



Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Inclusive Education: A case of one Full-Service school in Soweto

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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I hereby declare the following:

1. I declare that this research report is my own original work.
2. I have included all the necessary acknowledgements and references where applicable.
3. I understand the plagiarism rules of the university.
4. I have not handed in someone's work as my own work.



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30 October 2024

Date

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

SASA- South African Schools Act

SIAS- Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support

SNA- Support Needs Assessment Forms

LOLT- Language of Learning and Teaching

LER- Learner Educator Ratio

LSEN- Learners with Special Educational Needs

ATP- Annual Teaching Plan

SBST- School-Based Support Team

HOD- Head of Department

EFA- Education for All

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABSTRACT

1.	CHAPTER 1	1
1.1.	INTRODUCTION	1
1.2.	RATIONALE	1-2
1.3.	RESEARCH PROBLEM	2-3
1.4.	RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	3-4
1.5.	RESEARCH QUESTIONS	4
1.6.	CLARIFICATION OF TERM	4
1.7.	OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY	5
2.	CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	6
2.1	INTRODUCTION	6
2.2	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	6-7
2.3	INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	8-9
2.4	INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA	9-11
2.4.1	INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES	11-12
2.4.1.1	INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN NIGERIA	12-13
2.4.1.2	INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN BOTSWANA	13-14
2.4.1.3	INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN LESOTHO	14-15
2.5	FULL-SERVICE SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA	15-17
2.6	THE PRINCIPLES OF A FULL SERVICE SCHOOL	17-18

2.7 TEACHERS' PRACTICES AND PERCEPTIONS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	18-19
2.8 CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PRACTICES	19-20
2.9 INCLUSIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES	20-21
2.10 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICIES	21
2.10.1 THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA	21-22
2.10.2 WHITE PAPER 6	22-23
2.10.3 SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT	23
2.10.4 POLICY ON SCREENING, IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT (SIAS)	23-24
2.11 CONCLUSION	24
3. CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	25
3.1. INTRODUCTION	25
3.2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	25-26
3.3. RESEARCH PARADIGM	26
3.3.1 Epistemology	26-27
3.3.2 Axiology	27
3.4. RESEARCH DESIGN	27-28
3.5. DATA COLLECTION METHOD	28
3.5.1 INTERVIEWS	28-29
3.5.2 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS	29-30
3.5.3 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS	30-31
3.6 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE	31-32
3.7 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE	32

3.8 ETHICAL ISSUES	32-33
3.8.1 INFORMED CONSENT	33
3.8.2 VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION	33
3.8.3 CONFIDENTIALITY	33-34
3.8.4 CREDIBILITY, TRANSFERABILITY AND DEPENDABILITY	34
3.9 CONCLUSION	34
4. CHAPTER 4: CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND FINDINGS	35
4.1 INTRODUCTION	35
4.2 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS	35-36
4.2.1 THEME 1: TEACHERS' UNDERSTANDING OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	36
4.2.1.1 SUB-THEME 1: ACCOMMODATING DIFFERENCES	36-37
4.2.1.2 DIFFERENTIATED APPROACH TO LEARNING	37-38
4.2.2 THEME 2: PERCEPTIONS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	38
4.2.2.1 SUB-THEME 1: TEACHERS' BELIEFS	38-40
4.2.3 THEME 3: INCLUSIVE TEACHING PRACTICES	40
4.2.3.1 ASSESSMENT AND SCREENING	40-41
4.2.3.2 DIFFERENTIATION	41-42
4.2.4 THEME 4: CHALLENGES	42-43
4.2.4.1 OVERCROWDING	43
4.2.4.2 LANGUAGE	43-44
4.2.4.3 LACK OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	44-45
4.2.4.4 CURRICULUM	45-47
4.2.5 THEME 4: CHALLENGES WITH INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICIES	47-49

4.2.5.1 SUB-THEME 1: UNREALISTIC	49-50
4.3 CONCLUSION	50-51
5. CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS	52
5.1 INTRODUCTION	52
5.2 TEACHERS' UNDERSTANDING OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	52-53
5.3 TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION	53-54
5.4 INCLUSIVE TEACHING PRACTICES	54-55
5.5 CHALLENGES	55-57
5.6 CHALLENGES WITH INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICIES	57
5.7 CONCLUSION	57-58
6. CHAPTER 6: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS	59
6.1 INTRODUCTION	59
6.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY	59
6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS	59
6.3.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY	59-60
6.3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	60
6.3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE	60
6.4 CONCLUSION	60
7. REFERENCE LIST	61-71
APPENDICES	72
APPENDIX A: INFORMATION SHEET TO PRINCIPAL	72-73
APPENDIX B: INFORMATION SHEET TO TEACHERS	74
APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM	75

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE	76
APPENDIX E: ETHICS CLEARANCE	77
APPENDIX F: GDE LETTER OF APPROVAL	78-79

ABSTRACT

South Africa developed several inclusive education policies, including the South Africa Schools Act, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, and Education White Paper 6, to address exclusions in schools. Despite the enormous expansion of inclusive education, there are still issues of exclusions and impediments in South African classrooms. The study explored teachers' perceptions and practices of inclusive education in one of the full-service schools in Soweto. Using purposive sampling, data was collected through interviews, a focus group discussion, and document analysis. Five teachers were interviewed using an interview schedule to assist participants in narrating their views and practices. In addition to that, a focus group discussion was conducted with all the participants. The discussions were in person, and they were all audio recorded. The study used an inductive approach to analyze data. The findings showed that participants know what inclusive education is but consider it ideal, as it is challenging to implement in the classroom. The study thus recommends that nations worldwide establish one meaning of inclusive education because the term's various connotations might lead to confusion and contradictions. In addition to that, all schools must have adequate resources and infrastructure to cater to all learners. Furthermore, there must be adjustments in the curriculum. Lastly, teachers must have the essential abilities and skills to accommodate all learners.

Keywords: Inclusive education, perceptions, teaching practices, full-service school

CHAPTER 1

OVERALL INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The term ‘inclusive education’ has multiple meanings (Artiles, Harris-Murri & Rostenberg, 2021), and it is a difficult term to pin (Makoelle, 2024). There are different definitions of inclusive education, which may contradict one another. Some definitions are concerned with including all learners (broad definition), whereas some are concerned with including learners with disabilities. For example, on one hand, Daniela and Lytras (2019) define inclusive education as teaching that supports learner’s educational needs. Bešić (2020) on the other hand, defines inclusive education as making opportunities for learning and interaction accessible to all learners, not just those with impairments.

Inclusive education has been adopted globally and locally to curb and deal with issues of inequalities and exclusions in schools. In 1994, a conference took place in Salamanca with 92 participating countries in attendance. The emphasis of the conference was that “schools (independent and public) should include all learners” (UNESCO, 1994). The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action document, which stresses the creation of inclusive educational settings and equal access, was developed and signed by 92 participating countries (UNESCO, 1994). Different countries globally use the Salamanca document as a guiding policy document to develop inclusive education policies and schools.

South Africa developed several policies, including the South Africa Schools Act, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, and Education White Paper 6, to address exclusions in schools (Walton & Engelbrecht, 2024). Despite the enormous expansion of inclusive education, there are still issues of exclusions and impediments in South African classrooms. This highlights the necessity for a transformation in schools and the educational system to achieve inclusive education for every learner (Walton & Engelbrecht, 2024). The next section features the rationale of my study.

1.2 RATIONALE

There are certain standards for what a normal learner should be like in a classroom. As a result, when a learner does not meet these standards, people consider the learner different. In my opinion, inclusive education necessitates recognizing and valuing individual differences among learners. However, I believe that learners' differences are not valued in classrooms; instead, they are seen as a problem that needs to be dealt with in special schools. According to Bombardelli (2020), being an inclusive teacher entails recognizing, valuing, acknowledging, and embracing learner differences.

In addition, the different definitions of inclusive education create confusion and make it difficult to implement it practically in the classroom (Artiles, Harris-Murri & Rostenberg, 2021). I believe that inclusive education is not a reality, as schools do not implement or demonstrate inclusive education as a reality. My research study pursued to explore and understand teachers' perceptions of inclusive education, the teaching practices they use to include all learners in their teaching, the strategies they use to actualize inclusive education, and the role policies play. This research is important, as it was meant to bridge the gap between inclusive education aims and practical implementations in schools. The next section discusses the research problem.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

The Salamanca statement paved the way for countries globally to develop inclusive education policies and inclusive schools to address inequalities and exclusions (Graham., 2023). In South Africa post democracy and the publication of the Salamanca Statement, equality and inclusion were entrenched in the new constitution and inclusive education policies. The Department of Education and Government made many attempts to acknowledge equality, inclusion, and human rights in education (Hugo & Mobara, 2024). Many attempts included implementing the inclusive education system using White Paper 6 as the official policy and full-service schools as part of the movement towards inclusive education. Through the White Paper 6, the government established 164 full-service schools to cater to all learners' learning needs in South Africa, making it a roadmap for inclusive education implementation (Ayaya, Makoelle & Van Der Merwe, 2023). Hugo and Mobara (2024) state that full-service schools in South Africa promote and enrich inclusion.

Despite the inclusive schools and policies put in place, there is still continuous segregation of learners in South African schools. Walton and Engelbrecht (2024, p. 2138) concur “despite international policy initiatives, educational exclusion is pervasive, especially in the Global South, and disproportionately affects disabled students”. There is a vast disparity between the inclusive education policies on paper and the pragmatic reality in schools (Materechera, 2020). According to Makoelle (2014, inclusive education is only good in paper as its implementation has not been successfully realized. According to Francisco et al. (2020), the multiple definitions and principles of inclusive education contribute to the issues surrounding its enactment and the effectiveness of full-service schools.

In addition to that, most teachers were already employed at schools when they were changed to full-service schools and had to adjust and accept the transformation established by the new policies from the Department of Education (Hugo & Mobara, 2024). Teachers play a significant part in the education sector, as they are supposed to implement these policies in their classrooms. If they are not trained and do not have the relevant expertise and abilities to deal with diverse learners, they will not be able to accommodate the learning requirements of everyone in the classroom.

Teachers’ attitudes and lack of resources also affect the inclusion of all learners and the enactment of inclusive education in classrooms. Lack of resources, overcrowding, educators’ lack of skills, and insufficient training are highlighted as some of the challenges that prevent the successful implementation of inclusive education in South Africa (Mpu & Adu, 2021). This results in teachers feeling inadequate to teach in classrooms that are inclusive by nature as well as full-service schools. This is problematic because it acts against the values of inclusive education, making it difficult for educators to employ inclusive practices and approaches in their classrooms. The following section discusses the objectives and aims of the study.

1.4 RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This study aimed to investigate teachers’ perceptions and practices of inclusive education. The objectives of this study are as follows.

- a. To investigate the teaching strategies that teachers in a full-service school in Soweto employ in their teaching to include all learners.
- b. To discover inclusive pedagogic practices that teachers employ to embrace the principles of a full-service school.
- c. To examine the role that policies play in ensuring that inclusive teaching practices are implemented.

What follows is an outline of the research questions.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question of this research was as follows:

What are teachers' perceptions and practices of inclusive education?

The following are supporting questions:

- a. What teaching strategies do teachers in a full-service school in Soweto employ in their teaching to include all learners?
- b. What inclusive pedagogic practices do teachers employ to embrace the principles of a full-service school?
- c. What role do policies play in ensuring the implementation of inclusive teaching practices?

The following section clarifies the critical terms of the study.

1.6. CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

Perceptions: Perceptions refer to how something is viewed, comprehended, or interpreted. Teachers' perceptions refer to how teachers view and understand something (Mngo & Mngo, 2018).

Teaching practices: Teaching practices refer to the pedagogy that educators use to deliver knowledge to learners in the classroom (Finkelstein et al., 2021).

Inclusive education: In my understanding, inclusive education refers to catering to all learners learning needs in a classroom, regardless of their differences. Bešić (2020)

defines inclusive education as giving all learners equal opportunities to learn irrespective of their differences.

Full-service schools: Full-service schools are schools that will be equipped to support learners with barriers to learning within the mainstream school system (DoE, 2001)

1.7. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter outlines the background and summary of the research study. It also discusses rationale, purpose, aims and objectives. This chapter concludes with the research questions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter provides the theoretical framework and literature review.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

The research methodology applied in this study is discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation and Findings

This chapter presents the findings of the study collected through focus group discussions, interviews, and document analysis.

Chapter 5: Discussion of results

This chapter includes a discussion and interpretation of the results of the data findings of this study.

Chapter 6: Recommendations and Conclusions

This chapter discusses the significance of this study in the field of inclusive education and provides recommendations.

