entails observing a half hour lesson which will be audio-taped, and conducting two forty-five minutes semi-structured interviews; one pre and one post with you that will also be audio-recorded. The post and pre interviews will entail a discussion of the lesson you taught. The lesson and interviews will be audio-taped for accurate capturing of your responses.

Participation is entirely voluntary and your choice whether to participate will not advantage or disadvantage you in any way. There are no negative consequences or institutional sanction for non-participation. If you do choose to participate, I will respect your rights to privacy, and confidentiality. I will ensure that the interview transcript is used anonymously, with pseudonyms being given. Confidentiality will be maintained in the audio-taped lesson and recorded interviews and any detail that might identify you will be omitted in any published

and written data. If you choose to participate, you have the right to withdraw from participation at any time during the research process, with no negative consequences or penalty. You also have the right to decline to answer any of the questions asked in the interview.

All data collected will be kept securely in a locked cupboard and will be destroyed after three to five years after completion of the study. The results of the research will be used for academic purposes only. This includes my master's research and publications in academic journals and conference presentations. There are no foreseeable risks in participating and you will not be paid for this study. The research project has been cleared by the Human Research Ethics Committee (University of the Witwatersrand and the Gauteng Department of Education with the reference number 2016ECE036M).

If you are willing to participate in the research project, please fill in the attached consent forms. If you have any concerns or queries regarding our research, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Skye Mac Arthur

557263

skyemacarthur@gmail.com

072 617 6772

Supervisor

Lauren Rembach

Lauren.Rembach@wits.ac.za

Consent form for teacher

Wits School of Education



27 St Andrews Road, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193 • Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa

Tel: +27 11 717-3007 • Fax: +27 11 717-3009 • E-mail: enquiries@educ.wits.ac.za • Website:

www.wits.ac.za

Research Project: An investigation of Foundation Phase teachers' classroom practices to promote student engagement as an inclusive pedagogy.

Informed Consent Form

I _____ (participant's full name)

am willing / am not willing*

To participate in this research project

Circle one

Permission to be observed

Yes/No

Permission to be interviewed

Yes/No

Permission to be audio-taped

Yes/No

I know that the audiotapes will be used for this project only

Yes/No

Please also indicate:

- ☐ I understand that my participation is voluntary and that there are no negative consequences for choosing not to participate in this research: Yes/ No*
- ☐ I understand that I can stop the interview or lesson that I will teach at any time with no negative consequences to me: Yes/ No*
- ☐ I understand that I have the right to decline to answer any of the questions during the interview and that there would be no negative consequences to me: Yes/ No*
- ☐ I know that the researcher, project leader and supervisor will keep my information confidential: Yes/ No*

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX D: INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS (LEARNERS)

2 September 2016

Dear Learner

My name is Skye Mac Arthur and I am a student at the University of the Witwatersrand School of Education. As part of my degree, I need to do a research project.

My research is called **Research Project: An investigation of Foundation Phase teachers' classroom practices to promote student engagement as an inclusive pedagogy**. This means that I am interested in seeing if what your teacher was taught at university has helped how she teaches you. You are getting this letter because you are part of the classroom that I will visit. I will be audio-recording and observing your teacher's lessons. I will not disturb your learning in the classroom in any way.

I am inviting you and your classmates to take part in my research. Remember, you can decide if you are happy with me being in the classroom or not. I will also ask your parents / guardian / caregiver if it is okay for you to take part. If you take part all you will need to do is be in the classroom during your teacher's lesson and this is not going to be for marks.

Please know that I will not be using your own name. I will make one up one so that no one can identify you. The audio recording will be kept safe. It will be thrown away after 5 years after completing my research.

Please understand that you are very important in taking part in project but remember you do not have to do it.

Thank you so much.

Skye Mac Arthur

557263

skyemacarthur@gmail.com

072 6176772

Consent form for learners

Wits School of Education



27 St Andrews Road, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193 • Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa

Tel: +27 11 717-3007 • Fax: +27 11 717-3009 • E-mail: enquiries@educ.wits.ac.za • Website: www.wits.ac.za

Research Project: An investigation of Foundation Phase teachers' classroom practices to promote student engagement as an inclusive pedagogy.

Learner Informed Consent Form

I _____ (your name)

am willing ☺/ not willing ☹

to take part in this research project in the lesson that Skye will audio-record.

Please circle the faces to answer the questions below. The happy face is to answer yes and the sad face is to answer no.

1. I allow Skye to audio-record the lesson to help her take notes. ☺/☹
2. I know that the audio recording will not be focusing on me only on my teacher's voice. ☺/☹

APPENDIX E: INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENTS / GUARDIAN / CAREGIVER

Wits School of Education



27 St Andrews Road, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193 • Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa

Tel: +27 11 717-3007 • Fax: +27 11 717-3009 • E-mail: enquiries@educ.wits.ac.za •
Website: www.wits.ac.za

Dear [Parent / Guardian / Caregiver]

My name is Skye Mac Arthur, and I am a Masters student at the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand. As part of my degree I am conducting research within the field of inclusive education with a focus on identifying inservice teachers who have a postgraduate degree in Inclusive Education are able to promote learners who are engaged in their classroom. The title of my research is **An investigation of Foundation Phase teachers' classroom practices to promote student engagement as an inclusive pedagogy.**

You are receiving this letter as your child's class has been purposefully selected as one of the three classrooms in which I shall carry out my study. Although your child will not be directly interviewed or involved in the study, he/she will be present at the time that the research is conducted, and is thus invited to participate in the study. Participation is completely voluntary and there are no negative consequences should you or your child choose not to participate. Participation will involve your child's presence in the classroom during the time that I shall be audio-taping his/her teacher's lesson. The learners will not be the focus of the study. The learners would only appear on the audio recording when directly interacting with the teacher; should you consent to this.

The lesson will, with your permission, be audiotaped in order to ensure accurate recording and analysis of the teacher's practices. In agreeing to your child's participation, please be advised that you will not incur any expenses and your son/daughter will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way, nor will he/she be given any money for participating. He/she will be reassured that he/she may choose not to participate or choose to withdraw his/her permission at any time during the research study without any penalty or punishment.

The data will be documented in a masters project research report and it is envisaged that the research findings be used for academic purposes including books, journals and or conference proceedings. It is of utmost importance that your child's details as well as the schools details be kept confidential. In no way will your child's name and identity be mentioned at any point within the study or research report. His / her individual privacy will be maintained at all times. A pseudonym will be used to ensure that no-one would be able to recognise your child in any publication or presentation arising from the research. A summary of the findings will also be made available should you be interested.

I guarantee that all research data will be kept securely in a locked cabinet and will be destroyed within 3 – 5 years after completion of the project. Should you require further information throughout the course of the research, please do not hesitate to contact me on 072 617 6772, or via skymacarthur@gmail.com. Alternatively you may contact my supervisor Lauren Rembach Lauren.Rembach@wits.ac.za [\(011\) 717-3155](tel:(011)717-3155)

Please complete and sign the attached consent forms and return it to me via your child's class teacher no later than **13 September 2016**.

Thank you very much for your help

Yours sincerely,

Skye Mac Arthur

Consent form for parents

Parent / Guardian / Caregiver: INFORMED CONSENT

Participation in the research project: An investigation of Foundation Phase teachers' classroom practices to promote student engagement as an inclusive pedagogy.

I, _____
_____ (parent / guardian / caregiver's
full name) of _____ (circle one) **Give consent / Do not give consent for my
child to participate in the research project by being present in the classroom during the time in which
the audio-taping of the lesson are to be conducted.**

I acknowledge that:

Please circle your answer

- I have read and understand the information sheet that participation involves being in a classroom where
the teacher is being audiotaped. YES/NO*

-My child may choose not to participate or choose to withdraw from the study at any time without any
consequences. YES/NO*

- The researcher will keep my child's identity and all information strictly confidential YES/NO*

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX F:

INFORMATION SHEET FOR TEACHERS TO COMPLETE ONLINE SURVEY

Wits School of Education



27 St Andrews Road, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193 • Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa

Tel: +27 11 717-3007 • Fax: +27 11 717-3009 • E-mail: enquiries@educ.wits.ac.za •
Website: www.wits.ac.za

Invitation to participate in research and participant information letter

10 July 2016

Dear **Jolee Horwitz**

My name is Skye Mac Arthur and I am a student registered at the University of Witwatersrand for my Masters of Education Degree. I am interested in discovering if in-service teachers who have a postgraduate degree in Inclusive Education are able to promote learners who are engaged in their classroom. If you are an in-service teacher who has completed the postgraduate Inclusive Education Course, I would like to invite you to participate in my research project. Participation involves completing an online survey about your classroom practices. The survey will also ask if you would be willing to be contacted about participation at a further stage of the project. It will take approximately 5 to 10 minutes to complete the survey, which can be completed at a time and day that is suited to you before the [insert date]. The web link for the online survey will be sent to you via email once written consent has been received.

Participation is entirely voluntary and your choice whether to participate will not advantage or disadvantage you in any way. There are no negative consequences or institutional sanctions for non-participation. If you do choose to participate, we will respect all participants' rights to privacy, safety from harm and confidentiality. I will ensure that the survey transcripts are used anonymously. No names of participants and schools will be divulged. If you complete the survey, you have the right to withdraw from participation at any time during the

research process, with no negative consequences or penalty. In the survey, you are not obligated to answer all the questions asked.

The survey will be conducted through the programme called SurveyMonkey. Survey data will be deleted within three to five years after completion of the study. The results from the survey will be used for academic purposes only. This includes making a purposeful selection of participants for the second stage of my Masters' research project. There are no foreseeable risks in participating and you will not be paid for this study. There are also no direct benefits to you if you choose to participate, but we would expect that participation in the survey would provide an opportunity for reflection, and that the results of the survey would further our collected understanding of the impact of post-service training on in-service teachers' teaching practices in teaching learners of diverse needs. The research project has been cleared by the Humanity Research Ethics Committee (Education) of The University of the Witwatersrand [Protocol number] and permission has been granted to conduct research by The Gauteng Department of Education with the reference number 2016ECE036M.