TIMELINES

July- Chapter 4&5

August- Submission and corrections

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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter elaborated on the overview and orientation of the study. The chapter looked at the background to the study, introduced the research questions and the aim of the study as well as clarification of terms. The current chapter reviews literature regarding inclusive education and the enactment of full-service schools in South Africa and other African countries is reviewed in this chapter. This chapter also outlines literature on teachers' perceptions of inclusive education and the implementation of inclusive practices in classrooms. However, the focus is on full-service schools. Reviewing literature is important because one gains an understanding of the existing research and debates relevant to my research and area of study. Florian's framework is what follows.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Florian's framework of inclusive pedagogy underpins this study. Florian and Spratt (2023) define the term 'pedagogy' as the skills and craft knowledge of the teachers, which they use to guide the practice, decisions they take. The term 'pedagogy' refers to the knowledge and expertise that teachers use in their decision-making about their practice (Florian & Spratt, 2013). Inclusive education requires that all learners' learning needs must be catered for in the classroom, which means that learners must not only be present in the classroom, but they must all have an opportunity to learn. Hence, the decisions teachers make about their practice are fundamental. Florian developed a framework of inclusive education as a tool for evaluating and gathering evidence about practice (Florian & Spratt, 2013). Due to the multiple meanings of inclusive education, Florian developed a framework that teachers can use to better comprehend and enact inclusive pedagogy, providing all learners in the classroom with rich learning opportunities (Frumos, 2020). An inclusive education pedagogy ensures that all learners learn and have their learning needs catered for in the classroom, making inclusive pedagogy an active approach to education.

In addition to that, inclusive pedagogy helps teachers to respond and cater to all learner's differences, avoiding exclusion that can result from unmet learning needs in the classroom (Florian & Spratt, 2013). Therefore, teaching and learning of all learners in the classroom is the responsibility of the teacher. However, this requires certain expertise and skills from teachers. Mokala (2020) defines inclusive pedagogy as a strategy that gives learners access to a variety of opportunities in the classroom as it aims to advance the education of all learners. that the implication is that we must do away with the traditional notion of categorizing learners according to their learning needs but see learning difficulties as dilemmas for teachers to look for new ways and approaches to deliver meaningful learning experiences to all learners. Thus, teachers' inclusive perceptions and practices are important as they inform teachers' practices in the classroom.

Three aspects form the basis of Florian's theoretical framework for inclusive education, which teachers must adhere to to apply inclusive practices in their classrooms (Mokala, 2021): namely:

- Shifting attention from focusing solely on the learners that have been identified as having special learning needs to focus on all learners. This implies that teachers must do away with providing learners with disabilities with segregated special learning and create an inclusive learning approach that creates meaningful learning for all learners (Florian & Linklater, 2010).
- Rejecting their belief that learners' ability is being fixed and the belief that the presence of some learners will impede the progress of other learners (Mokala, 2021).
- Teachers must believe in transformability, which means that the learner's ability to learn is not fixed or predetermined but can be changed by the teachers' actions in developing teaching practices and pedagogy. The expectation is that teachers will see learning difficulties as a challenge for them rather than for learners (Brennan, King & Travers, 2021). Using this perspective, I was able to study and evaluate whether the inclusive practices that teachers employ in their classrooms recognize and acknowledge learner's differences. Inclusive education is covered in what follows.

2.3 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The United Nations Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) has been identified as the international breakthrough for inclusive education (Nilhom, 2023).

One of the major founding documents globally for inclusive education is the United Nations Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994), as this statement not only marks a clear shift in mindset orienting the teaching and learning of disabled learners towards an inclusive social model that recognizes and caters to all learners (Hernández-Torrano, Somerton & Helmer, 2022). The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action are documents that focus on developing inclusive schools and education for all. It was signed by 92 participating countries in the Salamanca Conference on Special Needs Education that took place in Salamanca Spain in 1994 (UNESCO, 1994). The focus was that schools (independent and public) should cater to and accommodate all learners regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, linguistic, or other conditions (UNESCO, 1994).

Arguably, The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs are the most significant documents in the field of inclusive education as they have and still influence the development of inclusive education policies globally (Ainscow, Slee & Best, 2019). In my opinion, the Salamanca statement is significant in the field of inclusive education as it speaks on insists on the inclusion and the idea of enrolling all learners in regular classrooms, especially those from marginalized backgrounds. However, there are contradictions within the statement as it advocates for the inclusion of all learners while it prioritizes the inclusion of learners with disabilities. In my view, this prioritizes a certain group of learners over other learners, making it problematic for inclusive education and the inclusion of all learners. Ainscow, Slee, and Best (2019) state that the Salamanca conference focused on special needs education.

It is important to highlight that a lot of research has been done on inclusive education since the declaration of the Salamanca Statement in 1994 (Nilholm, 2021). However, the term 'inclusive education' has different diverse meanings that may contradict each other as it has taken on multiple meanings across the globe (Artiles, Harris-Murri & Rostenberg, 2021). According to Mokala (2021), inclusive education is the subject of various debates

across the globe, which stem from the different meanings of inclusive education and what it means to be inclusive. In addition to that, Kefallinou, Symeonidou, and Meijer (2020), argue that inclusion is a debated and contested concept in education. Researchers and policy makers debate the meaning of inclusive education. The current study calls for a single definition of inclusive education that can be used globally to respond to the contradictions and debates that are caused by the multiple meanings of inclusive education.

According to Matabane (2022), inclusive education is advocates that all learners must be included and have access to regular teaching regardless of their differences. Similarly, according to Wheeler (2019) inclusive education is the inclusion of all learners in mainstream schools irrespective of their race, gender, disabilities, etc. Nilholm (2021) speaks of four diverse definitions of inclusion and inclusive education. The first definition implies that inclusion denotes the place of education; the second includes the requirement to address both the academic and the social needs of learners with disabilities. The third definition is concerned with the inclusion of all learners and the fourth definition is about creating communities in schools (Nilholm, 2021). These definitions highlight the need to include all learners with disabilities in regular schools. This is progressive because inclusive education focuses on the inclusion of all learners in educational settings.

According to Haug (2017), inclusive education is acknowledged as a tool to secure equal educational rights of learners. However, no European country has managed to construct a schooling system that lives up to the ideals of inclusive education. In my view, this means that inclusive education remains ideal in European countries, as most countries have not been able to construct education systems that accommodate all learning needs. As I have discussed inclusive education, the next section discusses inclusive education in South Africa.

2.4 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The movement of inclusive education developed and instigated the establishment of inclusive educational settings in the schooling systems globally which resulted in legislative and educational policy changes and developments (Lindner & Schwab, 2020). Due to this global trend, South Africa focused on the process of redressing the injustices

of the past in its education system. Before 1994, the apartheid education segregated learners according to their race. In this segregated schooling system, black learners did not have the same access to educational resources and schooling facilities that white learners had access to (Wheeler, 2019). This schooling system was flawed and was an injustice to black people as it promoted exclusions and divisions amongst learners and the broader society based on race and ethnicity.

The new democratic government elected in 1994 made it one of their objectives to transform the education system. In the same year, The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (NESCO, 1994) was adopted and it called for a schooling system that includes learners regardless of their race and disabilities (Ayaya, Makoelle & van der Merwe, 2020). In 1994, South Africa signed the Salamanca Declaration, which committed 94 nations to introduce equal and unbiased schooling that will promote enduring education (Department of Education, 2010: 8 as cited in Matabane, 2022). This was the beginning of South Africa's journey to a fundamentally reformed education system came forth through the development of various inclusive education policies in the South African education system.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, adopted in 1996 and effective in 1997 is included in these policies. According to section 29(1) of the Constitution, "everyone has the right to a basic education and the right to further education" (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). This policy gives everyone the opportunity to schooling regardless of their differences, as it leaves no room for segregation and exclusions. In addition to that, the Education White Paper 6 on special education introduced in 2001 is a measure to address the schooling of learners with special learning needs and disabilities (DoE, 2001). The policy stated that some schools will be transformed into full-service schools where learners with incapacities and distinctive learning needs will be learning alongside ordinary learners (DoE, 2001)

Furthermore, the Department of Basic Education's (DBE) 2014 Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment, and Support (SIAS policy), advocates significant reforms by laying out how educators are expected to educate learners who have barriers so that education is accessible to all learners, irrespective of their disability, gender,

background, or creed (Ayaya, Makoelle, & van der Merwe, 2020). According to Mokala (2021), the perception of inclusive education in South Africa stresses the significance of empowering educational structures and methods to accommodate all learners. It is important to note that implementing inclusive education in South Africa was met with different challenges. According to Matabane (2022), these challenges amongst others include the lack of infrastructure and personnel to deal with the proposed changes of making schools inclusive for all learners. This means that there is a shortage of resources needed to equip and enable schools to be able to cater to all learners as well as learners with disabilities.

In addition to that, Matabane (2022) claims that another factor that hinders the implementation of inclusive education is the gap between the policy and what happens in schools. This means that the policies put in place by the government and the Department of Education to ensure that all learners are included in schools do not reflect what is happening in schools. This is a problem as this gap may cause further segregation and exclusions in schools and that is against the aims of inclusive education.

Other countries in Africa have also adopted the global trend to create inclusive education settings (Pather, 2019). The next section discusses inclusive education in other African countries.

2.4.1 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES

Colonial powers influenced and affected the educational, economic, and social contexts of Africa, a continent known for its diversity in tribes, unique cultures, and values. European colonizers came to Africa to impose a particular imprint upon the landscapes of Africa taking away land, and economic, social, and educational powers (Christopher, 2023). The fight for freedom and inclusion in Africa stems from its history of colonization as Africa is continually fighting for complete freedom, inclusion, and political and economic freedom (Pather, 2019).

Several countries in Africa have developed democratic policies in the struggle for freedom, repatriation and reconstruction (Pather, 2019). These democratic policies include inclusive education policies, which fight for inclusion of marginalized groups.

Pather (2019) states that policy development about inclusive education and special schools across countries in Africa is disparate. Although Africa has adopted the global trend of inclusive education since Salamanca, the challenges of implementing inclusive education policies in Africa have made the journey difficult. These challenges include poverty, overcrowding, lack of resources, and teachers' attitudes amongst other things (Mphwina, 2022). According to Kinuthia (2022), Issues such as lack funding, resources, , unskilled personnel, and poor policy formulation prevent adequate accomplishment of inclusive education in Africa. Similarly, Luhailima and Mulovhedzi (2023) argue that schools in Africa are not yet ready for inclusive education in terms of both human and material resources. Therefore, inclusive education remains obscured due to the challenges it is facing in Africa leading to a gap between reality, policies, and practice (Kinuthia, 2022). This means that there is a divide between what is documented in inclusive education policies and what is being implemented or practiced in African schools. This is evident in countries like Nigeria, Botswana and Lesotho. The next sections will briefly discuss inclusive education in Nigeria, Botswana, and Lesotho.

2.4.1.1 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

Inclusive education has become a major educational system globally and in most African nations. In some developing countries like Nigeria, inclusive education stresses the accommodation of differently abled learners in general schooling (Orlunga & Alikor, 2023). This means that the education settings should be created in such a way that they cater to all learner's learning needs. Children with disabilities often face problems of isolation and exclusion; as a result, the government in Nigeria adopted an inclusive education policy through the national policy on education in 1997 (Odo et al, 2021). The policy is non-discriminatory for and advocates for the provision of equal educational opportunities to all learners irrespective of their differences.

Despite the adoption of the inclusive education policy, there are still learners who face issues of exclusion in Nigerian schools. Since the endorsement of the inclusive education policy in Nigeria, the implementation of inclusive education has remained poor leading to exclusions and inequalities in Nigerian schools (Odo, et al., 2021). Similarly, Orlunga and Alikor (2023) argue that inclusive education in Nigeria has failed in this regard especially

at its implementation stage due to constraints that involve a lack of resources, inadequate education facilities, and corruption amongst others.

Additionally, schools in Nigeria do not have enough the required facilities and infrastructure that incorporate both special needs learners and learners who do not have any disabilities (Orluna & Alikor, 2023). Implementation is the biggest challenge that hinders the inclusion of all learners in Nigerian schools. If the inclusive education policies and strategies put in place to curb exclusions and inequalities are not being implemented adequately in Nigerian schools, then it means that there are learners who are continuously excluded. This is problematic because it goes against everything that inclusive education stands for.

Irrespective of the challenges mentioned above, Nigeria needs to improve and work on the enactment of the inclusive education policy across Nigerian schools because the exclusions are concerning. To accommodate all learners perhaps the Department of Education in Nigeria needs to restructure the inclusive education policy in such a way that it is easier to implement. Kinuthia (2022) argues that as seen in all regions in Africa, there is an urgent need to build inclusive education school systems that respond to the needs of all learners putting into consideration their differences, cultures, social systems, and disabilities.

2.4.1.2 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN BOTSWANA

Botswana is also another African country that has adopted the inclusive education approach. The focus however is on supporting learners with disabilities by creating special units within mainstream schools and mainstream classrooms (Pather, 2019). This means that in the context of Botswana, inclusive education includes removing barriers that keep learners with disabilities from actively engaging in mainstream classroom activities (Boitumelo, Kuyini & Major, 2020). This is evident in the Inclusive Education Policy of Botswana. The policy requires that mainstream schools must provide access and opportunities for all learners, irrespective of disabilities, according to policy (Government of Botswana, 2011).

This policy recognizes the importance of responding to all learner's learning needs regardless of their disabilities and learning barriers by giving them equal opportunities to learn. This means that the focus will shift from segregating learners with disability in special schools to creating schools and classrooms that cater to all diverse learners' learning needs. However, many challenges hinder the enactment of this policy and inclusive education. These challenges include teachers' attitudes, limited skills, and lack of resources amongst other challenges (Boitumelo, Kuyini & Major, 2020). Teachers' attitudes play a huge role in bringing policies into life in classrooms. If teachers lack confidence in inclusive education and catering to all learners' learning needs, then they will not do justice in their classrooms by making sure that they employ inclusive practices in teaching and learning. According to Boitumelo et al., (2020), teachers' attitudes and thoughts about inclusive education depend on their experiences with inclusive education.

Similarly, Makonyango (2021) states that challenges that hinder the implementation of inclusive education in Botswana include a lack of resources, dysfunctional systems, segregation, and physical inaccessibility. This calls for drastic changes in policies so that it is easy to cater to all learners' learning needs.

2.4.1.3 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN LESOTHO

Countries across the globe have made significant developments to create inclusive and accessible educational settings for all learners. Lesotho has also committed to creating inclusive learning environments for all learners through the Education for All (EFA) International agenda (Lephoto, 2021). The 'Education for All' international agenda entails creating learning environments that cater to all learner's learning needs.

The commitment to include all learners in Lesotho started in 1990 when the Ministry of Education started exploring ways to include differently abled learners in the school system (Lephoto, 2021). This shows that the Lesotho government has always been concerned about the education of disabled children, as they are the most marginalized and excluded in the schooling system and the broader society.

In addition to that, King Moshoeshoe II started an organization called 'Hlokomela Bana' (care for children) which explored ways on schooling learners with additional needs and

disabilities. This shows that the culture of caring for all children in Lesotho embodies inclusive education and practices. The promotion of inclusive education in Botswana involves addressing the barriers that hinder the full participation of students with disabilities in the general education system (Boitumelo et al.2020)

The Lesotho Ministry of Education developed The Lesotho Inclusive Education Policy of 2018. According to Lephoto (2021), inclusive education is regarded as the process of responding to and addressing all learners' learning needs by reducing the segregations and exclusions that occur within education. Furthermore, the policy elucidates that inclusive education includes changing and developing the curriculum and syllabus to ensure that it caters to all learners' learning needs. The policy seeks to curb and respond to the exclusions and discrimination that occur within the segregated systems by moving towards education for all by giving all learners equal opportunities (Mohoebi, 2023).

The Lesotho Inclusive Education Policy of 2018 (MoET, 2018, p. 15) has the following six objectives:

- Improving teaching and learning environment.
- Strengthening the capacity of education providers to support learners with special education needs.
- Enhancing partnerships for the implementation of the Lesotho Inclusive Education Policy.
- Adapting the national curriculum to conform to inclusive education principles.
- Enhancing governance and management capacity in inclusive education.
- To have laws and policies supporting inclusive education in Lesotho.

Despite the efforts to accommodate all learners in Lesotho, there are difficulties in the efficient implementation of inclusive education. These issues include the fact that research has shown that no country or government can realistically shift overnight from special schools to integrated inclusive education schooling (Lephoto, 2021). This is a common thread in other African countries. The section that follows discusses full-service schools in South Africa.

2.5 FULL-SERVICE SCHOOLS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The term “full-service schools” was introduced in the Education White Paper 6 firstly to underline the significant role mainstream schools play in developing an inclusive system and furthermore, to elucidate their role as levers of transformation (DoE, 2010)

In ensuring that all learners are successfully included in the education system, the Department of Education and the White Paper 6 introduced the implementation and development of full-service schools. According to the Department of Education (2001), full-service schools are schools that are furnished to provide for the broad range of learning requirements among all our learners. These schools are the most effective schools that are active in combatting discriminatory and exclusionary practices in schools regardless of learner’s differences. This is because the capacity of these schools is built on the premise of inclusive principles (Mokala, 2021).

Section 5 of The South African Schools Act (Act 79 of 1996) has mandated provision for all schools to be converted into full-service schools and all public schools must strive to admit learners and cater to all their learning needs without any discrimination. Full-service schools have been equipped to accommodate and respond to all learners’ educational needs regardless of the learner’s differences as they attempt to achieve equality, access, inclusivity, social justice and quality in education. (DoE, 2010).

Ayaya and Makoelle’s (2023) contention is that full-service schools in South Africa were introduced to include learners with learning deficits and disabilities in the same environment as non-disabled learners to combat segregation and the exclusion of these learners. Special schools segregated these learners from the non-disabled learners as they paint a picture that disability is a problem that must be fixed and dealt with in separate special schools. This is problematic because special schools segregate and exclude learners. The introduction of full-service schools in South Africa was mainly for the provision of support to learners with mild to moderate barriers to learning (Phala & Hugo, 2022).

Ojageer (2019) states that teachers in full-service schools have the necessary skills and expertise to practice inclusive pedagogy. This means that teachers in full-service schools have the required knowledge to respond to a variety of learning barriers. Full-service schools in South Africa were guided by the principles of the Education White Paper 6

(Department of Education, 2001). However, a wide range of challenges hinders the enactment of inclusive practices and pedagogy.

According to Lindner and Schwab (2020), most mainstream schools fail to educate disabled learners, which leads to a high dropout rate. This is caused by the lack of capacity developments that equip teachers with the relevant skills needed to teach in full-service schools. The application of inclusive education in schools is hindered by the shortage of resources and adequate training for teachers (Ojageer, 2019). This means that these challenges are affecting the development of full-service schools in the country. Teachers' practices and perceptions of inclusive education are discussed in the following section.

2.6. THE PRINCIPLES OF A FULL-SERVICE SCHOOL

Van Zyl (2023) defines full-service schools as schools that can respond to the diverse learner population by providing education that fits the individual necessities of all learners. According to the Screening, Identification, Assessment, and Support Policy (DoE, 2014), full-service schools were established to address the barriers and exclusions that learners face in educational settings by accommodating all learner's learning needs. One can say that the ideologies and values of inclusivity are deeply embedded these schools as they were created to confront the exclusions that learners with learning barriers face in mainstream schools. Ayaya and Makoelle (2023) state that full-service schools advocate for all learners' learning needs to be catered for without exclusions and discrimination regardless of their disabilities and differences. De Ridder (2020) also argues full-service schools are mandated to give access and equal opportunity for all learners to learn with the support of the DBST, SBST, and the community.

District-based support teams (DBST) and special schools resource centers provide support to full-service schools when necessary (Dehay & Hanass-Hancock, 2023). They provide support by identifying the support that learners need and developing individual support plans. This alludes that all learners' learning needs and barriers will be catered for in full-service schools as the support plans are made specifically to address the barriers that learners have. As full-service schools focus on addressing barriers to learning, one needs to be cautious of the fact that this implies that learners who have

learning barriers and disabilities have a problem that needs to be fixed. De Ridder (2020), notes that in the South African context, full-service schools primarily focused on addressing educational and social disadvantage, which is a medical point of view as it looks at what is wrong with the learners rather than what is wrong with the system.

Teacher training in full-service schools is important as teachers who teach in a full-service school need to have the appropriate skills and knowledge. According to Dehave and Hanass-Hancock (2023), teachers in full-service schools need to have expertise and knowledge to support all learners by undergoing continuous professional developments in inclusive education and disability training. This is significant as it guarantees that teachers who are well informed and skilled to cater to their learning abilities and needs will teach the learners.

2.7 TEACHERS' PRACTICES AND PERCEPTIONS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Teachers play a significant role in the realizing the principles of inclusive education because they are considered the most important agents in the development of educational policies. This is because they are the ones who must implement these policies in their classrooms and create inclusive environments in their classrooms (Li & Ruppar, 2021). Therefore, their perception of inclusive education is significant in this research. The roles and responsibilities of teachers across the world have undergone a drastic change due to the paradigm shift towards inclusive education (Majoko, 2019). This means that teachers are now required to evolve with drastic changes and guarantee that all learners learn in the classroom. This requires certain skills and expertise from teachers thus their practices and perceptions of inclusive education are important.

A research study conducted by Mokala (2017) at a full-service school in Soweto investigated how foundation phase teachers understand and practice the principles of full-service schools. The findings indicate that teachers understand inclusive education as the inclusion and accommodation of all learners regardless of their diversity and differences (Mokala, 2020). It is important to highlight that Mokala (2017) believes that teachers who teach at a full-service school have a clear understanding of what inclusive education means as they have first-hand experience of teaching in an environment that is built on the principles of inclusive education. .

According to Magumise and Sefotho (2020) how teachers understand and view inclusive education depends on their own experiences of inclusive education. The implication is that teachers' views on inclusive education are based on the experience they have with inclusive education in or outside their classrooms. Magumise and Sefotho (2020) conducted a research study that examined teachers' perceptions of inclusive education in Zimbabwean primary education. The findings revealed that teachers view inclusive education as an education for all that allows for equal and inclusive educational opportunities for all learners. For me, this means that the way teachers understand and view inclusive education does not only depend on their understanding of inclusive education but also their experiences with inclusive education. Furthermore, their perceptions of inclusive education have an impact on their implementation of inclusive education.

Mngo and Mngo (2018) suggest that teachers are supportive of the concept on inclusion and inclusive education; however, they still prefer special schools where learners with special needs and learning deficits are taught in specialized facilities.. This suggests that teachers are open to the idea of inclusion and inclusive education; however, they still believe that learners with special learning needs and disabilities must go to special schools. This is problematic as the aim of inclusive education is to include all learners' therefore segregating learners with disabilities to special schools is a form of exclusion. This highlights that teachers' perceptions have an impact on their teaching styles and techniques. Despite the significant research on inclusive education, there is little research on the significance of teachers' perceptions and practices of inclusive education. This research study showed how significant teachers' perceptions of inclusive are as they determine how teachers implement inclusive education in their classrooms. The following section discusses the challenges in the implementation of inclusive education.

2.8 CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PRACTICES

Quantitative research conducted by Alnahdi (2020) observed teachers' inclusive practices and their self-efficacy to teach in inclusive classrooms. The findings of the study point to teachers' confidence in understanding what inclusive education is and they idealistic

believe that they can work and teach in all-inclusive settings. However, I do not think that all teachers have a clear understanding of what inclusive education is as their interpretation of inclusive education is based on their own experiences and perceptions, which might differ from the main aim of inclusive education. Findings from a research study conducted by Mohoebi (2020) confirm that teachers' understanding of inclusive education is based on several complex factors such as differentiation, resources, learning environment, etc. The study further argues that inclusive education is a broad term that has multiple definitions and teachers have different understandings of inclusive education (Mohoebi, 2020).

Some barriers hinder the implication of inclusive education in schools. These barriers include a lack of infrastructure, skills, attitude, and knowledge. Majoko (2019) states that there is a significant number of learners with disabilities and special learning needs who learn in schools. However, teachers lack the expertise required to teach these types of learners. This means that if teachers do not have the relevant skills and knowledge to practice inclusive pedagogy in their classrooms then some learner's learning needs will not be met.

Teachers' attitudes and beliefs also play a major role in their inclusive practices and perceptions of inclusive education. According to (Saloviita, 2020) studies have shown that female teachers feel more positive about inclusion and inclusive education than their male counterparts. This plays a significant role in the stigma that women and female teachers are the most caring and teaching is for women. All teachers should be able to employ inclusive teaching practices in their classrooms regardless of their gender. In addition to that, teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and the inclusion of learners with disabilities and special learning needs are a factor that hinders the enactment of inclusive education as some teachers have a negative attitude.

Research shows that inadequate resources and lack of teacher training are factors that hinder the implementation and progress of inclusive education (Magumise & Sefotho, 2020; Mokala, 2017). In addition, teachers believe that issues such as a lack of resources, congested classrooms, and hardly accessible physical environments contribute to their inability to cater to learners with disabilities in their classrooms (Magumise & Sefotho,

2020). This shows that teachers' perceptions and practices of inclusive education are based on their own experiences of catering to all learners in the classroom. Perhaps if all the barriers that hinder and affect teachers from including all learners in their classrooms are addressed then we can have more full-service schools that accommodate all learners' learning needs. The current study explored various strategies that teachers use to ensure that all learners learning needs are met, this will close the gap between the ideas of inclusive education and how it is implemented practically in schools. The next section discusses inclusive teaching practices.

2.9 INCLUSIVE TEACHING PRACTICES

Inclusive education has become a worldwide strategy to respond to exclusions and segregation that exist in educational settings. Teachers play a big role in this global trend, as they are the ones who must apply the principles of inclusion by using pedagogic practices in their classrooms. According to Schwab and Alnahdi (2020), teachers and their ability respond to all learners' educational needs influence the provision of inclusive education. One can argue that teachers are the most important tool in this regard. Inclusive teaching practices include the inclusive strategies that teachers use in their classrooms when teaching to ensure that all learners learn regardless of their diversity. Schwab and Alnahdi (2020), argue that the concept of 'inclusive teaching practices does not have a clear definition. However, it involves a combination of pedagogical approaches that teachers utilize in their classrooms when teaching. The inclusive teaching practices that teachers use in their classrooms to teach diverse learners are influenced by various factors. According to Paseka and Schwab (2020), inclusive teaching practices require individual and personalized instructions to learners. This means that teachers need to first identify the challenges and barriers that individual learners have so that they can be able to create individual instructions that will be relevant to address the specific barriers that individual learners have.