If you are willing to participate in the survey, please fill in the attached consent forms. If you have any concerns or queries regarding our research, please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Skye Mac Arthur

557263

skyemacarthur@gmail.com

072 617 6772

Supervisor

Lauren Rembach

Lauren.Rembach@wits.ac.za

Field Notes:

Participant A

Private Jewish School

All boy class, small 11 learners in the classroom

Lesson on Rosh Hashanah

Wash and pray before beginning the lesson (routine)

Boys were involved in the discussion of what a round challah symbolises

The boys loved the yeast experiment (which one would react, plain yeast with sugar and salt or the yeast mixed with sugar, salt and water). They were intrigued to see what happens to yeast when mixed with water, sugar and salt.

Used physical engagement, allowed the boys to go put the yeast out in the sun asking them to run around the field once.

Participant B

Private all boys school, 20 in the class

Lesson on Geometric shapes (Maths)

Feely bag was used to get the excitement going for what the learners were going to do

Physical engagement: exercising in the class (push up's, star-jumps...)

The boys were engaged and eager to learn doing pair work and then group work, working out the similarities and differences of 2d and 3D shapes.

Participant C

Private all boys school, 20 in the class

Lesson, revision on Maths breaking down a number

Sums were given to the boys to do and then they did it on their whiteboard table, and the person sitting next to them would mark it, if it was wrong then the boy who marked it had to explain how to get to the right answer.

Physical engagement: exercising in the class (push up's, star-jumps...)

Participant D

Co-ed Private School, 11 in a class

Lesson: homophones.

Tried discussion with the learners but only one learner answered. Pair work seemed to work better, the discussion between the pairs was continuous and they stayed on topic with homophones.

Participant E

Co-ed Private Jewish Day School 24 in the class

Lesson: Expanded Notation – Maths

Placed the learners into small ability groups on the carpet when teaching the concept.

Peer teaching was used on the carpet when learners were struggling, they turned to their friend for help at the request from the participant.

Participant F

All girls private school 20 in a class

Lesson: Grouping numbers in maths (multiplication)

Routine: Snack time during the lesson, go outside and eat for ten minutes before returning to complete the work.

Cooperative learning strategy was used “Fair-Share-Sticks”

Girls liked to get a chance to teach and help each other explain concepts.

Participant G

All boys’ government school, 33 learners

After coming into class from break, it was ‘cake and candy’ the boys had so much energy, physical engagement was used: push-up’s; sit up’s; star jumps and running around the field.

Lesson: Art. Using a comprehension to start the lesson off about dinosaurs the stegosaurus. Then a quiz about what has been read using the application Kahoots. The learners loved being involved and shouting out the answers after writing it down on their whiteboards.

The learners had a choice of what to use for their drawing of the stegosaurus (HB pencil, colouring in pencils, koki’s, paint or pastels). They loved the fact they were given a choice

Transcripts:

Pre-Interview Participant A

Researcher:

What is your understanding of student engagement?

Participant:

Student engagement? I think its, um.. how the teacher relates to them and um they will relate to the teacher and just a sitting with them and talking to them while they work. Just really creating a relationship and a connection with them

Researcher:

Can you give an example of how you promote student engagement in your lessons?

Participant:

I like to have a lot of active involvement from the students, I don't just like to be a teacher transmitting the information to the students. I like them to obviously engage, participate, um we are very big here on documentation. So we get them involved in the discussions. And you will see a bit later we make it into a whole discussion, where I'll pose the questions to them and then they we will discuss and they will talk about it a lot. And just what ever we are doing, it's I don't know like building a strong relationship with them, the children I think.

Researcher:

What learner differences inform how you teach your lessons to promote student engagement?

Participant:

Well I think its all about really just knowing your children, and I think knowing them and knowing their backgrounds form how I respond to them. Especially in terms of what they need. So, like, um if you have a child who has anxiety, or lacking in confidence for example,

then you relate to them and you kinder build them up. And I just have to kinda be mindful about their differences in terms of how you engage and how you respond to them.

Researcher:

What strategies do you use that underpin student engagement?

Participant:

I think just talking to them about everything that we do involves relating to them on some level, it's never just giving them the work. It's never just giving them the information. It's all about them getting to talk. I want to hear like how they feel about certain things. In every aspect of the daily programme. So just asking them questions, I guess? Giving them provocations where they ask, and where they are encouraged to give their opinions and what they think.

Researcher:

How would you suggest teachers promote student engagement to address learning barriers?

Participant:

I mean I think a lot of what comes, comes from the students will help to inform what their barriers are, so like observing them, and getting them to talk about, you know like question them about what they doing, getting to talk to them not just about their work but throughout their day. A lot of questioning about what they are doing. Giving them, activities that promote discussion and promote their opinions for them to get involved. And really just responding to them in accordance to what they bring, and in accordance to what their circumstances and their barriers or strengths are.

Researcher:

In your experience, what are the benefits of engaged learners in a lesson?

Participant:

I think they have to be engaged in order to benefit fully from it. I mean if they not engaged then you are wasting your time, pretty much. So I think they have a greater interest in it, they are able to take more information from it, they are able to build on their knowledge because

they'll go home and remember it and will talk about it to their families and then they'll bring new and more information. I think your ideal is to have all your students full engaged in the lesson.

Researcher:

In What way can a teacher use student engagement effectively in a diverse classroom context?

Participant:

So I think there could be issues of language barrier or children not being very keen on talking. like I know um I've got one in my class who just doesn't want to engage at all. He's just very closed off, but like actually you can't even have a conversation with him so, I think you just have to find opportunities where they are relaxed and the environment is stress free for them, even if its through something that they are doing, like a picture or through their play. Where you can um connect to them through that level. But I think it all boils down to knowing your kids and knowing what they are about.

Researcher:

What classroom conditions are conducive to promote student engagement in the classroom?

Participant:

I think number one would be a really calm, relaxed and happy environment. That is like very child friendly, no not child friendly. Basically child-centred, YES! That's the word. So like a very child-centred stressed free, relaxed environment with the types of activities, the types of work that interests them that brings about the engagement and their interests and that like causes them to want to engage with the work and engage with you. Juts really age appropriate, play-based. And just really making sure they are comfortable, it's not really about what the teacher wants, and not how the teacher you know how in her mind envisions the class to be. It's about how they learn best, and what they comfortable with and if its them lying on the floor while they do their work, then so be it. Or if its them you know doing their spelling for example in a different way, um just whatever captures their interest most and whatever is most appropriate and most conducive to their interests, I think.

Researcher:

What challenges have you faced when presenting lessons when learners are not engaged?

Participant:

It's very difficult! I mean they don't come away with the, with what you want them to know or you know what, like they don't engage. And they don't fully benefit from the lesson. It's frustrating for them, it's frustrating for you and it is a challenge, because at the end of the day, you haven't really met your goal. The goal is for them to be full engaged and I think the children and the teacher leave with a very frustrated feeling of having not accomplished anything.

Researcher:

How do you promote student engagement in your classroom?

Participant:

In my classroom? So um, I really just try to talk to them a lot, develop relationships with them, to try and make what we do as child friendly and appropriate as possible. To just to really have them being as enthusiastic as possible, and to develop a love for being at school and a love for what they do, and just thinking out the box about doing certain things. You know not your run of the mill here's the lesson that we are learning "let's do it" but you know making it into a science or making it into a design and technology, just something that appeals to them. And talking to them about, we do a lot of Regio and discussion and documentation and everything that we do is a discussion and everything we do, you know we get information from them, it becomes a conversation, I think.

Post-Interview

Researcher:

Discuss the manner in which you presented the lesson to engage all the learners?

Participant:

Okay, so. I tried to use like a variety of different strategies. So we had the discussion part for like more of the auditory learners. We had visual, for those that need to something, who need to imagine it. There was a bit of science, just to make it more interesting to them. There was active involvement, when they all had a chance to look at the yeast through a magnifying glass, to be part of it. And I also wanted to try and make the lesson quick, these boys are very active, there are different types of learners where their concentration is really not, it just doesn't last for very long. So I change it up a little bit don't spend too much time, but at the same time, long enough so that they can get all the information.

Researcher:

Discuss the extent to which your instruction engaged the learners during your lesson.

Participant:

I think for the most part, they were engaged. It is hard to always keep their attention. But they were listening, and for the most part were listening to each other. And I think this is something that they will remember, because they had the visual aspect of it, and the hands on active involvement of it and seeing the science, and how it related to the lesson plan. So I think for the most part they were quite engaged and I tried also to respond to them, and give them the answers and build on their answers.

Researcher:

Do you feel that the content and learning material used during the lesson engage all the learners? Please discuss.

Participant:

I think so, even if it wasn't for the entire time. I think for the most part that they were engaged, and that it was relevant for them. Using different elements like, building on what the discussion was about, I think like the science helped engage them. There was something from each part of the lesson, that each learner could take something from.

Researcher:

Which part of the lesson did you feel promoted student engagement?

Participant:

I think the discussion, because a lot of them were really eager to give their answers, and I think the discussion with questions and letting them each have a chance. And then also the science, they love science and are always interested in that. And seeing what the different reactions, you know they were looking for the cause, and were eager to see the results of the experiment. The magnifying glass gave them a chance to explore by themselves and have a look. This lesson was really just trying to make them feel a part of it. Make them feel that they were investigating and you know giving them questions, and they can answer from their own experiences, and previous knowledge. It was about theme thinking about what they have seen, how their mom bakes challah – to jog their memory a bit.

Researcher:

How do you as a teacher develop learner's dispositions for engagement in the classroom?

Participant:

I thinks its maybe just creating a culture of engagement and just constantly letting them feel that their input is important and that their input is valuable. Just in everything that we do, just to encourage them into engagement and encouraging their questioning, their input, their answers.