2.10 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICIES

In South Africa, the introduction of inclusive education came into play post-1994. The inclusive education principles are embedded in the inclusive education policies that were

created such as The Constitution of South Africa, the White Paper 6, the South African Schools Act, and the policy on Screening, Assessment and Support (SIAS).

2.10.1 THE CONSTITUTION OF SOUTH AFRICA

The Constitution of South Africa is the supreme law in South Africa as it outlines the rights and responsibilities of all South African citizens (Van Staden, 2020). The Constitution also defines the different structures of government. The government that was elected in 1994 led by the first black president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, drew the constitution. Since then, the constitution has been amended multiple times. The constitution has the preamble of South Africa, 8 schedules, and 14 chapters that have their sections (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). However, the focus of this research study is on Chapter 2 section 29.

Chapter 2 of the Constitution is the Bill of Rights, which outlines the rights of all the citizens of South Africa. Section 29 (1) in Chapter 2 of the constitution states everyone's rights to basic education and to further education, which the government is mandated to make accessible and available (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996). It further states that the government must explore all alternatives to ensure that this right is implemented effectively taking into consideration fairness, practicability, and the need to readdress the past injustices. The notion of 'everyone' in the constitution is a clear prohibition of exclusions and discrimination as it means that everybody regardless of their disabilities, is entitled to the right to education (Kamga, 2020).

The right to free basic education can be recognized as an inclusive education component, which gives everyone the right to be educated. However, the reality is that not everyone has access to this education, as there are some learners especially those who are disabled and disadvantaged who do not have equal access to education. According to Veriava and Paterson (2020), learners with disabilities, undocumented migrant learners, and marginalized groups are denied access to education. This proves that the government does not explore all alternatives to ensure that everyone has free and equal access to education, as some learners do not have access to education.

To ensure that the constitutional right of inclusive education is a reality the government implemented several policies that include the White Paper 6: Special Needs Education, the South African Schools Act, and the Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) amongst other policies and legislative measures (Kamga, 2020). The next section discusses White Paper 6: Special Needs and Education.

2.10.2 EDUCATION WHITE PAPER 6: SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION

In September 1994, The White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System Education was published as the first official document that was introduced as policy on inclusive education in South Africa (Mokala, 2017). The White Paper was founded on the agenda for the Reconstruction and Development Program whose concerns include building an inclusive and just education and training system (DoE, 2001). The policy focused on providing education for all built on human rights and social justice agenda from grade R up to grade 9.

According to Mokala (2017), the White Paper 6 was introduced as a policy for inclusion. However, it is criticized for its lack of clarity, which makes it difficult for it to be implemented. Studies have argued that the implementation of the White Paper 6 has made little progress over the past decade (Mpu & Adu, 2021; Makoelle, 2014). This highlights that this policy has not been rolled out fully and practically in schools, as there are challenges in its implementation. It is over two decades since White Paper 6 was introduced however; most learners with learning impairments are still segregated in special schools (Mpu & Adu, 2021). This shows that as a country, we are nowhere near having inclusive schools that cater to all learners' learning needs without discrimination and segregation. The South African Schools Act is discussed in the next section.

2.10.3 SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT

The government in 1996 established the South African Schools Act no 84. The Act provides for a homogenous system for the governance, organization, and funding of schools in SA (DoE, 1996). This policy was created to redress injustices of the past and to make certain that all learners have a high-grade education. The policy has seven

chapters that address the different structures of schools, their funding, the organization of schools, and the structure of the educational process.

The Act legislates that all public schools must admit all learners and must cater for their education needs without any discrimination (DoE, 1996). This simply means that all learners must have access to all the public schools and those schools must ensure that they cater to all the different learners' learning needs regardless of the learner's differences and disabilities. However, this is not what is happening, as some schools do not cater to all learners' educational needs. The next section briefly discusses the SIAS policy.

2.10.4 POLICY ON SCREENING, IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT (SIAS)

The SIAS policy was established in 2017 to provide a policy framework for the frame of reference, assessment, identification, and provision of programs for all learners who require additional support to enhance their participation and inclusion in school. The main aim of the SIAS policy is to ensure that all learners who experience barriers to learning can access free, equal, and inclusive education as equal to other learners in their communities (DoE, 2014).

The policy aims to ensure that all learners have access to education however the reality is that there are some learners especially those who are disabled who do not have access to schools. Mpu and Adu (2021) argue that several learners with disabilities are not attending schools because their educational needs are not catered for in mainstream schools. Learners with disabilities are often segregated into special schools because mainstream schools do not accommodate them, and this contradicts what the SIAS policy aims to achieve. The SIAS policy has to ensure that all equity and access for all to education without being discriminated. I find it important to highlight that this vision has some loopholes, as mainstream schools do not cater for learners with incapacities is discrimination. The next section delivers a conclusion of the current chapter.

2.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter reviewed literature relating to my research study to have a clear understanding of teachers' practices and perceptions of inclusive education. Firstly, I discussed Florian's framework of inclusive pedagogy, as it is the theoretical framework that underpins this research study. I then discussed inclusive education, which was followed by a discussion of inclusive education in South Africa. I then discussed full-service schools in South Africa. Lastly, teachers' perceptions and practices were discussed. In the next chapter, I will elaborate on the research methodology guiding this study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 was a literature review of studies and review of literature that is relevant to my research study. In the current chapter, the research methodology applied in this study is discussed. The section that follows discusses the research methodology.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The current study is qualitative in nature. Liamputtong (2020) defines qualitative research as the means for exploring and comprehending the meanings that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human issue. My qualitative research aimed to explore and understand teachers' perspectives of inclusive education. This research study is descriptive in nature. Andrade (2021) describes descriptive research as a type of research method that is used to describe the traits of a population or existing phenomenon that is being studied. I chose a descriptive research methodology for this study as it describes and gives a comprehensive picture of the teachers' perceptions of inclusive education and the inclusive pedagogies they implement in their classrooms.

In this study, the descriptive qualitative research method was used to collect data in the form of words through a focus group discussion with the participating teachers, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. The descriptive methodology assisted me to be able to obtain data to describe teachers' perceptions and practices of inclusive education. Furthermore, I drew patterns from the data collected. According to Siedlecki (2020), descriptive research describes the characteristics and actions of a population by studying them in their nature. The focus of the current study was on exploring teachers' perceptions and practices of inclusive education in teacher's classrooms.

Using the descriptive methodology in this study assisted me to be able to identify patterns and describe the perceptions and practices that teachers in a full-service school at Soweto use in their classrooms. Furthermore, I used those patterns to make conclusions in my study. The descriptive methodology allowed me to use multiple methods to collect

data for my study. This is beneficial because it allowed me to have a wide range of methods to gather data. In addition to that, the data collection process was fast and cost-effective, as it did not require me to pay to collect data. Despite the advantages of conducting a qualitative study using a descriptive methodology, there are disadvantages to using this approach. The data collected in the research using descriptive methodology are biased as they are based on the participant's individual experiences and assumption. The participants in the school indicate that I collected my research data might be different from participants at other schools. To overcome this, I explored literature that is relevant to my study to identify the trends and patterns similar to those of my research study. As I have discussed the research methodology, I will now briefly describe the research paradigm of this research study.

3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM

The study followed an interpretive paradigm. The Interpretivist paradigm is concerned with context-specific in-depth variables and factors. In this study, I used the interpretive paradigm because it views humans as distinct from physical phenomena. After all, they produce deeper meanings that are subjective and differ according to individuals and their context (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). The study used the interpretive paradigm because it focuses on participants making meanings from their experiences, allowing for a greater understanding of teachers' perceptions and practices of inclusive education.

The interpretive paradigm made it possible for me to treat the context of the study and its situation as distinct considering the associated circumstances and participants involved. The interpretive paradigm allowed me to analyze the social actions of teachers in their settings to understand their perceptions and practices of inclusive education. I concur with Alharahsheh and Pius (2020) that the interpretive paradigm enables researchers to use the participants' different meanings and experiences to make conclusions and describe reality. In the current study, the focus was on understanding teachers' perceptions and practices in their teaching environments thus I was interested in their different meanings and draw patterns of their meanings and experiences. The next section discusses the epistemology of this study.

3.3.1 EPISTEMOLOGY

According to Alharahsheh & Pius (2020), epistemology is concerned with how the research aims to reach reality by uncovering knowledge. The epistemological stance of this study is that reality transpires from several sources. Within the interpretive paradigm, the epistemology stance acknowledges multiple realities and sources (Mohoebi, 2023). This is reflected in the different research approaches that were applied to gather data in this study. Document analysis, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. Epistemology is significant because it is concerned with how reality is known and shaped (Junjie & Yingxin, 2022). Thus, as a researcher, I focused on interpreting and understanding the perceptions and practices of inclusive education that teachers have in a full-service school at Soweto. The axiological stance of the study is what follows.

3.3.2 AXIOLOGY

Axiology is concerned with value or utility (Hayati & Dalimunthe, 2022). The axiological stance of this research is that the views and values of the participants are significant and should be acknowledged and respected. According to Mokala (2017), axiology emphasizes the participants' values and belief systems. Thus, in this study, the findings reflect the values of the participants without being biased or judgmental. To stick to the value of research and avoid prejudice I have presented the results of the study in a balanced manner. The next section briefly describes the research design of this study.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

A case study was applied in this research. A case study research design is a comprehensive examination and exploration of a group of people and their connection to a particular phenomenon within a specific context (Rashid, et al., 2019). There are different types of case studies such as case studies can be explanatory, descriptive or exploratory.

A case study's evident characteristic is that it examines a phenomenon in its natural setting (Martinsuo & Huemann, 2021). The purpose of the current study was to investigate teachers' perceptions and practices of inclusive education in a full-service school in

Soweto. A case study was relevant in this study as it is a choice of research strategy, supported by my research paradigm and methodology.

The case study is one of the full-service schools in Soweto that caters to the needs of all learners regardless of their differences. I concur with Schoch (2020), who states that a case study entails a thorough analysis of a specific event, situation, or organization within a specific context or space. The study analyzed the perceptions and practices that teachers have in the context of a full-service school in Soweto. The case study research design allowed me to collect different data through interviews, a focus group discussion and document analysis to in-depth look at the perceptions and practices of inclusive education that teachers have. Having discussed the research design of this research study, the following section will discuss the data collection methods that I used to collect data in this current study.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

This study made use of document analysis, focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews to generate data. The next three sub-sections discuss the data collection methods used to gather data.

3.5.1 INTERVIEWS

Interviews are a form of data collection method where the researcher asks questions, and participants answer them, giving their own experience. Although there are different types of interviews, this study made use of semi-structured interviews to collect data.

Semi-structured interviews include an interview schedule, which guides the researcher on the questions to ask and issues to address (Bearman, 2019). Data was collected over two weeks in which in the first week, interviews were conducted. The participants selected for the study were selected based on the following criteria:

1. Have more than 5 years teaching experiences.
2. Male/female
3. Teach grades between grade R, one, two & three.
4. Have a diploma or degree in education.

5. Teach at a Full-service school in Soweto.

All the participants were relevant to the study as they met the criteria that ensured that the participants were trained and equipped to teach in full-service schools and could contribute meaningfully in the study. Five participants were selected because I wanted to interview one teacher for each of the grades mentioned above and a teacher who is part of the SBST. The SBST provides support to learners by minimizing the barriers to learning. The focus of the study was on the perceptions and practices of inclusive education that teachers in a full-service school have. I conducted the interviews to gain an understanding of how teachers comprehend inclusive education and the inclusive practices they use in their classrooms. I used a voice recorder to record the interviews and took handwritten notes. During the interviews, I was able to ask open-ended questions that also allowed me to seek additional clarity. Using semi-structured interviews in a research study is beneficial because it allows the interviews to be focused while still giving the researcher the choice to explore ideas and questions that may come up during the interviews (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021).

Before the interviews, I prepared an interview schedule with all the interview questions. The interview schedule had nine questions, which were prepared for the participants. On the day of each interview, I started by explaining the aim of my research study and assured that the participants being interviewed had a clear understanding of my research before signing the consent form. I explained to the participant to sign the consent forms. After that, I explained how the interview would be conducted, informing them that it would be audio recorded and I would take handwritten notes. The participants were given a copy of the interview schedule during the interviews and they were given an opportunity to ask for clarity if there were questions that they did not understand. The interview was a free and open environment where the participants expressed their views of inclusive education freely.

In interpretive studies, an interview is a unique type of communication that takes place between the researcher and participant to gather verbal and nonverbal information about a specific topic (Kekeya, 2021). I used interviews in this study because they are a versatile method of gathering qualitative data that gives participants the chance to share their

views and perceptions regarding inclusive education. While conducting interviews, I engaged the participants in open-ended questions while I audio recorded as the conversation naturally proceeded. For qualitative research, semi-structured interviews are more effective than other interview formats because they enable researchers to get detailed information and supporting data from interview subjects while considering the focus of the study (Ruslin et al, 2022). Using interviews assisted me because I was able to collect data while considering the focus of the study. The next section discusses focus group discussions.

3.5.2 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Focus group discussions include gathering people from the same context, experiences, or background together to discuss a specific topic (Nyumba, Wilson, Derrick & Mukherjee, 2018). In the current study, focus group discussions were used because they are a form of qualitative research where participants are asked questions about their perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, and ideas. I used a focus group discussion to collect data for my study because it allowed me to get different views and perceptions in a short period. According to Akyildiz and Ahmed (2021), Focus group discussions are a fast and effective way of collecting information and data in participants.

The focus group discussion was conducted three days after the interviews with five participants. The focus group consisted of four of the five participants that were interviewed as the other participant was on sick leave. At the beginning of the focus group discussion, the participants were tense. However they became more free as the discussion proceeded. There were two participants who were more vocal than the other participants were. The two vocal participants expressed their views and shared their experiences, which were almost the same for everyone. That allowed the other two participants to build and generate their responses based on the views and opinions of the vocal participants. The study's focus was to investigate teachers' perceptions and practices of inclusive education. To achieve this, teachers were given as to share their perceptions and experiences in a focus group discussion. The discussion was conducted in person, and I was taking handwritten notes while recording the discussion. Gathering all the participants at the same time was a challenge; as a result, I had to continue with

the discussion with one participant missing. The reason for continuing the discussion without one participant is that the participant was on sick leave, and we had already postponed the discussion 2 times.

Before the focus group discussion started, I explained how the discussion would be conducted. As advised by Nyumba et al (2018), during the focus group discussion, I was facilitating the discussion as the participants shared their different perceptions of inclusive education. states that the researcher adopts the role of a facilitator during focus group discussions. The participants also voiced the challenges they face when implementing inclusive practices in their classrooms. During the discussion, participants had pseudonyms such as Teacher A; B, C, and D. Focus group interviews have the disadvantage of being dominated by one person, which might result in biased findings (Mohoebi, 2023). This is evident in the focus group discussion conducted in my study, as there was one vocal participant. This resulted in the other participants basing their perceptions on what the dominant participant was saying. Despite this disadvantage, the advantages of using a focus group discussion for my study outweighed the disadvantages. In what follows, I will discuss document analysis.

3.5.3 DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Document analysis refers to reviewing and analyzing documents using a certain theme (Natow, 2020). For this research, analysis of documents was used. Analyzing documents assisted me in contextualizing my research within its subject as documents provide background information and broad coverage of data. According to Morgan (2022), document analysis entails examining a variety of documents, such as books, articles, newspapers etc. The documents analyzed in my study are the White Paper 6, the Constitution, the South African Schools Act, and the SIAS policy.

In this study, the policy documents mentioned were examined and assessed. As such, I could understand the goals and purpose of inclusive education. Analysis of documents necessitates the examination and interpretation of data to provide meaning, gain understanding, and empirical knowledge (Armstrong, 2021). The documents also helped me to check if teachers' perceptions and practices of inclusive education are in line and compliant with inclusive education policies. These documents also assisted me in finding

gaps between inclusive education as a theory and inclusive education in practice in classrooms. As I have discussed the data collection methods utilized to gather data for this research study, the next section discusses the sampling technique that was applied in this current study.

3.6 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

In this study, a purposive sampling technique was applied. The full-service school where I conducted my research study was selected because it is equipped with the required skills and resources to cater to all learners' learning needs. To serve the purpose of my research the participants selected are five teachers 1 male and 4 females who teach in a full-service school at Soweto.

Participant	Qualification	Number of years teaching	Grade taught
Participant A	Senior Teachers Diploma	Over 30 years	1,2 & 3
Participant B	Bachelor of Education Bachelor of Education honours (New Curriculum)	17 years	R, 1,2 & 3
Participant C	Honours in management	14 years	1
Participant D	Bachelor of Education	6 years	3
Participant E	Bachelor of Education	7 years	2

The teachers teaching grades 1, 2& 3 were chosen because they are relevant and in a better position to fit the purpose of my study. This is because grade 1-3 are a foundation of the identification process and they have first-hand experience in the identification of learner differences and different learning styles. The next section discusses the data analysis technique that was used to analyze the data collected in this research study.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE

In this study, the inductive approach of data analysis was used to analyze data. The inductive approach is a data analysis method where the researcher reflects on the patterns identified, builds codes and compares them while identifying themes (O’Kane, Smith & Lerman, 2021).

In analyzing data, I focused on capturing and unpacking teachers’ perceptions and practices of inclusive education. Through general inductive analysis, I started by transcribing the audio recordings and handwritten notes of the interviews and the focus group discussion by typing them as a Word document. Bailey (2008) indicates that transcribing refers to the process of turning recorded audio into written formats for analysis in a research study. Furthermore, I highlighted keynotes on the inclusive education policies that I used for my study. The participants used IsiZulu during the interviews and focus group discussion as a result I had to translate from IsiZulu to English when transcribing their responses. I then started the process of analyzing data after translating and transcribing the responses.

Second to that, I read all the documents that I typed in-depth and highlighted the patterns and connections to my research aims and questions in different colors. Highlighting made it easy for me to organize the data and identify themes for my study. Mohajan and Mohajan (2022) indicate that coding is crucial in qualitative research studies as it helps the researcher to find and develop new theories and themes in the data. The following section features the ethical considerations that were observed in conducting this research study.

3.8 ETHICAL ISSUES

Ethical considerations observed in the current study involved getting permission to conduct my research study and obtaining ethical clearance from the university (Protocol number: 2023ECE41M). Once the protocol number was allocated, I submitted my research request form to the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) to get permission to collect data. My application was approved, and I got my research approval letter from GDE. The next step was to ask for permission to conduct my research study at the full-service school by writing a letter to the principal, teachers, and all the stakeholders at the

school. Informed consent, voluntary participation, and confidentiality were applied in conducting the study. The sub-section that follows deliberates informed consent.

3.8.1 INFORMED CONSENT

Before conducting my study and collecting data, participants received an information letter explaining my research study so that they could be informed and have an understanding of my research objectives. Thereafter participants signed consent forms consenting to being participants in my research study. Informed consent in a research study is significant as participants sign an agreement to take part with an knowledge of what their participation requires (Xu et al, 2020). The following sub-section speaks on voluntary participation.

3.8.2 VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

I explained to all the participating teachers that they were not forced to participate in my research study, and they were free to remove themselves from the study whenever they wanted. The voluntary participation of participants was made clear to participants because it is unethical and not allowed to force take part in a research study (Xu et al, 2020). The following sub-section discusses confidentiality.

3.8.3 CONFIDENTIALITY

For confidentiality purposes, the real identity of the participants was not revealed to anyone. I referred to them as teachers A, B, C, D & E. Participants were also informed that their names would not appear anywhere in the research to avoid any unprecedented and preceded harm to participants and the overall outcomes of the research study (Kang, E., & Hwang, H. J. (2023). The next sub-section speaks on credibility, transferability, and dependability.

3.8.4 CREDIBILITY, TRANSFERABILITY, AND DEPENDABILITY

To ascertain the reliability of the study credibility, transferability, and dependability were ensured (Kakar et al, 2023). To measure the trustworthiness of the current study I ensured the credibility, transferability and dependability in the research design and processes. Haq et al (2023) outlines that credibility ensures that the actual data about the phenomenon

is provided, transferability ensures that the research findings can be applied in other similar contexts and that dependability ensures that the findings of one study are replicated in a similar study or context. The current study is trustworthy as it provides the actual findings regarding the perceptions and practices of inclusive education that teachers at a full-service school in Soweto have. In addition to that, the study can be used and applied in similar research studies in the field of inclusive education.

To ensure that my study is credible I was transparent and honest to my participants. To ensure that my participants are not misinterpreted I sent them the responses that I have transcribed so that they can check and confirm that what is transcribed is a true reflection of what they said. In addition to that, I included the background of the school and the participants so that the reader can have a better understanding of the research finding which relates to the context of the study. Furthermore, my research and data are reliable, as different techniques of gathering data were applied.

3.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the research methodology, research instruments, data analysis technique and ethical considerations that I used in this study.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND FINDING

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The study explored the perceptions that teachers in a full-service school have regarding inclusive education and the inclusive teaching practices they employ in classrooms to make sure that the needs of all learners are met irrespective of their differences and disabilities. This chapter presents the results gathered through focus group discussions with five participating teachers, four females and one male as well as semi-structured interviews with each of them.

The participants were selected purposely because they teach in a full-service school. Hence, they are appropriate for my research as they have the relevant expertise and skills. I then analyzed documents using the following policies: The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the South African Schools Act (SASA), Education White Paper Six, and the Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment, and Support (SIAS). The findings from the policies indicate the guidelines of what teachers' inclusive practices in the classroom should look like.

4.2 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The findings of the study were guided by the following research question.

- a. What teaching strategies do teachers in a full-service school in Soweto employ in their teaching to include all learners?
- b. What inclusive pedagogic practices do teachers employ to embrace the principles of a full-service school?

In addition to that, the last theme responds to the third sub-question of this study: What role do policies play in ensuring the implementation of inclusive teaching practices?

The table below outlines the themes and their sub-themes.

Theme 1: Teachers' understanding of inclusive education
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Sub-theme 1: Accommodating differences
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Sub-theme 2: Differentiated approach to learning

Theme 2: Perceptions of inclusive education

Sub-theme 1: Teacher beliefs

Theme 3: Inclusive teaching practices

Sub-theme 1: Assessment & Screening

Sub-theme 2: Differentiation

Theme 4: Challenges

Sub-theme 1: Overcrowding

Sub-theme 2: Language

Sub-theme 3: Lack of parental involvement

Sub-theme 4: Curriculum

Theme 5: Challenges with Inclusive Education Policies

Sub-theme 1: Unrealistic

4.2.1 THEME 1: TEACHERS' UNDERSTANDING OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

This section presents the teachers' replies that were generated from the interviews and the focus group discussion. When teachers defined inclusive education, two sub-themes emerged: inclusive education as accommodating differences and inclusive education as a differentiated approach to teaching and learning. These sub-themes respond to the main research question: What are teachers' perceptions of inclusive education?

4.2.1.1 ACCOMMODATING DIFFERENCES

The findings indicate that teachers' understanding of inclusive education is that it is about accommodating all learners' learning needs regardless of their differences and disabilities. One respondent says:

It means to cater to the different abilities of all learners. As I have explained, we cannot choose the abilities of the learners. (TEACHER E)

Other respondents pointed out that:

Inclusive education caters to the different intelligences of the learners. (TEACHER A)

Inclusive education is to accommodate learners with different learning barriers and problems. (TEACHER B)

The verbatim extracts above indicate that teachers know what inclusive education means. The elements in their definitions prove that teachers understand what inclusive education is. From the responses above, one would argue that valuing differences and diversity is the core element of inclusive education. Accepting and valuing learners' differences creates an environment that is safe and promotes diversity where all learners will feel included and appreciated.

4.2.1.2 DIFFERENTIATED APPROACH TO LEARNING

The findings indicate that teachers define inclusive education as a teaching approach where they teach learners according to their individual abilities and differences. One respondent said that:

I plan for each learner according to his or her learning needs and differences I do not follow the curriculum. I do differentiation because my lessons are planned to cater to the individual learning barriers and needs of all the learners in my classroom (TEACHER A)

You do differentiation when you teach them and not teach them at the same level. (TEACHER B)

Similar to that, another respondent alluded that:

I put learners in groups in the classroom. I know that group 1 has done a particular thing and they have their worksheet then I ask group 2 for a different job as I see that they are a bit slow. Then I deal with pictures in group 3 because they are slower. (TEACHER C)

The responses from participants indicate that to them inclusive education means teaching learners based on their learning barriers or abilities rather than having a one-size-fits-all teaching strategy. This will help in ensuring that all learners learn according to their abilities in the classroom. Another respondent pointed out that:

Inclusive education means to do differentiation when you are teaching, and when you are teaching, you must teach according to the different abilities of the learners. That is what I think inclusive education is. Although, that is not happening. (TEACHER D)

This response indicates the difference between the theory and practice because it means that in her classroom, the teacher is not teaching learners according to their different learning abilities. In addition to that, another respondent indicated that she uses teaching aids during her lessons. This is progressive because it caters to all the learners' learning styles, which means that all learners will be included in the classroom.

*Let us say I am teaching them something that they do not know, I must make sure that they see that thing. I can use a picture or a chart. Alternatively, they hear me explaining that thing and I physically demonstrate that thing so that even the learner who is partially sighted can hear me because when I use a chart, they might not see it. You must use different learning styles when you teach them as others are auditory learners, visual learners, and others are perceptual they learn by touching. Therefore, you must accommodate all those things when you teach them because you do not know how they learn. **TEACHER B.*** The section that follows discusses the perceptions of inclusive education.

4.2.2 THEME 2: PERCEPTIONS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

This section outlines the perceptions that teachers have regarding inclusive education. One theme emerged from the findings: Teacher beliefs as teachers' beliefs influence their perceptions and practices.

Teachers play a significant role of the enactment of inclusive education, as they are the ones who oversee the educational initiatives in the classroom context. Teachers need to have the required beliefs, attitudes and knowledge to apply inclusive education. The findings point to teachers' lack of belief that inclusive education can be implemented fully and that we can have schools that cater to all the learner's learning needs. This is due to several challenges that teachers raise.