Researcher:

Describe the classroom conditions that were conducive to student engagement in the lesson taught today?

Participant:

Well look, they all needed to be focused, they all needed to have their attention on the task, so just getting them ready and focused before the lesson started. Giving them enough outside time to let all their energy out before we started – that is very important. We have a lot of outside time during the day, they boys and are very active, and I feel that they can't really focus properly unless they've had that physical play. Making sure they have had enough time of that. And not to spend too much time on one particular aspect , but rather regular moving as I see that their engagement starts to dwindle a little bit. I think just making it appropriate for them, interesting for them, and just making it something that's really fun and interesting for them, something that they will enjoy, something that they can benefit from. It has got to come from them, it has to be relevant to their lives, and make it appropriate for them and their age, and the kinds of learners that they are.

Pre-Interview: Participant B

Researcher:

What is your understanding of student engagement?

Participant:

For me, I watch all my children all the time so it's easy for me, because I only have 20 children. I watch all the time, so the moment I see somebody dozing off or looking outside the window, I engage him specifically calling his name and asking him a question. so for me student engagement is observing all my children all the time and checking that there is somebody, that they are engaging with something that we talking about or participating. When I teach, I am walking around all the time, I never sit down at my desk I am checking all the time, I never just let them get on with it, I am checking constantly. I checking that they are working and participating and that they are managing.

Researcher:

Can you give an example of how you promote student engagement in your lessons?

Participant:

So that's when I will walk around, or there are three boys that I am very aware of, they have huge concentration problems. So I'm very aware of those specific 3 boys and I will. So there is 1 boy who struggles to answer questions quickly, so I have to make sure when I say "Sebastiano this question is especially for you, I'm going to come and ask it to you again just now" and I tell him what the question is. I go and discuss a little bit more. And then I say "Have you given it a little bit of thought?" and I say "Nobody else is allowed to answer it for him". He needs time to process these things.

Researcher:

What learner differences inform how you teach your lessons to promote student engagement?

Participant:

Concentration is a huge part. The differences in speed. Differences in different tasks. It depends on the tasks and I'll pair a weaker child up with a stronger child who is not perhaps as fast, or a child who I feel can help another child through the way he explains it, especially with maths – I do that a lot. So I um, I'm aware of just. And you know it changes all the time, it depends on the subject, and what you doing, and what you doing at the time. And I just see who is more capable of or normally who can manage the work that can help the child.

Researcher:

What strategies do you use that underpin student engagement?

Participant:

Peer teaching, I do a lot of that. Group work. I honestly just think it is teacher awareness that underpins your engagement all the time, because it varies all the time.

Researcher:

How would you suggest teachers promote student engagement to address learning barriers?

Participant:

Again, it goes right back to your peer work – working in your pairs. (Say that question again, sorry.) Its, um teachers in general? Um that is quite a difficult question, because every teacher, if you are not aware of every learner in your class then you are not going to create that engagement. So for me it's either, um for me it comes quite naturally because I have only 20 children so I'm aware of each child and his differences so I have a little child who is is fairly distracted so I am aware of certain activities I remind him "do you have these items with you, how have you positioned yourself at the table". So to me, it's your own awareness if your own children. Your left handed child must sit at a table where his left hand can be out, and not being bashed by somebody else. When you have like somebody else, now working in groups, I have two very talkative children so I have separated them, but I watch them. And I use positive reinforcement to try and build their best behaviour. And that for me is how each teacher needs to be very aware of their children.

Researcher:

In your experience, what are the benefits of engaged learners in a lesson?

Participant:

Well you are going to get maximum work out of your children. And you will see it in things like "models" it's a very difficult concept, that we introduce in grade 3 – which is part of the Singapore Maths Curriculum. And um you know when your children who have really struggled with that concept and have got it, you know you have done something right. And you have attempted to teach it in so many different ways. As a teacher you should not be afraid to go back to concrete apparatus. I think we stop using concrete apparatus earlier, when you see your children are finding that it is very literacy based problem solving maths. When you see that they are struggling with, bring out the equipment and go through it with them in a totally different way. And that's just from seeing who is dazing into space or who is copying the person next to them, so its awareness.

Researcher:

In What way can a teacher use student engagement effectively in a diverse classroom context?

Participant:

Definitely using peer teaching! Peer teaching! And also knowing your children, and know that children learn in different ways. I have children who listen extremely well, and some children who can't read very well. So if the one can, um If you can read to both of them then they will be able to answer the questions well. Because the reading child who can't read very well, will struggle with reading and comprehending and the child who for example can't read as well as he could um, but if I had to read the question out to him, he would find it more easy to listen and answer. Then I could put those two boys together with perhaps two strong readers and they will work it through together. Because the boy who listens very well, will be able to comprehend form the boy who reads it out to him can often talk it out.

Researcher:

What classroom conditions are conducive to promote student engagement in the classroom?

Participant:

A classroom like this, where you have 20 children – is very conducive. First of all, I think it's a classroom where you [teacher] has to be very well prepared. Let's just make no bones about it, if you go into your class as an unprepared teacher, if you don't come in preparing the day before and knowing exactly who your lessons are targeted towards.so if you know this type of lesson is going to be more beneficial for one child or the other, you just have to be very aware of the children perhaps who are not going to be as engaged, and you make sure that you draw them in. because not every lesson is um target the right child or every single child. You have to be aware of that.

Researcher:

What challenges have you faced when presenting lessons when learners are not engaged?

Participant:

Straight away, when they start asking questions. And I think aa I have not explained it clearly enough or well enough. So then you have to think of another strategy. Perhaps you can get somebody else to explain it. So you say “is there anybody else who wants to explain it in a different way, or better way?” and that sometimes happens. And you go back to the drawing board, I think where have I gone wrong, and I do self-reflection all the time as a teacher. You can’t walk into the classroom and think you are the best teacher, you know exactly what’s going on and in your authoritarian way you do all the teaching, it just doesn’t work like that! And that will certainly not drawing children in to wanting to talk and engage in your lesson, they have to do talking too.

Researcher:

How do you promote student engagement in your classroom?

Participant:

I I encourage my boys, I encourage them to a a a a um, a, For example now we are busy doing questions, we are going to be doing questions later this week that they would like to ask Dick King, so what I have done. A Dick King is our author we are busy studying this term. So what I have done is, I’ve taken their prior knowledge and let them put it up there. So it’s um creates a bit of a conversation – its on-going, until we start the formal activity. And then I go into how do we formally ask somebody questions. Like what are appropriate questions, so I’ve got a whole list of like 12 different clever types of questions you would ask the author. So it’s to create the space and the awareness and then go in and work on the topic.

Post-Interview

Researcher:

Discuss the manner in which you presented the lesson to engage all the learners?

Participant:

Um how did I? Ok! First of all I had everybody on the carpet, that was important! I think when they are right under your nose then they are forced to be engaged and you can have a lot more conversation. I like to have them under me. But at the same time, I am aware of the boys who have to stand and I allow them to stand – it is their way to stay focused and engaged.

Researcher:

Discuss the extent to which your instruction engaged the learners during your lesson.

Participant:

Hmm. I asked them a lot of questions, I drew on a lot from their knowledge. I used them in the lesson. I often do push-ups; go to the bathroom and do your thing, I do it because it is just a way for the boys to refocus and be a part of the lesson again!

Researcher:

Do you feel that the content and learning material used during the lesson engage all the learners? Please discuss.

Participant:

Oh definitely! A huge range of different materials, from concrete materials like the whiteboards, other resources like a discussion or smartboard, the feely bag. And I think in every single thing the learners are engaged!

Researcher:

Which part of the lesson did you feel promoted student engagement?

Participant:

Um! The final part where they had to cut out the shapes and label them. So they had to take all different clues that I had given them and work out on their own about the shapes, how many edges there were, what is an edge. That creates a lot of discussion surrounding the boys and that created a lot of engagement.

Researcher:

How do you as a teacher develop learner's dispositions for engagement in the classroom?

Participant:

Through being aware of every single learner in the classroom.

Researcher:

Describe the classroom conditions that were conducive to student engagement in the lesson taught today?

Participant:

First of all I have posters all around the classroom, which already caught their attention and engaged them! I have the apparatus necessary for engaging in engagement, the 2D and 3D shapes, I have the equipment to tackle into each and every single child's needs.

Pre-Interview: Participant C

Researcher:

What is your understanding of student engagement?

Participant:

So when I read that, I just thought that everybody is participating. So all you don't have someone, obviously it does happen who is day-dreaming in the corner there, but you are aware of that and then you will engage them again. So you will get their attention, and I think you are just aware of each of the children in your classroom and then you know how they behave and what their needs are, and what you need to do to make sure they are engaged.

Researcher:

Can you give an example of how you promote student engagement in your lessons?

Participant:

I think lots of times by trying to be visual, and to meet their different types of learning style. To have visual, have the auditory for the auditory learners and then have something where they are busy doing for the kinaesthetic learners. Because especially with boys, they tend to be quite visual and generally need to do. I also think a lot of peer work teaching. I often think they can teach a lot better than you can. So I do a lot of “talking to your friend” what do you think first, before I stand and just tell you what it is. Because I think they have a lot of proper knowledge, and if we can build on that then we can make it more beneficial, and we build on what they already know and I can gauge what they already know.

Researcher:

What learner differences inform how you teach your lessons to promote student engagement?

Participant:

Learner differences, so well I suppose different learning abilities, different learning styles, different concentration span – focus issues. Some of them do need to be extended more, so I think you have to take all of that into consideration. Um, like I have one boy on my class who works really quickly, so I have to know once he's finished how I am going to engage him again. He can't always go on errands, I still have to stimulate him as much as we are waiting for the two boys that take a lot longer to complete an activity. Different ability levels is a big thing, so whilst you tend to teach to the middle, we have to consider the weaker learners and the stronger ones, because I think they are often the ones we leave out, because with the middle ones we meet the needs of those boys, and forget the top or bottom. Or sometimes the weaker boys are so much more demanding that the other boys can be left out so you have to teach to meet all their ability levels. Which is challenging. I mean I only have 19 in my class, so can you imagine in another class where there are 30 in a class.

Researcher:

What strategies do you use that underpin student engagement?

Participant:

So I definitely do a lot of peer learning, like cooperative teaching. We do do a lot of group work, I think sense of humour – but not sure if that is really a strategy. I think at this age they like to have responsibility. So if you make them responsible for their learning, I think the more children know about their strengths and their weaknesses, they are then informed also to be able to assist themselves. So yes, they can acknowledge that they are battling with this, and these are the reasons why, then we can make a plan and show we will be working on it in this particular way, I think that goes a long way to make them more engaged, more motivated. Because I think the more motivated they are the more easily they are engaged and will participate. Sometimes it is very hard, like if you have a learner who really is battling, they have no motivation and just doesn't want to be in the classroom. There is also like I think "goals" when we set goals, that we try and achieve. So their personal goal is something that they all think I want them to do. Their behavioural goal is everyone this term is going to listen to me which is not really going to happen, but they all think that's what I want to hear. But then with their academic goals, we sit and we figure it out "ok I'm going to work on my expressive writing by improving my punctuation". Then there is accountability also, which is a big thing.

Researcher:

How would you suggest teachers promote student engagement to address learning barriers?

Participant:

I think you have got to be a teacher who is aware of all her children in her classroom, and their barriers to learning. And if you take those barriers into account in every lesson that you planning, which is hard and and it is time consuming. But by trying meet the different learning styles, um you are already engaging them more by trying to teach to everyone. By using different strategies, just even by giving them movement breaks you factor that into your

lesson. For 10 seconds you are going to do 10 star jumps and then you know buys, they are very competitive. So you know if you do it in front with them then they try and compete with you. So I think movement breaks are quite big thing. I think definitely focus on different learning styles and needs, and if you are able to always factor that in then you are more than likely able to keep them engaged, even though the truth is they not always engaged.

Researcher:

In your experience, what are the benefits of engaged learners in a lesson?

Participant:

Well just, they are going to take away a lot more from the lesson. The learning overall will just be better.

Researcher:

In What way can a teacher use student engagement effectively in a diverse classroom context?

Participant:

Well the more engaged the learners are the more positive the classroom environment will be. I think that better learning will take place. So in a diverse classroom, I suppose. Every classroom is divers no matter whether I only have 19 boys or not, they are all individuals so they are all different. I think it's the same (I don't get thins question, I'm not understand if I'm missing the pint to the question?)

Researcher:

What classroom conditions are conducive to promote student engagement in the classroom?

Participant:

I think so I've tried to go away from making the classroom so pretty and putting up all the posters, and actually making them (learners) responsible for that. The learning that takes

place then we will discuss the topic, and then they will put up the poster that they have created themselves. I think whatever is up in the classroom mustn't just be there for decoration which I think it can be. I think if it represents their learning, then they are proud of that. I think I learnt this by we had to make our classroom look like a book we had been reading, and I gave them free-range. It was chaotic, they were standing on my chair, but at the end of 2 hours they turned my classroom into a jungle and it was pretty amazing. Otherwise you as the teacher would have to slave away in your spare time, which is not necessary. I have found with this age group the more responsibility you give them, the more responsibility they take on for their learning. It can't just be the teacher talking, and they listening = because they not listening.

Researcher:

What challenges have you faced when presenting lessons when learners are not engaged?

Participant:

I think it's hard sometimes when you stand up there and you see you don't have them. You are thinking to yourself "what am I going to do, what am I going to do?" but I think often that comes from poor planning. Or say if you haven't planned enough for that lesson, I think if you are well prepared then you will be ok. The worst part is you standing up there and can see it's not working. Or sometimes you do plan and do all those things, and then you just have to go back and think again, I think reflection is a very important thing. But sometimes things do just go wrong. So you hand out the work, and then no one can do the work, and then for that you just have to go back to the drawing board. If one can't do it, it's fine; but if a whole bunch can't do it then you have to look at yourself and start again.

Researcher:

How do you promote student engagement in your classroom?

Participant:

So I think I definitely do use different learning strategies. Not necessarily all that much, as I think I could maybe. I think work is differentiated. I do try and keep to the different ability

levels. I think as a school we do that as well, we have guided and group reading within their different ability groups they do reading with the other teachers, so I think that is important. I definitely do think that I give them a lot of responsibility for their learning and I think relationships are important. I have good relationships with my children, they boys and I find boys easier and can relate better, that's just my own personality. I think lots of different learning, taking into account what their learning needs are, what their different learning styles are is very important. Lots of cooperative learning and peer learning; sometimes you just have to facilitate what's going on in your classroom, they can teach each other a lot. Not by underestimating children, I think they know a lot more than we think. Especially these children, they get to go on these amazing holidays, have wonderful background knowledge and thus are exposed to a lot of things. You come with information from previous and knowledge and I take that into account, because I think some teachers may feel intimidated by that, but I don't, I think we can all learn from each other – which is a different approach. I really do aim for learner centred, its hard, but I really do try. Like we have do this Singapore Maths Book where I say do the following pages and sit down and do it, so I learner entered isn't conducive in that way, but in theory it should be, it really should be.

Post-Interview

Researcher:

Discuss the manner in which you presented the lesson to engage all the learners?

Participant:

Okay, so. I tried to make use of the interactive game that they could interact together, so ja the game was interactive. At that point the game was very engaging. Boys are very competitive, I didn't say who won and they all said "I got the most cards"! Then um, when they did the models they initially had to do it by themselves which made them responsible and accountable. They first had to check each others written out on their boards, they weren't just sitting around doing nothing. They were marking each others, I am only one person. When other boys got it wrong, the boys did go help other boys so that they maintained being engaged in the lesson.

Researcher:

Discuss the extent to which your instruction engaged the learners during your lesson.

Participant:

So sometimes I think , well I guess, hmm... you are kind of standing up there and talking to them. Um and they do have to listen and I know osmeitmes they don't all listen, which is why do things like "Hpcus Pocus everybody focus; '1,2,3 Eyes on Me'" its is a way to get their attention and see who is listening.

Researcher:

Do you feel that the content and learning material used during the lesson engage all the learners? Please discuss.

Participant:

I that is very hard, obviously it was your aim. All the boys are accountable and they all did. It was really only two boys that batteled to get the answer. Ja, I suppose, I hope so.

Researcher:

Which part of the lesson did you feel promoted student engagement?

Participant:

I think both parts, I think the game engaged them and I also think the checking of each others um sums or models engages them. Because they like to see who got it right and who got it wrong, they quite harsh on each other.

Researcher:

How do you as a teacher develop learner's dispositions for engagement in the classroom?

Participant:

I would just sa through the different strategies. And for me it can be learnt behaviour, like in group work you can ssign different people different roles. You could have the checker and the person who write down what the answer was. By giving them those responsibilities then they

have to engage. I think that um often you have to speak to them about group work – it is not just one person doing the work and the rest just watching. So I think it is learnt behaviour, you have to teach them how to talk to one-another and not give them the answer. You must teach them how to explain to one another!

Researcher:

Describe the classroom conditions that were conducive to student engagement in the lesson taught today?

Participant:

Well I think because I do have them seated in groups, it isn't alswy ideal – they always chat to one another. The whiteboards are really gret! They have them on the desks so you know, when I taught Grade 1 and we would all just on the carpet with a normal whiteboard, but these; the novelty of the desks still are very appealing. So I think those resources really help. I think um um um um they each had their own sum so they were each accountable for getting the answer to that sum, so I think ja.

Pre-Interview: Participant D

Researcher:

What is your understanding of student engagement?

Participant:

Ok so, so it's obviously how you get children to be involved in your lesson. How you get them to take part or participate and become part of their learning.

Researcher:

Can you give an example of how you promote student engagement in your lessons?

Participant:

Um I'm very loud and outgoing and you know I chat a lot. So we often have discussions in class, we often do a lot of "Well what do you think about this?" um, I try to get them um to a for example when I do a lesson, I try and get them to come to a conclusion before I tell them what something is, um just so that they are a part of it and I'm not just telling them and making them rote learn things.

Researcher:

What learner differences inform how you teach your lessons to promote student engagement?

Participant:

In my particular classroom I have eleven children here, every single child here has some sort of barrier to learning. Because this is the we run a "Smart Start Programme" um this is basically our bridging, I'm putting it in inverted comma's "bridging class". Um so all of these learners have some kind of difficulty. So they will all need some kind of assistance somewhere down the line, some of them are strong at Maths and some are very weak at reading. So there are gaps along the way. So every single child in my class needs something different um to be engaged. So often like for example, when a child can't see – then I'll put him closer to the front. If a child is a visual learner, I'll try and put him toward the front or you know make sure that I have aids as far as possible. It is not always possible, but as far as possible. So I think all you do is you try to meet everybody's needs, BUT unfortunately I find that it is not always possible to meet every child's needs.

Researcher:

What strategies do you use that underpin student engagement?

Participant:

've got to think! Um... Look I did do my Inclusion course at Wits, I must be honest I don't have an inclusive classroom. Because I don't have strong children. Um it's not children mainstream,

it's not mainstream children where you know its mainstream where you are fitting them into a mainstream classroom. Like I have said, every child has their own difficulty. We are a class of diverse needs and ability. Um so I try as far as possible to use um group work and ahh a it's not always possible with these children. I try to use group, I try to use different strategies, I try to get them up and moving. I try I suppose to change my strategies, so that they are not having 'teacher input' all the time.

Researcher:

How would you suggest teachers promote student engagement to address learning barriers?