4.2.2.1 TEACHERS' BELIEFS

Teachers do not believe that it is possible to have schools that cater to all learners' learning needs and that it is possible to employ inclusive education practically in schools. They point out the practicality of inclusive education in classrooms as a challenge. Respondents mentioned that:

*I cannot say that all learners are catered for in my classroom because sometimes I do not do justice to the learners. This is because I might differentiate today and not be able to differentiate tomorrow due to several challenges. **TEACHER D***

*Every learner has the right to learn but it will be difficult to include all learners. I think that learners should go to special schools where learners who cannot see go to their school and deaf learners go to their school. **TEACHER C***

*They tell us to use inclusive teaching practices in schools, but they do not show us how to implement these policies practically in our classrooms. We always write reports that are not possible to implement but they do not come and show us how to implement. **TEACHER B***

Some teachers believe that learners are not included in their classrooms because sometimes they cannot use inclusive strategies and pedagogy in their classrooms as they face various challenges therefore learners with learning barriers or disabilities must go to special schools. As some educators believe that inclusive education is not practical, some do believe that we can have inclusive schools that cater to all learners.

*It is possible to have fully inclusive schools if all learners are screened before they are admitted to schools so that we can know the kind of learners you are dealing with, unlike the mainstream schools where all learners just are admitted. **TEACHER B***

Another participant's experience also aligns with the as she stated that

*We can get there because if learners are physically disabled, but their minds are working normally I do not think that they should be separated from other learners **TEACHER C.***

is the evidence from the from the above statements indicate that some teachers believe that they cannot fully implement inclusive practices in their classrooms while others believe that it is possible with the use of various strategies. These contradictions create

a barrier to the implementation of inclusive education, especially for those teachers who do not believe in inclusive education. In addition to that, another issue that the participants raised is that they are confused as to what kind of learners must be included in special schools, full-service schools and mainstream schools.

This thing is confusing us because when I got here at a full-service school I thought it was for cognitively challenged learners and physically disabled learners. **TEACHER E**

Another issue is that the department took mainstream and ordinary schools and turned them into full-service schools. We used to have ordinary schools, full-service schools, and special schools. If you look properly, I think the department did not know what they doing with full-service schools. They do not know what full-service school is and he difference between full-service schools and ordinary schools. **TEACHER D**

The responses above indicate that some teachers still believe in segregating learners according to their learning barriers and abilities to different types of schools namely: mainstream, special schools and full-service schools. This clearly shows that teachers do not believe in inclusive education, and they do not believe that we can have schools that are inclusive for all the learners.

4.2.3 THEME 3: INCLUSIVE TEACHING PRACTICES

This section presents the data from the interviews and the focus group discussions about the inclusive teaching practices that teachers use in their classrooms. Three sub-themes emerged Assessment & Screening, identification, and differentiation. These sub-themes respond to the following sub-questions: What teaching strategies do teachers in a full-service school in Soweto employ in their teaching to include all learners?

What inclusive pedagogic practices do teachers employ to embrace the principles of a full-service school?

4.2.3.1 ASSESSMENT & SCREENING

Participants indicated that as teachers they identify learners who have learning barriers and then assess and screen them so that they can identify the types of learning barriers

they have. Then give them the relevant support based on their learning needs. This is a strategy teachers use to ensure that all learners learn. The participants indicated that,

I pull out learners from different classes and I design a timetable. Then I will do an assessment/ screening where I will identify their problems then I group them according to their learning barriers. I then fill in the SNA and support-based assessment forms. I am a learning support educator; I am supporting educators on their learners. Then once the learner has grasped whatever they have to learn they go back to their classroom.

TEACHER A

Some learners will understand when I am teaching them and those who will not grasp them. For those who do not grasp, we have to fill in SNA forms and refer them to teacher A, the LSEN educator, to assist. If she fails to assist, the district must come and observe/assess the learner so that the learner can be referred. **TEACHER B**

In full-service schools once, a learner has been identified that they have a problem then they will be placed in a remedial class where the learner will be taught at his/her own pace. **TEACHER C**

The findings revealed that teachers in their classrooms must identify, assess, and screen learners who have learning barriers so that they can be supported with inclusive interventions that cater to their learning barriers to ensure that all learners learn.

4.2.3.2 DIFFERENTIATION

Participants indicated that they use differentiation based on the learners' learning needs as an intervention strategy to ensure that all learners learn. Participants stated the following:

I do differentiation meaning that I do not use a one-size fits all approach. For example, if I am teaching phonic sounds and we are doing three letters. There might be learners who are still on the level of grade 2 if I am teaching grade 3. The policy states that learners are only allowed to fail or repeat once in a phase and that does not mean that as that learner progresses, he/she will be able to grasp what I am teaching. Therefore, I must

differentiate where if I am teaching three sounds, I will give that learner two sounds and they will gradually learn. **TEACHER E**

Other teachers indicated that according to policies and the Department of Education, teachers must use differentiation as a teaching method that ensures that all learners are included. However, they cannot do that in their classrooms due to several challenges that they face.

We are told to do differentiation, but it is not doable. We cannot do differentiation properly because of overcrowding. When you do differentiation according to the learner's abilities, it does not require many learners. You must have a few learners so that you can have one-on-one sessions with them. Therefore, we cannot do one-on-one and we cannot assist learners with learning barriers properly because there are too many learners in the classroom. You cannot neglect the learners who do not have barriers to learning because you assume that they are fine. You must also pay attention to them because when you pay more attention to learners with barriers then the other learners will be left behind. In the classroom you might divide the learners into groups of four based on their abilities, some are high achievers, average, and those with learning difficulties. Therefore, we do not have enough time to do all those things. **TEACHER D**

You try to teach the others and you must do differentiation. Sometimes we do differentiation and sometimes we forget. Because there are, many learners and their abilities/levels are not the same. You find that two groups of learners can grasp while the others have learning difficulties, and you must always change your strategies. **TEACHER B**

The responses above indicate that teachers know that they must use differentiation as an inclusive strategy to accommodate all the learners' learning needs in their classrooms. However, there are challenges such as overcrowding and time constraints that hinder them from using differentiation in their classrooms. The next section discusses in detail the challenges faced by teachers when implementing inclusive practices.

4.2.4 THEME 4: CHALLENGES

This section addresses some of the challenges that teachers face in implementing inclusive practices. Teachers expressed that the main reason why they cannot implement inclusive education fully in their classrooms is due to several challenges that they face in and outside their classrooms. Participants expressed that the challenges they face in implementing inclusive education include overcrowding, language, lack of parental involvement, and curriculum. This theme responds to the challenges that teachers face when they implement teaching strategies and pedagogic practices in their classrooms. The teaching strategies and pedagogic practices are in line with the sub-questions of this research study.

4.2.4.1 OVERCROWDING

Teachers expressed that they cannot cater to all the learners' learning needs in the classroom due to the number of learners that are in their classrooms. They complained that they could not reach all the learners because of this challenge. There are classrooms with more than 50 learners due to factors that include lack of teachers and inadequate infrastructure amongst other issues. Participants commented that:

It is not possible to cater to all learners' learning needs because of the number of learners we have in classrooms. There are so many learners in our classrooms you cannot reach all of them as a teacher. You cannot reach all 42 learners in your classroom as a teacher because you are rushing the curriculum coverage and you need to rush while the learners are left behind. **TEACHER A**

Inclusive education is not happening because the way it is supposed to be happening according to their policies does not need an overcrowded classroom. If you look properly, inclusive education requires a one-on-one. There are many learners in the classroom. While you are trying to focus on the learners who are struggling, you move your focus on the other learners and they end up being left behind. You sometimes rush things with them because you have a mindset that they are fast and they know. So, while you are trying to focus more on the learners that are struggling the other ones are left behind.

TEACHER D

Participants expressed that they do try to come up with teaching strategies accommodate all learners in their classrooms. However, they are not able to reach all the learners because of the number of learners that they have in their classrooms.

4.2.4.2 LANGUAGE

The language of learning and training (LOLT) in primary schools in home languages from grade R to grade 3. Language plays a significant part in the teaching and learning process. Because the reason is that learners must understand the language used in order to grasp the content. This means that if learners do not understand the LOLT used in the classroom then they will not be able to understand the lesson. Participants expressed that another challenge they have is language barriers as the LOLT from grade R to grade 3 in their school is IsiZulu and learners come from families where IsiZulu is not their home language as they speak other languages.

The other issue we have is language. Language is a huge issue because the IsiZulu we teach is different from the IsiZulu they speak in townships, so it makes it difficult for learners to grasp quickly. Sometimes when you give them a picture, they write the names they use in the townships, not the proper Zulu we teach. **TEACHER D**

The language of teaching and learning in this school is IsiZulu but when learners get home, they speak other languages such as Sesotho, Setswana, and Sepedi. We speak IsiZulu, not the IsiZulu from Johannesburg but proper Zulu so that becomes a barrier. For example, when you say something, learners ask you what it is and you have to explain that, the language barrier is a problem. Even the learners who come from other countries I think they are faster learners than learners who are Sotho's or Tshwana's. So, they do not even get assistance at home. **TEACHER B**

We all have the same issue. As they have said, language plays a huge role, and it is a big issue. **TEACHER C**

The responses indicate that language does have an impact on teaching and learning as it can be a barrier if learners do not understand the language used during teaching and learning.

4.2.4.3 LACK OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents play a huge role in the upbringing of learners and for that reason have a huge part to play in the educational development of learners. Participants expressed that parents are not involved in their children's school week; they do not assist learners with their homework and some parents do not support their children.

*Most parents do not assist and support their children. Most of the parents are young. Some drink while they are pregnant and do all things like not sleeping at home and most of them leave home. Therefore, they neglect their children as some children stay with their grandmothers whilst the mother is doing own her things. **TEACHER A***

*You see parental involvement counts a lot and the background of the learners counts a lot because what I see and experience a lot is that most learners who struggle are learners whose parents do not check their books. When you give them homework, they will not write that homework for 2 weeks. Parents are very negligent. The learner's background and parental involvement count a lot. **TEACHER C***

The findings point to a lack of parental support, which influences the learners' academic performance as most parents neglect their children, which results in them being distressed, and end up not doing well in their studies. This affects the implementation of inclusive education because teachers give the learners who have learning barriers homework as a strategy to help them improve their grades. The learners will come back to school the following day without doing that work, as they do not get support and assistance from their parents with their schoolwork. Another participant indicated that parents do not disclose to the school the challenges that their children have which makes it difficult for teachers to provide the required support to learners.

One thing that affects or influences the inclusion of all learners is parents who do not disclose other things so that affects you have to think for yourself as a teacher. Others do not come forward and say their child has eyesight problems so as a teacher you must figure that out for yourself. Then you make a follow-up and tell the parents to take the child to get glasses. So, parents must be open even yesterday when a child collapsed we did not know that the child has epilepsy. So, the learner had a seizure, and we did not

*know what to do as the parent did not disclose this. So, parents make it difficult to continue teaching in the classroom as this disturbs teaching and learning and learning. I do not know what can be done because whenever we have meetings, we ask parents to disclose such information but they do not disclose they are secretive. **TEACHER B***

The findings show that parents are not involved in their children's education and this has an impact in the learner's educational development as parents do not assist with homework and disclose the challenges that learners have. The participants expressed that this makes it difficult for them to give the learner's the support that they need.

4.2.4.4 CURRICULUM

In addition to the challenges that participants stated above, they also state that the curriculum is another challenge that hinders their implementation of inclusive education in their classrooms. Participants are complaining that the curriculum does not cater to the different learning styles and pace those learners have they have one Annual Teaching Plan (ATP) that dictates what must be taught, when, and how. Teachers are stating that this does not accommodate learners with barriers who might not grasp content easily during the stipulated time in the ATP and curriculum. Participants also expressed that the Department of Education and the district are contradicting themselves because they are saying teachers must use inclusive teaching practices like differentiation when they teach however when the department sends assessments to schools they are not differentiated to cater for all learner's learning needs. The participants indicated that:

Currently, according to the curriculum, it is a one-size-fits-all. When the Department of Education sends ATP's it is a one-size-fits-all. They do not acknowledge that there are learners who are on grade 1 level but they are in grade 3 according to the curriculum and when we get assessments from the department, they do not accommodate those learners who cannot write. Back then, we used to learn but now we must count curriculum coverage, and we must submit to the district when schools closes what we have covered if not how will you catch up? How will I catch up when I fail to cover the curriculum? They are chasing and rushing the ATP and curriculum coverage, it is not like back then when you had to teach something until learners grasped it. We need to do different things every week while learners are not learning and grasping. We are overloading learners with

information, so we are also barriers. We feed learners with too much information because learners get to other grades without learning. **TEACHER B**

The principal must check what you have covered so far. So instead of taking your time so that learners can learn slowly and at their own pace. Teachers are scared that they did not cover some things in the curriculum. They cannot move with the learners because there are too many in the classroom and some learners do not know some things.

TEACHER A

That curriculum coverage is a lot for learners. Compared to how we used to learn, we did not have too much work. **TEACHER D**

That is why when we get to class, we give learners too much work because we must cover the curriculum. **TEACHER E**

The findings indicate that teachers cannot ensure that all learners' learning needs are catered for because of the curriculum. Teachers must teach according to the ATP, which stipulates what they must teach and for how long. This does not cater for all learners as there are those may struggle to grasp the content and they might need more support.