Participant:

I think it depends entirely on your children. I don't think that it is always easy to get a child to engage. I think that especially if you have a child who is on the spectrum or you now autistic, asperges – they don't always want to take part. So I think that you need to be aware of every child's needs. I think that you need to be understanding if you have a shy child, you will see I have one little girl who is particularly shy she doesn't like to participate. I push her but only to a certain extent. I think that you need to be aware of how comfortable they are in their space, if they are uncomfortable they are NOT going to engage. Um so I try to make my classroom fun and friendly and you know learner centred. But as I say, if you have a child who doesn't want to engage, they are not going to and then I try with those children to engage separately away from the group, if they don't feel confident doing it in front of everybody else. Also in terms of the work itself, I think that you as a teacher need to be engaged in like who is understanding and who is not, and pulling those children out as soon as possible, because that is the benefit of this small environment. Um I can call those children out, I can see who doesn't want to participate, you know if you have a big class of 40 learners I don't think that it is that easy, but ja fortunately I am very lucky.

Researcher:

In your experience, what are the benefits of engaged learners in a lesson?

Participant:

Ok. So I think it helps you to know your children, I don't think that you teach effectively if you don't know who you are teaching. So for me, it has helped me to get to know what they like, what they don't like, what they like participating in. You know a child that hates writing is not going to talk when you are doing an English lesson, but most of the time those are the children that are Maths whizz. So I find that it helps me to get to know them better. Also for like as I say for continuous assessments, I know who and who cannot do something, because I am engaging with them all the time. I engage by calling them up separately, by getting them to give answers in class, I'm quite strict about hands up and that sort of thing. But I do think that at some point they do all engage with each other and with me. And that does benefit the children, you cannot have a quiet class, because then you are going back to the 1960's when 'children were seen and not heard'. We want children to have an opinion, we want them to be forward thinking people, we want them to have you know have a voice um and I think the only way you are going to get them to have a voice is by giving them that airtime.

Researcher:

In What way can a teacher use student engagement effectively in a diverse classroom context?

Participant:

Ok so I think that my classroom is divers, its small but I do think that it is diverse. I think that when you have different children you have to use each of their strengths to suit you. So for example I have one little boy who doesn't stop talking, he talks incessantly. However, he does know a lot. So very often I can say "Ohh Connor, what do you think about this?" and he'll kind get the others on board, where I don't always watch what they watch or go where they go but he does. So he kind of gets everybody talking and gets everybody excited and then they all kinda come out of their shell and start talking about where they have been, and what they have done you know. So that does help, um ja they just have to engage, it is just so so so important that they engage.

Researcher:

What classroom conditions are conducive to promote student engagement in the classroom?

Participant:

Ok I've had bigger classrooms where I've put my children in groups, it does help and it does work but it also creates um 'buzz' when you want quiet. So I find that I prefer it when they all sit facing me, um I like it when I don't know if you want to take a photo at the end? I like them to be kind of in pairs so that if I do need them to do something together, then they do have a partner. Um so I find that it helps. If I say quickly discuss this, or quickly do this together or help your friend, then they have a partner right next to them. Um so I think seating is important, I think that how you set your classroom up I feel like I work with littlies, I mean they are 8! So things need to be beautiful and visual and they need to be excited by it, because otherwise they are not going to be interested in engaging with it. I also find, unfortunately we don't have many opportunities here because we don't have the resources but I also find um technology is huge with the, you know as soon you take out the iPad they immediately engage. Um as soon as you take out the T.V. to show them something on the T.V. they are like immediately interested. So I do think that technology is huge today for engagement, and getting them to to participate and sometimes because I think that's what they love, that's what they love. They love computers, they love T. V's they love phones, so as soon as you are doing something with that, they are interested in doing it. Also um that is concrete still at this age. So um if I am showing them how tell the time, if I give them each a clock they are way more interested than if I am just standing in front and showing them a clock. If I am teaching them tens and units, if they all have blocks in front of them then they all become involved. But as soon as you only have one child with blocks then you have lost everybody else, because they kind of like "argh you know they have something and I don't". At the end of the day they are still children, and they still want to play and they still want to learn. So if you are tapping into what they love then you will be teaching them.

Researcher:

What challenges have you faced when presenting lessons when learners are not engaged?

Participant:

Um! Ok! So I have had numerous occasions where I have had a number of spectrum children in my class, um so they are difficult in terms of getting them to engage. Um it generally needs to be something that they are interested in. So I have instances where I've been teaching, I'm just going to give examples off the top of my head. Um I've been teaching a class alphabetical order and this child is just doesn't get the point of it. So he'll be like "I'm not doing it, I just don't see the point of it, I'm not doing the work, I'm not doing it, why do we need to do alphabetical order, I am not doing it". And then I think, obviously you have to work around it. But to a certain extent I have to say "Right, um you've got to do this, it is part of learning um and you can either choose to participate or not, BUT you do have to do the work". Whereas most children love their teacher in Grade 2 and take part happily. But ja, I would say my biggest difficulty have been my children who are on the spectrum and don't really want to, or don't really feel like it on the day. We also have quite a bit of emotional stuff where they are, where they say "I don't feel like doing this today" and I think you need to be respectful, but I think you also have to try your best to get them to see that it is important and it is fun and like it is nice. So I try and do like a lot of creative things like for example we are doing dinosaurs so, we like would two days ago we made up a story together as a class you know about dinosaurs, and then they had to write their own stories. So I try and get, and I have a class of 9 boys and 2 girls so boys love cars and dinosaurs and bugs and beetles, so we try also to choose themes that are appropriate which help to get them involved. So yes, it is a challenge when they are not engaged, at one point or another you always going to have a child who is not interested or not feeling like doing it, or not feeling well today, so definitely engagement is a challenge.

Ah like I say we do a lot of themed work; we do

Researcher:

How do you promote student engagement in your classroom?

Participant:

Ah like I say we do a lot of themed work; we do a lot of concrete apparatus work. I try and get them to, we play games on out whiteboards; we do things in pairs; we make it fun, when we do spelling we do Bingo. You know so we try and do that kind of thing so that they get involved

and enjoy what they are doing. Because if they are not enjoying what they are doing then they are not wanting to take part in the lesson and be engaged.

Post-Interview

Researcher:

Discuss the manner in which you presented the lesson to engage all the learners?

Participant:

Ok! So I do choose the child with their hand up, but I also try to get the children who aren't participating to participate by asking them, calling their attention back – that type of thing. Getting them to talk in pairs, so even if they don't want to talk to me, they might talk to their peer. So that is what I tried to do.

Researcher:

Discuss the extent to which your instruction engaged the learners during your lesson.

Participant:

I think the lesson itself is engaging, because I was looking for examples from them and meanings from them. But the actual worksheet is one of those things where they just need to listen to the instruction and do what they have been asked to do.

Researcher:

Do you feel that the content and learning material used during the lesson engage all the learners? Please discuss.

Participant:

I'd hope so! Um no ja I think so. I think that again, unfortunately this is a concept of where they either know the meaning of the words or they don't. Um but I did try to engage them all by because I asked for their own example. So that is where I tried to get them all involved,

and sometimes they do, they do take a little bit longer to get into it and to understand what you are meaning. But eventually they do come around and give their own examples.

Researcher:

Which part of the lesson did you feel promoted student engagement?

Participant:

Discussion. The discussion part of it, ja.

Researcher:

How do you as a teacher develop learner's dispositions for engagement in the classroom?

Participant:

I think I try and get them and give them an opportunity to speak, even if it is wrong – I don't want to discourage what they are saying. That's why I say "ah you are so smart" "you know your example is correct, but it the wrong type of word" because you don't want to shut them down, otherwise you are not going to have them engaging in the future. So I think how you handle wrong answers is a huge thing. Um so I try to be as encouraging, even when the answer is not right.

Researcher:

Describe the classroom conditions that were conducive to student engagement in the lesson taught today?

Participant:

Ok so they do have to follow the basic classroom rules. They do have to be respectful of one another, they have to listen to one another to be a part of the lesson, they have to pay attention to me, they need to stay focused, stay on topic because it is very easy to go off topic when you have little ones as well. And I think um ja I tried to use the pairs as well, but it is not

always effective. It is not always effective as you say if you have paired two quieter children which I had over here then you have to encourage them by helping them out just a little bit.

Pre-Interview: Participant E

Researcher:

What is your understanding of student engagement?

Participant:

Ok! So for me student engagement is how the children engage with the work as well as how the children engage with the teacher while she is teaching. So with regards to student engagement um are they um understanding the work, are they um understanding in a more abstract way as opposed to a more surface way of understanding. For example when I do a comprehension are they engaging with the text? Do they really have an understanding of what they are reading, of what the questions are asking them. And with regard to Maths: do they have an understanding of regrouping, do they really understand what regrouping means with place value. So for me what student engagement is, is about children actually tackling the work and having an understanding of what they are doing as well as the teacher providing the tools in order for them to engage in what they are doing.

Researcher:

Can you give an example of how you promote student engagement in your lessons?

Participant:

Ok so. I'll specifically do a maths lesson. For student engagement, I will always start off with a general class intro, to get an understanding of where the kids are. And then I will ask questions to get them to see what they understand, to see if they have understood anything I have said. Then sometimes I will pair them to do an activity together, or we will do it in groups or we will do it individually and I will give them apparatus in order for them to engage with any topic that we are doing. So that's how I try and promote it.

Researcher:

What learner differences inform how you teach your lessons to promote student engagement?

Participant:

Ok! So obviously all learners learn differently. So we've got auditory learners, you've got visual learners. So how you. Again, so I will try and, if we are doing pair work or group work I will try and pair weaker learners with stronger learners in order for them to help each other. For example if a weaker student, if a stronger student has a greater understanding of it and they can sometimes explain it better, sometimes than I could to a child. Ja, so again I try and use quite a few techniques in my class to cater for learner differences. I do a lot of smartboard – visual interaction. I do a lot of auditory um repetition reinforcement and a lot of concrete apparatus for the children who can do concrete. And for those who are more advanced um I always have extension work for them afterwards because obviously they need that extra pus. So because each child learns so differently, um I have figured out how to approach that child, And see which method works best for them – if it is pair group, if it is individual, if it is apparatus, or if they don't need apparatus and they are happy to go on to more abstract work.