4.2.5 THEME 5: CHALLENGES WITH INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICIES

This theme emerged from the sub-research question that follows: What role do policies play in ensuring the implementation of inclusive teaching practices? The participants indicated that policies do not play their role, which makes it difficult to implement inclusive teaching practices in their classrooms. This current study analyzed four inclusive education policies implemented in South Africa. The policies are the White Paper 6, the Constitution, SASA, and the SIAS policy.

The Education White Paper 6 (Special Needs Education) policy document covers what inclusive education training is, the framework to establish inclusive education systems and funding strategies. Hence, it is significant as it is a response from the South African Government to enable education for all. The policy document states that inclusive education and training is about accepting that all learners need support, acknowledge difference, and ensure that education is empowered.

The findings in White Paper 6 indicate that inclusive education is about valuing and recognizing the differences in learners. Therefore, educational structures must ensure that the systems and learning approaches cater to the different learning needs of all learners regardless of their differences. The policy document also states that:

Learners with disabilities struggle to get access to education, as there are a limited number of special schools that admit learners according to certain categories (Department of Education, 2001 page number)

“The Ministry and the provincial departments of education will designate and then convert a number of primary schools throughout the country into ‘full service’ schools that will be equipped and supported to provide for a greater range of learning needs” (Department of Education, 2001, page number)

The findings in this document prove that the Education White Paper 6 upholds the educational rights of learners with disabilities as it aims to restructure a number of schools into full-service schools that will cater to all learners regardless of their differences.

In addition to that, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa adopted in 1996 covers the preamble and 14 chapters. Chapter 2 of the Bill of Rights outlines the rights of all the people in South Africa. Section 21 (1) in chapter two of the Constitution entitles everyone to a basic education and further training that is equal and accessible. The constitution outlines this right in the following way.

(1) Everyone has the right— (a) to a basic education, including adult basic education; and (b) to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible. (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996-page number.)

The findings in the Constitution indicate that everyone in South Africa is entitled to basic and further education. The concept of everyone implies that all learners as well as learners with learning barriers are entitled to basic and further education that is accessible. The SASA provides a uniform system for the organization, governance, and funding of schools in South Africa. Chapter 2 of the SASA makes provision for the schools to admit all the learners.

A public school must admit learners and serve their educational requirements without unfairly discriminating in any way (South African Schools Act, 1996).

This finding reveals that the admission of all learners without discrimination is significant because it allows all learners to have equal access to educational settings. In addition to that, the SIAS policy aims to support and develop the needs of all learners. Teachers need to know the learning needs and barriers that learners have to provide appropriate support. This is where the SIAS policy comes in handy.

The purpose of the SIAS policy is to provide a policy framework for the standardization of the procedures to identify, assess, and provide programs for all learners who require additional support to enhance their participation and inclusion in school (Department of Basic Education, 2014)

This reveals that the SIAS policy seeks to provide a framework to identify learners with learning barriers so that they can get the relevant support they need. In addition to that,

The policy focuses on supporting the teaching and learning process of learners with learning deficits (Department of Basic Education, 2014). In addition, improving access to quality education for vulnerable learners and those who experience barriers to learning, including learners with disabilities (Department of Basic Education, 2014 page number)

The findings reveal that the SIAS policy endorses the inclusion of all learners as it seeks to transform the schooling system into a system that conforms to the rules of the White Paper 6. The next sub-section discusses the views that participants have on the inclusive education policies discussed.

4.2.5.1 UNREALISTIC

The participants believe that inclusive education and inclusive education policies are not realistic because there is a huge gap between theory and practice. This is because what happens in classrooms differs from the policies and aims of inclusive education as stipulated. The participants also outlined that the Department of Education is contradicting itself when it comes to inclusive education because they tell teachers to use certain

strategies, but they do not follow those strategies as a department. The participants explained as follows:

The department does not follow those policies because the assessments they send to schools are not inclusive to the learners who cannot read and write. They are also making us rush to cover the curriculum so we are not teaching learners to learn but we are pushing coverage and the number of activities we must have weekly. They require the same number of activities from all the learners including the learners with learning barriers. They do not at least limit the number of activities for learners with barriers, as they are slow and learn at a slower pace, so it is a one-size-fits-all. Therefore, the department is contradicting itself because when we attend workshops, they say that we must do differentiation, and we do it in our classrooms but when they set tasks and assessments they do not accommodate those learners and they end up failing. If the department is saying, we must make differentiation when they set tasks they must also differentiate. **TEACHER B**

Their problem is that they just give us policies, but they do not implement them. For example, in inclusive education, there are scribes for those learners who cannot write for themselves and need assistance. Therefore, as a teacher, you ask them questions, they answer orally, and the scribe must write for them. However, if you look, they are supposed to be here at school but they are not. If as a teacher, I discover that there is a learner who needs a scribe, it is a long process to get a scribe. The scribes should be full-time at the schools. So, they just give policies but they do not implement them and they also do not know how to implement them. Those scribes are sitting there in the district. That thing called White Paper 6, which says that learners must all be taught in the same class, was not supposed to be done. It is not discrimination to put a learner with a particular ability in a place where they will be able to fit in and learn properly, rather than mixing the learners with other learners and then being told that you are discriminating against them. That is how I see things. **TEACHER D**

I think there must be a change in policies that were implemented to establish full-service schools. I think it was not supposed to be like that because we cannot have a school that caters to all learners' learning needs while other schools do not. I think from the policy

perspective every school must cater to all learners' learning needs. Because some schools do interviews before enrolling learners and for me that is discrimination.

TEACHER E

The findings indicate that participants believe that there are flaws in the inclusive education policies in South Africa. As they expressed that, the Department of Education gives teachers policies that they also do not follow. Participants therefore call for a change in the inclusive education policies. The next section concludes the current chapter.

4.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the findings of the data collected through semi-structured interviews and the focus group discussion as well as the analysis of the policy documents. The participants are five teachers who teach at a full-service school in Soweto teaching grades 1-3. The data was classified into four themes, which had sub-themes. The interviews and focus group discussion revealed that teachers do understand what inclusive education is, however, some challenges hinder the implementation of inclusive education and inclusive teaching practices they employ in their classrooms. The data also revealed that teachers have knowledge of how they can implement inclusive education and inclusive education policies in their classrooms. In addition, classrooms do not reflect the inclusive education policies that teachers believe are unrealistic. The discussion of the results of this study is discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSIONS OF RESULTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This research studied teachers' perceptions and practices of inclusive education in a full-service school in Soweto. The chapter discusses the results that arose from the research questions. The research outcomes emerged from focus group discussions, interviews, and document analysis. The process of selecting the teachers ensured that they taught in a full-service school that accommodated a wide range of educational needs. Consequently, they must possess the expertise and skills to handle the diverse learning requirements of their pupils. Firstly, I will discuss teachers' understanding of inclusive education. Secondly, I discuss teachers' perceptions of inclusive education. Thirdly, I present inclusive teaching practices that teachers use. Fourthly, I will discuss the challenges of inclusive education. Lastly, I conclude with the remarks.

5.2 TEACHERS' UNDERSTANDING OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The overall research question guiding the study was: What are teachers' perceptions and practices of inclusive education?

To comprehend teachers' perceptions and practices of inclusive education, we first need to clarify their understanding of it. This is because teachers' views and how they practice inclusive education depend on how they make meaning of it. The results show that to participants, inclusive education refers to accommodating learners' different learning needs by using a differentiated approach to learning. In line with the findings of the current study, a study conducted by Mohoebi (2023) indicated that teachers understood inclusive education as catering to the diversity of all learners. Inclusive education in White Paper 6 refers to enabling structures of education and learning methods to recognize the diversity of learners and cater to all learners (DoE, 2001).

The participants' understanding of inclusive education relates to the definition of inclusive education in White Paper 6, which means that their perceptions and practices are informed. This is progressive because one can argue that educators that have a correct

comprehension of inclusive education are more likely to use inclusive pedagogy. Mohoebi's (2023) study confirms that teachers' understanding of inclusive education on their perceptions and the pedagogic practices they use in the classroom. Teachers' understanding and meaning of inclusive education are in line with the standards and norms of the Salamanca Statement, which states that all schools should include all learners (UNESCO, 1994). This is significant because it influences the perceptions of inclusive education that teachers have. The next section deliberates the perception of inclusive education.

5.3 PERCEPTIONS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The study's main research question is: What are teachers' perceptions and practices of inclusive education?

The findings revealed that teachers think it is not possible to accommodate all learners' learning needs in their classrooms for several reasons. The reasons include the difficulties that surface when employing inclusive practices and approaches in their classrooms and the contradictions in inclusive education policies. Teachers pointed out the practicality of inclusive education in their classrooms. Participants expressed that they cannot cater to the educational necessities of all learners because it is impossible to do that in their classrooms. Hugo and Mobara's (2024) findings mirror the findings of the current study, as they discovered that teachers had definite perceptions of inclusive education constructed on their classroom experiences. Like Hugo and Mobara's findings, participants experienced the same challenges when they applied inclusive education in their classrooms, which made them believe that it is impossible to cater to all the diverse needs of learners.

Additionally, the findings indicate that teachers are confused because they do not clearly understand how they must implement inclusive education practically. A research study piloted by Dignath et al. (2022) indicated that teachers have different beliefs and perceptions of inclusive education, and teachers' teaching experiences have an impact to their proficient views. This affects the inclusion of all learners in the classroom as the effective application of inclusive education depends on the inclusive practices and strategies that teachers employ in their classrooms.

Teachers' perceptions and practices play a significant role in the successful implementation of inclusive education practices in classrooms (Kuyini et al., 2020). This is because if teachers have negative perceptions about inclusive education, they will not use inclusive education practices to ensure that all learners learn. Kuyini et al. (2020), research study revealed that positive teacher views and outlooks concerning inclusive education are associated with high efficacy.

5.4 INCLUSIVE TEACHING PRACTICES

This section responds to the following secondary questions:

- a. What teaching strategies do teachers in a full-service school in Soweto employ in their teaching to include all learners?
- b. What inclusive pedagogic practices do teachers employ to embrace the principles of a full-service school?

To implement inclusive education in classrooms, teachers employ a variety of teaching strategies and inclusive pedagogic practices. This is to make certain that all learners are included and to embrace the principles of a full-service school. The outcomes of this research revealed that teachers use different teaching strategies and practices such as assessment & screening and differentiation during teaching and learning. In classrooms, there are diverse learners with different learning needs, styles, and barriers. Thus, teachers need to develop various teaching strategies to ensure that they cater to all the differences of learners. To make it possible for teachers to develop these various strategies and practices they first need to identify the educational needs and barriers that learners have so that the strategies they use respond to that.

The SIAS policy states that teachers need to identify, screen, and evaluate learners to identify the learning barriers that learners have and provide them with the support they need (Department of Education, 2014). It is reflected from the findings of the study that teachers do identify, screen, and assess learners to identify their learning needs to provide them with the relevant support they need. The process of identifying and screening learners is significant because it allows teachers to provide relevant additional support to enhance the involvement of all learners.

Besides assessment and screening, teachers also use differentiation to respond to all the learners' educational needs. Differentiation is the most used inclusive intervention strategy in inclusive education. According to Eikeland and Ohna (2022), differentiation is a complex notion that is relevant after the global vision of inclusive education. Differentiation involves diverse preparation and strategies for inclusive teaching practices that address learners' needs (Lindner & Schwab, 2020). The research outcomes showed that teachers use differentiation by dividing learners into different groups and giving them different activities according to their learning abilities. This is to ensure that they reach the learner's learning needs rather than using an umbrella approach in teaching learners with differences.

This teaching strategy and pedagogical practice significantly cater to the individual educational prerequisites of all learners, regardless of their diversity. However, the findings indicated that there are several challenges that teachers face when they try to use these teaching strategies and pedagogic practices in their classrooms. The next section discusses these challenges in detail.

5.5 CHALLENGES

As stated in the previous chapter, teachers encounter numerous difficulties when employing inclusive teaching and pedagogical strategies in their classrooms. This section responds to these difficulties and the first two support questions of this research. The study's findings indicate that teachers struggle when they apply inclusive strategies and practices in their classrooms, including overcrowding, language, parent nonparticipation, and the curriculum.

The participants voiced their concerns that it is very challenging for them to use inclusive pedagogical practices in their classrooms because there are many learners in their classrooms. Hugo and Mobarra (2024) affirm this finding by indicating that, the suggested learner-teacher ratio in South Africa is 30:1. However, the results of this research indicate that teachers have +-40 learners in their classrooms. Having many learners in the classroom hinders teaching and learning as participants indicated that teachers could not reach all the learner's learning needs because there are too many learners in the classrooms. This makes it tough for educators to offer sufficient support to learners with

learning impediments. Mpu and Adu (2021) conducted a research study that revealed that classroom overcrowding made teachers feel inadequate in teaching inclusive education classrooms, making it hard for them to respond to all learners' educational needs. Overcrowded classrooms impact negatively on teaching and learning as they may lead to a stressful and crowded environment (Graham, 2023).

Another challenge that teachers face when implementing inclusive strategies and practices in their classrooms is language. The study results show that language is a serious challenge in their classrooms because learners' mother tongue is not the same as the school's LOLT. Pather (2019) argues that language barriers hinder learning. I concur that language is one of the significant issues, which influence teaching and learning because if learners do not understand the language, they will not understand what the teacher is teaching them.

In addition to that, the study's discoveries point to inadequate parental involvement as a huge concern because it makes it difficult for teachers to employ inclusive teaching strategies and pedagogical practices in their classrooms. Research study conducted by Mohoebi (2023) indicated that teachers try to include parents in the education of their learners; however, parents do not show any interest and do not make any effort to assist in the educational needs of their children. Mokala (2017) affirms the findings of the current study as she found that many teachers complained about lack of support and involvement from the parents. However, in another study, this finding is contradicted as many teachers affirmed the great support they receive from parents (Mokala, 2021). Lack of parental support is problematic because learners require both the support of their educators and parents to learn. Parents must actively participate in the education of learners. According to the SIAS policy, parents have a significant role to play in education as they can identify the barriers that learners might have in the early stages (DoE, 2014). Teachers will have difficulty giving learners adequate when the support from the parents is not sufficiently provided

The findings of the current study show that the way the curriculum is set makes it very difficult for teachers to respond to all the diverse educational needs in the classroom. This creates contradictions because teachers are instructed to use inclusive approaches and

practices in the classrooms to cater to all learners' learning needs. However, the curriculum is a one-size-fits-all because it does accommodate the diverse learning needs of all learner population. In addition to that, the assessments are also standard as they are not differentiated and do not cater to the different educational needs of learners. The next section discusses the challenges with inclusive education policies.

5.6 CHALLENGES WITH INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICIES

The third sub-question of this study is as follows: What role do policies play in ensuring the implementation of inclusive teaching practices?

There are several inclusive education policies adopted by South Africa to accommodate all learners' educational necessities. These policies include the constitution, the White Paper 6, the SIAS policy, and the SASA, which I discussed in detail in Chapter 2. These policies have an important part to play in implementing inclusive education in schools because they advocate for the inclusion of all learners in schools. However, the policies do not play their expected role in executing inclusive education. The findings of the study revealed that in South Africa inclusive education policies are unrealistic and have contradictions. There is a huge gap between the concept and practice of inclusive education because the policies differ from what happens practically in classrooms (Materechera, 2020).

The results of the analysis of documents, interviews, and focus group discussions indicated that there is a huge challenge regarding the full application of inclusive education policies in schools because of the flaws in the policies and what is happening in schools. In addition, there are contradictions in the inclusive education policies because they do not relate to how the Department of Education sets out the curriculum. This makes it challenging for teachers to employ inclusive teaching strategies in their classrooms.

5.7 CONCLUSION

The outcomes of the study point out teachers have knowledge of inclusive education; however, they cannot implement it fully and practically in their classrooms due to several challenges. These challenges include overcrowding, language, lack of parental involvement, and the curriculum. The literature review indicates that inclusive education

is broad and there are challenges in its implementation globally. This is because there is a gap between what is happening in schools and inclusive education policies. The following section outlines the recommendations and concludes the study.

CHAPTER 6

RECOMANDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The study aimed to investigate teachers' perceptions and practices of inclusive education. The study will be summarized, recommendations will be presented, and the study will be concluded in this chapter.

6.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The study investigated how teachers in a Soweto full-service school perceived and implemented inclusive education. To achieve this, the study addressed the following main and supporting research questions:

1. What are teachers' perceptions and practices of inclusive education?

1.1 What teaching strategies do teachers in a full-service school in Soweto employ in their teaching to include all learners?

1.2 What inclusive pedagogic practices do teachers employ to embrace the principles of a full-service school?

1.3 What role do policies play in ensuring the implementation of inclusive teaching practices?

To obtain data, interviews, a focus group discussion, and an analysis of policy documents were used. Five participants were used for the interviews and group discussion. The outcomes from the data gathered demonstrate that teachers understand inclusive education as accommodating different learners' needs in classrooms regardless of their differences by using inclusive teaching practices. However, due to many challenges, teachers cannot implement inclusive education fully and practically in their classrooms. These challenges include overcrowding, language, curriculum, and the non-presence of parents in learners' education. From the literature review, it is evident that inclusive education is broad, and there are challenges with implementation globally.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The present research study intended to uncover the perceptions and practices of teachers regarding inclusive education in a comprehensive school in Soweto. The findings lead to the following recommendations: for policy, for the Department of Education, and for practice.

6.3.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY

The outcomes of this research recommend that the Department of Education and other policymakers restructure the existing inclusive education policies. The restructuring must be in line with what is happening practically in schools. In addition to that, the Department must ensure that policies match the practices in schools and classrooms by having the necessary strategies and tools in place. This will curb and address the issues that educators face when they integrate inclusive methods.

Lastly, the country must adopt one common meaning of inclusive education and use it to develop and restructure policies. Multiple definitions of inclusive education cause contradictions, which this will address.

6.3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY

The Department must equip all the schools with supplies and facilities to accommodate all learners. The Department of Education must also build more full-service schools and hire more teachers to respond to the issue of overcrowding. In addition to that, there must be curriculum reform. There must be research conducted to investigate why there is a gap between the theory of inclusive education and its practice to ensure that the curriculum reforms respond to that gap. This means that the department of education needs to invest more in research studies that seek to investigate inclusive education in South African schools so that they can develop policies and strategies bridge the gap to ensure that all learners learning needs are accommodated.

6.3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The results from the data evaluated in this study revealed that applying inclusive education in the classroom presents several difficulties for teachers. The study thus recommends that all teachers must have the relevant expertise and skills to educate all

learners. This means that teachers need to attend workshops and training to acquire the necessary expertise on how implement inclusive teaching strategies in classrooms. Furthermore, to be able to incorporate inclusive practices into their classrooms, educators must further their own education and professional development. This can be done by registering for short courses or postgraduate studies relating to inclusive education so that they can have the knowledge and skills to teach in inclusive classrooms.

In addition to that, teachers need to screen and assess all their learners at the beginning of the year so that they can be able to provide the relevant support to the learners. It is significant for teachers to know all their learners learning needs and barriers, this can be done through screening and assessment. After teachers have identified the learning needs and barriers of all the learners, they can use various teaching strategies such as differentiation in their classrooms to ensure that all learners are accommodated in the classroom.

6.4 CONCLUSION

My research investigated the perceptions and practices that teachers in one of the full-service schools have regarding inclusive education. The data indicates that educators possess the craft knowledge of inclusive education and employ inclusive strategies in their classrooms. However, some challenges are beyond their control and hinder them from responding to the learning deficits of all learners. In addition to that, the existing policies create a barrier, as they are not in line with what is happening practically in classrooms. This chapter concludes the current study.

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APPENDIX A

INFORMATION SHEET FOR THE PRINCIPAL

Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Inclusive Education: A case of one Full-Service school in Soweto.

Dear sir/madam

My name is Refilwe Penelope Motsamai and I am a Masters student at Wits School of Education. I am conducting a research study entitled "Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Inclusive Education: A Case of One Full-Service School in Soweto"

I would like your school to be part of this study as your school is a full-service school that caters to a wide range of learners with different learning needs. This is essential in my study as your school advocates for the inclusion of learners with learning difficulties to ensure that all learners are included and catered for in the school.

My research study includes coming to the school to engage and interview teachers about their perceptions relating to inclusive education and the inclusive practices they employ in their classrooms. The participation of teachers in this research study is voluntary, and they are not compelled to take part.

I will conduct interviews with five (5) teachers teaching grade 1, 2, and 3 to get more understanding of their perceptions and practices of inclusive education. I will also have focus group discussions with all the 5 teachers. Both the interviews and the focus group discussions will be audio-recorded and conducted during their free periods and lunch so that teaching and learning are not disturbed.

The school will not be disadvantaged in any way by taking part in this study. The schools' names and information will be kept confidential at all times and the participants' identities will be kept confidential. The participants can withdraw from the study at any time, and they can stop the interview at any time.

Your response will be highly appreciated.

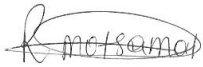
Yours sincerely.

Refilwe Motsamai

Cell: 0623409115

Email:

1687757@students.wits.ac.za

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Refilwe Motsamai', enclosed within a hand-drawn oval.

APPENDIX B

INFORMATION SHEET FOR TEACHERS

Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Inclusive Education: A case of one Full-Service school in Soweto.

Dear sir/madam

My name is Refilwe Penelope Motsamai and I am a Masters student at Wits School of Education. I am conducting a research study entitled "Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Inclusive Education: A Case of One Full-Service School in Soweto".

I, therefore, would like you to be part of this study as you have first-hand experience in dealing with diverse learners as you teach in a school that caters to a wide range of learners with different learning needs. I would like to gain insight into your perceptions regarding inclusive education and the practices of inclusive education you employ in your classroom by interviewing you. There will be individual interviews and focus group discussions with other participants, which will be audio-recorded and conducted during your free periods and lunch so that teaching and learning are not disturbed. The interviews and discussions are estimated to take about 45 minutes.

You are not compelled to take part in this research study. Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without being penalized. Taking part in this study will not disadvantage you in any way. Your name and details will be kept confidential all the time.

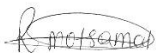
Your response will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Refilwe Motsamai

0623409115

1687757@students.wits.ac.za



APPENDIX C

CONSENT FORM

Title of project: Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Inclusive Education: A Case of One Full-Service School in Soweto.

I, agree to participate in the research project titled: Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Inclusive Education: A Case of One Full-Service School in Soweto, conducted by Refilwe Penelope Motsamai.

I agree to the following:

(Please tick the relevant options below)	YES	NO
• The research study was explained to me. I understand what this study is about.		
• I understand that my participation is completely voluntary and I can stop the interview at any time.		
• I know that I can withdraw from the study at any time without any implications to me.		
• I understand that I can access the information and data I have provided at any time.		
• I agree that the interview and the focus group may be audio-recorded		
• I agree that direct quotations from my interview/focus group/other activity may be used by the researcher in their research report.		
• I agree that my participation will remain anonymous (my name and details will not be used by the researcher in their research report.		

Name of Research Participant

Signature:

Date:

Name of Researcher:

Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX D

Interview schedule

Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Inclusive Education: A case of one Full-Service school in Soweto.

The questions asked in this interview address the perceptions and practices that teachers in full-service schools have regarding inclusive education and the inclusion of all learners in their classrooms. The interview will be 30 minutes for each participant and it will be recorded with a voice recorder to ensure that the correct version of the interview is transcribed.

The following are questions that will be asked during the interview:

1. How long have you been teaching at this school?
2. What is your highest level of education completed?
3. Have you ever taught in a mainstream school before, if yes what can you say is the difference in the classroom environment between mainstream schools and full-service schools?
4. How would you define inclusive education?
5. Which inclusive teaching practices do you use in your classroom to ensure that all learner's learning needs are catered for in your classroom?
6. What aspects would you say influence the inclusion of all learners in your classroom?
7. Would you confidently say all learners are included and their different learning needs are catered for in your classroom?
8. Given the current education system in South Africa do you think it is possible to have an all-inclusive education system that caters to all learners learning needs?
9. What do you think needs to be done to ensure that the education system is inclusive and it caters to all learners regarding of their differences?

APPENDIX E



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION ETHICS COMMITTEE

CONSTITUTED UNDER THE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (NON-MEDICAL)

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 2023ECE41M

PROJECT TITLE

Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Inclusive Education: A case of one Full-Service school in Soweto.

INVESTIGATOR

Refilwe Penelope Motsamai

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR

WSoE

DATE CONSIDERED

13 September 2023

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

Approved unconditionally

RISK LEVEL

Minimal Risk

EXPIRY DATE

Date of submission of the Research Report

ISSUE DATE OF CERTIFICATE

25 October 2023

CHAIRPERSON



Dr. Batseba Mofolo-Mbokane

cc: Dr Ntsoaki Mokala

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATOR

To be completed in duplicate and **ONE COPY** returned to the Chairperson of the School/Department ethics committee.

I fully understand the conditions under which I am authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.


Signature

Date 30 / 10 / 23

APPENDIX F



GAUTENG PROVINCE

Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

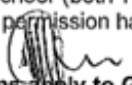
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GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	22 January 2024
Validity of Research Approval:	08 February 2024– 30 September 2024 2024/527
Name of Researcher:	Motsamai RP
Address of Researcher:	769a Thusini Street Zola 3
Telephone Number:	062 3409115
Email address:	1687757@students.wits.ac.za
Research Topic:	Teachers' Perceptions and Practices of Inclusive Education: A case of one Full-Service school in Soweto
Name of University:	Wits
Type of qualification	Masters
Number and type of schools:	LSEN Schools
District/s/HO	Johannesburg Central

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

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

 22/01/2024
The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher 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:

1

Making education a societal priority

Office of the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

7th Floor, 17 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg, 2001

Tel: (011) 355 0488

Email: Faiith.Tshabalala@gauteng.gov.za

Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

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

DATE: 22/01/2024

2

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