Researcher:

What strategies do you use that underpin student engagement?

Participant:

Ok. So pretty much what I said earlier. So I'll do a lot of visual learning, concrete apparatus, um sometimes kinaesthetic with movement – it just depends on the theme and um how the kids will react to that. Um ja, I do a lot of repetition a lot of reinforcement mmm, I do a lot of um I don't know how to phrase it? But like I try to pull a lot out of the kids. So for example, when I am introducing the theme, I will try and get as much information out of them as possible, and then build on that afterwards. So ja, strategies, like I'm not sure if comprehension would be a strategy? I'm actually not too sure? But for example, like if we do a comprehension, sometimes it can be too hard for the weaker child, so I will dilute it down

for them and then they won't have to answer all 10 questions. They can just pick 5 of the easier questions, so I try and do differentiation in my lessons basically.

Researcher:

How would you suggest teachers promote student engagement to address learning barriers?

Participant:

So, it's very hard for teachers to do that, because we are in a system that everything is so structured and rigid and we have such a big syllabus to get through. It is so hard to work on individual learners and their barriers. So obviously what the main idea or the best thing to do would be an inclusive approach in the classroom. Um where you have your different learners, and try to cater to them and at their level. But with that being said, it is very difficult for that. So ideally we want to provide an inclusive environment um where every learner can be helped or extended um, but unfortunately it is not always possible in the school that I am in. and the system and the structure that there is at the moment.

Researcher:

In your experience, what are the benefits of engaged learners in a lesson?

Participant:

Ok so the benefits are immense. Learners children have to be actively involved in their learning that is how they learn. I cannot be a dictator standing up to them and dictating to them um that this is our work, and this is how it is done. They have to figure things out for themselves, they have to engage with the learning with the materials, because when they do that, they have a much better understanding of it as opposed to rote learning, and like me just dictating work to them. So I try to like facilitate them more, I provide them with the information but I also let them grapple with the work that they are doing and get them to engage with the work concretely as well as any other way they are able to learn.

Researcher:

In What way can a teacher use student engagement effectively in a diverse classroom context?

Participant:

So in this school cultural differences doesn't really apply, because its um every child has the same race, religion, same everything. Um, so can I talk about barriers from a different learning abilities? (Me: Sure.) So definitely student engagement benefits learners who have various barriers to learning, or different styles of learning. Because like I said, children engage with children and when children teach children – sometimes they benefit more from it than when their teacher explains it. Because sometimes children just understand the language of a child better than the language of a teacher. So that's why when you mix your kids in terms of mixed ability groups, and pair stronger ones with weaker ones – they really do benefit. Because when the stronger ones are explaining they really are reinforcing the concept in their mind. And the weaker ones are benefiting from it because they are being explained in a different way. More on the lines of how they can understand. Like on the carpet, when one of the girls said "your ten needs to come here or else it makes a different number" then the other girl was kinda getting it. I didn't want to show her, I wanted her peers to help her. So that they all engaging with everything at the same time. So I do believe it does benefit um the diverse learning styles of children in the classroom.

Researcher:

What classroom conditions are conducive to promote student engagement in the classroom?

Participant:

Ok so you definitely need to have a happy classroom, you need to have a comfortable classroom where children feel safe enough to be able to ask questions um safe to learn, um safe to make mistakes and not feel embarrassed about them. So the context of your classroom has to be a space that is safe for children, and that is created by the teacher. Um so I believe that children who have barriers to learning need to be with a teacher who is understanding of them um has patience for them and having those qualities will radically set up a classroom that is conducive to learning. Um also the classroom would need to have a

variety of apparatus. Equipment to facilitate the different ways of learning. Like I have said, I have the smartboard which is very visual, so I do a lot of power point presentations, a lot of interactive videos, um a lot of interactive games that the children do on the whiteboard. And then um there is also a time where I don't use the smartborad, and I just use books. And then there's a time where I don't use books and I just use concrete apparatus. So you need to have a variety of apparatus in your classroom to be able to facilitate the different learning um learning arears in your children. And it just has to be a conducive happy place for your children to thrive.

Researcher:

What challenges have you faced when presenting lessons when learners are not engaged?

Participant:

t is very difficult um and that happens a lot of the time. When students are not engaging, where they are not at all willing to get involved and then you struggle to get information out of them. So what I try and do then, is make that lesson more relevant to that learner. For example, if a child likes shopkins. Ok then I will just do the same method but just bring Shopkins in and then they can look at their shopkins, they can take it out. You have to really work toward the interest of the child in order for them to engage with you. Cause if it doesn't, then they are not going to thrive in that that that area. So it is very hard to do, but so what I try and do is relevant to them. So for example, when we do money, I'll set up a shop. Um and I will put items in the shop that is relevant to the kids. I'm not going to go and put a, I don't know, a bag of quinoa in the shop, because they don't know what it is. You know, so I try to make it as relevant to them as possible, interesting for them in order for them to engage more. And if I feel that it is necessary if they are going to work better with a partner in that case, then I will let them work in pairs if it going to be more active for them.

Researcher:

How do you promote student engagement in your classroom?

Participant:

So I do a lot questioning, I do a lot of guided questioning – like you saw on the floor. I like to engage them first, get their understanding and build on that. I like to also have um. So I um facilitate the lesson as opposed to teach them. Um I let them I don't if working in groups is student engagement? I want to answer the question for your research. But I allow them to work on groups when I think it is necessary, work in pairs. I let them use different apparatus depending on what I am doing. And if we doing for example a comprehension on birds. Then I will go and google a whole bunch of different types of birds, then we can discuss the different types of birds first. So before we get to the comprehension, I have created I think an interest and it very exciting for them to do, rather than just a really boring comprehension. So I try and promote student engagement by also prepping beforehand um, to try and make the lessons as exciting as possible, interactive as possible and engaging as possible for the learners.

Post-Interview

Researcher:

Discuss the manner in which you presented the lesson to engage all the learners?

Participant:

Ok. So what I did was I specifically let them do individual work at their desks which they are comfortable enough to do on their own, they know how to construct sentences. And then while they were at their desks I selected certain children to come and do a guided activity with me on the carpet. And um like I said they were in ability groups at first. So the first group was obviously the children who don't quite, who struggle with understanding maths concepts. And that is why I did a very basic lesson with them. I didn't do much 'hundreds' with them, we just focused on 'tens' and 'ones' and then slowly as the groups based on ability got better, so I tried to challenge them more: adding with 'hundreds' um regrouping, and things like that. So that was the way I approached the lesson to try and engage the students on the carpet. Smaller groups, smaller interactions much easier for me to see who understands what I am doing and who doesn't. As opposed to a full class lesson, I like to bring them to the carpet and work in smaller ability groups.

Researcher:

Discuss the extent to which your instruction engaged the learners during your lesson.

Participant:

Um I think the instruction did engage the learners. Like um in the beginning, I said that they could choose a number – so I wasn't dictating, I wasn't prescribing to them. Um again, I guided questions trying to get out of them 'how many groups of ones, tens and hundreds'. How did your number change when you added more ones? Um if I were to add these ones where would I start? Um, so I think that ja, just that a sorry please can you repeat the question? So I think ja, just by giving them, by being very clear from the start of what they must do at their desks, they were fine they worked independently and the instructions on the floor it was very simple, very guided – they couldn't really go wrong with it. Um and then obviously the more advanced maths learners, the instructions got a little bit harder, um to try and cater for their mixed abilities.

Researcher:

Do you feel that the content and learning material used during the lesson engage all the learners? Please discuss.

Participant:

Definitely! I feel that um the concrete apparatus um they could see the numbers, they were working with the numbers, they were learning the place value of the numbers, um so that's why I feel that concrete apparatus is essential in creating students engagement. Because if I had just sat them on the floor with nothing in front of them, they would have told me if I had drawn a number on the board and said "tell me how many tens and ones" they would have done it, but you could see that they were getting excited by trying to put the numbers together and when they did make a mistake by putting the wrong number in the wrong column – which column should it go in rather. Its just, it facilitated discussion as opposed to just a direct teaching, it was more of a discussion and that we all learn together about the numbers.

Researcher:

Which part of the lesson did you feel promoted student engagement?

Participant:

Well um I definitely feel that the time I was on the carpet, promoted a student engagement the most, obviously working with the individual groups, focusing my attention on them. And um I wasn't really engaging with the independent work because that wasn't the focus of my lesson. The focus on my lesson was on the carpet with learners doing a maths lesson. The focus wasn't on the English. The English was just there to facilitate me in order to to work on the carpet with the learners.

Researcher:

How do you as a teacher develop learner's dispositions for engagement in the classroom?

Participant:

So like I have said, we always start off concrete, um and then we go to more abstract. I do a lot of repetition and reinforcement, I do a lot of oral um like a lot of oral questioning with them. What can you remember from this lesson? What does this number mean? What does this represent? So a lot of reinforcement, repetition, um oral questioning, ja and the concrete apparatus I feel that's the way I do it.

Researcher:

Describe the classroom conditions that were conducive to student engagement in the lesson taught today?

Participant:

Ok so again, the classroom conditions were everybody knew what they were doing. My instructions were very clear, the classroom was quiet, um the classroom was quiet everybody had an understanding of what they needed to do. Um while I chose kids it didn't disturb the

others while they were doing their English independent work. The learners on the carpet didn't distract anybody else. Um and again, I believe that I made a relaxed environment for them. A happy environment a safe environment for them to make mistakes on the floor, without them feeling embarrassed about it. Um ja I think that just in the general running of my classroom I am very strict with certain things. And like when we are doing independent work and I ask for quiet, there is quite. Um and my kids really understand that and they know that. So it all comes back to the beginning of the year, when I set up structures for my classroom – those structures help to facilitate um the learning that goes on in my classroom. How my classroom runs, um I am very strict with certain things, there is a time to work, there is a time to play, um and while we were on the floor I was happy for them to be laughing, smiling, joking you know just having fun with the apparatus. So basically I believe that my classroom is conducive because it is happy, fun environment for them to learn in.

Pre-Interview: Participant F

Researcher:

What is your understanding of student engagement?

Participant:

That students are engaged at all times at their level.

Researcher:

Can you give an example of how you promote student engagement in your lessons?

Participant:

So what I will do is just an introduction to make sure everybody understands. I introduce a concept in many different ways to make sure that at least once concept will appeal to a child. So that they understand what they have to do, and then throughout the lesson just look out for the children who are maybe on the fringes and just keep drawing them back in, just to make sure they are learning as much as possible all the time. So that no body kind of slips through the cracks.

Researcher:

What learner differences inform how you teach your lessons to promote student engagement?

Participant:

Well in this class there are quite a lot of different ranges of learning. We are dealing with the highest to the lowest, so the lessons are pumped almost to the lowest level learner, but then there are different levels which each learner will be able to reach their full potential. So I do differentiation, but the differentiation is not explicit and so none of the children know that its being done. And it is very much intrinsic in the lesson and that each child they don't know that they are doing it, but actually they are all succeeding at their level.

Researcher:

What strategies do you use that underpin student engagement?

Participant:

Oh it's just motivation and being enthusiastic about things and encouraging them to be successful all the time and noticing when students do do something right and that they are successful and bringing it and highlighting it to all the other students. So to me it's all about relationships actually, and um just building confidence. Because a confident child wants to learn and do their best.

Researcher:

How would you suggest teachers promote student engagement to address learning barriers?

Participant:

Also just taking into account what kind of barrier you are dealing with and then work your lesson around that barrier, so that it is not evident to the child, but you are also addressing the underlying basic skills that they need to be learning during that lesson. So you are not

highlighting the barrier at all, ok! You are teaching them to overcome it by addressing things that are going on – the underlying skills that they need to learn and know.

Researcher:

In your experience, what are the benefits of engaged learners in a lesson?

Participant:

Well they are huge! Absolutely massive! Well because all the children are learning all the time and they don't feel that there is anything different about them, so it takes away the whole deficit model kind of idea of learning. And you are empowering children to overcome any difficulties they have got.

Researcher:

In What way can a teacher use student engagement effectively in a diverse classroom context?

Participant:

What I do a lot of the time is peer-tutoring, but it won't always be the strongest child with the weakest child. We do what is called "Fair Share Sticks" basically it is just their names on sucker sticks and we choose very very randomly and um I help the students to teach each other. Because somebody is good at something most of the time you know. So if they get the opportunity to pass that knowledge on, then they really do feel that they are empowered, so we do a lot of "Fair Share Sticks" and peer engagement, and that works really really well.

Researcher:

What classroom conditions are conducive to promote student engagement in the classroom?

Participant:

So colourful, informal, relaxed, not disciplinarian at all – just very sort of like I said relationships are key, so just playing it very low-key, building up the respect between the girls

or boys. And um making learning visual, so everything that they do is actually displayed around the classroom, so that they can see what they have done. Also I have 26 girls in my class, and what's nice about that is its even which means when we do group work nobody is left out.

Researcher:

What challenges have you faced when presenting lessons when learners are not engaged?

Participant:

It would be just a case of bringing them in again to be engaged, but what I do then is usually notice that something is wrong, and take them outside to find out what is wrong. We will have a little chat to find out what is wrong and exactly what is going on, and then after that they feel a little bit better. And they come back in and are far more engaged. Because there is generally a reason why the child is not engaged and in my experience is usually emotional, so if you can find out what is going on, they do feel better and more supported and then more willing to engage. Or if something is a bit hard they do tend to withdraw and then you do just take it down a couple of levels, to where they start feeling successful again and then you can work on that. So you have to know the child intrinsically, you have to know where they are coming from, you have to know background information about the home environment and what is going on in the home environment. If you don't understand the child you can't do inclusion, there is just no way.

Researcher:

How do you promote student engagement in your classroom?

Participant:

Just through excitement, so creating a lot of anticipation in terms of what they are going to learn, so I do use Vygotsky's a Zone of Proximal Development and instead of creating a there is a space there for anxiety which promotes learning. So I have kind of changed it around to anticipation to promote learning. So like today they have seen the baking stuff, and they know something is going to happen, but they are just not sure what it is, you know. So it is that excitement of what are going to be doing and learn today and giving them what they need.

Because learning doesn't need to be boring, it is very very exciting. And then like I have said we are not as formal as um most schools. So you'll see just now in our lesson, I'll start off very formally but then it will kind of descend into chaos, because that is how children learn you know it's just, that's just the way it is. So this is a far more relaxed environment and that is conducive into helping them to learn, because they don't feel scared. Look at them are quite relaxed and want to be here and want to learn from each other.

Post-Interview

Researcher:

Discuss the manner in which you presented the lesson to engage all the learners?

Participant:

Ok so what I did initially was they did just a quick sort of oral test to see that everybody knew what I was talking about and also just to recoup on what we had done before. And then um they were on the carpet with me, so it was a case of just making sure that they were all listening and nobody was on the fringes causing nonsense. And then that they all were paying attention before the lesson had even started. So the clapping activity was really just to get their whole body engaged and ready for learning.

Researcher:

Discuss the extent to which your instruction engaged the learners during your lesson.

Participant:

So hopefully my instructions were very clear, and not ambiguous which is kind of easy to do. But also just to to to um my instruction was given in such a way to make them excited for what was to come for the lesson, they didn't know what I was going to do so I didn't tell them what the outcome was or the expectation, so it was creating that anticipation for what they kind of needed to learn. And then also just upbeat, upbeat and excited.

Researcher:

Do you feel that the content and learning material used during the lesson engage all the learners? Please discuss.

Participant:

I do, I do think that I did need to change my lesson kind of half way though because it was very clear that some of the learners hadn't quite grasped what they needed to grasp. So I think that um if I had stuck to the kind of original lesson plan I would have lost a lot of the learners, because they wouldn't have been engaged at all. Because it was getting too difficult, so in the end it all worked out just fine.

Researcher:

Which part of the lesson did you feel promoted student engagement?

Participant:

A it was when they were writing on their desks as a group, because they were all very engaged having one learner teach them and then the rest of the learners getting their chance to write down answers or what have you on the table top, which they all really enjoy.

Researcher:

How do you as a teacher develop learner's dispositions for engagement in the classroom?

Participant:

It all comes back to knowing your child, knowing each and every single child – which is very easy in a small setting. And knowing what hooks to use, um knowing how to bring them back into the lesson. And also knowing who is going to spin out at any given moment in time and why they actually doing it. And then how to deal with that obviously need to know how to bring them back into the group and back into the lesson.

Researcher:

Describe the classroom conditions that were conducive to student engagement in the lesson taught today?

Participant:

So it was very calm and relaxed, I think all learner's needs were taken care of. I think everyone was feeling happy and in a good space, and they wanted to learn. The work wasn't that difficult, that they couldn't achieve and be a success in their learning, so I think that created quite a nice space and atmosphere for learning.

Pre-Interview: Participant G

Researcher:

What is your understanding of student engagement?

Participant:

Well when I think of student engagement I think it's the active involvement of all children within your class and they are not just passive but actively engaged throughout your lesson. No matter if its with how you teaching, whether its with the content or with understanding and grasping the concepts. Um so ja they are all participating.

Researcher:

Can you give an example of how you promote student engagement in your lessons?

Participant:

Basically, if I see a child as dwindling off or you know getting side-tracked with something like I go up to them and mention and say their name quietly or just touch them on their shoulder and whisper in their ear, just so they also don't feel like you know they are the ones being picked on if you shout their name out in the class. You know, because sometimes boys are quite sensitive to those things, little things. So I just go up to them and say "let's focus now"

and I try to use positive reinforcement “do you think you can complete this work activity and I will and if you can’ just so you know to kind of get them involved in the lesson.

Researcher:

What learner differences inform how you teach your lessons to promote student engagement?

Participant:

1. Ok so learner differences on all levels. Ok so whether it is cultural, academics, pace, knowledge of the content. Um so I really do take those, all these factors into account even where the children come from. Um so I have this little boy in class right now and who um his parents are totally disinterested, not disinterested but a bit of a neglection with him – so they don’t help him at home. And that really does impact how the child is involved in the classroom, because he is not actually having the solid foundation and the advantage of other children within the classroom. So I have to help him get involved, I have extra lessons, arrive to school early and done reading with him, and have actually won the parents over by doing those sort of things. And I said in order for you to see progress in your child, you need to um ja also participate. It’s a two-way street – a collaborative a collaboration. It’s you know what inclusion is about. So in order to get this little boy involved, I need to know his background, and all those little factors play a role in how I respond to him in the classroom.

Researcher:

What strategies do you use that underpin student engagement?

Participant:

Well strategies, I look immediately at their books. I am constantly walking around the classroom seeing where they are at currently, because it is an indication if the children are doing nothing or if the children are just sitting there and playing on their white boards or whatever, that shows me that they are not involved. Or whether they are not asking me questions, I really ask questions to them and I try to make sure that they are all levels of

thinking: higher order thinking levels according to Bloom's taxonomy. I try to get the creative and normal basic question, just so I can involve all those learners who are you know really clever and those who are weaker.

Researcher:

How would you suggest teachers promote student engagement to address learning barriers?

Participant:

You know now days we have White Paper is it Six or White Paper Five? I mean White Paper Six, ok so that does give an indication of where the children are at, and gives me a guideline for learning barriers. Ok. So it goes beyond that, you as teacher need to be really well read, you need to know about Attention Deficit, you need to know about you know any factors that can impede their learning. And if you have that knowledge and you collaborate with your colleagues. Like I been constantly speaking to the educational psychologist, and I'll say I've noticed something like this with this little boy how can I assist him the classroom? That collaboration has then allowed me to ensure that I can implement strategies into the classroom and be able to assist him. So it's all about you also getting the knowledge and then implementing it to also get them involved.

Researcher:

In your experience, what are the benefits of engaged learners in a lesson?

Participant:

The benefits? Well they are able to grasp the concepts which in turn doesn't make them feel like failures um because um if they just sit there and are passive they are not getting anything from it. So the benefit of it is they actually feel like when they go home they have learnt something, they have grasped they are like little sponges that can go home and you know implement what I have taught. It gives them confidence and ja.

Researcher:

In What way can a teacher use student engagement effectively in a diverse classroom context?

Participant:

Well like I've said earlier it is about knowing your children in your classroom and knowing their diversity and not being or not only thinking of it as culture or only as language barrier or only as home background but actually getting to know your children and from there the teacher can engage effectively within the classroom. Um ja you know it's also whether you as the teacher want to and have the desire to, then you can actually help them.

Researcher:

What classroom conditions are conducive to promote student engagement in the classroom?

Participant:

Well it would help if your classroom sizes were a bit smaller, and you know you had more resources especially being in a government school we are quite limited. Maybe having iPads and meeting these children with multimodal devices and multi-representational methods. That can get them involved easily but you know even if you don't have that, it doesn't matter, you can always make other means to help these children in the classroom, to get them involved.

Researcher:

What challenges have you faced when presenting lessons when learners are not engaged?

Participant:

A lot of discipline issues, um for engagement particularly I have a lot of children who have come from rough backgrounds and um whether it's parents who have passed away or and one little boy just can't contain his anger and aggression. He gets so upset that he starts punching and pummelling the boys on the grass on the carpet and kicks them. And I have actually had to learn that this is impeding his learning and I've consulted the educational psychologist as support. She has recommended that I should get a little box and fill it with bubble wrap and bits of newspaper and bubbles. And when he feels so frustrated he can go

outside and tear the newspaper or blow the bubbles just as a calming mechanism. And I think um the challenges are discipline and that is impeding him in getting engaged, whether it's a discipline or children not understanding, I can't think off the top of my head now. But ja.

Researcher:

How do you promote student engagement in your classroom?

Participant:

I try everywhere I can. I am looking at for exactly where my children are at. I am trying to help them ja where. Ah I am trying to implement that is inclusive, whether it is academics, making sure that the work is according to their ability level. But not being exclusive of them. Well as you know Florian speaks about how you have to make it available to everyone. So when I do teach a lesson, and I say there are 20 sums up on the board I'll say can you see if you can complete 10 of those 20 and if you think you can complete 12 of those 20. So I try to give them a level a goal that can try to reach all the time. And I think that is trying to get them involved and that is trying to reach them where they are at currently.

Post-Interview

Researcher:

Discuss the manner in which you presented the lesson to engage all the learners?

Participant:

Alright so I tried to use a really multimodal approach to the way I taught. So if you saw that I used, so you know children learn in different ways. Some learn kinaesthetically some visually and some auditory. So you know it was helpful that I used that Kahoot Quiz, which got them involved. And I also had visual with the pictures of the stegosaurus when I explained that. And then the auditory was me explaining it verbally. And then it helped to consolidate to see if they understood it when we applied their knowledge of their understanding of it. So I tried to

get them engaged in all aspects. And obviously I got them to represent their understanding through the means of art. So I was engaging them through all different means.

Researcher:

Discuss the extent to which your instruction engaged the learners during your lesson.

Participant:

Well I directed the instruction specifically to certain children. So I got their attention by saying their names, like Thomas what is your idea of this? So I think that got him engaged, and also it's something that they are interested in. So stegosaurus, dinosaur's boys love that, so you know if children have a passion for it they would want to learn it. And it is also the way you approach teaching these subjects.

Researcher:

Do you feel that the content and learning material used during the lesson engage all the learners? Please discuss.

Participant:

Um... Yes! I would say so, well obviously you know you do miss your odd ones but my whole purpose was to try and engage them. But you always will have one child who is excluded. And um but that's me, I need to be more intuitive of that and be more aware of those children who are marginalised and excluded in the lesson. And that will I think come with time, looking out for those children. But I believe so, I explained with my materials and going towards them, directing each material towards the child's interest. And that is one of those things you know to try and include them. Um my ja, those children that did feel excluded did come to me and voice it to me, when they felt that they couldn't draw the stegosaurus. Um you know art might not be their forte, so perhaps I could have given them playdough to moulded it out of playdough. I could have maybe tried other materials which they could have done it which was their forte and not just limited it to painting or pastels or drawing it. You know just create other ways.

Researcher:

Which part of the lesson did you feel promoted student engagement?

Participant:

Um. I think when I did that Kahoot Quiz, I think that the children were really excited and enthusiastic to learn. I mean you heard how they were shouting out the answers and stuff. And that really did get them involved, but perhaps I could've if we had the resources of iPad's perhaps that would have been more accurate for me to see if they actually understood it, and not just got all you know they heard the little boy say "Stegosaurus dinosaur" and he shouted the answer out. I could've been more aware of where they were currently at if I had those resources. But you know what, I actually think that considering I am in a government school and the rest of it, I still made the best of what I could with the limited resources.

Researcher:

How do you as a teacher develop learner's dispositions for engagement in the classroom?

Participant:

I really try and tried to affirm them a lot. Use positive reinforcement all the time, I try and shower them with praise for their strengths as opposed to focusing on the negatives all the time. Like you can't do it, I'll say well look at how you drew that tree, give them that positive outlook and get them to see that they are able to do everything. I think that will then give them the disposition of that they can learn, and that actually makes them want to learn, and get involved and get engaged. Because you are showing them that they can actually do something, because not every child is the same.

Researcher:

Describe the classroom conditions that were conducive to student engagement in the lesson taught today?

Participant:

The classroom conditions? I'm not actually too sure. Um. I think um, I can talk from the negatives, but in order for it to be more conducive sometimes it is better to have a smaller amount of children in the classroom. That would allow me to make sure I am focusing on more on the children who do not understand, and helping them where they are at. But I think my children, um walking around the classroom and seeing oh that one didn't understand that and then quickly going up to him and see how I could get him involved, might have helped in his involvement in the lesson. So ja, I did try. I don't know if that answered your questions? Oh also, the setting of the classroom, I set the boys up into um I haven't placed the boys in ability groups so it is random, but I have set them in to um it is really nice because you have some boys who are really strong and then some weaker boys in the group, but they always assist each other. And that was conducive to and talking and engaging and wanting to learn, because you know this boy understood what a stegosaurus was and the other boy was well and he got involved, so he encouraged that active involvement within that lesson.

Ethical Clearance: Ethics Committee in Education Faculty of Humanities



Wits School of Education

27 St Andrews Road, Parktown, Johannesburg, 2193 Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa.
Tel: +27 11 717-3064 Fax: +27 11 717-3100 E-mail: enquiries@educ.wits.ac.za Website:
www.wits.ac.za

15 July 2016 Student Number: 557263 Protocol Number: 2016ECE036M

Dear Skye Mac Arthur Application for ethics clearance: Master of Education

Thank you very much for your ethics application. The Ethics Committee in Education of the Faculty of Humanities, acting on behalf of the Senate, has considered your application for ethics clearance for your proposal entitled:

The extent to which in-service teachers' classroom practices of inclusive education promote student engagement.

The committee recently met and I am pleased to inform you that clearance was granted.

Please use the above protocol number in all correspondence to the relevant research parties (schools, parents, learners etc.) and include it in your research report or project on the title page.

The Protocol Number above should be submitted to the Graduate Studies in Education Committee upon submission of your final research report.

All the best with your research project. Yours sincerely,

Wits School of Education 011 717-3416

cc Supervisor - Ms Lauren Rembach

Ethical Clearance: Gauteng Department of Education Research Approval Letter



For administrative use only:
Reference no: D2017 / 221
enquiries: Diane Bunting 011 843 6503

GAUTENG PROVINCE

EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	10 August 2016
Validity of Research Approval:	10 August 2016 to 30 September 2016
Name of Researcher:	Mac Arthur S.
Address of Researcher:	P.O. Box 130501; Bryanston Shops; 2074
Telephone / Fax Number/s:	011 463 7594; 072 617 6772
Email address:	skyemacarthur@gmail.com
Research Topic:	An investigation into in-service teachers' knowledge and classroom practices of inclusive education to promote student engagement.
Number and type of schools:	ONE Primary School
District/s/HO	Johannesburg East

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

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

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

CONDITIONS FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN GDE

1. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned, the Principal/s and the chairperson/s of the School Governing Body (SGB.) must be presented with a copy of this letter.
2. The Researcher will make every effort to obtain the goodwill and co-operation of the GDE District officials, principals, SGBs, teachers, parents and learners involved. Participation is voluntary and additional remuneration will not be paid;

Mudo
2016/08/11

1

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management ER&KM)

9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001
P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 355 0506
Email: David.Makhado@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

3. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal and/or Director must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.
4. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded by the end of the THIRD quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.
5. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.
6. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written consent from the SGB/s; principal/s, educator/s, parents and learners, as applicable, before commencing with research.
7. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilizing his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institution/s, staff and/or the office/s visited for supplying such resources.
8. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research title, report or summary.
9. On completion of the study the researcher must supply the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management, with electronic copies of the Research Report, Thesis, Dissertation as well as a Research Summary (on the GDE Summary template). Failure to submit your Research Report, Thesis, Dissertation and Research Summary on completion of your studies / project – a month after graduation or project completion - may result in permission being withheld from you and your Supervisor in future.
10. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned;
11. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director/s and school/s concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

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

Kind regards


.....

Dr David Makhado

Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 2016/08/11
.....